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## India to raise its own SEALs

Armed Forces Special Operations Division to start up in November

RAHUL DATTA ■ NEW DELHI

India will have soon an elite unit of commandos drawn from the three Services to conduct special missions of strategic interest to the country. Named Armed Forces Special Operations Division, the unit will be on the line of the US Special Operations Command, which was responsible for taking out Osama Bin Laden.

The Armed Forces Special Operations Division will start functioning from November first week this year initially with a small team of commandos selected from the Special Forces of the Army, Marine Commandos (MARCOS) of the Navy, and Garud commando force of the Indian Air Forces (IAF).

The special division having 3,000 commandos will be headed by a Major General. The Government recently gave the clearance for the setting up of the squad along with creation of a Cyber Agency to be headed by a Navy officer of the equivalent rank. On the lines of the Commando Division, the Cyber Agency will also have experts from the three Services to fight the fast emerging threat of cyber warfare, officials said here on Thursday.

Both the specialised units will function under the Integrated Defence Staff (IDS) responsible for enhancing coordination and enabling pri-

oritisation across different branches of the armed forces. The IDS will also oversee the setting up of the proposed Space Agency to be headed by an IAF officer for space-based missions.

The Naresh Chandra Committee in 2012 had recommended setting up three commands, namely Special Operations, Cyber, and Space to deal with new challenges facing national security. The committee was asked by the Government to give recommendations on fine tuning higher defence management to enable the armed forces to fight in a fast changing warfare scenario.

As regards the Special Operations Division, officials said here on Thursday besides having commandos from the three Services with the Army playing an eminent role as it has the most experienced professionals for such missions, the unit will have its own dedicated helicopters, transport planes and specialised weaponry besides surveillance equipment for carrying out strategic missions.

Elaborating upon the nature of the proposed Division, they said the specialised teams will be responsible for conducting missions within and outside the country. The missions include targeting strategic installations, high value targets in terms of ter-



rorists and cripple the war fighting capabilities of the enemy. The missions no doubt will be high risk given the strategic importance, sources said.

Once the Division becomes functional in November, plans are already in place to bring together the commandos from the three Services to a central place or station for joint training to conduct special missions during peacetime and war, they said.

Explaining the objective of the Division, officials said the stress is on synergising special operations amongst the

three forces. At present, the Special Forces of the Army, MARCOS and Garuds function separately.

Once the Division comes into being, the special talents and assets of the three Services will be pooled.

The idea to have such a Division, which was earlier to be known as Special Operations Command, was mooted by the Naresh Chandra committee and several military officials after the US Special Operations Command carried out the raid to kill Osama Bin Laden. Officials said that the Indian forces too have similar

capabilities and a combined command of commandos of three Services should be formed to conduct sensitive missions within and outside the boundaries of the country, officials said.

Naresh Chandra panel had also recommended forming of Special Operations Command as India needs to enhance its unconventional and special warfare capabilities to execute politico-military and connected operations to meet unconventional challenges.

The panel also felt at present the full potential of the Special Forces was not exploit-

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- On the lines of the Commando Division, Cyber Agency will have experts from the three Services to fight the fast emerging threat of cyber warfare
- Both the specialised units will function under the Integrated Defence Staff responsible for enhancing coordination and enabling prioritisation across different branches of the armed forces

## Dera chief gets life for murder of journalist

Gurmeet's 3 aides too get life behind bars

PNS ■ CHANDIGARH

A special CBI court in Panchkula on Thursday awarded life imprisonment to Dera Sacha Sauda chief Gurmeet Ram Rahim and three others in the murder case of journalist Ram Chander Chhatrapati.

Along with Ram Rahim, his close aide Dera manager Krishan Lal and carpenters at Dera -Nirmal Singh and Kuldeep Singh -have been awarded life imprisonment by the CBI court.

Special CBI Judge Jagdeep Singh also imposed a fine of Rs 50,000 each on all the four accused.

The same judge had earlier convicted 51-year-old Dera head Ram Rahim in the rape case of two female disciples on August 25, 2017 and sentenced him to 20 years of rigorous imprisonment.

Sirsa-based Dera chief Ram Rahim is already lodged in Rohtak's Sunaria jail after his conviction in 2017 in the rape case had appeared before the court through video conferencing. Other three convicts,



Kuldeep Singh, Nirmal Singh and Krishan Lal were present in the court through video conferencing from Ambala jail.

CBI counsel HPS Verma, while talking to the mediapersons said that Ram Rahim will have to remain in prison for life following Thursday's judgment. All four convicts have been sentenced to life imprisonment," Verma said.

Ram Rahim and the three others were convicted by the CBI court on January 11. All the four were convicted under Section 302 (murder) and 120 B (criminal conspiracy) of the Indian Penal Code. Nirmal Singh and Krishan Lal were also convicted under the Arms Act.

## Navy divers find body in flooded Meghalaya rat-hole coal mine

PNS ■ NEW DELHI/SHILLONG

Weeks after 15 miners got trapped in a flooded rat-hole coal mine in Jaintia Hills district of Meghalaya, the Navy divers, engaged in rescue mission on Thursday, found the body of one of the miners.

The miners were trapped in the illegal mine on December 13 last year after water flooded it. The State Government then launched a multi-agency rescue effort.

"The Navy divers detected the body using underwater remotely operated vehicles (ROV) at a depth of approximately 160 feet and 210 feet inside the rat-hole mine," Navy spokesperson DK Sharma said in New Delhi on Thursday and attached video grabs of the operation on the Twitter.

The body has been pulled up to the mouth of the mine. A team of doctors has been rushed to the site to advise the rescuers on how to pull the body out of the mine, officials said. It was also learnt that some skeletons were also sighted in the mine.

The Navy spokesperson said, "Divers are not able to go



Naval divers look at the captured pictures of one of the 15 miners trapped in illegal rat mines since Dec 13, in Ksan area of East Jaintia Hills on Thursday PTI

down due to the conditions in the mine. So a Remotely Operated Vehicle (ROV) has been employed by the divers for the search. One body detected by Navy divers using ROV at a depth of approximately 160 feet and 210 feet inside a rat-hole mine."

He also said "the depth is 160 feet and the body has been pulled up to the mouth of rat-hole mine and shall be extracted out of the mine under the supervision of doctors."

Meanwhile, sources also said the Navy, which was

pressed into the rescue mission on December 25, has deployed ten divers. The search in the rat hole mine has been on for over three weeks.

On Wednesday night, a ROV located a body and some skeletons. Forensic experts are expected to reach the site on Thursday evening.

They will give directions on how to proceed forward. The bodies have been decomposed due to high sulphur content there which has converted into acid due to presence of water, they added.

## CBI tenure of Asthana, three others clipped

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Government on Thursday curtailed the tenure of CBI Special Director Rakesh Asthana, who was earlier sent on forced leave, with immediate effect, according to an official order issued on Thursday.

The tenures of three more IPS officers in the CBI — Joint Director Arun Kumar Sharma, Deputy Inspector General Manish Kumar Sinha and Superintendent of Police Jayant J Naikavare — have been curtailed, reads the order.

The development comes days after Alok Verma was shunted out of the post of CBI Director and appointed Director General of Fire Services, Civil Defence and Home Guards by a high powered committee headed by Prime Minister Narendra Modi and comprising Justice AK Sikri of the Supreme Court and leader of the Congress in the Lok Sabha Mallikarjun Kharge.

Verma had resigned after being removed as CBI chief. It is not known if his resignation letter has been accepted. The shake up comes days ahead of the January 24 meet for picking a new CBI Director.

## SC lowers bar for dance licence in Maharashtra

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Standards of morality in a society changes with time, the Supreme Court said on Thursday while setting aside certain provisions of a 2016 Maharashtra law which restricted licensing and functioning of dance bars.

The SC, which paved the way for grant of licences and reopening of dance bars in Maharashtra, said the State can neither exercise "social control" with its own "notion of morality" nor take exception to staging dance performances per se.

"It needs to be borne in mind that there may be certain activities which the society perceives as immoral per se. It may include gambling (though that is also becoming a debatable issue now), prostitution, etc. It is also to be noted that standards of morality in a society change with the passage of time," said a Bench of Justices AK Sikri and Ashok Bhushan.

The SC quashed several provisions of the Maharashtra Prohibition of Obscene Dance in Hotels, Restaurant and Bar Rooms and Protection of Dignity of Women (working therein) Act, 2016, including



Bar dancers address the media after Supreme Court's verdict which paves the way for reopening of dance bars in Maharashtra, in Mumbai on Thursday PTI

installation of CCTV cameras in dance bars, saying it was "totally inappropriate and amounts to invasion of privacy".

The court said a particular activity which was treated as immoral few decades ago may not be so now as societal

norms keep changing with time. "Social change is of two types, continuous or evolutionary and discontinuous or revolutionary.

The most common form of change is continuous. This day-to-day incremental change

is a subtle, but dynamic, factor in social analysis," the Bench said.

The court said it cannot be denied that dance performances, in dignified forms, are socially acceptable and nobody takes exceptions to it.

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**CAPSULE**  
SC SEEKS NAMES FOR FIRST LOKPAL BY FEB  
New Delhi: The Supreme Court on Thursday fixed a February-end deadline for the search committee on Lokpal to recommend a panel of names for appointment of the country's first anti-graft ombudsman. P5

## Now film buffs can walk down exquisite memory lane

RAJESH KUMAR ■ NEW DELHI

From silent movies of old time to recent blockbusters, all will feature in the state of the art 'National Museum of Indian Cinema (NMIC) in Mumbai, which will be inaugurated on Saturday by Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

Conceived in 1997, the first-of-its-kind project met with multiple hurdles over the last two decades and missed several deadlines for inauguration. The last deadline was missed in the middle of 2018 due to certain reasons. The museum has been built at a cost of ₹140.61 crore by the NBCC of the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs (MoHUA).

