

OPINION 8 GRADED CONFUSION

WORLD 11 TRUMP'S IMPEACHMENT PROBE TO PROCEED

SPORT 15 LIVERPOOL BEAT EVERTON 5-2 IN MERSEYSIDE DERBY

LUCKNOW, FRIDAY DECEMBER 6, 2019; PAGES 16 ₹3



the pioneer

www.dailypioneer.com



HRITHIK THE SEXIEST ASIAN MAN 14 VIVACITY

Out on bail, 'rapists' set victim ablaze

Unnao girl waylaid on way to court, suffers 90% burns, airlifted to Delhi's Safdarjung Hospital; all 5 held

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

Barely a week after the brutal gang-rape and murder of a veterinarian in Hyderabad, a rape survivor was set ablaze by five men, including two rape accused, while she was on her way to court to attend hearing in the rape case, in Unnao in the wee hours of Thursday. The two men accused of raping her last year were granted bail 10 days back.

The victim, with 90 per cent burn injuries, was rushed to Unnao District Hospital then to Civil Hospital in Lucknow, and then airdashed to Delhi's Safdarjung Hospital later on Thursday evening.

All five accused, including rape accused Shivam Trivedi and Shubham Trivedi, were arrested in raids carried out soon after the incident.

As per reports, the rape survivor had left her Hindunagar village home to go to the railway station to catch a train to Rae Bareilly to attend the hearing in the rape case against Shivam and Shubham.

In an isolated stretch, she was waylaid by her 'rapists' Shubham and Shivam and three accomplices around 4.30 am. They doused her with kerosene and set her on fire.

In a chilling recap, the woman said in her statement to Subdivisional Magistrate Dayashankar Pathak that she was attacked when she reached Gaura turn near her home. She has named Shivam Trivedi,

Shubham Trivedi, Harishankar Trivedi, Ram Kishore Trivedi, Umesh Bajpai in the report.

Earlier, in January 2018, the girl had married Shivam Trivedi against her parents' wishes and owing to family pressure the couple separated. Following which, Shivam and Shubham raped her in Rae Bareilly, and the woman filed a rape case against them at Lalgaon police station in March.

Police said, "The victim was alone when she was set afire. No one from her family was with her as she left her home on Thursday morning. After being set ablaze, she ran for a kilometre before a villager rescued her and called police."

The rescuer, Ravindra Prakash, said the victim ran for about a kilometre while crying for help. "At first, I thought she was a witch as she was burning profusely, but when she said her father's name, I reacted," Ravindra said.

Ravindra then dialed 112 and the victim herself talked to the police. Soon after, a police van and an ambulance rushed to the spot.

She was first rushed to the community hospital in Unnao and then to District hospital and then to Shyama Prasad Mukherjee Hospital in Lucknow where doctors said her condition is "very serious".

"The condition of the girl who was set on fire and bought here at 10 am is very serious. She has 90 per cent burn injuries and we are taking the

utmost care," said Medical Superintendent Dr Ashutosh Dubey.

In the evening, the woman was airlifted to Safdarjung Hospital in Delhi. A "green corridor" was created to move her from the hospital to Amausi airport to ensure there was no delay due to traffic in Lucknow. The Delhi Traffic Police also provided a green corridor for the vehicle that carried her from the airport to Safdarjung Hospital.

UP Police chief OP Singh said, "The police had done its work by arresting them (rapists) in March. How they were given bail was the matter of the court. In this case too, the police acted swiftly and arrested all five accused."

Meanwhile, UP Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath the authorities to approach the court for cancelling the bail of the rape accused and invoke stringent sections of the IPC against them for the gory crime. On his intervention, the victim was later air-lifted to New Delhi for treatment.

In a statement issued in Lucknow on Thursday morning, Yogi directed Divisional Commissioner of Lucknow, Mukesh Meshram and IG (Lucknow Range) SK Bhagat to visit Unnao and submit their reports on the incident.

Meanwhile, the Rajya Sabha members raised the issue and the House was adjourned twice on Thursday.

Continued on Page 4



An ambulance carrying the Unnao rape survivor, who was set afire in the wee hours of Thursday, arrives at Safdarjung Hospital in Delhi after the UP Government arranged an air ambulance from Lucknow on Thursday



Forensic experts investigate at the site where a rape victim was set ablaze by five men in a village in Unnao district on Thursday

Eyewitness recalls horror

PTI ■ UNNAO

The sight of the rape victim set afire and running for help early Thursday sent shivers down the spine of local people. Ravindra, who sitting by the roadside then, told reporters that he was so frightened that he actually went to pick up his stick.

"It was only when she came nearer that I found she was severely burnt," he said. She had been calling out for help, he added.



Ravindra said he called police and the woman herself talked to them on the phone.

The police arrived soon and she was taken to the local community health centre, he said. She was later transferred to a district hospital and then to Lucknow.

CCTV, panic buttons, GPS to make Delhi buses safer

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

The Delhi Government will install CCTV cameras, panic buttons and GPS in the existing 5,500 DTC and cluster buses, a decision regarding which was taken by the Cabinet on Thursday.

The new buses being inducted are already equipped with safety and security func-

tions, while the existing DTC and cluster buses have been equipped with CCTV cameras, panic buttons and GPS-based Automatic Vehicle Location System.

Each bus will have three CCTV cameras, 10 panic buttons, and GPS locations and announcements will be made at bus stands for the visually impaired passengers, said

Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal.

"We have been trying to complete the tendering process in this regard for quite a long time. Three tenders failed in the last three-four years. Now the tendering process has been succeeded. The Cabinet has decided to issue the work award," said Kejriwal.

Continued on Page 4

RBI cuts growth forecast to 5%, keeps rate steady

PNS ■ MUMBAI

The Reserve Bank of India on Thursday cut the growth forecast by more than one per cent for the current fiscal and left the interest rate unchanged. While downward revision of the GDP growth was on the expected line, few had expected that the RBI would not go for sixth successive rate cut in view of the slowing down of the economy. Fear of inflation going out of bound forced the RBI to press pause button on its rate cut spree.

The RBI's decision to cut the GDP growth forecast aptly reflects the massive pressure on the economy on the macro front. The RBI slashed the growth forecast for FY20 to 5 per cent — down a full 110 bps from its October projection at 6.1 per cent, which again was a 90 bps reduction from its August forecast of 7 per cent. The economy is expected to be in the range of 4.9-5.5 per cent in the second half and 5.9-6.3 per cent in the first half of FY21, RBI Governor Shaktikanta Das said.

At the same time, the RBI



RBI Governor Shaktikanta Das, along with his deputies, arrives for the RBI's bi-monthly monetary policy review meeting in Mumbai on Thursday

monetary policy committee surprised the experts by not tampering with the rates on Thursday. Das said RBI cannot keep cutting policy rates "mechanically every time", but hinted at resuming the easing cycle after Budget and analysing impact of previous 135 bps rate cuts on economy.

He admitted that out of 135 bps previous cut, the bank have passed only around 44 bps so far to the customers. He argued that before undertaking any more rate cut, it was nec-

essary to ensure that benefit of the previous measures reach the customers.

Significantly, even as the MPC hit the pause button unanimously, it also warned of a steep spike in retail inflation to 4.7-5.1 per cent in the second half.

The decision to hit the pause button was unanimous by the six-member rate-setting committee, Das told reporters at the customary post-policy presser.

Continued on Page 4

Govt mullish, clueless about economy, alleges PC

PM has left it to his Ministers to indulge in bluff and bluster, says Cong leader

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

A day after stepping out of jail, former Finance Minister P Chidambaram on Thursday alleged the Centre is "clueless" about the state of economy and Prime Minister Narendra Modi has left it to his Ministers to indulge in "bluff and bluster".

Slamming the Government's economic policy, the senior Congress leader said nothing sums up the state of the economy better than the series of numbers: 8, 7, 6.6, 5.8, 5 and 4.5, a reference to quarterly growth rates of the GDP in the last six quarters.

Chidambaram addressed a Press Conference where he alleged the Government is unable to look for the obvious clues because it is "stubborn and mullish" in defending its "catastrophic mistakes" such as demonetisation, flawed GST, tax terrorism, regulatory overkill, protectionism, and centralised control of decision-making in the Prime Minister's Office.

He began his Press conference with a reference to Kashmir. Chidambaram said his first thoughts upon his

release from jail were with the Kashmiri people who "have been denied their basic freedoms since August 4, 2019".

He refused to speak on the case pending against him and focused mostly on the economy in his Press conference. He only said the "clear and comprehensive" Supreme Court order, granting him bail in a money laundering case connected to INX Media will clear the "many layers of dust" settled on the understanding of criminal law and the manner in which criminal law has been administered by the courts. "I am happy to be back. The Government cannot suppress my voice in Parliament," he said.

"In the last 106 days, I was strong in spirit and I have become stronger because...My record as Minister and my conscience are absolutely clear. Officers who have worked with me, business persons who have interacted with me and journalists who have observed me know that very well. My family trusts in God. We have total confidence that the courts will, ultimately, render justice," Chidambaram said.

Asked if parallels can be



Congress leader and former Finance Minister P Chidambaram speaks during a Press conference at AIICC HQ in New Delhi on Thursday

drawn between the Government's assurances on issues in Kashmir and the economy, Chidambaram answered in the negative, saying as far as economy is concerned, "the reason is incompetence, while in Kashmir, it is the Government's arrogance". He added in a lighter vein that sleeping on a wooden board, without a pillow strengthens the neck, spine and back.

"Even after seven months into the fiscal year, the BJP Government believes the problems faced by the economy are cyclical," said Chidambaram.

Continued on Page 4

Chidambaram violating bail conditions: BJP

New Delhi: The BJP on Thursday accused Congress leader P Chidambaram of violating bail conditions, as set by the Supreme Court, by claiming to have a very clear record as a Minister, and said the case against him was essentially about corruption he was allegedly involved in as the Finance Minister.

Detailed report on P5

'Does she eat Avocado?' PC takes dig at FM

New Delhi: "Does she eat avocado?" quipped former Finance Minister P Chidambaram, who arrived in Parliament on Thursday after spending 106 days in Tihar jail, when asked to comment on Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman's comment that her family didn't eat onion much.

BJP MP offers truckload of onions at ₹25/kg

New Delhi: A BJP MP on Thursday offered to provide Opposition members a truck full of onions at ₹25 a kilogram from his constituency in Uttar Pradesh, while speaking on the price rise of the bulb in the Lok Sabha.

Virendra Singh 'Masit', MP from Balia and also president of BJP Kisan porcha, said onions are produced in UP, besides Maharashtra and Gujarat, in large quantity.

MPs relinquish food subsidy at House canteen; ₹17 cr/yr saved

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Political parties have agreed to give up subsidy accorded to their MPs in Parliament canteens after accepting a suggestion from Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla.

The removal of subsidies will result in saving around ₹17 crore annually, said official sources, adding that many food items will cost almost double than the current prices once the decision comes into effect.

The price of meals is likely to at least double — a plate of biryani, which now costs ₹56, is estimated to be sold at ₹112 after the decision to lift subsidy, around 80%, on food.

Continued on Page 4

Smog chokes Delhi-NCR, air turns hazardous

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

The 10-day long relief from toxic air ended as smog returned on Thursday to choke Delhi-NCR with the pollution levels entering the "hazardous" zone in many parts of Delhi and its suburbs.

Also, the national Capital registered the season's lowest minimum temperature at 7.6 degrees Celsius on Thursday with the overall air quality index (AQI) touching 382 in Delhi and its adjoining areas.

Following the development, a Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB)-led task force asked all agencies in Delhi-NCR to take stringent steps to control air pollution.

The overall air quality index (AQI) in Delhi read 382 at 4 pm, while the AQI entered the severe zone in Ghaziabad (432), Greater Noida (417) and

Noida (414) on Thursday.

The levels of PM2.5 — particulate matter so small that they can enter the lungs and even the bloodstream — shot up to 245 micrograms per cubic metre, six times the safe limit of 0-60, by 8 pm. The last time such levels were reported was on November 16.

At a meeting of the task force, VK Soni, a senior scientist at the India Meteorological Department (IMD), said the region is likely to witness slow wind speed in the next five days.

He asked officials to intensify enforcement activities in hot spots and industrial areas and recommended people to minimise the use of private vehicles.

The wind direction is expected to shift from North to North-East Friday onwards which may increase pollution further, he said.



The AQI is likely drop to the lower end of severe category by Friday. Rain and thunderstorm on December 11 may bring some relief, Soni said.

During a review meeting with the implementing agencies on Tuesday, the CPCB said December and January have seen a number of days in the "very severe" category in the last three years.

"Similar situation may emerge this year as well, unless timely and adequate field-level preventive action is taken by implementing agencies," it said.

NK Gupta, Additional Director, CPCB, pointed out that a large number of incidents of construction and demolition activities and open dumping of garbage were being reported from some parts of Delhi and neighbouring towns such as Ghaziabad and Faridabad. "Therefore, municipal cor-

porations in these areas are required to pay greater attention to such polluting activities and take all necessary measures to check air pollution on account of such activities," he said.

It was also pointed out that for want of timely reporting by implementing agencies, it has not been possible to make correct assessment of their performance.

According to a private weather forecasting agency Skymet, PM 2.5 levels are in poor category, while PM 10 still is in moderate category in some parts. Noida on the other hand is seeing PM 10 in the severe category.

It said no relief in terms of pollution is expected in the coming days as light winds will continue to blow over the region with temperatures being on the lower side.

CAPSULE

SC: 2018 SABARIMALA VERDICT NOT 'FINAL'

New Delhi: The Supreme Court said its 2018 verdict allowing entry of girls and women of all ages into the Ayyappa temple at Kerala's Sabarimala was not the "final word" as the matter was referred to a larger Bench.

I APOLOGIZE A HUNDRED TIMES: JUSTICE MISHRA

New Delhi: Supreme Court judge Justice Arun Mishra Thursday said he would "apologise a hundred times" with "folded hands" if anybody is hurt by his words, two days after he had warned a senior lawyer of contempt action.

LEADERS DOWNPLAY BABRI DEMOLITION ANNIV

Ayodhya: Both Muslim and Hindu religious leaders are talking about downplaying the anniversary of the demolition of the Babri mosque.

Molesters beat up girl, hang her to death

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

Even as the torching of a rape survivor in Unnao in the early hours of Thursday shocked the nation, two more sensational cases of attack on members of fairer sex were reported. In one incident, a class IX girl student was molested and later hanged to death in Mainpuri while in the other, a minor girl was gang-raped in Sitapur.

In Mainpuri, a girl from Ghirora area had gone to school to attend her classes on Wednesday morning where she was sexually assaulted by some students.

On returning from school, the girl informed her parents about the incident. When her brother learnt of this, he went out and beat up one of the accused. However, the villagers intervened to resolve the issue.

According to victim's father, the matter took an ugly turn when four accused reached his house on a car and barged in early Thursday morning. They assaulted his

daughter and later hanged her from the ceiling and escaped. By the time the girl could be rescued, she had died.

Later, the villagers staged a massive demonstration, demanding immediate arrest of the accused.

The police later arrested two named accused and assured the agitators of early arrest of the rest of the accused.

In Sitapur, a 15-year-old girl was gang-raped by two men on the night of December 3. The miscreants took the victim to a sugarcane field, raped her and later abandoned her after gagging her and tying her hands and legs.

The girl was found on Wednesday after her family members along with villagers started a search.

Superintendent of Police LR Kumar said that an FIR was registered and the girl was being treated in a local hospital.

The accused, identified as Rupesh and Yogendra, were arrested and investigations are underway.

AISPLB annual general meeting on December 8

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

The All India Shia Personal Law Board (AISPLB) has decided to hold its annual general meeting on December 8 to discuss issues like mob lynching and National Register of Citizens (NRC) threadbare.

AISPLB president Maulana Syed Saim Mehndi said the December 8 meeting was expected to be path breaking as many national issues would be discussed in it. "There are many important issues that are staring our country. They include NRC. We will decide what stand the AISPLB should take on these contentious issues. Similarly, killing people in the name of religion needs to be looked into through the prism of justice and Indian Constitution," Maulana Mehndi said.

The Shia cleric said that there were several other issues which needed to be discussed like reservations for Shia Muslims in the name of economic backwardness and why representation of Shias was on the decline in Parliament and state assemblies. "On social issues, we will discuss ways and means to reduce expenditure on marriages and deaths. Improvement in education will also be discussed. Top intellectuals from Shia community are expected to take part in the meeting," he said.

Two BSP leaders join BJP



BJP state chief Swatantra Dev Singh welcoming Vinod Singh and T Ram, in the party. Also seen in the picture in state minister Brajesh Pathak (left)

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

The Bharatiya Janata Party received a shot in the arm when two senior leaders of the Bahujan Samaj Party joined the ruling party in the presence of its state unit chief Swatantra Dev Singh and minister Brajesh Pathak in Lucknow on Thursday.

The two BSP leaders, who switched sides are former UP minister Vinod Singh and ex-MLA, T Ram.

BJP state chief said they would strengthen the party in the state as both were grassroots leaders and enjoyed mass support. The party hoppers were earlier sacked by the BSP this year.

Vinod Singh, who was elected from Lambhua Assembly constituency in Sultanpur district in 2007 Assembly polls, was tourism minister in the Mayawati government.

In 2017, he had contested the polls on BSP ticket but had lost. In the 2019 Lok Sabha

polls, Singh had supported BJP candidate Maneka Gandhi from Sultanpur and opposed the joint Samajwadi Party-Bahujan Samaj Party candidate.

Similarly, a former chief engineer of PWD during BSP regime and a Dalit leader, T Ram was elected from to Assembly from Ajaraga constituency in Varanasi in 2012 elections but lost in the 2017 polls as a BSP candidate.

Both the leaders said that they would serve the BJP with full dedication.

RLD: Yogi govt has no moral right to remain in office

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

Reacting to the Unnao incident in which a rape survivor was torched on Thursday morning, Rashtriya Lok Dal

UNNAO INCIDENT

spokesman Anil Dubey said the gory crime showed that the Bharatiya Janata Party government was not serious on the safety of women in Uttar Pradesh.

Dubey said the Yogi Adityanath government had no moral right to remain in office after the spurt in crime against women.

"It is a heart-rending incident and has brought to the fore the brazenness of the miscreants. The spurt in crime against women in UP has only exposed the hollowness of government's 'Beti Padhao Beti Bachao' campaign," he said.

The RLD spokesman said that the government should give Rs 1 crore as compensation to the family of the victim and ensure speedy trial of the accused.

Dubey said the Unnao district administration and police denied him permission to meet the victim's family at Shyama Prasad Mukherjee Hospital in Lucknow where the victim was brought for treatment.

Aam Aadmi Party state chief Sabahjeet Singh demanded the resignation of Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath while reacting to the Unnao incident.

"There is a jungle raj in UP and even the Supreme Court

has pulled up the state government for the poor law and order and the spurt in crime. The government has completely failed to maintain law and order and check crimes and has failed to provide safety to women," he said.

Communist Party of India (Marxist-Leninist) state secretary Arun Kumar said that the Unnao incident had shaken people to the core.

"The goons are ruling the roost in UP these days and the government is sitting relaxed while the people are bearing the brunt of the prevailing jungle raj. In all incidents reported in the past in Unnao and Sambhal, the accused tried to kill the rape survivors to destroy evidence," he said.

Communist Party of India state secretary Dr Girish said the Yogi Adityanath government should take moral responsibility of the Unnao incident. He said the CPI would intensify agitation if the government did not do justice to the victim.

"The government has failed on all fronts and also to curb crime. We have asked our partymen to bring these issues in public domain and expose the failures of the BJP government," he said.

UPCC chief appoints dist coordinators for Delhi rally

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

With Congress national general secretary Priyanka Gandhi Vadra all set to camp in the state capital for two days from Friday to review preparations for making party's Bharat Bachao Rally in New Delhi on December 14 a big success, UPCC president Ajay Kumar Lallu on Thursday appointed coordinators in all districts to ensure maximum participation of people.

Sources said that besides interacting with the new UPCC office-bearers, chiefs of all frontal organisations and heads of party cells and their members, Priyanka would also try to quell the growing resentment within the party, especially over sidelining of the leaders above 60 years of age or expulsion of 10 veteran leaders.

Priyanka was reportedly shocked to learn that in the meetings called by Lallu to make the Delhi rally a success, almost 80 per cent of the invitees did not turn up and those who came to the meetings raised their voice over "unpopular decisions" taken by her and Lallu.

The 10 veterans expelled from the party have termed the action against them as "unconstitutional".

Meanwhile, Lallu held a press conference on Thursday morning to reveal the pre-



UPCC chief Ajay Kumar Lallu showing posters prepared for the Congress Bharat Bachao Rally rally in Delhi

paredness for the Delhi rally. "Lakhs of party workers from Uttar Pradesh will reach the Ramliha ground in New Delhi on December 14 to take part in the Bharat Bachao Rally, called to protest the murder of democracy, curb on freedom of expression, economic loot and corruption in the Bharatiya Janata Party government," Lallu told reporters on Thursday.

"For making the Delhi rally a success, party national secretaries, office-bearers and senior leaders are continuously touring districts," he said. The UP Congress president

said that crime against women in the state was rising alarmingly and the state had set a record in cases of rape, murder, loot, kidnapping and cyber crime.

Lallu also attacked the Union government for the bad shape of the economy due to wrong policies.

Sources said that Lallu also appointed coordinators for each district to make the Delhi rally a big success. Vinod Mishra, Maroof Khan, Dilpreet Singh have been made coordinators of Lucknow, Pramad Tewari of Pratapgarh, Shri Prakash Jaiswal of Kanpur, and Akhilesh Pratap Singh of Shahjahanpur.

CLASSIFIEDS

NOTICE

I, Syed Mohammad Saad, R/o 133/A Nagram House, Nazirabad, Lucknow-18 have changed the name of my son from 'Ali Mujtaba Syed' to 'Syed Ali Mujtaba' for all future purposes.

NOTICE

I, No. 9425332W, L/NK, Sachin Subba of 11 GRRC hereby declare that in Service records my wife's name mistakenly mentioned as MAHIMA SUBBA, while her correct name as MAHIMA KARTHAK SUBBA and correct Date of Birth is 30.06.1987.

OBITUARY

OBITUARY



SUBEDAR P SENTHIL KUMAR
12 JUN 1975 - 12 OCT 2019

ALL RANKS OF ARMY MEDICAL CORPS SOLEMNLY PRAY TO THE ALMIGHTY TO BESTOW PEACE TO THE DEPARTED SOUL AND GRANT STRENGTH TO THE BEREAVED FAMILY TO BEAR THE GREAT LOSS OF SUBEDAR P SENTHIL KUMAR WHO DIED WHILE SERVING WITH ARMY HOSPITAL (R&R).

FROM: LT GEN NAVDEEP SINGH LAMBA AND ALL RANKS OF ARMY MEDICAL CORPS

OBITUARY

OBITUARY



HAV SURENDER KUMAR
15 MAR 1987 - 07 OCT 2019

ALL RANKS OF ARMY MEDICAL CORPS SOLEMNLY PRAY TO THE ALMIGHTY TO BESTOW PEACE TO THE DEPARTED SOUL AND GRANT STRENGTH TO THE BEREAVED FAMILY TO BEAR THE GREAT LOSS OF HAV SURENDER KUMAR WHO DIED WHILE SERVING WITH ARMY HOSPITAL (R&R).

FROM: LT GEN NAVDEEP SINGH LAMBA AND ALL RANKS OF ARMY MEDICAL CORPS

QUICK TAKES

MUZAFFARNAGAR RIOTS: FATHER OF YOUTH KILLED IN KAWAL GOES MISSING

Muzaffarnagar: The father of one of the youths, whose killing at Kawal village in 2013 led to riots in Muzaffarnagar district, is missing for the last 10 days, police said. Bishan Singh, who is an accused in the 2013 Shahnawaz murder case, is missing and a complaint has been filed on Wednesday, according to a senior police official. According to the complaint, on November 24, Singh left his house in Malakpura village, under Jansath police station limits, on a motorcycle but did not return. Singh's son Sachin and another person Gaurav were beaten to death in Kawal village following which riots broke out in Muzaffarnagar and adjoining areas, claiming 60 lives and displacing over 40,000 people.

KIN OF RSS OFFICE-BEARER SHOT AT IN ETAH

Etah: A relative of an RSS office-bearer was shot at by unidentified persons in Etah district, police said on Thursday. Sachin Solanki (40), relative of RSS office-bearer Rajpal Singh, was shot at on the Etah-Marhara road in the afternoon and

was rushed to a hospital, they said. He was later referred to Agra for treatment as his condition was stated to be serious. Police are probing the matter. No arrests have been made so far in this connection.

COP MARRIES SECOND TIME, BOOKED FOR CHEATING

Agra: A woman has filed a complaint against a sub-inspector in Agra district for allegedly marrying her despite having a wife and two children, an official said on Thursday. The 35-year-old woman filed the complaint at Sikandra police station. She also alleged that the policeman had put pressure on her to go for an abortion, the official said. The matter is under investigation and departmental action will be taken against the accused if the complaint is found to be true, Station House officer (SHO), Sikandra, Arvind Kumar told PTI. The sub-inspector was posted at Bindu Katra outpost when he married the complainant last year. She later found that he was already married and had two children, the police said. The woman alleged that the accused never took her home or helped her financially, PTI

CAB unconstitutional and divisive: Mayawati

Lucknow (PNS): Describing the Citizenship (Amendment) Bill as unconstitutional, Bahujan Samaj Party chief Mayawati said the bill, brought hurriedly by the Centre, was completely divisive and should be sent to a parliamentary committee for review. She said that to grant citizenship on the basis of religion and to discriminate on the basis of religion was completely against the basic structure of Dr Bhimrao Ambedkar's humanitarian and secular Constitution.

Mayawati said that rather than forcing the Bill, brought in a very unconstitutional and immature manner, much like demonetisation and Goods and Services Tax, the Centre should do a rethink on the matter. "It should be sent to a parliamentary committee for better discussions and deliberations so that the Bill can be presented before the people of the country in a constitutional manner," Mayawati opined. She added that if the Union government took the right and suitable decisions as per the Indian Constitution and in public interest, the BSP would ignore politics and support it. "The present Citizenship (Amendment) Bill has many flaws and for removing them, the Centre should deliberate and discuss the matter with all parties before bringing it in Parliament so that apprehensions over it could be resolved," she said. Mayawati welcomed the extension of reservation for SC/STs for 10 years in legislature, and asked the government to fill up the backlog of posts reserved for these sections in Central and state governments by launching recruitment drive.

NOTICE

The original sale-deed, in respect of Plot part of No. 419, area measuring 118.59sq.mt. situated at Village & Ward-Ibrahimpur, Tehsil-Sarjni Nagar, District-Lucknow, which was executed, Vide Book No.1, Zild No.7961, on pages-283 to 310 at Sr. No. 10316 on dated 05/12/2006, registered in the office of Sub-Registrar-1, Lucknow, which has been lost somewhere. If the original sale-deed is mortgaged with any Person(s), Financial Institution(s), Bank(s) or any other one, may inform immediately to Area Office-IV, L.C. HOUSEING FINANCE LTD.-B/148, 1st Floor Sector-F, Aliganj, Lucknow or Mr. Anoop Kr. Singh, Advocate, Mobile No.9455032991, 9554472272 otherwise the above noted proposal shall be finalized immediately after the expiry of 15 days of this publication.

Three criminals arrested

Allahabad (PNS): Three criminals were arrested near the Kanchanpur turn in the trans-Ganga area on Wednesday. Police said that one of them was wanted in a case of attempt to murder. The arrested culprits were later identified as Yashwant alias Babloo Pasi, Balwant alias Nankoo Pasi and Mohammed Akhtar, all residents of Lalgaolganj.

Notice inviting e-tender
No. RMSA/CW/Furniture/1141/2019/21 Dated 05-12-2019
Rashtriya Madhyamik Shiksha Abhiyan, Assam invites e-tender through e-procurement system under two bid system for supply & installation of school furniture at respective school locations in the state of Assam from reputed and registered manufacturer of furniture. The detail bid document along with terms & condition and timeline can be read/downloaded from the portal <http://assamtenders.gov.in>. The last date of submission of bid is 1400 hours on 06-01-2020.
Sd/- Mission Director
Rashtriya Madhyamik Shiksha Abhiyan, Assam
Kahilpara, Guwahati-19

Notice Inviting e-Tender
No. RMSA/Gunotsav/1002/2018/55 Date : 05.12.2019
Mission Director, Rashtriya Madhyamik Shiksha Abhiyan, Kahilpara, Guwahati-19, Assam invites tender through e-Tendering process from reputed offset printing presses having Web/Sheet Offset Machine for printing and supply of Activity Book (Remedial Teaching).
To participate in the tender process through e-procurement document, bidder should have valid Digital Signature Certificate (DSC) of class-II (minimum) and have to register in the portal <https://assamtenders.gov.in> by themselves.
The Bidder who have downloaded the tender schedules containing the tender details, terms and conditions, from the website shall submit their tender on-line on the website <https://assamtenders.gov.in>, with proof of payment of non refundable tender processing fee of Rs. 5000/- (Rupees five thousand) only in the form of demand draft/Bankers Cheque drawn in favour of Mission Director, Axom Sarba Siksha Abhiyan Mission, Kahilpara, Guwahati-19, Assam, from any nationalized Bank and payable at Guwahati. The tender should be submitted on-line as per date and time of submission as per prescribed schedule.
Sd/- Mission Director,
RMSA, Assam
Kahilpara, Guwahati-19

Notice Inviting e-Tender
No. SSA/MDM/Register-MDMS/49/2019/10529 Date : 04.12.2019
Mission Director, Axom Sarba Siksha Abhiyan Mission (Samagra Shiksha, Assam) and State Nodal Officer- MDM, Kahilpara, Guwahati-19, Assam invites tender through e-Tendering process from reputed offset printing presses for printing and supply of Food grain Register, Attendance Register, Accounts Maintenance Register and Food Testing Register.
To participate in the tender process through e-procurement document, bidder should have valid Digital Signature Certificate (DSC) of class-II (minimum) and have to register in the portal <https://assamtenders.gov.in> by themselves.
The Bidder who have downloaded the tender schedules containing the tender details, terms and conditions, from the website shall submit their tender on-line on the website <https://assamtenders.gov.in>, with proof of payment of non refundable tender fee of Rs. 1000/- (Rupees one thousand) only in the form of demand draft/Bankers Cheque drawn in favour of Mission Director, Axom Sarba Siksha Abhiyan Mission, Kahilpara, Guwahati-19, Assam, from any nationalized Bank and payable at Guwahati. The tender should be submitted on-line as per date and time of submission as per prescribed schedule.
Sd/- Mission Director SSA, Assam
cum State Nodal Officer- MDM
Kahilpara, Guwahati-19

PSPCL Punjab State Power Corporation Limited
(Regd. Office: PSEB Head Office, The Mall Patiala)
O/o CE/MM, Room No. 215, 2nd Floor, Multi Story Building, PSPCL Head Office, The Mall, Patiala, Phone No. 0175-2213047, Mob: 96461-22954, 96461-11034, E-mail: potransformer@gmail.com, Corporate Identification Number (CIN): U40109PB2010SGC033913, Registration Number: 33813, Website: www.pspcl.in, e-tendering portal: <https://pspcpl.abcpocure.com>.

