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TEACH KIDS TO
MAKE FRIENDS

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OF AUS OPEN**
16 SPORT

Cong's brahmastra Priyanka takes plunge

Rahul makes her Gen Secy incharge of East UP for polls

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Ending years of speculation, Priyanka Gandhi Vadra, the sister of Congress president Rahul Gandhi, on Wednesday finally plunged into active politics ahead of the Lok Sabha elections to take on the might of the BJP and Prime Minister Narendra Modi in the crucial Hindi heartland that has 80 Lok Sabha seats.

Dubbed as the "brahmastra" of the Congress, Priyanka will debut as the party's general secretary incharge of the eastern part of Uttar Pradesh having Modi's constituency in Varanasi and also UP Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath bastion in Gorakhpur.

Congress leaders said Priyanka's entry into active party politics will galvanise the workers, helping them take on the dual challenge posed in the State by the BJP and the Samajwadi Party-Bahujan Samaj Party alliance.

The Congress hopes that Priyanka will be able to turn the projected direct fight between the BJP and SP-BSP alliance into triangular contest where the Congress could benefit on a number of seats due to division of votes.

Congress leaders also feel that while it is too early to assess the impact of a possible Congress revival under Priyanka stewardship on the prospect of the BJP and the SP-BSP alliance, but care may be taken in the selection of candidates to ensure that the BJP suffers most.

Congress list of candidates, sources said, may be dominated by upper castes, since the BJP hopes to capitalise on 10 per cent reservation to general category candidates in educational institutions and



Supporters of Priyanka Gandhi Vadra celebrate outside the AICC Headquarters after she was appointed AICC general secretary for Uttar Pradesh East in New Delhi on Wednesday PTI

employment to woo the upper caste voters. Priyanka can play vital role there in bringing back the traditional upper caste voters to the Congress fold.

Soon after her appointment as an office-bearer in AICC, speculation is rife that she may be fielded as the party candidate from Rae Bareilly, the constituency currently being represented by her mother and UPA chairperson Sonia Gandhi, who is not keeping well of late.

Though no reactions came till late evening from Priyanka as she is reportedly in New York and scheduled to return on February 1, Rahul said he is

happy that Priyanka will assist him in the Lok Sabha polls.

"I am very happy that my sister Priyanka will assist me in Uttar Pradesh in the Lok Sabha polls, she is very capable," Rahul said at Amethi after making some of the crucial appointments in the party system. The brother-sister duo will formally announce the beginning of Lok Sabha poll campaign in UP on February 4 at a Press conference.

Senior party leader Jyotiraditya Scindia will be on par with Priyanka as AICC general secretary for Uttar Pradesh West region. Rahul added Jyotiraditya is a dynam-

ic youth leader. Both Priyanka and Scindia replace Ghulam Nabi Azad, who has been appointed AICC general secretary for Haryana, where the party is facing factionism.

"UP is central to building a new hope fulfilled. The new UP AICC team led by Priyanka and Jyotiraditya will herald the dawn of a new kind of politics in the State. We will offer the youth in UP a dynamic new platform to transform the State," said Rahul.

Husband Robert Vadra congratulated Priyanka on a Facebook post: "Congratulations P... always by your side in every phase of your

life." The BJP has been repeatedly targeting Vadra, a businessman being investigated for allegedly corrupt land deals in Haryana and Rajasthan and is facing probes by the Enforcement Directorate.

The party is not immediately clear on the division of the 80 parliamentary seats between the two new incharges but sources said it could be 40 each. Both Amethi and Rae Bareilly, the two Gandhi family bastions, fall in eastern Uttar Pradesh and Priyanka has been extensively campaigning since 2004 in all national and state level elections.

It's admission of Rahul's leadership failure: BJP

'In Congress, the family is party; in BJP, party is family'

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The BJP on Wednesday interpreted the entry of Priyanka Gandhi Vadra into the active politics in the Congress as an admission of his brother Rahul's leadership failure and likened the move to the party opting for a "family alliance" after having been "rejected by various parties in the proposed mahagathbandhan".

"Priyanka ji has become the general secretary, my good luck to her. Since the party is a family concern, these kinds of postings are nothing unusual, except to say with a caveat why has she been given the limited role of eastern UP? Perhaps her persona merited a wider role," said Union Law Minister and senior BJP leader Ravishankar Prasad.

Claiming that the appointments made by the Congress reflected the outlook of the party, Prasad said it was a case of a brother (Congress president Rahul Gandhi) appointing his sister to a party position.

Railway Minister Piyush Goel accused the party of carrying out dynasty politics and said, "In the Congress party there is reservation only for one family, nobody gets anything

beyond them."

BJP spokesperson Sambit Patra claimed the new appointment reflected crisis of confidence within the Congress against Rahul. "The Congress has basically publicly announced that Rahul Gandhi has failed and needs crutches from within the family. Because of his rejection by grand alliance parties, he has opted for a family alliance," Patra said.

Patra said it was natural that the Congress had to "coronate" somebody from within the family and added that Prime Minister Narendra Modi has projected the Lok Sabha elections as a battle between "naamdar" (dynasts) and "kaamdar" (those who have

worked).

The new India is asking the question who will be the next leader in the Congress, Patra said referring to its succession line from Jawaharlal Nehru to Indira followed by Rajiv, Sonia and Rahul.

"All appointments are from one family. And this is the fundamental difference between the Congress and the BJP. In the Congress, the family is party. In the BJP, the party is family," Patra said.

In 2014 elections, Congress could win only two seats — Sonia from Rae Bareilly and Rahul from Amethi — from UP which has the largest number of 80 Lok Sabha seats in the country.



Congress chief Rahul Gandhi interacts with locals in Amethi on Wednesday PTI

UP Congress workers elated at prospects

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

The entry of Priyanka Gandhi into active politics and her appointment as AICC general secretary incharge of Uttar Pradesh (east) has come as a major boost for the party workers and leaders ahead of the Lok Sabha polls. The morale of the youthful cadre received a further fillip as along with Priyanka Gandhi, Congress president Rahul Gandhi appointed Jyotiraditya Scindia as AICC general secretary incharge of UP (west).

In his first reaction after appointment of his sister Priyanka as the party general secretary, Rahul said the decision was taken to strengthen the party and this two powerful Congress leaders will pave way for the spread of the Congress ideology of the youths, elders, and other section of the society.

"I trust Priyanka Gandhi Vadra and Jyotiraditya Scindia. We will not play on the back foot," he told reporters at Fursatganj.

He added the party has appointed both the leaders in a permanent basis in UP and had not sent Priyanka and Jyotiraditya for just two months or till the Lok Sabha polls.

"I have sent them to take Congress' ideology forward in Uttar Pradesh. Our ideology is of standing and fighting for the poor, for the youth, for the farmers. Both Priyanka and Jyotiraditya are very capable and dynamic, and will surely take Congress forward in UP," he added.

The sudden appointment of Priyanka on the day Rahul is visiting UP has changed the political dynamics in the State which will elect 80 Lok Sabha members.

When asked if Priyanka would be contesting the Lok Sabha polls, Rahul said, "It is up to Priyanka to take the decision. I have already said that the Congress will not play on the back foot and will only bat on the front foot in UP and elsewhere."

Related copy on P7

CAPSULE

CBI BOOKS EX-CMD OF AI FOR MISUSING POSITION

New Delhi: The CBI has booked former Air India Chairman-cum-Managing Director Arvind Jadhav for allegedly violating procedures while making various promotions and appointments, officials said on Wednesday.

BAL THACKERAY A BOLD PERSON, SAYS MODI

New Delhi: Paying tributes to Bal Thackeray on his birth anniversary, Prime Minister Narendra Modi Wednesday described the Shiv Sena founder as a bold person with an unwavering commitment towards protecting rights of the people.

3 LET ULTRAS KILLED IN BARAMULLA ENCOUNTER

Srinagar: Three Lashkar-e-Tayyeba terrorists were killed in an encounter with security forces in Baramulla district of Jammu & Kashmir on Wednesday.

EVM HACKING CLAIM: DELHI POLICE FILES FIR

New Delhi: The Delhi Police has registered a case based on a complaint filed by the EC regarding allegations of hacking of EVMs and rigging of polls levelled by self-proclaimed cyber expert Syed Shuja.

Govt OK's Red Line Metro extension to Gzb New Bus Adda



PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Union Cabinet on Thursday approved the extension of Rithala-Dilshad Garden Red Line Delhi Metro corridor to Ghaziabad New Bus Adda. This would be the second Delhi Metro line in Ghaziabad and the first Metro link connecting the interiors of the city. It will pass through Sahibabad Industrial Area and is aimed at impacting the nearby residential areas.

In a statement, the Government said the total distance of the extended line will be 9.41 km. The Union Cabinet has also approved contribution of ₹324.87 crore as Central financial assistance for the extension at a total completion cost of ₹1,781.21 crore, it said. Detailed report on P5

Modi-led committee to pick CBI chief today; UP DGP among 5 probables

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The high-powered selection panel headed by Prime Minister Narendra Modi will on Thursday choose a name from a list of five IPS officers of 1983 and 1984 batches for the appointment as CBI Director. The other members of the high-level selection committee are Chief Justice of India Ranjan Gogoi and leader of the Congress in the Lok Sabha Mallikarjun Kharge.

The list of officials in the race are Uttar Pradesh and Gujarat Directors General of Police OP Singh and Shivanand Jha respectively, CISF chief Rajesh Ranjan, and BSF Director General Rajnikant Mishra besides Special Secretary (Internal Security) in the Union Home Ministry Rina Mitra, sources said.

While Singh and Jha do not have any experience in the CBI, Ranjan, Mishra and Mitra have served in the premier investigating agency in the past. 1983-batch IPS officer

Gujarat DGP Shivanand Jha, CISF chief Rajesh Ranjan, BSF DG Rajnikant Mishra, and MHA Special Secretary Rina Mitra in the list

Singh is from Uttar Pradesh cadre, Jha is a Gujarat-cadre officer, and Mitra is from Madhya Pradesh cadre. Ranjan is a 1984-batch Bihar cadre officer, and Mishra from the same batch is an officer of Uttar Pradesh cadre.

A senior official in the know of the things with regard to the appointment said there are surprise elements in the appointment process. Given the track record, the Modi Government loves to choose by surprise.

The appointment of the CBI chief comes close on the heels of the selection panel's decision to remove Alok Verma from the post following a bitter feud he had with his deputy Rakesh Asthana. The Government had on the midnight of October 23 sent both Verma and Asthana on forced

leave after divesting them of all powers. Verma then challenged the Government's decision before the Supreme Court, which reinstated Verma as CBI chief on January 8. But the Selection Panel removed Verma as CBI boss and transferred him on January 11 as DG Fire Services, Civil Defence and Home Guards. However, Verma refused to take the role and submitted his resignation the next day.

Meanwhile, the Government is also in the process of appointing two 1990-batch Uttar Pradesh cadre officers — Tanuja Srivastava and Tilotma Verma as Joint Director in the CBI. Madhya Pradesh cadre officer of 1987-batch Sudhir Saxena is likely to be appointed as Additional Director of the agency, a post that fell vacant after transfer of Additional Director AK Sharma who has now been appointed as ADG in the CRPF. Sharma's name had also figured in the controversy between Verma and Asthana.

SC rejects bail plea of Unitech promoters

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Wednesday refused to grant bail to Unitech Ltd promoters Sanjay Chandra and his brother Ajay Chandra in a case relating to alleged siphoning off the homebuyers' money.

A Bench of Justices DY Chandrachud and Hemant Gupta said the Chandras have still not complied with its October 30, 2017 order which asked them to deposit ₹750 crore with the apex court registry by December 31, 2017.

"At this stage, we note that on October 30, 2017, petitioner were subjected to bail provided they deposited ₹750 crore in the apex court registry by December 31, 2017. The order was passed by a three-judge Bench. It is an admitted fact that said order of October 30, 2017 is still to be complied with. Therefore prayer for bail is misconceived. We see no reason to modify the order of a three-judge bench," said the SC.

RSS leader killed, body recovered from field

PNS ■ RATLAM

Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) worker was allegedly killed by slitting his throat and his body was recovered from his field on Wednesday morning at Kamed village in the district/

The deceased, Himmat Patidar (36), who was former RSS Shivpur mandal karyawah (president), was found dead with his face burnt in his field located under Bilpank police station area.

Addl SP Pradeep Sharma told that Patidar had gone to his field in Kamed on Tuesday night.

His family members panicked after he did not return home during the night.

They started looking for him and found his body lying in their field in the morning.

"Unidentified accused allegedly slit his throat, burnt his face before dumping his body there," he added. Police have recovered a torch from the spot and his motorcycle was

found lying around ten metres away, the officer said.

His body was sent for post-mortem, police said adding that a case has been registered against unidentified accused and a probe has been launched in this connection.

According to Sharma, police have got some leads and are hopeful of cracking the case. According to police, the deceased's brother, Sanjay Patidar, is also associated with the RSS. He is the district RSS music band chief.

'MP will be model of inclusive economy'

STAFF REPORTER ■ BHOPAL

Chief Minister Kamal Nath said that it has become necessary to expand India's economy after making it all-inclusive by solving problem of unemployment and economic problems of the farmers. He said that Madhya Pradesh will be made a model of inclusive economy.

Addressing the session on the subject 'emerging market' on the second day of annual conclave of the World Economic Forum at Davos on Wednesday, the Chief Minister said that India has joined the race to become world's second largest economy but it has many challenges ahead.

He said that unemploy-



ment is the biggest problem of today. It is also a challenge to

make farmers' economic condition strong.

The Chief Minister said that it is must to address these

issues urgently first to exploit India's economic growth potential. Addressing further, Kamal Nath said that constant focus on environmental issues while taking up sustainable economic development is a must.

He underlined that growing disparity in the society has also come up as a major issue.

This can be addressed by ensuring justice to all. He mentioned that this is not a problem of India but a problem of all other countries too. This needs global attention and solution.

He said that the issues of farmers in India are different than other countries' farmers and hence solutions cannot be the same. Kamal Nath said that rule based trade system is must for the growth of world trade.

'Road work should be completed within time'

STAFF REPORTER ■ BHOPAL

Minister for Public Works Department (PWD) Sajjan Singh Verma gave instructions in a meeting held at Nirman Bhavan here on Wednesday that the ongoing construction of roads in Bhopal should be completed with quality and within the stipulated time. He mentioned that action should be taken by blacklisting those contractors, who are causing delay in the construction works.

Verma also reviewed the ongoing construction works of the Capital zone. Engineer in Chief, PWD Akhilesh Agarwal was also present at the meeting. It was informed in the meeting that broadening work of Bhabhbhadda-Bilquisganj-Share road in Bhopal has

been started. The 8 km road of this route is being made four-lane with an expenditure of Rs. 30 crore. This work will be completed within the next 18 months. Similarly, work of 12 km long two lane road from Kaliasot to Barhi has also been started.

This road will facilitate convenient and comfortable movement to traffic of Chunabhatti, Gulmohar, Bagmugaliya and Katara Hills. An amount of Rs 50 crore is being spent on the construction of this two lane road and the construction of the road will be completed by February 10, 2020. This two lane road will connect to Hoshangabad bypass road.

Besides, it was informed in the meeting that Public Works Department is handling main-

tenance work of over 14,000 government houses of the capital zone. There are 114 of B-category, 75 houses of C-category, 287 houses of D-category, 515 of E-category, 1686 of F-category, 2917 of G-category, 4425 of H-category and 3916 of I-category government houses in the capital.

Besides, it was informed that approval has been received from the New Development Bank for construction of 5 roads each in Vidisha and Hoshangabad district costing about Rs 300 crore. These works are being started soon. Similarly, approval has been received for approximately 325 km long roads from the Centre Reserve Fund of the Union Government. An amount of Rs 585 crore approximately will be spent on construction.

Landmark Automobiles: New channel partner inaugurated

STAFF REPORTER ■ BHOPAL

Nitin Seth, President- LCV, Ashok Leyland inaugurated new channel partner, Landmark Automobiles here on Wednesday.

Ashok Leyland inaugurated dealership for Light Commercial Vehicles (LCV) in Bhopal, Madhya Pradesh. This is the 7th LCV dealership in the state. The new channel partner, Landmark Automobiles, has a 3S (Sales, Service and Spares) facility strategically located NH46, near Chinarr Dream City, Bhopal.

This new dealership will add to the extensive LCV distribution network of over 500 touch points. The Company currently offers a range of LCV products - DOST, PARTNER and MiTR across the country through its exclusive, state of the art dealership outlets.

On the occasion Nitin Seth

This new dealership will add to the extensive LCV distribution network of over 500 touch points. The Company currently offers a range of LCV products - DOST, PARTNER and MiTR across the country through its exclusive, state of the art dealership outlets

said, "One of the key reasons for the runaway success of 'DOST' and now 'DOST+',

since launch, has been the robustness of the product and our network. Our products were conceived and launched to meet the evolving needs of Indian LCV customers who are very cost sensitive. Our LCV family of customers has now grown to more than 2,00,000, across India. We will remain committed to maintaining and even enhancing the level of customer service and satisfaction."

LK Dubey Director, Landmark Automobiles, said, "Ashok Leyland is a brand which has grown from strength to strength. Its LCV products like the 'DOST' and 'DOST+' are one of the finest in the category. Demand for LCVs is increasing owing to e-commerce boom and advent of hub-and-spoke model. With this dealership in Bhopal, we will meet this demand and help the brand become a formidable force in this region."

35-year-old woman dies in road mishap

Bhopal: A 35-year-old married woman died while her husband and seven year old son escaped with injuries after their bike was hit by a speeding truck near Sai Mandir late in the night on Tuesday; Habibganj police have registered and started investigation.

According to the police three injured were rushed to nearby hospital after their bike was hit by a speeding truck where woman was declared dead while two others escaped with injuries.

The locals informed the police and on the receipt of the information a police team reached the spot and started investigation.

The deceased was identified as Nayab Jahan of Shahjehanabad while her husband Riyaz and son Ziyar escaped with injuries. The truck bearing registration number MP06HC1469 was seized while the errant truck driver escaped the spot leaving and is

still missing. Investigating Officer SI Gajraj Singh Tiwari said that the deceased was hit on his way back to Bhopal after attending a function at Mandideep. In the post mortem report traces of alcohol were not found and if the truck driver was in an inebriated state could be ascertained after he would be nabbed. Search for the errant driver has been started and based on the registration number the details of the truck would be searched which would help in tracking the owner and errant driver during the further investigation, he added. The incident took place at around 11 pm near Sai Mandir at Habibganj.

The collision proved fatal for the deceased. After the preliminary investigation the body was sent for the post mortem and the police have registered a case under section 304 A of the IPC and has started further investigation. **SR**



Students present cultural programme during annual day celebration of Bal Bhawan school in Bhopal on Wednesday

Pioneer photo

Wali takes charge as new DIG

STAFF REPORTER ■ BHOPAL

The new DIG of Bhopal, Irshad Wali, assumed office here on Wednesday. The outgoing officer, Dharmendra Choudhary, handed over the charges to Wali.

DIG Irshad Wali said that maintaining law and order in the State capital would be his priority. Every possible effort would be made to check crimes against women. Dispose pending cases, property offences and to curb cybercrime would be focus.

To a query, he said that with the advancement in the technologies would be used in controlling crime and streamlining traffic.

This would prove more accurate and safe for the citizens, he added.

Greater emphasis would be paid to check crimes against women. Several good initiatives have been taken by State Police Headquarters and dis-



tribut police for curbing crime against woman and efforts would be made to implement in a better manner and explore more good efforts in the same direction.

The action against goons and anti-social elements would be taken continuously.

Cyber crimes have increased and it requires

awareness among the citizens. More stress would be paid in creating awareness towards digital transactions, he said, adding that the citizens would be encouraged to increase their participation in supporting police and more participation of Nagar Suraksha Samiti would be sought.

He said that he would

make strategy based on functioning of police officials and personnel working in the state capital and would implement it to yield better results.

The police personnel would be encouraged to remain fit which would help them in shouldering their responsibilities in a better manner.

Tribal art painting workshop organised

STAFF REPORTER ■ BHOPAL

The artists aspiring to learn different forms of paintings have an opportunity to learn the ages old tribal art. A painting workshop is being organised in city for the artists where the students would discover the colourful world of tribal art.

The workshop began from Wednesday at Bhojpur Club. It is organized by Artizen group. Renowned tribal artist Manoj Thekam is teaching the art of Gond Painting to the participants.

It is to be noted that these paintings are basically based on the Vastu and traditions of its area.

The tribal people live with

It is to be noted that these paintings are basically based on the Vastu and traditions of its area

their tradition and define it in their creativity and all the paintings have distinctive features.

Gond paintings portray the scenes, birds, animals and human faces on dark and vibrant colours.

The paintings have brown or black base.

Gond paintings can best be described as 'on line work'. The artist makes sure to draw the inner as well as outer lines with as much care as possible

so that the perfection of the lines has an immediate effect on the viewer.

Lines are used in such a way that it conveys a sense of movement to the still images. Dots and dashes are added to impart a greater sense of movement and increase the amount of detail.

Another very striking facet of Gond paintings has to be the use of bright vivid colours such as white, red, blue and yellow.

The paints are usually derived naturally from objects such as charcoal, coloured soil, plant sap, leaves and even cow dung.

The workshop will continue till Thursday.

Theatre workshop for youngsters soon

STAFF REPORTER ■ BHOPAL

Raunak Social and Cultural Society theatre troupe is all set to wow the Bhopalites with their new production Lamjha. The group is doing their final rehearsals these days.

It is to be noted that the play will be staged at Madhya Pradesh State Tribal Museum on Friday. The play is directed by Jyoti Dubey and is written by Shri Laxmi Narayan.

The rehearsal of drama Lamjha is going at Kalibari. A theatre workshop is being organised for the youngsters for the same who want to create a niche for themselves in theatre industry or to learn the skills of stage performance or to even brush up their theatrical skills.

The story of the drama revolves around the hero of the play Budhuru. In the drama, the girl's father brings a lamb to her girl Jamola, making her lust, and all the work done by a young woman is done and she serves the father-in-law.

A theatre workshop is being organised for the youngsters for the same who want to create a niche for themselves in theatre industry or to learn the skills of stage performance or to even brush up their theatrical skills

Meanwhile, Budhura and Zamola seem to fall for each other. But the girl's father does not like the boy's work and he refuses to marry the boy. Zamola becomes sad to hear

the news of Mercury's return. Here, Mercury shows his bravery and protects the villagers from the lions who came in the village.

Zamola's father's heart is ecstatic by seeing the sadness of Zamola and the bravery of Budhura, and they get married to each other.

This play will present the tradition of Gond tribe and dance which will be performed by the artists.

The news of Mercury's return. Here, Mercury shows his bravery and protects the villagers from the lions who came in the village.

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Aaj ke Samay mein Gandhi: Lecture held

STAFF REPORTER ■ BHOPAL

Renowned Gandhian SN Subbarao laid emphasis for imbibing thoughts of Mahatma Gandhi in practical life to make the concept of United India everlasting. He said that India can become leader of the world, if young generation takes firm decision for strengthening national unity.

He expressed these views during the lecture on the subject 'Aaj ke Samay mein Gandhi' held at Environment Planning and Coordination Organisation (EPCO), Bhopal under the series of lectures organised on the occasion of 150th anniversary of the Father of the Nation Mahatma Gandhi.

Subbarao said that the strong nation like Soviet Union splits in many parts in the past. It has been always challenging to keep India united, in which people, who speak different languages and follow different religions live. He further mentioned that no power can damage the unity of India, if youth power works constantly by taking resolution of national unity. Subbarao mentioned that Almighty dwells in



Noted Gandhian leader and thinker SN Subbarao addresses a symposium on 'Gandhi in the present time' organized at EPCO in Bhopal on Wednesday

Pioneer photo

every heart and it is also necessary for each person to hold respect towards all religions. He also mentioned about the Sarva Dharma prayer of Mahatma Gandhi on the occasion. Dr. Subbarao

stated that Mahatma Gandhi always kept people of different beliefs united through Sarva Dharma prayer.

Besides, Subbarao urged youth to always remain wakeful towards the

Shukla, Udayan Vajpayee and Chinmay Mishra. The Executive Director Jitendra Singh Rajee also expressed his views in the programme. The vote of thanks was proposed by Lokendra Thakkar.

environment. He mentioned that clean environment helps in connecting with God. Several religious places of various religions of the country are situated near hills and rivers. There is a need to become active for environment protection by taking resolution to protect trees and cleanliness of rivers.

Principal Secretary Anupam Rajan of the Environment Department has informed that 3 orators have delivered lectures on the thoughts of Mahatma Gandhi from October 2, 2018 till now including Dhruv

'Guv to be Chief Guest at National Voters Day'

STAFF REPORTER ■ BHOPAL

The Chief Electoral Officer TVL Kantha Rao has informed that the Governor will be the Chief Guest of main programme of the 'National Voters Day'. The programme will be held at Minto Hall from 11 am on January 25.

Chief Secretary of the State, State Election Commissioner and the State Icon made for voters awareness will participate in the programme as Special Guests. Apart from this, members of the civil society, media personnel, representatives of voluntary organizations and officers and voters invited from the state will also attend the programme.

In order to encourage new voters, voter identity cards will be distributed to them and Best

It is to be highlighted that 'National Voters Day' is observed by the Election Commission of India on the foundation Day of the Commission on January 25

Election awards will be presented to officers/ employees, who have done remarkable work in the field of election.

It is to be highlighted that 'National Voters Day' is observed by the Election Commission of India on the foundation Day of the Commission on January 25. The programme is organised

with an aim to generate awareness towards the voting among the voters in order to ensure participation of youth, women, handicapped, senior citizens, service voters and all the sections of the society.

The first 'National Voters Day' was observed on January 25, 2011 and since then this programme is organized at National, State, District and Polling Booth level in a dignified manner. The 9th National Voters' Day is being observed on January 25, 2019. The theme of this year's programme has been decided as 'Koi Matdata Na Chhooto' by the Election Commission.

41-day 'Kisan Yatra' flagged off

STAFF REPORTER ■ BHOPAL

National President of Madhya Pradesh Kisan Congress Nana Bhai Patole, flagged off the 41-day 'Kisan Vijay Rath Yatra' from the state Congress headquarters on Wednesday.

The yatra will be completed under the leadership of state Congress President Kisan Khet Majdoor Dinesh Gurjar. The yatra will reach the farmers across the state and made the farmers aware about waiver of debt of farmers' by the state government.

The 'Kisan Vijay Rath Yatra' was inaugurated the ministers of Madhya Pradesh government, Sajjan Singh Verma, PC Sharma, Brijendra Singh Rathore, Kamleshwar Patel, Rajamani Patel shared about the schemes being by the government for the farmers and congratulated on the launch of the yatra.

Floral tributes were paid to the photograph of Subhash Chandra Bose by Congress office bearers and party work-



National president of Kisan Congress Nana Patolji and Madhya Pradesh president of Kisan Congress Dinesh Gurjar during Kisan Rath Yatra after being flagged off at PCC headquarters in Bhopal on Wednesday. Pioneer photo

ers and office bearers highlighted the life of Subhash Chandra Bose.

On the occasion Administration In charge of the state Congress, Rajiv Singh, said that issues and concerns of farmers will reach Congress through Kisan Vijay Rath Yatra.

The beneficial schemes for farmers prepared by Chief Minister Kamal Nath would be shared with the farmers.

Dinesh Gurjar said that this visit of 41-day journey will be conducted across the state. The purpose of the visit is to spread pro-farmer schemes

and debt waiver among farmers.

He said that President of All India Congress Committee, Rahul Gandhi's promised of waiver of debt of farmers within ten days was kept. The first halt of the yatra would be in Sironj Vidisha.

BHEL secures power project

STAFF REPORTER ■ BHOPAL

Bharat Heavy Electricals Limited (BHEL) has secured an additional order from Maharashtra State Power Generation Company (Mahagenco) for its ongoing 660 MW coal-based supercritical thermal power project at Bhusawal thermal power station (Unit 6).

The project is being executed by BHEL on Engineering, Procurement & Construction (EPC) basis at Jalgaon district in Maharashtra. Mahagenco has reposed faith in BHEL by awarding the additional order for installation of emission control equipment, changes in various equipment/subsystems due to change in coal, modification in CHP/AHP, etc.

With this order, the revised order value for the Bhusawal TPS Unit 6 EPC project is now around ₹3,750 Crore. The initial order was won by BHEL against stiff International Competitive Bidding (ICB).