The museum is housed in two buildings — the New Museum Building and the 19th century historic palace Gulshan

Mahal — in the Films Division campus in Mumbai. Bollywood stars Amitabh Bachchan and Akshay Kumar are among those who will attend the event. The displays present showcase the journey of over a hundred years of Indian cinema.

The museum was conceived in 1997. The restoration of Gulshan Mahal, where Films Division was born in 1948, started in 1998, along with building a collection of exhibits. However, various complications kept on impeding the process. The plan was revived in 2012, the year Indian cinema turned 100. The museum, including a new building, was to come up by 2014 but a series of changes in planning led to the delay. Last year, too, it was scheduled to be inaugurated by the prime minister.

According to sources in the



MoHUA, the creation of the museum has been guided by the Museum Advisory Committee headed by noted film maker Shyam Benegal. Kolkata-based National Council of Science Museums (NCSM) was entrusted with designing the museum and the galleries.

"The museum aims to take its visitors through an absorbing journey of over a century of Indian cinema in a story telling mode with the help of visuals, graphics, artifacts, interactive exhibits and multimedia exhibitions," it said.

The museum, built in two phases, is housed in two adja-

## National Museum of Indian Cinema in Mumbai will be inaugurated by Prime Minister

cent buildings. The first one is in the freshly-restored heritage building Gulshan Mahal on the Films Division premises on Peddar Road. It will display a rare collection of static artefacts, vintage equipment, various memorabilia and other exhibits to take visitors through India's over-a-century-old cinematic journey. The second part of the museum is housed in a modern building next to Gulshan Mahal. It will have over 40 interactive galleries devoted to cinema across India, the journey of Indian cinema

from the silent era to talkies, technology and creativity in cinema as well as a children's activity gallery.

Set in an elegant 19th-century heritage bungalow in South Mumbai, the new museum building has four exhibition halls divided under the categories -- Gandhi and cinema, children's films, technology and Indian cinema and cinema across India. The museum has five floors and two Mezzanine floors accounting for a total built up area of 12,000 sq metres. It is divided into nine sections — the origin of cinema, cinema comes to India, Indian silent film, advent of sound, the studio era, the impact of World War II, creative resonance, new wave and beyond, and regional cinema.

An innovation committee headed by lyricist Prasoon

Joshi was also constituted to provide an upgrade to NMIC. NBCC CMD Dr Anoop Kumar Mittal said completing a project that lies at the heart of a congested city, without compromising on the quality of construction, speaks volumes of NBCC's capabilities and engineering expertise. "In an endeavour to make the entire complex a potential 'film hub', the Victorian-Gothic era complex, which once drew luminaries to its musical soirées and cultural gatherings, is now well-equipped with modern amenities and facilities, including expansive auditoriums.

In addition to this, the complex houses a multi-purpose hall that has been designed to be used as a movie preview theatre and for social functions, conferences and other seminars," Mittal said.



# Harish Rawat's Yatra draws huge response

**YATRA OF THE VETERAN CONG LEADER COVERS CHAMOLI AND RUDRAPRAYAG DISTRICTS**

PNS ■ DEHRADUN

While the state Congress president Pritam Singh is all set to embark on his 'Parivartan Yatra' starting from January 21 the 'Myar Maiti' Yatra of the former chief minister Harish Rawat has been generating a tremendous public response. Things are growing interesting as both are inimical to each other and are determined to call the shots for the upcoming general election slated this year, say the observers.

The yatra of the veteran Congress leader covered Chamoli and Rudraprayag districts on Thursday. At Karanprayag in Chamoli district, Rawat's entourage received a huge welcome as the people in their hordes thronged to listen to him. Addressing a public meeting at the main market of Karanprayag, Rawat said that he has come here to remind the people of the developmental model he had envisioned while in power. He listed out the achievement of the



## Cong aping BJP sans success: Bhasin

PNS ■ DEHRADUN

The Bharatiya Janata Party has opined that the Parivartan Yatra of the Congress in Uttarakhand is more of an 'Astitva Bachao Yatra' aimed at preserving its existence. The Congress leaders are staging such "drama" to maintain their existence, opined the BJP.

The BJP State media in charge Devendra Bhasin said that the Parivartan Yatra being undertaken by the Congress in Uttarakhand is nothing more than an activity aimed at maintaining their relevance. "As in most parts of the nation, the Congress in Uttarakhand is also scattered. In such a scenario, the biggest challenge

facing the Congress is ensuring its own survival.

The party in Uttarakhand is not united, it has two 'Yatras' underway in the state.

The Congress is scared of the BJP, which is the reason why its senior leaders are roaming around the state in view of the Lok Sabha elections.

The situation has worsened to such an extent that Congress leaders are now resorting to looking for seats for themselves even outside the state. This is evident from their statements.

Bhasin further said that the condition of the Congress is such that it still lacks any ideas about its own programmes.

It is resorting to aping the programmes that the BJP has

## Question of Astitva for BJP, not Congress: Dasauni

Dehradun: Reacting to the remark made by the BJP spokesperson Devendra Bhasin who has termed the proposed 'Parivartan Yatra' of the Congress as a "Astitva Bachao Yatra", the Congress

spokesperson Garima Dasauni said that the challenge to save existence is before the BJP and not the Congress. She averred that the Congress has nothing to lose and has everything to gain. Dasauni

said that the people would teach the saffron party hard lessons for failing to fulfil the tall promises they dished out to the people in the run-up to the 2014 general election.

PNS

successfully undertaken in the past.

"The Parivartan Yatra is also an imitation of the BJP programme. Earlier, the series

of Press conferences held by the Congress were also an imitation of what had been done by the BJP earlier. However, the way the Congress Press con-

ferences flopped due to the lies of its leaders being exposed, the Parivartan Yatra will also meet with a similar fate," he opined.

Congress-helmed government and lashed out at the Union government and Trivendra Singh Rawat government of Uttarakhand for trashing the developmental interests of the state. He further said that those who had promised to provide 2 crore jobs and deposit Rs 15 lakh into bank account of every citizen have simply vanished.

Launching a diatribe on Trivendra Singh Rawat government, the former CM said that it has stopped many welfare schemes initiated by the

previous government which would cost the BJP dear in the Lok Sabha election.

He said that the people of the country are waiting impatiently to show the saffron party the door of exit. "They are determined to make Rahul Gandhi the next Prime Minister of the country," he said. The former CM also addressed public meetings and led road shows at Rudraprayag, Srinagar, Kirtinagar, Byasi and Rishikesh on the day. The Kedarnath MLA Manoj Rawat

and former minister Mantri Prasad Naithani besides a large number of Congress leaders accompanied Rawat on the day.

Later talking to the media persons in Rishikesh, Rawat said that the purpose of his yatra was to galvanise the Congress workers into the poll mode.

He claimed that the morale of the Congress workers is very high and palpable. "I am sure that the party is all set to bag all the five Lok Sabha seats

in the state in a clean sweep," he added.

Rawat has been hyperactive in the state since he threw a seasonal fruit party in Dehradun on the New Year. He later hosted Khichadi parties in Dehradun and Haldwani which generated much heat in the political environment of the state.

The manoeuvring of the redoubtable leader, however, is not going down well with the camps headed by PCC president Pritam Singh and the

leader of the Opposition in the state Assembly Indra Hridayesh.

"The duo would together go the whole hog to take the wind out of the sails of the former chief minister in course of the yatra the state party chief is about to embark on. But it is clear as anything that Harish Rawat is still head and shoulders over the duo not just in terms of charisma but also political sagacity and craftsmanship," said a political watcher based in Dehradun.

## 5 more Swine flu cases surface in Dehradun

PNS ■ DEHRADUN

Five more cases of the Swine flu have been reported by the health department in Dehradun, taking the number of people afflicted by the dreaded disease this season to 15.

The chief medical officer (CMO) of Dehradun, Dr S K Gupta told The Pioneer on Thursday that swab samples of three patients admitted in Synergy Hospital have been found positive for the disease on the day.

Similarly, two new patients have been reported from Max Hospital while one case has been reported from Indresh Hospital on the day, he added. He further said that seven patients have so far died in Dehradun from Swine flu.

Dr Gupta said that four patients of the diseases are now undergoing treatment at Synergy Hospital while three are admitted at Max Hospital and one patient is at present admitted at Indresh hospital.

The CMO said that all medical professionals have been asked to keep track of the suspected cases of the disease and inform them to the district health department promptly.

**The CMO said that since the disease spreads by droplet infection the people should cover their nose and face with handkerchief while sneezing or coughing. This aside, they should regularly wash hands and face, Dr Gupta said and added that one should immediately consult a doctor in case of consistent fever and breathlessness**

He added that all the hospitals have adequate supply of Tami flu (medicine of swine flu) and triple layer masks.

The CMO said that since the disease spreads by droplet infection the people should cover their nose and face with handkerchief while sneezing or coughing. This aside, they should regularly wash hands and face, Dr Gupta said and added that one should immediately consult a doctor in case of consistent fever and breathlessness. Meanwhile, a training programme was organised at state health directorate on Thursday in which the officials associated with Integrated

Disease Surveillance Programme (IDSP), epidemiologists and microbiologists from all districts participated. Addressing the programme, the director health, Dr R K Pandey said that isolation wards in the hospitals should be earmarked and the medicines should be made available in the districts. He further said that awareness campaign should be launched in the districts during which the people should be informed of the preventive measures they should take to keep the disease at bay. The training was given by state nodal officer, IDSP Dr Pankaj Singh.