Notice Inviting Tender	
Tender Enquiry No.	Q-3987719-20PO-TACE-MM
Scope / Short Description	Procurement of 90 Nos. EEL -3/Star-2(New), ISI Marked, 110/433 KV, 315 KVA, Three Phase, 50 cycles, outdoor type, oil immersed, naturally cooled, core or Shell type, Stack/wound core type construction aluminum wound, CRGO/Amorphous core distribution transformers complete with fittings as per PSPCL specification & conforming to IS 1180 Part-I (2014) & 2026 (with latest amendments).
Start date for down loading of specification / tender documents from PSPCL's web site	30-11-2019
Last date for down loading of specification / tender documents from PSPCL's web site	14-01-2020 up to 11:30 AM
Last date of bid submission	15-01-2020 up to 11:00 AM
Bid opening date	15-01-2020 at 11:30 AM

For detailed NIT & tender specification please refer to <https://pspcpl.abcpocure.com>.
Note: It is informed that in case tender process is not completed due to any reason, no conterminum will be published in newspaper. Details regarding conterminum may be seen on official PSPCL website www.pspcl.in
Chief Purchase Officer,
Central Purchase Organization,
PSPCL, Patiala
C-488/19 DPR/04NOV19/ C8058 Dt. 04-12-2019

SHUBHAM HOUSING DEVELOPMENT FINANCE CO. LTD.
Corporate Office : 425, Udyog Vihar Phase IV, Gurgaon-122015 (Haryana)
Ph : 0124- 4212530/31/32, E-Mail: customercare@shubham.co website : www.shubham.co

POSSESSION NOTICE (FOR IMMOVABLE PROPERTY)
Whereas the undersigned being the authorized officer of the Shubham Housing Development Finance Company Limited (hereinafter called Shubham) under the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 and in exercise of powers conferred under Section 13(12) read with rule 3 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002 issued demand notice calling upon borrowers to repay the amount within 60 days from the date of receipt of the said notice.
The borrowers having failed to repay the amount, notice is hereby given to the borrowers and the public in general that the undersigned has taken possession of the property described hereinbelow in exercise of powers conferred on him under Section 13(4) of the said Act read with rule 8 of the Security Interest Enforcement) Rules, 2002.
The borrowers in particular and the public in general is hereby cautioned not to deal with the property and any dealing with the property will be subject to the charge of Shubham Housing Development Finance Company Limited for an amount detailed below and interest thereon.
The borrower's attention is invited to provisions of sub section (8) of section 13 of the Act, in respect of time available, to redeem the secured assets. Details are as below:

S. No.	Loan No./Borrower(s), Co-Borrower	Demand Notice Amount	Date of Demand Notice	Secured Asset	Date of Affixation
1.	LKW. 1411. 029990 Arshad Khan, Samina Siddiqui	Rs. 9,30,889/-	27-11-2018	House At Part of Plot No- 50, At Land Kharsa No-182, Mohalla Moazzam Nagar Ward Garhi Peer Khan Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh-226003	02.12.2019

Place : Gurgaon
Date : 05-12-2019
Authorized Officer,
Shubham Housing Development Finance Company Ltd.

Providential escape for school children

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ LUCKNOW

Children traveling by two different school vans had a providential escape after a speeding truck hit both the vehicles one after another in Jankipuram police station area on Thursday morning.

As per reports, van driver Raj Kumar, a resident of Jankipuram Extension, was going to drop two students to a private school on Thursday when the truck hit the van all of a sudden. After committing the crime when truck driver tried to flee the scene, he hit another school van near Sahara Estate. The other was being driven by Shailendra, who is a resident of Madaion. In both the incidents, Raj Kumar and Shailendra suffered injuries while the children escaped unhurt. Eyewitnesses said the children trapped in the vans were crying for help. "Soon they were taken out of the vans by the commuters passing by. Their parents were also called at the scene and they left for their homes with them," they said. They added that some com-

muters chased the truck driver but he abandoned the truck and fled the scene via the lanes near the crime scene.

Locals criticised police for failing to stop movement of trucks in the morning hours when light vehicles ply on the road. "The rule is that heavy vehicles are not allowed to move on city roads after 7 am. Besides, the heavy vehicles engaged in government or public work are allowed to move at a low speed. The traffic cops deployed at different crossings do not ensure implementation of these rules. Their negligence often causes such mishaps," they pointed out. The police said a case was registered and they were hunting for the errant driver.

Meanwhile, a group of youths attacked a rival with a crude bomb in Madaion on Wednesday night. The critically injured youth, identified as Beeru Singh (23) of Baurumau village in the locality, was admitted to a hospital. Reports said Beeru was at a grocery shop owned by Gauri Shanker on Wednesday night. Around 9

pm, his rivals Ajay Yadav and Jitendra (brother duo) reached the shop. Before Beeru could sense foul play, the accused hurled two bombs at him. "A bomb hit the wall of the shop while the other his leg," the shop owner told the police. He said the incident triggered a stampede-like situation in the area, taking advantage of which the accused fled the scene.

Beeru's brother Dharmendra said Ajay Yadav is much feared in the locality and he was forcing Beeru to drive his tractor. "Beeru works with another person as tractor driver but Ajay was hell bent on employing Beeru. On Wednesday afternoon, Ajay had threatened to kill Beeru and burnt the tractor which he was driving. Later, Beeru was attacked," Dharmendra said.

The police said they were told by some eyewitnesses that Beeru himself lobbed a crude bomb while another in his pocket exploded after the first. "We were also told that Beeru did that to frame his rivals in a fake case," the police claimed, adding further investigations

Labourer suffers electric shock, succumbs

Lucknow (PNS): A labourer was electrocuted to death while two of his fellows injured while working at an under-construction building of Medical Health and Family Welfare department in Sarojini Nagar on Thursday morning. The injured were admitted to Lokbandhu Hospital.

As per reports, a contractor, identified as Vinay Singh of Sarojini Nagar, is getting a godown constructed in Nadarganj locality of the area. Three labourers hired by him were carrying a metal-frame tripod for the construction work. When they were lifting it up, it came in contact with an overhead wire and the trio suffered electric shock. "The victims were rushed to the Lokbandhu Hospital where one of them, identified as Karan Yadav (27) of Etawah, was declared brought dead," a police spokesman said. Those injured were identified as Mokhtar Ali and Salahuddin, both of Lakhimpur Kheri. People created a ruckus demanding action against the contractor. Highlighting safety issue, they demanded compensation for the kin of the deceased and those injured. The protesters dispersed after the police assured them action against the contractor.

Meanwhile, a 50-year-old man, identified as Ram Singh of Sitapur, was killed in a road mishap in Bakshi-Ka-Talab police station area on Thursday morning. Reports said Ram Singh was coming to Lucknow on a bike for some work. On the highway near Tikari village in the area, some speeding vehicle knocked the bike from behind around 11.30 am. He was taken to a government hospital where he was declared brought dead.

Commissioner reviews preps for National Youth Festival

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ LUCKNOW

Divisional Commissioner Mukesh Meshram held a meeting regarding the 23rd National Youth Festival to be held in Lucknow from January 12-16. The programme will be inaugurated at the Bharat Ratna Atal Bihari Vajpayee International (Ekana) Stadium and the rest of the events will be held at Indira Gandhi Pratishthan.

Meshram said the fest will witness the participation of people from all across the country and hence it is important that there should be officials present at the airport and railway stations to receive them. He said youths will be accommodated in Goyal Institute, Ram Swaroop Memorial Institute and BBD. He directed the officials to carry out inspection of the institutes and ensure proper arrangements.

The Divisional Commissioner said that since the programme will witness the participation of students from eastern and the southern parts of the country, there should be



Divisional Commissioner Mukesh Meshram presiding over a meeting on Thursday

translators of various languages present at the venue. He said arrangements should also be made to see that there is a public address system and control room set up at Indira Gandhi Pratishthan. Meshram said there will be volunteers present on

the occasion to help in parking of vehicles. He said WhatsApp groups should be created by the officials to coordinate in terms of arrangements. Also present at the meeting was District Magistrate Abhishek Prakash.



(Above) Women workers of Congress and (right) SP leader Ahmad Hasan at Lucknow's Civil Hospital where the Unnau rape survivor was admitted before being sent to Safdarjung Hospital in Delhi on Thursday



A handshake etched in the memory of this LU alumnus

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ LUCKNOW

Jayanti Prasad, a 1986 batch IAS officer who is the Custodian, Special Court, Government of India, recalled the high point in his academic life when he received the gold medal from then Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi at the Indian Science Congress held in Lucknow University in 1984.

Prasad said he was the university topper both in BSc and MSc (Physics) and was awarded the medal on the special occasion. "I still remember there were several restrictions regarding security owing to the terror scenario prevailing at that time and former PM Rajiv Gandhi was sitting on the dais even as the Vice-Chancellor handed over medals so that nobody stepped close to Gandhi. We were instructed not to go close to the former Prime Minister but when I went to receive the medal, I put out my hand for a handshake and he kindly responded. The moment was captured through the lens by mediapersons," he recalled. He admitted that two words had prompted him for a handshake — 'dekha jayega'.

He said the other high point of Lucknow University was the friendships which he made in those days. "Those friendships still exist. There was a different flavour to the friendship because we were all equally poor and did a lot of masti,

CENTENARY YEAR CELEBRATIONS



and there was no vested interest," he said. Prasad, whose father worked in the State Secretariat, said his elder brother also studied in Lucknow University and was also a topper of Physics department and now serving as a special secretary in Steel Ministry. He said he was very much interested in music and they had also formed a group called 'Jham'. "We would not only play at the university but also at other places. We also performed at Doordarshan. Most of the group members now hold prestigious posts," he added.

Asked as to what Lucknow University gave to him which

he carried forward to bureaucracy, he said: "Values."

"The teachers were very good and more like a family. I am still in touch with several teachers such as Dr RN Singh of Physics department. Even now, I touch his feet. His father RB Singh was also a great teacher," he added.

He said that they had boisterous discussions at the canteens and his favourite was 'samosa' with 'chutney'. "The discussions were mostly non-academic, mostly about films. There was a canteen at the Science department and another other at the Economics department," he recalled.

LDA seals three establishments for land abuse

Lucknow (PNS): Three business establishments were sealed in Gomti Nagar on Thursday for land abuse and illegal construction. The notices were served on owners last month. The buildings located in Vibhuti Khand, Vishesh Khand and near Patrakarpuram crossing were sealed by the anti-encroachment squad of LDA.

Interestingly, the owners were sure that their premises would not be sealed as they were said to have been in an understanding with some LDA staffers. Eyewitnesses said the owners of a restaurant at Patrakarpuram crossing was surprised to see the anti-encroachment squad at 10 in the morning. There was some commotion but police accompanying the LDA team made sure that there were no major protests. The LDA team entered the kitchen and asked the cooks to leave. They also requested the customers to leave as soon as possible. The restaurant being run in an unauthorised portion of the building was sealed.

Incharge of the squad AK Singh warned the owner to demolish the illegal portion or it will be razed by them. LDA secretary MP Singh said that demolition and sealing of illegal structures would continue.

The squad also sealed a textile showroom in Vibhuti Khand for land abuse. Notices had been served on the owner twice. Initially, the squad members were not allowed to enter the shop. Later, the police intervened and the showroom was sealed. The members also sealed a shop in Vishesh Khand market.

DM concerned over onion price rise

Lucknow (PNS): District Magistrate Abhishek Prakash held a meeting on the skyrocketing prices of onion on Thursday. Expressed concern over the rising prices of onion, the DM directed the officials of various departments to take necessary measures. The DM was informed that there are 11 selling points in the district with the belonging to the Mandi Parishad, 4 of HAFED and 4 of the Karmachari Kalyan Nigam. He was also informed that onions were being sold at reduced cost. He said the number of selling points should be increased.

CSIR-National Botanical Research Institute
Rana Pratap Marg, Lucknow – 226001
www.nbri.res.in, 0522-2297965/967

CHRYSANTHEMUM & COLEUS SHOW

DECEMBER 07 & 08, 2019

Venue: Central Lawn, Botanic Garden, CSIR-NBRI, Lucknow

Timings
December 07, 2019 : 02:00 PM to 6:00 PM
December 08, 2019 : 10:00 AM to 6:00 PM

Main Attraction: Display of Germplasm Collection of Chrysanthemum & Coleus, Sale of Plants and Flowers

The persons/organizations or their representatives, who sponsored the shields/trophies of the show are requested to join the prize distribution ceremony on December 08, 2019 at 04.00 PM.

SBI STATE BANK OF INDIA
1st Floor, Local Head office, RACPC, Moti Mahal Marg, Lucknow-226 001

POSSESSION NOTICE (for Movable property under Rule 6 (1))

Whereas, the undersigned being the Authorized officer of the State Bank of India, RACPC, (Kapoorthala Bagh), Lucknow Branch (8067) under the Securitization and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 (Act No. 54 of 2002) and in exercise of powers conferred under section 13(12) read with rule 8 and 9 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002 issued a 13(2). The Bank issued demand notice on the date mentioned against account and stated herein after calling upon them to repay the amount, within 60 days from the date of receipt of said notice.

The borrower having failed to repay the amount, notice is hereby given to the borrowers/Guarantor and the public in general that the undersigned has taken possession of the Property described herein below in exercise of powers conferred on him/her under section 13(4) of the said Act read with Rule 9 of the said Rule on the date mentioned against the account.

The borrower in particular and the public in general is hereby cautioned not to deal with the property and any dealings with the property will be subject to the charge of State Bank of India, RACPC, (Kapoorthala Bagh), Lucknow Branch (8067) for the amount and interest thereon. Details of properties where possession had been taken is as follows:

S. No.	Name & Address of the Borrower/Branch/ A/C No.	Description of The Movable Property mortgaged	Amount O/s (as per u/s 13(2))	Date of Demand Notice / Possession
1	Borrower: Sh. Arun Kumar Dass Shubhani Khera, Near Santoshi Maa Mandir Talibagh, Lucknow A/C No.: 36169311973 (Car Loan)	UP 32 HJ 5533 HYUNDAI CRETA Chasis No. MALC381ULGM123269 Engine No. D4FBGM122476	₹ 10,01,137/- + interest+ other expenses	08.08.2019 30.11.2019

Date : 06.12.2019, Place: Lucknow
Authorised Officer, State Bank of India

Narendra Modi
Prime Minister

"India is moving from women development to women-led development."

Government of India

National Award in recognition of exceptional work for Women Empowerment

Inviting Nominations for 2019

narishaktipuraskar

Compassion Ability Courage

Eligibility Criteria

- ☑ Open to individuals, groups and institutions for outstanding work towards empowerment of women
- ☑ Individual applicant must be at least 25 years of age
- ☑ Institutions must have at least 5 years of relevant experience

For detailed information and online application, visit: www.narishaktipuraskar.wcd.gov.in

Last date for submission : 7th January, 2020

Only Online Applications shall be considered

Foggy weather: NR to effect changes in train movement

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ LUCKNOW

In view of fog, which has enveloped several parts of Uttar Pradesh, the Northern Railway has decided to temporarily cancel, partially cancel, divert and reduce frequency of some of the trains from December 16 to 31. According to an official spokesman, around two dozen pairs of trains under Northern Railway will remain affected due to the foggy weather conditions.

In Lucknow division, Amritsar-Gorakhpur Jansadharan Express, Varanasi-Gonda Intercity Express,

Ambala-Barauini-Hariharnath Express, Chandigarh-Prayag Express, Bareilly-Prayag Passenger, Jammu Tawi-Haridwar Express, Faizabad-Kanpur-Anwarganj Express, Dehradun-Varanasi Express and some other trains passing through Lucknow will remain affected. Passengers will be informed about the changes in schedule on their registered mobile numbers.

Meanwhile, senior deputy general manager, NR, Chandrakala Mukherjee held a meeting with the Lucknow division officials on Thursday

and reviewed the work on detecting leakage and loopholes in the system. She asked the officials to take immediate action and ensure transparency in working.

Mukherjee said the department would not tolerate any offence related to corruption. She also asked the senior officials to ensure that employees in direct contact with people or in public dealing to work with honesty. She asked the officials to submit 'action taken reports'. DRM Sanjay Tripathi and other senior officials, including senior DCM Jagtosh Shukla, attended the meeting.

Majaz remembered on death anniversary

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ LUCKNOW

Asrarul Haq Majaz is one of the most important poets of the mid 20th century. Famous as 'Keats of Urdu poetry', his compositions reflect the spirit of Lucknow school of poetry. According to Atif Hanif from AMU Old Boys' Association, Majaz was remembered by people visiting his grave on his death anniversary on Thursday. He is buried at the Nishatganj graveyard in Lucknow. 'Majaz Lakhnawi Road' in front of the graveyard is a small lane dedicated to him.

Ahmad Irfan presented a short narration on Majaz's poetry, Salim Kidwai from AMU spoke about his life and Anwar Habeeb Alvi presented his ghazal. Ahtesham Khan from American Institute of Languages, along with Zack Grand from USA, were present on the occasion. Hanif said that the family of Majaz is from Hazrat Usman Harooni, a great sufi and Persian poet.

"Born in Rudauli, which is famous for sufism, his father



Floral tributes paid to Majaz's grave in Nishatganj graveyard on his death anniversary on Thursday

Pioneer

Sirajul Haq was from a zamindar background. His sister Hamida Salim has documented that he was admitted to Maqdoomia School in Rudauli, which was the best English medium school of the town. Majaz passed High School from

Aminabad Inter College in Lucknow and Intermediate from St John's College in Agra. His personality groomed at Aligarh Muslim University where he completed BA in 1935. A shorter version of his composition 'Nazar-e Aligarh'

was declared 'AMU tarana' during a function at VM Hall in 1951," Hanif recalled. Majaz's sister Safia was married to poet Jaanisar Akhtar, the father of poet-lyricist Javed Akhtar.

"The family of Javed Akhtar is from Khairabad and

has been keeping the tradition of poetry alive for five generations. Majaz was one of the pioneer poets of Taraqqi Pasand Tehreek (Progressive Writers Movement). Majaz was a regular visitor to Coffee House in Hazratganj," Hanif said.

New show to give insights into various aspects of Ambedkar

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ LUCKNOW

The show 'Ek Mahanayak- Dr BR Ambedkar' will give an insight into the other aspects of the 'Father of the Constitution of India', said historian and researcher on Dr Ambedkar, Prof Hari Narke from Savitri Bai Phule University (Pune) while addressing mediapersons on



Thursday. The press conference was organised by a television channel for promotion of the show.

Dr Hari Narke said it is a biopic on the life of Ambedkar and it is an inspirational story of Dr Ambedkar, his journey from the tender age of five to becoming the prime architect of the Indian Constitution.

Dr Hari said that he has been associated with the Maharashtra government and edited 22 volumes of Ambedkar's speeches. "This is the first time that a show has been made on the great man and we have given a view of Dr Ambedkar who had many aspects to him. In one of his speeches as an MLA, he had said that the progress of the country could be measured in terms of the progress made by women. Years later, the same was stated by world organisations," he pointed out.

Asked whether the show was a fiction or based on facts, he said the main parts of Ambedkar's life were present-

ed factually but the conversations he had with his family were fictionalised to an extent. "Today, everyone is talking about the Constitution and we have had a movie titled 'Article 15'. Nobody could have thought of making a film with this title earlier," he added.

The show will see Prasad Jawade essay the lead character of Dr Ambedkar while Aayudh Bhanushali as young Ambedkar, together with Jaggu Niwange playing Ambedkar's father, Neha Joshi mother, Saud Mansuri elder brother, Athar Khan younger brother, and Tulsia & Vanshika Yadav sisters.

"I feel extremely humbled and honored to have been given the opportunity to play the role of such an extraordinary leader. The moment I was approached for the role, I instantly said yes. Very rarely does one come across the role of a lifetime. Portraying an eminent personality like Dr Ambedkar is both challenging and exciting at the same time. There is a lot to learn from the character. Being a medium to present his valuable ideologies to the audience through my acting is an opportunity of a lifetime," Jawade said.

On his visit to Lucknow, Prasad said: "The city never fails to fascinate me. Each time I visit Lucknow, I find it more beautiful. There is a sort of tranquillity which the city offers because of its religious and historical significance speaking volumes of its golden past".

CITY BRIEFS

CLEANLINESS DRIVE

NCC UP Directorate is conducting a major cleanliness drive in form of 'Swachhata Pakhwada' from December 1 to 15. The aim is to create awareness among people. The core activities associated with Swachhata Pakhwada are awareness campaigns, 'shramdan' and a 'plogging' session. Plogging is recreational activity which combines fun with environmental awareness. A pan-UP plogging activity by NCC cadets will be conducted on December 7 in all 75 districts of UP.

HYACINTH MENACE

Director of National Botanical Research Institute (NBRI) SK Barik said on Thursday that the perpetual problem of water hyacinth in the Gomti river can be solved by harvesting the plants and then extracting a growth hormone which lies in their roots which can be used for increasing the productivity of other agricultural plants. He pointed out that it can also be used for the purpose of preparing vermicompost, which is an effective biofertiliser. Barik said water hyacinth is a menace because their growth reduces the dissolved oxygen level to a great extent which can impact the aquatic life. He pointed out that though the

plant was an invasive species, it is useful because its roots containing a powerful hormone.

CARBO-XXXIV INAUGURATED

The inaugural of the International Carbohydrate Conference (CARBO-XXXIV) on emerging frontiers in Carbohydrate Chemistry and Glycobiology, organised by the department of Chemistry to commemorate the centenary year of Lucknow University was held on Thursday. The programme was presided over by Vice-Chancellor SK Shukla while RR Schmidt from Konstanz University (Germany) was the chief guest. Naveen Khare, organising secretary of the conference and president of ACCTI, welcomed the guests and highlighted the importance of carbohydrates in daily life. The Vice-Chancellor released the souvenir of the conference. Retired teachers of the department of Chemistry were honoured on the occasion. The first session had one plenary lecture and three invited lectures while the second had one plenary lecture, three invited lectures and one oral presentation. There was first part of poster presentations in which 57 posters were presented. Three awards were given away by ACCTI in the open-

ing ceremony of the conference. The conference is being attended by renowned international and national carbohydrate chemists. Organising secretary Naveen Khare from the Chemistry department of Lucknow University said that Carbohydrate Conference (CARBO) is one of the most important events organised annually under the auspices of ACCTI. "The conference will bring together established and emerging researchers, scientists, technologists and industrialists to serve as a forum for deliberation and discussions on the progress in all major areas of carbohydrates," he said.

MUSIC COMPETITION

Bank of Baroda is organising an inter-zonal music competition under its 'Anubhuti' programme on Friday and Saturday. It will be inaugurated by general manager of Bank of Baroda (Lucknow Zone) Ramjass Yadav. Teams from 18 zones of the bank as well as from head office will participate in this competition. There will be four categories such as solo singing, duet singing, dancing and playing musical instruments. Bank of Baroda organises various sports and cultural events every year under 'Anubhuti' programme.

SCHOOLSCAN



CONFLUENCE-2019

The second day of International Festival of World Unity and World Peace, 'Confluence-2019', organised by City Montessori school, Indira Nagar campus, witnessed an overflow of multisided talents of the students of Nepal, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, Uganda and various states of India. While a dramatisation (Opera House) attracted the attention of viewers, the contestants presented a variety of items in Rhythmic Taal (choreography). Competitions like Waram So (experimental science demon-

stration), Brain-a-Thon (quiz) and Confluence (team event) also brought to the fore the talents of students. Fifteen teams displayed their acting talents in this contest on various topics. The participants were clear in disseminating the message that each child is unique, different and full of beautiful thoughts and ideas and if they are given wings of freedom, only the sky is limit for them. In choreography competition, teams of Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, Nepal, Uganda and various states of India participated with vigour and enthusiasm.

कार्यालय अधीक्षण अभियन्ता
विद्युत प्रेषण मण्डल उद्योग पावर
द्वारसमीयान कारपोरेशन लिमिटेड
डीएलएलडब्ल्यू, मिर्जापुर, वाराणसी -
221004 Email:seetcar@upptcl.org बुद्धि
पत्र विद्युत प्रेषण मंडल वाराणसी के पत्र
संख्या-987/विद्युतमंडल(लो)/इं० निविदा
दिनांक 29.11.2019 के द्वारा प्रकाशित इ०
निविदा संख्या 125/2019-2020/
विद्युतमंडल/वाराणसी को अल्पकालिक इ०
निविदा 125/2019-2020/विद्युतमंडल/
वाराणसी पदा जाये तथा जिसके खोलने की
पूर्व निर्धारित तिथि 28.12.2019 को संशोधित
कर दिनांक 18.12.2019 को निर्धारित की जाती
है। अन्य नियम व शर्तें यथावत रहेंगी। अधीक्षण
अभियन्ता विद्युत प्रेषण मंडल-वाराणसी पत्रांक
1010 दिनांक 5.12.19 राष्ट्रहित में बिजली
बचाये।

वेबसाइट [https://
etender.up.nic.in](https://etender.up.nic.in) पर
अपलोड हेतु लखनऊ
विद्युत सपूर्ति प्रशासन ई-निविदा
निरस्तीकरण सूचना अधोहस्ताक्षरी
द्वारा आमंत्रित ई-निविदा संख्या
50-वि०न०वि०म० (द्वितीय)/
2019-20 के साक्ष्य अपलोड किये
गये निविदा प्रस्ताव निविदा शर्तों के
अनुसार न पाये जाने के कारण
तत्काल प्रभाव से निरस्त की जाती
है। अधीक्षण अभियन्ता, विद्युत
नगरीय वितरण मण्डल (द्वितीय),
लेसा- ट्रा०गो० मध्यांचल विद्युत
वितरण निगम लि० 33/11 कैंची
उपकेन्द्र मंत्री आवास, गोमती नगर
लखनऊ पत्रांक - 1341 दिनांक -
5.12.19 राष्ट्रहित में बिजली
बचाये।

OFFICE OF THE PROJECT MANAGER
(E/M) UNIT AT OLD BUILDING
16TH DIVISION, U.P. JAL NIGAM,
BANDA

Letter No. - 3647/M-13/230
Date: 02.12.2019

SHORT TERM TENDER NOTICE

Tenders are invited by the undersigned on behalf of the Chairman, U.P. Jal Nigam for Supply of U.P. Jal Nigam Approved Make 1000 LPM 55 Mtr. Head Submersible Pump Set at Divisional Store Bhooragarh Distt. Banda for bhaberu urban water supply scheme.

The Sale of Tenders will be available from 05-12-2019 to 15-12-2019 in the Office of the Project Manager, (E/M) Unit, U.P. Jal Nigam, Banda. The cost of tender document is Rs. 1,000.00 + 18% GST.

The tender shall be opened on 16-12-2019 at 15.00 hours at Superintending Engineer 15th Circle U.P. Jal Nigam, Jhansi.

NORTH EASTERN RAILWAY
Open Tender Notice No.
N/539/02/OT/19-20/37

"Open Tenders" through online (E-Tendering) are invited by Divisional Railway Manager (Signal & Telecomm) /Varanasi/North Eastern Railway for and behalf of the President of India for the following works:

SI.No.-1, Tender Notice No. & Description of Work: N/539/02/OT/19-20/37: Name of Work: Provision of CGS at Belthara Road & Azamgarh (AMH-PF-1 & BLTR PF-1 & 2) of BSB Division. Details: Approx. Value: ₹ 1,53,93,762.49, Earnest Money: ₹ 2,27,000/-, Cost of Tender Form: ₹ 5,000/-, Completion Period: 270 Days.Tender Closing Date & Time: 30-12-2019 up to 15:00 Hrs.

(1) Tender online will be submitted up to 15:00 Hrs. on date 30-12-2019.

(2) For full details and submission of bid kindly visit the official website of Indian Railways i.e. www.ireps.gov.in

Divl. Rly. Manager (S&T),
Varanasi

CPRO/Signal-81 Varanasi

About any passenger amenity complaint SMS on Mob. No. 09794845955

Do not travel with inflammable article in train.

मध्यांचल विद्युत वितरण
निगम लिमिटेड ई-निविदा
सूचना अधोहस्ताक्षरी द्वारा
अनुमोदी एवं कार्य में दक्ष ठेकेदारों से
ई-निविदा दो भागों में निम्न विवरण
अनुसार उ०गो० सरकार के पोर्टल
etender.up.nic.in पर आमंत्रित की
जाती है। निविदा सम्बन्धी विवरण
www.mvnl.in पर भी अवलोकित
किया जा सकता है। 1. अति
अल्पकालीन ई-निविदा सं०
27/वि०वि०म०(१०)/2019-20: अधीक्षण
अभियन्ता, विद्युत नगरीय निर्माण
मण्डल-पंचम लेसा, लखनऊ हेतु एक
नया जीवांचल चरित वाहन की आपूर्ति
हेतु। निविदा प्रभ मूल्य 1180.00 एवं
धरौहर घनराशि रु० 3000.00।
ई-निविदा अपलोड करने की अंतिम
तिथि 12.12.2019 समय 14:00 बजे
तक तथा ई-निविदा का प्रथम भाग
खुलने की तिथि 12.12.2019 समय
17:00 बजे। अधीक्षण अभियन्ता, विद्युत
नगरीय निर्माण मण्डल (पंचम) लेसा
भवन, रेजीडेन्सी, लखनऊ पत्रांक 1288
दिनांक 5.12.19 राष्ट्रहित में बिजली
बचाये।

NORTH EASTERN RAILWAY
Dy. CME/Repair for Chief Workshop
Manager, N.E. Railway, Mechanical
Workshop, Gorakhpur - for and on behalf
of President of India invites open tenders
through on line (E-Tendering) for the
following work : S. No. 1. E-Tender
Notice No. & Name of the work : IREPS
Tender No. : 11-MWS-GKP-2019-20-1
"D-Check Schedule Maintenance of 12
Nos. CUMMINS make D.G. Sets for 06
Nos. Power Cars". Estimated Cost (in
Rs.) : 5,69,47,056/-, Earnest Money (in
Rs.) : 4,34,700/- Last date of tender
submission : Upto 11:00 Hrs. Date
06.01.2020. Cost of the Tender forms :
10000/-. Period of Contract : 3 Months,
S. No. 2. E-Tender Notice No. & Name
of the work : IREPS Tender No. : 12-
MWS-GKP-2019-20-1 "D-Check
Schedule Maintenance of 12 Nos.
GREAVES make Engine of D.G. Sets for
06 Nos. Power Cars". Estimated Cost (in
Rs.) : 4,40,700/- Last date of tender
submission : Upto 11:00 Hrs. Date
06.01.2020. Cost of the Tender forms :
10000/-. Period of Contract : 3Months.
The details of above tender are also
available on Indian Railway website
www.ireps.gov.in

Dy. CME/Repair
Mechanical workshop
CPRO/About=157 N.E. Railway, Gorakhpur

About any passenger amenity
complaint SMS on Mob. No. 09794845955

Do Not smoke Bid/Cigarette in train

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

OUT ON BAIL...

Meanwhile, taking serious note of the incident, National Commission for Women (NCW) directed the UP DGP to send his report to the Commission at the earliest. The NCW has also asked the UP Police to send all cases related to rape and other crimes against women where the accused were granted bail in the past three years.

In her letter, NCW chairperson Rekha Sharma said that the Commission was disturbed with the rise in crimes against women in Uttar Pradesh, despite enactment of several laws to safeguard women's rights.

"Considering the gravity of the matter of Unnao case, it is requested to send a detailed action taken report in the matter from the date of filing complaint of rape by the survivor and action taken against erring officials for not providing protection to the victim," she wrote.

Sharma further said that in addition, a detailed report regarding the number of reported heinous crimes against women and bail granted in such cases across the State in the last three years be sent to the Commission at an early date.

RBI CUTS...

"You must cut when the impact would be maximum; the timing is also very important rather than going on mechanically cutting the rates on every occasion," Das said explaining the rationale behind the surprise pause.