BHEL has been a leader in the emission control equipment

WITH THIS ORDER, THE REVISED ORDER VALUE FOR THE BHUSAWAL TPS UNIT 6 EPC PROJECT IS NOW AROUND ₹3,750 CRORE. THE INITIAL ORDER WAS WON BY BHEL AGAINST STIFF INTERNATIONAL COMPETITIVE BIDDING (ICB). BHEL HAS BEEN A LEADER IN THE EMISSION CONTROL EQUIPMENT BUSINESS FOR SEVERAL DECADES AND WAS ONE OF THE EARLIEST ENTRANTS IN THE COUNTRY

Systems (MHPS), Japan, for highly efficient state-of-the-art FGD systems and with HLB Power, Republic of Korea, for large size Gates and Dampers.

On the NOx control front also, the company possesses in-house capabilities to supply the technology for reducing NOx levels through efficient low NOx burner systems as well as suitable modifications in Boilers.

In addition, BHEL is supplying state-of-the-art SCRs for higher reduction in NOx emission and has technology collaboration with NANO Co Ltd, Republic of Korea, for SCR Catalysts in coal fired power plants.

With this order, BHEL is poised to achieve its objective to indigenously design and manufacture key equipment for the entire range of emission control, thereby providing twin boost to the Government's plan of 'Making in India' and its Intended National Determined Contributions (INDC) for limiting the carbon footprint of the nation.

business for several decades and was one of the earliest entrants in the country.

BHEL has so far secured orders for providing 34 sets of Flue Gas Desulphurization (FGD) system for SOx control and 13 sets of Selective Catalytic reduction (SCR) system for NOx control. BHEL is fully geared to cater to the full range of emission control

equipment to meet the latest stringent norms for Indian thermal power plants.

BHEL's credentials as one of the leading suppliers of Electrostatic Precipitators for controlling Particulate Matter (PM) emission in power plants, are already well established.

BHEL also has an ongoing technology collaboration with Mitsubishi Hitachi Power

16,009 get treatment at Sewa Sadan

STAFF REPORTER ■ BHOPAL

As many as 1,29,962 eye patients have been diagnosed and treated in Sewa Sadan Eye Hospital in the calendar year 2018. Under controllable blindness programme, eye surgeries of 16009 patients have been done in this period.

With a view to identify the cataract patients, 274 free eye diagnosis and treatment camps were organized at small towns and cities which are normally situated in 200 km periphery of Sant Hirdaram Nagar Bhopal. After identification of eye patients, they are brought to the hospital for their surgeries.

Besides cataract surgeries, 119 Cornea Transplantation surgeries were also performed in the duration. Assistance to such a large number of visually impaired persons could only become possible because of continuously organizing eye donation campaign in the soci-



ety by this eye hospital. Corneas are brought from the eye banks based at Hyderabad, Bhubaneswar, Jaipur and Angamaly also.

It is noted that these facilities and services of surgeries,

medicines, Food, Fruits and Post Operative Care to the patients are also provided free of cost. Dreaded diabetes disease is spreading silently in the society. This disease mainly affects the vision of many dia-

betic patients. Diabetic patients mainly suffer with Glaucoma and diabetic retinopathy eye diseases. During the period, 91 surgeries of Glaucoma have been done. Similarly 306 surgeries of retina and diabetic retinopathy and 1184 surgeries of other eye diseases have also been successfully performed in the hospital.

In view to observe the treatment quality, specialty services, availability of modern technology equipments, quality of post operative care etc, the Quality Council of India have accorded accreditation to this hospital.

And thus this has become first NABH accredited multi specialty Eye Hospital in the state of Madhya Pradesh.

16-year-old youth drowned in Baah River

STAFF REPORTER ■ BHOPAL

A 16-year-old youth drowned in Baah River on Tuesday; deceased and his cousin have gone to the river for taking bath during which deceased drowned, Berasia police have started investigation.

According to the police, in the afternoon the deceased identified as Ravi Jathav drowned while he had gone to Baah River at Khejda Parihar for taking bath.

The deceased was accompanied by his cousin Veer and his friends who tried to find the deceased but failed and informed locals who rushed to rescue deceased and fished out the body. Police said that the deceased was resident of Nai Basti Jathkhedi and had gone to his uncle's house in Khejda Parihar.

The cousin of the deceased told the police that deceased jumped into the river to take bath but failed to come on the surface after which they searched for him but failed and later deceased drowned. The body was sent for the post mortem and a case under section 174 of the CrPC has been registered by the police. Police have started further investigation into the matter.

Meanwhile, a 22 day old baby girl died under suspicious circumstances at Shikhar Plaza under Bairagarh police station area in the night on Tuesday.

Police said that Navya Singh was declared dead after she failed to respond when her mother tried to feed her in the wee hours on Wednesday. Police have registered a case under section 174 of the CrPC and started further investigation.

Meanwhile, a 22 day old baby girl died under suspicious circumstances at Shikhar Plaza under Bairagarh police station area in the night on Tuesday

Conference on Solar PV Power plant organised



STAFF REPORTER ■ BHOPAL

A daylong conference on Solar PV Power plant was on Wednesday organised by Talesun Energy and EnergyX in association with All Industries Association of Mandideep, at Courtyard by Marriott in Bhopal.

The conference was attended by SMEs from Mandideep and Bhopal area, the awareness drive focused on benefits of Rooftop Solar Power plant exclusively for Industry and commercial units.

The keynote address was delivered by Managing Director Sir John Martin Thomas followed by Technical Director Bruno Riva of Talesun Energy. Talesun Energy is the world's 3rd largest solar company in the world and has annual module production capacity of 5GW between China, Thailand, and Vietnam. EnergyX, which is the Joint Venture partner of ZT Talesun Solar India Pvt Ltd (Indian entity of Talesun Energy) was represented by Ajay Pratap, CEO, Tejasvi Verma, COO and Rk Avantika Kumari Director

Madhya Pradesh being the industrial town is at the epicentre of growth in rooftop-based solar power plants. As Talesun Energy, we want to set precedent of European standards in Madhya Pradesh and help industry reap benefits of solar

Marketing.

"Madhya Pradesh being the industrial town is at the epicentre of growth in rooftop-based solar power plants. As Talesun Energy, we want to set precedent of European standards in Madhya Pradesh and help industry reap benefits of solar," said Sir John.

The agenda of the conference was to address concerns of the industry members from Madhya Pradesh.

It was attended by various bodies AAI, FICCI, CII and various stakeholders' bankers, media, social media representatives and prominent person-

alities.

EnergyX is the Solar Asset Development partner of Talesun Solar in India and has recently signed JV agreement for development of solar project in India. It is developing more than 500KW in Mandideep area only and has plans to do 20MW here by FY19.

The conference received great response and was welcomed and appreciated by all the members of All Industry Association. Talesun Energy and EnergyX will jointly develop 1,000 MW in India in next 5 years.

13 colleges get notice for not submitting verified bank accounts

PNS ■ GWALIOR

The Department of Higher Education, Government of Madhya Pradesh has issued notices to 13 colleges in the Gwalior- Chambal Division for not submitting the verification of the bank accounts.

The department has asked these colleges to submit the verification of the statements at the earliest.

They colleges have also been asked to update the information online.

According to sources in the Higher Education Department, the colleges, including government and private ones had been asked earlier too to submit the bank statement verification but they had failed to do so.

The sources also said that show-cause notices will be sent to the principals of these col-

leges.

The department has also asked the government colleges to organize career fair in their respective colleges.

The colleges have been asked to assist the students in getting proper placements.

The department has further asked the colleges to invite companies and organizations from various parts of the country for the campus interviews.

The principals of the colleges have been asked to inform the department about the dates and invitees of the career fair. A committee under the chairmanship of the district collector will be formed for the smooth running of the career fair.

The department has asked the principals to make sure that the maximum number of students gets appropriate placements.

According to sources in the Higher Education Department, the colleges, including Government and private ones had been asked earlier too to submit the bank statement verification but they had failed to do so. The sources also said that show-cause notices will be sent to the principals of these colleges

Birth anniversary of Netaji celebrated

PNS ■ GWALIOR

The citizens of Gwalior celebrated the birth anniversary of Netaji Subhash Chandra Bose with colourful processions and patriotic joviality at various places in the city on Wednesday.

Union Minister, Narendra Singh garlanded the statue of Bose at the Trimurti Junction and exhorted the audience to spread the message of Swatcha Bharath through words and actions.

He added that there cannot be a greater tribute than this to the great leader.

During the function organized by the Gwalior Youth Hostel at the Trimurti Junction, former MLA Ramesh Agarwal garlanded the statue of Netaji and spoke about the various contributions of Netaji Bose during India's freedom struggle.

He urged the youths who were present in large numbers to follow his footsteps.

Hundreds of NCC cadets took out a procession from the NCC Officers Training College to the Trimurti Junction to commemorate the birth anniversary of Netaji.

The cadets, travelling by bicycles spread the message of environmental protection.

During the function organised by the Gwalior Youth Hostel at the Trimurti Junction, former MLA Ramesh Agarwal garlanded the statue of Netaji and spoke about the various contributions of Netaji Bose during India's freedom struggle

They were seen shouting slogans about the process of protecting the environment for the benefit of the nature and humans.

Students of the Gorkhi School too celebrated the birth anniversary of Netaji.

The speakers highlighted the roles of Netaji and other freedom fighters during India's freedom struggle.

The students also gave performances based on India's cultural diversity and unity, conservation of water and Swatcha Bharath. DCC President, Devendra Sharma was the chief guest of the program.

BUREAU OF ENERGY EFFICIENCY (BEE)
(A Statutory body under Ministry of Power, Government of India)
4th Floor, Sewa Bhawan, R. K. Puram, Sector-1, New Delhi - 110066
Website: www.beeindia.gov.in, Ph: 26766700, Fax: 011-26778352

REFRESHER COURSE FOR ENERGY AUDITORS/MANAGERS

BEE intends to conduct refresher course for BEE certified Energy Auditors (EA) and Energy Managers (EM). All EA and EM, who have passed the National Certification Examination and have received their "CERTIFIED ENERGY MANAGER" certificate in February 2013, are hereby required to register for Refresher Course.

For details visit our website: <https://beeindia.gov.in> or <http://www.aipnpc.org>.

Davp 34106/11/0065/1819 Secretary

GWALIOR SMART CITY DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION LIMITED
Regd. Office : Gwalior Municipal Corporation, Narayan Krishna Shejwalkar Bhawan, City Center, Gwalior (M.P.) 474011 IN, CIN : U75100MP2016SGC041727, Email ID : gwaliorsmartcity@gmail.com, Ph. : 0751-2438386, 2438750, 2438751

S.No./Engg./CEO/SmartCity/65 Date : 18.01.2019

Notice Inviting Tender

Gwalior Smart City Development Corporation Ltd. (GSCDCL) invites online item rate bids for the following works. The Details are as under :

S.No.	MP GSCDCL / NIT No.	Tender Name	Probable Amount of Contract	EMD	Tender Fee	Last Date for Tender Purchase	Last Date of online bid submission
1.	GSCDCL/089/E-Tendering/2018-19	Request for Proposal for Selection of Concessionaire for Operation and Maintenance of BajajTaal Baradari Amphitheater Gwalior 2nd Call	4,00,00,000	4,00,000	15,000	13-02-2019 Till 1730 hrs.	13-02-2019 Till 1730 hrs.

Full details of the above tenders can be seen on www.mptenders.gov.in Amendments to NIT, if any shall be published on website only.

Add. C.E.O. Gwalior Smart City Development Corporation Limited

देना बैंक DENA BANK

Zonal Office- Bhopal, Plot No. 274, Zone-II, M. P. Nagar, Bhopal

POSSESSION NOTICE (For Immovable Properties)

Whereas The undersigned being authorised officer of the Dena Bank under the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 and in exercise of powers conferred under Section 13(2) read with Rule 9 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules 2002 issued demand notices to the following borrower/guarantor, calling upon them to repay the amount mentioned in the respective notices with in 60 days from the date of receipt of said notices.

The borrower having failed to repay the amount, notice is hereby given to the borrower 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 Rules on the dates mentioned in respective columns.

The borrower/Guarantor in particular and the public in general is hereby cautioned not to deal with the property and any dealings with the properties will be subject to the charge of Dena Bank, Wright Town, Jabalpur for an amount herein below mentioned.

Name of Account / Borrower/ Guarantor	Notice Amount ₹	Demand Notice Dt. Possession Date	Description of Property
Borrower: M/s Soham Enterprises Prop: Smt Madhumati Gupta Guarantor: Shri Ashutosh Dwivedi & Smt. Madhvi Dwivedi	56.84 Lacs +Interest & Charges	16.11.2018 18.01.2019	Residential House situated at Plot No. D/23 Part of Kh.No. 30/1,30/23, 30/24, P.H.No.34, N.B. 643, Mouza - Lamti, Babu Kamla Grih Nirman Sahkari Sammitti, Tah, & Dist.- Jabalpur (M.P.) in the name of Shri Ashutosh Dwivedi and Smt. Madhvi Dwivedi.
Borrower: M/s Akshay Enterprises Prop: Smt Madhumati Gupta Guarantor: Shri Ashutosh Dwivedi & Smt. Madhvi Dwivedi	36.27 Lacs +Interest & Charges		

Place: Bhopal, Date: 23.01.2019 Authorised Office, Dena Bank

3 leaders exit will not impact Congress: Vali

Says BJP to be routed in 2019

PNS ■ ROURKELA

Jogesh Singh, Naba Das and Srikant Jena are "expiry" leaders and their exit from Congress will not have any impact on party's prospect," said AICC secretary Mastan Vali at a Press meet here.

Talking on the claim of BJD about equidistance from BJP and Congress, Vali said the claim is only for eyewash and in reality the BJD is in nexus with the BJP.

Among others, Congress leaders Dr Prafulla Majhi, Hemananda Biswal, Santosh Singh Saluja, spokesman Hamid Hussain, Benumadhab Tripathy and Prafulla Sunani were present

He said the development in the country is only possible by the Congress and this has been realized by the people also. The result of four State Assembly elections held in recent past shows how the BJP lost miserably in the elections, he said.

He also raised the corruption in Rafale deal accusing of the PM as the kingpin. In 2019 elections, the people will give a befitting reply to both Naveen and Modi, he asserted. Among others, Congress leaders Dr Prafulla Majhi, Hemananda Biswal, Santosh Singh Saluja, spokesman Hamid Hussain, Benumadhab Tripathy and Prafulla Sunani were present.

Ambulance stopped at rally; baby critical

PNS ■ ROURKELA

A 21-day-old baby girl while was being shifted from one private hospital to the Ispat General Hospital here in an ambulance on Tuesday was left stranded for about one and a half hours near Bisra Chowk area due to a rally by the locals.

The father of the girl managed to lift the baby from there to IGH as a scooter rider came to his rescue. The girl is now battling with her life at the IGH, Rourkela, due to her exposure to open air.

Sarat Kumar Raul, who works as a Jawan in 6th battalion of CRPF at Chakradharpur, had admitted her wife at a private maternity home, since his wife was due for delivery.

On January 2, her wife had delivered two girl children and one male child. The condition of all three new born children was critical and the male child passed away.

The mother and one of the female children were shifted to IGH whereas the other

"It is really a matter of concern that ambulances got trapped in jam due to rally. I will definitely try to ensure that this sort of incident does not occur in future," said Rourkela SP Uma Shankar Das

girl child was sent to Aastha mother and childcare hospital for her recovery. Since Sarat's wife was at IGH with one child, he was staying at Aastha hospital to take care of the other child.

Since, the child at Aastha hospital recuperated, the doctor at Aastha hospital advised to shift her to the IGH where her mother was with another child.

"After waiting inside the ambulance for a long time and finding myself helpless, I came out with my daughter and walked down through the traffic jam to other side and then reached at the IGH, after taking a lift from a

scooter rider, who was returning after seeing the traffic jam," said Sarat.

According to eyewitness, another two ambulances were also trapped inside the jam and no one came forward to help them. The baby girl after being shifted to IGH, reportedly has been battling with her life at IGH, apparently after getting exposed to open air, sources said.

"It is really a matter of concern that ambulances got trapped in jam due to rally. I will definitely try to ensure that this sort of incident does not occur in future," said Rourkela SP Uma Shankar Das.

Bulk of credit for Independence goes to Netaji, says Guv

PNS ■ CUTTACK

The Indian National Army (INA) commander Netaji Subhash Chandra Bose had jolted the colonial forces so much so that the British had to quit India in 1947." This was stated by Odisha Governor Prof Ganeshi Lal here on the Netaji Jayanti after paying rich tributes to the strongest freedom fighter of the country on his 122nd birth anniversary at his birthplace here on Wednesday.

Speaking to media on the occasion, Prof Lal said analysts and researchers after making in-depth studies on India's Freedom Struggle have opined that bulk of the credit; in fact 75 per cent of the credit for India's Independence goes to Netaji Subhash Chandra Bose. He said his birthplace here in Cuttack should be developed into an important research center to study India's freedom struggle.

Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik also paid tributes to the Netaji here and called

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upon the people to remember the tremendous sacrifices he made for the Independence of our country. Both the Governor and the Chief Minister visiting the Netaji Birthplace National Museum here garlanded the statue of the legendary freedom fighter and went around the museum. Hundreds of other political leaders accompanied by their supporters also visited the museum on the occasion.

Security beefed up for R-Day in Ranchi

PNS ■ RANCHI

Ranchi district administration will increase security in the state capital to ensure peaceful Republic Day celebrations across the city and its suburbs.

Additional security forces will be deployed in all sensitive parts of the city on Saturday, Ranchi Superintendent of police Sujata Kumari Veenapani said on Wednesday. Security personnel from the Jharkhand Armed Police (JAP) and other districts of Jharkhand will patrol the various roads in Ranchi and maintain a strict vigil on all sensitive points, she added. "ATS (Anti Terrorism Squad) will be active in Ranchi on Republic Day. Besides, sniffer dogs will be deployed at all important points in the city," said Veenapani. She added that additional measures have been taken to ensure foolproof security at the airport, railway stations, bus stands and other public places. Malls too will be under police surveillance, the SP said.

AAP says open to alliance in Punjab

PNS ■ CHANDIGARH

A day after splinter groups of the main political parties of Punjab united to put up a fourth front to give them a tough fight in 2019 parliamentary elections, the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) on Wednesday declared that it was "open to alliance with any party sharing common ideology in Punjab".

"There is no issue in joining hands with any political outfit to oust the erstwhile SAD-BJP alliance government or the ruling Congress government under the leadership of Capt Amarinder Singh from the corridor of power," said AAP's senior leader and Sangrur MP Bhagwant Singh Mann.

Mann said that all possibilities of an alliance were being explored so that the alliance could put up a bold united face on the issues and

concerns surrounding Punjab and the Punjabis, thereby showing these traditional political parties, knee-deep in corruption muck, were shown the doors.

He declared that all-out efforts were afoot to possible alliance with the Shiromani Akali Dal (Taksali) and Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP) were underway.

His statement came a day after the leaders of SAD (Taksali) including Ranjit Singh Brahmputra, Sewa Singh Sekhwan, Ratan Singh Ajnala, Punjabi Ekta Party's (PEP) president and AAP rebel leader Sukhpal Singh Khaira, Lok Insaaf Party's Samrajeet Singh Bains, BSP's state unit president Rashpal Raju held a closed door meeting at Ludhiana to work out the modalities of the front, named as Punjab Democratic Alliance (PDA).

Empowering tribal groups BJP's top priority, says J'Khand CM

PRAGYA PALLAVI ■ RANCHI

Empowerment of tribal groups that have 26.3 per cent of Jharkhand's total population is one of the major priorities of the ruling Government, assured Chief Minister Raghubar Das on Wednesday.

The CM was speaking during the State level programme organised in the honour of 'Martyrs' here. In addition, the CM said that nobody can snatch away the lands of tribal people until BJP is in power.

The State registers total 32 tribes (8 primitives) inhabiting in different districts.

"Jharkhand is the land of Martyrs' and great leaders, who not only played an important role in maintaining the tribal identity but also showed their courage during the tribal revolts against the atrocious British regime," he said.

"All attempts will be made by the state government to give honour to martyrs. The initiatives being taken by the State government is in the favour of the tribal groups, who were till

date merely seen as a vote bank. No opposition parties had ever shown any interest in bringing change in the lives of minority groups," the CM added.

With a view to give a memorable tribute to the martyrs of Jharkhand who sacrificed their lives for the well-being of people and society, the 'sacred soil' collected from 4,562 panchayats including 32,620 villages covering all the 260 blocks of 24 district reached the State Capital on Wednesday.

Rich tributes paid to Netaji, Sai in Odisha

PNS ■ SAMBALPUR

Different socio-cultural organisations, political leaders and common people paid rich tributes to legendary freedom fighter Veer Surendra Sai and Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose on their birth anniversary on Wednesday.

Hundreds of people gathered at Khinda, the birth place of this freedom fighter and paid homage to the hero of the freedom struggle. At his birth place, the Surendra Sai Smruti Sansad organised a meeting, which was attended by Chairman of Western Odisha Development Council (WODC) Kishore Mohanty, Rengali MLA Ramesh Patua and Surendra Sai's descendent Lal Fakira Sai. The members of the Smruti Sansad also organised several cultural programmes in the evening. At Sambalpur, also pro-



grammes were organised and the statue of Veer Surendra Sai at Jail Chowk of the city was garlanded.

The district administration and the Odisha Sanskritik Samaj jointly organised a meeting in the evening in the memory of the hero. The speakers highlighted the contribution

and uniqueness of Sai's freedom struggle.

A road march was also organised during the occasion. More than 1,000 students from different schools of the city participated in the road march and moved round the city. Similarly, a Mashaal rally was organised at Burla.

Juniors give farewell party to seniors at St Joseph

Bhopal: It was a memorable day for the seniors of St Joseph's Co-ed school as their juniors gave a grand farewell party. Bidding them a good bye, the juniors wished luck to their seniors for a bright future.

The programme was inaugurated by lighting of the lamp. The school principal Father Shuju congratulated the Class 12 students in his speech and encouraged them for good results. School Head Boy Priyesh Agarwal and Head Girl Manya Shrivastav gave the farewell card. The students of the class 11 gave splendid performance.

The programme began with the juniors performances.

The juniors enthusiastically performed farewell songs for the seniors; they sang the good bye songs which again created

an ambience full with emotions. The programme then was followed with the group dance performances where the juniors gave outstanding performances on traditional and modern Hindi movies songs.

The students performed dance on songs like 'Jhingat Lavadi, UP Dheer Thumka, Let's Dance, Jogheda Thara, songs from old songs to new songs".

Different titles were given to the students of class 12. The titles included like Discipline, Regular School, Responsibility, Dance, Theater, Music Fine Art and Sports.

After that drama, which was exaggerated by education, it was said that suicide is not a remedy to avoid any problem.

Prajajal Rathore and Kshish

Jamal of class 12 told their experiences in different parts of their school life. The students sang songs with different instruments of music, which students sat in the drawing gallery praised and praised. Awards were given to the students who made their names in various fields.

On the other hand, students of class 11th performed bhanga dance songs and "bhanga" on many songs. Miss and Miss Josephite was chosen from the three streams of Class XII, Science, Commerce and Humanities. The vote of thanks was finally concluded with the school Anthem. In this programme, Principal, Father Shuju, Manager, Father Ronald Cardoza, Sisters, Teachers and PRO Vasundhara Sharma were also present. SR

MP strongly objects to Abhishek Mishra's arrest

STAFF REPORTER ■ BHOPAL

Madhya Pradesh has taken a strong objection on arrest of Abhishek Mishra, a resident of Chhatrapur by the Delhi Police without informing local police.

While registering objection vide its letter to Delhi Police Commissioner, the State's Home Department has described the action of Delhi Police as violation of the Supreme Court.

It is to be noted that it was informed by Ashok Mishra, the resident of Chhatrapur at around 8.30 pm on January 22, 2019 that his son Abhishek Mishra has been taken along by some unknown persons from his residence 111, Rajeev Nagar, NRI Colony, Bhopal located in Koh-e Fiza.

He is not getting any information of Abhishek Mishra's where about and his mobile is switched off.

On investigation by the local Police, information was received from the Director Anshuman Singh of his Social Media Company that Abhishek Mishra, the resident Near Sahu Ki Chakki, Pathapur Road, Chhatrapur, MP has been arrested by Praveen Kumar, Inspector, Cyber Crime Unit, Special Cell, Delhi Police on January 22, 2019.

While providing the above mentioned information vide letter to Delhi Police Commissioner, the Home Department of the State Government has written that it seems from the entire incident that the

Special Cell of the Delhi Police has not followed the directives of the Supreme Court properly while arrest.

Neither Local Police was not informed nor was information given to the family, which has raised a doubt of kidnapping.

The Home Department vide its letter to the Delhi Police Commissioner has written that necessary investigation should be carried out in this action which has been taken by the Delhi Police against the law.

Along with this, Madhya Pradesh Government should be informed by taking appropriate action against the responsible officer for this inappropriate action.

Mystery shrouds death of 4 including 2 women

Bhopal: Mystery still shrouds the death of four persons including two women and 12 day old baby girl in Mandideep. The lone survivor is not in a position to record statement, said police.

In the initial investigation it was found that the four died of suffocation as there was a wood stove in the room which became the reason but nothing has been confirmed by the police as post mortem report is awaited. Sensation prevailed in Himashu Colony after four persons were found dead while one was found in an unconscious state who was rushed to hospital and on the next day recorded his statements with Tehsildar. The police are yet to receive the statement.

The deceased were identified as Deeplata, her 7-year-old son Akash, her daughter Poornima and Poornima's 12 day old baby girl while

Poornima's husband Chhannu Bhuria escaped and is undergoing treatment.

Police said that in the preliminary investigation nothing regarding poisoning is revealed and in circumstantial evidences suggest that the deceased were suffocated.

The lone survivor works with a private firm in Mandideep. The details post mortem is awaited which could help in the further investigation.

During the investigation coal blocks were found inside the room which could be possible reason of death as the deceased failed to respond to the excessive carbon monoxide which was generated when wood stove was lit. Police are awaiting the statement of the survivor to ascertain the incident as hearing him in pain neighbours informed police and ambulance. SR



Congress party activists pay tributes to Netaji Subhash Chandra Bose to mark his 122nd birth anniversary in Bhopal on Wednesday. Pioneer photo

MP Congress hails Priyanka Gandhi's political plunge

Bhopal: Madhya Pradesh Congress Wednesday welcomed Priyanka Gandhi Vadra's formal entry into politics saying it shows the party's strong will to emerge victorious in the upcoming Lok Sabha elections.

A group of party workers celebrated the development by dancing and distributing sweets outside the state Congress office-Indira Bhawan. Various party leaders and ministers also hailed the move saying it would benefit the party.

Ending years of speculation, Priyanka Gandhi Vadra formally entered politics on Wednesday with the Congress appointing her general secretary for Uttar Pradesh East in a move reflecting the party's intent to go full throttle in the state ahead of the general elections.

Senior party leader Jyotiraditya Scindia was also appointed as AICC general secretary for Uttar Pradesh West.

"Warm wishes and Congratulations to Priyanka Gandhi ji and Jyotiraditya Scindia ji on being appointed as All India Congress Committee (AICC) general secretary in charge of Uttar Pradesh. This step of the Congress has reflected the strong intentions for party's victory in the 2019 elections. Jai Congress," Madhya Pradesh Congress said in a tweet. Chief Minister Kamal Nath and party veteran Digvijay Singh also congratulated Priyanka Gandhi Vadra and Jyotiraditya Scindia through their twitter handles. SR



A scene from the play 'Subhash Ki Kahani' staged at Shaheed Bhawan in Bhopal on Wednesday. Pioneer photo

Red Line Metro to reach Ghaziabad new bus adda

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Delhi Metro network's Rithala-Dilshad Garden Red Line will soon be extended to Ghaziabad's New Bus Adda. The Union Cabinet on Thursday approved the extension of Delhi Metro corridor from Dilshad Garden to New Bus Adda Ghaziabad. This would be the second metro line in Ghaziabad and the first metro link connecting the interiors of the city. It will pass through Sahibabad Industrial Area and is aimed at impacting the nearby residential areas.



The stretch also includes an interchange facility. At the Mohan Nagar station, people can change for Blue Line. Ghaziabad Development Authority (GDA) wrote to the UP government saying that the project was 99% complete and that December 25 could be a good day for commissioning of the line.