## Dehradun-Pantnagar-Pithoragarh route gets air service

PNS ■ DEHRADUN/PANTNAGAR

The Air services on Dehradun-Pithoragarh and Pantnagar-Pithoragarh routes was started on Thursday. Chief minister Trivendra Singh Rawat thanked Prime Minister Narendra Modi for the launch of the services under Ude Desh ka Aam Nagrik (UDAN) scheme.

He said that with the commencement of this service, Pithoragarh can be reached from Dehradun in an hour's time. This will facilitate the people of the areas adjoining Nepal and China border while

also boosting tourism.

At the Naini Saini airport in Pithoragarh, a programme was organised to mark the launch of the air service. The passengers who arrived on the maiden flight from Dehradun to Pithoragarh and those who travelled from Pithoragarh to Pantnagar-Dehradun were garlanded by local women in traditional attire. A cultural troupe also performed Cholia dance on the occasion. Travelling as one of the passengers on the Heritage Aviation flight from Dehradun, the State's Finance and Parliamentary Affairs minister Prakash Pant said that a long standing need of the dis-

trict had been met with the start of this air service.

He also thanked the local residents for their cooperation towards facilitating the construction of the Naini Saini airstrip. He said that after necessary work on the Hindon airport is done, air service between Pithoragarh and Delhi would also be started. At the Pantnagar airport, the director Sanjeev Kumar informed that a total of 18 persons travelled on the flights between Pantnagar and Pithoragarh on a nine-seater plane. The tickets for the flights between these two destinations are fully booked till January 26, he added.



**Candid Notes By Gajendra Singh Negi**

## Attempt aborted?

The damming news reports in which Vivek Doval, the son of the National Security Advisor (NSA) Ajit Doval, is accused of running a hedge fund company from a country famous for being a tax haven and close association of his companies with his brother Shaurya at a time when Lok Sabha elections are round the corner, has rendered a setback on Shaurya Doval's plans to take an electoral plunge from Garhwal constituency. The intention of Doval junior to contest Lok Sabha elections became clear last year when his awareness and social service initiative 'Buland Uttarakhand' was launched. Subsequently his posters appeared in many parts of Garhwal Lok Sabha constituency which provided impetus to the buzz that he would contest from there. However the latest turn of events appear to mar his chances, which apart from giving ammunition to Congress to attack BJP have brought smiles back on the faces of BJP leaders who are in contention for party ticket from the seat which is considered one of the safest bets for the saffron party.

## Fiery females

Things were never so harsh for the leaders of all powerful teacher organisations as they are now, with the department where they used to dictate terms is being helmed by two lady bureaucrats who are not giving much importance to them. One bureaucrat of the duo, a young IAS officer is running the department where officials are known for their laid-back attitude, with an iron hand. She is said to be getting unflinching support of her superior, a senior woman officer, which is augmenting her fire-power. The no nonsense approach of these ladies in power has unnerved the Netas of the department most of whom are camping in Dehradun for years and are making merry on pretext of serving the teaching community. If these ladies were not enough to give them nightmares, the problem of these Netas has been compounded by the Minister who unlike his predecessors is not afraid to throw gauntlet when it comes to dealing with them.

## Scared by Scare

At the time when Swine Flu is hitting most of the northern states of the country and has shown no respect even for a high profile personality like national president of BJP, the health department in the Himalayan state is hell bent on putting a lid on information regarding spread of the disease. The stinginess of the department in reporting swine flu cases is being manifested in minuscule number of swine flu cases this time around. The faux pas of the department however is revealed by unusually high mortality among the cases reported by it. In an attempt ostensibly done to ensure that public panic is prevented on the disease, the beleaguered department has constituted a team which would conduct 'audit' of every patient who had died from the disease. The department is particularly peeved at a private hospital whose swine flu lab is approved by none other than National Centre for Disease Control as this hospital is reporting swine flu cases with alarming regularity. It is learnt that an ambitious Babu heading the department is determined to snuff out the disease from the state and in this endeavour is adopting these tactics.

## Meet held to review LS polls preparedness

**Departments directed to ensure necessary works to ensure smooth election**

PNS ■ DEHRADUN

Chief Secretary Utpal Kumar Singh has instructed all the officers concerned to complete the work for the forthcoming Lok Sabha general elections 2019 as per the time schedule given by the Election Commission of India. He issued this instruction while chairing a meeting regarding the preliminary preparations for the general elections 2019 at secretariat on Thursday. Singh directed all the officers present to seek any guidance required from Chief Electoral Officer (CEO) regarding elections.

He also instructed them to make budgetary arrangements for giving honorarium to home guards and ensure their food arrangement on time.

The state's chief electoral officer Sowjanya said that coordination meeting with neighboring states of Himachal Pradesh and Uttar Pradesh should be held. Further, the training of police personnel should also be conducted on



time. The director general of police, Anil Raturi instructed inspector general (law and order) Deepam Seth to take action in this regard soon.

The DGP further said that the proposal for budgetary allocation for giving honorarium to home guards should be cleared expeditiously. He said that talks had been held with the States of Rajasthan, Himachal Pradesh and Uttar Pradesh for the 12,000 additional home guards required during the elections. He also sought the details of the strong rooms so that security of these strong rooms could be

reviewed.

The CEO also told the Excise commissioner about the daily/weekly liquor monitoring as per the guidelines of the Election Commission of India. The Electricity Department officials were directed to ensure uninterrupted power supply across the state during the election.

They were also directed to ensure proper electricity supply at all the polling centres. Similarly, officials of the drinking water department were directed to facilitate supply of drinking water at the polling centres during the election.

The Rural Development department was asked to hold voter awareness programmes through voluntary organisations and Mahila Mangal Dals. The Information Technology department was asked to ensure internet services by having close coordination with BSNL and TSP to the polling stations.

The CEO informed that for voter and election related information helpline number 1950 has been established in each district.

Discussion was also held in the meeting regarding the election expenditure account and

consistent monitoring of related activities during the polls.

The Education department officials were directed to check the various facilities at polling centres and keep the buildings ready for use. Similarly, the Public Works Department was directed to ensure that all state roads and link roads are open for traffic and that plans are prepared to reopen roads in case they are blocked.

The health department was directed to ensure medical teams during the various phases of polling and to provide necessary medicines and first aid boxes to polling parties along with free medical facilities to any polling staff in need of such medical help during polling in private and government hospitals.

The forest department was instructed to ensure transportation on forest roads and communication facilities in shadow areas through departmental wireless sets.

The social welfare department officials were directed to ensure that differently abled voters are included in the voters list and arrangements are made for their transportation to the polling stations. Additional chief secretary Radha Raturi, principal secretary Anand Vardhan and other officials concerned were also present in the meeting.

## 'Take back ONGC order on security guards'

PNS ■ DEHRADUN

The Personnel Below Officer Ranks (POBR)- the association of armed forces veterans has demanded the ONGC to take back its order for removal of 123 security guards.

The president of the association Shamsher Singh Bisht told the media persons here on Thursday that public sector giant ONGC has made arbitrary changes in age and physical criteria based on which it is not providing extension to those who have crossed the age of 50.

He said that the decision of ONGC violates the contract it had with the Uttarakhand Purva Sainik Kalyan Nigam Limited (UPNL) and against the norms of rehabilitation policy for the armed forces veterans framed by the Union government.

Terming the decision as an insult heaped on the ex-servicemen, Bisht demanded the chief minister Trivendra Singh Rawat to intervene on the issue.

# 'Let quality edu get priority in poll manifestos'

--SMC members to persuade parties

PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

Quality education should be prioritised in the manifestos of all the parties in the coming elections and if they don't focus on this, we will boycott casting our votes, warned members of the School Management Committee (SMC) Federation here on Thursday.

At a State-level SMC Federation meeting, the representatives from nearly 25 districts alleged that due to apathetic attitude of the State Government towards State-



run schools, the quality of education is deteriorating and the sufferers are the children.

The federation has listed nearly 15 demands to put forth before all parties to include these in their election manifestos.

Federation convenor Anupama Pradhan said, "We demand that in State run schools education standards should be improved. For, this a detail education policy should be framed; teachers should be appointed through Staff Selection Board; MLE (multi-lingual education) programme should be implemented in fully tribal schools and 25 per cent should be allotted in State Budget for education."

The members also said apart from giving it to political parties they will also sensitise parents in remote villages.

# 'Graft in every new BJD Govt scheme'

--Officials, ruling party men demanding PC: Cong

PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

Even as the Naveen Patnaik Government has been announcing schemes one after another in the name of development, but it has failed to curb the massive corruption in them, alleged PCC president Niranjan Patnaik.

The Government officials are not helping people without PC and most of the beneficia-



ries are the BJD cadres, slammed Patnaik.

In a Press release, the PCC chief said recently in a shocking incident, poverty-stricken Laxmidhar Behera committed suicide as he was denied Indra Awas for failure to bribe the BDO. The video recorded by

the deceased before his death has gone viral. He has blamed the State Government and the Government machinery for driving him to take the extreme step, told Patnaik.

Launching a blistering attack, Patnaik said that while the State Government was utilizing the calamity and emergency funds for KALIA scheme, it failed to provide a shelter to the needy hapless man.

He charged that party men and elected peoples' representatives of BJD are demanding bribe and PC for Indra Awas and toilets.

# CREDAI property expo in city in April

PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

The CREDAI Odisha Managing Committee has decided to hold a property expo here in April. CREDAI members from Bhubaneswar, Cuttack, Brahmapur, Sambalpur, Puri, Baleswar, Bhadrak, Jajpur, Jharsuguda would participate in the event to showcase their properties.