Das was quick to add that the MPC continues to be accommodative as long as it is necessary to revive growth, while ensuring that inflation remains within the target. Das said the MPC decided to pause and see the outcomes of the Government steps in the past four-five months, such as

massively slashing corporate tax rates, easing issues faced by the automobile sector, and setting up a last mile fund for real estate sector, and also the impact of the five rate cuts by the Reserve Bank since February.

"We should allow some more time for the combined impact of the measures taken by the Government and the consistent monetary easing by the RBI so far, for their full impact to unfold and play out," Das said.

Given these, the MPC decided that it is better take a temporary pause and wait for better clarity on all these fronts during the February meeting, he added.

On whether hitting the pause button was due to the fears on the Governor missing the fiscal targets, Das said there is no worry on fiscal deficit front. Further action on the rate front will also depend on the Budget.

"I am not saying we are worried about fiscal numbers (being breached), but we'd just like to have greater clarity with regard to the kind and the nature of the counter-cyclical fiscal or any other measures that Government may announce in the Budget. It will give us greater clarity," Das explained.

On the economic front, Das said they have seen some green-shoots emerging but it is too premature and assume how sustainable they are.

In more bad news, the MPC projected a sharp spike in headline inflation numbers to 4.7 to 5.1 per cent for the second half and 4.3-4.8 per cent for the first half of FY21.

"Our calculation is that in the fourth quarter, food inflation is likely to remain very high and any moderation in the coming months depends on several factors," Das said. The RBI expects core

inflation to remain in the current zone -- below 4 per cent but warned that the steep hike in telecom tariffs may have adverse impact on core inflation.

CCTV, PANIC...

"Under this project CCTVs, panic buttons (10 each in every bus) and GPS based Automatic Vehicle Location System will be installed in nearly 5500 DTC and cluster buses in Delhi. If anyone presses the panic button, immediately the control room will be alerted and help will be rendered," said the Kejriwal while announcing about the initiative.

As per the officials, a centralised command room to control and monitor the entire system including panic buttons and CCTV cameras will be set up. "There are two major advantages to this project. First, CCTV cameras and panic buttons will help to prevent security threats and enhance women's safety in buses. Secondly, commuters will get the location and expected time of arrival of the buses on a mobile app powered by GPS based Automatic Vehicle Location System. Earlier it was uncertain and almost difficult for the commuters to know about the schedule of the buses. Now that will be an old experience for the people of Delhi," added Kejriwal.

About 100 buses will be installed with all these facilities by end of December. Further, the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) Government has set up a target to complete the project within next six months, CCTV cameras and panic buttons in 5500 buses and to make the app-based Automatic Vehicle Location System fully functional. The total cost of the project is estimated at Rs 150 crore. "The App is almost completed.

Once the entire system is put in place, information on buses - location, time of arrival and so on, will be displayed on the bus stops across the city," said the CM. Besides, marshals have been deployed in buses for the safety, security to prevent criminal activities such as pick pocket, eve-teasing and molestations inside the bus.

MPs RELINQUISH...

The food items in Parliament canteen menu were subsidised to the extent of 80 per cent of their prices.

The decision was akin to the one taken in 2016 which was, however, not implemented though rates of some foods were increased.

There are currently five canteens in Parliament complex run by the Indian Railway Catering and Tourism Corporation.

The IRCTC will fix the price of each item calibrating it with the steep onion prices and submit the same to the Lok Sabha Secretariat, which will then take a final call on it. The removal of subsidies will result in saving around Rs 17 crore annually, official sources said, adding that many food items will cost almost double than the current prices once the decision comes into effect.

The decision to give up the discount was reached following a meeting the Speaker had with floor leaders of different parties of Business Advisory Committee.

"It was decided in the business advisory committee after Speaker's initiative. MPs are of the view that it is not appropriate," said BJP leader Rajiv Pratap Rudy, who is a member of the Business Advisory Committee.

Out of the total subsidy of Rs 17 crore, Rs 14 crore is at present availed by Parliament staff and others who visit the

premises while Rs 3 crore is by MPs.

The price of meals is likely to at least double -- a plate of biryani which now costs Rs 56 is estimated to be at least Rs 112 after the move.

GOVT MULLISH...

"The Government is wrong. It is wrong because it is clueless," said the Rajya Sabha member who attended the upper house proceedings on Thursday hours after his release on bail.

Chidambaram who has served both as Home and Finance Minister on different occasions in the Manmohan Singh Government, alleged that Modi has been "unusually silent" on the economy.

"He has left it to his Ministers to indulge in bluff and bluster. The net result, as The Economist put it, is that the Government has turned out to be an 'incompetent manager' of the economy," he said.

Taking a swipe at the Government, Chidambaram said it is calling the present slowdown "cyclical"; thank god it has not called it seasonal, he added. "It is 'structural' and the Government has no solutions or reforms that would address the structural problems," he said.

Asserting that the Government "is in denial" over the state of the economy, Chidambaram pointed out that rural consumption is down according to the National Sample Survey Office (NSSO) as are rural wages and producer prices, especially for the farmers.

There is less demand among the people because they have less money and less appetite to consume due to uncertainty and fear, Chidambaram claimed. According to the Congress leader, the previous UPA dispensation lifted 14 crore people out of poverty between

2004-2014, while the NDA had pushed millions of people below the poverty line since 2016.

"The economy can be brought out of the slowdown, but this Government is incapable of doing that. I believe the Congress and some other parties are better equipped to pull the economy out of the slowdown and push economic growth, but we have to wait for better times," the former Finance Minister said.

When asked by reporters in Parliament premises to comment on Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman's comment that her family didn't eat onion much, Chidambaram quipped "Does she eat avocado?" Later he said that his comments on the Finance Minister was not "sarcastic". I was not sarcastic, I was quoting her. They should have planned in advance, what is the point of importing (onion) now, when will they arrive. But if the Finance Minister says I don't eat onions, that shows the mindset of this Government," he said.

"I thought the Finance Minister said in Parliament yesterday that she didn't eat onion and she is not bothered. What does she eat? Avocado? She doesn't eat onions," he said while protesting with party MP colleagues on the onion issue in Parliament complex.

On queries by mediapersons about industrialist Rahul Bajaj's claim that people were scared to criticise the Government, Chidambaram said the businessman is tall enough to make those remarks at a meeting but there is "complete fear everywhere". "Every institution is gripped by fear and the media is no exception... Please shed fear, please speak truth to power," he said.

PRAKASH JAVADEKAR ON PC'S RELEASE — Chidambaram violated bail term on first day

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Hours after Former Finance Minister and senior Congress leader P Chidambaram spoke to media and lashed out at the Government on the handling of economy and J&K, the BJP on Thursday accused him of violating bail conditions by claiming to have a very clear record as a Minister and asserted that the case against him was essentially about corruption he was allegedly involved in as the Finance Minister.



Minister Prakash Javadekar addresses media at Parliament during the ongoing Winter Session in New Delhi on Thursday

Union Minister said all media outlets have been functioning in the Valley. "Kashmir is now on path to progress," Javadekar said. At the beginning of his press conference, Chidambaram had said his first thoughts upon his release were with the Kashmiri people who "have been denied their basic freedoms since August 4, 2019." He said it was arrogance of the Government that played out in Kashmir.

Javadekar referred to the emergency imposed by the Congress in 1975 saying the then Indira Gandhi Government had clamped down on the media while the Modi Government has shared all information related to the situation in J&K with Parliament. The Government has allowed journalists from India and abroad to travel to Kashmir where, he added, incidents of stone-pelting have come down by more than half.

On former finance minister's criticism of economic slide under the BJP dispensation, Javadekar said low inflation and high growth in economy have been the highlights of the Modi dispensation since 2014 while Congress regimes damaged country's economy.

The Modi Government on a host of issues, Javadekar said he has got to speak to the media after so many days and that is why he was taking out his anger on every subject.

Union Minister Prakash Javadekar told reporters that the claim of Chidambaram about his case, amounted to "self-certification".

"P Chidambaram has violated the bail condition on the very first day after his release. What he said is in violation of this condition," the BJP leader said.

Addressing a press conference at the Congress headquarters, the Former Finance Minister had said earlier, "In the last 106 days, I was strong in spirit and I have become stronger because. My record as Minister and my conscience are absolutely clear."

Hitting out at the opposition leader over his attack on

the Modi Government on a host of issues, Javadekar said he has got to speak to the media after so many days and that is why he was taking out his anger on every subject.

Some Congress leaders are in jail, some have just got out of jail and some are on bail, he said, adding that the opposition party has become desperate.

It is not that they were in jail for their role in "freedom movement" but due to criminal charges against them, he said.

On Chidambaram's criticism of the Government that it had denied basic freedom to people in Kashmir since Article 370 was nullified in August, the

RS adjourned twice over Unnao rape case

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Rajya Sabha was adjourned twice on Thursday over the Unnao rape victim incident with the Opposition including the Congress and Samajwadi Party (SP) trying to raise the issue and the chair denying them to do so. The first adjournment was in the pre-lunch session and the second in the afternoon.

The House saw the first adjournment soon after Chairman M Venkaiah Naidu commenced the Zero Hour soon after the day's proceedings began. He disallowed the Congress and SP to raise issues including the Unnao incident as it was not listed for the Zero Hour.

Raising point of order, Derek O'Brien (TMC) sought to know why no calling attention and short duration discussions were listed in the business during this week. He also tried to raise the Unnao incident involving a rape survivor but was not allowed by the chair. The victim is battling for life with more than 90 per cent burns after she was allegedly set ablaze by five men while on Thursday morning while she was on her way to court.

The victim, who was assaulted in December last



Rajya Sabha Chairman M Venkaiah Naidu conducts proceedings of the House during the Winter Session of Parliament in New Delhi on Thursday

year and is being treated in a Lucknow hospital, said in a statement that she was on her way from her village in Unnao district to Rae Bareilly where the trial is going on when she was attacked and set ablaze.

Leader of the Opposition in the Rajya Sabha Gulam Nabi Azad, too, expressed concern over the issue of short duration discussion and said it had not happened last week as well and two discussions should be scheduled for next week.

Naidu said the Minister concerned said he was unwell and, hence, requested to postpone the discussion for next week and assured it would be held on Tuesday.

However, SP leader Ram Gopal Yadav tried to draw the attention of the House to the

Unnao rape case and even Congress members were on their feet insisting the same. To which, the Chair said there would not be discussion on the issues that were not listed for Zero Hour. Naidu then adjourned the Zero Hour at 11.15 am.

The second adjournment for half-an-hour came in the post lunch session with the Congress raising the matter. The agitated members brought up the issue when the House was to commence a discussion on The Taxation Laws (Amendment) Bill, 2019.

Congress leader Anand Sharma urged Deputy Chairman Harivansh to at least listen to the opposition members who wanted to discuss the incident of the attack on the Unnao rape survivor.

17.74 crores patients visited Ayush health centres in 2018

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Modi Government's efforts to push Ayush through various programmes and schemes are yielding positive results. According to the data tabled in Lok Sabha recently, about 17.74 crores patients visited the Ayush healthcare facilities last year, 17.27 crores and 15.94 crores in 2016-17 and 2015-16 respectively.

"The efforts of Central Government for promotion of Ayush through various programmes and schemes yielded in more number of people availing treatment from Ayush health care facilities. However, taking treatment from Allopathy or Ayush is the choice of the people," Union Ayush Minister Shripad Naik said in Lok Sabha in the ongoing session.

The Minister also talked about the progress of its pilot project integrating Ayush with modern medicine to tackle lifestyle related disorders such as diabetes and cancer launched in some districts in Uttar Pradesh, Gujarat, Bihar and Rajasthan.

Of ten lakhs patients screened in the last two years since implementation of the project, 93,117 patients have been enrolled for long term management through ayurveda and yoga interventions.

As Non-Communicable Diseases (NCDs) like diabetes

are difficult to treat and in view of rising health cost, the Government is focussing on bringing convergence and synergy between traditional medicine, modern medicine and modern sciences for scientific validation of ayurveda concepts and development based drugs in collaboration with country's reputed research institutes like AIIMS, CSIR, DRDO and CCRAS to name a few.

For instance, two labs of CSIR - National Botanical Research Institute (NBRI) and Central Institute for Medicinal and Aromatic Plants (CIAMP) have jointly developed cost-effective anti-diabetes herbal medicine BGR-34. A formulation of herbs like Giloy, Sadabhara, methi and daruheda, the BGR-34 has been found to have effectively managed blood glucose homeostasis in Type 2 Diabetes which is becoming India's fastest growing disease. AIIMS is conducting various researches to assess impact of herbs in management of chronic diseases.

From 72 million diabetes cases recorded in 2017, the number is expected to nearly double by 2025. Similarly, by 2040, cancer cases are expected to almost double to twenty lakh compared to 11.6 lakh cases in 2016. The World Health Organisation Report for 2018 says that NCDs account for 63 per cent of deaths in India.

Pornographic issues will be studied by informal group: Naidu

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Concerned over the menace of child pornography leading to crime against children, Rajya Sabha Chairman M Venkaiah Naidu on Thursday announced that a 14-member informal group of the House will study issues related to pornographic content on internet and social media platforms.

The group, which will be coordinated by Congress leader Jairam Ramesh, will prepare its report within one month, he said before the Zero Hour. The Chairman's initiative came after the entire House expressed concern over the rampant proliferation of child pornography on the social media last week.

"After studying the matter and discussion with members, I have decided to give one month time to an informal group to look into the issue," Naidu said.

The group will comprise of 14 members from across all

parties and will be coordinated by Congress member Jairam Ramesh, he said. Other members can also share information related to this issue with the group, the chairman said.

Naidu said the group will prepare an "informal report" after discussing about the issues related to pornographic content on internet and social media platforms with civil society groups, compulsory emergency responsive teams and social media companies.

The 14-member group includes Tiruchi Siva (DMK) Jaya Bachchan (SP), Amar Patnaik (BJD), Derek O'Brien (TMC), Vandana Chavan (NCP), Roopa Ganguly (BJP), M V Rajeev Gowda (Cong), Kahkashan Parveen (JD-U), Rajeev Chandrasekhar (BJP), Sanjay Singh (AAP), Vijila Sathyanth (AIADMK) and Vinay Sahasrabudde (BJP) and Ameer Yajnik (Congress).

MODERNISATION OF ARMED FORCES Def Ministry signed 180 contracts

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

In an effort to sustain the pace of modernisation of the armed forces, the Defence Ministry has signed more than 180 contracts valued at over ₹1,96,000 crore with the Indian Industry since 2014 while a few are in the pipeline to be signed in near future.

A contract for manufacture of Frigates under Project P 17A was signed in February 2015 with Mazagon Dockyards Limited (MDL), Mumbai valued at ₹45,000 crores while 02 Frigates under Project P1135.6 are slated to be manufactured by Goa Shipyard Limited (GSL) under a contract signed in Oct 2018 valued at ₹14,100 Crore.

Further, contracts for manufacture of 41 Advanced Light Helicopters for Indian Air Force (IAF) and 32 ALH for Indian Navy (IN) have been signed with Hindustan

100 units of 155x52mm cal self-propelled guns are being procured under 'Make in India' initiative of Govt from L&T



Aeronautics Limited (HAL) in March 2017 and Dec 2017 with a combined value of ₹14,100 crore. This is in addition to procurement of 14 Dornier 228 aircrafts from M/s HAL valued at ₹1100 crore through a contract signed in February 2015.

Seven Squadrons of Akash Missile System are being procured from BEL through a contract of October 2019 valued at ₹6,300 crore as also the Integrated Advanced Command and Control System (IACCS) Nodes valuing ₹7,900

crore. OFB has been tasked to supply 464 T-90S/SK tanks worth ₹19,100 crore for which indent has been placed on it by the Ministry as recently as November 2019.

Also 100 units of 155x52mm cal Self-Propelled Guns are being procured under the 'Make in India' initiative of the Government from L&T valued at ₹4,300 crore. Also Contract for Modernisation of Airfield Infrastructure (MAFI) to be executed through Indian vendors is under final stages of contracting.

Govt gives more power to Indian coast guard

Coast guard can now 'visit, board, search and seize' within the maritime zone

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Government has given powers under the Coast Guard Act to allow the force to board, search any vessel and arrest people for offences within the maritime zone of the country, Defence Secretary Ajay Kumar said on Thursday. The security agency earlier did not have the power to board any vessel passing through India's Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ).

"Empowering Indian Coast Guard and enhancing coastal

security. MoD issues notification enabling CG to 'visit, Board, Search and Seize' suspicious vessels within India's EEZ and its continental shelf @IndianCoastGuard," Kumar tweeted.

The notification states that under the Coast Guard Act, 1978, the Central Government authorises "every member of the Coast Guard" to "visit, board, search and seize vessel, or arrest any person, or seize any artificial island or any floating or moored object or any underwater object including any maritime property involved or suspected to be used in the commission of any offence."

Before this notification, the Coast Guard used provisions of the Customs Act and the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Act and other relevant acts to board and seize vessels in the EEZ.

However, it did not have the necessary legal backing and many cases would flat in the court, officials said.

There was also a legal loophole using which the vessel companies could sue the Coast Guard for detaining ships without any authorisation. They also said earlier, its officials would seize drugs, detain offenders and hand them over to agencies like the local police, Directorate of Revenue Intelligence and the Narcotics Control Bureau. The vessels would be handed over to the port authorities.

The official added that since 2009, the maritime security force has been seeking more powers under the Territorial Waters, Continental Shelf, Exclusive Economic Zone and Other Maritime Zones Act, 1976 so that they could board and search suspicious vessels.

CPCB asks to shut down 270 tyre pyrolysis units

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Acting on the National Green Tribunal (NGT) order, the central pollution authority has asked 270 tyre pyrolysis units in 19 States to shut down their shops, saying these have been found to be flouting environmental norms and causing high levels of pollution.

Pyrolysis is a method of recycling old tyres through a thermochemical treatment under high temperature to produce industrial oil and other matters. The states whose pollution control authorities have been issued

notices are Andhra Pradesh, Assam, Bihar, Chhattisgarh, Haryana, Himachal Pradesh, Jammu and Kashmir, Jharkhand, Karnataka, Kerala, Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh, Odisha, Punjab, Rajasthan, Tamil Nadu, Telangana, Uttar Pradesh and Uttarakhand.

While ordering the shut-down of the 270 units, the CPCB referred to a National Green Tribunal (NGT) order and said these units were causing pollution and adversely affecting the health of workers involved in the process.

"In exercise of powers vest-

ed under Environment (Protection) Act 1986, directions are hereby issued to you (state pollution control boards) to close down all such pyrolysis units in your state or UT which are not complying as on date with consent conditions and SOP (standard operating procedure) of the Ministry of Environment.

"You are also directed to carry out strict vigilance and monitoring in complying industries to ensure continued compliance of consent conditions and the SOP of the Ministry," the notice issued on Wednesday by CPCB Chairman SPS Parihar said.

SUDAN TANKER BLAST — LS members urge to bring back bodies, give adequate solatium

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Lok Sabha members from Tamil Nadu and Bihar on Thursday sought the government to ensure that the bodies of the Indians killed in the Sudan tanker blast be brought back at the earliest and their families given adequate compensation.

T R Baalu of the DMK, Rajiv Pratap Rudy of the BJP and Selvaraj M of the CPI raised the issue in the House during Zero Hour.

They said as most of the victims were sole bread earners,

the government should ensure adequate compensation to the families.

At least 18 Indians were among 23 people killed and over 130 injured in a horrific LPG tanker blast that destroyed a ceramic factory in Sudan.

Sixty-eight Indians were working in the factory.

Rudy requested foreign minister to have their bodies flown back to India and other help be provided by the Indian mission in Sudan.

In another issue, Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla said the states should come up with an

action plan to curb the rising incidents of digital banking frauds in the country after a Member of Parliament raised the issue in the House.

Raising the issue during the Zero Hour, Arvind Kumar Sharma of BJP said on one hand the nation was moving towards Digital India while on the other hand, such fraudulent activities were taking place.

"In digital banking, frauds are taking place through different apps like Paytm... Every day frauds are taking place...And the police does not even register an FIR," he said.

Naidu pulls up MPs for low attendance in parl panels

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Rajya Sabha chairman M Venkaiah Naidu on Thursday expressed his displeasure over the low attendance of MPs in the meetings of the parliamentary standing committees and urged the leaders of the political parties to ensure "quantitative and qualitative functioning" of these panels.

Pulling up the absentees, Naidu, who held a meeting with the chairpersons of these panels, said only 18 members each from both houses of Parliament attended eight Rajya Sabha committees' meet-

ings since being reconstituted in September this year.

Sharing concern about the functioning of these committees in the Upper House, Naidu said: "I expect the number of members of this House with full attendance in the meetings of the committees to rise."

Each member of the department-related standing committee represents 25 members of Parliament while deliberating in the committee. If one member is absent, the voice of 25 MPs would not be heard, according to Naidu.

He said the Rajya Sabha's eight department-related standing committees

CITIZENSHIP AMENDMENT BILL — 4 hrs allocated for debate in LS on Tue

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Lok Sabha will debate the controversial Citizenship Amendment Bill on Tuesday and four hours have allotted for the debate and expected to bring the bill in Rajya Sabha on Wednesday or Thursday. Congress leader Rahul Gandhi said that their party will oppose the Bill in Parliament.

Many opposition parties continued protest on the bill, which seeks to grant citizenship to non-Muslims from Pakistan, Bangladesh and Afghanistan escaping religious persecution there. BJP leaders are confident

of its passage in Rajya Sabha with the support of several non-aligned regional parties like the BJD and the TRS, which have often joined the treasury benches in the past, despite vehement opposition by the Congress and strident anti-BJP parties like the TMC, which have been claiming that citizenship can't be given on the basis of religion.

The Congress, which has termed the bill "divisive" and discriminatory, made it clear on Thursday that it will oppose the draft legislation in Parliament. Making the party's stand clear, its leader Rahul Gandhi said in



Kerala that the Congress is against "any form of discrimination against anybody in this country".

"So anybody who discriminates against anybody who is Indian, we are against them.

That is our line. We believe that India belongs to everybody - all communities, all religions, all cultures," Gandhi told reporters. In Lucknow, BSP president Mayawati described the bill as unconstitutional,

and demanded that it be sent to a parliamentary committee for review.

"The Citizenship Amendment Bill cleared by the central cabinet is both unconstitutional and divisive. Citizenship in the name of religion and discrimination in the name of religion of the citizens through it is totally against the basic structure of the humanitarian and secular Constitution of Dr Bhimrao Ambedkar," Mayawati told reporters. Opposition parties like the DMP and Trinamool Congress are also opposed to it.

Sabarimala verdict not 'final word' as matter referred to larger Bench: SC

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Thursday said its 2018 verdict allowing entry of girls and women of all ages into the Ayyappa temple at Kerala's Sabarimala was not the "final word" as the matter was referred to a larger Bench.

The apex court's observation came when senior advocate Indira Jaising, appearing for a woman devotee, Bindu Ammini, alleged violation of the 2018 verdict and said her client was attacked for her bid to enter the shrine.

A bench headed by Chief Justice of India (CJI) S A

Bobde, referring to a recent verdict of the apex court, said the 2018 judgment was not the final word as the issue was referred to a seven-judge bench for consideration.

"There is (an order) for a much larger bench to decide the matter. There is no final word as yet," the bench said.

On November 14, a five-judge Constitution bench headed by then CJI Ranjan Gogoi, in a 3:2 majority verdict, had referred the pleas seeking a review of its historic 2018 judgment to a seven-judge bench, along with other contentious issues of alleged discrimination against Muslim and Parsi women.

In September 2018, a five-judge Constitution bench had, by a majority 4:1 verdict, allowed girls and women of all ages to visit the Ayyappa temple at Sabarimala, saying discrimination on physiological grounds was violative of the fundamental rights as enshrined in the Constitution such as the right to equality.

Jaising said her client was attacked just outside the police commissioner's office, despite the fact that the earlier judgment allowing entry of all girls and women into the temple was not stayed by the November 14 judgment.

Religious leaders downplay Babri anniv, security stepped up

PTI ■ AYODHYA

Both Muslim and Hindu religious leaders are talking about downplaying the anniversary of the demolition of the Babri mosque, now that the Supreme Court has pronounced its verdict on the Ayodhya dispute.

While the police are taking no chances — an official said the security arrangement in the temple town are similar to those ahead of the SC judgment day — religious organisations have assured that the December 6 anniversary will be low key.

While right-wing Hindu organisations earlier celebrated the day when a mob pulled down the structure on the disputed site, some Muslim groups mourned it.

This time, although the AIMPLB said "a day of sorrow" would be observed, it added that "it is up to the individuals".

The Vishwa Hindu Parishad has too decided

against observing the 27th anniversary of the demolition as "Shaurya Diwas".

"Yaum-e-gham (day of sorrow) will be observed, wherever it was observed last year. And, it is up to individuals to observe it or not," senior AIMPLB office-bearer Zafaryab Jilani said.

VHP spokesman Sharad Sharma said, "There will be no public function. People may light earthen lamps in various temples. Seers are also of the view that truth has triumphed so there is no relevance of the celebrations."

On November 30, Ram Janmabhoomi Nyas chief Mahant Nriyaya Gopal Das too had appealed against observing "Shaurya Diwas", saying there was no relevance left for it after the apex court verdict.

Maulana Shafique Alam of Terhi Bazaar Masjid, which is in close proximity to the Ramjanmaboomi, on Thursday said Friday prayers would be held in the mosque at

1 pm. "Around 150-200 Muslims are likely to attend it," he said.

Recalling developments on November 8, a day before the apex court gave its verdict, Shafique Alam said, "There are around 40-50 Muslim families in this area, of which 30 had sent their womenfolk to other places. Some financially well-off people too shifted ahead of the Supreme Court judgment."

"Most of them returned after November 14. There were no clashes, but people were feeling sad over the judgment. I too had gone to my native place in Bihar's Gaya and returned on November 19," he said, adding that police were very helpful. He, however, blamed "outsiders" for vitiating the atmosphere of Ayodhya, saying his Hindu neighbours were very nice.

"Even during marriage or any other celebrations in their households, they switch off the music system during

namaaz," he said. Meanwhile, security is tight in the temple town with a senior Uttar Pradesh Police official saying the arrangements are similar to the plan they had devised for November 9, the day the apex court pronounced verdict on the Ramjanmabhoomi-Babri Masjid land dispute.

"The security plan for December 6 will be a continuation of the plan we had devised for November 9," Additional Director General of Police (Law and Order) PV Ramasastry told PTI, adding that the precautions taken by them were the same they had adopted on the judgment day. Ayodhya SSP Ashish Tiwari said the entire district had been divided into four zones, 10 sectors and 14 sub-sectors.

"As many as 78 sand bag posts have been established with armed policemen posted there. Barriers have been put in place to control traffic. As

many as 269 police pickets have been set up in sensitive areas," Tiwari said.

The SSP added that 305 troublemakers had been identified and action was being initiated against them.

Apart from this, nine quick response teams have been deployed.

"To combat any emergency situation, five arrested parties have been formed in addition to 10 temporary jails," he said, adding that anti-sabotage teams were checking hotels, dharamshalas and other public places. He said people had been appealed to immediately inform police about any suspicious activity or people. The public had also been asked not to fall prey to any rumour mongering and maintain harmony, he said.

"Stress has been laid on confidence-building measures," the SSP said, adding that they had contacted saints, traders and academics in this regards.

More review petitions in Ayodhya case: AIMPLB secy

Lucknow: Six more litigants are set to file review petitions against the Supreme court verdict in the Ayodhya case, an AIMPLB office-bearer said here on Thursday.

The Jamiat Ulema-e-Hind has already filed a review petition. Maulana Syed Ashhad Rashidi, legal heir of original litigant M Siddiq, filed the plea, saying the judgment suffers from "errors apparent on record and warrants a review under Article 137 of the Constitution of India".

Commenting on the fresh pleas on Thursday, All India Muslim Personal Law Board Secretary Zafaryab Jilani told PTI, "Review petitions on behalf of six litigants are being



prepared and these can be filed in next two days."

Jilani said the date for filing would be disclosed as soon as they were complete.

According to the November 9 verdict, the

Supreme Court had said the entire 2.77 acre of disputed land should be handed over to the deity Ram Lalla, who was one of the three litigants.

The five-judge Constitution bench also directed the Centre to allot a five-acre plot to the Sunni Waqf Board in Ayodhya to build a mosque.

The Sunni Central Waqf Board has, however, decided against filing a review plea. The board also said it was yet to take a call on whether to accept the plot or not.

The AIMPLB had on Sunday asserted that 99 per cent of Muslims in the country wanted a review of the Supreme Court verdict. **PTI**

AIMIM member held for 'objectionable' FB post

Malda: A madrasa teacher, who is also a member of Hyderabad-based AIMIM, was arrested here early on Thursday for allegedly posting objectionable remarks on social media against West Bengal Chief Minister and TMC supremo Mamata Banerjee, a senior police officer said.

Motiar Rahman (35), a resident of Chanchol area of the Malda district, was taken into custody around 2am, hours after his "derogatory" com-

ment against Banerjee and her dispensation went viral on Facebook, the officer said.

Rahman was arrested under various sections of the IPC and the Information Technology Act following verification of the post by the police department, he explained. According to the officer, a TMC supporter had also filed a complaint against the madrasa teacher after he chanced upon the post on the social networking site. **PTI**

BJP Govt has ruined economy, polity, society: Didi

SAUGAR SENGUPTA ■ KOLKATA



Miffed by alleged regular Mattempts by State Governor Jagdeep Dhankhar at interfering in day-to-day business of the State Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee on Thursday slammed the Central Government for trying to run a parallel Government in Kolkata — much the way it has been doing in States like Maharashtra.

In a circuitous reference to the BJP Government, Mamata said, "they are trying to run a parallel administration in Maharashtra, West Bengal and other States. The situation is a little better in West Bengal even though, here too a paralyzing political climate of the country."

Banerjee who was speaking at the inauguration of INFO-COM, 2019 also said that the businessmen too were being target by the saffron government. "They are interfering in the business of industrialists. The economy is collapsing for these policies of the Centre," the Chief Minister said reminding how on account of faulty economic policies of the Centre the country had gone in the grip of a never-ending vicious circle of inflation, unemployment and economic slowdown.

Referring to the falling gross domestic product of the country Banerjee said "It is the darkest situation in the country. There is unhindered privatization. The industries are being shut down and merger of banks is taking place... and

nobody is able to speak," adding how nobody was safe in the present political environment where "whoever raises a voice against this situation comes under the scanner," of the Enforcement Directorate, Central Bureau of Investigation or other such agencies.

Situation was such that the industrialists who want to invest in India were now scared to do so considering the suffocating political climate of the country.

Banerjee said how she wanted to play a positive role for the general people, the economy and industry adding how she did not increase the railway fare as the Railway Minister.

Today "the Central government is trying to sell off the Indian Railways, BSNL, and Air India... the banks too have been merged. I am scared of the future of the insurance sector also... Unemployment will be the biggest disaster for the country," she said condemning the Government's approach towards controlling inflation. "Look how the onion prices are shooting through the roof and nothing is being done about that," she said wondering "who is

responsible for this epidemic situation."

In a no-holds-barred attack on the Centre she said how New Delhi's arrogance was being projected through its blind persuasion of a discriminatory NRC policy which is "designed to pursue a divide-and-rule politics."

Banerjee criticism of the Centre came almost in tandem with Governor Dhankhar's condemnation of the State Government when he said that democracy had been caged in Bengal.

A furious Governor who visited the State Assembly on Thursday after informing Speaker Biman Banerjee in advance but "failed to find even a single soul in the Assembly premises," told the media that "democracy is being humiliated in Bengal," where a Governor failed to find an entry in the Assembly House.