The Cabinet has also approved contribution of Rs.324.87 crore as central financial assistance for extension at the total completion cost of Rs.1,781.21 crore. The rolling stock is being provided by Delhi Metro Rail Corporation (DMRC) and land has been provided free of cost by the Ghaziabad Development Authority (GDA), said officials of Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs.

The extended corridor of Rithala-Dilshad Garden Red Line covers eight metro stations in total - Shaheed Nagar, Raj Bagh, Rajendra Nagar, Shyam Park, Mohan Nagar, Arthala, Hindon river and Ghaziabad New Bus Stand metro stations.

The 9.41-km-long corridor which is entirely elevated, has missed several deadlines. The corridor is ready for operation. "The trail run is going on on this corridor. Not only that, the Noida Metro Aqua line, connecting Noida to Greater Noida, will also be thrown open. Prime Minister Narendra Modi is expected to flag off trains on both the extended Delhi Metro Red line and the Noida Metro Aqua line in the coming days," said the officials of Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs.

The other line that will be opened by year-end, Noida Metro's Aqua line, is 29.7-km long. It has been under construction since the year 2015 and will benefit people residing in Greater Noida by connecting the city's vast stretches and linking it firmly with the national capital. The Aqua line will run from the depot station in Theta, Greater Noida to Sector 71, Noida and will cover 21 metro stations. Out of these 21, 15 metro stations will operate from Noida Sector 149 to Noida Sector 71, passing through Sectors 144, 137, 81, 50 etc. and 6 metro stations will operate from Greater Noida, passing through Delta 1, Alpha 1, Alpha 2, Pari Chowk and Knowledge Park 2. According to sources quoted in the report, the final documentation and inspections would be completed in three weeks, making it possible for the inauguration to take place in December.

Cabinet to strengthen N-E autonomous councils

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Keeping in mind the tribal population in the Northeast ahead of the Lok Sabha polls, the NDA Government on Wednesday took a major decision to grant more power and funds to 10 autonomous councils in the region.

The Union Cabinet approved a "landmark" constitutional amendment to increase the powers of the autonomous councils in the Sixth Schedule areas of the Northeast. The Finance Commission will be mandated to recommend devolution of financial resources to them, an official statement said.

The amendment also provides for transfer of additional 30 subjects including departments of Public Works, Forests, Public Health Engineering, Health and Family Welfare, Urban Development and Food and Civil Supply to Karbi Anglong Autonomous Territorial Council and Dima Hasao Autonomous Territorial Council in Assam.

"The Cabinet approves landmark amendment to Article 280 and Sixth Schedule of the Constitution. The most important part of these amendments is that these will significantly improve the financial resources and powers of the autonomous districts councils in Assam, Meghalaya, Mizoram and Tripura, fulfilling long-

standing aspirations of the tribal population in these Northeastern States," the statement read. A Bill in this regard is expected to be introduced in the upcoming session of Parliament, a Home Ministry official said.

"This will be a game changer, as it will substantially enhance the funds available to these local government institutions for undertaking development works in these tribal areas," the official said.

The proposed amendments provide for elected village municipal councils, ensuring democracy at the grassroots level. The village councils will be empowered to prepare plans for economic development and social justice including those related to agriculture, land improvement, implementation of land reforms, minor irrigation, water management, animal husbandry, rural electrification, small scale industries and social forestry.

At least one-third of the seats will be reserved for women in the village and municipal councils in the Sixth Schedule areas of Assam, Mizoram and Tripura and at least two of the nominated members in all autonomous councils in the North East Sixth Schedule areas resulting in empowerment of women.

There will be State Election Commissions for holding elections to the autonomous councils, village and municipal

councils in the areas of Assam, Mizoram and Tripura. There will be a provision for anti-defection too. Meghalaya has for the time being kept out of the purview of the provision for elected village and municipal councils and one-third reservations for women.

The amendments will fulfil the commitments made under tripartite Memorandum of Settlements signed by Government of India, governments of Assam and Meghalaya, United People's Democratic Solidarity (UPDS), Dima Haram Daogah (DHD) and Achik National Volunteers' Council (ANVC).

The amendments propose to rename the existing autonomous councils as Karbi Anglong Autonomous Territorial Council (KAATC), Dima Hasao Autonomous Territorial Council (DHATC), Garo Hills Autonomous Territorial Council (GHATC), Khasi Hills Autonomous Territorial Council (KHATC), Jaintia Hills Autonomous Territorial Council (JHATC) and Tripura Tribal Area Autonomous Territorial Council (TTAATC) as the present jurisdiction of these councils extend to more than one districts.

There will also be increase in seats in KAATC (from 30 to 50 seats), DHATC (30 to 40 seats), GHATC (30 to 42), KHATC (30 to 40) and JHATC (30 to 34).

India-Kuwait pact on domestic workers approved

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

In a move that will benefit over 3 lakh Indians, including 90,000 women working in Kuwait, the Cabinet on Wednesday approved signing of an agreement between India and the Gulf country for cooperation on recruitment of domestic workers.

The Memorandum of Understanding provides a structured framework for cooperation on domestic workers related matters and provides strengthened safeguards for Indian domestic workers including female

workers in Kuwait, a statement said.

The pact is initially valid for a period of five years and incorporates provision for automatic renewal.

A joint committee will be set up to follow up the implementation of this MoU.

This will also promote bilateral cooperation in domestic workers related matters between the two countries.

"Around 3,00,000 Indian domestic workers are deployed in Kuwait. This includes around 90,000 female domestic workers," the statement added.

Centre clears setting up of national bench of GST appellate tribunal

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Cabinet decided that the national bench of the Goods and Services Tax Appellate Tribunal to be located in the capital would have one member each from Centre and States and a President. The Tribunal will expedite resolution of disputes under GST laws.

approved currency swap facility to enable India to provide a prompt response to the current request from SAARC member countries for availing the swap amount exceeding the present limit prescribed under the SAARC Swap Framework. The Reserve Bank will negotiate the operational details bilaterally with the central banks of the SAARC countries availing the Standby Swap.

This apart, the Cabinet

CBI books ex-CMD of AI for misusing position

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The CBI has booked former Air India Chairman-cum-Managing Director Arvind Jadhav for allegedly constituting an illegal panel for making senior appointments and transfers.

Along with Jadhav, the CBI has also named then Executive Director (Personnel) LP Nakhwa (now retired) and former Additional General Managers (Operations) A Kathpalia, Amitabh Singh and Rohit Bhasin in its FIR registered under IPC section related to criminal conspiracy and provisions of Prevention of Corruption Act pertaining to abuse of official position.

The FIR alleged that Jadhav had constituted a panel in 2010



to promote officers to the rank of General Manager (operations) in violation of laid down procedures.

The three-member panel included then Chief Operating Officer Gustav Baldauf, then

Executive Director (operations) A Soman and former Executive Director (Personnel) LP Nakhwa, the FIR said.

Nakhwa, who was General Manager (Medical Services), was given the rank of Executive

Director (Medical Services) after the post was upgraded as a temporary measure till August 31, 2009.

It is alleged that Nakhwa was to be reverted to the post of General Manager (Medical Services) from September 1, 2009, but she continued in her position as Executive Director in clear violation of the Civil Aviation Ministry's directive dated March 6, 2009.

The CBI inquiry also found that Jadhav regularised Nakhwa in the post of Executive Director (Medical Services) with effect from April 1, 2010 without following the due procedure, the FIR said.

The Civil Aviation Ministry had annulled and reversed the irregular appointment of Nakhwa as Executive

Director (Medical services).

A human resources sub-committee of the Board of Air India in an order dated September 8, 2010 reverted Nakhwa to the post of General Manager (Medical Services) with immediate effect.

"Therefore, the promotion panel so constituted by Arvind Jadhav...For selecting suitable candidates for promotions to the post of GM (operations) should have been re-constituted in the wake of reversion of Nakhwa from Executive Director (Medical services) to the rank of General Manager," it said. The CBI also alleged that Nakhwa was not eligible for being a member of the said promotion panel but Jadhav nominated her against the prevailing rules and procedure.

ADR: BJP earned ₹553 cr from unknown sources in '17-18

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Political parties received ₹8721.14 crore funding from unknown sources between 2004-05 and 2017-18 with the BJP and the Congress witnessing maximum income from such sources. More than 50 per cent of the funds national parties received during the financial year 2017-18 came from "unknown" sources that included donations through electoral bonds and voluntary contributions.

According to Association for Democratic Reforms (ADR), the income of these parties from "unknown" sources was ₹689.44 crore, which is 53 per cent of their total income. The BJP alone declared ₹553.38 crore as its income from unknown sources. This income of BJP forms more than 4 times the aggregate of income from unknown sources declared by the other five national parties.

According to it, the total income of BJP, Congress, CPI, BSP, TMC, and NCP in 2017-18 was ₹1293.05 crore. The income of these parties from "unknown" sources was ₹689.44 crore, which is 53 per cent of their total income.

Out of the ₹689.44 crore, the share from electoral bonds was ₹215 crore or 31 per cent, the report said.

The parties received ₹354.22 crore or more than 51 per cent of the fund from unknown sources through voluntary contributions (below ₹20,000), it said, adding the total income from other miscellaneous unknown sources



The ADR also recommended that scrutiny of financial documents submitted by the political parties should be conducted annually by a body approved by CAG and ECI so as to enhance transparency and accountability of political parties with respect to their funding

was ₹4.5 crore.

Thirty-six per cent of their income or ₹467.13 crore from "known" donors, whose details were available from contribution reports submitted to the Election Commission.

They got ₹136.48 crore from other known sources, such as from the sale of assets and publications, membership fees, bank interest, and party levy, the report said.

According to donation reports (containing details of donations above ₹20,000), only ₹16.80 lakh was given in cash to the national parties.

The CPI(M), which is also a national party, was not included in the analysis as its "schedules or annexures were unavailable for the financial year 2017-18". At present, political parties are not required to declare the names of individuals and organisations giving less than ₹20,000 nor of those who donate via electoral bonds.

While the national parties were brought under the Right to Information Act by the CIC ruling in June 2013, they have still not complied with the decision.

The ADR also recommended that scrutiny of financial documents submitted by the political parties should be conducted annually by a body approved by CAG and ECI so as to enhance transparency and accountability of political parties with respect to their funding.

"The national and regional political parties must provide all information under the Right to Information Act. This will only strengthen political parties, elections and democracy," it said.

Disappointed as decision on elevation of judges not made public, says Lokur

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Former Supreme Court Judge, Justice Madan B Lokur Wednesday expressed disappointment over not bringing to public domain the December 12 decision of the apex court's Collegium on the elevation of judges, which has been at the centre of controversy.

Justice (Retd) Lokur, who demitted office on December 30, 2018, was part of the 5-member Collegium deliberations which had reportedly agreed to recommend the names of Justices Pradeep Nandrajog and Rajendra Menon to the Supreme Court.

Later, however, Delhi High Court judge Sanjiv Khanna and Chief Justice of Karnataka High Court Justice Dinesh Maheshwari were elevated as apex court judges, triggering a public debate on the issue.

On the controversy around the purported change in the decision, Justice Lokur said he did not know as to what additional documents came after his retirement.

Speaking at an interaction here on "State of the Indian Judiciary", organised by a law portal, the former judge however rubbished the claim of nepotism in the judiciary.

Justice Lokur said he didn't think that the Collegium

system has failed.

Healthy discussions take place at the Collegium meetings and agreements and disagreements are part of it, he said, adding that the discussions are confidential and trust is the important factor.

He advocated time-bound decisions on the recommendations of the Collegium by the Executive, saying that in the event of no response from the government, the recommendations can be deemed to be accepted. He said there is a need to bring some changes in the Collegium system and some mechanism has to be there for adhering to time line in judicial appointments.

SC grants bail to 4 convicts in Naroda Patiya riot case

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Tuesday granted regular bail to four convicts in the Naroda Patiya massacre case in Gujarat in which 97 people were killed by a mob during the 2002 riots in the state.

The Gujarat High Court had on April 20 last year upheld the conviction of 12 out of the 29 accused who were pronounced guilty on various charges by the trial court and had acquitted 17 others, including former BJP minister Maya

Kodnani.

A Bench comprising Justices AM Khanwilkar and Ajay Rastogi Tuesday granted regular bail to four convicts — Umeshbhai Surabhai Bharwad, Rajkumar, Padmendrasinh Jaswantsinh Rajput and Harshad alias Mungda Jila Govind Chhara Parmar.

The top court also granted interim bail for a period of 19 days to convict Prakashbhai Sureshbhai Rathod (Chhara) to take part in his daughter's marriage on February 10.

PM inaugurates museums on Bose, Jallianwala Bagh



Prime Minister Narendra Modi pays floral tribute to Subhash Chandra Bose on his birth anniversary at the Red Fort in Delhi on Wednesday

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

On the 122nd birth anniversary of Subhash Chandra Bose celebrated on Wednesday, Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated a museum at the iconic Red Fort dedicating to the life and his contribution to the India's freedom struggle.

The Prime Minister also inaugurated the Yaad-e-Jallianwala Museum on the Jallianwala Bagh and World War I, the Museum on 1857- India's first war of Independence and Drishyakala-Museum on Indian Art within the Red Fort complex.

The Museum on Netaji Subhash Chandra Bose and Indian National Army provides a detailed account of Subhash Chandra Bose and the history of Indian National Army, said a statement from the Union Culture Ministry. It also showcases various

Modi said museums on Netaji Bose and Azad Hind Fauj are a key part of Kranti Mandir

artefacts related to Subhash Chandra Bose and INA. The artefacts include wooden chair and sword used by Netaji, medals, badges, uniforms and other artefacts related to INA.

In a series of tweets, Prime Minister said, it was extremely humbling for him to inaugurate four museums relating to India's rich history and culture. He said the entire complex of museums will be known as Kranti Mandir as a tribute to the revolutionary zeal and courage of the great freedom fighters.

Modi said museums on Netaji Bose and Azad Hind Fauj are a key part of Kranti Mandir. History echoes from

these walls. In this very building, brave sons of India, Colonel Prem Sahgal, Colonel Gurbaksh Singh Dhillon and Major General Shah Nawaz Khan were put on trial by the colonial rulers.

The Prime Minister has urged art lovers to visit Drishyakala, which will take people through the finest aspects of Indian art and culture. There are four historical exhibitions, spanning three centuries, with over 450 works of art.

Modi also said the works of eminent Indian artists like Raja Ravi Varma, Gurudev Tagore, Amrita Sher-Gil, Abanindranath Tagore, Nandalal Bose, Gaganendranath Tagore, Sailoz Mookherjea and Jamini Roy are on display at the exhibition. Modi tweeted that Gurudev Tagore's works at Drishyakala is a treat for art lovers to see.



Prime Minister Narendra Modi visits the Yaad-e-Jallianwala Museum, (museum on the Jallianwala Bagh and World War I) at Red Fort in Delhi on Wednesday

There will be jobs...

...only if we change our beehive thinking and focus on making specific, systemic changes



Joblessness is like an albatross around our necks, noticeable and mentionable, but a drag that nobody has an idea of how to deal with. Even in poll season, none of the political parties has articulated specifics of a rehabilitation plan despite knowing that a manifesto of redemption would work with the masses. Perhaps, the political class, guilty of having created the mess in the first place, would not like to acknowledge their shortness of vision or the lack of it. Perhaps, they do not want to commit, knowing the anger non-fulfilment stokes. Or perhaps, by letting the problem fester they have a better chance of fomenting political unrest. But cold statistics keep knocking at our door and the latest to hit us comes from Maharashtra, where 7,000 people, mostly college graduates, applied for 13 waiter jobs at the secretariat canteen, a job that requires candidates to be educated up to Class IV. And if that isn't a measure of desperation, consider that in a recruitment drive by Indian Railways, nearly 19 million people from across the country applied for 63,000 vacant posts! With no credible figures on unemployment being put out by the NDA government, which had promised to create two crore jobs per year ever since it took over the reins, we have the Centre for Monitoring of Indian Economy figures quantifying joblessness as nearly seven per cent despite GDP growth. Job elasticity is simply not there though the government is now desperately seeking cover in Employees' Provident Fund Organisation (EPFO) figures of increased subscriptions. However, we must remember that much of that has to do with migration of labour from informal to formal sectors, reorganisation of the labour market and may not have anything to do with net job creation at all. The time for complaints and justification is over and we have to pursue a recuperative vision. Keeping to the flavour of popular parlance, *rozgari* cannot be milked as a poll plank till we see some *kaamdari* in right earnest.

India's unemployment challenge is more serious compared to others because of its large productive youth population, usually considered a demographic dividend but in the absence of jobs could very well become a demographic disaster instead. Yes, there is lack of growth in the industrial sector and in an automated scenario, that cannot be readily relied upon. Given the increased digitisation of operations, new jobs have to be reliant on the services sector while insular global trade policies mean that we must ramp up domestic demand. Medium-scale enterprises can emerge as the sunshine sector in terms of job absorption capacity while education, healthcare and tourism will have to be primed given their dominant service orientation. For all initiatives like Skill India, there must be an industry-aided skill requirement map so that the problem of overqualification, as evidenced by the latest job rush queues in Maharashtra, does not dash hopes. Besides, there must be a provision for career-long skill upgradation given that the economic paradigm can change due to technological breakthroughs and fluidity of the economy. Yes, use of AI may kill some traditional jobs but as seen with the IT revolution, it can also encourage an allied layer of human services and talent. Surely no change can be guaranteed overnight. That's why an integrated systems thinking is necessary to factor in future imperatives beforehand to ensure flexibility and adaptability. Albert Einstein had once said, "We cannot solve problems by using the same kind of thinking we used when we created them." We need to not only think out of the box but be ready to jump out of it.

Virat dominance

The cricketer's kind of achievements comes only once in a while to deck up the gentleman's game



After inspiring India to its first ever Test series triumph and the maiden bilateral ODI series win in Australia, Indian skipper Virat Kohli added another milestone in his list of achievements on the 22 yards of cricket glory. Kohli was in ravishing form throughout in 2018 amassing 1,322 runs in 13 Tests at an average of 55.08 with five hundreds while in 14 ODIs, he compiled 1,202 runs at an astonishing average of 133.55 with six hundred-plus scores. This was the second year on a trot that the modern-day great of the game has scored more

than a 1,000 runs in a calendar year in both Test and ODI formats. However, in comparison to previous years, the stupendous run of 2018 rates as a great record because out of the 13 Tests he featured in, 11 were in tough overseas conditions of South Africa, England and Australia. Often criticised as a flat track bully because a majority of his big scores has come on the Indian subcontinent, Virat demolished the jinx of poor performance in England and despite India suffering a humiliating defeat of 1-4 in five-match series last summer, he emerged as the highest run scorer with 593 runs in 10 innings, consisting of two tons and three 50-plus scores. In South Africa in the three-match series, he was the combined highest run scorer with 286 runs in six innings. And in the year-end series Down Under, though Cheteshwar Pujara and the Indian pace attack were the highlights of India's historic triumph, it was skipper Kohli who stood tall against the on-fire Australian attack in tough Perth conditions and scored centuries to keep India in the game. And if he was not given out controversially at the slips, the situation could have been vastly different.

Not only in the five-day format of the game, the talismanic skipper, who is now just 10 short of Sachin Tendulkar's record of most hundreds in ODI cricket, was in a completely different zone in the limited overs format. He started his campaign against South Africa in their home ground and amassed 558 runs in just six innings at an astonishing average of 186.00 and a strike rate of 99.47, which was a fair indication that he doesn't play too many dot balls. During the series, he scored three centuries and one 50-plus score and successfully led India to the 5-1 win in the six-match series. And after opting out of the Nidhas Trophy and returning in the England series, he was only second behind England's Joe Root with 191 runs and two half-centuries in three games. Then again after missing Asia Cup in the United Arab Emirates, he returned to lead the Men in Blue in the home series against West Indies and scored three back to back hundreds in the first three matches, topping the chart of highest run scorer with 453 runs in five matches at an average of 151. While in between these two formats, he featured in 10 Twenty 20 games, three each in three overseas tours of the team and one against Ireland. His unbeaten 61 in the final T20 at Sydney helped India chase down 165 runs and level series 1-1. Though India wasn't able to win the Test series in England and South Africa, it was Virat's impressive leadership that took his side close in most of the games. If any other batsman had stepped in to help Virat, the results could have been different.

No closure for Netaji

It's unfortunate that the man, who led India towards its freedom, was lost when India woke up to Independence. Till date only theories exist about his death



KINGSHUK NAG

When Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose's death in an air crash in Taipei on August 18, 1945, was announced, the British Government suspected that this was a cover for his escape to the Soviet Union. Their suspicions were confirmed a few months later when transmitters in Calcutta's Governor's House caught three broadcasts on shortwave band 31 by Netaji between December 26, 1945, and February 1946. The broadcasts showed that he was alive: Netaji said that he was under the "shelter of great world powers" and his utterances revealed that he was aware "my men are being tried at the Red Fort."

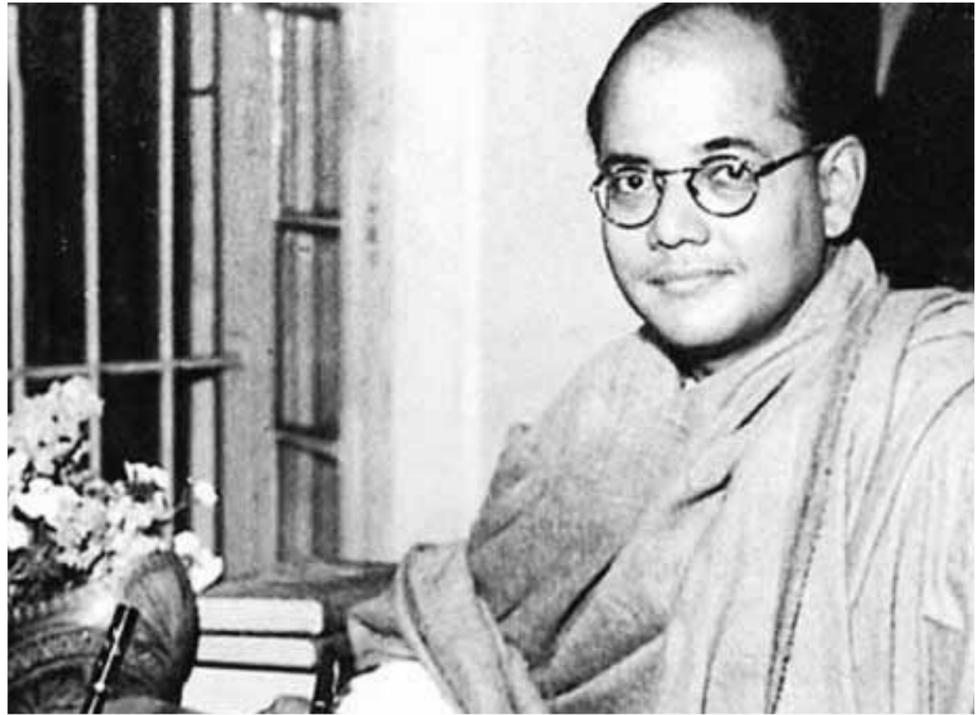
Subhas Chandra Bose promised to come to India and sit on judgement on "those trying my men at the Red Fort." He also said that the back of British imperialism had been broken and that the British could concede Independence to India in two years. Copies of these transmissions have now been made public after the declassification of records pertaining to Netaji in 2015.

Due to inferior technology in those times, transmissions never reached the ears of millions of Indians for whom they were meant, but the British masters were definitely alarmed on hearing them. The alarm spread to the Congress circles as well. Found among the records was a letter from Khurshed Naoroji, one of the Secretaries of Mahatma Gandhi to Louis Fischer (on June 22 1946). It read: "At the heart, the Indian Army is sympathetic to the Indian National Army (INA). If Bose comes with the help of Russians, neither Gandhiji nor Jawaharlal Nehru or the Congress will be able to reason with the country."

That Netaji was looming large on the British horizon was clear from the fact that on October 25, 1945, the then British Prime Minister chaired a Cabinet meeting for finalisation of a policy towards Bose, based on a confidential note on the subject from Lord Wavell, the then Viceroy of India.

Incidentally, the file also mentioned that Lord Mountbatten, who was the British Supreme Allied Commander for South East Asia Command, received a dispatch from the British directorate of military intelligence that said: "When Bose was preparing to leave Burma by plane, the Chinese intercepted a message from the Japanese, asking him to remain in Burma. Bose subsequently escaped to Thailand."

The file also mentioned that the case in support of Netaji's death in an air crash was based on evidence provided by Col Habibur Rahman and Japanese doctor T Yoshimi. But Habibur Rahman was "not willing to come out with the truth" and



there were a multitude of discrepancies in his version. Obviously, the British did not believe that Netaji had died in any air crash.

The British obsession with Netaji was natural in view of the INA, whose wartime activities had given a new dimension to the Indian freedom struggle. The INA had taken on the British Indian Army in the North-East during the World War II. Due to censorship in those parts (as a result of inner line restrictions), news had not been covered in mainland India and people did not know about the exploits of the INA (although they had lost the war).

Fresh from the victory in World War II, the British thought they would teach a lesson to the INA soldiers — like they had to the soldiers of the first war of Independence. They selected three soldiers — Hindu, Muslim and a Sikh — for trial for waging war against the King Emperor. This, they averred, would be a lesson to all Indians.

This policy had worked in 1857, when the last Mughal Emperor, Bahadur Shah Zafar, was tried in the Red Fort and deposed to Rangoon. But clearly, things had changed. The trial of the INA officers brought out before Indians the brave exploits of the INA. The British had thought pub-

“ THAT NETAJI WAS LOOMING LARGE ON THE BRITISH HORIZON WAS CLEAR FROM THE FACT THAT ON OCTOBER 25, 1945, THE THEN BRITISH PRIME MINISTER CHAIRED A CABINET MEETING FOR FINALISATION OF A POLICY TOWARDS BOSE, BASED ON A CONFIDENTIAL NOTE ON THE SUBJECT FROM LORD WAVELL, THE THEN VICEROY OF INDIA ”

licity of INA activities would lead to their being hated by the Indian public. They were wrong; as Indians began to hear about the activities of the INA, their chests began to swell in pride.

Our men in the Indian Army also became restive and Naval ratings mutinied. There was also trouble among Army ranks in Jabalpur. It was clear that the colonialists, who had used the Indian Army to control India, would not be able to do so any longer as the INA had showed the Indian army men a new way of reclaiming their country.

Lt General S K Sinha, one of the most celebrated officers of the Indian Army, who also became Governor of Jammu & Kashmir and Assam after retirement, was a young Captain in August 1946 posted to the Military Operations Directorate (MOD) to replace English officers. Shortly before his death, Gen Sinha wrote in an English newspaper on February 16, 2016, that while going through the files left by his predecessor, he found a report from Major General O'Brien of Military Intelligence that raised serious doubts about the continued loyalty of thousands of emergency commissioned officers of the Army, who had been recruited in the World War II period and wanted to keep a

watch on them. More importantly, Sinha found plans for Operation Gondola, by which 43,000 British civilians would be escorted out of the country if the need arose. Obviously, the British were planning for an eventual aversion of trouble.

Although the British had originally planned to leave India in September 1948, they quit earlier on August 15, 1947, to avert trouble in the form of an uprising. The British were keen on a peaceful exit to keep its empire in other parts of the globe stable. If they were to be kicked out violently from India, their colonies elsewhere would be in threat.

Unfortunately, the Congress leadership, led by Jawaharlal Nehru, collaborated with the last Viceroy, Lord Mountbatten, to allow this design that led to the Partition of India along with its freedom. What happened to Netaji one does not know.

Probably, he was packed by Stalin to the Gulag Archipelago; although some say he made his way to India as a mendicant Gumnami Baba. But when India woke up to freedom, the man, who made this possible, had been lost. An unsavoury fact at that.

(The writer is a senior journalist and an author)

SOUNDBITE

Sometimes judiciary has over stepped without referring to any particular case. It is not fair criticism that judiciary has overreached.



Justice (retired) —Madan B Lokur

Indians will not tolerate an atmosphere of coercion, intimidation and bullying. General elections may bring some change.



Historian —Rajmohan Gandhi

I was very close to being a part of a film, which finally did not happen. Not because of me though. Let's see, God has better plans.



Actor —Sushmita Sen

GDP is a fancy figure and at times it can be misleading as one needs to see where all a 7.5 per cent growth figure translates into.