The expo would provide an opportunity for customers to get various ranges of properties within their budget with competitive prices under a single roof whereas the developers would get a brighter chance to clinch highest deals within short periods.

The yearly expo could not be held last year due to delay in the RERA registration of projects. The CREDAI Odisha and Bhubaneswar office-bear-

**Expo would provide an opportunity for customers to get various ranges of properties within their budget with competitive prices under a single roof**

ers, who were present in the meeting, included chairman DS Tripathy, vice-chairman Binay Krishna Das, president SK Routray, secretary Anil Kumar Agarwal, treasurer Anil Mohanty and CSR Committee chairman Sangram K Sahoo and CREDAI Cuttack president PR Maharana and CREDAI Bhubaneswar secretary Sofia Firdous.

# Swine Flu deaths: Punjab Govt sets up isolation wards

PNS ■ CHANDIGARH

Alarmed after seven Swine Flu deaths and 60 positive cases so far, Punjab Government has set up isolation wards at three Government Medical Colleges, 22 district hospitals and 41 sub-divisional hospitals, besides announcing that the treatment of all suspected and confirmed cases is being provided free of cost.

Swinging into action in view of an acute upsurge in cases of Influenza A H1N1, the state Health Minister Brahm Mohindra on Thursday held a high level meeting with the senior officers of the Health Department to review the state's preparedness and actions being taken for management of swine flu.

Mohindra said that the guidelines for management of Influenza A H1N1 have already been circulated to all the districts. Separate isolation wards for management of Influenza A H1N1 have been established at three Government Medical



Colleges, 22 District Hospitals and 41 Sub-divisional Hospitals of the State, he said.

He said that testing of the cases is being done at GMC Amritsar, Patiala and PGIMER Chandigarh and this test is free of cost. Moreover, all the treatment of Influenza A H1N1 is being provided free of cost to all the suspected and confirmed cases in these government hospitals, he added.

"In 2019, 140 suspected cases were tested free of cost for Influenza A H1N1, and out of these, 60 cases have been found

to be positive. Seven patients with complications and ongoing other illnesses have died in the State," he said.

Mohindra said that the teams of the Health Department visited all the patients and 435 close contacts of these cases were also treated free of cost.

At the same time, the Minister appealed to the people of the State that if a patient is suffering from flu like symptoms, that is cough, cold with high grade fever, he or she should report to a govt.

# UP offers surplus potatoes to Jharkhand

MRITUANJAY KUMAR ■ RANCHI

One of the most consumed vegetables, potato, will soon make inroads to Jharkhand not from West Bengal but from the north-west neighbor Uttar Pradesh. Uttar Pradesh marketing institution Horticulture Cooperative Marketing Federation (HOFED) held a buyer-seller meet in Ranchi on Thursday to promote its surplus potatoes to buyers of Jharkhand on lower prices.

Speaking on the occasion Deputy Director Horticulture Uttar Pradesh said, "It is well known that UP is largest producer of potato in the country. It produces 35 per cent of total production of potato in the country. Total production of the State is 150 lakh metric tonnes and after total consumption by itself, the State has to sell 40 to 45 lakh metric tonnes of potatoes every year on lower prices. Farmers of the State are even not getting prices equal to production cost."



"With a view to provide proper price to the farmers the Horticulture Department of the Uttar Pradesh has held the buyer-seller meeting in the State capital as Jharkhand is not producing potatoes equal to its requirement. It has to import potatoes from outside of the State. Jharkhand brings potatoes from West Bengal and many times the import is halted by the West Bengal. Now UP is biggest exporter of potato. It is clear that Jharkhand is neighbouring State of UP and there

will be no transporting problem," Yadav added.

Director, the State Vegetable Marketing Federation, Jharkhand, Surendra Singh said, "Jharkhand is one of the largest producer of green vegetables and it is not producing potato as much as its requirement. At present, the proposal of the HOFED is very good as the State is totally dependent on import of potato. I would inform about the Secretary of the department and seek her advice on the issue."

# Vyasaganagar school sports meet begins



PNS ■ JAJPUR ROAD

A three-day 10th annual sports meet of the Vyasaganagar Public School kicked off here on Thursday. School Principal Debasmita Sahu presided over the inaugural programme.

Chief guest Kalinganagar

ADM Santosh Kumar Mishra inaugurated the programme hoisting the flag in the presence of Jajpur Road police station IIC Amitav Mohapatra, school president Bharat Bhusan Deo, Chandra Sekhar Panda and Vice-Principal Narayan Chandra Raul.

During the three-day pro-

gramme different events would be held followed by cultural programmes. Among others, teachers Raghunath Mishra, Prasant Patnaik, Harapriya Kar, Maheswari Behera, Pragya Praramita Rout, Amiya Rana, Biswa Ranjan Patnaik, Debasmita Panda, Susant Sahoo and Truptimayee Jena were present.

# S'pur-T'garh electric traction completed

PNS ■ SAMBALPUR

On completion and commissioning of electric traction between the Sambalpur and Titilagarh railway stations in the Jharasuguda-Vizianagaram railway section of the East Coast Railway (ECOR), the Howrah-Jagadalpur Samaleswari

Express, Howrah-Titilagarh Ispat Express, Sambalpur-Nanded Express and Sambalpur-Rayagada Inter City Express are now running on electrification traction.

The Samleswari Express between Howrah and Rayagada, Ispat Express, Intercity Express and Nagabali Express are now running with

electric locomotive.

As the electric locomotives are pollution free, energy efficient, environmental friendly and would save diesel, the Sambalpur Division is going for mass electrification and very soon all the trains in the division would be taken in electric traction.

**Samleswari Express between Howrah and Rayagada, Ispat Express, Intercity Express and Nagabali Express are now running with electric locomotive. Electric locomotives are pollution free, energy efficient, environmental friendly and would save diesel, the Sambalpur Division is going for mass electrification and very soon all the trains in the division would be taken in electric traction**

# AAP carries door-to-door survey in Haryana

PNS ■ CHANDIGARH

Aam Aadmi Party's Haryana unit on Thursday while quoting its survey claimed that 80 per cent of the people of Haryana believe that BJP led State Government lacks in commitment to improve condition of schools, hospital, and address the issue of unemployment and woes of farming community. "This information has come out during the door-to-door survey conducted by the Aam Aadmi Party in Haryana. Under this campaign, the party workers have covered 3.15 lakh houses in Haryana so far," said Gopal Rai, Delhi Cabinet Minister and in-charge of AAP Haryana unit.

The Aam Aadmi Party had earlier launched this campaign in Delhi too. After that success, it is now being implemented in Haryana, he said. Gopal Rai said that under this survey, the party workers

are knocking at every house in Haryana and asking them questions about the state's schools, hospitals, farmers, unemployed youth etc.

"The party workers are also appraising people about the work done by the AAP government in Delhi and bold decisions taken by Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal in the field of education and health. When asked about Haryana Chief Minister, most people said that such bold decisions can not be taken by him," claimed the AAP leader.

AAP Haryana unit chief Naveen Jaihind said that more than 750 teams are operating these campaigns in different villages of Haryana. Jaihind said that people are waiting to uproot the BJP government in the next elections. Notably, the AAP has announced to contest on all 10 Lok Sabha seats and 90 assembly seats of Haryana, election for which are scheduled to be held this year.

# Cong obstructing judicial process in Ram Temple case

PNS ■ RANCHI

The BJP wants a grand temple of Lord Ram at his birthplace in Ayodhya, and will continue its efforts to build it in a Constitutional way, whereas Congress is trying to obstruct the judicial process through its lawyers. Congress does not want to solve the issue of Ayodhya said, in-charge of the State Lok Sabha Election Committee, Mangal Pandey, while addressing the press conference here on Thursday.

Speaking on the occasion Pandey said, "The Grand Alliance is just a deception, the political parties that were born in protest against the Congress party and the working culture of the Congress, today they are uniting for power and self betterment." "If a political party can take the country on the path of progress and on new heights of development, it is only the BJP. Under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi in 2019, it is certain that the party will form Government in the Centre with much bigger majority than present.

# XIMB to hold 'TEDxXIMB' on January 20

PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

The Xavier Institute of Management, Bhubaneswar (XIMB) would hold again its annual internationally acclaimed event 'TEDxXIMB' here on January 20 on the theme "Chakravayuh: The inescapable formation".

The event aims to uphold the passion and commitment to ideas in and around the academics, business and social circles in Odisha.

The TEDxXIMB 2019 would see a counter-terrorism specialist Lt General Satish

**Event aims to uphold the passion and commitment to ideas in and around the academics, business**

Dua, Youtuber and "The Soch Network", 'D Talks', 'Dare to Deliver', "The Divyanshu Damani Show" founder Divyanshu Damani, crusader for equal rights for the differently-abled 'Dr Sruti Mohapatra and The Jungle Crows founder Paul Walsh.

Besides, it would also see Megha Vishwanath, Sachin Das Burma and AL Jagannath.

# Flight services from Jeypore in offing

PNS ■ JEYPORE

The intra-State commercial air service is likely to resume from the Jeypore airstrip in Koraput district by the first week of February this year.

Sources said the airstrip's construction work is in progress. While the project is almost completed, some pending work would be done by March this year.

The formalities required to obtain permission from the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) has also been almost completed. The

district administration is likely to apply for a licence in January last week, the sources said.

Officials from the Air Traffic Control (ATC)-Communication are likely to visit the airstrip this week for an inspection of the construction work and review the infrastructure related to air traffic control.

Notably, the flight services from Jeypore are now shut since December 2016. Last year, the airstrip was included under the UDAN scheme for regional air connectivity.