He said how the Speaker had earlier invited his wife and him to visit the Assembly and even have lunch there but later cancelled the invitation saying he would not be available on the appointed day and time.

He said "this is sad day for the democracy of the State," wondering why the gate number 3 which was specially used for the entry of the VVIPs including the Governor was kept closed. "I knew that the House was adjourned for a few days but this does not mean that the secretariat should be closed," he said adding "you cannot make the legislature

capive with such exercises. Democracy is being humiliated, not me. We are caging democracy. However, as the Governor of the state, I will never bow down and will work to uphold the democratic principles of the State."

Claiming that the purpose of his visit was to see the historic building, the background and to visit the library," the Governor who met with a similar treatment at the Calcutta University on Wednesday when the top functionaries including the Vice Chancellor and the Registrar went missing when he visited the campus said.

Slamming the Chief Minister he said that she had failed to perform constitutional duties for the last few months, adding how as a Governor he had never been briefed by the Government on important issues like cyclone Bulbul.

The Raj Bhavan and the Nabanna (Secretariat) had been at loggerheads ever since Dhankhar by-passed the State administration and went to rescue Union Minister Babul Supriyo who was trapped in a students' agitation in Jadavpur University on September 19. Subsequently the Governor took a number of administrative tours on his own accord infuriating the Chief Ministers whose Cabinet colleagues openly hit out at the Governor for running a parallel administration in Bengal at the behest of Union Home Minister Amit Shah.

Shame to our country's democratic history, says Jagdeep Dhankhar

Kolkata: Jagdeep Dhankhar who had to wait outside the West Bengal Assembly on Thursday as the gate designated for the Governor was locked, said the "humiliation" meted out to the Governor's post has put the country's democratic history to "shame".

Later Dhankhar entered the Assembly premises through Gate no 4, meant for media persons and officials.

"Why is gate no 3 closed? Despite my prior intimation, the gate is closed. The Assembly being adjourned does not mean it is closed."

"The Governor's gate being locked has put our democratic history to shame. This is not an insult to me, but an insult to the people of the state and the Constitution," Dhankhar told reporters.

According to Assembly norms, gate no 3 is designated for the governor's entry and exit. Dhankhar had on Wednesday written to Assembly Speaker Biman Banerjee expressing his desire to look into its facilities and also visit the library.

"After I had informed about my visit, the special secretary of Raj Bhavan, received a message inviting me and my wife for a lunch by the speaker. I accepted it.

"But within one-and-half hours of receiving the message,

my special secretary received another message from the Assembly secretary, stating that the invite stands cancelled. He was also told that the secretary and special secretary of the Assembly will not be present during my visit," the Governor said after coming out of the Assembly. "I wonder what happened during one-and-a-half hours that every thing changed. I will write to the speaker that what happened today has belittled his chair," he said.

Hitting out at the State Government for trying to undermine democratic norms and constitutional posts, the Governor said he will not be "cowed down" by such "antics" of the ruling Trinamool Congress (TMC).

"I will continue to work towards upholding constitutional and democratic norms. The role of the governor and the Government is clearly defined in the Constitution. I can't be cowed down by such antics," he said. In an unprecedented development on Tuesday, the speaker had adjourned the House for two days, saying that the Bills, slated to be placed in the Assembly, were yet to get the Governor's approval. However, the claim was refuted by the Raj Bhavan, which in a statement termed the situation as "factually untenable". **PTI**

GUJARAT WATER SUPPLY & SEWERAGE BOARD
SECTOR-10/A, Gandhinagar

BRIEF SHORT NOTICE INVITING ON LINE TENDER FOR FIXING RATE CONTRACT FOR SUPPLY OF BLEACHING POWDER GR. II (WITH ISI MARK IS 1065-1989) FOR THE YEAR 2020

GWSSB invites online tender through e-tendering for Manufacture, Supply & Delivery of Bleaching Powder Gr. II with ISI Mark from Indian Manufacturer only Interested bidder who wish to participate in above tender may view the detailed tender notice & down load the Tender documents at free of cost from website.

<https://www.nprocure.com>

The last date of submission of online tender is 23-12-2019. No/INF/VPN/2019/G/1709

पावरग्रिड POWERGRID

NOTICE

1. Approval under regulation-86 of CEREC (Conduct of Business) Regulations/1999 and CEREC (Terms and Conditions of Tariff) Regulations, 2009, CEREC (Terms and Conditions of Tariff) Regulations, 2014 and CEREC (Terms and Conditions of Tariff) Regulations/2019 for (i) Truing up of Transmission tariff for 2009-14 tariff block (ii) Truing up of Transmission tariff for 2014-19 tariff block and (iii) Determination of Transmission tariff for 2019-24 tariff block For **Petition 01:** Asset: 2 No. 400kV line bays at Fatehpur 400/220 kV Sub-Station under "Provision of 400 kV bays at Fatehpur for ATS under Unchahar TPS" in Northern Region, **Petition 02:** Combined Assets consisting of **Asset-1:** 400kV D/C Koteshwar HEP-Koteshwar Pooling Station Circuit-I&II alongwith associated bays (DOCO 01.04.2011), **Asset-2:** LILO of Circuit-I of 765 kV Tehri-Meerut Line at Koteshwar Pooling Station along with associated bays (DOCO 01.03.2011), **Asset-3:** LILO of Circuit-II of 765 kV Tehri-Meerut Line at Koteshwar Pooling Station along with associated bays (DOCO 01.07.2011) and **Asset-4:** 50% series compensation at Meerut (Extension) on Tehri Pooling point (Koteshwar)-Meerut 765 kV 2" S/C Lines (Charged at 400 kV) (DOCO 01.02.2012) covered under "Transmission System associated with Koteshwar HEP" in Northern Region, **Petition 03:** combined assets consist of **Asset-1:** LILO of 400kV S/C Ballabgarh-Bhiwadi Transmission line at Gurgaon along with associated bays (DOCO 01/07/2010), **Asset-II:** 315 MVA, 400/220 kV ICT-I along with associated bays at GIS Sub-Station at Gurgaon (DOCO 01/07/2010) and **Asset-III:** 315 MVA, 400/220 kV ICT-II along with associated bays at GIS Sub-Station at Gurgaon (DOCO 01/02/2012) associated with Northern Region System Strengthening Scheme-VI (Effective DOCO 01/02/2011) in Northern Region, **Petition 04:** Combined Assets consisting of **Asset-I:** 315 MVA, 400/220 kV ICT at Bhiwadi in Northern Region (DOCO: 01/02/2013), **Asset-II:** 315 MVA 400/220 kV Spare Inter Connecting Transformer at 400/220 kV Hisar sub-station (DOCO: 01/02/13) & **Asset-III:** 315 MVA 400/220 kV Spare Inter Connecting Transformer 400/220 kV Lucknow sub-station. (DOCO: 01/07/2012) under "Provision of Spare ICT's and Reactors of Eastern, Northern, Southern and Western Region" in Northern region.

2. The beneficiaries of the above mentioned Transmission system are: (1) Rajasthan Rajya Vidyut Prasaran Nigam Limited, (2) Ajmer Vidyut Vitran Nigam Ltd. (3) Jaipur Vidyut Vitran Nigam Ltd. (4) Jodhpur Vidyut Vitran Nigam Ltd. (5) Punjab State Electricity Board, (6) Haryana Power Purchase Centre (7) Power Development Deptt. Govt. of Jammu & Kashmir, (8) Uttar Pradesh Power Corporation Ltd. (9) Delhi Transco Ltd. (10) BSES Yamuna Power Ltd. (11) BSES Rajdhani Power Ltd. (12) North Delhi Power Ltd. (13) Chandigarh Administration, (14) Uttaranchal Power Corporation Ltd. (15) North Central Railway (16) New Delhi Municipal Council (17) Himachal Pradesh State Electricity Board (18) Tata Power Delhi Distribution Limited.

3. Tariff details: a) 2014-19 Block

Petition	Asset	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	Rs in Lakh
Petition 01	Asset-I	-	-	67.19	271.65	298.20	
Petition 02	Combined Asset-A	3,058.37	3,023.41	2,956.85	2,886.63	2,818.64	
	Combined Asset-B	1,003.03	986.45	976.72	978.27	971.44	
Petition 03	Combined Asset-I	4,280.36	4,203.58	4,117.36	4,040.44	3,968.28	
	Combined Asset-II	183.14	183.26	177.35	171.20	165.90	
Petition 04	Combined Asset-A	345.04	335.74	325.79	315.92	306.41	

b) 2019-24 Block

Petition	Asset	DOCO	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	Rs in Lakh
Petition 01	Asset-I	21/12/2016	223.48	221.38	219.43	217.58	215.69	
Petition 02	Combined Asset-I	05/07/2011	3,250.45	3,125.68	3,031.09	2,937.27	2,844.77	
	Combined Asset-II	01/02/2011	3,663.75	3,624.66	3,575.60	3,488.95	2,682.69	
Petition 04	Combined Asset-A	24/10/2012	797.61	795.54	793.41	792.43	790.43	

4. A copy of the application made for determination of tariff is posted on the website of the applicant at www.powergridindia.com.

5. The suggestions and objections, if any, on the proposals for determination of tariff contained in the application be filed by any person, including the beneficiary before the Secretary, Central Electricity Regulatory Commission, 3 & 4th Floor, Chandrakola Building, Janpath, New Delhi-110001 (or other address where the office of the Commission is situated), with a copy to the applicant at the address of its corporate office within 30 days of publication of this notice.

Place : Gurgaon Date : 29.11.2019 Sr. General Manager (Commercial)

POWER GRID CORPORATION OF INDIA LIMITED
(A Government of India Enterprise)
Registered Office: B-9, Qutab Institutional Area, Katwaria Sarai, New Delhi 110 016
Corporate Office: Saudamini, Plot No. 2, Sector-29, Gurgaon, Haryana - 122 001
www.powergridindia.com, CIN: L40101DL1989SO038121
A Maharashtra PSU

Trivandrum Press Club rocked by attacks on women journo

KUMAR CHELLAPPAN ■ CHENNAI



Trendsetter for other Press clubs in the country, is in the news, this time for wrong reasons. Thursday evening saw the city police arresting M Radhakrishnan, a journalist who is also the secretary of the Press Club from the club premises on charges of assaulting a woman journalist.

The lady had alleged that the secretary of the Press Club physically assaulted her and barged into her residence in late hours. She also charged Radhakrishnan of moral policing.

The city police have filed a case against Radhakrishnan following the complaint from

children. Radhakrishnan reportedly slapped the male companion and demanded that the duo apologise to the local residents for their "inappropriate behaviour" and swear not to meet again after office hours. The Press Club secretary had also collected some people before whom the entire incident happened. The lady told the police that Radhakrishnan had threatened her that he would spoil her family life if she does not obey his orders.

The Network of Women in Media staged a demonstration in front of the Press club on Thursday condemning the incident and demanding the arrest of Radhakrishnan. They described Radhakrishnan's behaviour as a "malicious

attempt to impose a medieval and misogynist moral code on working journalists." But Radhakrishnan denied all allegations. He said his intention was only to save his colleague from the "anger of the locals" who had objected to the presence of a man and woman in the residential neighbourhood at that hour of the night.

The Kerala State Women's Commission chaired by M C Josephine, senior CPI(M) leader ordered a suo motu case against Radhakrishnan and others based on media reports about the incident. A release by the Commission said that it would also ask the City Police Commissioner to hold a thorough probe into the incident and submit his findings. Josephine said that she

would find out whether all media institutions in the State have Internal Complaints Committee to examine the woes of women journalists.

This is the second incident of its kind to rock the Trivandrum Press Club. Last week saw one of the lady students of the Press Club's Institute of Journalism complaining to the authorities that Neelan, a faculty member-journalist sent obscene messages to her mobile phone. Neelan, who is the son of national award winning actor Premji for his role in the Malayalam film Piravi, has since been removed from the list of faculties, according to Press Club office bearers. This case also is being probed by the Press Club management.

Schoolgirl's letter rattles DMK leadership

PNS ■ CHENNAI

The move by the Government of Tamil Nadu to introduce 300 hours long Hindi teaching programme in the State-owned International Institute of Tamil Studies for 66 students who came forward on their own to learn the language has drawn the ire of the Dravidian major, the DMK.

What has caused further embarrassment to the DMK leadership was a letter written by a school student from Sivaganga to party chief MK Stalin asking him why he was against Navodaya Vidyalayas and Hindi. Thangam Thennarasu, DMK leader and a close confidante of Stalin has fired the

first salvo by claiming that the move to teach Hindi was a regressive move. "This is an attempt by the AIADMK Government to destroy Tamil language and culture," charged Thennarasu while speaking to reporters at Chennai.

But Ma Foi Pandiarajan, the minister for Tamil Development said the allegation by Thennarasu, himself a former minister of education, was without understanding ground realities. "Learning of the languages is optional. All students have agreed to join the course out of their own interest. The Government has allotted Rs 3 lakh each to hold Hindi and French classes in the Institute. We will have 300 hours of Hindi and another 300 hours of French classes," said

Pandiarajan. The minister also said that the courses would facilitate comparative learning of literature, besides opening the window of job opportunities in the country and abroad.

Meanwhile more and more students, civil rights activists and educationists have come out questioning the stance of the DMK towards introduction of Hindi in the State's curriculum. What stood out in the latest round of anti-Hindi tirade by the DMK is a letter written by a school student to Stalin questioning the propriety behind his opposition towards opening Navodaya Schools in the State.

Tamil Nadu is the only State in India which does not allow Navodaya Schools as

part of the two-language policy pursued by the Dravidian parties.

B Saadhanashree, a school student, said in her letter to the DMK chief not to fool the people of Tamil Nadu by saying that learning Hindi would destroy Tamil.

She also accused the DMK chief of preventing the people of Tamil Nadu from learning Hindi to protect his own family.

Saadhanashree, belonging to a middle-class family in Sivagangai district, said that her father had to work as a driver in a school to pay her annual fee of Rs 30,000/- . In her letter which was published in "Kalvi Today", a magazine exclusive for school education and academics, she asked why the

DMK was opposing the opening up of Navodaya Schools, a concept public school launched by former Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi in 1986 as part of his initiative to make quality public school education available to the socially and backward children.

"It isn't the rich families like yours that will benefit from Navodaya schools but students from poor and middle-class families in villages, like us," said Saadhanashree.

She further stated that students from Navodaya Schools in Puducherry passed the NEET medical entrance examination. "But can you say how many students from Tamil Nadu Government-run schools could pass the NEET?" asked the student.

MHA ask States to send suggestions for recasting of IPC, CrPC

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) has asked all State Governments to send their suggestions for a major overhaul and recasting of the Indian Penal Code (IPC) and the CrPC, officials said on Thursday.

The new structure and content of criminal laws will be citizen centric and will reflect the aspirations of a modern democracy and provide for speedy justice, especially to the weaker sections of society, an official said.

The Bureau of Police Research and Development (BPRD) will undertake review of the laws such as the IPC, CrPC, Indian Evidence Act and the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Act. The BPRD will constitute a suitable working or consultative group and submit a report.

The laws should reflect the modern reality and the revised laws should be in accordance with democratic aspirations of the people and provide speedy justice to women, children and weaker sections of the people, another official said.

The new laws are required to focus on simplifying legal procedures so that ease of living is ensured for the common man. Union Home Minister Amit Shah had recently said in Lucknow that the Centre would soon be making changes in laws related to internal security, including necessary amendments in the IPC and the CrPC.

'Contempt threat' to lawyer: Justice Mishra apologises

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Supreme Court lawyers request Justice Arun Mishra on Thursday to be patient in dealing with them after the judge warned a lawyer of contempt while hearing a land acquisition matter two days ago.

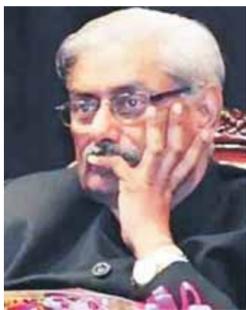
The issue cropped up as Justice Mishra, who is heading a five-judge Constitution bench hearing land acquisition matters, warned senior advocate Gopal Sankaranarayanan on Tuesday of contempt while he was advancing his arguments.

"If anybody has felt anything at any point of time, with folded hands, I am apologising," he said.

Sibal told Justice Mishra that both the bar and the bench had the duty to maintain a decorum in the court and the mutual respect should continue.

Rohatgi told the bench that younger lawyers were "fearful" of coming to this court and this affected the younger members of the bar.

"I am more associated with the bar. From me, you can take it that the bar is the mother of the bench. I respect the bar like anything. From the core of my heart, I am saying that please do not have that impression in your mind," Justice Mishra said.



Justice Mishra, however, said arrogance was "destroying this great institution" and it was the duty of the bar to protect it.

Justice Mishra, however, said arrogance was "destroying this great institution" and it was the duty of the bar to protect it.

The judge said lawyers should

refrain from making personal comments against anybody while arguing their case. He added that though he was criticised throughout his career, he had always supported the Bar. Khanna told the bench that the independence of the judiciary and the bar was very important and there was a need to maintain a mutual and cordial respect among the bar and the bench.

At the end, Justice Mishra told the SCBA president to ask Sankaranarayanan to meet him and said he was a very intelligent and brilliant lawyer and that he wished him a bright future.

"The EC of SCAORA expresses its deep concern over the threat of contempt proceedings and conviction by Justice Arun Mishra to Gopal Sankaranarayanan, while he was performing his professional duties. Several members of the

bar have repeatedly been raising such grievance about the unwanted treatment and passing of personal remarks by Justice Mishra," a resolution passed by the SCAORA said, adding that the duty to maintain the court's dignity and decorum was upon both lawyers and judges.

"We request Justice Mishra to be a little bit more patient in dealing with lawyers," it had said. Senior advocate and former SCBA president Vikas Singh had written a letter to Khanna, urging him to call an urgent meeting to "condemn" the incident. Expressing distress over the incident, he had said lawyers and judges were equal stakeholders in the functioning of the apex court and their relationship should be based upon mutual trust and respect.

Woman's charred body found in Bengal's Malda; rape suspected

Malda: In a rerun of the Hyderabad veterinary doctor's murder, a young woman's charred body was found in a mango orchard in West Bengal's Malda district on Thursday, raising suspicion that she was raped and killed, a senior police officer said.

The body has suffered severe burns, making it difficult to ascertain the woman's identity, Deputy Superintendent of Police (DSP) Prasanta Debnath said.

Local farmers spotted the body in English Bazar Police Station area in the morning, following which they raised an alarm, the DCP, who visited the site along with Superintendent of Police Alok Rajoria, said. "Prima facie it seems that the victim is in her early 20s. Her body has several injury marks. We have sent it for post-mortem to Malda medical college," he said, adding that a probe has been initiated in the case.

Minor raped by her 14-year-old cousin in Himachal's Kullu

Shimla: A 10-year-old girl was allegedly raped by her 14-year-old cousin in Himachal Pradesh's Kullu district, police said on Thursday.

The incident took place on Wednesday when the girl was on her way to school, Kullu Superintendent of Police Gaurav Singh said. The accused is a Class 10 student and a juvenile, he added. He is being produced before the Juvenile Justice Board, the SP added.

A case has been registered against the accused under section 376AB (punishment for rape on woman under 12 years of age) of the Indian Penal Code and sections 4 and 6 of the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act at a women police station on the victim's statement, he said. The victim's medical examination was conducted at the regional hospital in Kullu, he added.

Bengal plans setting up call centre to help women in distress

Kolkata: In the backdrop of the Hyderabad gangrape and murder of a veterinary doctor, the West Bengal Government is mulling to set up a call centre having a toll free number to cater to the complaints of crime against women in the districts, a senior official said on Thursday.

The centre would be funded from a portion of the Nirbhaya fund that the state gets from the Union Government. "There will be a toll-free number for the purpose. Once a call is received, the executives at the call centre will alert the concerned police station in the districts for prompt action," the officer said.

Around 40% of the amount out of the Nirbhaya fund that the State gets from the centre would be earmarked for the purpose, he said. The Hyderabad horror has sent an alarm across the country and the proposed measure is a step to further strengthen security of women in Bengal.

'Systems should be improved to check crime against women'

Hyderabad: Former Supreme Court judge J Chelameswar has said calls for tough punishments to culprits are made whenever sensational crimes happen but making the system function more efficiently was required to check offences against women.

Lamenting that conviction rate was low, he said there should be a debate on improving the efficiency of the system involving investigation, prosecution and resolution without delay and various aspects of the issue should be taken to the notice of the government and the legislatures.

Speaking at a meeting on women's security organised by the C R Foundation here on Wednesday in the wake of the gruesome rape and murder of a woman veterinarian in Telangana, he said crimes against women were a multifaceted issue. "Rhetoric" calling for tough punishments to the culprits was seen when

sensational crimes happen, but the system should be made to function more efficiently without getting into such rhetoric, he said.

In states like Uttar Pradesh, criminal cases remained unresolved for about 30 years, he said adding a case pending for 24 years had once come before him as a judge.

Citing examples of prolonged delay in cases, including one handled by him that too over 25 years, he said the idea was not to criticise anybody. The law functioned on the belief that there would be some fear.

If this is our efficiency, I don't understand why would the person committing crimes would fear, he said.

"If we believe that there should be a law in a civilised society and punishment should be given as per the law, then it was the responsibility of all to ensure that the laws functioned properly, he said.

SEXUAL HARRASMENT CASE

Tanushree Dutta files protest plea, seeks rejection of closure, further probe

TN RAGHUNATHA ■ MUMBAI

Six months after the police gave a "clean chit" to senior actor Nana Patekar in the alleged sexual harassment case filed against him by her, actress Tanushree Dutta on Thursday filed a protest petition a city court seeking rejection of a "closure report" filed by the Oshiwara police and direction for "further investigations" in the case.

Tanushree, who had earlier on July 8 moved a city court to oppose filed by the police and obtained time from a court to file a "protest petition", Tanushree formally filed the "protest petition" before the Railway Mobile Metropolitan Court at Andheri in north Mumbai, seeking rejection of "B Summary report" (Closure report) filed by the police in the alleged sexual harassment case filed by her against Patekar in October last year.

In the protest petition filed on her behalf by senior Advocate Nitin Satpute, Tanushree urged the court to replace the police officer who had earlier filed "false" closure before the court and sought "further investigations", if deemed necessary and urged the court to monitor the investigations in line with the law laid down by the Supreme Court in the 2016 Sudhir Bhaskarrao Tambe Vs Hemant Yashwant Dhage case.

After allowing the protest petition filed by the actress, the court adjourned the case for arguments on January 16, 2020. The investigators file a B-Summary report in a court when they do not find any evidence against the accused person to file a charge-sheet against him and seek a trial.

The "protest petition" is a petition that an aggrieved person or complainant files before a magistrate when he or she is not satisfied with the police report filed before the Court concerned. The complainant may move the petition against

the negative police report which is called the "protest petition" and the same is treated as complaint under Section 190 of Criminal Procedure Code.

Under section 190 of CrPC, the Magistrate may cognise of the complaint, hear the complainant and inquire into his or her grievance as provided under sections 200 and 202 of Cr. P. C.

Among other things, the actress urged the court to subject all the accused, including the investigating officer, and witness nos 5 to 13 to Narco Analysis, Lie Detector and Brain Mapping Tests and initiate action against the Investigation Officer (IO) and also launch contempt proceedings concerned.

On June 12, the Oshiwara police had filed a closure report in a local court at Andheri in north-west Mumbai, stating that they had no evidence to prosecute Patekar in the alleged sexual harassment case filed against him by actress Tanushree.

Following the development, Tanushree had alleged that at the behest of Patekar, all her witnesses were silenced by intimidation and fake witness-ess were put forth to weaken the case. "What was the rush to file a B-summary report when all of my witnesses have not even recorded their statements yet?" Tanushree had asked.

Acting on a complaint filed by Tanushree on October 6, 2018, the Oshiwara police had registered a First Information Report (FIR) against senior Patekar and three others four days later.

On October 10 last year, the Oshiwara police had formally registered an FIR against Patekar and three others under sections 354 (Assault or criminal force to women with intent to outrage her modesty), 354-A (Assault or use of criminal force with intent to disrobe her) and section 509 (word, gesture or act intended to insult the

modesty of a woman) of IPC.

In her complaint lodged with the police on October 6, Tanushree had alleged that the incident took place on March 26, 2008 during the shooting of a song in the film "Horn Ok Pleasee".

Tanushree had said that the entire song was to be picturised on the actress, while Patekar had only line in the song. She said that before the shoot, she had made it clear to the producer and director that she would not enact or perform any lewd, vulgar or uncomfortable steps in the particular song.

On the 4th day of the shoot, 26th March 2008, while shooting was going on, Nana Patekar's behaviour was inappropriate towards me. He was on the set despite his work on the song being over and he was grabbing me by the arms and pushing me around on the pretext of teaching me how to dance.

When he was teaching indecently and unnecessarily, then I felt very uncomfortable because of his behaviour and I felt he has outraged my modesty," Tanushree had alleged. "He (Patekar) told the choreographer and other junior artists to back away so that he could teach me the dance steps through he was not a choreographer and he was not required during the choreography as per my previous rehearsals," the actress added.

The actress also told the police that she had lodged a complaint with the Cine and TV Artists Association, which passed the order without considering her complaint for apology. On his part, Nana Patekar had vehemently denied Tanushree's allegations, saying that there was no question of his molesting her "as there were around 50 people on set at that time". In a statement issued through his lawyer, Patekar dismissed the actress' allegation, terming it as a "figment of her imagination".

66.59% turnout in Karnataka bypolls

Bengaluru: The crucial byelection to 15 Karnataka assembly constituencies that would have a bearing on the stability of the BS Yediyurappa-led BJP Government saw an estimated 66.49 per cent voter turn out on Thursday and was by and large peaceful.

After a slow pace in the first half of the day since polling began at 7 am with only 33 per cent till 1.30 pm, voting picked up later in the day though it was below the percentage recorded in the Assembly elections in 2018.

The four constituencies in the city docked poor voter turnout. Officials said an estimated 66.49 per cent of the 37.78 lakh eligible electors cast their votes in the 15 segments till 6 pm. The figure was likely to go up as at some places people standing in queues at close were allowed to vote. According to the figures available, the highest turnout of 90.44 per cent was recorded in Hosakote while the lowest of 43.25 per cent at K R Pura here.

Cities three other constituencies too have recorded comparatively lower turnout, Mahalakshi Layout 50.92 per cent, Shivajinagar 44.60, Yeshwanthpura 54.13 per cent. Turnout in other constituencies are: Athani- 75.23 per cent, Kagwad 76.27, Gokak 73.08, Yellapur 73.52, Hirekerur 78.63, Ranebennur 73.53, Vijayanagara 64.95, Chikkaballapura 86.40, K R Peta 80, and Hunsur- 80.71, officials said.

The byelections are being held to fill the vacancies caused by the disqualification of 17 rebel Congress and JD(S) MLAs, whose revolt led to the collapse of the H D Kumaraswamy-led coalition government in July and paved the way for the BJP to come to power.

The BJP needs to win at least six of the seats to remain in majority in the 225-member assembly (including the Speaker, who has a casting vote), which would still have two vacant seats — Maski and RR Nagar. In the assembly with the current strength of 208 after the disqualifications, the BJP has 105 MLAs (including an independent), the Congress 66 and the JD(S) has 34 MLAs.

There is also one BSP member, a nominated member and the Speaker. While the BJP exuded confidence that the people will vote in favour of the party for stability and development, the Congress and JD(S) are optimistic that the voters will defeat the defectors, who have been disqualified and are now the ruling party candidates.

BJP has fielded 13 of the 16 disqualified legislators, who joined the party following the Supreme Court allowing

them to contest the bypolls, as its candidates from their respective constituencies from where they had won in the 2018 assembly elections on Congress and JD(S) tickets. While in most of the constituencies that went for the bypolls there was direct contest between Congress and BJP, in the southern parts of the state JD(S) comes into the picture, making it a triangular fight.

In Hosakote however, BJP rebel and independent candidate supported by JD(S) Sharth Bachegowda is a key factor.

Speculations are rife about Congress and JD(S) not being averse to joining hands once again to form a coalition government in case the BJP fails to garner the required number of seats to stay in majority.

Besides Chief Minister BS Yediyurappa, whose governments future is at stake, the bypoll results are crucial for CLP leader Siddaramaiah who faced growing discontent against his unilateral style of functioning and selection of candidates for the polls.

The poll outcome is also keenly awaited by JD(S) Kumaraswamy who aims to keep his party flock together amid threats of further internal bickering.

Among 15 constituencies going to the bypolls, 12 were held by Congress and three by JD(S). A total of 4,185 polling stations were set up in the 15 constituencies. The fate of 165 candidates — 156 men and nine women — were sealed in the voting machines. While BJP and Congress had 15 candidates each in the fray, the number of JD(S) candidates was 12. Remaining were all from smaller parties and independents.

Bypolls have been by and large peaceful, barring some stray incidents of arguments between workers of political parties and with police at some places like in Hunsur, officials said. Tension prevailed in Hunsur after a Police Inspector allegedly asked MLA C Anil and his supporters to move away from the polling centre.

There were reports of electronic voting machines malfunctioning due to technical problems in some places like Singayyanapalya in KR Pura, Athani and Hunsur among others, but they were set right and voting resumed, officials said. Senior citizens and differently-abled citizens came out in good numbers to cast their votes at several places.

The bypolls were earlier slated for October 21 but the Election Commission had deferred them to December 5 in view of then pendency of petitions in the Supreme Court challenging the disqualification of the 17 MLAs.

Udhhav to meet PM Modi for first time post-Govt formation

TN RAGHUNATHA ■ MUMBAI

In a significant political development, Maharashtra Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray will meet Narendra Modi for the first time after he snapped ties with the BJP and formed a Government with the NCP and Congress, when the Prime Minister arrives in Pune on Friday night for a national conference of top police officials.

Uddhav will receive the Prime Minister when he arrives in Pune at 9.50 pm on Friday for a national conference of directors general and inspectors general of police, to be held in Pune from December 6 to 8.

Union Home Minister Amit Shah is also likely to attend the three-day conference of the DGPs and IGs to be held at the Indian Institute of Science Education and Research (IISER) in Pune's Pashan area.

Though it is more of a protocol that a Chief Minister receives the Prime Minister on the latter's arrival in his state, it is of political significance, considering that Uddhav, who is the Shiv Sena president, will meet Modi for the first time since the three-decade-old saffron alliance broke down and the Sena joined ranks with the NCP and Congress to form a

Government. The brief meeting between Modi and Uddhav at the Pune airport on Friday night will have a positive bearing on the relations between the two leaders in the coming days.

Modi was among the first to congratulate Uddhav on his being sworn in as the chief minister of Maharashtra on November 28. "Congratulations to Uddhav Thackeray ji on taking oath as the CM of Maharashtra. I am confident he will work diligently for the bright future of Maharashtra," Modi had tweeted.

Replying to Modi, Uddhav had tweeted: Thank you Hon'ble Prime Minister Shri @narendramodi ji for your kind wishes. With you as my big brother in the Centre & with a strong cabinet in the state, I am looking forward to working persistently, to build a New Maharashtra. Meanwhile, the state government and the Centre have planned elaborate security arrangement for Modi's visit to Pune and also for the national conference of the State DGPs and IGs coming from across the country.

The Ministry of Home Affairs organizes the national conference of DGPs and IGs every year.

Earlier it was organized in Delhi, but after Modi became Prime Minister, it is being held in different cities every year.