Madhya Pradesh CM —Kamal Nath

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Citizen activists

Sir — Judicial scrutiny will likely render the 10 per cent reservation for the economically weaker sections null and void. However, removing the age and attempts barrier will go a long way in providing equal opportunity at the outset without affecting the status quo. In a highly competitive atmosphere, this can go a long way in ensuring that nobody is left out for want of chance and everybody gets to have equal access to job opportunities.

Anoop Hosmath
Mysuru

Ability of a leader

Sir — This refers to the editorial, "Didi's headline act" (January 21). The prime objective of Opposition parties, especially West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee, appears to be to defeat the BJP and Prime Minister Modi in particular. It is an undisputed fact that regional parties have no specific policy, programme or an ideology for the development of the nation. Even if the mahagathabandhan is voted to power, the selection of

More questions about L'affaire Rafale

This refers to the article, "Demystifying the Rafale" (January 20) by Pathikrit Payne. The surmise of the article seemed to be based upon contract negotiations with the Hindustan Aeronautics Limited, the only Indian Offset Partner (IOP) in the reckoning then, which ceased to make headway owing to "refusal by Dassault to guarantee quality of production if the jets were to be built by HAL in India", and also the refusal by Dassault to accept "the humongous man-hour quoted by HAL (2.7 times more than what Dassault needed to make a Rafale) for the deal." To recall, the Defence Offset Guidelines of Defence Procurement Procedure, 2013, had bestowed the Original Equipment Manufacturer unfettered freedom to select its IOP in any defence deal. The argument that unresolved issues with the "recalcitrant" HAL proved to be the nemesis of the earlier deal should be taken with a pinch of salt. And costing being a dicey affair, often, a conclusion based on numbers could be wide off the mark. One has reason to believe that Dassault had been placing hurdles deliberately to prevent the well-established Public Sector Undertaking from playing an active role in the deal.



The question is: Would Dassault have stayed as the L1 bidder even after the price was revised vertically skywards? In the early days of the BJP's tenure, in July 2014, in response to a request by its Finance Minister, the Eurofighter Consortium had offered to cut the 'total package price' by 20 per cent. Perhaps, an evaluation of the prices and benefits afresh in the changed context would have boosted national security even better and also accrued the concomitant economic benefits. Such unanswered questions about the 'L'affaire Rafale' are many.

Haridasan Rajan,
Kozhikode

the Prime Minister will, undoubtedly, be an insurmountable problem for them. The winning of a majority of MPs in the Lok Sabha poll by any party may not be a criteria to decide who will clinch the top post. Regional parties will ultimately look for a remarkable personality, who enjoys popularity and has adroit administrative

abilities. Except for Banerjee, no leader has the ability, skill and dexterity to be the Prime Minister. But Banerjee is temperamentally emotional and not fundamentally rational. Her tempestuous attitude and outlook may not appeal to all regional parties.

Nimai Charan Swain
Bhubaneswar

Celluloid falsehood

Sir — Making biographical films on politicians can hardly portray an impartial picture of their lives. For personal benefits, entertainment and commercial objectives, the real story gets twisted and hard realities are

ignored. Such films ought to be included in the category of fiction. However, hoi polloi can be attracted by the person in focus, and such cinema can be misleading, even controversial if not defamatory. Perhaps this is a marketing technique. Films on personalities, who are still around, must be avoided.

M Kumar
Via email

No turning back

Sir — This refers to the editorial, "Who let the cranks out?" (January 23). In an age of modern scientific technology and new inventions, it is surprising that people are crying foul over the use of Electronic Voting Machines (EVM) in elections. India should not in any way get back to Stone Age practices just because a few modern scientific devices are faulty. EVMs have come here to stay and have saved us from the Herculean task of manual counting.

Srinivas
Via email

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FIRST COLUMN

Back in the cauldron

The weakening of American resolve and toughening of the Taliban's posture would turn Afghanistan into a medieval prison that it once was



HIRANMAY KARLEKAR

Afghan Taliban's spokesman, Zabiullah Mujahid, refuted, on January 19, reports in Pakistani media that the organisation had agreed to talks in Islamabad with Zalmay Khalilzad, the US special representative for Afghanistan Reconciliation. This is not surprising; nor is the statement on the same day by a Taliban leader who wanted to remain anonymous, "We have rejected Pakistan's approach and suggestion. We are clear that Kabul's puppet regime is not in a position to fulfill our demands."

A bit of background needs to be recalled in respect of the issue of talks. In July, 2018, the Trump administration began seeking direct negotiations with the Taliban. Since then, Khalilzad has held at least three rounds of talks with the latter, the last one being in Abu Dhabi, capital of the United Arab Emirates, in December, 2018, in the presence of representatives from Pakistan and Saudi Arabia. These, of course, were not formal peace talks to end the 17-year-old war in Afghanistan but rather exploratory talks leading to formal talks.

The future of these exploratory talks now hangs in the balance. Two questions arise here. What are the chances of these being resumed? What would happen if they are not? According to the Taliban leader, who sought anonymity, talks with the US could resume only if the latter assured that just three issues would be discussed — a US withdrawal from Afghanistan, an exchange of prisoners and the lifting of the ban on the movement of Taliban leaders.

They are unlikely to change their stand. Their strategy has been to drag on the war and tire out the US to the point where Washington is prepared to leave on any terms. They have fought — albeit with sanctuary and massive support from Pakistan — the US and their allies and the fledgling Afghan military and police, for over 17 years. They have expanded the territory under their control. According to a report by the US Government's leading oversight authority, Special Inspector General for Afghan Reconstruction, the Afghan Government controlled, as of January 31, 2018, 229 (56.3 per cent) of the country's 407 districts, Taliban 59 (14.5 per cent) and 119 (29.2 per cent) were contested, controlled neither by the Government nor the Taliban.

A report in *The New York Times* of May 9, 2018, however, said that 65 and 35 per cent of Afghanistan's territory respectively were under Government and Taliban control or influence. According to an *Associated Press* report on December 21, 2018, half of Afghanistan was under Taliban control or influence. As a result, the US, which has spent over \$900 billion, and had over 2,400 of its soldiers killed since the launch of its post-9/11 offensive against the Taliban in 2001, is showing an increasing desperation to leave. Its reaching out for talks with the Taliban in July, 2018, marked a significant concession to the latter who had said that they would first discuss peace with the Americans alone, while Washington had insisted on talks with the Afghan Government's participation.

There have been other developments indicating a weakening of American resolve. One of these is the Trump administration's decision, announced on December 20, 2018, to withdraw 7,000 troops from Afghanistan by this summer. The result has been a toughening of the Taliban's posture, an example of which was their threat, delivered on January 15, that they would call off peace talks with the US if the latter's troops were not pulled out of Afghanistan. The threat came as Khalilzad and the delegation led by him arrived in Kabul for talks with the Government headed by President Ashraf Ghani.

Clearly, the Taliban will negotiate only on their terms. Pakistan's Government, its public statements notwithstanding, is not going to try to push them to accepting American terms because it wants to control Afghanistan through them. As for the US, its growing desperation may lead it to a final outcome which leaves the Afghan Government and its forces to fend for themselves.

The chances of their being able to do so are bleak. Lt-Gen Kenneth F McKenzie, set to become the commander of the US Central command, told the US Congress during his confirmation hearings in December, 2018, that the Afghan Army would dissolve without American support. Coming in the wake of several major attacks like the one on Ghazni in August, 2018, Monday's one on a military installation in Maidan Wardak province, which reportedly killed over 100 personnel of the National Directorate of Security (NDS), Afghanistan's main intelligence agency, indicate that he may not have been wrong.

What would happen if the Taliban take over Afghanistan? The country would return to the medieval prison that it was — with its women reduced to domestic slavery — during their rule between 1996 and 2001. Islamist fundamentalism, and the terrorism spawned by it, would receive a massive boost worldwide. Europe would be a bigger target than now. And the US should remember what President Obama said while announcing his new Af-Pak policy on March 27, 2009, "If the Afghan Government falls to the Taliban — or allows the Al-Qaeda to go unchallenged — that country will again be a base for terrorists who want to kill as many of us as they possibly can."

(The writer is Consultant Editor, *The Pioneer*, and an author)

POINT COUNTERPOINT

I HAVE FULL FAITH THAT THEY (PRIYANKA AND SCINDIA) WILL WORK TOGETHER AND WHAT UTTAR PRADESH NEEDS, THE CONGRESS WILL FULFIL THEM.

—CONGRESS PRESIDENT

RAHUL GANDHI



THIS WAS EXPECTED. TO PROMOTE DYNASTY IS WHAT CONGRESS IS ALL ABOUT. PRIYANKA'S APPOINTMENT SHOWS RAHUL'S FAILURE.

—BJP SPOKESPERSON

SAMBIT PATRA

Time's up, say #NeverAgain

Just as #MeToo, fuelled by the extraordinary courage and conviction of women, became a global force to reckon with, there is a need for a movement against domestic violence and abuse



ANU PESHAWARIA

There can hardly be a more opportune time than now, in the midst of a culturally, politically and economically powerful 'MeToo' movement across the world, to revisit the larger cause of domestic violence and abuse. There is an urgent need for an equally powerful social media-driven movement against it like #NeverAgain. As an Attorney with long years of passionate advocacy of this important socio-cultural and legal issue, this writer has been particularly focussed on issues of domestic violence and abuse in the diasporic Indian/South Asian families in the US. Anecdotal experience suggests that the problem exists in a significant way among the large expatriate Indian population around the world as well but does not often get the attention it so urgently demands.

Just as #MeToo, fuelled by extraordinary courage and conviction of women, who were silenced and oppressed for decades, as well as aided by the power and reach of social media, has become a global force to reckon with, there is a need for a scaleable movement on this issue. One is conscious that South Asian women, trapped in violent and abusive domestic situations, may find it hard to make their case on social media but it is a tool that ought to be employed to network, put abusive spouses and families on immediate notice and end it once and for all.

The case of Indian and South Asian women, who marry Indian/South Asian men living in the US and end up in violent or abusive domestic situations, is unique for several reasons. Perhaps the most important one is that many of them are either completely unprepared or ill-prepared to deal with it because they find themselves in a wholly new socio-cultural milieu in a country some 10,000 miles away from India and other South Asian nations. Many fall into such relationships even before they have had the time to familiarise themselves with their immediate surroundings, let alone social and legal services being available to them.

Overarching their rather harrowing lives is the fear of social stigma. More often than not, they are told stories of how a wonderful life awaits them in America, the world's richest country, which would be a dramatic improvement for them, compared to what they experience in India. With this as the backdrop, to find oneself in an abusive relationship so far away from familiar surroundings, makes things much harder for them. The consequence is that many of them choose to endure abuse rather than upset the rhythm of their lives.

This writer's extensive engagement with the women trapped in abusive relationships reveals that one common feeling among them is one of utter helplessness, exacerbated by what society back home might say about their failure to make their marriages work. The writer also found that a majority of these women would not only muster enough courage to speak out but even take legal action if they had a helping hand either from individual attorneys like the writer herself or legal aid groups.

Although there have been no national or state-wide studies of Indian/South Asian women and domestic violence in the US, there is reason to believe that this is a growing problem. Indian Americans are a reasonably large group of people. According to the US Census Bureau's 2015 American Community Survey, there are 3,982,398 multi-race, multi-ethnic and single-race Asian Indians, of which 3,699,957 are single race. While Indian Americans barely constitute about one per cent of the US population, because of their broad economic success, they are a force to reckon with far beyond their numbers. In terms of domestic and sexual violence among South Asian commu-



nities, a fact sheet released by the Asian Pacific Institute on gender-based violence is quite instructive. Here are some of their findings:

- Domestic violence:**
 - In a study of 208 South Asian women recruited through community outreach in the Greater Boston area, 21 per cent reported having experienced physical and/or sexual abuse at the hands of their intimate partner; 15 per cent reported such experience during the previous year. (*Intimate partner violence associated with poor health outcomes in US South Asian women*).
 - In a face-to-face interview study of 1,577 Asians recruited from Asian organisations and gathering places in the greater Houston area in Texas, 20 per cent of the Indian respondents (154 male and female) reported experiencing at least one form of intimate partner violence based on the eight-item Conflict Tactics Scale, ranging from "thrown objects at the respondent" to "used a knife or gun on the respondent" during the previous year. (*A prevalence study on partner abuse in six Asian American ethnic groups in the USA*).
 - A study on life course experiences of intimate partner violence and help-seeking (lifecourse IPV and help-seeking study), which assessed experiences of IPV among 56 Indian and Pakistani abused women (and 87 Filipina women) aged 18-60 recruited via various community outreach methods in the San Francisco Bay Area, found that 96 per cent of Indian and Pakistani victims reported having experienced physical violence by an intimate partner. About 50 per cent of Indian and Pakistani victims reported having experienced sexual violence by an intimate partner. Indian and Pakistani victims born in the US, or those who had immigrated to America pre-adolescence (1.5+ generations), were more likely to experience all three forms of IPV — physical violence, sexual assault and stalking, compared to those born outside the US and those who immigrated post-adolescence. Younger Indian and Pakistani victims were more likely to experience stalking by intimate partners compared to their older counterparts. (*Lifecourse Experiences of Intimate Partner Violence and Help-Seeking among Filipina, Indian, and Pakistani Women: Implications for Justice System Responses*).
 - A study of 160 South Asian women (who were married or in a heterosexual relationship), recruited through community outreach methods such as flyers, snowball sampling and referrals in

Greater Boston (*Raj and Silverman Study*), found that 42 per cent of the participants reported that they had been physically and/or sexually abused in some way by their current male partners in their lifetime; 36.9 per cent reported having been victimised in the past year. Around 30 per cent reported having experienced partners' physical abuse and 18.8 per cent reported having experienced partners' sexual abuse. About 65.2 per cent of the women reporting physical abuse also reported sexual abuse. Sixteen per cent reported injury or the need for medical services as a result of a partner's violence. Women, who reported intimate partner violence, were more likely than those who did not report violence to indicate that they had experienced "poor physical health in seven or more of the last 30 days" (20 per cent vs seven per cent), "depression [in] seven or more of the last 30 days" (32 per cent vs 10 per cent), "anxiety [in] seven or more of the last 30 days" (34 per cent vs 20 per cent) and "suicidal ideation during the last year" (16 per cent vs three per cent). No significant difference was found in the prevalence of domestic violence between arranged marriages and non-arranged marriages. (*Intimate partner violence against South Asian women in greater Boston*)

Abuse by in-laws

- Of a convenience sample of 169 South Asian women, who were married at the time of the survey, six per cent reported having experienced emotional abuse by in-laws. The proportion of women, who reported emotional abuse by in-laws, was higher among those reporting partners' violence in their current relationship (15 per cent) than those who did not report such violence (three per cent). (Victims of intimate partner violence more likely to report abuse from in-laws).

Domestic violence-related homicide

- In a telephonic interview survey of a random sample of Gujarati adults aged between 18 and 64 years, seven per cent of the female respondents reported that in-laws had called them names. (*The Shanti Project, Baseline Community-Wide Survey, Unpublished raw data*).

Domestic violence-related homicide

- A report on 160 US domestic violence related homicides in Asian families based on newspaper clippings and information from advocates for a six-year period from 2000–2005 found that 30 of 158 (19 per cent) victims with known ethnicities were South Asian. And 32 of 122 (26 per cent) perpetrators with known ethnicities were South Asian. (*Shattered Lives: Homicides, Domestic Violence and Asian Families*).

Seeking help

- The Raj and Silverman Study found that 11 per cent of South Asian women reporting intimate partner violence indicated receiving counseling support services for domestic abuse. Only three per cent of the abused South Asian women in the study ever obtained a restraining order against an abusive partner. This rate is substantially lower than that reported in a study of women in Massachusetts, in which over 33 per cent of the women, who reported intimate partner violence in the past five years, obtained a restraining order.

Seeking help from family members

- In a study of 62 battered women (20 African American, 22 Hispanic, and 20 South Asian), South Asian women were more likely to seek help from family members. South Asian women were significantly more likely to be advised by family members "to stay in the marriage" than other groups of women. (*Social support and disclosure of abuse: Comparing South Asian, African American, and Hispanic battered women*).

According to estimates, two out of five South Asian women report domestic violence, which is much higher than the general US population (28 per cent according to UNICEF, 2000). These statistics tell only a fraction of the story. They tell you how many women had the courage to report abuse or call for help. How many more are silent, terrorised, obedient to the abuser and isolated in an abusive situation we do not know. The numbers of those, who do not call for help, too are not known because they do not recognise the situation is abusive or they do not know their legal rights. All we know is that domestic violence in South Asian community "is seriously under-reported because we have seen many women who never get as far as the formal institutions" (Preisser, 1999).

However, because of the state of the current law, both in terms of immigration policy and in terms of where we are with international agreements between the US and India, in too many cases this writer's hands are tied. Much more should be done than simply answering their calls and do what can be done to counsel, educate and help them negotiate laws that too often keep them in unhealthy situations or separate them from their own children. Ultimately, the laws need to accommodate these special cases. The awareness must spread to citizens of the US so that we can all make a concerted effort to relieve the suffering of some of our most vulnerable residents.

(The writer is Attorney at law, Supreme Court of the United States of America)

Paradise lost: India's biodiversity is in crisis

While developed nations are bending over backwards to usher in biodiversity into urban spaces, India is tracking backwards and losing its green cover. The Western Ghats are symbolic of the country's pristine hotspots and must not be allowed to wither away



KOTA SRIRAJ

Population pressures, hunger for land and prime real estate have all made many a nature hotspot disappear over the last decade. These permanent losses of biodiversity hotspots would seem insignificant when compared to the rather disturbing findings of a latest study published in the *Yale Journal of Biology and Medicine*. The study found that unplanned developmental activities and land use are reducing the ever-green forest cover and perennial streams in the central region of the Western Ghats in India.

While other developed nations in the world are bending over backwards to usher in biodiversity into

their cities and urban spaces, India is tracking backwards and losing its green cover and natural sanctuaries for its flora and fauna. The Western Ghats, a biodiversity hotspot known for its rich ecology, natural forest systems and perennial rivers, are slowly but steadily falling prey to large-scale human activities that are now beginning to erode the ecosystem of this central region of the country.

The study sharply focusses on the Kali river that originates in Uttara Kannada district in Karnataka and joins the Arabian Sea. The river is as old as the Western Ghats but over the years, it has been dammed at six locations. As a result, 325 species of flora and 190 species of fauna are at immediate risk of extinction. Remote sensing data formed the basis of the study and showed how the silent destruction of one of nature's best known habitats is taking place systematically. The data specifically shows that between 1973

and 2016, forest cover reduced from 85 per cent to 55 per cent.

Additionally, land use pattern in the region also underwent changes during 1980-2000 due to developmental projects such as the building of dams on the river Kali, Kaiga nuclear plant and Dandelii paper mill. The paper mill establishment itself led to large-scale conversion of forests to crops. These developments are not only sad but also irreversible. The study also noted that forests had shrunk thanks to the large water reservoirs, which had been constructed at the expense of forest cover.

The lush environs of the Western Ghats came to be replaced with exceedingly dry and dusty atmosphere. This mainly due to changes in water usage. Eco-hydrological footprint is a measure of how the ecology of a region responds to changes in water cycle and water usage. This can be measured by assessing the ratio of available water and water lost

due to usage and evaporation. Around 2,309 million cubic metres of water is required to meet demands of society and livestock in the region, while around 4,700 million cubic metres are required to maintain ecosystems and the aquatic life.

An analysis in the report also showed that although the Kali river has sufficient water supply and perennial streams in the Ghats and coastal area, regions that lie in plain lands with a higher degree of agriculture and cultivation, have intermittent and seasonal flow. This is leading to water scarcity for four to nine months in a year.

Whereas those areas, which have greater than 70 per cent of forest cover, are not experiencing any type of water scarcity. This shows the strong correlation between ecology and hydrology in the backdrop of land use. The unfortunate part is that in the process of clearing the forests for developmental activities, India is losing native

species of vegetation, which play a pivotal role in enhancing the water retention capability of the catchment area.

This levelling of the forests for dams and other development activities may be touted as development but it is a skewed progress at best since it ensures the best interests of only a certain section of society. Indigenous population or the local people are paying a steep price as they not only lose the habitat but also their income and livelihood.

According to experts, villagers in the vicinity of native forests earn ₹1.54 lakh per acre per year, compared to ₹32,000 in villages with stream catchments experiencing deforestation. This confirms the vital role of native forests in sustaining water and people's livelihood.

The study also revealed that management practices adopted by engineers also contributed to the erosion of water retention capability in the river catchment with severe water

scarcity. Keeping these aspects in mind and for the best interests of the Western Ghats, a United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) recognised World Heritage Site, the Government agencies must establish better management and conservation strategies to maintain the forest cover and take immediate measures to preserve the exclusivity of the flora and fauna of the region.

The role that the National Green Tribunal (NGT) can play to preserve the Western Ghats cannot be emphasised enough. Although it has already put in place many measures, in the light of the recent report, gaps in the efforts to conserve Western Ghats are becoming apparent. The NGT must take cognisance of the same and take suitable action. Western Ghats are symbolic of India's pristine biodiversity and must not be allowed to wither away.

(The writer is an environmental journalist)



FOREIGN EYE



REHAUL THE EDUCATION SYSTEM

Political interference permeates every aspect of Government schools — from teaching to administration. Politicians in Sri Lanka are pampered and praised, they are cosseted, watched, admired and flattered beyond belief. Many are stupid enough to believe all this adulation that our people seem stupid enough to give! They must be told to keep out of schools and universities (Daily Mirror editorial)

3 terrorists killed in Kashmir's Baramulla

KHURSHED WANI ■ SRINAGAR

For the third straight day, three more terrorists were killed in north Kashmir's Baramulla district on Wednesday taking the toll to nine. The terrorists were killed in a fierce encounter in Binnar village where police and security forces launched an operation on specific information on movement of terrorists.

The three slain terrorists are believed to be cadre of Lashkar-e-Tayyeba (LeT) outfit, two of them suspected to be foreigners.

Security sources said that a joint team of army, Police and CRPF launched a cordon-and-search operation at Binnar village on the outskirts of Baramulla district on the basis of inputs about the presence of terrorists.

As the forces zeroed in on the suspected spot, the hiding terrorists opened fire triggering off a gunfight. "As the searchers were going on, the search party was fired upon by the terrorists. The fire was retaliated leading to a gunfight," a police



spokesman said.

"In the ensuing encounter, three terrorists were killed and the bodies were retrieved from the site of encounter. Their identities and affiliations are being ascertained," he said.

Incriminating material including arms and ammunition was recovered from the site of encounter. Police have registered a case and initiated investigation in the matter," he added.

"Citizens are requested not to venture inside the encounter zone since such an area can prove dangerous due to stray explosive materials. People are requested to cooperate with the police till the area is completely

sanitised and cleared of all the explosive materials if any," police spokesman said.

This was the third encounter in as many days in the Valley. The three gunfights in south, central and northern parts of Kashmir resulted into the killing of nine terrorists. On Monday, three terrorists were killed in an encounter in Hapatnar village of Char-e-Sharief area in central district Budgam while three more were killed in Shirmal village of south Kashmir's Shopian district on Tuesday. The encounters took place ahead of tight security arrangements in the wake of Republic Day.

LoC tense as Pak violates ceasefire again

MOHIT KANDHARI ■ JAMMU

Tensions escalated along the Line of Control in Poonch sector late Wednesday evening following 'unprovoked' ceasefire violation by the Pakistan army.

According to ground reports, the firing which started from Sonagali around 4.00 pm continued till late in the night.

The entire stretch between Balakote and Mankote was activated and witnessed heavy exchange of fire. The Indian army jawans remained in a state of high alert to prevent any strike by Border Action Team of Pakistan army or fresh infiltration bid.

The local villagers in the area also remained closeted inside their houses as several mortar shells landed in the civilian areas close to the line of control. Residents in Poonch claimed the exchange of fire along the LoC was intense and was audible in Poonch town.

Residents in Poonch claimed the exchange of fire along the LoC was intense and was audible in Poonch town

Defence PRO in Jammu, Lt Col Devendra Anand said, "Pakistan army initiated 'unprovoked' ceasefire violation by using small arms fire. Pak army also targeted forward areas in Mendhar sector by shelling with mortars". "The Indian army retaliated strongly and effectively", he added.

In plain areas of Jammu, especially along the International border, the counter infiltration grid has been beefed up to prevent any infiltration bid. Small groups of heavily armed infiltrators were spotted in the areas by the border guards close to the International border.

Maha ATS busts 'ISIS-inspired' group; minor among 9 arrested

Mumbai: The Maharashtra Anti-Terrorism Squad (ATS) has busted an "ISIS-inspired" group, which was planning mass casualty attacks using poisonous chemical mixtures at big gatherings, an official said on Wednesday.

The ATS has also arrested eight men and detained a minor boy — all suspected members of the group — following searches in Thane and Aurangabad over the last two days, he added.

The arrests have come just days ahead of the Republic Day on January 26.

The ATS has seized liquids, chemical powders, a chemical bottle with "hydrogen peroxide" written on it, six knives, six pen drives, six laptops, over 24 mobile phones, several gadgets, WiFi routers, DVDs, CDs, hard drives, graphics cards, modems and computer RAMs (random access memory), the ATS official said.

The group, which had engineers in its ranks, had planned to prepare toxic chemical mixtures and blend those with food or water at big events to cause mass casualty, he added.

All the seized materials were sent to the forensic science



laboratory for examination, he said.

"These people had created a terrorist gang inspired by the ISIS called the Ummat E Mohammadiya and had planned terror activities at various places," the official said without elaborating.

"The idea was to make some poisonous mixtures and mix those in water or food at places of big events so that people consume it," he said.

The locations where the group had planned the terror activities were being ascertained, he added.

"We will verify all the aspects, including (a possible) attack at the (ongoing) Kumbh Mela (in Prayagraj, Uttar

Pradesh) and at other big events as well," the official said.

The chemicals seized from the group were of experimental quantities, he said, adding, "We are also investigating whether the group had any associates in the state or other parts of the country."

Among those arrested was Mazhar Abdul Rashid Sheikh, the son of Rashid Malbari — a underworld criminal and dreaded sharp-shooter of the Dawood Ibrahim gang — the ATS official said. Sheikh was arrested from Aurangabad in central Maharashtra, he added.

The minor, who was detained, was aged around 17 and was a student of class 11 (Science), the official said. **PTI**

50% quota for Mantralaya scribes in Maharashtra housing scheme: Govt

Mumbai: The Maharashtra Government has decided to reserve 50 per cent residences for members of the 'Mantralaya Aani Vidhimandal Vartahar Sangh' in Mumbai under a housing scheme of the MHADA, Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis announced on Wednesday.

Fadnavis made the remarks here at an award function, when he conferred lifetime achievement award to veteran journalist Dinu Randive among others. The Maharashtra Housing and Area Development Authority (MHADA) is a State-run agency.

Speaking at the event, Fadnavis said the Government has tried to give "stability" to the fourth pillar of democracy, the media, in the past four years and listed decisions his dispensation

has taken in this regard.

"The MHADA has prepared a scheme for residences of journalists. It has been decided that members of the Mantralaya Aani Vidhimandal Vartahar Sangh will have 50 per cent reservation in it.

"Location has been finalised and the process concerned will be completed in a month," he added.

Fadnavis also hailed 93-year-old Randive, who had started his journalistic career in 1956.

Randive also participated in the freedom struggle, the Samyukta Maharashtra agitation and the Goa liberation movement.

Award winners in other categories included Vishwas Waghmode, Mahesh Tiwari and Prajakta Pol. **PTI**



Devotees light oil lamps in the evening during Kumbh Mela 2019 in Allahabad on Wednesday

PTI

BJP's days are numbered: TMC

SAUGAR SENGUPTA ■ KOLKATA

A day after Amit Shah charged the Trinamool Congress with unleashing syndicate raj in Bengal and promised to clear the province of illegal cross-border infiltrators once it came to power, the State ruling outfit hit back calling the BJP president an empty vessel whose party had failed to keep its earlier promises like repatriating black money and crediting ₹15 lakh each in the citizens' bank accounts.

While TMC Rajya Sabha MP Derek O'Brien called the BJP a mad outfit, speaking out of nervousness and desperation, senior leader and State Minister Partho Chatterjee called Shah an empty vessel who was only capable of making large noises.