<p><b>इलाहाबाद बैंक</b> विश्ववास की परंपरा</p>		<p><b>ALLAHABAD BANK</b> A tradition of trust</p>	
<p>Ref No.: HO/Rec/WFD/2163</p>		<p>Head Office, Recovery Department Kolkata</p>	
<p>M/s Babloo Shuttering Works, H.No. 283, Shankarpur, Sahaspur P.O. Sahaspur, Dehradun. Pin -248198</p>		<p>Mr. Babloo S/o Sh. Phool Singh H.O. 283, Shankarpur, Sahaspur P.O. Sahaspur, Dehradun. Pin -248198</p>	
<p><b>Show Cause Notice for Declaring as Wilful Defaulter</b> A/c- M/s Babloo Shuttering Works &amp; its Proprietor : Mr. Babloo Branch: Dehradun</p>			
<p>Dear Sir, At your firm's request, Bank through its Dehradun branch sanctioned term loan of Rs. 25.00 lac on 08.04.2010, which was duly accepted by you/ the firm and accordingly, you/ the firm have executed various documents/agreements &amp; also availed the facility by drawing the amount. You/the firm have defaulted in meeting its payment/repayment obligations to the bank as per terms of sanction. Despite our best efforts you failed to regularize your account deliberately and at last as per RBI guidelines your account was classified as Non Performing Asset on 22.12.2011. Bank has also observed number of misconducts in the operation of account &amp; non-compliance of terms &amp; conditions of sanction and more specifically undernoted ones which is/are out of the four actions set out by Reserve Bank of India for declaration as Wilful Defaulter</p>			
<p><b>Action of the unit /firm, which is/are out of the four action set out by Reserve Bank of India for declaration as Wilful Defaulter</b></p>		<p><b>Reason &amp; evidence which proves the action of the firm &amp; also support their justification for declaration as Wilful Defaulter</b></p>	
<p>The Unit has defaulted in meeting its payment/repayment obligation to the lender and has also disposed of or removed the movable fixed assets or immovable property given by it as a security for the purpose of securing a term loan without the knowledge of the bank/lender.</p>		<p>Term Loan of Rs.25.00 lac was sanctioned to the borrower on 09.04.2010 for purchasing of iron shuttering plates. Loan was disbursed on 09.04.2010 &amp; amount of Rs.25.00 lac was remitted through his savings bank account to M/s Shubham Traders, purported supplier of the said items, against their quotation No.113 dt. 25.03.2010. But, subsequently it is reported that the borrower has disposed off the goods and closed the unit. During various visits by bank officials advised the borrower for repayment of dues. In last visit on 08.12.2017, it was found that no shop or office was available at the recorded address of the firm. The borrower is not traceable. Branch has issued letter No. nil dated 18.02.2011 &amp; 31.03.2011 to the firm to regularise the account. A legal notice dated 17.02.2012 was issued to the borrower firm by Bank's advocate for default in repayment of loan amount. The branch has also issued a letter no.DDN/BR/ADV/2017-18/54 dated 20.01.2018 specifying the diversion of Bank's fund and sought their reply. But no reply/ response have been received by the branch so far from the firm/proprietor. From the above it is clear that the firm/its proprietor have disposed of or removed the movable fixed assets or immovable property given by it as a security for the purpose of securing a term loan without the knowledge of the bank/lender. The account has been declared fraud due to submission of fake property documents and diversion of fund.</p>	
<p>The above evidence of wilful default on the part of the firm &amp; its proprietor have been examined by the Bank's wilful Defaulter Identification Committee headed by the Executive Director. The committee has concluded that an event of wilful default has occurred.</p>			
<p>Take Notice that in view of RBI guidelines the names of the firm M/s Babloo Shuttering Works &amp; its proprietor Mr. Babloo have been proposed by the Bank due to the above reason(s) to declare as wilful defaulter. In case you desire, you can make a representation/submissions in the regard within 15 days of receipt of this letter here of to the Bank. Beside this, if you desire, a personal hearing can also be given. Please note in case no representation and/or no request for said personal hearing is received within stipulated period or Bank is not satisfied with the representation/submission made by you, Bank will go ahead with its decision of declaring &amp; also informing RBI, CIBIL &amp; other credit information Companies names to the firm &amp; its proprietor as wilful defaulter and also will take appropriate legal action.</p>			
<p>Your faithfully (S K Saha) Asstt. General Manager (Recovery) On behalf of the Wilful Defaulter Identification Committee</p>			

**14<sup>th</sup> Bn ITB Police Force, Notice Inviting e-Tenders**

The Commandant, 14<sup>th</sup> Bn ITBP, Jajardewal, Pithoragarh (UK) on behalf of President of India invites online item rate tender on two bid system of following work:-

1. NIT no. 125-32 Name of Work: Construction of Coy office ops room, SO's Accommodation, 08 nos jawan barrack, Recreation hall, Kitchen cum dining hall, Qtr Guard, clothing, ration, WT Office, MI room, Tradesmen shop, Training shed and stable building at Milam post of 14<sup>th</sup> Bn ITBP Jajardewal Pithoragarh (UKD). Estimated Cost Rs. 9,18,10,699/= Earnest Money Rs. 18,36,214/= Period of completion 36 (Thirty Six) months, Last date and time of submission of bid 04-02-19 upto 1700 Hrs.

The bid forms (Tender form) and other details can be obtained from the website [www.eprocure.gov.in](http://www.eprocure.gov.in)

FOR COMMANDANT  
14<sup>th</sup> BN ITBP POLICE  
davn 19112/11/0384/1819

DECONGESTING DELHI

# ₹4,405 cr highway project approved

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

In a major move to decongest Delhi, the Ministry of Road Transport and Highways (MoRTH) has approved a 155-km six-lane highway project worth ₹4,405 crore under the Bharatmala scheme.

The roads include Akshardham to Loni Border at Delhi-UP Border (14.75 kms), Delhi-UP Border-Mandola-Eastern Peripheral Expressway (EPE) intersection (16.57 kms), EPE junction to start of Shamli bypass (61.4 kms) and start of Shamli bypass to Saharanpur bypass (62.7 kms).

In a letter to Delhi BJP President Manoj Tiwari, Union Road Transport and Highways minister Nitin Gadkari announced that the four projects have been approved by the ministry worth ₹4405 crore to decongest the national capital.

The project Akshardham to UP Border and Mandola in Delhi-UP Border to EPE intersection will cover 31.32 kms and it will cost ₹2900 crore. Currently, commuters from Western UP have to pass through the east Delhi areas such as Shastri Park, New Usmanpur, Khajuri Khas and

Bhajanpura to reach Saharanpur highway that starts at Loni. The new highway will allow commuters to avoid the congested areas of east Delhi and reach the Saharanpur-bound national highway NH-709B near Loni from the NH-24 directly.

The new roads will connect northeastern parts of the Delhi and facilitating those travelling to Shamli, Mandola and Saharanpur in western UP.

The road would start from the NH-24 near the Akshardham flyover and touch the Delhi-Saharanpur NH-709B near Garhi Jassi in Loni Dehat.

The proposed road would be aligned along the Noida Link Road and the Marginal Bund Road in Delhi and Baghat Road in Uttar Pradesh (UP). In Delhi, the road would pass through Ramesh Park, Geeta Colony, Shastri Park, Sonia Vihar Extension and West Karawal Nagar. While in UP, it would pass through Ankur Vihar, Welcome City and Indrapuri before ending at the Pooja Pusta Police Chowki in Loni.

The stretch connecting Akshardham to Khajuri Khas

is known for traffic bottleneck in the national capital.

"The development of Akshardham-Geeta Colony-Shastri Park-Khajuri Khas-Delhi-UP Border at Loni have been approved to decongest the national Capital under Bharatmala projects", Gadkari said adding that this road road has now been declared as National Highway no 709 B.

"The project is being given top priority. This road will be developed as six lane access controlled road with service roads on both sides", he said.

"Further, from Akshardham to EPE intersection, there is a provision of 19 kms of elevated section which would help in minimizing acquisition of land and segregation of local traffic," the letter read.

According to the ministry, the bids for the Akshardham to UP Border and Delhi-UP Border-Mandola to EPE intersection projects are being invited by next week. The work has been awarded for the project EPE junction to Shamli bypass that will cost ₹725 crore. The project connecting Shamli bypass to Saharanpur bypass will cost ₹780 crore.

# ISRO set to launch satellite to help MHA secure borders

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

A satellite will be launched by the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) exclusively for the Home Ministry to help it further strengthen its frontiers. The move is part of recommendations made by a task force on the use of space technology in improving border management which have been accepted by Home Minister Rajnath Singh.

Later speaking to media, Union Minister for State for Space Jitendra Singh and ISRO Chief K Sivan said that India has developed a border management technology. Speaking at the launch of a programme called UNNATI, an initiative of the Indian Space Research Organisation, Singh said, "I was amazed the other day that we have actually started a technology the integrated comprehensive border management — which is a pioneer project started in the international border of Pakistan."

You can virtually enter inside the house of a person living across the border. So such minute precision has been made by the camera." He said space technology is used in infrastructure works, construction of roads, intersection of Railway network, manning of railway lines and disaster management. UNNATI (UNISpace



ISRO Chairperson K Sivan presents memento to Mos for Department of Space Jitendra Singh during the inauguration of "UNNATI" (UNISpace Nanosatellite Assembly and Training by ISRO) at UR Rao Satellite Centre (URSC) in Bengaluru on Thursday

Nanosatellite Assembly and Training by ISRO) is a capacity building programme on nanosatellite development.

It provides opportunities to the participants from developing countries to strengthen their capabilities in assembling, integrating and testing of nanosatellites, ISRO said in a

statement. UNNATI programme is planned for three years in three batches and will target to benefit 90 delegates from 45 countries, the space agency said.