कार्यालय अधीक्षण अभियन्ता, उन्नाव वृत्त, लोकोनिठि उन्नाव
अल्पकालीन ई-निविदा सूचना (द्वितीय आमंत्रण)
1. महामहिम राज्यपाल महोदय, उन्नाव की ओर से लोक निर्माण विभाग उन्नाव में पंजीकृत निविदादाताओं से ई-टेंडरिंग के माध्यम से नीचे दर्शाये गये कार्य हेतु निविदा आमंत्रित की जाती है।

Office of The Executive Engineer, Construction Division-1, P.W.D., Kanpur Dehat
E-Tender Notice
The Executive Engineer, Construction Division-1, P.W.D., Kanpur Dehat on behalf of Hon'ble Government of Uttar Pradesh invites the percentage rate bids from the eligible and approved Contractors registered with UP PWD Class 'A', 'B', 'C' & 'D' (Road Work) for following works:-

OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER, CONSTRUCTION DIVISION-2, PWD RAEBARELI
E-Tender Notice
No. 1843/2Lekha/ 2019
The E.E., C.D.-2, U.P.P.W.D., Raebareli on behalf of Government of Uttar Pradesh invites the percentage rate bids online from the eligible and approved Contractors registered with UP PWD, class 'A, B, C, D' The Bidders may submit bids for any or all of the works. Bidders are advised to note the minimum qualification criteria specified in Clause 4 of the Instructions to Bidders to qualify for the award of the contract.

Insider vs outsider

By distinguishing immigrants on the basis of religion, the Citizenship Bill goes against the spirit of our Constitution



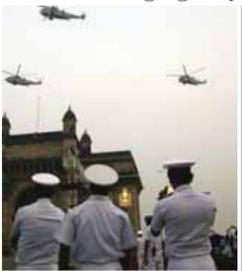
From the looks of it, the resurrected Citizenship (Amendment) Bill, which died in the Rajya Sabha last session because of a lack of numbers and consensus, is a polarising tool meant for the Bengal elections and intimidating Muslims. For it completely keeps the Northeastern States, which equally share the border with Bangladesh, out of its purview, saying most of them have Inner Line Permits and special status that guard them against an influx of "outsiders" (Hindu immigrants in this case) and, therefore, need not

be anxious about a law that would apply for the rest of the country. Opposition to the Bill stems from the fact that it reinforces ethnic and communal faultlines due to its overt and covert support to selective migrants escaping persecution in the neighbourhood. While it proposes to grant Indian citizenship to fleeing Hindus, Sikhs, Buddhists, Jains, Christians and Parsis, who are residents of Pakistan, Afghanistan and Bangladesh, it excludes persecuted Muslim sects, the Shias and Ahmadiyas. In other words, non-Muslim immigrants would not face deportation and Muslims would. It also proposes to reduce the mandated 11 years of residence in India for citizenship eligibility to six years, hastening cooption. By distinguishing settlers on the basis of religion — that too pitting Muslims versus non-Muslims — the isolationist Bill goes against the fundamental right to equality under Article 14 of the Constitution. Ostensibly, the BJP wants to neutralise the Muslim infiltration in border States, encouraged by votebank politics of past years, with a Hindu influx and effect a demographic change. But this idea is preposterous, simply because there aren't enough Hindus left in these countries who would want to return to their roots. The population of Hindus in Bangladesh at the time of Partition was close to 30 per cent and is currently estimated to be less than five per cent. The Hindu population in Pakistan was 23 per cent at the time of Independence and is currently about one per cent. Afghanistan's Hindu population declined since 1992 from a quarter million to less than 220 families. As of 2017, no more than a few thousand Hindus and Sikhs were left in Afghanistan. The less said about the other minorities the better. So, illegal Muslim infiltration from Bangladesh is the only concern because of porous borders and needs to be monitored. Pakistan does push militants into Kashmir but migrants are hardly a problem in the northwestern part of the country. Clearly, the Bill has been envisioned with Bangladesh as its focus.

Also, now that Assam, Arunachal, Mizoram, Tripura, Meghalaya and Nagaland have been kept out of the Bill's purview, it is clear that the BJP's target is undoing Muslim immigration into Bengal. It has now stepped back from the Northeast simply because it is investing too much in the region in developing a new votebank and strengthening its footprint. Massive protests have already taken place in the Northeast, especially in Assam, where ethnic groups have raised concerns about the burden of "illegal migrants" being passed on to their State alone and it being contradictory to the spirit of the Assam Accord and the just-released National Register of Citizens (NRC) list. The Assamese argue that the Bill granting citizenship to Hindu refugees from across the border till the cutoff year of 2014 would swamp Ahom identity and the right of indigenous people over their land, opportunities and resources. The Conrad Sangma-led Meghalaya Democratic Alliance (MDA), where BJP is a coalition partner, had earlier sought an immediate review while the Mizos feared a massive influx by Buddhist Chakmas. The indigenous people, be it the Assamese, Khasis or the Nagas, argue that the Northeastern States are yet to recover from the influx of Hindu Bengalis from 1971 and, of course, the subsequent illegal Muslim immigrants. They equate all refugees to the drought of economic opportunities for locals and are deeply distrustful of any migration policy. So now that these States are out of the Bill, it effectively applies only to Bengal. Combined with NRC, which is intended to review the status of naturalised settlers, the Bill clearly seeks to loosen up the Muslim votebank in Bengal, which has almost a monolithic loyalty to the Trinamool Congress. The BJP might use the Hindu refugees like the Congress did the Muslim ones but both encourage alienation of locals rather than integration. What everybody seems to forget is that for all our professed secularism, we are carrying the ghosts of Partition. That explains why communalisation is an easy gamble. We cannot afford to derail the peace by stoking such sentiments.

A shipless Navy

India has an ocean when other nations just have seas but it is not doing a great job of protecting its naval interests



When Admiral Karambir Singh bemoaned the lack of funds to the Navy, he stated not just a fact of life but also hinted at just how poorly India has treated its maritime force. This is peculiar given not just India's huge coastal border and the need to protect it but also the need to project itself as a power in the Indian Ocean Region (IOR). Indian interests in the IOR and that of its geographic neighbours are being challenged by the eastern neighbour giant, China, which has been busy acquiring assets across the IOR.

China's "String of Pearls" is one that can potentially be used to strangulate India economically and militarily in case of a potential future conflict with assets like Gwadar in Pakistan. Sri Lanka's Hambantota Port is the most telling example of how China is developing a form of economic imperialism and the potential of deploying that against India. India's dwindling allocation to the Navy as a percentage of all defence funds has the sea service upset, and rightly so, from 18 per cent of overall funds in 2012-13 to 13 per cent in 2019-20. While some could dismiss this as inter-service rivalry and the constant jostling inside the forces for money, a reality in all large military powers, the Indian Navy is currently moth-eaten. New projects have taken eons, best exemplified by the inordinate gestation and commissioning process for the Project 15 and 15A guided missile destroyers. By the time the Project 15B "Vishakhapatnam-class" ships come into service in 2021-22, India's 10 modern guided missile cruisers will be outnumbered by China's 34 Type 52C, 52D and Type 55 Destroyers. Even for coastal defence, a decision to purchase modern minesweepers have continued for two decades.

The Indian Navy, however, does need to share some blame with an unhealthy obsession with aircraft carriers, a need for power projection that has cost us. Carriers are inordinately expensive, take years to produce and in the Indian context, are of little tactical or strategic value against China, although things are slightly different against Pakistan. India should concentrate on rapidly building up its submarine and smaller surface vessel fleet, which with modern weapons can punch well above their weight. India is an old maritime power and we have an ocean when other nations just have seas. We should be proud of that and protect our interests at all costs.

Graded confusion

The new evaluation system of the Delhi university, which is an amalgam of absolute and relative grading systems, is bizarre and is bound to affect academic standards



SHOBHIT MAHAJAN

Confusion (noun): The state of being bewildered or unclear in one's mind about something. This is how the dictionary defines "confusion." There certainly seems to be a lot of it currently in the hallowed corridors of the University of Delhi. No, "graded" does not refer to a gradual onset of bewilderment; it is about the complete lack of clarity in the evaluation of academic competence.

Recently, the University of Delhi notified new rules for evaluation. The university, which had hitherto been giving absolute marks to students, moved to a grading system. However, the rules governing the conversion of marks to grades, as decided by the university, are bizarre to say the least.

To get an idea of what the changes are, it is important to recapitulate how evaluation was previously done here. Examinations were evaluated and percentage marks were given in each subject. These marks were then moderated — a process, which contrary to the dictionary meaning of the word, essentially meant that the marks were scaled up in case the students did not do well.

This kind of moderation is something everyone is familiar with. Every year, in response to newspaper reports of a "difficult" paper, the Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) agrees to "moderate" the results. This leads to an inordinate number of students getting extremely high marks, in some cases they score 100 per cent marks even in subjects like History.

Massive grade inflation, which results from this innocuously named process of massaging the results, has been the norm in the Delhi University, too, for a number of years now. This form of inflation, like its economic counterpart, is obviously corrosive to the academic well-being of the university.

If this assault on academic standards was not bad enough, this year onwards, the evaluation system has undergone another change, which is truly disastrous. The University Grants Commission (UGC) had asked all universities to introduce the grading system from the 2015-16 academic session. The grading scheme ranges from Outstanding (O) to Fail (F). That by itself is not a problem if the conversion of the raw scores in the examination to the grade was either absolute (as has been the norm in many Indian universities) or if the grades are given on a relative scale where the grades only indicate the student's position relative to the entire class (as was suggested by the UGC). This is the norm in most universities in the US as well as some institutes in the country. There is nothing inherently good or bad about either of these systems if they are followed consistently.

However, the University of Delhi, in its wisdom, has decided to come up with an amalgam of absolute and relative grading systems, thereby making a mess of what the grades mean. For instance, a student will get an "O" grade if his/her marks (they have



already been scaled up/moderated) are more than the lower of 90 per cent or mean+2.5 times the standard deviation.

The 90 per cent condition obviously assumes an absolute grading scheme whereby one's score is 90 per cent. The second condition is related to a relative grading scheme. This formula assumes that the marks obtained by a class comprising a reasonable number of students would follow what is called a bell-shaped or normal distribution.

In this distribution system, one can compute the average or mean marks obtained as well as the standard deviation, which is a measure of the spread around the mean. Thus, a larger standard deviation means that the marks are more spread out around the mean than in a distribution with the same mean but smaller standard deviation.

One of the properties of a normal distribution is that we can say what percentage of the population (in this case the students) would be in various regions of the marks distribution. Thus, a student whose marks are mean + 2.5 times standard deviation would have higher marks than more than 99 per cent of the students.

One can already see that this curious mixture of absolute

THIS CHANGE IS ACTUALLY MORE PROBLEMATIC THAN SIMPLY SOME NUMBERS. A MAJORITY OF THE STUDENTS IN THE SCIENCES ULTIMATELY END UP TEACHING IN SCHOOLS. WHAT THE UNIVERSITY HAS EFFECTIVELY DONE IS TO ENSURE THAT THE STANDARD REQUIRED TO GET A DEGREE IS LOWERED. THE IMPACT THIS WOULD HAVE ON SCHOOL TEACHING CAN ONLY BE IMAGINED

and relative grading can lead to a strange situation. In principle, one could get an "O" grade even as he/she scores low marks. Consider a class where the mean score is 45 and standard deviation is four. Then anyone with more than 55 marks will get an "O." Looking at the student's grades, one would have no idea whether the "O" signifies absolute (90 per cent) or relative standing.

The impact of this at the lower end of the grades is even more disastrous. A student needs the lower of 30 per cent or (mean — standard deviation) to pass the course. Now, if the grading was purely relative, what this would mean is that about 16 per cent of the students would necessarily fail. However, the rule stipulates the lower of the two figures. Thus, if the mean and standard deviation is such that the number comes out to be more than 30 per cent, anyone with 30 per cent would pass. On the other hand, if that number comes out to be less than 30 per cent, then those marks are all that are needed to pass. Thus, 30 per cent is the maximum in any paper that would be required by a student to pass the exam.

Hitherto, the percentage required to pass any exam in the

university was 40 per cent. This has now been effectively brought down to a maximum of 30 per cent. One can argue that there is nothing sacrosanct about 40 per cent and it is as arbitrary a number as any other. This may be strictly true but what is undeniable is that this would lead to a lowering of academic standards.

This change is actually more problematic than simply some numbers. A majority of the students in the sciences ultimately end up teaching in schools. What the university has effectively done is to ensure that the standard required to get a degree is lowered. The impact this would have on school teaching can only be imagined.

The University of Delhi was only recently deemed as an Institute of Eminence. The philosophy behind this controversial scheme is to endow some institutions to improve their positions in the global university rankings, which seem to have acquired a talisman-like aura with our education planners. Mandating a lowering of academic standards, as one is witnessing in higher education, is certainly an odd way to achieve that objective.

(The writer is professor of physics and astrophysics, University of Delhi)

SOUNDBITE

There are 15 to 16 cases against me. When you look at a soldier, he will have lots of medals on his chest. Every single case is a medal for me.



Congress leader —Rahul Gandhi

There is a universal wish in most religions and in most parts of the world to wipe out old-fashioned practices when literacy becomes widespread.



Historian —William Dalrymple

Not standing up to a President who abuses power would set a wrong precedent, and that is not good for the future of the country.



Indian-American Congresswoman —Pramila Jayapal

I thought the Finance Minister said she does not eat onions, she is not bothered... What does she eat? Does she eat avocado? She does not eat onions.



Congress leader —P Chidambaram

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Women deserve respect

Sir — This refers to the editorial, "Crying shame" (December 2). There is a widespread protest in various parts of the country demanding public lynching, chemical castration and capital punishment for perpetrators of the brutal sexual assault and grisly murder of a young veterinarian in Hyderabad. Some of our politicians, too, have demanded the same.

At this juncture, my heart goes out to the young girl of Kathua in Jammu & Kashmir, who was abducted, raped for days and then murdered. At that time, the arrests of the accused saw some heartless and communal-minded elements opposing the crackdown. The gravest shock was the presence of people with political affiliations taking part in these protests.

For long, I have been against capital punishment for rapists. When confronted with conscience-jolting acts of depravity, it is but normal for people to act in anger and revulsion. Instead, the need is to address the patriarchal inequality inscribed in daily life against women.

A blueprint to revive the economy

The Gross Domestic Product (GDP) growth for the second quarter of the financial year 2019-20 registered a further fall, slipping to 4.5 per cent from the first quarter rate of five per cent. The informal sector, which was neither indexed, monitored or taxed, never figured in its computation. Experts feel that the slowdown was always more pronounced in the unorganised sector, which is far more dependent on cash. As is wont, Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman chose to play down the crisis in Parliament and sought to reel out extraneous details and figures. Truth be told, the Indian economy is faced with a catastrophic recession today. Core sector output has shrunk with associated effects on allied manufacturing activities.

Private businesses, which had been in expansion mode prior to the onset of the slowdown, have now started scaling back capacity utilisation to minimise systematic risk. And if revenue, whether from sales or investment, dips any further, many small firms will be forced to pull their shutters down. Peremptory cut in corporate tax and a stimulus package for the realty sector were reportedly meant to encourage investment and mitigate liquidity crunch. Bereft of budgetary leverage, the Government then indulged in the forcible appropriation



of the contingency fund of the RBI and is now in a hurry to forsake its ownership of profit-making PSUs. The question, however is: Will the tax cut or stimulus engineer a spurt in growth? Or will it lead to a pick-up in consumption/demand? Or is it that under the pretext of structural adjustments, the Government has gone overboard to shield the corporates from existing unpredictability? Only time will unravel the truth. For the time being, only a well-pronged strategy can resurrect the economy.

Haridasan Rajan Kozhikode

Overworked cops

Sir — As per data released by the Bureau of Police Research and Development (BPRD) on July 2, 4,000 police personnel protect about 300 VIPs in Telangana. The

VIPs include 17 Lok Sabha MPs, six Rajya Sabha MPs, 120 MLAs and 40 MLCs, among others.

The Chief Minister, State Ministers, a junior Union Minister, Speaker of the Legislative Assembly, Chairman of the Council, judges and

bureaucrats are all included in the VIP list.

The scenario, however, changes when it comes to protecting the common man. According to the BPRD's data, 131 cops take care of a population of one lakh in Telangana as against the national average of 193 cops per one lakh population.

Also, a single policeman mans an area of 2.5 square km, much below the national average of a 1.27 personnel per square kilometre. Telangana is also hamstrung by the lack of police personnel. In fact, it faces the highest shortfall of cops after Uttar Pradesh, Bihar and West Bengal in the country.

And the entire nation, including the media, leaders in the Opposition, activists and the public spewed venom at the police department for its poor handling of the veterinarian's case who was raped, murdered and then burnt. Did the media ever bother to highlight the poor conditions under which a cop, in any part of this country, lives, works or resides?

P Arithanth Secunderabad

Send your feedback to: letterstopioneer@gmail.com

FIRST COLUMN

A golden investment

Putting money in gold has its pros and cons. However, including it in the portfolio is vital to hedge against volatility and inflation



HIMA BINDU KOTA

Indians have a major love for gold and hold it in high regard as a safe investment option and a nest egg for future generations, especially women. It is estimated that a large chunk of the 700-800 tonnes of gold that India imports goes into making jewellery as women and families traditionally like to think of it as a substitute for money. Even now, gold has not lost its glitter among the host of investment options available like stocks, bonds, mutual funds and real estate, to name a few, as historically, it offers a perfect hedge and stability when the markets do not. This is because it has an inverse relationship to equity investments.

For instance, if the equity markets start performing poorly, gold would have performed well. Adding the yellow metal to an investment portfolio forms a buffer against overall volatility. Additionally, putting money in gold is worthwhile because it is an inflation-beating investment. Over a period of time, the return on gold investment is in line with the rate of inflation.

Increasing political and economic uncertainty in the country and globally is a harsh reality of the times we are living in and it affects the economic environment everywhere. Hence, gold is considered a safe haven in ambiguous circumstances. In fact, history is full of falling empires, political coups and the collapse of currencies. During such times, investors who held gold were able to successfully protect their wealth and in some cases, even use the commodity to escape from the turmoil. Consequently, whenever there is news that events might lead to global economic uncertainty, investors often buy gold as a safe haven.

Any rational investor should include the yellow metal in his portfolio to provide stability and diversify against sharp movement in equity and bond prices.

People can invest in Gold Exchange Traded Funds (ETFs). These are simple products that combine the flexibility of stocks and the simplicity of gold as an investment. ETFs trade on the cash market of the stock exchanges, like any other company stock. They can be bought and sold continuously at market prices. ETFs are excellent passive instruments that are based on gold prices and invest in bullion. Because they are backed by gold, ETFs have complete transparency. Due to their unique structure and creation mechanism, ETFs have much lower expenses as compared to physical gold holding. Gold ETFs are ideal for those who would like to invest in the yellow metal but do not want to suffer the hassles and bear the costs of storing and safeguarding it.

Gold equity funds invest in the shares of firms that are involved in gold mining. These are pure equity funds and are often international in nature since there are not many listed gold mining firms in India. Like any other stock fund, they can deliver much higher returns than pure gold. But when gold prices are low, mining companies shut mines as the cost of production is higher than realisation costs. Stocks of such mining companies were battered for many years. Investors have to deal with three risks in these funds. First, returns from these funds are dependent on gold price movement. Second, these gold funds invest in stocks, which means they carry the risk associated with shares. Third, there is also currency exchange risk. This means if the rupee appreciates, returns can get affected. Gold equity funds are best suited for sophisticated investors and are not ideal for a retail investor.

With the advent of the Sovereign Gold Bond (SGB) scheme investing in the yellow metal has become much easier and convenient now. With the Union Government's SGB scheme, an investor can earn an assured interest rate, eliminating risk and cost of storage. The SGB 2018-19 Series-I has a subscription price of ₹3,114 per gram and an individual can buy a maximum of 4 kg. SGBs provide attractive interest rates with an asset appreciation opportunity. The annual interest rate offered is 2.5 per cent and the interest is tax free. The redemption is linked to gold prices. There is 100 per cent elimination of risk and cost of storage. Also, SGBs are exempt from capital gains tax, if held till maturity. The bonds carry a tenure of eight years with an option to exit from the fifth year onwards. SGBs are the most efficient way of putting money in gold from an investment point of view if you can stay put for five years or more. Importantly, indexation benefit is available if the bond is transferred before maturity. Gold bonds score high on liquidity as they are tradable on the exchanges. Also, they can be collateral against a loan, an aspect that is missing in ETFs.

Like every investment, putting money in gold also has its pros and cons. However, including it in the portfolio is vital to hedge against volatility and inflation. Depending upon the economic, financial and political situation, the level of diversification should range anywhere between five per cent to 30 per cent.

(The writer is Assistant Professor, Amity University)

POINTCOUNTERPOINT

I DON'T EAT A LOT OF ONIONS AND GARLIC, SO DON'T WORRY (ABOUT PRICE RISE AND SHORTAGE). MY FAMILY DOESN'T HAVE MUCH TO DO WITH ONIONS.
 —FINANCE MINISTER
 NIRMALA SITHARAMAN



THE FINANCE MINISTER SAID YESTERDAY SHE DOES NOT EAT ONIONS, SHE IS NOT BOTHERED... WHAT DOES SHE EAT? DOES SHE EAT AVOCADO?
 —FORMER FINANCE MINISTER
 P CHIDAMBARAM

Unshakeable courage

Twenty five years after Latur was jolted by an earthquake that left a trail of destruction, several thousand women affected by the tragedy are recognised as transformational leaders



MOIN QAZI

Over 26 years ago, on September 30, 1993, Latur district in the Marathwada region of Maharashtra was jolted by an earthquake that left a trail of mass destruction. It ravaged hundreds of villages and uprooted multitudes of people.

Today, several thousand women among those severely affected by the tragedy are recognised as transformational leaders. How these semi-literate and impoverished women converted adversity into opportunity and finally prosperity is a saga of grit and tenacity. The glue that bonded them and provided the necessary impetus towards leading a revolution was a passionate and indefatigable social entrepreneur, Prema Gopalan. Schooled and trained in disaster management, she began reconstruction and rehabilitation work among these women and in 1998 formally launched Swayam Shikshan Prayog (SSP) (self-education for empowerment) with a larger and long-term mission of self-empowerment and self-learning.

The crisis and the consequent social mobilisation for reconstruction of houses gave people the opportunity and impetus for large, community-centred efforts and started creating models for building community resilience. SSP started out as a not-for-profit, helping bridge the gap between the community and the Government following the temblor. It worked to enable women from the community to monitor the relief effort and act as intermediaries by giving feedback to the Government on the progress of building work, selection of beneficiaries and what was needed on the ground.

Prema realised the potential of these rural women and believed they could grow into planners in local development and governance. Building on their capacities, she steered them through a broad-based development strategy of economic and social empowerment. It helped her conceptualise the broad vision for SSP.

The objective of SSP is to promote inclusive and sustainable community development among low income women in climate-threatened areas by building robust ecosystems that could enable them to access skills training, financial and digital literacy and technology and marketing platforms. They have become equipped to navigate the challenges posed by climate change, natural disasters, agriculture, health and sanitation. They also have the negotiating skills to deal with Government agencies and local self-Government bodies.

Women are at the centre of SSP's work, creating the tools, services, and networks they need to break through complex and entrenched situations of poverty and the caprices of the climate. The purpose of its partnerships — spanning entrepreneurship, health, agriculture, technology and financial services — is to create sustainable solutions that can be broadly implemented to improve the lives of women living in poor, rural communities.

Prema believes that rural women should be acknowledged for who they really are — a new generation of dynamic entrepreneurs, job-creators and economy drivers, committed to bringing a change in their communities. She has steered thousands of women in the most vulnerable communities in drought and flood-affected villages by partnering them with global and local businesses to set up sustainable last-mile social enterprises in clean energy, sanitation, basic health services, nutrition and safe agriculture. They have transitioned from self-employment to diversify their ventures, aggregate into

“HOW THESE SEMI-LITERATE AND IMPOVERISHED WOMEN CONVERTED ADVERSITY INTO OPPORTUNITY AND FINALLY PROSPERITY. IS A SAGA OF GRIT AND TENACITY. THE GLUE THAT BONDED THEM AND PROVIDED THE NECESSARY IMPETUS TOWARDS LEADING A REVOLUTION WAS A PASSIONATE AND INDEFATIGABLE SOCIAL ENTREPRENEUR, PREMA GOPALAN”



value chains and mentor thousands of others to get on the path of entrepreneurship

Prema is a recipient of Social Entrepreneur of the Year Award, 2018 of the Schwab Foundation and the SSP has received a large number of global and national awards including the Equator Prize, 2017 from UNDP and UNFCCC Momentum for Change Award, 2016 for Communities and Climate Change.

One of the key issues that Prema and her team are targeting is climate change and have identified six impact areas. They are linked to agriculture, water and energy resources, food security, health, climate-related natural disasters and climate-induced migration.

“Women can reverse climate change impact for the poor by leading from the front,” says Prema. Among the impoverished, women face the brunt of risks associated with climate change since they are primary managers of energy, water, food and essential services. Hence clean energy products dominate social businesses of these women. Prema's team is enabling thousands of women to succeed in remote markets by selling everything — from solar chargers for mobile phones to more efficient cooking stoves — that can lift a rural household out of extreme poverty. The businesses are leveraging the last-mile rural women's entrepreneurship network for awareness generation on clean energy technologies and access to products and services.

The SSP model comprises four ventures: A resilience fund for women-led businesses; a fraternity of 5,000 self-help groups networked through federations; a rural school of entrepreneurship and leadership for women which provides business, financial and marketing skills; and a market aggregator that provides warehousing, branding, marketing and distribution services to last-mile business

women. The consortium nurtures the value chains and entrepreneurial ecosystems that women need to succeed in remote and opaque markets.

Rural women are the human face of poverty and development. They toil on their farms but lack access to land titles and are therefore, not recognised as farmers. This, in turn, denies them access to finance to update their farm, training technology and markets. SSP's women entrepreneurs are taking their communities forward, reshaping the local economy, securing food self-sufficiency, driving local initiatives for increasing incomes, creating jobs, building access to key assets in times of crisis and creating a lasting impact. As a result, they are no longer perceived as beneficiaries; instead they have emerged as partners.

There has also been a failure of agricultural strategy over the last decade, as food crops have gradually been abandoned in favour of cash crops such as sugar cane, which is more profitable but is highly water-intensive. In such a scenario, sustainable and diversified agriculture is the only solution to stop the deepening of India's agrarian crisis, especially since the impacts of climate change are now visible. Water insecurity lies at the core of the crisis. Shifting to organic farming (which increases soil fertility) to grow drought-resistant varieties that provide additional incomes and household nutritional security while simultaneously enhancing biodiversity, is a viable option.

One of the most revolutionary contributions of SSP is in bringing about this shift to sustainable farming and protection of water and natural resources. Men are losing interest in farming but women continue to work the land. The SSP has empowered women farmers in climate-resilient agricultural practices. These women are now active decision-makers on core issues

like growing crops, conserving natural resource and increasing biodiversity. In this arid zone, these women collectives have made farming breakthroughs possible. Through the years, SSP has created large-scale programmes aimed at development centered on women's participation and leadership. SSP has also built a support system of village-level networks of entrepreneurs known as *sakhis* (friends). An innovative intervention is in rural health care. SSP selects and trains women who are landless but have basic education, are interested in health care and community service. These *Arogya Sakhis* are community members who receive basic training and live and work in the communities they serve.

“These women conduct a series of preventive tests using mobile health devices, capture the data by using a tablet and upload the results on the cloud server developed by our technology partner,” says Prema. The data is then shared with a doctor, who analyses it and provides a report and prescriptions over the cloud. The *Sakhis* then guide the patients on the treatment and precautions to be taken. Wherever needed, they are referred to hospitals for further treatment.

The Government, too, has learnt from these initiatives and public health programmes are modelled round them. The community health workers, including the Accredited Social Health Activists (ASHA) and the Auxiliary Nurse Midwife, are indeed the foundation of our public health care system and have played a central role in its success, thereby reducing maternal and child mortality. ASHAs are central to India's strategy to improve maternal and child health and are selected by the village they serve.

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

Time for serious introspection

As rape-cum-murders and voyeurs watching gruesome videos of crimes on porn sites become more rampant, society needs to mull over the reasons for such moral decay and later augment its institutions to restore ethics



PURVA BHATT

It sends chills down my spine when I think of the fateful night of November 27. As usual, after a heinous rape case makes the headlines, the country wakes up from its slumber, shakes its head in sympathy and expresses outrage, shock and anger.

The nation enters into a zone of empathy and the oft-heard statements are, “It could've been my daughter, my wife or my sister; it could have been me; maybe I should avoid coming back home late at night; maybe I shouldn't send my daughter to another city to pursue her education; maybe she shouldn't drive a two-wheeler, maybe she

should learn martial arts; maybe she should just die in the womb.” Such gender inequalities in this process find both confirmatory bias and social legitimisation, which again become a cause for concern.

We Indians are highly sensitive, emotional and empathic people, yet we are the ones with a transient memory. We vehemently vent our angst and frustration with a few candle marches, displaying our momentary spur of rebellion and then get caught in the daily humdrum of our lives.

However, the fact remains that our society is facing moral decay! While on one hand the majority of the nation was mourning over and petrified by the unfortunate rape and cold-blooded murder on the streets of Hyderabad, on the other hand, the name of the victim was searched more than eight million times on a porn website by voyeurs and perverts.

Where most of us might again eloquently pour out our vexation, exasperation, anger, through a few social media posts, rallies and march-

es, the “illusion of introspection” deflects us from pondering upon the *de facto* cause of such savagery.

It diverts us from perusing social patterns by conveniently passing on the buck and putting it all down to the State's inefficiency. The State ensures a “public prosecutor” bearing in mind the underlying assumption that the act is a breach not only of legal but also of social laws and the defendant poses a threat to society.

Then how can society behave like a passive observer that is dependent upon the State's discretion, by shifting all the responsibility to the State? The idea of what is morally “wrong” and “right” has been intricately discussed in Indian society. Our society talks about ethically right, morally right, socially right even universally right conduct and notions in much more detail than any other civilisation.

These weren't just topics of discussions by a few intellectuals but were principles understood and practised by the masses in their daily lives. The philosophy of dharma (often intentionally confused with

religion) was one such concept. Our society inculcated a sense of ethical, moral and social values through various social institutions such as family, education and even occupation.

The State should be encircled, held responsible and asked all the inconvenient questions. However, what is also important is for members of society to wake up and own up to the issue of moral decay. Politicians and the State's other institutions must be held accountable but not just when such saturation limits are crossed.

The State should have been questioned by society even when it removed moral science from school curriculum; the State should have been interrogated when it took upon itself to decide society's curriculum, pedagogy and syllabus, even when it took control of our social and religious institutions.

Decadence and depravity in any society is not just the concern of politicians, to be discussed and deliberated upon to form corrective policies. It is for the society to introspect, discuss and correct.

Sadly, society has let the State systematically encroach upon much of its authority and responsibility, consequently leading to the weakening of social norms and sanctions. When was the last time we discussed in our families social values, moral consciousness, ethical conduct, the idea of collectivism, the thought of the peace mantra *Sarve bhavantu sukhinah*?

There has been a systematic demolition of prominent institutions which in various ways maintained the moral density of society. Society, after ceding its powers to the State, started behaving like a beneficiary of its pity and benevolence. However, society cannot shed all responsibility and just pass the buck to the State.

Its members need to question their role in the decadence that has crept into society. While the nation ensures uniformity of legal norms and sanctions on all its citizens, why do the deterrents against committing crime have varying effects on different individuals? We need to ask ourselves a simple question, whether our

fathers or any other men we admire, would have ever committed such a gruesome act even if there was no fear of punishment for rape? The answer in most cases would have been a resounding “no.”