Referring to Shah's speech in a Malda rally O'Brien said "it

is obvious that they are very nervous," as "they know their days are numbered. They are politically scared. Their speeches are low on facts and poor in State."

Shah had on Tuesday told a rally in Malda that "Trinamool Congress needs to be uprooted from this State so that its syndicate tax raj can be ended." Blowing the BJP's elections bugle he vowed to throw out all infiltrators from Bengal. "If we come to power we can assure you that the BJP will make Bengal infiltrator-free."

Reacting to Shah's statements O'Brien tweeted, the BJP did not understand the ethos of India and Bengal. "They are heading towards a big zero," he said adding "some are saying they are desperate, some are saying they have gone mad ... or is it a combination of both?"

Thousands hit Mizoram streets against Citizenship Amendment Bill

Aizawl: Thousands of people, including students, hit the streets across different places in Mizoram on Wednesday to protest against the Citizenship (Amendment) Bill.

Effigies of Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Union Home Minister Rajnath Singh were torched, as protesters took out rallies from here, seven district headquarters and at over 50 other places.

Raising slogans and carrying placards, the agitators demanded the resignation of the PM and the Home Minister, alleging that the controversial bill will endanger the very existence of the Mizos.

The rally was organised by the Mizo Zirlai Pawl (MZO) or Mizo students federation, which had also organised an 11-hour, state-wide bandh on January 8. **PTI**

SPECIAL TREATMENT TO SASIKALA IN PRISON Not yet briefed on inquiry committee report: MB Patil

Bengaluru: Karnataka Home Minister MB Patil on Friday said he was yet to be briefed on the report of an enquiry committee that went into charges of preferential treatment to ousted AIADMK leader V K Sasikala at the prison here and would take action after discussions with department officials.

Patil, who took over as Home Minister after the Cabinet rejig on December 22, asserted that nobody was above the law and there was no need to protect anybody.

"It has come to my notice through media reports about RTI... Nobody is above the law..." he told reporters here.

"There was inquiry...I'm holding discussions. Officially I'm yet to be briefed on it. I cannot act on media reports.

Have taken cognisance of media reports. I will discuss without department officials and whatever is needed will be done. What is the need to protect anybody," he added.

An RTI query revealed that Sasikala was given special treatment in a prison here, where she is serving imprisonment in a corruption case, according to the report by an inquiry committee that went into the allegations by a senior police official.

The 295-page report by retired IAS officer Vinay

Kumar confirmed that the then DIG (Prisons) D Roopa's claims in July 2017 that Sasikala was given preferential treatment and a separate kitchen functioned for her at the Parappana Agrahara Central Jail here, RTI activist Narasimha Murthy had recently said.

Kumar had submitted his report to the Government on November 17, 2017, but its contents were not made public.

Asked if action would be taken based on thereport, Patil said "definitely...I have not been officially briefed about it... I have to ascertain about it as the Home Minister and will act accordingly." **PTI**

More than 70K cows died in Hingonia gaushala in last five years: Gehlot

Jaipur: Lashing out at the Opposition BJP on the issue of cows, Rajasthan chief minister Ashok Gehlot on Wednesday said 74,016 cows had died in Hingonia gaushala in Jaipur during the previous Government's five year rule.

He accused the BJP of calling the Congress a party of Muslims but stated the Congress had won elections in the 'cow belt' of Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh and Chhattisgarh.

"Politics was done in the name of cows. As many as 74,016 cows died in Hingonia gaushala in five years. Congress was called the party of Muslims but the party won elections in Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh and

Chhattisgarh," Gehlot said, in his reply to the debate on the Governor's speech in the Assembly. He said the Hindu community had realised the BJP raises the issue of Ram temple ahead of elections.

The chief minister targeted the former Vasundhara Raje Government "for weakening schemes like free medicines which were initiated by the earlier Congress Government" and said his Government will not discontinue any public welfare scheme. He said the public gave huge mandate to the BJP in 2013 Assembly elections but the Vasundhara Raje Government wasted five years and gave misrule to the public. **PTI**



All Assam Students' Union (AASU) along with 30 other indigenous organisations of the State take part in a mass agitation programme against Citizenship (Amendment) Bill in Guwahati on Wednesday

PTI

TN district thanks Collector for pro-development schemes

KUMAR CHELLAPPAN ■ CHENNAI

Tiruvannamalai, one of the most backward districts in Tamil Nadu, is undergoing a silent transformation, thanks to innovative and well-conceived programmes and schemes worked out by the District Collector.

"The district was known as home to Lord Annamalai Temple and the ashram of Ramana Maharshi. Other than these two unique institutions, Tiruvannamalai was known only for child marriages, foeticide, illegal termination of pregnancy and malnutrition," said Kattumannarkoil Kannan, vice president, Cauvery Delta Farmers Welfare Association, Tamil Nadu.

Being one of the most rain deficit regions in the State, Tiruvannamalai's contribution to the State economy was negligible. There are no industries



Mothers taking oath with camphor that they would not marry off their daughters before they turn 18

Pioneer photo



District Collector Kandasamy with schoolchildren who wrote letters to their parents not to marry them off before they turn 18

Pioneer photo

worth mentioning and this resulted in many poor men opting to work as illegal wood cutters in the Seshachalam Forests of neighbouring Andhra Pradesh. Most of the wood cutters allegedly killed in "encounters" inside the forest were from

Tiruvannamalai. All these could turn out to be old stories as the district in making big strides thanks to K S Kandasamy, the district collector.

Since the day he took over as collector in September 2017, Kandasamy went into action.

He was greeted by unprecedented problems crying for drastic solutions. Quacks operated in various parts of Tiruvannamalai performing selective abortion of female children. Women were afraid of delivering female children as

they knew life of girls would be a horrid affair.

"Infanticide, school dropouts, child marriages, malnutrition, lower educational status, high maternal mortality rates, were some of the issues haunting us. The maternal

mortality ratio was 111.1 for the year 2017-2018. We brought it down to 54.36 by 2018 to 2019," Kandasamy told The Pioneer on the eve of his departure to New Delhi where he is being honoured on Thursday by the Prime Minister.

Along with the MMR, Kandasamy succeeded in bringing down the infant mortality rate which stood at 11.9 in 2018. "This is lower than the State average of 17. But we are working to bring it down to zero. There are many factors for this phenomenon and this needs multi-pronged strategy," said the district collector.

Since early marriages and teenage pregnancy are the root cause of the higher order birth, Kandasamy and his team have decided to eradicate child marriages. "During 2017-2018 we had stopped 168 child marriages. And during the current year and up to December 2018 we have stopped 166 child

marriages in our district and legal actions were initiated. All the children secured are being given training, counselling and career guidance," he said.

A simple but majestic event held at the initiative of Kandasamy turned out to be the game changer in the attitude of women and men towards girl child. "All rural women took a pledge by holding burning camphor that they would not marry off their kids below the age of 18. This has paid rich dividends," said Kandasamy.

Vijayasree Ramesh, a social activist from Chennai is optimistic about the future of Tiruvannamalai. "The collector has taken the women community into confidence and he himself has become a role model in driving home the lesson that women should be respected. He had integrated schemes like Beti Bachao Beto Padhao with the local issues and this has paid good results,"

said Ramesh, a lawyer-turned-girl child activist.

One of the private colleges in the district came forward to implement the "Role Reversal Activity" suggested by Kandasamy. An equal number of boys and girls were selected for the mission. For one day, they had the roles reversed. Boys became home makers while the girls had fun.

We cooked and cleaned and served them food of their choices. And the girls had fun playing games, dance, chit-chat, drive a battery operated car. It was a different experience and our perspective about women got changed," said Arun, one of the students who took part in this mission.

These are few of the innovations being implemented by Kandasamy and team. He is confident that by the time he has to move out, an irreversible process of change would have set in Tiruvannamalai.

Priyanka to hit SP-BSP alliance hard

Now dissidents have option of knocking door of Congress



PNS ■ LUCKNOW

With the euphoria generated by the alliance followed by the mega meet of Opposition leaders at Kolkata, the Samajwadi party and the Bahujan Samaj Party are grappling with the 'real politik' of seat sharing. Both the parties are also grappling with the dissidence as many aspirants will not be able to contest the election following the alliance.

of the fledgling alliance. The move has come as a setback for the SP-BSP alliance as it has created fresh avenues for the prospective Lok Sabha candidates of both SP and BSP but denied opportunity to contest as both the parties have shared 38 seats each and rest for the small parties. The SP, BSP appeared over confident of their electoral arithmetic comprising of the SC, OBCs and minorities.

in the electoral fortune of the Congress has brought a new hope for those SP and BSP leaders who were at the dead end of their political career because of the alliance of the two parties. Now they have the option of knocking at the door of the Congress," said a political analyst.

"Entry of Priyanka Gandhi could be setback for the Samajwadi Party-Bahujan Samaj Party alliance. The strategist of the SP-BSP were confident that there will be direct fight with the BJP, now the electoral battle is likely to be triangular which may benefit the BJP," said the Rajya Sabha MP of the Samajwadi party. He added, "The forceful entry of the Congress could also create dilemma for the Muslim voters and providing credible alternative to the rebels of SP, BSP and the BJP".

BSP former MP refusing to be identified said, "The SP-BSP leaders should have made efforts for the honourable accommodation of the Congress in the alliance". He said this would have sealed the fate of the BJP and the tally of the ruling party at the Centre could have been reduced to a single digit.

"If 2017 UP Assembly election is the benchmark, then the alliance plus Congress would have secured 52.08% vote share as compared to 39.67% of the BJP" said the BSP leader.

Political observers say that voters, particularly Muslims, have not forgotten Mayawati's decision to take the BJP's support to form the Government in Lucknow in 1995, and later in 1997 and 2002. They say these voters will not rule out the possibility of this happening again if the Opposition fails

to unseat Narendra Modi and the BJP at the Centre. There is this fear amongst Muslims that Mayawati could switch sides after the elections if she is not in a powerful position. This assumption that Muslims will vote only for the alliance is somehow misplaced."

UP Congress general secretary Onkar Nath Singh said, "All sections of the society are looking at the Congress as a possible alternative on seats that will be contested by BSP and SP. If they feel the Congress is in a strong position, they could end up voting for the Congress instead of the alliance."

The last time the SP and BSP had joined hands was for the Uttar Pradesh Assembly elections in 1993, when the BJP was riding the Hindutva wave after the demolition of the Babri Masjid the previous year.

Gauri's sister rubbishes cyber expert's claim

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA ■ BENGALURU

Slankesh's sister Kavita Lankesh has rubbished the claim made by a US-based self-styled cyber expert and hacker that Lankesh was killed because she was planning to write an article on the hacking of Electronic Voting Machines (EVMs).

"I am aware of it and I think it is completely false. I don't think it is true at all. I don't know why it was said like this. I don't believe my sister was targeting for that at all," Kavita Lankesh said.

Lankesh was shot dead on September 5, 2017 evening outside her house.

Police have arrested 16

people, while two suspects are at large.

Police have claimed that a right wing criminal syndicate, which killed the left leaning journalist Lankesh, was inspired by the literature brought out by a right wing organisation Sanatan Sanstha and assassinated her for being 'Durjan' (evil person), as mentioned in the book.

However, adding an outlandish twist to the story, the man identified as Syed Shuja had said he had met Lankesh and wanted the article on EVM to be published in her weekly when the assassination happened.

Kavita said, "The murder was a political conspiracy but I don't believe in this kind of twist. So far, the investigation

is going in a right direction." When asked whether she believed that there were political motives behind the claims, she said, "I guess so. It's a fake news. I don't need to go into it."

The Election Commission has filed a complaint with the Delhi Police asking it to register an FIR against Syed Shuja, who at a press conference in London on Monday claimed EVMs can be hacked, and the 2014 Lok Sabha elections were rigged.

In its complaint, the poll panel asked the police to investigate the matter "promptly" for violation of certain sections of the Indian Penal Code dealing with spreading rumour to alarm and "create fear" in the minds of the public.

Didi: Those dividing country into pieces not national leaders

PTI ■ DARJEELING

A day after BJP president Amit Shah ridiculed the Opposition's bid to forge a grand alliance, Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee on Wednesday said those who want to divide the country into pieces cannot be called national leaders. Speaking at an event here to celebrate the 122nd birth anniversary of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose, Banerjee said "we will be successful only when we are together".

"Such persons are leaders of only a section of people of the country," Banerjee said in an apparent dig at the BJP, without naming the saffron party or any of its leaders. "Those who want to divide the country into pieces cannot be national leaders," she added.

Kickstarting the party's Lok Sabha poll campaign in West Bengal from a rally at Malda, Shah Tuesday scoffed at the efforts by opposition parties to forge a grand alliance, saying it is driven by the "greed for power" and with nine potential prime ministerial candidates in their ranks.

Taking a swipe at the opposition rally convened by the Trinamool Congress supremo in Kolkata last Saturday, Shah said bringing in 20-25 leaders on one stage would not serve any purpose as Narendra Modi will become prime minister again.

He had also described TMC government as "facilitators of murders" and made serious corruption charges against it. TMC had organised a mega rally at Brigade Parade ground in Kolkata on Saturday last in which over two dozen leaders of as many 22 anti-BJP parties had given a call to oust Modi from power in the general elections.

Stating that Netaji had taken people from all communities and races together, from the Hills to those in every other part of the country in forming the Indian National Army (INA), Banerjee said he talked of "togetherness and unity of all people of the country". She said Mahatma Gandhi, Maulana Abul Kalam Azad and Babasaheb Ambedkar were great national leaders as they stood for the good of all.

Priyanka's appointment will strengthen party: Pilot

PTI ■ JAIPUR

Deputy Chief Minister of Rajasthan Sachin Pilot on Wednesday said Priyanka Gandhi's appointment as AICC general secretary for UP East will inspire party workers across the country.

"It is a welcome development. This will boost party workers across the country. It has been a long standing demand of the workers to give her (Priyanka) an official role. "Until now, she chose to restrict herself to campaigning in Amethi and Raebareilly but now as a general secretary, she will strengthen the party's Lok Sabha campaign in the next three months," he said.

Pilot said her new official role will make a huge difference. "Today we understand India is going through a very challenging time and people are looking at the Congress to give an alternative and we need to really get our act together and give a very charged campaign," said the Deputy Chief Minister of Rajasthan.

Pilot's boss, Ashok Gehlot has also welcomed the announcement.

Sitharaman slams Cong on EVMs hacking issue

PTI ■ CHENNAI

Amid the row over a self-styled expert alleging that EVMs could be tampered with, Union Minister Nirmala Sitharaman on Wednesday hit out at the Congress for joining hands with elements in a foreign country who claimed that electronic voting machines could be hacked.

She dared the Congress to step down from power in Madhya Pradesh where assembly elections were held recently.

A self-styled cyber expert had days ago claimed that EVMs could be hacked and alleged that the 2014 general elections were rigged.

To a question on Tamil Nadu Congress demanding an inquiry into claims that EVMs could be hacked following a hackathon in London recently, she told reporters here that "if they win, EVM is working properly, if they lose EVMs do not function properly, and that too in a foreign country."

The Defence Minister attacked the Congress for what she termed pursuing the path of weakening democracy. "This is an effort by the Congress to weaken democracy,"



"The Congress party won the Madhya Pradesh, Chhattisgarh and Rajasthan Assembly elections only through the Electronic Voting Machine," she said and blamed the Rahul Gandhi-led party for changing stand on EVMs according to their convenience.

The Congress party should say they will step down from government in Madhya Pradesh since they won the polls through the EVMs.

"They should say that there should be some problem with the EVMs and that was why they won...otherwise they should say that they themselves manipulated the machines for their victory," she said.

She queried if the Congress manipulated EVMs for their victories in the past.

'Perfectly fine': Nitish over EVM's credibility

PTI ■ PATNA

Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar on Wednesday defended Electronic Voting Machines (EVMs), saying it was "perfectly fine" and suggested that there will not be any problem if voter verifiable paper audit trails (VVPAT) are made available at every polling stations.

Amid raging debate over EVMs, which Opposition leaders have been critical of, Kumar said he was not in agreement with the things said.

In an apparent dig at the Congress, which is among opposition parties who are criticising EVMs, Kumar asked "during whose time the EVM system was introduced?"

"My stand on the use of



EVM is very clear. EVMs are perfectly fine. There will not be any problem if VVPAT is made available at every polling stations. I do not agree with things which are being said about EVM. In my view, EVM has strengthened people's right to vote," Kumar

told reporters.

He was talking to reporters here after paying tributes to national leader Netaji Subhash Chandra Bose on his 122nd birth anniversary in the state capital.

The incidents of bogus voting and booth capturing used to be witnessed during voting through ballot paper but things have improved with the introduction of EVMs and the system would further improve with the introduction of VVPAT, Kumar, who is also JD(U) national president, said.

Kumar said voters' slip must be distributed in every household beside taking the receiving from the families in which voters' slips have been distributed.

APPEAL FOR IDENTIFICATION

General public is hereby informed that this male
Named: Unknown, **S/o:** Unknown, **R/o:** Unknown, **Age:** About 45 years, **Sex:** Male, **Height:** 5 feet 4 inch (Approx), **Complexion:** Shallow, has been found Near Laxmi Nagar Metro Station Red Light, Delhi and he was admitted in LBS Hospital and during the treatment Doctors declared him dead on dated 16.01.2019 at 08:15 hours.

In this regard a DD No. 09-B, dated 16-01-2019 has been lodged at P.S. Shakarpur, Delhi.

Sincere efforts have been made by local police to trace out information about this male but no clue has come to light so far.

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

SHO
P.S. Shakarpur, Delhi.
Ph. 011- 22542992, 8750870621
DP/6646/ED/19
DP/6085/ED/18

Why is NDA afraid of facing JPC into Rafale deal: D Raja

PTI ■ CHENNAI

CPI leader D Raja on Wednesday reiterated his party's demand for a JPC probe into the Rafale deal, asking why the NDA Government is 'afraid' of facing the Joint Parliamentary Committee if there was no wrongdoing in the Indo-French pact.

The CPI national secretary urged PM Narendra Modi to "tell the truth" on the matter. "Neither the Defence Minister (Nirmala Sitharaman) nor the External Affairs Minister (Sushma Swara) was involved when the deal was clinched. It was the Prime Minister, the Prime Minister alone who took the decision and decided the

deal," he said.

"JPC is a parliamentary instrument and Parliament is supreme in our democracy. If there is nothing (wrong) they can very well accept JPC. Why are they afraid of it," he told PTI. Raja's remarks came in response to Sitharaman once again ruling out a JPC probe into the Rafale deal on Wednesday.

On the demand for a JPC probe into the Rafale deal while speaking to reporters here Wednesday, Sitharaman had said "it is not needed." Unlike the 2G issue, no institution like the Comptroller and Auditor General or even the Supreme Court said anything against Rafale, she noted.

Man held in UP for posing as PMO official

PTI ■ LUCKNOW

A man was arrested for allegedly impersonating as an official of the Prime Minister's Office (PMO), according to a statement issued by the Uttar Pradesh Police's Special Task Force (STF) here on Wednesday.

Acting on a tip-off, the STF arrested Naresh Rai from Jiamau locality here on Tuesday, it said.

The STF had received a complaint that Rai used to call bureaucrats posing as a PMO official and ask them to give contracts and jobs to some people, it said, adding that he used to take money for this. An SUV was also seized, the statement added.

गजियाबाद विकास प्राधिकरण
 (I.S.O. 9001:2015 एवं I.S.O. 14001:2015 प्रमाणित संस्था)
 विकास पथ, गजियाबाद

पत्रांक 439/4/पीओ-टी/2018-19 दिनांक 22/01/2019

ई-निविदा आमंत्रण सूचना

उपाध्यक्ष, गजियाबाद विकास प्राधिकरण की ओर से निविदा नोटिस में उल्लेखित क्रम संख्या-1 से 8 तक के कार्यों की ई-निविदा आमंत्रित की जाती है। निविदा सम्बन्धी समस्त विवरण व शर्तें गजियाबाद विकास प्राधिकरण की वेबसाइट www.gdaghaziabad.com पर उपलब्ध हैं एवं UPLC की वेबसाइट <https://etender.up.nic.in> पर निविदा विक्रय की तिथि में उपलब्ध होंगी। सम्बन्धित निविदाओं को ई-निविदा आमंत्रण सूचना में उनके सम्मुख दर्शायी गयी तिथियों पर डाउनलोड व अपलोड किया जा सकता है एवं प्राप्त ई-निविदाओं को उनके सम्मुख दर्शायी गयी तिथियों पर खोला जायेगा। निविदा में कोई भी संशोधन/ परिमार्जन/ परिवर्तन व अतिरिक्त सूचनाओं को वेबसाइट पर ही प्रकाशित किया जायेगा।

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एक सुन्दर शहर..... हमारा संकल्प

Tripura DGP: BSF, cops on alert to check Rohingya infiltration

PTI ■ AGARTALA

The BSF and the State police have increased vigilance along India-Bangladesh border to check infiltration of Rohingya Muslims, Director General of Police (DGP) Akhil Kumar Shukla said on Wednesday, two days after 30 refugees were apprehended at Churaibari in Assam.

The immigrants, including 12 children, were on their way to Guwahati from Agartala in a bus Monday, when the Assam Police held them at Churaibari in Assam's Karimganj district, about 200 km from here.

They were sent to jail by a district court Tuesday. Last week, 31 Rohingyas were holed up behind the barbed wire fencing along the Bangladesh boundary in Tripura, as the border guards of both sides

debated over their status.

"The Border Security Force (BSF) and the state police have been put on alert to ensure that no new Rohingya Muslims enter into our territory through the India-Bangla international border," Shukla said.

Tripura shares 856-km-long border with Bangladesh. C.L Belwa, the deputy inspector general of BSF (Tripura Frontier), said Rohingyas make their way to India through different routes in the east and then move to other parts of the country for job and livelihood.

The refugees, who were apprehended at Churaibari on Tuesday, had actually entered India through Assam, he said.

"They had come to Tripura to work in brick kilns, but their livelihood issues were not solved here so they were returning to Assam again,"

Belwa said.

The 31 Rohingya Muslims, who were holed up in no-man's land since January 18, have been handed over to Tripura Police by the BSF after talks with Border Guards Bangladesh (BGB) failed.

They underwent a medical check-up and were later produced before a court in West Tripura district which sent them to 14-day judicial custody Tuesday.

More than 700,000 Rohingya Muslims fled Myanmar's Rakhine state to neighbouring Bangladesh since August 2017 after a military crackdown, triggering a massive refugee crisis.

In October 2017, the Ministry of Home Affairs had urged all states to take immediate steps to identify and monitor Rohingya immigrants.

PUBLIC NOTICE

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Notice under Securitisation and Re-construction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002

This notice is being issued in relation to the enforcement of security in respect of a housing loan facility granted pursuant to a loan agreement entered into between ICICI Bank Limited ("Secured Creditor, which term includes its successors and assigns) and the borrower and co-borrower mentioned below.

A notice is hereby given by the Authorised Officer of the Secured Creditor ("Authorised Officer") that the following borrowers has defaulted the repayment of principal and payment of interest of housing loans obtained by them from the Secured Creditor and the loans have now been classified as Non Performing Assets. Notice dated have been issued to them under Section 13 (2) of Securitisation and Re-construction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 on their last known addresses as provided to the Secured Creditor by them, That in addition thereto for the purposes of information of the said borrowers enumerated below, the said borrowers are being informed by way of this public notice

Sr. No.	Name of the Borrower/ Co-Borrower/ Guarantor (Loan Account Number) & Address	Property Address of Secured Asset/ Asset To Be Enforced	Date of Notice Sent/ Outstanding as on Date of Notice	NPA Date
1.	Ashok Kumar, Suman Lata, K-19 B, Patel Nagar, Sec-7 Ghaziabad Uttar Pradesh A/c No LBDEL0001306381	172, HIG, Abhay Khand-1, Indrapuram, Ghaziabad	06-Dec-2018, Rs.495379.47/-	08/09/2018

The above borrowers and/or their guarantors (where ever applicable) are advised to make the payments of all outstanding within period of 60 days from the date of issuance of notice U/s. 13 (2) failing which further steps will be taken after the expiry of 60 days from the date of issuance of notice U/s. 13 (2) dated mentioned above as per the provisions of Securitisation and Re-construction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002

Date : 24-01-2019
Place : Delhi/ Ncr

Sd/-
Authorized Officer
Secured Creditor

Office Project Manager, Construction Unit
Uttarakhand Peyjal Sansadhan Vikas Evam Nirman Nigam
Lohaghat (Champawat)
E-mail- pmofficechampawat@gmail.com Ph./ Fax No.-05965-234152

Letter No. 106 / NIVIDA QUOTATION/ 04 Date: 23-01-2019

E - TENDER NOTICE

The Project Manager, Construction Unit, Uttarakhand Peyjal Nigam, P.G. College Road, Lohaghat (Champawat) 262524, on behalf of Chairman Uttarakhand Peyjal Nigam invites item rate tender on e-Government procurement System (e-GPS) portal i.e.- <http://www.uktenders.gov.in> for following works:-

Sl. No	Name of Work	Estimated Cost of work	Earnest Money	Cost of tender document	Tender / Rates validity period	Work Completion period	Contractors' Registration
1	CONSTRUCTION OF TRANSIT HOSTEL FOR 12 MEDICAL OFFICER'S AT DISTRICT HOSPITAL CHAMPAWAT DISTT. CHAMPAWAT	₹ 210.00 Lacs	Rs 4.20 Lacs	Rs 2000/- + GST @18% (Rs 360) Total = Rs 2360/-	4 month	12 month	"A" Class (Building works)
2	CONSTRUCTION OF TRANSIT HOSTEL FOR 08 MEDICAL OFFICER'S AT C.H.C.PATI DISTT. CHAMPAWAT	₹ 170.00 Lacs	Rs 3.40 Lacs	Rs 1000/- + GST @18% (Rs 180) Total = Rs 1180/-	4 month	12 month	"A" Class (Building works)

The Tender form and other details can be downloaded from above portal from **28.01.2019** at **17:00 hrs to 12.02.2019** at **17:00 hrs** Other details / information can be seen in tender form/ E-portal or obtained from office / phone no. 05965-234152 of Office of tender inviting authority.

(Sanjeev Verma)
Project Manager.

DELHI JAL BOARD: GOVT. OF NCT OF DELHI
EXECUTIVE ENGINEER (NORTH EAST)-I
2142 JANTA FLATS G.T.B. ENCLAVE DELHI-110093
PRESS NIT No-71 (2018-19)

S.N No.	Name of Work	Amount put to tender	Date of release of tender in E-procurement Solution	Last date /time of receipt of tender through e-procurement Solution
1.	Boring & installation of 03 nos Tubewells at Horticulture nursery G.T.B enclave JE Store C-Block Dilshad Garden & Leprosy Complex Tahirpur AC-63 NE-1	33,78,784.00	19-01-2019 2019_DJB_166278_1	04-02-2019 2:10 PM
2.	Boring & installation of 03 nos Tubewells at Gali No. 05 Mandoli Extension & Bhagirathi UGR/BPS in AC-68 NE-1	34,06,842.00	19-01-2019 2019_DJB_166278_2	04-02-2019 2:10 PM

Further details in this regards can be seen at <https://delhi.govtprocurement.com>

ISSUED BY P.R.O (WATER) **Sd/-**
Advt. No. J.S.V. 708/2018-19 **EX. ENGINEER (NORTH EAST)-I**

HORTICULTURE DEPARTMENT
NEW DELHI MUNICIPAL COUNCIL
 Palika Kendra, NEW DELHI-110001

e-Procurement Tender Notice

Tender ID No. 2019_NDMC_166476_1
 Name of work:- M/o Parks and Garden 2018-19
 Sub Head: Supply of Perimeter Fencing, Eucalyptus Pole, G. I. wire at IInd avenue Road Lodhi Colony.
 Estimated Cost: Rs. 5,05,200/-
 Date of release of tender through e-procurement solution: 22.01.2019
 Last date/time for receipt of tenders through e-procurement solution : 06.02.2019 at 3:00 PM.

Further details can be seen at <https://govtprocurement.delhi.gov.in>
 Note:- To participate in e-tender in NDMC registration with e-tendering system, Government of NCT of Delhi is mandatory.

Sd/- Dy. Director(H)-VI

To be The Global Benchmark for a Capital City

US Senate to vote on opposing bids to end shutdown

WASHINGTON ■ AFP

US Senate leaders have agreed to vote on Thursday on competing proposals to end a government shutdown now in its second month, but the chances are slim that either will reopen federal agencies.

Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell and top Democrat Chuck Schumer announced an agreement on the Senate floor Tuesday for a pair of test votes. The first would be a procedural step on a measure that funds all shuttered branches of government through September, and includes President Donald Trump's demand for border wall funding and his proposal on immigration policy.

A second vote would be on a stop-gap measure that funds government until February 8, to allow for debate over border security and immigration, while also letting Trump's upcoming State of the Union address before Congress proceed.

It also would include disaster relief money already passed in the House. Each proposal would require 60 votes to advance in the 100-member body, a high threshold, given the current level of partisan rancor over who is to blame for the shutdown.

A senior Republican Senate aide told AFP it was unlikely Republicans would sign on to the short-term funding bill, and that even if they did, the president would not sign it. But the Democratic leader took to the floor to say the votes "could break us out of the morass we are in," and he specifically encouraged Republicans to sign on to the stop-gap bill to briefly open government. "It will allow us to then debate, without hostage-taking, without temper tantrum... How we can best do border security," he said.

On Monday, FBI agents complained that the month-old US government shutdown is preventing them from paying informants, buying drugs undercover in narcotics busts, and even renewing their own security clearances. Investigations and prosecutions are suffering from the lack of money to travel to interview witnesses or funds to pay translators, agents are saying, according to Tom O'Connor, president of the FBI Agents Association (FBIAA). The shutdown began on December 22 after President Donald Trump rejected a proposed government funding bill that did not meet his demand for billions of dollars to build a wall on the US-Mexico border.

Last ISIS-held village in Syria falls

BEIRUT ■ AFP

Kurdish-led fighters overran the last village held by the Islamic State group in Syria on Wednesday, confining its once vast cross-border "caliphate" to two small hamlets, a war monitor said.

It is the culmination of a broad offensive launched by the Syrian Democratic Forces last September with US-led coalition support in which they have reduced the jihadists' last enclave on the north bank of the Euphrates valley near the Iraqi border to a tiny rump.

The capture of the village of Baghouz leaves the few remaining diehard IS fighters holed up in scattered homesteads among the irrigated fields and orchards on the

north bank of the Euphrates Valley. "Search operations are continuing in Baghouz to find any IS fighters who are still hiding," the head of the Britain-based Syrian Observatory for Human Rights, Rami Abdel Rahman told AFP.

"The SDF will now have to push on into the farmland around Baghouz." "Around 4,900 people, mostly women and children but including 470 IS fighters, have fled the jihadists' fast dwindling enclave since Monday, Abdel Rahman said late on Tuesday.

Of those 3,500 surrendered to the advancing SDF on Tuesday alone. They were evacuated on dozens of trucks chartered by the SDF. The fall of Baghouz follows the SDF's capture of the enclave's sole

town of Hajin and the villages of Al-Shaafa and Sousa in recent weeks.

The new wave of departures means that nearly 27,000 people have left former IS areas since early December, including almost 1,800 jihadists who have surrendered, the Observatory said. The whereabouts of the ultra-elusive IS supreme Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi, who has made just one public appearance - in Iraq's then IS-held second city Mosul in 2014 - are unknown.

It is a far cry from the jihadists' peak in 2014, when they overran large parts of Syria and neighbouring Iraq and Baghdad proclaimed a "caliphate" in areas under their control. The gains have come at the cost of heavy losses for the mainly Kurdish fighters of the SDF and

despite their sense of betrayal by their US ally after President Donald Trump made the surprise announcement last month that Washington would withdraw all its troops.

Neighbouring Turkey has threatened repeatedly to launch a cross-border operation to crush the Kurdish fighters of the SDF and the autonomous region they have set up in areas of northern and northeastern Syria under their control.

Turkish troops had been held at bay by the intervention of US troops who set up observation posts along the border and mounted joint patrols with Kurdish fighters.

But with those troops gone, the Kurds fear they will be exposed to the full might of the Turkish military.

Afghan CEO urges patience amid talk of US troops withdrawal

DAVOS ■ AP

Afghanistan's chief executive is urging the world not to give up on his impoverished country after the Trump administration suggested the United States could withdraw troops.

Afghanistan has struggled with corruption, political instability and a long Taliban insurgency, frustrating efforts to stabilize it. US President Donald Trump's administration last month indicated it could pull out half of the 14,000 U.S. Troops stationed in Afghanistan.

"Don't lose patience," Abdullah Abdullah told The Associated Press in an interview at the World Economic Forum in Davos, Switzerland. "We all made mistakes in the past 18 years" - since U.S. Forces overthrew a Taliban regime in the aftermath of the September 11, 2001 attacks only to see the fundamentalist Islamic militia regroup in the years afterwar.

Abdullah said the situation on the troops withdrawal was unclear: U.S. Officials in Afghanistan have said "there isn't any instruction" to pull out troops.

Interim bail of Zardari extended till Feb 14

KARACHI ■ PTI

A banking court in Pakistan on Wednesday extended till February 14 the interim bail of former president Asif Ali Zardari, his sister Faryal Talpur and nine other suspects in a money laundering case.

The former president and his sister along with other suspects appeared before the court as the interim bail granted to them ended Wednesday, Geo TV reported.

China detains students, labour activists

BEIJING ■ AFP

Chinese authorities have detained a dozen labour activists over recent days in the latest clampdown on efforts to organise workplaces in China, rights groups said. Beijing has taken an uncompromising line against efforts to establish independent labour unions in southern Guangdong province, the epicentre of China's high-tech manufacturing sector.

The campaign is backed by campus Marxist groups at some of

China's most prestigious universities - several leaders of which have been arrested or disappeared in recent months.

Another seven students and recent graduates from two elite Beijing universities were arrested on Monday, according to labour rights organisation Jasic Workers Solidarity.

The students were rounded up hours after publishing a statement accusing police of recording forced video confessions of previously detained student activists who had

supported the Guangdong union campaign, the rights group said.

They had accused police of organising recent screenings of the videos, in which their subjects confessed to using worker issues to "subvert the state", on several campuses in an effort to deter further student activism. The viewings targeted students who were members of Jasic Workers Solidarity - a group which rose to prominence last year when it attempted to form a workers' union at a welding machinery company in Guangdong.

City of London Policy chief to reassure India over Brexit

LONDON ■ PTI

The Policy Chair of the City of London Corporation is set for her first visit to India next week to strengthen ties between the British capital and India in the field of financial and professional services.

Catherine McGuinness, who is the political chief of London's financial district or "Square Mile", will also seek to reassure Indian financial firms worried about Brexit and the risks of the UK leaving the European Union (EU) in a feared no-deal situation as the March 29 Brexit deadline nears.

"My first visit to India comes at an interesting point in time for both our countries. In the UK our focus remains firmly on Brexit, while in India the conversation is all about the pending budget and elections," McGuinness said on the eve of her visit, planned between January 27 and 30.

"But while these political issues may dominate headlines for good reason right now, it's crucial we don't lose sight of the larger picture and the importance of the strong relationship between our two countries," she said.

The City of London Corporation's policy chief pointed out that while trade stands at an "impressive" 18.8

billion pounds, there is still enormous potential to expand this relationship even further.

She is set to travel to Delhi and Mumbai for meetings with senior government and industry leaders to discuss how to boost relations and knowledge sharing in areas like fintech, green finance, re-insurance and non-performing assets.

Some of the pre-scheduled meetings on her agenda include interactions with the Insolvency and Bankruptcy Board of India (IBBI), Confederation of Indian Industry (CII), representatives of the Maharashtra state government, and Alice Vaidyan, Chairman of GIC Re.

In Mumbai, she will also meet Surendra Roshia, CEO of HSBC India, who recently joined the City of London Corporation's influential India Advisory Council.

High Commissioner to the UK, Ruchi Ghanashyam, described the City of London Corporation as an important partner of the Indian mission in London, working to boost economic and commercial activities between India and the UK particularly in the fields of financial services and fintech.

"This visit will foster greater understanding of the City of London in India as well as deepen the already close and strong trade and economic

relationship," she said.

A new report on regulatory technology (regtech) is also set to be launched during the upcoming tour of India. "The publication is the third and final document in a fintech-related series produced by the City Corporation alongside PwC India, and outlines UK regtech expertise, the market opportunity in India and a recommendation on how to improve collaboration in the sector," the City of London Corporation said.

The Corporation says it has run a representative office in Mumbai since 2007 to enable long-term relationship building with financial sector stakeholders across India. Around 10-15 Indian financial firms are based in the Square Mile, which the City Corporation works closely with.

Sanjiv Chadha, Regional Head of State Bank of India (SBI)-UK, said, "SBI is delighted that Policy Chair Catherine McGuinness will make her inaugural visit to India."

"The Bank is pleased to work with the City of London Corporation in further developing relationships in the financial and professional services space. It is a relationship that continues to provide unique and important opportunities for growth in both the Asian and UK markets," he added.

Scotland Yard chief warns of Brexit-related terror threat

LONDON ■ PTI

Scotland Yard's counter-terrorism chief, Assistant Commissioner Neil Basu, has warned that the "ferible" atmosphere around Brexit could be enhancing the risk posed by far-right terrorism in the UK. The UK is due to leave the 28-member European Union (EU) on March 29. However, the government of Prime Minister Theresa May is facing massive resistance from her own Conservative Party MPs as well as the opposition Labour Party over her Brexit deal.

"We saw a spike in hate crime after the referendum (in June 2016), that's never really receded. So there's always a possibility people are being radicalised by the kind of ferible atmosphere we've got at the moment," Basu told BBC on Tuesday at the launch of a new film aimed at encouraging people to report their suspicions about all forms of terrorism.

"We want people to report anything that we think is going to lead to violent confrontation and people need to calm down," said the Indian-origin Metropolitan Police Lead for Counter-Terrorism and the Head of its Specialist Operations.

Buttigieg enters 2020 US race, would be first openly gay nominee

WASHINGTON ■ AFP

He is a longshot candidate, but South Bend Mayor Pete Buttigieg said Wednesday he is jumping into the burgeoning 2020 Democratic field challenging Donald Trump, aiming to become the first openly gay presidential nominee. Should he win, the 37-year-old wunderkind, a US Navy reservist who took leave from his mayoral duties to serve in Afghanistan, would also be America's youngest-ever commander in chief.

Buttigieg announced that he has formed a presidential exploratory committee, a key opening step to formally launching a bid. He joins a growing list of charismatic Democrats seeking to carry the party's torch into 2020, including three female US senators - Elizabeth Warren, Kamala Harris and Kirsten Gillibrand - and Hispanic-American former Obama cabinet member Julian Castro. In a nearly-two-minute video posted online, Buttigieg portrayed himself as a can-do reformer - he has earned high praise for reviving his mid-sized Indiana city - from America's millennial gen-

eration eyeing the future, not the past. "Right now our country needs a fresh start," he says in the clip. "There's no such thing as again in the real world. We can't look for greatness in the past."

In his opening video he makes no mention of Trump, instead taking aim at what he called the "show" in Washington: "The corruption, the fighting, the lying, the crisis. It's got to end." And he highlights his credibility as being part of a new forward-focused generation facing immense challenges. "We're the generation that lived through school shootings, that served in the wars after 9/11. And we're the generation that stands to be the first to make less than our parents - unless we do something different," he said.

Buttigieg was in the early primary state of Iowa last year, testing out a campaign message and attempting to build name recognition. He is up against a strong Democrat field of contenders, which will broaden in the coming months to include the likes of former vice president Joe Biden, Senator Cory Booker and former congressman Beto O'Rourke.

Russia presents info on missile US says violates pact

MOSCOW ■ AP

The Russian military on Wednesday rolled out its new missile and spelled out its specifications, seeking to dispel the U.S. claim that the weapon violates a key nuclear arms pact.

The military insisted that the 9M729 land-based cruise missile conforms to the limits

of the 1987 Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces Treaty.

The U.S. Has announced its intention to abandon the INF, charging that the new Russian missile violates provisions of the pact that ban production, testing and deployment of land-based cruise and ballistic missiles with a range of 500 to 5,500 kilometres.

Washington said it will suspend its treaty obligations if Russian does not come into compliance by February 2.

Lt. Gen. Mikhail Matveevsky, the chief of the military's missile and artillery forces, said at a meeting with foreign military attaches that the new missile has a maximum range of 480 kilometres. He said the 9M729 missile

differs from the previous 9M728 model by having a modified warhead and guidance system that enhances its capability.

The military then displayed the weapon along with its mobile launcher during a presentation at its exhibition center near Moscow.

Matveevsky insisted that the new missile's booster,

cruising engine and fuel tank remain unchanged.

He added that the new missile actually has a range 10 kilometres less than the older type due to heavier warhead and control systems. Matveevsky emphasised that the new missile can't be modified in field conditions.

The Russian general said that the modified mobile

launcher for the new type of missile is bigger because it carries four of them rather than the previous two.

Matveevsky added that the military gave the presentation to underline its "increased transparency and our adherence to the INF Treaty." Kremlin has staunchly denied the U.S. Claim of Russian violations of the pact.

NORTHERN RAILWAY
Open E-Tender Notice

The Senior Divisional Mechanical Engineer/CSW, Northern Railway, Delhi Division for and on behalf of President of India invites e-tender on "TWO PACKET SYSTEM" for following work from experienced and capable tenders. 1. Name of work : Linen washing for trains at Delhi & Meerut City 2. Work Place : Delhi and Meerut. City 3. Period of work : Three years 4. Approximate value of E-Tender : Rs. 11,88,56,884/- (Including the provision of GST & ECC) 5. Approximate value of E-Tender : Rs. 9,80,93,330.25/- (excluding the provision of GST & ECC) 6. The earnest money in the form of Net Banking Ref. No. _____ dated _____ is attached. I/We have clearly noted that the earnest money in the form of Bank Guarantee bond is not acceptable : Rs. 7,44,300/- 7. The Tender fee in the form of Net Banking Ref. No. _____ dated _____ is attached. I/We have clearly noted that the earnest money in the form of Bank Guarantee bond is not acceptable : Rs. 11,800/- (including GST @ 18%) 8. Date and time of availability of e-tender documents : From 22.01.2019 to 15.02.2019, upto 11:00 hrs. (on the website of IREPS Portal) 9. Closing Date and time of e-tender : 15.02.2019 at 11:00 hrs. 10. Opening Date and time of e-tender: After 15.02.2019 at 11:00 hrs. If the date of opening happens to be a holiday the e-tender shall be opened on the next working day. Note: In case of e-tender documents, cost of e-tender documents & EMD shall have to be deposited separately through net banking, failing which the offer shall be liable to summarily rejected. Technical and Financial eligibility will be adjudged as per the advertised value of tender which includes GST & ECC and has been defined on top sheet at page 3 of 4 of tender document. No. 116-S-LW-DLI-18-MC-IV Date: 21.01.2019 469/2019

Serving Customers With A Smile

PROCLAMATION REQUIRING THE APPEARANCE OF A PERSON ACCUSED

(See Section 82 Cr. PC)

Whereas complaint has been made before me that accused person namely **Kamal Kaushik S/o Ram Darshan Kaushik R/o B-953, Sector-1, Rohini, New Delhi** has committed (or is suspected to have committed) the offence in case **FIR No. 668/2015 u/s 419/420/468/471/120-B/34 IPC dated 05.10.2015, PS Paschim Vihar West, Delhi** and it has been returned to a warrant of arrest thereupon issued that the said accused **Kamal Kaushik** could not be found and whereas it has been shown to my satisfaction that the said accused **Kamal Kaushik** has absconded (or is concealing himself to avoid the service of the said warrant). Proclamation is hereby made that the said accused person **Kamal Kaushik of FIR No. 668/2015 u/s 419/420/468/471/120-B/34 IPC dated 05.10.2015, PS Paschim Vihar West, Delhi** is required to appear in the court to answer the said complaint on **27.02.2019**.

By order
Sh. Vishal Pahuja
Metropolitan Magistrate (West-04)
Room No. 271, 2nd Floor
Tis Hazari Courts, Delhi

DP/1791/OD/19

SEARCH FOR MISSING

General public is hereby informed that this girl (depicted in the photo) namely: **Shalu D/o Rameshwar Dayal, R/o A-936, Mangol Puri, Delhi** has been missing/kidnapped from the area of PS Mangolpuri, since **22.12.2018**. In this regard DD No. **61-A dated 24.12.2018** has been registered at **PS Mangolpuri, Delhi**. Sincere efforts have been made by local police to trace out the girl but no clue has come to light so far. Her physical description is as under:-
Sex: Female, Age: 20 years, Height: 5'2" ft., Complexion: Fair, Face: Round, Wearing: Red Suit-Salwar and chappie in feet.
Any person is having information or clue about this missing/kidnapped girl may kindly inform to the following:-

SHO
P.S. Mangolpuri, Delhi
E-mail: cic@cbi.gov.in Ph. No.-011-27921168, 27922186
Tel. No.: 011-24368638/24368641 Mob. No. - 7065036121
Fax No.: 011-24368639 DP/1760/OD/19

NOTICE

Notice is hereby given that following sub-brokers are no longer affiliated as sub-brokers of M/s. O.J. Financial Services Ltd (SEBI Reg. No. INB 230772831) as a member with National Stock Exchange of India Ltd. having their Regd. office at 901, Mercantile House, K G Marg, New Delhi-110001 on having received applications from our following sub-brokers for cancellation of their registration whose details are as under:-

Sub Broker Name	Trade Name	SEBI Registration No.	Registration Date	Regd. Address
Deepak Singhal	Deepak Singhal	INS233944912/2307728	11-Jun-07	249 Bharat Apartment, Sector-13, Rohini, Delhi-110085
Hanumanta Sales P. Ltd.	Hanumanta Sales P. Ltd.	INS236613639/2307728	7-Jan-09	2168, Main Gate Subzi Mandi, Shora Kothi, Sabzi Mandi, New Delhi-110007
Manoj Kumar Maheshwari	Manoj Maheshwari	INS234041015/2307728	9-Jul-07	158-C, Pocket-F GTB Enclave, Delhi-110093
Naveen Gupta	Naveen Gupta & Co.	INS231074217/2307728	29-May-01	Flat No. 107, US Palace, 320, Delhi Nale Bazar, Asaf Ali Road, New Delhi-110002
QRG Enterprises Ltd.	QRG Enterprises Ltd.	INS23A600736/2307728	27-Jul-17	D-2 Sector-126, Noice-201304

People are advised not to deal with them under our affiliation. Any person heretofore dealing with the above-mentioned sub-brokers should do so at their own risk. Any client or person having any claim against the sub-brokers arising out of their transaction in securities may furnish the details of their claim in writing to Compliance within 6 months of the publication of this Notice.
By order of Board of Directors of M/s. O.J. Financial Services Ltd. (Member NSE)

ASSET RECOVERY MANAGEMENT BRANCH
16-B/6, Desh Bandhu Gupta Road, Dev Nagar, Delhi-110005

POSSESSION NOTICE (for immovable properties)

Notice is hereby given under the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act 2002 (54 of 2002) and in exercise of powers conferred under section 13(2) read with rule 9 of the Security interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002 issued a demand notice on the date mentioned below in the table and stated hereinafter calling upon them to repay the amount within 60 days from the date of receipt of said notice.

The borrower and guarantors having failed to repay the amount, notice is hereby given to the borrower and guarantors 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 Act on the date mentioned below in the table.

The borrower and guarantors 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 Syndicate Bank for the amount and interest thereon.

Name of Borrower and Guarantors	Name of Borrower and Guarantors	Date of Demand Notice	Date of Possession	Amount O/s
Borrower M/s Shri Balaji Jewellers	Owner of the property : Sh. Anil Kumar S/o Sh. Vishnu Kumar	30.06.2017	19.01.2019	Rs.15,51,26,37,77.77 as on 29.06.2017 plus further interest, expenses and other charges etc. thereon.
Guarantors 1.Sh. Anil Kumar Verma 2.Smt. Laxmi Verma 3.Smt. Rekha Verma 4.Sh. Vishnu Kumar Verma	All that part and parcel of the FREE HOLD Property bearing Shop No. 2, Plot No. 32, Main Road, Kavita Colony, Nangloi, Delhi-110041.			

Date: 19.01.2019
Place: Delhi (Authorized Officer) Syndicate Bank

UTTARAKHAND POWER CORPORATION LIMITED
(A Govt. of Uttarakhand Undertaking) CIN : U40109UP2010SC0258672358
V.C.V. Gabar Singh Urja Bhawan, Kanwali Road, Dehradun - 248001 Tel.: 0135-2763672-76 Fax : 0135-2760289 Website : www.uktenders.gov.in

E-TENDER NOTICE (NIT)

Uttarakhand Power Corporation Ltd, Dehradun invites e-tender for following as detailed below:-

Sl. No.	Name of Item	Tender Specification No.	Estimated Cost (in ₹)	Average yearly Turn Over of preceding Three Financial Years i.e. 2015-2016 & 2016-2017 & 2017-2018 (in ₹)	Earnest Money (in ₹)	Cost of tender document including GST (in ₹)	Last Date & time of online request for Tender and Submission of tender in online & Offline mode	Date of opening of bid Part-I in online and offline mode
1.	Internal Audit of 10 Nos. Electricity Distribution Divisions of UPCL for the Financial Year 2019-2020 & 2020-2021	CCP-J/53/2018-2019	34,68,893.20	50.00 Lac	1.50 Lac	2,360.00	21/02/2019 upto 17:00 hrs.	22/02/2019 at 15:30 hrs.

For further details, please visit the website www.uktenders.gov.in

No. 47/EE(CM)/UPCL-A/2/DI. 22/01/2019

SUPERINTENDING ENGINEER CORPORATE (C&P-I)

"SAVE ELECTRICITY IN THE INTEREST OF THE NATION" Use L.E.D. Bulb to save Electricity.
(Toll-Free No. 1912) "Pay Electricity bill online 24x7 from www.upcl.org".
(For information on Electricity theft, informer may report to Toll free No. 1800 180 4185 / Fax No. 0135-2760911)

WESTERN RAILWAY

CORRIGENDUM

To E-Tender Notice No.: **W628031818** dated **04/01/2019**. This tender has been cancelled.

Follow us on: twitter.com/WesternRly

PUBLIC NOTICE

My clients Joginder Kumar Jaggi and his wife Vinita Jaggi R/o 169A, Pocket J&K, Dilshad Garden Delhi-110095 have severed their all relation with their son Aman Jaggi from their moveable-immovable properties and ceased all relations, due to his misconduct & misbehaviour. My clients Shall not be responsible for any acts committed by him in future.

Mohit (Advocate)
Ch. No. G-414, IIIrd Floor, Karkardooma Court, Delhi

Pliskova slays Serena's title bid

Karolina saves four match points to upset Williams in quarterfinal clash; Djoker marches past injured Nishikori

AFP ■ MELBOURNE

Serena Williams's bid for a record-equalling 24th Grand Slam title was brought to a halt in sensational style at the Australian Open on Wednesday by Karolina Pliskova, but fellow former champion Novak Djokovic cruised into the semi-finals.

The American great had beaten world number one Simona Halep in the fourth round but folded against the tall Czech seventh seed, who saved four match points before winning 6-4, 4-6, 7-5 under the hot Melbourne sun.

Her reward is a clash against Japan's Naomi Osaka for a place in the final, after the Japanese fourth seed brutally swatted aside the injured Elina Svitolina 6-4, 6-1.

World number one Djokovic enjoyed an early night when courageous Kei Nishikori retired with a thigh strain when losing 6-1, 4-1 after going through three five-set epics during the tournament.

It kept the Serb's bid for a record seventh Australian title on track and he will now meet French 28th seed Lucas Pouille, who beat power-serving Canadian Milos Raonic 7-6 (7/4), 6-3, 6-7 (2/7), 6-4 to make his first Slam semi.

It was a gut-wrenching defeat for Williams, who battled back from a set down and was leading 5-1 in the third and serving for the match, only to throw it away with some wild shots as frustrations bubbled to the surface.

"There's nothing I did wrong on those match points. I stayed aggressive. She just literally hit the lines on some of them," said the dumbfounded 37-year-old, who rolled an ankle but refused to blame it for the defeat.

Since returning last year from giving birth, Williams has made four unsuccessful attempts to match Margaret Court's long-time standing 24 Grand Slam titles, and the wait continues with the French Open in May her next chance.

"The big picture for me is always winning," she added. "I'm not going to sit here and lie about that. It hasn't happened yet, but I feel like it's going to happen."

For Pliskova, it is only her third semi-final at a major.

She made the last four at Roland Garros in 2017 and the US Open a year earlier, where she beat Williams before losing the final to Angelique Kerber.

"I was almost in the locker-room but now I am standing here as a winner. It is



Australian Open Semis
Live from 5:30am IST
SONY TEN 2 NETWORK



a very good feeling," she said after depriving Williams of a US Open final rematch with Osaka.

CALM OSAKA

Asked about facing Osaka next, Pliskova replied: "She's dangerous but nobody is more dangerous than Serena."

A focused Osaka rolled past Ukraine's Svitolina, who was troubled by neck and shoulder problems.

Despite the Ukrainian suffering, it was nevertheless a serious statement from the steely-eyed Osaka, who was playing the sort of tennis which drove her to the US Open title.



HALEP'S REIGN AS NUMBER ONE OVER

AFP ■ MELBOURNE

Petra Kvitova's surging win over Ashleigh Barty to make the Australian Open semi-finals ensured Simona Halep's reign as world number one is over, not that the Romanian is bothered.

The Czech star overtook Halep's points total, while Naomi Osaka and Karolina Pliskova also have a mathematical shot at assuming the mantle when the new rankings come out next week.

Entering the opening Grand Slam of the year, 11 players had a chance to hold the top spot, but that has now been whittled down.

Of the three in the running, only Pliskova has been there before, in 2017 when she became the first Czech woman to do so.

To do so again she must win the title on Saturday.

"I tried to be consistent, it's unfortunate that she got injured but playing against her even when she was injured was still really tough," said the 21-year-old.

"I just had one goal, to try as hard I can and not get angry. I didn't do that really well in the last two rounds and I did that



today so I'm really happy with the way I played."

Djokovic, who is targeting a 15th Grand Slam title, endured his own tough fourth round showdown with Daniil Medvedev and said he was glad to get off court early.

"As they say, this is exactly what the doctor ordered for me after the match two nights ago," he said. "Not to spend too much time on the court."

"I've had plenty of matches so far this year and I am in another semi-final and I will do everything to get ready for that one."

Pouille had never won a match in Melbourne before this year but has recruited 2006 Australian Open champion Amelie Mauresmo to his team and said it was paying off.

Winning start for Saina & Sindhu

PTI ■ JAKARTA

The Indian trio of P V Sindhu, Saina Nehwal and Kidambi Srikanth dished out superb performances on the opening day to advance to the second round of the \$350,000 Indonesia Masters World Tour Super 500 badminton tournament here on Wednesday.

Olympic and World Championship Silver medallist Sindhu opened the new season with a fighting 22-24, 21-8, 21-17 win over 2012 London Games champion Li Xuerui of China in a 54-minute women's singles match.

The second seeded Indian will now be pitted against Indonesia's Gregoria Mariska Tunjung.

Eighth seeded Saina, who had reached the semifinals at the Malaysia Masters last week, recovered from a first-game loss to secure a 7-21, 21-16, 21-11 win over local hope Dinar Dyah Ayustine, ranked 50th, in another women's singles match. It was Saina's third win over Ayustine.



Saina Nehwal returns a shot during her first round clash

Saina Nehwal/Twitter

The 28-year-old from Hyderabad will next face another Indonesian Fitriani Fitriani, against whom she has a 4-0 head-to-head record.

In men's singles, eighth seed Srikanth eased past Malaysia's Chong Wei Feng 21-12, 21-8 to set

up a showdown with Japan's Asian Games bronze medallist Kenta Nishimoto.

But compatriots B Sai Praneeeth and Subhankar Dey failed to cross the opening hurdle at the tournament.

2017 Singapore Open champion Praneeth was sent packing 12-21, 16-21 by Olympic champion Chen Long of China in 40 minutes, while Subhankar, who had won his maiden title at SaarLorLux Open in Germany last year, fought hard before going down 14-21, 21-19, 15-21 against former World champion Viktor Axelsen of Denmark.

Local hope Anthony Sinisuka Ginting, seeded seventh, proved a difficult customer for Parupalli Kashyap once again as he claimed a 21-12, 21-16 win over the former Commonwealth Games champion.