Each batch will be for 8-week duration and will comprise theoretical course work on nanosatellite definition, util-

## In short term, immediate needs of border guarding forces will be met by procurement of high resolution imagery and hiring of bandwidth for communications

ity, laws governing their impact on space debris, design drivers, reliability and quality assurance and hands-on training on assembly, integration and testing of nanosatellites.

To execute the project in a time bound manner, a short, medium and long-term plan has been proposed for implementation in five years in close coordination with the ISRO and the Defence Ministry. "Major recommendations of the report are to build capacity in border guarding forces to use space resources for security, operational planning and border infrastructure development," the statement issued by the Home Ministry said.

In short term, immediate needs of border guarding forces will be met by procurement of high resolution imagery and hiring of bandwidth for communications, it said. "In mid-term, one satellite is being launched by the ISRO for exclusive use of the MHA," the statement said.

The task force headed by Joint Secretary (Border Management), having members from the BSF, the Department of Space and BM division of the Home Ministry, consulted all stakeholders including border guarding forces, the ISRO, National Security Council Secretariat (NSCS) and the Ministry of Defence to finalise the report.

## IN SHORT

### RS SECRETARIAT HOLDS EVENT ON HARASSMENT

**New Delhi:** In a first of its kind since an Act of Parliament came into force against sexual harassment of women at workplace in 2013, Rajya Sabha Secretariat organised a two-day sensitisation workshop on various aspects of the issue and the provisions of the Act. The workshop was inaugurated by Secretary General Dush Deepak Verma. Officials of the secretariat and professionals of RSTV attended the workshop being held in association with Institute of Secretariat Training and Management (ISTM).

### INDUS FOOD-II SECURES BUSINESS WORTH \$1 BN

**New Delhi:** The second edition of Indus Food saw business deals and agreements worth \$1 billion negotiated. "We had 800 global buyers from 78 countries who participated in Indus Food. In the first edition, we had participation from 43 countries which generated business worth \$650 million, and this year, we managed to secure business transactions worth over \$1 billion," said Trade Promotion Council of India (TPCI) Chairman Mohit Singla. TPCI had organised the two-day Indus Food at India Expo inaugurated by Union Minister Harsimrat Kaur.

### 'SHAH DOING WELL. WILL BE DISCHARGED SOON'

**New Delhi:** BJP president Amit Shah, who has been admitted to AIIMS for treatment of swine flu, is doing well and will be discharged in a day or two, the party said Thursday. Shah had informed people about his illness Wednesday in a tweet. "National President of BJP, Amit Shah ji, is doing well. He will be discharged in a day or two. Thanks everyone for your good wishes!" the party's media head and Rajya Sabha member Anil Baluni said.

### HIRAMATSU FELICITATES ONKAR S KANWAR

**New Delhi:** Ambassador of Japan to India, Kenji Hiramatsu on Thursday hosted a ceremony to felicitate Onkar S Kanwar, Chairperson of the India-Japan Business Cooperation Committee and Chairperson of Apollo Tyres, on receiving the Decoration of the Order of the Rising Sun, Gold and Silver Star last November in recognition to his outstanding contribution to strengthen ties between the two nations. The reception enjoyed the presence of the former Prime Minister, Manmohan Singh, among other dignitaries representing the Indian public and private sectors.

### BILL CONGRATULATES GOVT FOR AYUSHMAN

**New Delhi:** Microsoft co-founder Bill Gates on Thursday congratulated the Indian Government for the successful completion of the first 100 days of the healthcare scheme Ayushman Bharat as its launch. His response was in the wake of Union Health Minister JP Nadda tweet in which he informed that 6.85,000 beneficiaries have availed free health care in just first 100 days of the scheme and the number is rising rapidly.

# Cong alleges Doval's son started Cayman Islands hedge fund after DeMo

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Congress on Thursday alleged National Security Adviser Ajit Doval's son Vivek started a hedge fund in Cayman Islands days after demonetisation and demanded a probe by the Reserve Bank (RBI) into FDI inflows from the tax haven.

Senior Congress leader Jairam Ramesh also asked the RBI to make public details of FDI inflows from Cayman Islands since demonetisation, which he claimed were to the tune of ₹8,300 crore during 2017-18 and equalled total funds flowing into India between 2000 to 2017. Ramesh, however, did not substantiate his allegations with any documentary evidence.

For his part, CPI-M leader Sitaram Yechury also tweeted demanding answers from Doval citing a media report on the issue to allege that the role of the PMO and its top security official was under a "dark shadow". He said it was the prime minister's responsibility to ensure the NSA's accountability as he was not accountable to Parliament being an unelected official, and asserted "silence amounts to culpability".

Yechury said, "The role of Modi's PMO and its top security official is under a dark shadow. Serious questions of probity and propriety get more weight due to NSA Doval's role in the ₹59,000 crore Rafale scam, where he was illegally negotiating in Paris with the French. Doval, who has grabbed more and more power for himself under Modi, can't be above the rule of law."

Ramesh at a Press conference alleged that a hedge fund GNY Asia was opened in Cayman Islands on November 21, 2016, 13 days after demonetisation, with Vivek Doval as one of its directors. The former Union Minister also alleged

that while there are three more directors of GNY, one of them is Don W Ebanks whose name appears in Panama's 'Paradise papers' also referred as 'Panama papers'.

Alleging that "there is certainly a link between demonetisation and FDI inflows from Cayman islands", he said this is a "round tripping of money" and demanded a probe. "This is not FDI, it is round tripping of demonetised money, and has a direct link to black money.. There should be a probe into the FDI that came into the country from Cayman Islands after demonetisation," he demanded, saying, "GNA owes an explanation to the country".

"What is the role of GNY Asia in FDI inflows. We demand that the Reserve Bank makes public all funds from where money has come into the country from Cayman Islands," Ramesh said. He said the RBI should publish details of all those who brought in money from Cayman islands. "There should be complete information on this made available to the public," he said, adding "the RBI should probe the identity of funds who brought in ₹8300 crore in one year".

"It is not natural that we raised this question. A Prime Minister of a neighbouring country had to resign after his name appeared in the Panama papers," he said, alleging that the name of a former chief minister's son also appears in these papers. Ramesh also sought to know what are the relations between Vivek Doval's fund GNY Asia and Zeus Capital, another company in which his brother Shaurya Doval has business interests.

Cayman Islands are an autonomous British Overseas territory in the western Caribbean Sea, which is considered a tax haven.

# CBI registers cases against 6 more shelter homes in Bihar

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The CBI has registered six fresh cases on connection with the alleged abuse of inmates in shelter homes in Bihar, taking the tally to nine.

The cases were registered on the basis of details given in the Tata Institute of Social Sciences (TISS) audit report of shelter homes in Bihar. The TISS report brought sordid state of mismanagement, abuse and unlivable conditions. Following the TISS report, the Supreme Court had also directed the CBI to probe all the 17 cases of abuse at the various shelter homes.

In its May 2018 report, TISS had expressed "grave concerns" on the management of 17 shelter homes, including 'Balika Grih' in Muzaffarpur where 34 girls had reported abuse at the hands of office-bearers and outsiders.

The audit report was submitted to the State Government and later became the basis of a SC directive for a CBI probe into the Muzaffarpur shelter home case. The apex court later handed over the remaining 16

cases to the agency.

The CBI, which had on Wednesday booked two shelter homes in Bhagalpur and Gaya, registered six new cases against Novelty Welfare Society, which ran a short-stay home in Munger district; Panaah shelter home, also in same district; Gram Swaraj Sewa Sansthan which ran a short-stay home in Kaimur; Om Sai Foundation which ran sewa kutir in Muzaffarpur; and short-stay home run by Ikard and Kaushal Kutir run by Don Bosco Tech Society in Patna.

Director of Novelty Welfare Society and others used to lock the room of a mentally sick woman inmate causing wrongful restraint and confinement and ill-treated other inmates.

The NGO also sublet a portion of the shelter home for a rent of Rs 10,000 and did not provide proper ventilation or sanitation facilities for the inmates, the FIR alleged.

In the case of 'Panaah', it is alleged that office-bearers of the home "physically exploited" the inmates forcing them to do manual work including cook-

ing and cleaning, the FIR stated.

The FIR said the shelter home was being run from a building meant for an observatory home and was not "livable" for young children.

The CBI has booked Sudarshan Ram, Pintu Pal and Tara Devi, all office-bearers of Gram Swaraj Sewa Sansthan, which ran the short-stay home at Lalpur in Kaimur district.

It is alleged that the security guard was sexually abusive, passing lewd comments and physically assaulting women and girls inmates.

## CBI arrests SAI officials

**New Delhi:** The CBI has taken into custody a few officers and some other persons Thursday in connection with a case of alleged corruption in Sports Authority of India (SAI), officials said. The arrests were made during searches at the sports administrator's office in Delhi's Lodhi Road area, they said.

## Submit panel of names for Lokpal by Feb end: SC

**New Delhi:** The Supreme Court on Thursday requested the search committee on Lokpal to recommend by the end of February a panel of names for appointing the country's first anti-graft ombudsman.

A bench headed by Chief Justice Ranjan Gogoi asked the Centre to make available requisite infrastructure, manpower, secretarial assistance and others to enable the committee, which is headed by former apex court judge Ranjana Prakash Desai, to commence its work immediately and conclude it within the time frame.

The Bench, also compris-

ing justices LN Rao and SK Kaul, ordered this after Attorney General KK Venugopal apprised the court that due to certain difficulties like lack of office space, infrastructure, manpower and secretariat, "possibly, the search committee has felt handicapped in convening its meetings and in holding its deliberations". It also noted in its order that the eight-member committee, which was constituted by a Government notification of September 27 last year, had not undertaken any deliberations till January 16 and a meeting was held only on Wednesday.