However, the perpetrators of the barbaric act still did it, with seemingly little or no fear of strict legal norms. Therefore, as a sociologist, I would argue that the power of social norms is often more persuasive than legal norms. The aforementioned argument therefore again puts the ball in the court of society which needs to carefully examine its role, its moral decay and the power that it has ceded to the State.

This does not mean that society must develop its mechanisms to ensure justice, it would be in complete binary opposition to the argument presented here. What society needs is to introspect over reasons for such moral decay and later augment its institutions to restore ethical density.

(The writer is an Assistant Professor in Humanities and Social Science and researcher, MNIT)



A TOXIC ALLIANCE SHUNNED BY BORIS

The US President's departure from London came as a relief to Boris Johnson as Donald Trump is a fan of Brexit and praises the Prime Minister as the man to deliver it. His presence in UK was an electoral hazard for the Conservatives as some voters admire Trump but most do not. It is no recommendation for the Tory leader to be liked by a man notorious for dishonesty, ignorance, narcissism and chauvinism. (The Guardian editorial)

Sensex slips as RBI surprises with status quo

Bank stocks bear the brunt

PTI ■ MUMBAI

Equity benchmarks closed lower on Thursday after the Reserve Bank unexpectedly left interest rates unchanged amid slowing growth.

Citing prevailing inflation pressure and rising food prices, the six-member Monetary Policy Committee (MPC), headed by RBI Governor Shaktikanta Das, unanimously voted to hold the key repo rate at 5.15 per cent.

The stock markets, which had opened in the green on rate cut hopes, tumbled after the monetary policy announcement.

Trading sentiment was further dampened after the RBI cut its GDP growth forecast to 5 per cent for 2019-20 from the earlier estimate of 6.1 per cent.

After swinging between gains and losses, the 30-share BSE Sensex finally ended 70.70 points or 0.17 per cent lower at 40,779.59.

Similarly, the 50-scrip NSE Nifty settled with a loss of 24.80 points or 0.21 per cent at

12,018.40.

On the Sensex chart, Bharti Airtel, Tata Steel, IndusInd Bank, HeroMoto Corp and Tata Motors were among the major laggards, declining up to 2.96 per cent.

Rate-sensitive auto, bank and real estate counters closed on a flat-to-negative note. In value terms, bank stocks accounted for most of the Sensex losses.

TCS, ITC, L&T, Infosys, Tech Mahindra and HDFC were the only gainers, surging up to 2.04 per cent.

"It was an unexpected move with the RBI keeping the repo rate unchanged at 5.15 percent, as the market expected 25 bps cut in repo rate. With the RBI following an inflation targeting regime, the central bank focused on maintaining the inflation rate within the target range."

"The rising food inflation posed a challenge to the central bank in cutting the rates... However, by maintaining the accommodative stance, there is room for rate cuts in the future," said Deepthi Mary

Mathew, economist at Geojit

Financial Services.

Sectorally, the BSE metal index fell the most, followed by basic materials and energy.

Capital goods, IT and tech indices moved higher.

In the broader market, BSE midcap and largecap indices under-performed the benchmark. BSE smallcap index closed almost flat.

Crude oil benchmark Brent Futures rose 0.6 per cent to USD 63.38 per barrel.

After five consecutive cuts in interest rates this year, the six-member MPC unanimously voted to hold the key repo rate at 5.15 per cent and reverse repo rate at 4.90 per cent.

Bankers and economists had widely expected the central bank to cut rates for a sixth time to support a slowing economy, whose growth rate slipped further to a six-year low of 4.5 per cent in the September quarter from 7 per cent a year back.

RUPEE REBOUNDS

Meanwhile, the Indian rupee rose sharply in the last hour of trade to settle 24 paise higher at 71.29 to the US dollar on Thursday after the RBI promised to continue with its monetary policy.

The Indian unit traded on a flat note for a better part of the session but briefly fell post RBI monetary policy announcement. It recovered swiftly mainly in the last hour of trade to close at 71.29, up 24 paise over its previous close.

The rupee's rise was also supported by weaker dollar against key global currencies.

The dollar index, which gauges the greenback's strength against a basket of six currencies, was down 0.16 per cent at 97.49.

"Indian rupee gains in line with other Asian peers. Rupee edged higher after Reserve Bank of India left the policy rate at 5.15, the first pause after five consecutive rate cuts, amid rising inflation expectations," HDFC Securities said.

The 10-year government bond yield was at 6.60 per cent, up over 2 per cent.

"India's sovereign bonds declined the most in more than two months, the benchmark 10-year bond yield bonds rose 13 basis points to 6.60 per cent, after central bank kept policy rate unchanged... The MPC also decided to continue with the accommodative stance as long as it is necessary to revive growth," it added.

CarDekho raises USD 70 mn to expand operations

New Delhi (PTI): Auto portal CarDekho on Thursday said it had raised USD 70 million (about ₹500 crore) in Series D funding, led by China's Ping An's Global Voyager Fund.

Ping An is one of the world's largest financial services companies and is also the majority shareholder of China's largest auto portal Autohome.

Sunley House Capital Management, a subsidiary of global private equity firm Advent International, also joined the funding round along with existing investors Sequoia India and Hillhouse.

"These funds will be used to further strengthen company's transaction businesses and expand its international footprint," CarDekho said in a statement.

The company recently started its operations in the second country in Southeast Asia by acquiring the Philippines operations of Carmudi.

CarDekho had launched its Indonesia operations in 2016 under the brand name OTO.com.

"With the latest fundraising, we will continue to strengthen our domestic and international businesses and will aggressively work towards becoming the largest personal mobility ecosystem in the country," CarDekho CEO and co-founder Amit Jain said.

Realty players disappointed by RBI decision to hold rates

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Cash-starved realtors expressed disappointment over the RBI's decision on Thursday to keep the benchmark lending rate unchanged and said the apex bank should have cut repo rate by 1 percentage point to boost housing sales and economic growth.

"India Inc. was expecting a rate cut of 100 basis points instead of small tinkering such as a rate cut of 25 basis points, which would have provided a boost to the government's recent initiatives to kick-start GDP growth," NAREDCO president Niranjan Hiranandani said.

"The decision to wait and watch the outplay of previous cuts will go against the current sentiments. The markets overall are disappointed," he said, adding that real estate developers are facing liquidity crunch.

Knight Frank India CMD Shishir Bajjal said the RBI's decision to not lower interest rate has come "as a surprise and a bit of a disappointment to the industry".

"Lower interest rate would have helped push up credit demand and investment in the economy, aiding overall economic growth. It would have provided much required reprieve to some ailing sectors like real estate and auto," he added.

Anarock chairman Anuj Puri said, "From a real estate point of view, rate cuts are obviously always welcome as they help improve overall sentiment. The expected rate cut of 25 basis points would have caused home loan values to fall below 8 per cent for first time ever".

Sanjay Dutt, MD & CEO, Tata Realty & Infrastructure Ltd, said, "This time while the focus of the RBI remains to be on reviving the economy, we are disappointed to see no change in the policy rate".

The real estate industry, in particular, has been facing some difficult times and with inventories piling up the need to push demand and encourage purchase is now more than ever, he added.

However, Anshuman Magazine, chairman & CEO, India, South East Asia, Middle East & Africa, CBRE, said the RBI's decision to keep the repo rate unchanged was an indication towards the government's focus on the evolving inflation-growth dynamics.

JLL India CEO & country head Ramesh Nair said the central bank, by keeping the rate unchanged, had recognised that the need of the hour was to infuse confidence about the economic growth through a holistic approach.

"The decision to maintain policy rates augurs well for the

economy as the recently introduced policy reforms will take time to pan out and materialise. The economy needs to absorb the impact of the recently introduced reforms and the previous rate cuts. The real estate sector is expected to pick up due to the favourable policy incentives and the faster transmission of previous rate cuts," he added.

With concern over rising food prices, Elara Technologies CEO Dhruv Agarwala said, "Under the circumstances, the apex bank had little option but to maintain status quo with regard to the repo rate."

News Corp and Softbank-backed Elara Technologies owns Housing.com, PropTiger.com and Makaan.com real estate portals. Sanjay Prasad, managing director & chairman, Colliers International India, said the government along with industry experts should identify and resolve other sensitive issues effecting the sector.

Gaurs group MD Manoj Gaur stressed on effective transmission of 135 basis point cut in repo rate this year.

"Industry was expecting a rate cut as that would have somewhat provided a positive sentiment to the housing sector. Any positive news on borrowing interest rates would have provided the sector an upward trigger," said Samir Jasuja, Founder and MD, PropEquity.

NIFTY 50

SCRIP	OPEN	High	LOW	LTP	CHANGE
NIFTY 50	12071.25	12081.20	11998.75	12018.40	-24.80
ZEE5	286.05	302.30	283.40	298.75	17.40
TCS	2083.00	2126.80	2068.35	2120.20	41.70
ITC	243.15	247.50	243.10	247.00	3.85
LT	1294.00	1313.00	1285.15	1301.10	16.00
BRITANNIA	3064.40	3094.65	3041.00	3085.00	35.75
INFY	706.45	715.90	703.80	714.10	5.25
WIPRO	247.20	244.90	241.10	243.70	1.50
TECHM	755.00	766.75	752.10	763.20	4.40
TITAN	1180.00	1204.60	1175.00	1180.70	6.05
ADANIPTS	368.00	373.60	365.15	368.15	0.30
NESTLEIND	14395.65	14395.65	14220.00	14300.00	-6.25
HDFC	2309.20	2333.55	2300.00	2321.25	-1.15
RELIANCE	1574.00	1579.75	1544.00	1551.00	-1.70
UPL	571.95	574.80	565.00	569.60	-0.65
EICHERMOT	21690.00	21690.00	21325.00	21384.05	-23.95
BAJFINANCE	3990.85	4034.00	3968.00	3982.30	-8.55
ASIANPAINT	1717.40	1738.15	1707.00	1716.00	-4.30
HCLTECH	563.80	567.65	557.15	561.35	-1.40
DREDDY	2879.80	2880.00	2849.10	2870.00	-7.85
M&M	525.55	531.15	522.00	524.00	-1.55
KOTACBANK	1651.25	1660.00	1640.35	1646.35	-4.90
ICICIBANK	532.55	537.50	526.05	527.45	-1.80
HINDUNILVR	2047.80	2047.80	2027.30	2037.20	-10.80
HDFCBANK	1255.60	1254.75	1247.75	1244.90	-6.75
BAJAJ-AUTO	3240.00	3286.40	3225.85	3230.00	-21.15
NPL	116.75	115.25	113.85	114.00	-0.80
IOC	124.45	128.95	125.80	125.90	-0.95
BAJAJFINSV	9015.00	9030.25	8935.05	8955.00	-75.25
ONGC	129.20	130.40	128.55	128.90	-1.15
ULTRACEMCO	4202.15	4270.00	4146.35	4159.25	-37.90
POWERGRID	188.50	188.90	186.50	186.55	-1.85
MARUTI	7090.00	7125.15	6990.55	6995.00	-81.10
INFRATEL	252.70	256.80	244.10	245.60	-3.35
VEDL	145.00	145.10	141.40	142.15	-2.05
HINDALCO	199.05	201.45	197.25	198.10	-3.00
AXISBANK	743.00	745.00	725.00	728.00	-11.85
CIPLA	469.50	470.30	460.40	462.40	-7.60
SUNPHARMA	440.00	441.95	433.25	436.50	-7.20
GAIL	123.50	123.75	120.75	121.25	-2.00
SYBANK	63.00	64.00	60.85	61.95	-1.05
SBIN	343.00	344.60	335.15	336.00	-5.85
HEROMOTOCO	2445.00	2475.00	2391.00	2395.10	-43.90
TATAMOTORS	173.35	172.20	165.20	166.30	-3.10
GRASIM	780.00	789.85	766.90	770.90	-14.50
BPCL	495.00	499.90	490.30	491.50	-9.70
INDUSINDBK	1544.30	1548.90	1506.90	1508.80	-35.50
TATASTEEL	411.05	411.85	397.10	399.00	-10.30
BHARTIARTL	463.30	463.60	445.35	449.15	-12.25
COALINDIA	202.50	203.10	195.65	195.90	-6.85
JSWSTEEL	260.75	261.80	250.10	250.65	-9.15

BSE 500

SCRIP	Open	High	Low	LTP	RNAM
YEBANK	63.05	64.00	60.80	62.10	COALINDIA
HDFCAML	3179.00	3247.95	3172.50	3200.85	EDLEWEISS
INFY	707.10	716.10	704.30	714.65	MFSL
ZEE5	286.95	302.25	283.50	300.30	HINDALCO
RELIANCE	1579.00	1579.85	1544.00	1550.30	STAR
ICICIBANK	533.00	537.30	526.20	527.90	BEL
SBIN	343.00	344.35	335.05	336.25	GAIL
TCS	2065.00	2126.00	2065.00	2121.50	SRF
IBULHSGFIN	289.80	294.30	283.20	284.50	HCLTECH
PETRONET	276.00	277.25	271.15	272.10	M&M
TATAMOTORS	170.60	172.20	165.30	166.10	VOLTA
IDEA	7.63	7.64	7.01	7.31	GRUAS
L&TH	119.85	121.50	115.10	115.70	IDFCFIRSTB
POWERGRID	189.20	189.20	186.55	187.15	NMDC
HINDUNILVR	2040.00	2046.00	2028.00	2036.25	BRITANNIA
TATASTEEL	410.85	412.00	399.20	399.65	ADANIPHARMA
BHARTI	7088.00	7126.40	6988.90	7005.60	PVR
MARKET	464.20	464.20	445.05	447.20	BHEL
FINCABLES	362.10	362.10	345.00	349.50	UPL
RBLBANK	372.20	374.65	362.50	365.40	MARICO
TATAELXSI	808.50	867.95	807.45	862.50	RAJESHXEPHO
BANKBARODA	105.00	105.65	101.70	102.25	ULTRACEMCO
AXISBANK	745.00	745.00	725.15	729.50	GNFC
HDFCBANK	1254.10	1259.00	1240.10	1245.45	HDFCLIFE
INDIGO	1384.00	1393.35	1316.55	1320.20	DREDDY
HINDALSTEL	152.00	154.45	135.00	140.90	TATAMTRDVR
KOTACBANK	1655.05	1659.90	1640.50	1649.95	HEG
JSWSTEEL	260.05	261.25	250.05	251.30	EICHERMOT
TITAN	1182.00	1204.60	1175.60	1183.60	ABCAPITAL
COLPAL	1462.00	1465.25	1446.50	1457.15	BAJAJFINSV
INDUSINDBK	1545.00	1548.30	1506.45	1509.85	MOTHERSUAL
VEDL	145.20	145.50	141.45	142.45	WHIRLPOOL
BAJFINANCE	3995.00	4031.00	3970.00	3987.40	CONCOR
DLF	219.00	222.80	217.25	221.00	NBCCL
ITI	1655.55	1665.55	1613.00	1637.80	CANFINHOM
HDFC	2310.15	2332.75	2300.90	2325.45	BANDHANBANK
ITC	243.95	247.40	243.15	246.90	STRANSFIN

NIFTY NEXT 50

SCRIP	OPEN	High	LOW	LTP	CHANGE
NIFTY NEXT 50	28337.90	28399.85	28094.75	28145.55	-218.65
CONCOR	556.95	572.95	551.00	567.60	11.75
DABUR	456.10	466.85	455.60	466.50	8.70
STRANSFIN	1089.10	1123.85	1087.30	1108.20	19.10
BANDHANBANK	570.00	583.80	569.70	579.25	9.45
MCDOWELL-N	595.10	603.00	592.55	600.45	5.85
ICEL	1702.30	1726.85	1682.60	1703.45	11.70
PIG	1366.00	1384.90	1360.10	1370.00	6.20
DLF	220.25	222.90	217.70	220.75	0.50
BERGEPAINT	493.00	502.00	488.85	497.25	0.05
SHREECAM	2042.00	2015.55	2013.05	2029.60	-7.20
HINDZINC	213.00	213.95	211.00	211.25	-0.25
BIOCEN	287.20	289.25	283.90	286.75	-0.45
PEC	114.50	117.00	113.70	114.35	-0.20
SBILIFE	969.00	974.50	955.00	969.95	-2.30
BOSCHLTD	15739.00	15739.95	15480.15		

Stanford Prof slammed for mentioning Trump's son impeachment

PTI ■ WASHINGTON

The impeachment hearing against US President Donald Trump took an ugly turn when a professor of law from the prestigious Stanford University took the name of his minor son Barron during her testimony before a Congressional panel, drawing an angry reaction from First Lady Melania.

Pamela S Karlan made the remarks while explaining the president's rights under the Constitution during the impeachment proceedings by House Judiciary Committee on Wednesday.

It all started in response to a question from Congresswoman Sheila Jackson Lee from Democratic Party.

"Contrary to what President Trump has said, Article 2 does not give him the

power to do anything he wants, and I'll just give you one example that shows you the difference between him and a king, which is the Constitution says there can be no titles of nobility, so while the president can name his son Barron, he can't make him a baron," Karlan said while using the 13-year-old's name in an analogy to emphasize the differences between kings and presidents.

Her remarks drew laughter from the people present in the room.

Republican Congresswoman Matt Gaetz from Florida confronted Karlan about her using the name of Barron during the hearing.

"When you invoke the president's son's name here, when you try to make a little joke out of referencing Barron Trump, that does not lend credibility to your argument. It

makes you look mean," she said. "It makes you look like you're attacking someone's family, the minor child of the president of the United States," Gaetz said.

First Lady Melania also slammed Karlan for invoking her son during the impeachment hearing.

"A minor child deserves privacy and should be kept out of politics. Pamela Karlan, you should be ashamed of your very angry and obviously biased public pandering, and using a child to do it," the First Lady said in a tweet.

The First Lady was joined by the White House Press Secretary Stephani Grisham on Twitter.

"Classless move by a Democratic 'witness'. Prof Karlan uses a teenage boy who has nothing to do with this joke of a hearing (and deserves pri-

vacancy) as a punchline," she said. "And what's worse, it's met by laughter in the hearing room. What is being done to this country is no laughing matter," Grisham said.

"The worst part is it was obviously rehearsed beforehand," Grisham said in another tweet.

Karlan later apologised for her remarks.

"I want to apologise for what I said earlier about the president's son. It was wrong of me to do that. I wish the president would apologise, obviously, for the things that he's done that's wrong. But I do regret having said that," Karlan said.

While minor children of presidents have occasionally received criticism and scrutiny, it's long been a tradition in the US to keep first children out of the bitter political wrangling.



Constitutional law scholar Stanford Law School professor Pamela Karlan apologizes for a remark she made about Barron Trump, President Donald Trump's son, during a hearing before the House Judiciary Committee on the constitutional grounds for the impeachment of President Donald Trump on Wednesday, on Capitol Hill in Washington. AP

UN climate talks aim to pave way for carbon market

AP ■ BERLIN

Officials at this year's UN climate talks are hoping to achieve a breakthrough in long-running efforts to agree on rules for a global carbon trading system. Economists say establishing an international market for carbon could unlock billions of dollars' worth of investments as countries and companies seek the most cost-effective way to cut emissions.

But the issue, known in the parlance of climate diplomacy as 'Article 6', has defied agreement for years. With pressure growing from governments to resolve the deadlock, environmental campaigners say the two-week meeting in Madrid might finally result in a deal.

3 dead after Pearl Harbor sailor shoots civilians, himself

PTI ■ HONOLULU

A sailor shot three civilians, killing two of them, before taking his own life at Pearl Harbor just days before thousands were scheduled to gather at the storied military base to mark the 78th anniversary of the Japanese bombing that launched the U.S. into World War II.

Rear Adm. Robert Chadwick, the commander of Navy Region Hawaii, said the service would evaluate whether security would need to be upgraded ahead of the annual ceremony. About a dozen survivors of the 1941 bombing were expected to attend, along with dignitaries and service members.

Chadwick said he didn't know the motive behind Wednesday's shooting at the naval shipyard within the base. The third victim was hospitalized. It wasn't known if the sailor and the three male civilians had any type of relationship, or what the motive was for the shooting, Chadwick said.

"We have no indication yet whether they were targeted or if it was a random shooting," Chadwick said.

The sailor was assigned to the fast attack submarine USS Columbia, which is at Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam for maintenance. Details about the sailor were not immediately released.

It wasn't immediately known what type of weapon was used or how many shots were fired. Chadwick said that was part of the investigation. Personal weapons are not allowed on base.

Names of the victims won't be released until next of kin have been notified.

"Our thoughts are with the families of the victims and everyone involved. I can say that we are mobilizing support services for naval shipyard personnel as well as everyone else who may be affected by this



Security stands guard outside the main gate at Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam, in Hawaii after a shooting at Pearl Harbor Naval Shipyard in Hawaii. AP

tragic event," Chadwick said.

The base went into lockdown around 2:30 p.m. when the first active shooter reports were received. The base reopened a few hours later. Witnesses were still being interviewed hours after the shooting. The shipyard repairs, maintains and modernizes the ships and submarines of the U.S. Pacific Fleet, which is headquartered at Pearl Harbor.

The base is the home port for 10 destroyers and 15 submarines. It also hosts Air Force units. Hawaii Gov. David Ige said the White House has offered assistance from federal agencies and that the state is also ready to help if needed.

"I join in solidarity with the people of Hawaii as we express our heartbreak over this tragedy and concern for those affected by the shooting," Ige

said in a statement.

Mass shootings and gun violence are rare in Hawaii. In 1999, a Xerox service technician fatally shot seven coworkers. In 2006, a man fatally shot his taxi driver and a couple taking photos of the city lights from a lookout point in the hills above Honolulu.

Hawaii had the lowest gun death rate among the states in 2017, according to the Giffords Law Center to Prevent Gun Violence. The islands have strict firearms laws, including a ban on assault weapons and large capacity ammunition magazines. The shipyard is across the harbor from the wreckage of USS Arizona, which sank in the Dec. 7, 1941, Japanese attack. It's also across from the visitors center, which will host Saturday's ceremony.

More than 2,300

Americans were killed in the bombing. The shipyard has played a key role in naval history, most notably during World War II.

Shipyard workers were given just days to repair the USS Yorktown, an aircraft carrier severely damaged during the Battle of the Coral Sea in 1942, because the Navy needed to quickly send the ship to Midway to meet Japanese forces there.

Some 1,400 shipyard workers labored around the clock for almost 72 hours to patch the carrier together.

The planes the Yorktown delivered to Midway sank one of the four aircraft carriers Japan sent to the battle and helped destroy two others. The Battle of Midway turned the tide of the war in the United States' favour.

Strike paralyses France

AFP ■ PARIS

A nationwide strike brought much of France to a standstill on Thursday as tens of thousands hit the streets to protest a pension overhaul by President Emmanuel Macron, which unions say will force millions of people to work longer or face curtailed benefits.

Trains, metros and buses, as well as some flights, were cancelled while most schools were closed or only assuring daycare services, forcing many parents to find alternatives or stay home from work. Authorities said around 285,000 people had taken part in rallies across the country by midday, a figure that did not include the several thousand at a Paris march that began at 2:00 pm.

"We haven't seen such a turnout in a very long time," said Yves Veyrier, head of the Force Ouvriere union at the beginning of the Paris rally toward the Place de la Nation. "We now expect the government to take the measure of this mobilisation, and understand that its universal system is a bad idea," he said.

Although the Paris march began peacefully, black-clad protesters later set fire to a storage trailer and broke storefront windows, prompting police to fire

tear gas to try to halt the vandalism.

Police also fired tear gas in the western city of Nantes, where some protesters scuffled with firefighters and security forces.

Public transport unions said they would extend until at least Monday their open-ended strike, which saw 90 percent of TGV and regional trains cancelled and nearly all lines on the Paris metro affected.

Rush-hour traffic was lighter than usual in the French capital as many people simply took the day off to avoid the travel chaos, with several stores and restaurants shuttered because employees could not get to work.

Bike paths were packed as commuters turned to bicycles and electric scooters, while several ride-hailing companies were offering special strike promotions.

National newspapers were unable to publish their print editions, and the CGT union said workers had blocked seven of the country's eight oil refineries, raising the prospect of fuel shortages if the strike continues.

The SNCF rail operator said 90 per cent of TGV trains would again be cancelled Friday while warning of "very severe disruptions" for the Eurostar and Thalys trains serving London and

Brussels.

Air France said it would again cancel 30 per cent of its domestic flights, and 10 per cent of its short-haul international routes.

Macron has faced a wave of opposition this year, from the "yellow vest" movement demanding improved living standards to more recent protests from police, firefighters, teachers, hospital workers and lawyers.

"I'm not just here about pensions — the health service is our business, public services and also the general drift of the government to the right in general," said Pierre Malige, a 42-year-old professor of mechanics at the University of Nantes, at a protest in the city.

But so far Macron, a former investment banker who came to power on the back of a promise to transform France, has largely succeeded in pushing through a series of controversial reforms, including loosening labour laws and cutting taxes for businesses.

Union leaders are demanding that Macron scrap his plan for a "universal" system that would do away with 42 "special regimes" for sectors ranging from rail and energy workers to lawyers and Paris Opera employees, which often grant workers higher pensions or early retirement.

14 missing in deadly Ukraine fire

AFP ■ KIEV

Fourteen people remain missing from a fire that claimed a student's life in Ukraine's southern port city of Odessa, President Volodymyr Zelensky said on Thursday.

The fire broke out in a college building in central Odessa on Wednesday, killing a 16-year-old female student and injuring 27 others.

The blaze had been contained by Thursday morning, but dozens of firefighters were still combing through the partly destroyed walls of the six-story building.

Zelensky wrote in a Facebook post: "We all hope that of the 14 missing people, as many as possible will be found safe and sound. But I do not want to deceive anyone — there may be more victims."

Seven firefighters were among the injured and five people were in a serious condition.

"We all are praying" for them, said Zelensky, 41.

"We know that doctors are doing everything possible to save them. And impossible too."

Impeachment saga shifts

AP ■ WASHINGTON

House Speaker Nancy Pelosi announced on Thursday that the House is moving forward to draft articles of impeachment against President Donald Trump.

"Our democracy is what is at stake," Pelosi said. "The president leaves us no choice but to act." Pelosi delivered the historic announcement as Democrats push toward a vote, possibly by Christmas.

She said she was authorising the drafting of articles of impeachment "sadly but with confidence and humility." "The president's actions have seriously violated the Constitution," Pelosi said.

At the heart of the impeachment probe is a July call with the president of Ukraine, in which Trump pressed the leader to investigate Democrats and political rival Joe Biden as Trump was withholding aid to the country.

"Our democracy is what is at stake," Pelosi said in her solemn announcement. "The president leaves us no choice but to act because he is trying to corrupt, once again, the election for his own benefit. The president has engaged in abuse of power,

undermining our national security and jeopardizing the integrity of our elections."

Earlier in the day, Pelosi announced that she would deliver an unusual public statement on the status of the House impeachment inquiry into President Trump.

Democrats are charging toward a Christmas time vote on removing the 45th president, a situation Pelosi hoped to avoid but which now seems inevitable.

On Wednesday, Pelosi met behind closed doors with her Democratic caucus, asking, "Are you ready?" The answer was a resounding yes, according to those in the room.

She made the morning statement from the speaker's offices at the Capitol, the same location where she declared the formal launch of the House investigation into Trump's actions toward Ukraine.

Trump tweeted that if Democrats "are going to impeach me, do it now, fast." He said he wants to get on to a "fair trial" in the Senate. The president also said Democrats have "gone crazy." Three leading legal scholars testified Wednesday to the House Judiciary Committee that Trump's attempts to have

Ukraine investigate Democratic rivals are grounds for impeachment, bolstering the Democrats' case.

A fourth expert called by Republicans warned against rushing the process, arguing this would be the shortest of impeachment proceedings, with the "thinnest" record of evidence in modern times, setting a worrisome standard.

Trump is alleged to have abused the power of his office by putting personal political gain over national security interests, engaging in bribery by withholding USD 400 million in military aid Congress had approved for Ukraine; and then obstructing Congress by stonewalling the investigation.

Across the Capitol, the polarising political divide over impeachment, only the fourth such inquiry in the nation's history, was on display.

Democrats in the House say the inquiry is a duty. Republican representatives say it's a sham. And quietly senators of both parties conferred on Wednesday, preparing for an eventual Trump trial.

"Never before, in the history of the republic, have we been forced to consider the conduct of

a president who appears to have solicited personal, political favors from a foreign government," said Rep. Jerrold Nadler, D-N.Y., chair of the Judiciary panel, which would draw up articles of impeachment.

Nadler said Trump's phone July 25 call seeking a "favour" from Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky wasn't the first time he had sought foreign help to influence an American election, noting Russian interference in 2016. He warned against inaction with a new campaign underway.

"We cannot wait for the election," he said. "If we do not act to hold him in check, now, President Trump will almost certainly try again to solicit interference in the election for his personal political gain."

Trump called the hearing a "joke" and doubted many people would watch because it's "boring." Once an outsider to the GOP, Trump now has Republicans' unwavering support. They joined in his name-calling the Judiciary proceedings a "disgrace" and unfair, the dredging up of unfounded allegations as part of an effort to undo the 2016 election and remove him from office.

Most victims of Sudan fire tragedy belonged to TN, Bihar: Indian Embassy

PTI ■ KHARTOUM

Most of the Indian victims hospitalised or reported missing after the massive LPG tanker blast at a ceramics factory in Sudan belonged to Tamil Nadu and Bihar states while authorities are trying to ascertain the details about the 18 Indians killed in the tragedy.

The Indian Embassy has issued a detailed list of the Indians who were hospitalised, went missing or survived the incident that happened at Seela Ceramic Factory in Bahri area in the Sudanese capital Khartoum on Tuesday, killing 23 people and injuring 130 others.

Eighteen Indians were among those who lost their lives in the tragedy. No information is currently available on their identities.

Seven Indians have been hospitalised, with four in critical condition and 16 reported missing.

Six victims belonged to Tamil Nadu, five from Bihar,

four each from Rajasthan and Uttar Pradesh, two from Haryana and one each from Delhi and Gujarat.

Out of those hospitalised, Jai Kumar, Bobalan and Mohd. Saleem are from Tamil Nadu; Ravinder Singh and Surender Kumar hail from Rajasthan; Neeraj Kumar from Bihar and Sonu Prasad from Uttar Pradesh.

Out of those reported missing, three are from Tamil Nadu — Rama Krishan, Raj Shekhar and Venkata Chalem, four from Bihar — Ram Kumar, Amit Tiwari, Hari Nath and Nitish Kumar Mishra, three from Uttar Pradesh — Zeshan Khan, Mohit and Pradeep Verama, two from Rajasthan — Bhajan Lal and Jaideep, two from Haryana — Pawan and Pradeep, one Intezar Khan from Delhi and Bahadur from Gujarat.

"Some of the missing may be in the list of dead which we are still to receive as identification is not possible because of the bodies being burnt," the Indian Embassy said in a

release on Wednesday.

Expressing grief at the incident, External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar said 60 Indians were employed in the factory and 53 of them were understood to be present at the factory and residential area at the time of the accident.

"Sadly, we have reports of fatalities among Indian workers and we are trying to ascertain the numbers," he said.

The injured have been admitted at Al-Amal Hospital, Omdurman Teaching Hospital and Ibrahim Malik Hospital.

He said the Indian Embassy in Khartoum is in constant touch with the factory management and the embassy staff has been stationed at the site as well.

"We are working with the Sudanese authorities to facilitate the identification of the deceased at the earliest," he said.

A total of 34 Indians who survived have been accommodated at the Saloomi Ceramics factory residence.

According to a statement issued by the Sudanese gov-

ernment, the blast in a gas tanker triggered the fire.