In men's doubles, national champions Manu Attri and B Sumeeth Reddy dished out a fighting game to notch up a 14-21, 21-19, 21-15 win over Denmark's Mads Pieler Kolding and Niclas Nohr.

Commonwealth Games Bronze medallist pair of Ashwini Ponnappa and N Sikki Reddy also bowed out of the competition, losing 14-21, 14-21 to Thailand's Jongkolphan Kititharakul and Rawinda Prajongjai in the women's doubles opener.



Sanjita Chanu celebrates after winning Gold at Gold Coast CWG

IWF lifts ban on Sanjita

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The International Weightlifting Federation has revoked the provisional suspension on weightlifter K Sanjita Chanu for a failed dope test, a major reprieve for the two-time Commonwealth Games Gold-medallist who has claimed innocence.

In a case that has dragged on for almost a year and has been marred by an "administrative" goof-up in Sanjita's sample number, the IWF informed that a final decision on the matter is expected in the coming days.

"On the basis of the information at its disposal, the IWF has decided that the provisional suspension of the athlete (Khumukcham Sanjita) shall be lifted as of today (22 January 2019)," IWF's legal counsel Eva Nyirfa said in an e-mail sent to the national federation and Sanjita.

"The IWF Hearing Panel will render its decision on the athlete's case in due course," it added.

The 25-year-old Sanjita, who had won Gold in the women's 53kg category at the 2018 Commonwealth Games in Gold Coast, had tested positive for anabolic steroid testosterone. Her urine sample was taken prior to the World Championships in United States in November 2017, and she was put under provisional suspension from May 15 last year.

A final decision of the IWF panel is yet to come but Sanjita said her assertion of innocence has been vindicated.

"I have got a mail from the international federation and our national federation has also called me up this morning informing about the lifting of the (provisional) suspension. I am relieved and happy. I am innocent and I have never taken any banned substance in my career. I am vindicated now," she said.

"At the same time, I experienced mental trauma during these past 8-9 months (since May 15 last year) due to the mistake of the international federation. I hope nothing like this happens to any athlete in future. An athlete's reputation is very precious," she added.

Sanjita said the Indian Weightlifting Federation had asked her to join the national camp immediately if she wants.

"The federation official told me today to write if I want to join national camp. I am doing that. I missed the Asian Games and World Championships in 2018. I want to compete in the World Championships this year and qualify for 2020 Olympics. For any athlete, Olympics is the ultimate," she said.

India could have done better in Asian Cup: Jeje

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Indian football team striker Jeje Lalpekhlua on Wednesday rued the country's crashing out of the ongoing Asian Cup and said it could have done better in the continental showpiece event.

The Indian team was on the verge of booking a maiden knock-out round berth but conceded goal via penalty at the far end of the group match against Bahrain. India needed a draw to reach the Round of 16 but lost 0-1 to Bahrain to exit from the tournament.

"We gave our 100 per cent in every match. But we could have done better. Not qualifying out of the group stages is a setback for us. But it shows anything can happen in football," Lalpekhlua said.

"It was a very difficult match against Bahrain and it was unfortunate the way we lost. However, that is life in football, and the important part is the experience earned by the young players that will give dividends in future," he was quoted as saying by the official website of All India Football Federation.

India outplayed Thailand 4-1 in the opening match to notch up its first win in the Asian Cup since 1964. Thailand eventually qualified for the Round of 16 where they lost to China.

"Our biggest achievement was the win against Thailand," said Lalpekhlua, who had scored India's fourth goal in that match.



But we have to make Asian Cup qualification a regular feature. Now we need to focus to do well in World Cup Qualifiers, followed by yet again qualifying for the Asian Cup (for 2023)," said the player from Mizoram.

"The sleeping giant is now awake. We have shown to all in Asia that we belong on the same page as them. Our performance in the Asian Cup has improved tenfold, and it can only get better from here as young players have been given the needed experience. Indian football can go only upwards from here towards a brighter future," Lalpekhlua said.

None better than Harendra as India coach: Sandeep

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Former captain Sandeep Singh on Wednesday slammed the frequent change of coaches in Indian hockey, asserting that there is none better for the job than the recently-removed Harendra Singh.

Harendra was sacked as India coach earlier this month following a disappointing 2018 and offered another stint with the junior squad. He became the sixth coach to be sacked in as many years.

"You can't be changing coaches this frequently. The crucial Olympic qualifier (FIH Series Finals in June) is ahead of us and we should not be experimenting too much. I don't think I have worked with a better coach than Harendra sir," Sandeep said at the launch of Flickers Brothers hockey academy, his joint venture with brother Bikramjeet.

"There are a few coaches (in India) who can coach at the highest level and Harendra paaji is one of them. He should have been given more time.

"Any new coach takes about six months to adjust to the system and



Sandeep Singh speaks during Flickers Brothers academy launch press conference

players also need time to understand his methods. Team doesn't have that kind of time (ahead Olympic qualifiers)," he said.

India have had a variety of foreign coaches and Harendra helming the national team was a rarity in recent times. But he could not even last 12 months after taking charge, following the team's medal-less

SINGLES

BALOTELLI COMPLETES MARSEILLE MOVE

PARIS: Marseille have completed the signing of Italy striker Mario Balotelli from their French rivals Nice, the Ligue 1 club confirmed on Wednesday. Balotelli, 28, has signed for the former European champions until the end of the season after being released from the remainder of his contract by Nice and passing a medical at the Velodrome earlier in the day. The impending arrival of the former AC Milan, Inter and Liverpool forward, who has scored 14 goals in 36 games for Italy. Marseille coach Rudi Garcia said this week that signing Balotelli was his "number one priority". OM are currently seventh in Ligue 1 and have struggled for goals after failing in an attempt to bring Balotelli to the club last summer. Their main strikers, Valere Germain and Kostas Mitroglou, have scored just three league goals each so far this season.

CHELSEA CLOSING ON HIGUAIN DEAL

LONDON: Chelsea are in final talks to sign Juventus striker Gonzalo Higuain, head coach Maurizio Sarri said on Wednesday as he looks to bolster his team's firepower. Sarri previously coached Higuain at Napoli when he scored a Serie A record 36 goals in a league campaign in 2015/16. That sort of goalscoring prowess is what Chelsea have been badly missing in recent months, with Sarri's lack of confidence in Alvaro Morata and Olivier Giroud forcing Eden Hazard into an unfamiliar centre-forward role. They're a few hours into signing a contract today," Sarri said. Chelsea play Tottenham in Thursday's League Cup semi-final second leg at Stamford Bridge, bidding to overturn a 1-0 deficit to reach the February 24 final.

DUSSEN LEADS SA TO SERIES-LEVELLING WIN

DURBAN: Hendrick 'Rassie' van der Dussen and Andile Phehlukwayo guided South Africa to a series-levelling win in a roller-coaster second one-day international against Pakistan at Kingsmead on Tuesday. The pair came together when South Africa were 80 for five in reply to Pakistan's 203. They put on an unbeaten 127 as South Africa won by five wickets with eight overs to spare. Van der Dussen, playing in his second one-day international, made an unbeaten 80 after scoring 93 on debut. Phehlukwayo was named man-of-the-match after two career-best performances. He took four for 22 in Pakistan's innings and then scored 69 not out. Earlier Hasan Ali, batting at number ten, hit a career-best 59 off 45 balls and helped captain Sarfraz Ahmed (41) put on 90 for the ninth wicket to enable Pakistan to reach 203.

SARFRAZ CAUGHT PASSING COMMENTS

DURBAN: Pakistan captain Sarfraz Ahmed could find himself in trouble after he was caught by stump mics of making what seemed to be racist comments against a South African player during their second one-dayer. According to reports, Sarfraz made these comments against Andile Phehlukwayo in the 37th over of South Africa's run chase on Tuesday. Phehlukwayo inside-edged a Shaheen Afridi delivery for a single. He was on 50 at the time and as he ran off to the non-striker's end, Sarfraz was caught on the stump mics passing some comments in Urdu. 'Abey kaale, teri ammi aaj kahaan baitheen hain? Kya parwa ke aaye hai aaj (Hey black guy, where's your mother sitting today? What have you got her to say for you today?)' Sarfraz was quoted as saying by 'ESPNews' website.

ANAND PLAYS DRAW WITH RAPPORT

WIJK AAN ZEE: Viswanathan Anand played out an easy draw as black with Richard Rapport of Hungary to stay in joint lead on six points after the end of the ninth round of Tata Steel Masters chess tournament. Tackling his first of the two back-to-back black games in a row with ease, Anand had a level position on board for the major part and is now in a three-way tie with four rounds still remaining in the first super tournament of the year. Ian Nepomniachtchi of Russia joined Anand and world champion Magnus Carlsen of Norway in the lead following a fine victory over Indian Grandmaster Vidit Gujrathi. Ding Liren of China played out a draw with tallender Vladimir Kramnik to be joint fourth along side Dutchman Anish Giri who was held to a draw by compatriot Jorden Van Foreest.

TIM HOWARD TO RETIRE AFTER 2019

NEW YORK: Former United States goalkeeper Tim Howard announced on Tuesday that he will retire from the sport after his 2019 Major League Soccer season with the Colorado Rapids. The 39-year-old former Manchester United and Everton stopper, a veteran of three World Cup campaigns, confirmed his decision to hang up his gloves in a statement on Twitter. "I'm greatly looking forward to kicking off the 2019 MLS season, as it will be my LAST," Howard wrote. "There will be plenty of time for sentiment later. For now, I am going to enjoy every minute. And as I've always done, compete hard and help lead the Rapids with the sole purpose of winning." Howard is the most capped goalkeeper in US national team history with 121 appearances. Agencies

vivacity

LIKE DOING CHALLENGING ROLES: NAWAZ —P14



Teach kids to make friends

In the current hustle and bustle era, it is highly important to release tensions to lead a decent life, however, it is not actually possible without friends. Being friends dramatically helps in getting rid of many unnecessary things, says **Team Viva**

Having good friends makes you happy. Friendships can be developed within families, in neighborhoods, in schools, and even over the internet. Being a good friend is not a skill that kids just pick up from hanging out with other children on the playground. Developing friendships takes a lot of work (both by parents and kids), but can be one of the most rewarding things to happen in a child's life. Teaching kids to be a good friend will help them make lasting friendships throughout their lives. Life skills like these are important to learn at an early age because it will become more natural for your child the more they practice these skills. For more kids activities that teach kids about being a good friend and other life skills, you may want to take a look at these ideas:

Not all kids feel comfortable in a big group and many will choose to have just one special friend. It can be hard for very social, extroverted parents to relax when their child doesn't seem to have many friends, but it may genuinely be what your child prefers. Kids are still learning how to monitor their emotions and handle situations appropriately. As such, there will be times that they don't get along or act very friendly. It can be tempting to step in with a solution when you see this happening. Instead of trying to solve their problems for them, you can teach kids about friendship if you teach them to think critically and resolve their own conflicts. Set a good example and be a good friend yourself. This is one of the greatest ways to teach kids about being a good friend. Talk to your kids about your friends in positive ways. Make time for your friends and find opportunities to help them, and bring your kids along so that they can be involved too. Think about the characteristics you value in good friends and consistently demonstrate them yourself. Spend time with friends and new people. It is hard to develop friendships if you aren't around people! We love to get out and get involved in our community. We go to parks, sign up for classes and sports activities, get outside and meet neighbors, volunteer at schools, and participate in church and town events. We also enjoy spending time together as a family because we want our kids to be friends. We work together on home projects, play games, create, and do acts of kindness for one another. Kids are always paying attention to the things we do and say whether we realize it or not. One easy way to teach kids about friendship, then, is to let them see you being a good friend. Modeling friendship will give them an example of how friends act and reinforce some of the things you teach them about friendship. Children of all ages enjoy spending time with their peers and socializing is an important part of their development. By providing structured and unstructured time for kids to socialize you can teach them about friendship. These opportunities will give them real-world experience in making friends and maintaining friendships. If you're a parent, then set up a play date



for your kids. Stay for a while to monitor how the kids interact and to meet the other parents. If you are a teacher or mentor then try to encourage positive interactions between peers by assigning group activities and giving the kids opportunities to learn and play with one another. Explain that no matter how old you are, it is natural to have negative emotions and selfish thoughts. However, in order for us to develop friendships, we need to take control of these thoughts and replace them with love and empathy. Start talking to your children at an early age about emotions and self-control, and show them how to practice taking control of your emotions by acting as a positive role model on a daily basis. Children very quickly develop reputations, so you want to step in as soon as you can and develop those appropriate social skills. You don't want your child to be known as the one who hits other children, or the one who doesn't share. You want to cut that off as soon as you can in Kindergarten and really work on that. Speed Chatting is a fun way to help kids



develop good conversation skills. Brainstorm some simple questions ahead of time, grab a friend, set a timer, and encourage your child to ask his friend questions for one minute while the friend listens and responds... then switch. Once they are done chatting, encourage the kids to tell you what they learned about each other.

Team building activities help develop friendships. Simple activities we like to do together include building obstacle courses, making forts, baking, and constructing blocks towers. All of these activities are pretty open ended, require some problem solving and negotiation, and encourage communication,

KIDS ARE ALWAYS PAYING ATTENTION TO THE THINGS WE DO AND SAY WHETHER WE REALISE IT OR NOT. ONE EASY WAY TO TEACH KIDS ABOUT FRIENDSHIP, THEN, IS TO LET THEM SEE YOU BEING A GOOD FRIEND

which are all great friendship skills to have! By having good friends, we will be easy to look for assistance. Problem comes without invitation, so nobody could avoid it. In such circumstance, friends could be

the best allies for you to solve the problem and assists you. With a strong solidarity and spirit, friends will help each other and bring a way out from the problems to whoever needs it. They are cohesive and cooperative in order to help each other inside their community. We could share each other what problems afflict us, what events make us happy or sad, what is our secret which is really bothering us, e.t.c. So, in this situation, friends take role as our vessel to distract all of emotional problem and relieve our brain's stress. This also could reduce numbers of desperate people committing in suicidal. Good friends will not lead us into a damaged situation. Although in some case, friends could make some jokes or fools which are embarrassing us, but in other side of their mischievous behavior, they are care to each other. They will give us advises to lead us into a better condition and encourage us if we are in a wrong way. That's why we should choose a well-personality people to be our friends.

BE CAREFUL DURING AILMENTS

BY ANJALI CHANDANI

The adage goes "To err is human", but when we know that a simple mistake can send a person to coma or even take a patient's life we cannot afford to make such a fallacy. These faults that occur during medical practice are commonly termed as the medication errors, which are unfortunately happening on a great scale in our country. The British Medical Journal quoted that India like any other developing country is recording a lot of medical errors. Any condition beyond human control or one that occurs spontaneously without any related history or symptoms should not be counted in medication error. However, improper knowledge or delayed procedure which occurs as a fault of medical practitioner should directly be accounted under medication error. An article

published in the year 2015 by Karthikeyan M, reviewed medication errors happening in health care system in the world. As per review the effects of these errors are evenly distributed among three facets of health care i.e the system, the patients as well as the payers. It showed that the prescribing errors like the drug-drug interaction overdose ranged from 7.1% to 68.2%; the nursing errors like the wrong drug or wrong patient ranged from 19% to 34%; while the pharmacist errors (dispensing) ranged from 2.29% to 25%. What's worst is the fact that these errors compromise the trust of the patients on the health care system. In a recently conducted survey when 100 people on a social media platform were asked questions regarding their trust on the health care system 83% people replied that they feared the

treatments which are being delivered to them or their loved ones, which in itself is enough to attribute towards the losing trust of people on modern day medical practices. Not deny-

ing the fact that many of these professionals take all the necessary measures to avoid the medication errors, still most of them do not use the epitomes of previously made mistakes as a guideline to avoid making similar mistakes in the future. One reason behind this is that India has not trained health care professionals to measure the clinical outcomes. Building a safer system calls for a more systematic approach to eliminate errors, one which outlines the importance of identifying and learning from them through mandatory and voluntary reporting. In the light of above mentioned facts developing countries urgently need to take measures such as maintaining proper comprehensive records and encouraging nurses to improve their quality of

drug administration to patients. However it is not all cloudy over the medical sector in India. Since, efforts are being put behind the slow drag of medical policies and conventional system practices in both urban and rural areas, to better streamline the process. The government too has put various projects on ground after successful pilot runs. An article presented in the year 2010 by Isha Patel mentioned the pharmacovigilance systems set up in India which collect information on adverse drug reactions. She looked at ADRs in rural tertiary care hospital in Gujarat. As per the study the pharmacovigilance improved the reporting of ADRs by 3% prospectively and 1% retrospectively amongst 600 patients suffering from various lung diseases. More steps like these must be taken at an urgent pace in India.



Trend Slazer

'I like doing challenging roles'

Actor **NAWAZUDDIN SIDDIQUI**, who is set for the release of his forthcoming film *Thackeray*, says he hates taking up roles which do not challenge him as a performer. "I love doing challenging roles. With each film, I want to try something new. I hate doing roles in my comfort zone. I want to be a versatile actor. I look up to only new, different and challenging roles for myself," said Nawazuddin. "There's only one life, we should keep trying new things. That's what I want to do," he added. He talked about his role in the film, "Balasahebji was an iconic figure. I am honoured to be doing a film based on his life. He was a cartoonist, writer and political figure. His journey has inspired me a lot." He said that it was a tough role for him because, "he was an iconic figure and while shooting the film on him, the only thing that I kept in my mind was to do justice to the role through my acting. I researched a lot about him, watched a lot of his videos, speeches and Sanjay Raut (writer) helped me in learning more about his life." The film is slated to release on January 25.



Photo: Pankaj Kumar

'Calling out patriarchy at home is very tough. The most difficult thing is to question people around you, especially whom you love the most like your parents, brother and boyfriend. I feel bad for boys sometimes because the problem lies with the parenting method which doesn't let them equip with strong, opinionated women.'



—Swara Bhasker

Hathaway quits drinking

Actress **ANNE HATHAWAY** said that she has quit drinking for the next 18 years because she does not want to drink around her two-year-old son Jonathan.

During an appearance on *The Ellen Degeneres Show*, Hathaway said: "I quit drinking back in October for 18 years. I'm going to stop drinking while my son is in my house just because I don't totally love the way I do it and he's getting to an age where he really needs me all the time in the morning."

She added, "I did a school run one day where I dropped him off at school, I wasn't driving, but I was hungover and that was enough for me. I didn't love that one." She had earlier said that she feels at "greater peace" now that she's a mother.

Image enhancement is one thing; you are in the end in control of it. But when the projected image becomes bigger than you, then the mirrored image can eat into the reality of your self-esteem. A recent study, conducted by a cosmetic clinic chain, spanning over 300 people across four Indian cities, showed that the process of taking, altering and posting selfies negatively affects one's self-esteem and body image perception as well as promotes body dysmorphia.

Selfies, that have already been considered responsible for numerous deaths as well as injuries among people lost in the act of clicking themselves, are also making people anxious and less-confident about their own looks and physical attractiveness. As per the report, in Delhi, 68 per cent men and 82 per cent women showed an increase in levels of anxiety after posting their selfies on social media. Around 71 per cent men and 80 per cent women showed a decrease in self-confidence. Their feelings of physical attractiveness also recorded a dip. The feelings of inadequacy were intense enough to drive many of them to undergo cosmetic surgery in order to enhance their facial appearance.

The study noted that people posted selfies using filters more than without as their real features made them anxious about public approval. Also, the fact that filters work magically on the selfie saddened them, making them envy their own enhanced image.

In one of the recent lectures on the psychological effects of taking and posting selfies on social media, Debraj Shome, director of the said clinic chain, pointed towards men and women between 16 to 25 years of age who spend up to five hours per week clicking selfies and uploading them online. "People who took and posted selfies reported feeling more anxious, less confident, and less physically-attractive later. Even though people could retake or retouch their selfies through filters, we noted certain effects that could be harmful. It contributed to significant feelings of inadequacy over looks. This indicates that people in India will also become like the ones in California, USA, where a large majority of the population considers cosmetic surgeries."

The lecture also noted an important point by Dr Rinky Kapoor, cosmetic dermatologist. Said she, "The camera in the phone has ironically become the reason why the phone sells. It is well-known that selfies are a risk to one's life and limb, with hundreds of people dying or sustaining injuries while taking selfies. This study shows that selfies have an adverse psychological effect on one's personality too. The impact is even more devastating on people with low self-esteem who take to social media to engage in public behaviour with reduced risk of disgrace and social anxiety."

She suggested that since there is not

Selfie? Not me

Behavioural expert **DEBRAJ SHOME** explains why the mania of taking and posting selfies online is hinting at an insecure and a mentally-unstable generation.

By **TEAM VIVA**



any upside to the act of taking selfies as yet, the government "seriously" needs to consider banning front-facing cameras in smartphones. "There is also a need to launch a nationwide campaign that discourages people from taking selfies," she said.

As per the research, negative impacts of taking selfies were observed the most among people in Delhi, followed by people in Mumbai, Hyderabad and then Kolkata. The nationwide study showed an increase in anxiety among 60 per cent men and 65 per cent women. Of all the respondents, 61 per cent men and 70 per cent women recorded a decrease in confidence after posting their selfies.

Shome also pointed out that social media and celebrities have been hugely responsible in making selfies popular, especially among the youth. "Since famous celebrities and other TV person-

'Frequently taking selfies could be considered a body-checking behaviour, such as repeated weighing and recurrent checking of one's own reflection in the mirror'

alities also have social media accounts, youngsters tend to see how their favourite celebrities strike a pose and get million likes. Following them, they try to imitate their behaviour. They tend to feel depressed comparing themselves to the other so-called physically-attractive people. This eventually results in self-loathing."

He said that for some, taking and posting selfies is also a way of expressing themselves, testing how they really look. The number of likes determines their liking towards themselves.

The doctor explained how posting selfies to social media is making youngsters determine self-image and perception, which in turn is emerging as yet another psychological disorder. He said, "Frequently taking selfies could be considered a body-checking behaviour, such as repeated weighing and recurrent

checking of one's own reflection in the mirror."

He suggested that this should be considered a risky online health-related behaviour in terms of mental health, especially if it triggers weight and shape dissatisfaction. He added, "High body dissatisfaction is the primary risk factor for the development of eating disorders and is correlated with low self-esteem and depression. Interventions that aim to diminish or eliminate the harmful effects of social media engagement on one's psychological make-up need to be validated and implemented. This indicates that addiction to phones and selfies may create a mentally-unstable next generation."

Youngsters need to realise that taking selfies is not about impressing people. They shouldn't let this control them. One should be satisfied with the way s/he looks.

AN INSPIRING SILENCE

When you tread on the terrain of **SATISH GUPTA'S**

Zen Whispers, it envelopes you in a mix of contemporary and traditional genres, says **UMA NAIR**

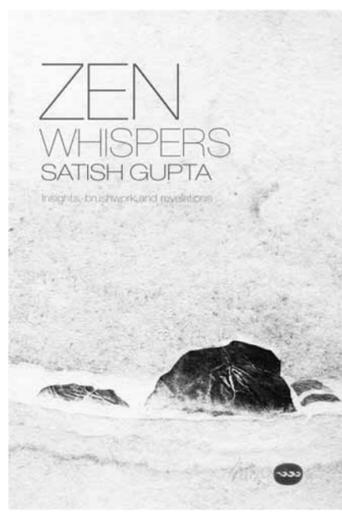
Cute and quaint in terms of a culling of statements, Satish Gupta's *Zen Whispers* is a representation of his many journeys in art as well as life. We get a glimpse into the Zen monk and artist who embodies the Buddha within.

The book, which was launched a week ago at the Visual Arts Gallery, is replete with paintings and sculptures from different periods of Satish's artistic endeavours that covers works selected from his monumental landscapes series — wave scene series, flower series. This leads to a deep understanding of his artistic developments during the past 25 years for the audience of art and readers alike.

PAUSES AND SPACES

While the book's cover has been treated and designed like a Zen masterpiece, the book is full of pauses and spaces. Satish emerges as an artist who is an itinerant traveller with a thorough knowledge of the past and the present, the East and the West. Interestingly, the designing and arrangement of the chapters in the book are loose and candid, also filled with the language of assonance and allusion, perhaps almost like going beyond the senses or the colours into a utopian realm that melds and melts into the absolute.

The work indicates Satish's deep understanding of design and his in-depth contemporary awareness derived from his experiences of understanding art practices that straddle through both the Eastern and the Western worlds. The book showcases a variety of gen-



res. Satish gradually develops his own artistic language by infusing Chinese contexts with a minimalist rendering of contemporary awareness. This distinctive style gains him critical acclaim and we look at his small word scapes in new dimensions.

INNER REALMS

The signature of antiquity in the paintings echoes the monumentality of inner realms, giving viewers an impression that they are not the works of a contemporary artist but a man who straddles through many realms. After studying them meticulously, one will, however, notice that Satish deliberately breaks away from the practice of contemporary art and instead uses world practices.

To remain still is one of the qualities that the Eastern philosophy teaches when facing the rapidly-changing world and we get an aura of stillness when we read through. The words are soothing yet delicate. Behind his meticulous

thoughts, which portray a discipline inherited from tradition, there are innovative and ingenious experiments. Satish creates a synergy by his seamless intertwining of tradition and the avant-garde both in his words as well as his paintings. Just after reading a few pages, it feels like we are being introduced to fantasies on paper and enchantment in the verbal world. The visual richness comprises colour splashes and bold strokes. We can gain multiple moments of silence through the pages, understanding the traditional aesthetics of both concept and imagery — the kinetics of consciousness also come into play — and you realise that silence is the source of his inspiration.

UNIVERSAL CULTURES

Satish's paintings are awash with the spirit of universal, traditional cultures, but they also go far beyond the conventional boundaries of ink/watercolour painting, exuding an aura that is both spiritual and filled with mystery. His words, thoughts and works are a mix of genres — Indian and international, traditional and contemporary. The sculptures are mesmerising if not filled with a dense grav-

ity. This book tells us that the tides of the universe are in our veins and nature's peace flows around us. The sea is emotions incarnated for Satish, and we have to travel, stop and look at the waves to know and understand the beauty of the sheer surging of life, and the tidal wave of Being. The sinuous strokes of black and white embody the perfect joy of each separate muscle, joint and sinew in that it is everything that mirrors the waves and the soil and the sea. The book tells us that in life, nature is aglow and rampant, expressing itself in movement and we must be protectors as well as nurturers of the Earth and its bounty.

The rhythmic quality of the words resonates with the artist's underlying statements. The inner spirit of the paper used becomes the beauty of painting and the enchantment of the moment is the passion inherent. All great works of art and books have one thing in common — they touch hearts universally, across time and boundaries.



Oscar number game

From *Black Panther* to *Roma*, this year's nominations have been viral already but here are some fun and unknown facts behind these choices

After more than 30 years and some two dozen films, Spike Lee has received his first Academy Award nomination for Best Director for *BlackKkKlansman*. It's also the first time that one of his films have been nominated for Best Picture.

Glenn Close's Best Actress nomination for *The Wife* is her seventh, and could finally mean her first Oscar. She has more nominations without a win than any other living actor or actress.

Black Panther is the first Marvel movie — and the first superhero film of any kind — to be nominated for Best Picture. Its \$700 million box-office take is more than the earnings of the other seven Best-Picture nominees combined.

Roma is the first Netflix film to be nominated for Best Picture.

Sam Elliott's first Oscar nomination — for Best Supporting Actor in *A Star Is Born* — comes 50 years after his first acting credit, on the TV series *Judd for the Defense*.

Rami Malek, nominated for playing Queen frontman Freddie

Mercury in *Bohemian Rhapsody*, is the only first-time Oscar nominee among the men up for Best Actor. He's up against multiple nominees like Christian Bale, Bradley Cooper, Viggo Mortensen and Willem Dafoe.

Yalitza Aparicio's nomination for *Roma* comes in her first role as an actress.

This is the second of Hollywood's four versions of *A Star Is Born*, to get a Best Picture nomination, along with the 1937 original. The 1954 and 1976 versions each got several Oscar nominations, but not for Best Picture.

No women were nominated for Best Director this year. The number of female directorial nominees in the 91-year history of Oscars remains only five.

Eighty-seven countries had submitted films to be considered for Best Foreign Language Film. Only five of them got nominated — Germany, Japan, Lebanon, Mexico and Poland.

Bob Hope hosted the Oscars a record 19 times. No one is scheduled to host this year's ceremony.