## SC to hear plea for security of women who entered Sabarimala

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court will hear on Friday a plea of two women seeking round-the-clock security after they recently entered the Sabarimala temple in Kerala despite protests right-wing Hindu groups.

A Bench of Chief Justice Ranjan Gogoi and Justices LN Rao and S K Kaul said that it would hear the plea filed by two women — Kanakdurga and Bindu — on Friday after senior advocate Indira Jaising contended the matter should be

heard urgently as one of the women was assaulted by her mother in-law.

The plea sought round-the-clock security to both the women due to threat to their life for entering into the hilltop shrine.

The plea sought directions to all authorities to allow women of all age groups to enter the temple without any hindrance and to ensure security and safe passage, including police security to women wishing to enter the temple in future.

## Justices Dinesh Maheshwari, Sanjiv Khanna to be sworn in as SC judges today

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Karnataka High Court Chief Justice Dinesh Maheshwari and Justice Sanjiv Khanna of the Delhi High Court will be sworn in as judges of the Supreme Court on Friday.

The Government had notified on Wednesday the appointment of justices Maheshwari and Khanna as judges of the apex court.

Chief Justice of India Ranjan Gogoi will administer the oath of office to the two judges on Friday, an official cir-

cular said. "The swearing-in-ceremony of Justices Dinesh Maheshwari and Sanjiv Khanna as judges of the Supreme Court will be held on January 18, 2019 at 10:30 AM in the Chief Justice's court," the circular said.

The five-member SC Collegium, comprising CJI Gogoi and justices A K Sikri, S A Bobde, NV Ramana and Arun Mishra, on January 10 recommended names of justices Maheshwari and Khanna for elevation as apex court judges.

# Cut down on meat, sugar intake to save world: Scientists

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

To prevent unavoidable environmental catastrophe in the wake of burgeoning population, climate change and biodiversity loss, scientists have called for change in the current diet trends across the globe — cut down consumption of red meat and sugar by half and double your intake of nuts, fruits, vegetables, and legumes by 2050.

The EAT-Lancet Commission study released on Thursday also said that fossil fuels should be eliminated in agricultural production, which

should prevent further losses to biodiversity, and bring about improvements in fertiliser and water use efficiency.

The study which was funded by the Wellcome Trust and EAT (specifically funding from the Wellcome Trust and Stordalen Foundation) said that daily dietary pattern of a planetary health diet should consist of approximately 35% of calories as whole grains and tubers, protein sources mainly from plants — but including approximately 14g of red meat per day — and 500g per day of vegetables and fruits.



Consumption is expected to increase as the global population grows to 10 billion by 2050 while it will also become wealthier, with an expectation that more animal-based foods

will be consumed as a result. But without change, current trends will lead to climate change, biodiversity loss, increased pollution, and unsustainable changes in water and land use.

"The food we eat and how we produce it determines the health of people and the planet, and we are currently getting this seriously wrong," says one of the study's authors, Professor Tim Lang of the City, University of London.

"We need a significant overhaul, changing the global food system on a scale not seen before in ways appropriate to

each country's circumstances."

The findings represent the first scientific targets for healthy diets via sustainable food production systems, which operate within the planet's ability to produce food and promotes diets consisting of a variety of plant-based foods, with low amounts of animal-based foods, refined grains, highly processed foods, and added sugars, and with unsaturated rather than saturated fats.

Using these targets, the report's authors modelled various scenarios to develop a sustainable food system and deliv-

er healthy diets by 2050.

They found that major dietary changes, improved food production processes and reduced food waste are needed for planet to continue to be sustainable, and added that no single measure on its own would be enough to stay within the limits.

They added that global collaboration would also be required, such as changes to the agriculture industry to focus on more varied nutrient-rich crops and increased governance of land and ocean use.

"Humanity now poses a

threat to the stability of the planet. Sustainability of the food system must therefore be defined from a planetary perspective," said the study's co-lead, Commissioner Professor Johan Rockström.

"There is no silver bullet for combatting harmful food production practices, but by defining and quantifying a safe operating space for food systems, diets can be identified that will nurture human health and support environmental sustainability." The Stockholm Resilience Centre was the scientific coordinator of the report.

BATTLE TIGHTENS UP FOR LS POLLS

# Regional parties will be kingmaker: Didi

SAUGAR SENGUPTA ■ KOLKATA

In a significant statement made barely hours before she goes to host one of the biggest mega rallies Bengal has ever seen in the history of free India, Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee on Thursday said regional parties would play a crucial role in forming the next Government in Delhi.

With the BJP unlikely to win more than 125 seats in the coming general elections the "federal parties" will play the decisive role in forming the new Government, Banerjee said even as she visited the Brigade Parade Ground to oversee the preparations of January 19 mega rally being hosted by her party Trinamool Congress.

The rally is likely to break all the previous records Banerjee has already gone on record saying even her party colleagues expect an attendance of more than 30 lakh. "So much so that not all people will be able to come at the Brigade Ground and so we have arranged for them giant screens at the other corners of the city," said a senior party leader.



West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee with her nephew and party MP Abhishek Banerjee (R) and Kolkata Police Commissioner Rajeev Kumar (L) during the visit of Brigade Parade Ground ahead of party's mega rally in Kolkata on Thursday PTI

Banerjee said "the Opposition mega rally will sound the death knell for the BJP which will not get more than 125 seats," adding the "regional or federal parties will make the decision regarding who will form the Government in New Delhi."

"BJP will not get more than 125 seats, the Congress will make an estimate of their own tally," Banerjee said adding the federal parties will be in a decisive position to form the Govt. Insisting that she "would not impose our views on other parties," Banerjee said "we will

listen to what the other leaders say as it is a meeting of the all parties and not our own party."

Senior leaders like former PM HD Deve Gowda, NCP chief Sharad Pawar, K'taka Chief Minister HDK, his Andhra Pradesh counterpart N Chandrababu Naidu, former Arunachal CM Gegong Apang, NC leaders Farooq Abdullah, Omar Abdullah, SP chief Akhilesh Yadav, RJD leader Tejaswi Yadav, Delhi CM Arvind Kejriwal, DMK leader Stalin and "even a BSP representative would attend the mega rally," Banerjee said.

# 10% EWS quota due to political will of my Govt: Modi

Ahmedabad: Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Thursday said the Constitutional amendment to provide 10 per cent reservation to economically poor in the general category was achieved due to the political will of his Government and would be implemented from this academic year.

Addressing a gathering after inaugurating the 1500 bed Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel Institute of Medical Science and Research, Modi said the economic reservation has been given without impacting the existing social reservations.

"The new reservation will be implemented in 40,000 colleges across 900 universities in the country from this academic year. The number of seats will be increased by 10 per cent," he said.

Modi said his Government was committed to provide equal opportunities to all sections of the society. The Institute will be linked to the Ayushman Bharat scheme so that poor people can avail medical facilities free of cost, he said. In 100 days, seven lakh poor people have received treatment under the Pradhan Mantri Ayushman Bharat



PM Modi arrives to inaugurate 'Vibrant Gujarat Global Trade Show' in Ahmedabad on Thursday PTI

scheme, he said.

This will be the first Government hospital to have a helipad, he said, adding the new medical facility will help boost health sector in the state.

"Cleanliness and health-care has always been the prime agenda of Ahmedabad municipal corporation since the time Sardar Patel was the mayor. The hospital project started in 2012 and I am mesmerised by the way it has turned out to be," he said. PTI

# Magnitude 6 quake jolts Nicobar Islands region

Port Blair: A strong earthquake of magnitude 6 hit the seismically active Andaman and Nicobar Islands Thursday, the National Centre for Seismology (NCS) said.

There was no report of loss of life or damage to property.

The earthquake hit the region at 8.43 am and its epicentre was Nicobar Islands region, the NCS, an institute under the Ministry of Earth Sciences (MoES) tracking seismological activities, said.

No tsunami alert was issued as sea levels around the Andaman Nicobar archipelago showed no major rise, said SPS Sheno, Director, Indian National Centre for Ocean Information Services (INCOIS).

The INCOIS is an institute under the MoES and it has a network buoys and other apparatus to check rise in the sea level in case of a tsunami. It alerts not only the Indian authorities, but also its neighbours in case of a tsunami.

All of the Andaman and Nicobar Islands lie in Zone V. The entire island chain is also prone to tsunamis both from large local quakes and also from massive distant shocks. PTI

# RTI applicants allegedly sent condoms in response to queries, probe on

Bikaner: Rajasthan's Hanumangarh district administration on Thursday began a probe into allegations that two RTI applicants were sent envelopes containing condoms in response to their queries, an official said.

RTI applicants Vikas Chaudhary and Manohar Lal, residents of Chani Badi in Bhadra tehsil of the district, had sought information related to development work done there in 2001.

After their second appeal, the Rajasthan Information Commission had directed the gram panchayat to provide information to the applicants. They had received two separate envelopes.

The inquiry was initiated after a video purportedly showing applicants finding condoms inside RTI envelopes had gone viral.

"RTI applicants have reiterated their allegations during investigation and gram sevaks had submitted in written that he did not put any objectionable material in any RTI envelope and information was provided to the applicants against the application they had filed," SDM Bhadra Raj Kumar Kaswa



Sarpach of Chani Badi panchayat Pushpa Bansal has lodged a complaint at Bhirani police station in the matter

said. He said the Hanumangarh district collector has sought a factual report in the matter from the Zila Parishad CEO and the block development officer.

Sarpach of Chani Badi panchayat Pushpa Bansal had lodged a complaint at Bhirani police station in the matter, stating it to be a conspiracy.