"Preliminary observations indicate a lack of necessary safety measures and equipment at the factory, in addition to random storage of flammable materials," it said.

An investigation has been launched, it added.

Meanwhile, Sudanese Prime Minister Abdallah Hamdok, now on a visit to the US, expressed his condolences for the victims and said that preliminary reports indicate the absence of necessary safety tools.

"The random storage of flammable materials contributed to the continuation and expansion of the fire and the destruction of the factory completely," he said in a statement from Washington.

"The Council of Ministers will form a committee of inquiry to determine the responsibilities and avoid the recurrence of such unfortunate incidents in the future," he was quoted as saying by Sudan Tribune portal.

Sydney smoke crisis 'longest on record'

AFP ■ SYDNEY

Australian bushfires have caused unprecedented pollution in Sydney and along the country's east coast, officials said Thursday, with smoke and dust burning residents' eyes and prompting a spike in respiratory complaints.

Hundreds of bushfires have burned out of control since September up and down the eastern seaboard, blanketing cities from Sydney to Brisbane in smoke for weeks on end.

The extent of the crisis was made clear Thursday, with the New South Wales department of environment declaring bushfires and dust had caused "some of the

highest air pollution ever seen" in Australia.

The region "has experienced other periods of poor air quality that lasted several weeks, including the 1994 Sydney bushfires and the Black Christmas bushfires of Dec 2001-Jan 2002," a spokeswoman told AFP.

"This event, however, is the longest and the most widespread in our records," New South Wales Rural Fire Service said more than a dozen fires were burning near Sydney on Thursday, including three that carried an emergency warning.

For three weeks the city has seen almost daily air quality warnings.

Bushfires are common in Australia, but scientists say

this year's season has come earlier and with more intensity due to a prolonged drought fuelled by climate change.

New South Wales health officials said more people with asthma were turning up at hospitals, and ambulance call-outs for breathing problems were up 24 per cent in the week to December 1.

Meanwhile, tourists and residents took measures to combat the smoke, buying facemasks and staying indoors as much as possible.

On Thursday, Sydney's air quality index registered fine particulate pollution — small enough to penetrate deep inside the lungs — at over 160 parts per million, far

above levels considered to be safe.

Local newspapers and television have posted advice about how to limit the impact of the smoke — offering tips on what masks to buy and what activities are safest.

The smoke caused golfers at the Australian Open — one of the world's oldest national opens — to complain about conditions.

"It's tough to see your golf ball when you're out there playing, where it finishes. Your eyes do burn," said 2015 champion Matt Jones.

"I've got that cough like you've got something in your lungs, phlegm in your lungs or whatever, but it's not fun," he said. "I hope my kids are inside in the hotel room."

Verdict in Musharraf treason case on Dec 17: Pak court

PTI ■ ISLAMABAD

The verdict in the high treason case against former Pakistan dictator General (ret'd) Pervez Musharraf would be pronounced on December 17, a special court announced on Thursday.

Last week, the special court ordered 76-year-old Musharraf to record statement by December 5 in the treason case after the Islamabad High Court (IHC), after hearing the petitions filed by Dubai-based Musharraf and the Pakistan government, stopped the special court from issuing the verdict on November 28.

The statement was made by a three-member bench of the special court, headed by Peshawar High Court Chief Justice Waqar Ahmed Seth,

which was conducting a hearing of the case against the former president on Thursday, Geo News reported.

The new prosecution team's lawyers informed the court that they needed more time to prepare for the case. Justice Seth said that no postponement will be allowed and an order in writing should be submitted stating that arguments would be completed by December 17.

Adjourning proceedings till December 17, Justice Seth said they would hear the arguments in the next proceeding and announce the verdict, Dawn News reported.

They (prosecutors) should keep aside other cases and fight this case, Justice Seth was quoted as saying by the report.

He said that the judges had come from various parts of the country for the special court.

"This is a special case and this is a special court," Justice Seth remarked.

The special court had on November 19 concluded the trial proceedings in the high treason case against Musharraf for declaring a state of emergency on November 3, 2007, and had ruled that a verdict would be announced on November 28 on the basis of the available record.

The high treason trial of the former military dictator for clamping the state of emergency on November 3, 2007, filed during the previous Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz government, has been

pending since 2013.

He was booked in the treason case in December 2013. Musharraf was indicted on March 31, 2014, and the prosecution had tabled the entire evidence before the special court in September the same year.

But due to litigation at appellate forums, the trial of the former military dictator lingered on and he left Pakistan in March 2016 with the nod of superior courts as well as the interior ministry for medical treatment.

According to previous Pakistani media reports, Musharraf had amyloidosis, a rare disease caused by the build-up of an abnormal protein called amyloid in organs and tissues in the body, and is under medication.

Pak govt to sell unused properties at Dubai Expo

PTI ■ ISLAMABAD

The Pakistan government has decided to sell its precious unutilised state properties at the Dubai Expo to attract foreign and Pakistani investors, according to media reports on Thursday, as the cash-strapped country tries to overcome a ballooning balance-of-payments crisis and bolster its public finances. Prime Minister Imran Khan said that the precious government properties will be sold for better utilisation of funds on public welfare projects.

The funds generated through the exercise will be spent on public welfare schemes related to education, health, food and housing, Dawn newspaper reported.

"These unutilised state properties will be marketed at the Dubai Expo to attract foreign and Pakistani investors to buy these assets," Privatisation Secretary Rizwan Malik informed the prime minister.

"Unfortunately, criminal negligence was done by the previous governments as they did not utilise these valuable properties. Despite billions of rupees' assets, various federal government institutions are bearing losses of billions of rupees every year," Khan said.

Khan also warned that stern action would be initiated against officers found to be creating hurdles in the identification of non-utilised government-owned properties. The News International reported.

The International Monetary Fund in July approved a three-year USD 6 billion loan for Pakistan with tough conditions to address its balance of payment crisis and help the country's ailing economy return to "sustainable growth".

Pakistan approached the International Monetary Fund (IMF) in August 2018 for a bailout package after the Imran Khan government took over.

58 migrants dead as boat capsizes off Mauritania

AP ■ DAKAR

Scores of migrants who swam through rough Atlantic Ocean waters to safety from a capsized boat while 58 others drowned were receiving care Thursday in Mauritania after one of the deadliest disasters this year among people making the perilous journey to Europe.

The boat that left Gambia a week ago had been carrying at least 150 people, including women and children. It was headed toward the Canary Islands when it tried to approach the Mauritanian coast to get fuel and food, Laura Lungarotti, chief of mission in the West African nation with the U.N. migration agency, told The Associated Press.

"Many drowned. The ones who survived swam up to the Mauritanian coast close to the

city of Nouadhibou," she said. "The Mauritanian authorities are very efficiently coordinating the response with the agencies currently present" in the northern city.

At least 83 people swam to shore, the agency said. An unknown number of injured were taken to the hospital in Nouadhibou. It was not immediately clear whether anyone remained missing.

Survivors said the boat had left Gambia on November 27.

There was no immediate statement from authorities in Gambia, where tens of thousands of people have set off in hopes of reaching Europe in recent years. Despite the country's small size, more than 35,000 Gambians arrived in Europe between 2014 and 2018, according to the UN

migration agency.

A 22-year oppressive rule by former President Yahya Jammeh severely affected the country's economy, especially for youth, and contributed greatly to the exodus. Since Jammeh fled into exile in January 2017 after a surprise election loss, European countries have been pushing to return asylum seekers.

But Gambia's economy still suffers. The coastal nation was shaken earlier this year by the collapse of British travel company Thomas Cook. At the time, Gambia's tourism minister said the government convened an emergency meeting on the collapse, while some Gambians said the shutdown could have a devastating impact on tourism, which contributes more than 30% of the country's GDP.

Pak court constitutes medical board to examine Zardari's health condition

PTI ■ ISLAMABAD

A medical board to examine the health condition of former Pakistan president Asif Ali Zardari has been constituted by a court here which directed it to submit its report on Wednesday, according to media reports on Thursday.

Zardari, 64, who was arrested in June, approached the court on Tuesday seeking bail on medical grounds in two corruption cases.

The Islamabad High Court (IHC) on Wednesday constituted the medical board comprising doctors of the Pakistan Institute of Medical Sciences (PIMS) and the personal physician of Zardari.

Hearing a petition seeking bail for Zardari on medical grounds, an IHC division bench comprising Chief

Justice Athar Minallah and Justice Aamer Farooq sought a report from the medical board on December 11, when it will resume the hearing of the identical petitions filed by the former president as well as another bail petition filed by his sister Faryal Talpur in the fake bank accounts case.

The case is related to a massive money laundering scam that was previously being probed by the Federal Investigation Agency.

Advocate Farooq H Naek, the counsel for Zardari, argued before the court that the former president is suffering from multiple ailments, Dawn newspaper reported.

"He is a heart patient having three stents in his heart. He has a Holter Monitor attached to his chest so that

the doctors are able to check and note variations in his heartbeat and blockages in his arteries. The petitioner is a patient of ischemic heart disease, which means that his heart may have inadequate supply of blood and oxygen," Naek said.

He argued that Zardari also "suffers from various other ailments such as cervical and lumbar spondylosis, sensory and motor neuropathy with impaired proprioception", the paper said.

On December 3, Zardari filed for bail on medical grounds in the two cases against him. The petition argues that the PPP co-chairperson should be given bail till the completion of the trial against him.

The National Accountability Bureau claims

that Zardari Group, a company owned by Zardari and his sister Faryal Talpur, received millions of rupees in suspicious transactions carried out through fake accounts in the money laundering case.

The Park Lane Estate, on the other hand, is a Karachi-based real estate firm. The anti-graft watchdog had initiated an inquiry against Zardari and his son, Bilawal Bhutto Zardari, on charges that they illegally transferred forest land to the firm in collusion with some government officials. Bilawal was given a clean chit in the case on June 12.

Zardari, who was president of Pakistan from 2008 to 2013, was arrested in June after his bail application was rejected in connection to the fake bank accounts case.

Pro-paramilitary protestors flood Iraqi protest camp

AFP ■ BAGHDAD

Several thousand men backing a paramilitary force close to Iran flooded the Iraqi capital's main protest camp on Thursday, worrying anti-government demonstrators who have denounced Tehran's role in their country.

The men arrived in Tahrir (Liberation) Square in apparently coordinated marches from different parts of the capital, waving sticks, Iraqi flags and the logo of the Hashed al-Shaabi armed network.

Some carried portraits of Hashed fighters killed in fighting against jihadists as well as pictures of the country's top Shiite cleric, Grand Ayatollah Ali Sistani.

The Hashed had backed the Iraqi government but after a dramatic intervention by Sistani last week, it dropped its support. The embattled prime minister, Adel Abdel Mahdi,

resigned at the weekend.

Many units within the Shiite-majority force have been trained or equipped by Iran.

The demonstrators occupying the square for weeks have explicitly criticised Iran for backing an Iraqi political elite they see as corrupt and inept. They have insisted that all current figures in power are tainted with graft and have been wary of political parties seeking to coopt the youth-dominated movement.

The new arrivals on Thursday mixed in with thousands of other protesters in the square, who appeared worried although no confrontation or skirmishes took place.

"They've ruined it," one protester said, as another muttered, "It's going to get messy."

Mass rallies have rocked the capital and Shiite-majority south since early October, first denouncing government graft and a lack of jobs before mov-

ing to broader demands for deep-rooted regime change.

Nearly 430 people have been killed and 20,000 wounded since demonstrations erupted, according to an AFP toll compiled from medics, police and a national commission.

The victims' families have been demanding justice for their loved ones, and many of them hit the streets of Iraq's southern Diwaniyah on Thursday.

They joined thousands of other protesters, mostly teachers and students taking part in a general strike, AFP's correspondent said.

"The authorities are putting off the issue of who killed our sons and brothers in the protests," said Assaad Malek, whose brother died in protest-related violence.

"They should take a tough stance and severely punish the officers and SWAT forces who killed my brother," he added.

Campaigns swarm Harris donors after she exits race

AP ■ WASHINGTON

Kamala Harris' exit from the Democratic presidential primary has set off a stampede among her former rivals, who are moving fast to improve their campaigns' fortunes by winning over donors who supported the California senator.

In New York, former Vice President Joe Biden, New Jersey Sen. Cory Booker and South Bend, Indiana, Mayor Pete Buttigieg are working to book get-to-know-you meetings with her supporters, donors said.

In the early voting state of South Carolina, one prominent Harris fundraiser and surrogate said nearly every campaign had reached out to gauge his interest. And in the San Francisco Bay Area, Harris' home base, a Biden fundraiser says he sent out emails the day she left the race to get an edge on the competition.

Harris' decision to end her once-promising campaign prompted an outpouring from supporters, who lamented that the exit of the third black

woman to ever run for president made what had been a historically diverse field less so. But even as they mourned, the fierce nature of a primary stirred intense competition among those who saw a potential gain in her exit.

For Booker and Biden, the donor courtship offers an opportunity to regain lost ground and bring in a fresh stream of cash with two months until the Iowa caucuses. But for Buttigieg, who is already a leading fundraiser and has proved wildly popular with donors, it would allow him to put further distance between himself and his rivals.

Silicon Valley donor Steve Westly, who raised millions for President Barack Obama and is now helping Biden, sent out emails Tuesday wooing Harris supporters.

"Presidential campaigns are not delicate affairs. It's a race and it's about moving as quickly as you can and making the ask," Westly said.

"Kamala has a lot of strength in California and we



are going to go after as many people as we can. We won't get all of them, but I believe we will get the majority." Biden will be in California next week for a series of fundraisers in Los Angeles and the Bay Area. His campaign is encouraging Harris donors to attend, or donate before the year's end, said one person involved with the campaign's state operation. They're receiving a positive

response so far, the person said, but the donors have also heard from the campaigns of Buttigieg, Booker and Massachusetts Sen. Elizabeth Warren, the person said. The person spoke on condition of anonymity to discuss sensitive campaign matters.

The Biden campaign has also discussed having the former vice president make direct outreach to California Gov.

Gavin Newsom, who had been backing Harris.

Yet just because the campaigns are thirsting for new donors doesn't mean Harris' supporters are ready.

Bakari Sellers, who helped Harris raise money and was one of her most prominent TV surrogates, said he had been contacted by representatives of every campaign except Warren's and Hawaii Rep. Tulsi Gabbard's. Sellers, however, said he was still in mourning and taking his time first.

"Everybody is asking me where Kamala supporters are going, and the only thing I can firmly tell you is that we are going to the bar," Sellers said.

Warren, who has mostly sworn off the big-dollar fundraisers that many donors inhabit, invoked the exits of Harris and Kirsten Gillibrand from the Democratic campaign to elicit financial support and attack the two billionaires who remain, former New York Mayor Michael Bloomberg and California businessman Tom Steyer.

UK election is full of dirty tricks and political clicks

AP ■ LONDON

Britain is proving a lawless landscape for political mudslingers mining cyberspace for votes in an election that could determine the UK's future relationship with the European Union.

Two years after Britain found itself at the epicenter of a global scandal over the misuse of Facebook data by political campaigns and a year after lawmakers called for sweeping reforms to protect democracy in the digital age, the country's biggest political parties are bombarding voters with misleading social media messages after the government failed to act.

The ruling Conservative Party circulated a doctored video that made it look as if an opposition leader had been stumped when asked about his position on Brexit, then during a leaders' debate the party's press office temporarily rebranded its website as a

fact-checking service. The Labour Party has also sought to co-opt the roll of independent factchecker, rolling out a website called The Insider, which calls on voters to "trust the facts."

"It's the Wild West out there," said Matt Walsh, who researches digital political communication at the University of Cardiff. "The parties can pretty much do what they want in terms of putting political messages out there and they can do what they want in terms of upsetting social media users."

Britain's electoral laws, like those of most countries, were largely written before the dawn of the internet, meaning social media campaigns are mostly unregulated and open to exploitation by a new generation of political strategists who grew up with the technology. While Russia was able to exploit these loopholes in an effort to disrupt the 2016 US presidential election, the big story of 2019 may be the willingness of Britain's

political parties themselves to push the boundaries of truth, transparency and reality.

The stakes couldn't be bigger. Prime Minister Boris Johnson is seeking a mandate to take Britain out of the EU by Jan. 31. Labour leader Jeremy Corbyn promises a second referendum that could block Brexit, along with left wing economic policies including the nationalization of railways, water companies and broadband networks. And tactics applied in the British campaign are but a harbinger of how digital misinformation could affect other coming votes, including next year's US presidential election.

The UK House of Commons' media committee last year called for widespread changes to electoral laws, which it said weren't "fit for purpose" in the 21st century. The report followed an 18-month inquiry into fake news and data manipulation by political campaigns, which was triggered by con-

cerns about Russian interference in western elections. The probe helped fuel a scandal about how consultancy Cambridge Analytica used Facebook data to target voters during Donald Trump's 2016 run for the White House.

The government's failure to act on the committee's recommendations leaves voters at the mercy of unscrupulous campaign operatives at a time when more and more people are turning to social media for news and information. Since there are no sanctions for misbehavior — other than having your post removed from Twitter, Facebook or Google+ — the campaigns have realized there's little downside to posting doctored videos or misleading information.

"You aren't seeing any blowback from that. It's almost the opposite," said Zvika Krieger, head of technology policy at the World Economic Forum. "(Being misleading) gets more attention. There's a

pervasive incentive to post as much misleading information as possible. It's a very worrying trend."

While misinformation is not new in political campaigns, digital data is improving exponentially political campaigns' ability to tailor messages to voters based on their behavior online. And this comes at a time when parties are devoting more resources to digital communications.

The Conservatives spent 3.98 million pounds (\$5.17 million) on social media and data-driven advertising during the last general election campaign in 2017, up 71% from the previous election in 2015, according to research by Tactical Tech, a Berlin-based group that seeks to mitigate the impact of technology on society. Labour's digital spending more than tripled to 1.47 million pounds in the same period. But it is hard to know how to regulate digital campaigning as it is difficult to get a complete

picture of how and where parties focus their digital spending. The campaign that has pushed the limits furthest this year is the Conservatives.

First, they took a TV news interview with Labour's Brexit spokesman, Keir Starmer, and edited it to make it appear that he couldn't answer a question about the party's position on leaving the EU. The video has been viewed more than 1.1 million times. Then, during a leaders' debate last month, the party's press office temporarily rebranded its Twitter feed "factcheckUK" and used the account to attack Corbyn's comments.

Will Moy, chief executive of Full Fact, a real fact-checking website, criticized the stunt.

"It was an attempt to mislead voters, and I think it is inappropriate and misleading for a serious political party to behave that way," he said at the time.

Caught unprepared in 2017, when social media helped

Labour to a better-than-expected performance, the Conservative Party this year brought in a New Zealand-based firm called Topham Guerin to sharpen its online message.

Sean Topham and Ben Guerin, both in their 20s, helped Scott Morrison become Australia's prime minister in 2018 with a strategy to flood online platforms with hundreds of posts with a consistent message. They specialized in memes with tacky messages that would riff off events like the finale of the cult show "Game of Thrones." People would laugh and share.

"The content wasn't slick, but it was plentiful.

"You're going to slap some Calibri font on some... re-used meme and you're going to publish it and you're going to get on to the next one," Guerin told a conference in May in Sydney. "And you know what? Their content is going to do better than the thing your poor graph-

ic designer spent a week on. Sad but true."

While such posts may draw laughter and wry comments as readers share them, they have serious implications for society.

Even as candidates are lowering the bar on what they are willing to do or say, campaigns are increasing their sophistication in using data from a wide variety of sources to micro-target voters with custom-made messages. At the same time, improvements in technology are making it easier to manipulate audio and video in ways that are invisible to the untrained eye, Krieger said.

"As our lives get more and more connected — smart cities and sensors and movie-watching preferences, smart appliances — campaigns are going to be able to target people with frightening levels of consistency," he said. You can push voters "in the direction you want them to go..."

"It's going to provide a critical threat to democracy."



Black industrial lights along the grey panels at the entrance of Danbro's gave a hint of what was to come. Monochromatic paintings, rustic brown chairs, grey marble tables and old mosaic tiles teleported us to a casual roadside cafe in Europe where any and everybody gather over a drink at any time of the day, unwinding themselves and easing off over conversations. Keeping the human connect alive over endless cups of coffee and savouries.

We were at the new Italian boulangerie and patisserie in Kailash Colony. The menu comes in a newspaper format called *Danbrotimes*, a throwback to the coffee club culture of yore. But not being familiar, we decided to go for the chef's special. We were first served Soup Of The Day, which is different for each day. You would think you know enough about mushroom soup but this one had a delicate texture with black pepper blending perfectly with fresh mushrooms and the butter. In one word, wholesome. Served with grilled Ciabatta, which complemented its flavours, we got off to a good start.

Next up was Croquettes Potato. Stuffed with cheddar cheese and jalapenos, it was creamy yet crispy. The soft core was so centered that it balanced the heat of the spices. An unusual addition was the *Chimi Churi* sauce made of fresh herbs, a speciality of chef Brajesh Ghansiyal. Said he, "This sauce is in demand mostly because of its simple yet strong flavours. There are no

THAT WARM

Danbro's is the ideal winter joint with some luscious bites, steaming coffee and yummy croissants. **By SAKSHI SHARMA**

additives except the herbs." We actually ditched the other dips and this combination makes for some lazy bites over a weekend with friends.

Chef Anjali Mohan, who is keen to redefine the way people look at vegetarian food is determined to make it your chosen indulgence, said, "When you say vegetarian, people either experiment with *paneer* or mushroom. So we usually get bored with *paneer* and most of us do not like mushrooms. That is why I made it a point to include more vegetables and potato in the menu." She then made sure that we try her wild berry smoothie and cold coffee. While the former had blueberry, yogurt with chia seeds and fresh strawberries which overpowered all other flavours, the latter was a decent must-try.

Then it was the turn of Char Grilled Vegetarian Lasagna topped with wheat pasta sheets and cheese sauce bursting with flavours. Packed with olives, zucchini and capsicum, its layers were soft and crunchy at the same time. It seemed like a never-ending dish but the delicacy of exploring each layer of richness and distinct smoked flavours kept us going. Wheat pasta can actually lend a richer texture than the



usual flour one. Besides, it all depends on the Bechamel sauce and here the chefs got it right, coating each layer perfectly and fluffing up the full potential of the vegetables, nudging out flavours that are drowned in usual cooking methods. As full as we were, we didn't want to miss the dessert,

especially at a place which is known for it. In line were Passion fruit cheese cake, Strawberry cheese cake, Coconut truffle, which was basically Belgium white chocolate with coconut covering, Coffee truffle and Butter croissant. We couldn't resist but try a bite of all. The layers of cream cheese, fresh passion fruit and yogurt made for a sinful indulgence like no other. Do try the butter croissant, not drippy but just enough to give bounce to the yeast dough. Certainly, the best wrap-up for the evening.

Other than this, Danbro's offers popular hits like Hot lava cake with Polo mint ice cream, chocolate mousse cannelloni with caramelised banana and Baileys cream and Choco loco, vanilla-coated Bourbon biscuits with chocolates. They were complex but the flavours were so rounded that they leave a mark on your tastebuds, especially when they come from a bakery that has its origins in Milan.

Whether you want to grab a coffee, have a big breakfast, simply cosy up on a winter afternoon or want a quick high-tea with colleagues, this is the place for you.

Now, wines from Washington

They have a higher percentage of 90-rated wines than other top wine-producing regions in the world, say experts



When Craig and Vicki Leuthold opened the Maryhill Winery in 2001, there were about 100 wineries in the state of Washington. That number has since exploded to more than 1,000 wineries this year and the remarkable growth is likely to continue.

Maryhill Winery, just South of the remote town of Goldendale, is part of that growth. It has recently opened tasting rooms in Spokane and Vancouver, Washington, and is in the process of opening a tasting room in the Seattle suburb of Woodinville. "Our timing was great," said Craig Leuthold, whose winery produces 60 varieties. "Washington wine has really increased in popularity."

Washington has become a force in the wine industry. The state has the nation's second-highest number of wineries, after California. But California, which has around 3,700 wineries, remains much bigger than anyone else in the United States, selling more than \$40 billion worth of wine in this country. Within the US, wines from California are the top sellers, followed by wines from Australia and Italy. Washington ranks fourth in the sources of wine sold in the U.S., said Steve Warner, president of Washington State Wine, the industry's trade group.

"More Washington wine is sold in the United States than French wine," he said.

The state's wine industry generates about \$2.4 billion a year in revenues and contributes more than \$7 billion a year to the state's economy, Warner said.

Washington's wines are consistently top-ranked, he said. "Washington has a higher percentage of 90-rated wines than other top wine-producing regions in the world," Warner said, referring to the 100-point scale for rating wines. "We are competing against wine regions with 28 generations of winemakers, who were doing it before America was a country."

Most of the industry's success stems from the state's climate and soils, Warner said.

Wine grapes like long sunny days and cool nights, which the vineyards in the central and eastern part of the state enjoy.

The area also gets little rainfall compared with other grape-growing regions, which is a plus, he said. Washington still has plenty of available land at reasonable prices in wine country, said Thomas Henick-Kling, director of the enology and viticulture program at Washington State University in Pullman.

The acreage dedicated to grapes for wine is rapidly expanding. Twenty years ago, there were 24,000 acres (9,713 hectares) of grapes. Today there are 59,000 acres (23,877 hectares) of vineyards. Washington also has skilled farmers and winemakers, graduates of winemaking programs at numerous local colleges, Henick-Kling said.

There were about 20 wineries in 1981. That grew to 100 wineries by 2001, just over 500 by 2012 and just over 1,000 now, Warner said.

Growth has been averaging more than 70 new wineries per year for the past seven years. Washington's growth is no surprise, as the number of wineries and wine consumption continue to grow in the US. "The growth in wineries around the country is very exciting as wine sales continue to grow, particularly at the premium end," said Gladys Horiuchi of the Wine Institute, which represents California wineries.

Wine shipments to the United States from all foreign and domestic sources grew one per cent in 2018. The Wine Institute said people are drinking more premium wine, which starts at \$8 per bottle.

The 1,000th active license was issued to Jens Hansen, owner of Uva Furem winery in Maple Valley. Hansen retired from the Air Force, moved to the Seattle area and decided to become a winemaker. "I feel

like the Washington wine community is a lot like the Air Force in that everyone looks out for each other," Hansen said.

About 70 grape varieties are grown in Washington, with the most popular reds being cabernet sauvignon and merlot. Chardonnay and white Riesling are the most common whites.

Most of Washington's wineries are fairly small. The owners "are passionate about wine and work full-time and crush grapes on weekends," Warner said.

There are a smaller number of midsize wineries that enjoy national distribution, plus a handful of industry giants like Chateau Ste. Michelle, he said.

More investors from outside the state are joining the industry, Warner said. It also helps that Washington has long had a lot of wealthy people who work for companies like Boeing, Microsoft and Amazon and have money to invest in the industry, he said.

Many of the State's best wineries are clustered around the old town of Walla Walla, which used to be known primarily for sweet onions and as home of the state penitentiary. Now it is home to world-class winemakers. Warner expected the strong growth rate to continue.

"The line is not flattening," he said. "I wouldn't be surprised if we get to 2,000." One factor that could limit growth is climate change, but Washington also seems fortunate there. The mighty Columbia River, which irrigates much of wine country, is predicted to be a stable water supply for many years to come, Henick-Smith said. Heat spikes in the summer might damage grapes, he said. But farmers are moving vineyards to higher elevations looking for cooler ripening weather.

"Here in Washington we're pretty stable," Henick-Smith said.

—AP

gorge us



Youmee celebrates Remen festival with delicious soup of hand-crafted noodles, savoury broths and perfectly melded toppings. For vegetarians, there is a delicious ramen meal bowl with tofu, broccoli, pok choy, mushroom, lettuce in miso broth. Veggie Delight is a blend of mushroom, pok choy, Chinese cabbage, bean sprouts in garlic sesame flavoured broth. Non-vegetarians can enjoy teriyaki chicken ramen and many other options. **Date:** Till December 8 **Price:** ₹1,300 for two (plus taxes) **Time:** 11 am to 11:30 pm **Venue:** Youmee, Greater Kailash 2.

Novotel presents NCoorg food festival, offering an extensive dinner buffet by chef Anjali Ganapathy. You can relish the traditional essence of *Bella Kaapi*, *Pandi Curry*, *Akki Otti*, *Kambla Curry* and *Byrambuttu* and a lot more during the festival. **Date:** December 7 to 14 **Price:** ₹2,150 (plus taxes) **Time:** 7 pm onwards **Venue:** Food Exchange, Novotel, Aerocity.



PARMESAN PANNA COTTA WITH CHERRY TOMATO CONFIT FRIED BASIL

WHAT YOU NEED

- Garlic clove: 1
- Thin cream: 250 ml
- Thickened cream: 150 ml
- Thyme: 3 sprigs
- Grated parmesan reggiano and extra shaved cheese: 100 gm
- Gelatin leaves: 3
- Vine-ripened cherry tomatoes: 4 sprigs



Holiday inn celebrates Goa on a platter. Its menu features Lamb vindaloo, Chicken xacuti, Goan fish curry, Chicken cafreal and many more. Almost every dish is flavoured with coconuts, blended with freshly ground spices. For the sweet-toothed, there is Bibingka, a type of rice cake. **Price:** ₹1,900 (plus taxes) **Time:** 7 pm to 11 pm **Date:** December 6 to 8 **Venue:** Cafe on 3, Holiday Inn, Mayur Vihar.



Searock Cookhouse offers a variety of heart-warming dishes — *Kori gassi*, Malabar chicken curry and *Ulli theyyal duce* that will make you feel warm this season. **Date:** Till December 31 **Time:** 12 pm to 12 am **Venue:** Searock Cookhouse, Connaught Place.

- Olive oil
- Balsamic vinegar: 2 tbsp
- Baby basil leaves and grilled bread

METHOD

- Oil four half cup Dariele moulds. Place garlic in a saucepan with creams and thyme sprigs over a medium heat.
- Bring it below boiling point and then stir in cheese. Set it aside for 30 minutes to infuse.

Chef Akanksha Dean introduces Dish of the Month with a Falafel Pocket and three Mediterranean dips with her twist to the menu at Imperfecto Shor Cafe. The dish is loaded with impeccable Middle Eastern flavours and will certainly give you an unforgettable experience. **Date:** Till December 25 **Venue:** Imperfecto Shor Cafe, Hotel Pride Plaza, Aerocity.



- Soak gelatin leaves in cold water for five minutes to soften. Re-heat cream until its below boiling point. Squeeze gelatin to remove excess water, then add leaves to cream and stir to dissolve. Strain into a jug and then pour into moulds. Chill for at least four hours to set, preferably overnight.
- Pre-heat oven to 190 degree celsius for about 30 minutes before serving.

Farzi cafe presents delightful dishes like Classic Mac n Cheese with chilli cheese toast, Chinjabi chilli chicken with bell pepper trio, *Keema goli anardana*, Traditional butter chicken, Chicken and basil penne arrabiata and more. **Date:** Till December 31 **Price:** ₹2,200 (for two) **Venue:** Farzi cafe, DLF Cyber City.



- Place tomatoes on a tray and then season and drizzle with oil. Roast for five minutes or until it starts to wilt. Drizzle with half the balsamic.
- Run a knife around panna cotta moulds and then turn out onto plates. Drizzle with remaining balsamic and serve with tomatoes, shaved parmesan, basil and bread.

Courtesy: Executive Chef, Neelabh Sahay at Novotel Kolkata Hotel and Residences.