MERE GULLY MEIN PLAGIARISED?

It hasn't been long that Ranveer Singh and Alia Bhatt-starrer *Gully Boy's* teaser went viral making waves across social media. The film is an intimate recounting of Mumbai's homegrown rap scene and the musicians who defined it.

With release of the film's *Mere Gully Mein* recently, there

was again appreciation going around. However, it turned out that there are issues with this track as well (as was with *Apna Time Aayega*, which was said to be plagiarised), and this time it's not just an "inspired" look. The track is a cover of a 2015 song of the same name. While the filmmakers

noted that it was a remake, the song's original creator has now claimed that he "wasn't paid the royalties due to him."

Sajeel Kapoor, better known by his stage name Sez on the Beat, took to social media following the song's release and posted that while he appreciates the film's

attempt to trace the origins of Mumbai's indie rap scene, he was "not informed" that his track was being used for the film until recently, nor that it would be a cover instead of his original and, perhaps most pertinently, he was not paid royalties for it, despite having a contract with the makers.

THAILAND'S NEW SHADES

Targeting mature, discerning Indian travellers, the Tourism Authority of Thailand (TAT) is promoting niche hideaways beyond the Bangkok-Pattaya circuit. The tourism board has extended the visa-on-arrival fee waiver for Indians to April 30

■ ANKITA SAXENA

To ensure that Thailand remains the most preferred tourism destination among the Indian travellers, the Tourism Authority of Thailand (TAT) has introduced new experiences and destinations for 2019. As a stimulus to encourage more Indians to visit the destination, the Thai government has extended the visa-on-arrival fee waiver from January 14 to April 30.

The TAT Governor, YUTHASAK SUPASORN said, "We want to change the perception of Thailand in India from a 'cheap destination' to a more value-for-money destination. We have been working towards this for some years now. We started with four key segments namely weddings and honeymoon, sports tourism, health and well-being and responsible tourism. We want to move away from a mass tourist destination to a niche destination. After in-depth research on Indian travellers' behaviour, we have identified some lesser known destinations and have formulated a strategy to promote them. I feel we will be able to achieve two million Indian tourists by the end of 2019, a year earlier than the previously set target of 2020."

The TAT Deputy Governor for Marketing Communications, Tanes Petsuwan, informed that India is now one of the top 10 source markets for tourist arrivals to Thailand, a member of a small club of countries that generate more than one million visitors a year. In January-November 2018, the arrivals from India were up by



TAT Governor, Yuthasak Supasorn

12.03 per cent to 1.42 million, generating an estimated 63 billion Baht in tourism income. In December 2018 alone, after the waiver of visa-on-arrival fee for Indians, Thailand

recorded 143,000 Indian visitors, registering a growth of over 63 per cent as compared to December 2017, taking the total figure of Indian tourist arrivals to over 1.6 million in 2018.

Petsuwan said, "The growing sophistication and maturity of the Indian travellers has given us an opportunity to promote Thailand's diverse range of niche market products to women travellers, high-net worth individual (HNIs), weddings and honeymooners and family groups. Today, a new strata of experienced, well-heeled and internet-savvy Indian travellers are venturing beyond the long-standing Bangkok-Pattaya circuit to new destinations such as Chiang Rai, Rayong, Trat, Hua Hin and Samut Songkhram."

Sharing some highlights of the Indian tourists, the deputy governor said that in 2018, of the total Indian visitors, 58 per cent were repeat travellers; the average daily expenditure was recorded at approximately ₹12,500; the average length of stay was 7.45 days and the visitor ratio of groups and individual travellers was recorded as 31 to 69.

"In 2019, the 'Amazing Thailand Open to the New Shades' campaign will be carried forward to invite travellers to indulge in unique experiences. We are targeting four segments of Indian travellers. A separate website—www.firstvisit.com, has been

launched to cater to the first time travellers. We are targeting women travellers and thus have introduced the website—www.women'sjourneythailand.com. Almost 300 Indian destination weddings took place in Thailand in 2018 and to further this segment, we have introduced www.myweddinginthailand.com for specific needs of those who wish to tie the knot in Thailand. For the family travel category, we are promoting Samut Songkhram as a new destination for local experiences. Luxury travel from India is also a segment of focus this year," added Petsuwan.

The tourism board further apprised that the bilateral airline capacity is at an all-time high with 307 weekly flights between Thailand and 16 major cities in India, served by 13 airlines which include, the Thai Airways, Bangkok Airways, Thai Smile, Bhutan Airlines, Druk Air, Jet Airways, Air Asia, Spice Jet, Thai Lion Air, Indigo, NokScoot and GoAir.

In August this year, TAT will undertake an Amazing Thailand roadshow to Tier-II cities—Ahmedabad, Pune, Amritsar and Bhubaneswar as part of TAT's strategy to tap the potential of India's secondary cities. Thailand expects to welcome five million Indian visitors by 2023.



Making railways safer and more punctual

The chairman of the Railway Board, T V K Yadav, recently chaired a Review Meet of the zonal performance at the Northern Railway's headquarter in New Delhi. The member of the Traffic Railway Board Girish Pillai, the general manager of the Northern Railway TP Singh, the principal heads-of-department of the Northern Railway, the divisional railway managers of the five Divisions of Northern Railway viz. Ambala, Delhi, Moradabad, Lucknow and Ferozpur were also present on the occasion.

Appraising the overall safety performance of the zone during 2018-19, Yadav noted the 31 percent noteworthy reduction in the number of accidents vis-à-vis 2017-18 and expressed his satisfaction on the mission mode of the zone in 100 per cent elimination of unmanned level-crossing on the zone, which is a part of the 'Mission Zero Accident'.

The chairman underscored the need for expeditious completion of infrastructure projects viz. new lines, doubling lines and so on to enhance capacity creation to meet the twin objectives of operation (punctuality) and safety. He noted that the Northern Railway has taken several steps to improve the punctuality of the passenger carrying trains during the



year which include elimination of traction change in 12 trains, standardising and factoring in mega corridor block in the new time table to rationalise train running time. He apprised that live monitoring of the asset failures is being undertaken and additional manpower and resources are being deployed on dense traffic sections.

One of the significant measures to augment punctuality performance was the de-congestion of major terminals of Delhi, Lucknow and Allahabad area. A noteworthy raise in speed of trains on loop lines enabled saving 86 minutes, while the track strengthening and electrification works enabled the raising of sectional speed. He also noted that the

PF berthing slots were rationalised to ensure better station punctuality.

Yadav also reviewed the ongoing action plans of the zone with regards to the rationalisation of rake links, terminal shifting to reduce station congestion and to ensure expeditious primary maintenance. The washing line OHE connectivity is on the anvil with other improvements viz. high-speed fuelling and watering.

The chairman further reviewed the various development plans proposed in the year ahead viz. the doubling works, flyovers (rail) to enable operational flexibility and by-passes/chord lines to avoid detention due to reversal. He also reviewed the various traffic facility upgradation works viz. coaching terminal facility at Bijwasan and Varanasi yard remodeling plans. The capacity enhancement works through a target 41 km new line, and doubling spanning 137 km, are on the anvil for the year 2019-20.

Assigning a higher impetus to the modernised signaling, the zone has on its anvil projects for introduction of automatic block signaling on high density routes through an estimated ₹287.66 crore in the year ahead. This would enable better punctuality performance, commented the chairman.

Naqvi applauds Hunar Haat for employment generation

The Union Minority Affairs Minister Mukhtar Abbas Naqvi, believes that more than two lakh artisans, craftsmen and culinary experts have been provided with employment opportunities through the 11 'Hunar Haats' which have been organised across the country during the last two years. The minister was speaking at the closing ceremony of the Hunar Haat held in Delhi from January 12 to 20. He said, "Hunar Haat has been organised across the country by the Ministry, and it has proved to be an 'empowerment and employment exchange', for the master artisans and craftsmen. The employment oriented programmes of the Modi



Government like the Hunar Haat has significantly encouraged and promoted the rich traditional heritage of artisans which had been marginalised for a long time. This ini-

tiative has become a 'credible brand' of indigenous talent of Indian craftsmen and will fulfill Prime Minister Narendra Modi's commitment to 'Make in India', 'Stand up India', and 'Start up India'.

He further added that the even was a hit as over 13 lakh visitors from across the country and abroad visited the fair and encouraged the artisans by purchasing, on a large scale, their indigenous handmade products. The artisans have also received national and international orders worth lakhs of rupees.

In the coming days, the event will also be organised at other different locations in the country.

VIT's accelerated business coaching programme

The VIT Technology Business Incubator (VIT-TBI) is a joint initiative between VIT Vellore, and the Department of Science and Technology, Government of India. The VIT-TBI provides incubation support to start-up ventures and periodically organises capacity building and training activities to address the needs of the early-stage entrepreneurs and individuals, who are planning to start a business venture.

This six-week, non-residential training programme's objective is to expose the participants to the key steps in start up venturing process and equip them with adequate knowledge to initiate a venture in food processing and agro-based technologies. It equips the students with requisite skills, knowledge and competencies to convert their start up idea into a viable business entity.

The select qualifying individuals, with bankable project reports, get an opportunity to present the same for incubation support or appropriate funding support. The programme covers the essentials of entrepreneurship, basics of marketing, finance, human resource and so on. It will also provide ample exposure to various facets of organic agriculture, integrated farming practices, biofertilisers, composting, commercial business opportunities in medicinal plant and horticulture, food processing techniques, quality control, certification processes, hospitality industry, packaging and will include industry visits. This programme will also equip the participants to write and present a Project Report and throw open opportunities to Business Incubation at the VIT Technology Business Incubator, if found suitable.

CORPORATE BRIEFS

'ALUMOF'—MASCOT FOR INCAL 2019 UNVEILED

The Union Minister of Parliamentary Affairs, Panchayati Raj and Mines, Narendra Singh Tomar, unveiled the official Mascot for the first International Conference on Aluminium 2019 (INCAL) called 'ALUMOF'. The

INCAL 2019 is slated to be held in Bhubaneswar from Jan 31 to Feb 3, under the aegis of the Ministry of Mines and is organised by the Aluminium Association of India (AAI). ALUMOF, which stands for Aluminium — The Metal of the Future, was unveiled in the presence of the secretary of mines, Anil Kumar Nayak, and the CMD, NALCO and the Chairman, Aluminium Association of India, Dr Tapan Kumar Chand. The mascot aims to raise awareness and promote aluminium as the metal of the future and a metal of national importance.



The Minister of State of Human Resource Development, Water Resources, River Development and Ganga Rejuvenation, Dr Satya Pal Singh, flagged off the extension of 74027/74028 Delhi Jn to Baraut DEMU train to from Qasimpur Khari in the presence of the additional divisional railway manager, Rajeev Dhankhar, Delhi Division along with several senior railway officials.



Bharat Heavy Electricals Limited (BHEL) has secured an additional order from the Maharashtra State Power Generation Company (Mahagenco) for its ongoing 660 MW coal-based supercritical thermal power project at Bhusawal thermal power station (Unit 6). The project is being executed by BHEL on Engineering, Procurement and Construction (EPC) basis at Jalgaon district in Maharashtra. Mahagenco has awarded the additional order to BHEL for installation of emission control equipment, changes in various equipment/subsystems due to change in coal, modification in CHP/AHP, and so on. With this order, the revised order value for the Bhusawal TPS Unit 6 EPC project is now around ₹3,750 crore.

BHEL BAGS ORDER FOR EMISSION CONTROL EQUIPMENT IN MAHARASHTRA

The Tata Power Delhi Distribution Limited (Tata Power-DDL), has launched its second all-women Customer Care Centre at Civil Lines in Delhi. The centre will be entirely managed by a team of 12 women who are trained to handle the entire gamut of customer service offerings such as new power supply applications, monthly bill payments as well as addressing customers' concerns and queries. The centre was inaugurated by the commissioner of NDMC Varsha Joshi, in the presence of the CEO of Tata Power-DDL, Sanjay Banga, and other senior officials from the company.

TATA POWER-DDL'S 2ND ALL WOMEN CUSTOMER CARE CENTRE IN DELHI

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After a gap of 11 years, the CISF Tableau will again showcase the multidimensional functioning of the force at the forthcoming Republic Day Parade on January 26. The tableau is a reflection of the aspirations, commitment and dedication of CISF towards its mandate and showcases the various domains of its professional conduct.



AAI AWARDED FOR PERFORMANCE IN ELECTRONIC TENDERING

The Airports Authority of India (AAI) has recently been awarded as the Best Performer among the Central Public Sector Units based on the electronic tendering carried out in April 2017 to March 2018 through the Central Public Procurement Portal of NIC, Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY). The member of operations, AAI, I N Murthy, received the award from the secretary, MeitY, on the occasion of 2nd National Workshop on Central Public Procurement Portal organised by NIC.

1st CORPORATE MANAGEMENT OLYMPIAD

Power System Operation Corporation Limited (POSOCO) bagged three Gold Medals in three different categories in the first edition of the Corporate Management Olympiad, organised by AIMA. Five teams of POSOCO participated with Pinky Debnath of the Eastern Regional Load Despatch Centre (ERLDC), POSOCO became the first ever Miss Olympiad.

OFB CONTRIBUTES TO ARMY BATTLE CASUALTIES FUND

As a part of social responsibility, the Ordnance Factory Board (OFB) has contributed ₹10 lakh to the Army Battle Casualties Fund. The member of OFB, S P Mishra, accompanied by the deputy director general of OFB, Rajvir Singh, handed over a cheque of the said amount to Major General R P Kalita, Additional Director General (Ceremonial and Welfare). The Indian Army's account—Army Welfare Fund Battle Casualties' accepts donations for the families of battle casualties which is utilised to pay financial assistance to widows of battle casualties, their next of kin and dependents.



DELHI-WARSZAW DIRECT ON LOT POLISH AIRLINES FROM SEPTEMBER

LOT Polish Airlines, Poland's flag carrier will launch a new non-stop service between Warsaw and New Delhi, commencing on September 17 this year. The new route will be operated five times a week on the Boeing 787 Dreamliner which will feature three class of service - LOT Business Class; LOT Premium Economy Class and LOT Economy Class. The new route will provide the shortest and the most convenient connection from New Delhi directly to the centrally located hub in Warsaw as well as access to many Central, Eastern and Western European cities.



All round India trap Kiwis

Kuldeep, Shami bowl Blackcaps out for 157 runs before Dhawan smashes 75* to help Men in Blue register 8 wicket win



THE BIZARRE SUN BREAK

PTI ■ NAPIER

Sun stops play after dinner. Sounds bizarre? But this is what happened in the first India-New Zealand ODI at the McLean Park.

Rain interruption in international cricket bringing the Duckworth-Lewis method into consideration is nothing new. But here it was the sun that troubled the batsmen by coming right in the line of their view, forcing play to stop for about half an hour.

Indian captain Virat Kohli said he has never experienced a sun-induced stoppage in his life.

"Never in my life," he said when asked about the halt due to which the target was revised by two runs and the match shortened by an over.

"It was funny. In 2014, I got out once with the sun in my eyes and this rule wasn't there then," Kohli said at the post-match presentation ceremony.

The decision to halt proceedings was taken after the dinner break of the day-nighter, keeping the players' safety in

mind, on-field umpire Shaun George said.

"The setting sun is in the eyes of the players and we need to think of their safety as well as umpires. There was an awareness of it by the players (they didn't appeal)," said the umpire.

New Zealand skipper Kane Williamson also took a light-hearted view on the situation.

"It is hard to move the sun and hard to move the Grand Stand. So, we didn't have much option and had to sit down a bit," he quipped.

Stoppages due to sun have been witnessed in the past here during the domestic competitions, and reportedly, also at few English grounds, but none of them were international matches.

In 1980, and India-England Test match in Mumbai, called Bombay at the time, was brought forward by a day due to a solar eclipse.

Normally, the cricket pitches are positioned in the North-South direction to avoid this scenario, but at McLean Park, the pitch is East-West facing.

FASTEST 5000 RUNS IN ONE DAYERS

Batsman	M	Inn	Time Period
Hashim Amla (South Africa)	104	101	6y & 313 days
Viv Richards (West Indies)	126	114	11y & 237 days
Virat Kohli (India)	120	114	5y & 95 days
Brian Lara (West Indies)	120	118	6y & 359 days
Shikhar Dhawan (India)	119	118	8y & 95 days

Faisal Features

Kohli rested for last 2 ODIs and T20 series

PTI ■ NAPIER

India captain Virat Kohli was on Wednesday rested for the last two games of the five-match ODI series against New Zealand and the following T20 series owing to his "workload in the last few months".

Vice-captain Rohit Sharma will lead the side in his absence.

The selection committee and the team management took the call in view of his packed schedule over the past couple of months. "Considering his workload in the last few months, the team management and senior selection committee is of the view that it would be ideal for him to get adequate rest ahead of the home series against Australia," said the BCCI in a statement.

"There will be no replacement for Mr Kohli in the squad for the



New Zealand series. Rohit Sharma will captain the side in the final two ODIs and T20I series," it added.

After the ongoing New Zealand tour, India will host Australia for five ODIs starting February 24 and soon after the IPL follows.

This led to an interruption that has never been seen in international cricket before.

Because of the nearly half-an-hour delay, the target was revised to 156 in 49 overs, which the visitors chased without much ado.

While Rohit Sharma may have lost his focus after the dinner break, Kohli and Dhawan didn't let the sun-induced stoppage distract their minds when play resumed. Kohli, though, got out five short of a fifty.

The Indian captain hit three boundaries in his 59-ball knock before pacer Lockie Ferguson had him caught behind with a quick delivery that caught the batsman by surprise.

In the course of his 26th ODI fifty, Dhawan became the joint fourth fastest batsman to reach 5000 runs. Dhawan needed 118 innings to reach the mark.

This knock will bring some relief for Dhawan as he hasn't scored a half century in his last nine innings.

Earlier, opting to bat, the New Zealanders were off to an inauspicious start, losing both openers Martin Guptill and Colin Munro within the

first five overs with just 18 runs on the board.

By sending back Guptill in his 56th match, the 28-year-old Shami became the fastest Indian to reach 100 wickets in ODIs.

Coming into the series after a hugely successful 2018, Ross Taylor looked good in his 41-ball 24, but he was brilliantly caught and bowled by Chahal, who lured the batsman to dance down the pitch a tad too early with his change of pace.

Till Taylor was there alongside Williamson, things looked good for New Zealand, as the duo played a few delightful shots, especially the skipper whose trademark backfoot punch through the covers stood out.

Tom Latham was dismissed in similar fashion, with leg-spinner Chahal being the bowler.

Henry Nicholls and Mitchell Santner came, swung their willows for a six and a couple of boundaries, and got out to Jadhav and Shami respectively as New Zealand stuttered at 133 for six in the 30th over.

By that time, Williamson too had had enough, and got out while trying to hoick Yadav over long-on.



PTI ■ NAPIER

India produced cricket of the calibre that has become synonymous with Virat Kohli's men to crush New Zealand in the first ODI but a bizarre and unprecedented sun-induced interruption overshadowed the on-field action on Wednesday.

Entering the five-match rubber following maiden Test and ODI series triumphs in Australia, India signalled their intent with a clinical display, which saw them chase down a revised target of 156 by eight wickets in 34.5 overs.

The Duckworth-Lewis method came into the picture for an interruption which was not caused by rain for the first time.

On a near-perfect day, the only thing that didn't go their way was the toss. But India made light of that by bowling out the home team for a paltry 157 in 38 overs.

Wrist spinner Kuldeep Yadav was the most successful bowler, returning figures of 4/39 in 10 overs, while seamer Mohammed Shami finished with an excellent 3/19 in six overs. There were also two wickets for leg-spinner Yuzvendra Chahal.

Captain Kane Williamson top-scored for the hosts with 64 off 81 balls.

In response, Shikhar Dhawan began the innings with a flurry of boundaries, eventually finishing as the top-scorer with 75 off 103 balls.

The left-handed opening batsman, battling indifferent form, studied his innings with six boundaries.

India were comfortably placed at 44 for one when, in a bizarre turn of events, players walked off the ground after dinner because the setting sun made it difficult for them to spot the ball at McLean park.



MS Dhoni stumps Lockie Ferguson during the 1st ODI between New Zealand and India in Napier AP

SHAMI FASTEST INDIAN TO 100 ODI WICKETS

NAPIER: Pacer Mohammed Shami on Wednesday became the fastest Indian to claim 100 wickets in One-Day Internationals, reaching the mark in the opening match against New Zealand.

This was his 56th game in the 50-over format.

Shami's wicket number 100 was New Zealand opener Martin Guptill, who played onto his stumps a delivery that moved in after pitching on a good length.

With his brilliant opening burst at McLean Park, the 28-year-old Shami continued his good showing in the limited overs format, having impressed in Australia prior to this



five-match ODI series.

Before Shami, Irfan Pathan reached the 100-wicket mark in 59 ODIs, while Zaheer Khan (65 matches), Ajit Agarkar (67) and Javagal Srinath (68) are the other Indian bowlers to complete a century of wickets in the quickest time. PTI

Pujara, Mayank highlight Ranji semis

PTI ■ BENGALURU

All eyes will be on prolific India batsman Cheteshwar Pujara and Mayank Agarwal in opposite sides when domestic powerhouses Saurashtra and Karnataka take on each other in the five-day Ranji Trophy semifinal starting here from Thursday.

Pujara has been in supreme touch as he became India's highest run-getter with three centuries in their maiden Test series victory in Australia.

Just after the Test series, Pujara played a crucial role in Saurashtra's quarterfinal match against Uttar Pradesh. He cracked an unbeaten 67 in the second innings to help Saurashtra defeat Uttar Pradesh by six wickets.

The visiting team also has the likes of Sheldon Jackson in the middle order to provide the much-needed stability. For Karnataka batsman Agarwal, a good knock in the Ranji semifinals will help him cement his place in the Indian team. He scored 195 runs in three innings he played in Test series in Australia. The local lad had returned to India a few days before the start of ODI series against Australia after sustaining a thumb injury in the Test series. Subsequently, he missed the Ranji quarter-final match against Rajasthan.

Apart from Agarwal, skipper Manish Pandey, who has been scoring runs, will be looking to continue his good form. Vinay Kumar, Karun Nair and Jaydev Unadkat are the other international players who would like to contribute for Karnataka. Unadkat, Vinay and Abhimanyu Mithun have been in good form with the ball, while Krishnappa Gowtham is an all-rounder on whom Karnataka can bank upon. While in the other semifinal in Wayanad, Kerala will hope to turn the tables on the in-form defending champion Vidarbha at the Krishnagiri stadium.

Karan apologises for Pandya-Rahul episode

PTI ■ MUMBAI

Breaking his silence on the controversy following comments by cricketers Hardik Pandya and K.L. Rahul on his chat show, filmmaker Karan Johar says he apologises for what happened and admits the conversation "may have crossed boundaries".

The filmmaker also said he feels very responsible for the remarks made on "Koffee with Karan" and has spent sleepless nights wondering how to "undo this damage".

Pandya and Rahul were widely slammed for their remarks labelled misogynistic and sexist and have been provisionally suspended by the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI), pending an inquiry.

"I'm not justifying the conversation that happened on the episode. I'm saying that perhaps things were said that may have



Hardik Pandya and KL Rahul pose for photo with Karan Johar during his chat show KJo

crossed boundaries and I apologise because it was my platform where it happened," Johar told ET Now in an interview.

The filmmaker said the boys have "paid the price" for what happened on the episode.

"I have had so many sleepless nights, just wondering about how I can undo this damage. Who is going to listen to me? It has now gone into a zone that is beyond my control," Johar told the channel in the interview posted on Twitter on Wednesday.

Calling himself a feminist who has been brought up by strong women, Johar said he asks the same questions to everyone.

Asked if he has any regrets about the episode, Johar said he regretted what has happened to them.

After the controversy, the episode featuring the two cricketers was taken down by Hotstar.

"Certain remarks/comments made by the guests on the episode 12 of Koffee with Karan may hurt the sentiments of our users/viewers. As a responsible platform, we have removed the episode from Hotstar with immediate effect," Hotstar had tweeted.

Aus name two debutants

AFP ■ BRISBANE

Australia have named debutants Kurtis Patterson and Jhye Richardson and recalled opener Joe Burns for the first Test beginning in Brisbane on Thursday.

Patterson scored centuries in both innings playing for the Cricket Australia XI against Sri Lanka in Hobart last week, prompting selectors to call him into the squad.

The 25-year-old has scored 3,813 first-class runs for New South Wales at an average of 41.00 and will bat at number six. West Australian fast bowler Richardson, who was impressive in the ODI series against India,

comes in for the injured Josh Hazlewood.

Selectors resisted the temptation to blood 20-year-old batsman Will Pucovski, who many are touting as the next Ricky Ponting, opting instead for the experienced Burns. Burns, 29, played his

last Test against South Africa in April last year but has three Test centuries to his name.

Australia: Tim Paine (capt), Marcus Harris, Joe Burns, Usman Khawaja, Marnus Labuschagne, Travis Head, Kurtis Patterson, Pat Cummins, Mitchell Starc, Jhye Richardson, Nathan Lyon.

SL hoping for a miracle in Test series

AFP ■ BRISBANE

Sri Lanka have closely studied the way India defeated Australia in their recent Test series, but captain Dinesh Chandimal said on Wednesday that his side will still need a miracle to do the same.

Speaking to reporters ahead of Thursday's opening Test at the Gabba, Chandimal was cautious when asked about Sri Lanka's chances.

"It's definitely a challenge for us, and if you can take this challenge — and as a batsman or as a bowler you give it your best shot and give 200 percent to the team — we can do a miracle here," he said.

"That's what we want to do as a team, and we'll keep our fingers crossed."



Dinesh Chandimal and Tim Paine pose with trophy ahead of 1st Test AFP

The Sri Lankan skipper said he wasn't perturbed by the notoriously fast and bouncy Gabba wicket.

"When you look at the pitch you can see a lot of grass on the wicket," he said.

"We have got really good fast bowlers so that's a real plus," he added.

The skipper also said that he wanted to make history and become the first Sri Lankan captain to win a Test series in Australia, but wouldn't take his opponents lightly. "We never underestimate the Australians," he said.

"They have some really good players, but in their batting unit they are missing a lot of experienced players. So if we can get early wickets we can put them under pressure."

Indian Eves eye on-field success after off-field drama

PTI ■ NAPIER

The Indian women's cricket team will aim to put behind the off-field furores and bring the focus back on the game when it clashes with New Zealand in a three-match ODI series starting on Thursday.

The Indian women's team was at the centre of a huge controversy after its semi-final exit in the T20 World Cup in the West Indies owing to a bitter public spat between ODI captain Mithali Raj and the then coach Ramesh Powar.

Following the fiasco, WV Raman replaced Powar and this will be his first assignment at the helm. Mithali also had a fallout with T20 skipper and star batter Harmanpreet Kaur but asserted on the eve of the series that she has moved on from all the drama and is focussed on the task at hand.

The side would be aiming to improve its fifth position in the ICC championship table through this series, which is part of the world body's women's championship and will determine qualifiers for the 2021 World Cup. India lost the home leg of the ICC Women's Championship series 2-1 to New Zealand during the last cycle that ran from 2014-2016.

However, the team has enough firepower in stylish opener Smriti Mandhana, who has already scored 488 runs in the championship. New Zealand are presently in second position on the table with 12 points from nine matches while India are fifth with eight points and ahead of Pakistan only on net run rate. Defending champions Australia lead the table with 16 points from nine outings.

The losses at the ICC Women's World Cup 2017 and the Women's World T20 last year put paid to New Zealand's hopes of qualifying for the knockouts. They now get a chance to outdo India in home conditions, which will also help their chances of qualifying directly for the 2021 Women's World Cup, which will be competed here. The hosts and four other top teams will direct entries to the premier event two years from now.

New Zealand are without wicketkeeper-batter Katey Martin, who is unavailable due to work commitments, but have match-winners in the likes of former captain Suzie Bates and Sophie Devine, who leads the championship run table with 592 with three hundreds.

Spin bowler Leigh Kasparek is another one to look out for with 19 wickets in the championship so far.

New Zealand have played England, Pakistan and the Windies so far while India have completed their engagements against Australia, South Africa and Sri Lanka.



Indian skipper Mithali Raj and her Kiwi counterpart pose with the trophy ahead of ODI series opener Blackcaps

New Zealand vs India
Live from 6:30am IST
STAR SPORTS 1 NETWORK