RECIPES



GANDANE KA SAAG

WHAT YOU NEED

- Sarson saag (chopped): 500 gm
- Spinach: 600 gm
- Methi (chopped): 100 gm
- Onion: 200 gm
- Cumin: 20 gm
- Coriander powder: 20 gm
- Turmeric powder: 30 gm
- Chilli: 40 gm
- Ghee: 3 tbsp
- Kashmiri chilli: 10 gm
- Butter: 100 gm
- Kasoori methi: 20 gm
- Cream: 100 ml
- Garlic: 50 gm
- Ginger: 10 gm
- Oil: 20 ml
- Salt to taste

METHOD

- Deep fry corn chips. Then sprinkle salt and crushed pepper corn.
- Arrange nachos on a plate, spread half of bean chilli on top to cover them.
- Spread 45 gm of cheddar and mozzarella cheese on top. Spread jalapenos.
- Repeat the steps.
- Place the loaded nachos in the oven. Cook until the cheese melts and is bubbly.
- Remove the cooked nachos from the oven. Slide the nachos on a clean and warm plate.
- Sprinkle salsa and chopped cilantro on top.
- Using a scoop, place a dollop of sour cream on the top of the nachos. Serve immediately.

Courtesy: Chef Shadab Ahmed at Jyran — Tandoor Dining & Lounge.

Trend Blazer

'Manali a great experience'

Veteran AMITABH BACHCHAN, who has been shooting in Himachal Pradesh for his forthcoming film *Brahmastra*, calls it the "most rewarding experience."

Big B took to his blog and posted, "The affection and love of the ever hospitable people of Himachal Pradesh has been quite overwhelming. Thank you HP and Manali for all the care. It has been a most rewarding experience," he said.

He shared a few stills from the film's shoot in his blog. He can be seen wearing a jacket, a pair of goggles and a traditional Himachali cap and has his hands folded in a *namaste*.



'There shouldn't be censorship on OTT platforms. It is really an outdated concept and practice. We live in a vibrant democracy, so to have censorship is a negative thing. I feel instead of censorship, there should be a modern system of rating where people give you a guideline regarding a certain show which contains abusive language or things like that.'

—Vivek Oberoi

Actor HRITHIK ROSHAN has been named the Sexiest Asian Man in the world for 2019, and also of the last decade.

He topped UK-based Eastern Eye newspaper's 16th edition of the world-famous list published annually.

Tiger Shroff, who entered the top 10 for the first time, was fourth. Pop superstar Zayn Malik was fifth and TV star Harshad Chopda sixth.

The list is prepared on the basis of votes cast by fans across the world, buzz generated on social media sites, media attention, massive global interest etc.



Craig rocks the James Bond role

The official trailer of the forthcoming James Bond adventure *No Time To Die* was launched recently. And DANIEL CRAIG's look will give the fans a vintage action feast in his final outing as agent 007.

The two-minute, thirty-six second trailer, released on the film's social media outlets has it all.

There's Craig striking a dapper intense form as Bond, zipping around in a high-concept Aston Martin devised especially for him by Q (Ben Wishaw). Naomie Harris returns as Moneypenny and Ralph Fiennes as M.

There is a brief glimpse of Christoph Waltz as Ernst Stavro Blofeld, too, who was captured at the end of the last Bond film, *Spectre*.



THE QUEEN OF PURPOSE

Actor RANI MUKERJI tells CHAHAK MITTAL that even though women might have grown stronger and independent than they were before, criminal minds haven't changed a bit. And that is exactly what *Mardaani 2* is about

'WHY AREN'T WE TRAINING OUR CHILDREN OR MAKING SELF-DEFENCE A COMPULSORY SUBJECT IN SCHOOLS AND COLLEGES?'



It was in 1997 when actor Rani Mukerji played a rape survivor in *Raja Ki Aayegi Baraat*. It's 2019 and she is still fighting against sex offenders and tracking such perverts in society in *Mardaani 2*. For all her convincing performances, she is distraught that her roles haven't changed ground reality. Even though women might have grown stronger and independent than they were before, criminal minds haven't changed a bit. What else could make it more evident than the recent examples? Be it Delhi's Nirbhaya or Hyderabad's veterinarian and a thousand other innocent women who were forced to succumb to brutality, the bestiality about dominating women continues.

For the actor, the journey from *Mardaani* (2014) to *Mardaani 2* has been full of a similar emotion — anger. She explains, "I actually channelised all my anger that I felt against the Nirbhaya case through my portrayal of Shivani Shivaji Roy. I strongly pondered if there was something that I could have done? And as a performer, I felt this is the way that I could talk to my sisters in the country and tell them about the growing threat on the streets. And it's not just here, but everywhere."

While *Mardaani* talked about sex trafficking, its sequel reflects the rising sexual assaults in the country. The actor feels that there is need to look for solutions, which can only be found through educating people and building gender sensitivity among all sections of society, ensuring it trickles down to the lowest level. "*Mardaani* also looks at how nobody is talking about how to end this crime. It's so huge and spread in various fragments. Women really need to be educated, made aware that nobody can be trusted so easily. Girls need to be careful outside schools and colleges. With *Mardaani 2*, the messaging is very loud and clear about how there's a threat from nameless, faceless and ageless criminals today. Somewhere we need to make a strong stand. It could be an innocent looking person who could be capable of a very heinous crime. So you can't trust anyone. The film also looks at juvenile criminals, which is again a major problem with society today since cases like these haven't stopped even after seven years of Nirbhaya. We need to stop and think why we are not



able to implement certain laws which will send shivers down the spine of a person who is even thinking of committing a crime," she says.

This time her anger has doubled after the rape of a vet in Hyderabad. She says, "I wonder what are the parents of the girl, who lost her life, going through currently? How are they going to feel better? How are they going to get a closure to what has happened to their child? They will never be able to take this out of their system. It has scarred their lives. Will they ever be able to get the justice for what happened? Nothing could dull their pain. And these kinds of incidences are going to continue if women don't take charge of their own lives. We cannot be doing candle marches everytime a woman is raped and killed and then eventually move on with our lives after some time. But how can we make sure women are safe? Let's make them stronger, shouldn't we?"

Such were the questions she raised before prepping for her role. How can girls be prepared for any eventuality? What are we carrying in our bags? What are we doing to learn self-defence techniques? She recalls, "When I did *Mardaani*, I met the Krav Maga martial art experts from Israel who teach the art to women in their country. So nobody can dare touch an Israeli woman because

she is empowered enough to protect herself. So why aren't we training our children now? Why aren't we making self-defence a compulsory subject in schools and colleges? I was not a mother during *Mardaani*. Today, I am the mother of a daughter and would love if her school makes something like this mandatory."

The film and her character are evidence of how cinema is giving more power to women. However, this sensibility is yet to percolate to mass entertainers. There are still certain dialogues or lyrics of a song that objectify women and demean them in multiple ways. And these are later used as comments to eviscerate. Rani looks at it in two different ways and explains, "*Mardaani 2* is a thriller, where through an interesting and intense story, we bring out a strong message. We, as filmmakers, have chosen that path. But we should never forget that ours is an entertaining medium, which has to explore different formats. And at the end of the day, a film always mirrors the society. At the same time, we need to be cautious that as creative people, we have been given the freedom of expression. Having said that, we may make an error of judgement. Adult humour is one thing, vulgarity quite the other. And this is where the censor board comes in."

Here, she demands a responsible attitude from the viewers' end too to follow the censor rating and not make their children watch content that might not be suitable for them. "Don't you think that as adults, they are capable of understanding what knowledge they should take back and what they shouldn't?" she questions and highlights that some films are also meant only for entertainment, which might not have a social message. She adds, "What if I do a role

where I explore a negative trait tomorrow? It doesn't mean I am trying to inspire my fans to be in that negative zone. I am just doing it because I feel connected to that role. We also need to look at each actor for the reason for which they have chosen to do a particular film. And not generalise it."

Rani's films like *Mehendi, Black, No One Killed Jessica, Hichki* and *Mardaani* series are some examples of how she has always been upfront about certain issues and stereotypes about women in society. "Being a woman, I understand when somebody says she had never been taught or told to be strong. I understand where she is coming from. And then I also understand when a woman says that *aisa kuch bhi hua toh* I am going to just slap that guy and kick him. *Ek maaru pakad ke*," she says, animatedly. She thinks it is high time that we make women believe that they are as strong and powerful as men.

Now that she is in a settled space, is Rani going only for content-driven films? Not really. "I choose my films very spontaneously. *Mardaani* happened after the Nirbhaya case. *Hichki* happened at a time when I just delivered my child. My baby was about a year old and I was really emotional and vulnerable. I wanted to do a film on a subject that made me want to leave my home and go to work because it was difficult to leave my child behind. Hadn't *Hichki* happened, I don't think I could have returned on screen. It looked at the teacher-student relationship, which I feel strongly about. Because I feel that no child should be pushed to isolation. We cannot tell a child to be good at all subjects and expect him to excel in that. Every child has his strength and weakness."

Nobody can imagine Rani's Tina, Kajol's Anjali and SRK's Rahul in *Kuch Kuch Hota Hai* (1998) being portrayed by any other actor. Because the three were so beautifully and powerfully etched in the narrative. Today, even though films have a stronger narrative and a sense of realism, the characters seem to be losing their individuality. Rani disagrees. "I think it depends on the filmmakers the most. We have to view/review the film in isolation for this because there are times when you like an actor so much that you cannot imagine anybody else in that particular role. That is also the kind of love you have for a particular actor. And in some cases, probably the actor is not that good in his or her portrayal of the character so one may feel that s/he could be replaced," she says, picking up her coffee mug. For her, it's still about solid fundamentals and all in a day's work.

Photo: Pankaj Kumar

The ABC of reviewing cars

More than the objective understanding of an automobile, its subjectivity needs to be looked at thoroughly when one reviews a vehicle. And it can only be done once you experience the drive

People often tell me that I have a cushy job of 'reviewing cars' and undoubtedly, it would be wrong if I deny that it is a terribly difficult one. Having said that, changing cars and early wake-up calls every few days are not as amazing as many suspect them to be. But a job is a job, and evaluating a car to be good or bad is not simply getting the stats together and blabbering them out with a string of adjectives attached. There is an objective part to a review, of that there is no doubt. Engine size, output, 0-100 times, car dimensions, interior fittings and what not. However, all of that is in the brochure as well but the art of the review is in the subjective things. The stuff that they do not tell you in the brochure, and things which you can only get to know once you drive the car.

Keep in mind, my perception of a vehicle can be very different to that of my friends in the automotive writing trade. The way we review cars is also quite different depending on where we drive them. The 'first drive', usually a short one on a (very straight) highway, does not reveal much, other than giving an idea of acceleration and the interiors of the car, alongside seating position, luggage space and some other ponderables. This is a mere reason why I love spending a week or two with a car, sometimes even longer. Doing so can give you a strange appreciation of a vehicle. For close to two months, I drove the Diesel AMT version of the Grand i10 Nios and while the gearbox was far from being smart, indeed slow would be a better adjective, I grew to appreciate the size of the car, its superb handling and overall appropriateness for urban conditions. If you have a long



urban commute, one where you cover over 50 kilometres in a day, this is the best you could possibly buy. Yes, it can be more peppy but who am I to argue with 21 kilometres per litre.

It brings us to the other point, how I (and most other serious auto reviewers) look at aspects like ride and handling, and even acceleration for that matter. For example, acceleration is not something you do with a 0-100 speed run because other than a few expressways in India, it's illegal. How many times in real life, after you have turned 25, do you drop the clutch drive like a maniac off the red light, especially with expensive petrol? So you look at how quickly and effectively you head off from a traffic light or toll gate, changing gears at the right engine speeds. Then you observe how the gears respond, keep an eye on the engine speed and notice when and where you need to change. The fact is that most cars sold in India are driven in the city and have to be the urban warriors.

Then there are ride and handling, again imponderables for many 'car reviewers' and something that no brochure can tell you. Therefore, I have often seen comments and sentences from

proper reviews appearing on certain motoring sites, sometimes entire paragraphs. This is something you can feel yourself being shoved into the side bolsters or even off the seats when you take a sharp turn. At times, you get surprised at how well and true a car handles after you turn the steering, and while most front-wheel drive cars tend to understeer a bit, that is that the wheels do not turn as much as you want to, you learn to compensate for that. I did not expect the Renault Triber I am currently driving to take the sweeping right-hander at the end of the Barapullah flyover as steady as it did. It is no Lamborghini or even a BMW 3-series for that matter but sometimes cheap and cheerful cars today can surprise you too with just how nicely the steering is weighted, how the car turns and how much (or little) body roll there is. One of my major issues with the MG Hector is the lack of precision in the steering and the grotesque amounts (for a modern vehicle) of body roll.

Then there are other things that we consider, stuff like the utilisation of space, something that despite the Maruti S-Presso's less than stellar looks, it does extremely well as does the Renault Triber. And while car companies talk

about how much space or lack thereof, their boots might have, you actually need to see how high or low the loading lip is. Consider ergonomics, where the switches are, how solid or not the switches and dials are and check seat and steering adjustability. There is one of my personal bugbears, the quality of plastics, because while you can always change your seat covers, you cannot change the look and feel of the plastics. If the plastics feel like shit, too 'plasticky' (yes, I see the irony there) they can ruin a perfectly good vehicle which has brilliant mechanics. Nowadays, I find myself giving a lot of attention to the layout of steering wheel controls, let alone everything else.

Yes, it is a fun job and I thank my lucky stars for doing it for almost two decades. I get to travel a lot, drive on amazing roads and get to experience some amazing scenery. But do not think that I, or folks such as the other jury members of the Indian Car Of The Year (ICOTY), have an easy job because it is not just about liking cars, driving and travelling. At the end of the day, this is a serious business and anybody who says that it isn't, does not know what it takes.



KUSHAN MITRA



Deepika writes for NY Times

Actor Deepika Padukone has never failed to leave a mark. Be it making a fashion statement or trying to inspire people. She has yet again made a bold move by talking about her story of fighting with depression across a border. In an interview with the New York Times, a reputed American daily, Deepika spoke about mental stress and the loneliness one can feel even when there are a lot of things happening around them.

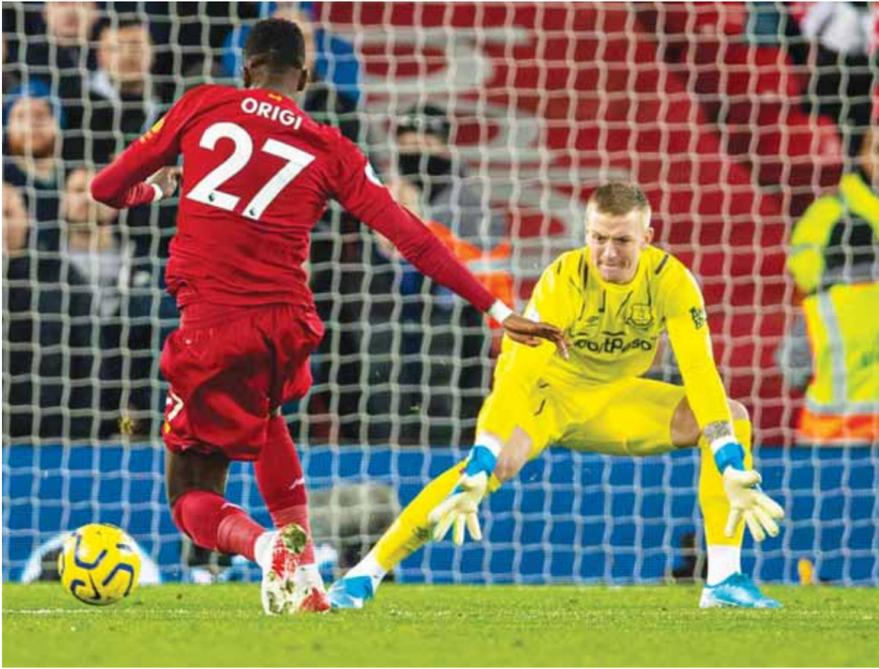
She throws light on about how according to WHO, 300 million people across the world are facing the same challenge silently and are totally unaware of the fact what is happening to them. She says, "Only a person close to you like your mother will notice such things."

When she faced a similar situation a few years back in her life, she was a frontier to address the issue and came up with the foundation called 'The Live Love Laugh Foundation'. In India, where mental health is treated as a taboo, Deepika wants to remove the stigma around the illness and urge people to break the silence about their stories and seek help if required to come out of this situation. Her foundation aims at spreading awareness via various mediums. It is so inspiring to see her address this issue at an international level like this.



3 point machines

Origi comes again to rob Toffees at Anfield in 5-2 win as Klopp completes century of PL triumphs



Divock Origi scores Liverpool third goal as Everton goalkeeper Jordan Pickford watches him during Premier League game at Anfield PL/Twitter

AFP ■ ANFIELD (LIVERPOOL)

Liverpool surged eight points clear at the top of the Premier League as Divock Origi was the scourge of Everton once more in a thrilling 5-2 Merseyside derby win for the European champions at Anfield.

All but one of the goals came before half-time as Origi and Xherdan Shaqiri, who replaced the rested Roberto Firmino and Mohamed Salah, put Liverpool 2-0 up inside 17 minutes.

Michael Keane pulled a goal back for Everton before Origi got his second and Sadio Mane finished off a blistering counter-attack to make it 4-1.

The scoring did not stop there as Richarlison cut the deficit once more, but Georginio Wijnaldum hammered the final nail in the Everton coffin a minute from time as an eighth defeat in 11 league games sees the Toffees slip into the bottom three.

"All the goals were incredible," said a delighted Jurgen Klopp, who made five changes in total. "Wonderful goals, sensational passes, super pieces of football. I loved it a lot."

Klopp insisted this fixture remained the "standout" one in Liverpool's sea-

son despite the massive points difference between the sides at either end of the table.

However, the German's actions spoke louder than words as he could afford the luxury of leaving out Firmino and Salah at the beginning of a hectic month for the Reds in three competitions.

"We needed fresh legs and I had to show my respect to the boys in the squad," added Klopp. "They proved it. It is much more fun making changes, all of the boys are ready to deliver performances like this."

Origi scored the 96th-minute winner when the sides met last season at Anfield and proved his worth within six minutes this time with a calm finish to round Jordan Pickford and slot into an empty net after a sensational pass from Mane cut Everton open.

Shaqiri was making his first start of the season, but also showed no signs of rustiness in front of goal by finishing off another Mane assist on his trusty left foot.

"My biggest dream is to win the title with this club and give it to the fans," said the Swiss midfielder.

"We have to focus on the pitch, stay

grounded and work hard every day. If we win, it will be amazing, but we still have a long way to go."

'NOT NORMAL' MISTAKES

At the other end, Liverpool were without the suspended Alisson in goal and looked poor at the back all night as their long wait for a clean sheet at Anfield this season continued.

Keane took advantage of a slip from Dejan Lovren to lift a delightful finish over Adrian to briefly breathe new life into Everton.

That was extinguished on the half-hour mark as Lovren made amends with a brilliant ball over the top which Origi cushioned into his path before lobbing Pickford.

Liverpool then struck again from an Everton corner as Trent Alexander-Arnold led the charge from one end of the field to the other before squaring for Mane to curl into the bottom corner.

Under-fire Everton manager Marco Silva had made a substitution just 35 minutes in to try and turn the tide with Bernard replacing Djibril Sidibe and the Brazilian made an impact as from his cross the ball came off Richarlison's shoulder to leave Adrian helpless.

NUMBER GAME

14 Everton's 14-point tally this season in the Premier League is their joint-third worst in the competition after 15 matches and their worst since 2003-04, when they narrowly avoided relegation by one position and six points

100 Liverpool's victory over Everton was Jurgen Klopp's 100th Premier League win in his 159th match in charge in the competition; among all managers, only Jose Mourinho (142 matches) enjoyed 100 wins in fewer games in the competition's history

5 Everton have conceded five goals against Liverpool in a match for the first time since November 1982, when they lost 5-0 under Howard Kendall against a Reds side managed by Bob Paisley

1999 Everton find themselves in the relegation zone after playing at least 15 Premier League matches for the first time since April 10th 1999 (after 32 games)

32 Liverpool are now unbeaten in 32 Premier League matches since a 1-2 defeat to Man City back in January (W27 D5) — the Reds' longest ever run without defeat in English top-flight history

6 All six shots on target in the first half of Liverpool's game with Everton were scored

18 Since the start of last season, Trent Alexander-Arnold has provided more Premier League assists than any other player (18), with 15 of those coming in 2019

2 This is only the second time in 1,053 Premier League games that Everton have conceded four first half goals (also v Arsenal in Feb 2018)

5 Divock Origi has scored five Premier League goals against Everton; only Robbie Fowler (6) and Steven Gerrard (9) have scored more PL goals for Liverpool in the Merseyside derby

5 Divock Origi has now scored in all four matches against Everton for Liverpool at Anfield (five goals)

18 Liverpool are unbeaten in their last 18 Premier League games against Everton (W8 D10). It's their longest ever unbeaten run against a specific opponent in the competition.

But Silva must now wait to see if he is offered another stay of execution by the Everton board ahead of Chelsea's visit to Goodison tomorrow.

"I am not the right person to answer about the situation, this question is for different people," said Silva over growing calls for him to be fired.

"The type of mistakes we are making is because the players are playing under big pressure because of the position in the table. They are making some mistakes that are not normal for the level we are."

Back to square one

Mourinho suffers first setback as Spurs manager in 1-2 away defeat against Man Utd; Foxes win seven in a row



Mason Mount celebrates with Tammy Abraham after scoring Chelsea's second goal against Aston Villa Tammy/Twitter

AFP ■ MANCHESTER

Jose Mourinho endured an unhappy return to Manchester United as Marcus Rashford struck twice in a 2-1 defeat for Tottenham while second-placed Leicester equalled their top-flight league record of seven consecutive wins with a 2-0 victory against bottom side Watford. Also Chelsea bounced back from two consecutive league defeats to beat Aston Villa 2-1.

Mourinho's first loss since taking charge of Spurs eases the pressure on Ole Gunnar Solskjaer as United moved above Tottenham, up to sixth in the table.

Rashford smashed United into an early lead with the help of some poor goalkeeping by Paulo Gazzaniga, the England international's powerful shot creeping in at the near post and he had chances to extend the lead.

Yet for all United's dominance in the first 45 minutes, one moment of brilliance from Dele Alli pulled Mourinho's men level before the break.

Alli plucked the ball out of the air and skipped beyond two United defenders with one touch before slotting home his fourth goal in as many games since Mourinho took charge.

United were handed the chance to retake the lead when Rashford went down under Moussa Sissoko's challenge in the penalty area early in the second half and he put his recent spot-kick woes behind him to send Gazzaniga the wrong way.

"The three points are massive for us," said Solskjaer.

"We've had too many draws this season and given too many points away from winning positions. It's a great lesson the last two games (Sheffield United and Aston Villa) and we came back in a great manner."

Mourinho, sacked by United last December, described his reception at Old Trafford as "nice and polite". "It's a step back against a team

NUMBER GAME

35 Tottenham Hotspur have lost more Premier League matches against Manchester United than against any other team (35 defeats)

3 Dele Alli has scored in three consecutive appearances in all competitions for the first time since March 2017 (four in a row)

8 Marcus Rashford has scored in six of his 10 appearances at Old Trafford this season, netting eight goals

7 Leicester City have now equalled their top-flight league record for consecutive wins (seven games), with the only previous occasion coming between December 1962 and March 1963

14 Only Jamie Vardy (17) has been directly involved in more Premier League goals this season than Tammy Abraham (11 goals, 3 assists)

11 Tammy Abraham has scored 11 goals in 14 Premier League apps this season - the only Chelsea players to score more in their first 14 apps in a PL season are Diego Costa (12 in 2014-15) and Nicolas Anelka (12 in 2008-09)

22 As well as scoring in back-to-back games for the first time since August, Teemu Pukki has netted his 22nd league goal of 2019; only Jarrod Bowen (24) and Jamie Vardy (26) have scored more such goals within England's top four tiers this year

that is playing with the same objective as us, trying to get up the table and reach the top six," he said. "We need to keep going. We made mistakes but it's not good to be crying about them now."

VARDY CONTINUES SCORING RUN

Leicester moved back above City as Liverpool's closest challengers. Brendan Rodgers' side were awarded a penalty after the break when Jonny Evans went down clutching his face inside the area and Jamie Vardy made no mistake, scoring for the seventh straight game.

James Maddison sealed the points deep into stoppage time.

Chelsea forward Tammy Abraham, who was prolific during a loan spell at Aston Villa last season, proved the difference against Villa, heading in Reece James' cross to open the scoring.

Trezequet bundled home to bring the visitors level before the break, but Abraham then turned provider by chipping down for Mason Mount to brilliant volley high past Tom Heaton.

Wolves, in fifth place, remain unbeaten in the league since September and goals from Leander Dondoncker and Patrick Cutrone either side of half-time gave them a 2-0 win against a disappointing West Ham at Molineux.

Southampton moved out of the bottom three with a 2-1 win against fellow strugglers Norwich.



Coach Igor Stimac sits in dugout during India's World Cup qualifier game IFT/Twitter

Scoring goals is big problem: Stimac

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Indian football team head coach Igor Stimac feels scoring goals has been a "big problem" and his side will have to fix it quickly for the country to start winning matches.

After an encouraging start to their 2022 World Cup qualifying campaign, India fizzled out later, drawing with the likes of Bangladesh and Afghanistan to be out of reckoning for a third round berth.

The Indian team has been competitive in all five games thus far, and picked up an unlikely draw away to Asian champions Qatar, but a lack of cutting edge has proved costly.

"Scoring goals is our big problem right now. We are playing some good football, and the effort is there, but we don't have that final touch in and around the box. We need to find solutions to that," Stimac told FIFA.

"We are working on it, through set-pieces and other methods. We have also been changing the team's style of play, with fewer long balls, and I'm seeing real progress there — the stats show our ball retention is already much better."

With just three points from five matches and at fourth spot in their group, India's World Cup qualifying chances are over.

The 52-year-old Stimac said he is loving every second as India coach since his appointment six months back.

"I've loved every second so far. It is a privilege to lead the national team of such a vast and great country. The passion is there."

"It's always been said that India is a sleeping giant when it comes to football, and that's true — because the potential is there. Together, we have to start waking that giant and make sure that we're competitive at the next Asian Cup and going on to the World Cup qualifiers in 2026," said the former Croatia manager.

The former Croatian international defender was in charge of Qatar Stars League side Al Shahania for a brief stint in the 2016-17 season, and he predicted that the 2022 football showpiece will be the "most fascinating" one.

"It will be a pity (for India) to miss out on Qatar in 2022 because I think it will be the most fascinating World Cup ever. I coached in Qatar for a while and I've been back to visit since stopping work there. It's an incredible country and the people there will make the World Cup a huge success. I know there have been doubts but, honestly, it's going to be amazing."

AFP ■ PARIS

Neymar and Kylian Mbappe both scored as Paris Saint-Germain restored their five-point cushion at the top of Ligue 1 with a 2-0 win over Nantes.

Mbappe's smart finish shortly after half-time and Neymar's late penalty saw the hosts ease to victory at the Parc des Princes.

PSG, whose scheduled game against Monaco last weekend was postponed due to bad weather, also have a game in hand on second-placed Marseille as they bid for a seventh French league title in eight seasons.

Thomas Tuchel started Neymar and Mbappe together for the first time this season, although the German coach left Edinson Cavani and Mauro Icardi on the bench.

"It says a lot if in December our two key players (Mbappe and Neymar), who we want to



Kylian Mbappe celebrates after scoring Paris Saint-Germain's first goal PSG/Twitter

make the difference, are starting for the first time together," said Tuchel.

"Imagine if (Lionel) Messi and (Luis) Suarez played together for the first time in December (for Barcelona)... They lacked rhythm, I'm not expecting too much from both of them."

"I'm happy they scored, but there is a lot of potential (for them to improve)."

Mbappe fired the first opening over the crossbar, before Nantes' Ludovic Blas was denied by Keylor Navas in the PSG goal.

Neymar appeared to have put the hosts in front with a fan-

tastic left-footed strike after Nantes could only half clear a corner, but following a lengthy delay, the goal was ruled out by VAR for an apparent high foot from Julian Draxler.

The world's most expensive player almost gave PSG a half-time lead anyway, but saw his low shot tipped away by visiting goalkeeper Alban Lafont.

The league leaders did forge ahead in the 52nd minute as Mbappe met Angel Di Maria's low cross with a backheel flick into the corner after fine work by Neymar.

The Brazilian eventually got his goal with five minutes remaining, scoring his penalty at the second time of asking after substitute Icardi encroached in the area.

Earlier on Wednesday, Gelson Martins came off the bench to fire Monaco to a 2-1 win over Toulouse as the principality side made it six victories in nine league outings.

Hazard to miss Clasico

AFP ■ MADRID

Eden Hazard is set to miss the Clasico against Barcelona after further tests revealed a fracture in his right ankle, Real Madrid confirmed on Thursday. Hazard was forced off during the draw with PSG in the Champions League last week and despite Zinedine Zidane saying after the match he had suffered a "bad twist", Madrid announced the Belgian had been diagnosed with "bruising".

But further tests have shown a fracture, with Hazard now expected to be out for around four to six weeks. It would mean he will sit out the Clasico at Camp Nou on December 18.

"After tests performed on our player Eden Hazard by the Medical Services during the process of improving the bruising in his right leg, he has been diagnosed with an incomplete external fracture in that area," a club statement.

Marcelo is also likely to miss the game against Barcelona after the capital city club confirmed the defender has suffered an injury in his left calf.

But Hazard's absence is the bigger blow to Zidane's side, who sit second in La Liga, behind Barca only on goal difference.

Satwik-Chirag, Pramod nominated for BWF awards

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The Indian men's doubles pair of Satwiksairaj Rankireddy and Chirag Shetty has been nominated for the *Most Improved Player of the Year* award by the Badminton World Federation (BWF) after a stellar season during which the duo picked up some memorable wins.

The young combination had a breakthrough season, claiming its maiden Super 500 title at Thailand Open before reaching the finals of French Open Super 750 event this year.

The prestigious awards recognise the achievements of the elite badminton players and pairs in six categories, including two in Para badminton.

India's para badminton player Pramod Bhagat, who has bagged 11 Gold, three Silver and four Bronze medals this year, was nominated in the *Male Para Badminton Player of the Year* award.

Corriere dello Sport slammed for 'Black Friday' headline



ROME: Italian football clubs on Thursday slammed a renowned sports daily's front page as "unacceptable" and "terrible" after it used "Black Friday" in a headline in reference to Romelu Lukaku and Roma defender Chris Smalling.

Smalling and Lukaku, former Manchester United teammates, face off at the San Siro today as Inter Milan look to maintain top spot in Serie A beating Roma, prompting the Rome-based *Corriere dello Sport* to publish the controversial headline.

The article praised the two players for taking "strong positions against racism and are the symbols of the two clubs", but Roma tweeted "not a single soul" would think the headline a good idea.

The club's chief strategy officer Paul Rogers said the choice of headline was "terrible" although the article itself was "positive". "The intention of the news-

paper article was actually positive but this headline has totally overshadowed the anti-racist message contained within the story," Rogers said.

"Unfortunately, as we've seen on social media, more people will see that ill-judged headline on the front page than read the actual article and it creates new issues at a time when we are all trying to tackle the issue of racism in Italian football."

The *Corriere dello Sport* was unrepentant despite the backlash, saying the headline was "only the praise of difference, the pride of difference, the magnificent wealth of difference."

"White, black, yellow. Denying difference is the typical macroscopic stumbling block of anti-racism racism," it said in an editorial.

"An innocent headline... Is transformed into poison by those who have poison inside." Anti-racism body Fare said of the daily's front page "the media fuels racism every day" AFP