Hanumangarh Zila Parishad CEO Navneet Kumar said he has received information related to the matter and it is being investigated, adding that it could be the outcome of rivalry between two groups in the village. PTI

# BJP gen secy urges AGP to reconsider decision to snap ties

Guwahati: BJP general secretary Ram Madhav appealed to the Asom Gana Parishad on Thursday to reconsider its decision to snap ties with the party over the contentious citizenship bill last week.

Madhav, who is also the incharge of the Bharatiya Janata Party in the Northeast, sought to allay apprehensions regarding the bill, saying it was not only for Assam or the Northeast, but for the entire country.

Among those opposing the bill, there are some who are genuinely concerned "whom we respect", but there are also some who are opposing only for their "political interests", Madhav said at a press conference here.

There are others like the United Liberation Front of Assam (ULFA), who are opposing the bill to "disturb" peace and create unrest, he added.

The AGP had on January 7 pulled out of the BJP-led coalition government in Assam, after its "last-ditch attempt" to convince the Centre to withdraw the proposed legislation failed.

The Citizenship (Amendment) Bill, 2019, which was passed in the Lok Sabha on January 8, seeks to provide citizenship to non-Muslims from Bangladesh, Pakistan and Afghanistan. Three AGP ministers had resigned from the Assam cabinet the next day.

"We appeal them (AGP) to reconsider their decision to leave the alliance as we went together to the people before the elections and also fought the assembly polls together. That is why Chief Minister Sabananda Sonowal has not forwarded the three AGP ministers' resignation letters to the governor for acceptance as the mandate of the people was for an alliance. We respect the people's mandate and appeal the AGP to reconsider its decision,"

Madhav said. On some of the state BJP legislators coming out publicly against the bill, Madhav said, "They have a genuine concern. They will go to Delhi and we will explain to them to allay their apprehensions."

The civil society, student unions and regional political parties are protesting against the bill in northeastern states, fearing that their identities would be affected.

"A situation has been created in Assam by creating a fear psychosis to stall the work of the high-level committee set up by the Centre to go into Clause 6 of Assam Accord.

"We understand that under such circumstances it is normal to be concerned. I assure that all measures will be taken so that the identity of Assam is not affected," he said.

Clause 6 of the Assam Accord, 1985, envisages constitutional, legislative and administrative safeguards to protect, preserve and promote the cultural, social, linguistic identity and heritage of the Assamese people.

"There is no need for the uncalculated concerns among the people as legislative and administrative measures are being taken to protect the identity, language and culture of Assam and the other northeastern states," the BJP leader asserted.

"I want to remove the lie that is being spread... I am confident that after telling the truth to the people, they will understand our standpoint," he said.

"The Government will keep in view its obligation to the refugees, the minorities of erstwhile Pakistan, as well as the interests of the people of Assam and the northeast region... That is why I appeal to those spreading misinformation to stop it," Madhav said. PTI

# Congress lines up series of protests against Citizenship Bill

Guwahati: The Opposition Congress on Thursday announced a series of programmes till January 31 across Assam to protest against the Citizenship (Amendment) Bill.

Assam Pradesh Congress Committee Spokesperson Rhituparna Konwar said the BJP-led state and central governments are "imposing" the Bill, which will completely nullify the Assam Accord of 1985.

"This Bill will endanger the very existence of Assamese community. To protest this, we have decided to launch our second series of agitation under 'Jagao Asom, Bachao Asom' programme from January 21 to 31," Konwar said in a statement.

As per the programme, all district and block Congress units would light lamps and hold 'Sarba dharm' (all religion) prayer in the evening of January 21 so that the BJP gov-



ernment "gets its wisdom back".

On January 23, 'Sankalp Divas' will be organised coinciding with birth anniversary of Netaji Subhash Chandra Bose to get inspired by the secular ideology of the freedom fighter to fight the communal Bill, Konwar said.

The following day, a five-hour sit-in will be held, while human chains will be formed on January 30 across the state, he added.

"On the last day, which is January 31, a two-hour torch

light procession will be taken out to protest against the Bill.

The Congress has decided to strongly oppose any move to pass the Bill," Konwar informed.

The Citizenship (Amendment) Bill, which was passed by the Lok Sabha on January 8, provides for according Indian citizenship to Hindus, Jains, Christians, Sikhs, Buddhists and Parsis from Bangladesh, Pakistan and Afghanistan after six years of residence in India instead of 12 years, which is the norm currently, even if they do not possess any document

Massive protests broke out across the state and other parts of North East after Prime Minister Narendra Modi announced in Silchar on January 4 that the controversial document would be passed as soon as possible in Parliament. PTI

# Raje Govt got distracted over useless issues, says Rajasthan Governor

Jaipur: In his address at the first session of the new State Assembly, Rajasthan Governor Kalyan Singh on Thursday accused the former BJP Government of getting "distracted" from more important issues as it tried to find flaws with the Congress-led regime before it.

The customary address — in which the Government of the day lays out its agenda — was marred by disruptions by Rashtriya Loktantrik Party chief Hanuman Beniwal who climbed on to a platform near the assembly secretary's desk.

Speaking for the recently elected Congress Government led by Ashok Gehlot, the Governor said economic growth rate dropped during Vasundhara Raje Government's term.

"The former Government got distracted over useless issues

like finding flaws of its previous Government," Kalyan Singh said.

"As a result of which the annual average economic growth rate, which was 8.16 per cent in 2009-10 to 2013-14 reduced to 7.19 per cent in 2014-15 to 2017-18. The average increase in per capita income was 14.95 per cent from 2009-10 to 2013-14 but it reduced to 9.68 per cent during 2014-15 to 2017-18," he said in his address, which was tabled in the House.

Similarly, the growth rate in the agriculture sector which was 4.19 per cent in 2008-09 increased to 8.94 per cent in 2013-14," he said. But with the "wrong policies" of the Vasundhara Raje Government, which followed, the growth rate in the sector dropped to 3.95 per cent in 2017-18, according to the address. PTI

# Omar questions Army officials boasting about number of militants killed in J&K

Srinagar: Former Jammu & Kashmir Chief Minister Omar Abdullah on Thursday questioned Army officials boasting about the number of militants killed in the State last year, saying it would have been a "great year" if no youth had joined militancy.

"I beg to differ, a great year would be one in which no young man would join militancy, no terrorists would be killed & no security personnel would lose their lives in encounters. The compulsion of killing militants/terrorists shouldn't be treated as a cause for celebration," Omar wrote on Twitter.

He was responding to the remarks of Northern Army Command chief Lt Gen Ranbir Singh in which he reportedly said that 2018 has been a great year for the security forces as more than 250 terrorists were killed, 54 caught alive and four surrendered to the forces. PTI

# BJP leader compares Rahul to Aurangzeb

Says he is 'last emperor' of Cong

Jaipur: Rajasthan BJP vice president Gyan Dev Ahuja on Thursday compared Congress president Rahul Gandhi with Mughal emperor Aurangzeb, suggesting that the Congress "empire" was coming to an end.

He said the Congress president is the "last emperor" of the Congress "sultanate", just like Aurangzeb.

"Like Aurangzeb who was the last emperor of the Mughal sultanate, Rahul Gandhi is the last emperor of this sultanate.

The end of the Congress is certain," he told reporters here.

Contrary to what the BJP leader said, Aurangzeb who died in 1707, was not the "last" of his dynasty.

The last Mughal ruler was Bahadur Shah Zafar, who died in 1862. But Aurangzeb is often seen as the last of the prominent Mughal kings as the empire began disintegrating after him.

Gyan Dev Ahuja also questioned Congress president's claim of being a "janeu dhari" (a Hindu who wears the sacred thread), saying his party should name the priest who conducted the ceremony for it.

In the past, Ahuja has court-

ed controversy by likening cow smugglers as "terrorists". He said on Thursday the concern for cows displayed in the Congress is nothing more than a sham.

He claimed the Bharatiya Janata Party will win the by-election for the Ramgarh assembly seat, where polling was called off due to the death of Bahujan Samaj Party candidate Laxman Singh.

The Congress won 99 of the remaining 199 Rajasthan assembly seats where elections were held last month. The bypoll for Ramgarh will take place on January 28. In the last Assembly, Ahuja was an MLA from Ramgarh. PTI

# SHEENA MURDER CASE

# Mikhail was not tortured during psychosis treatment: Doctor

Mumbai: A doctor who had treated Indrani Mukerjea's son Mikhail Bora for psychosis told the special CBI court here on Thursday that he was not confined or put under physical restraint, as alleged, during the treatment.

Mikhail had earlier told the court, which is conducting trial in the Sheena Bora murder, that he was tortured during the treatment at the behest of his mother Indrani, the main accused.

He had alleged that he was put in confinement, given electric shocks and tortured during the treatment for psychosis because his mother wanted to prove that he was "insane". He

also said that he did not take drugs. Dr Yusuf Machiswala, who treated Mikhail at Masina Hospital here, said Mikhail was referred to him for "substance-induced psychosis" in 2006. "To the best of my knowledge, he was abusing tobacco and cannabis," the doctor told Judge J C Jagdale, adding that he was transferred to another hospital after two months.

"Indrani (again) called sometime in the month of April 2012 and said that Mikhail was behaving aggressively and she also mentioned the name of Sheena," the doctor said, adding that he suggested an anti-psychotic medicine and asked to bring Mikhail to hospital. PTI

To a defence lawyer's question whether Mikhail was admitted to hospital against his wish (in 2006), Machiswala said, "At that time he was a minor, so there was no question of his wish or consent."

"I didn't ask Mikhail Bora about his wish. He was cooperating with treatment. I don't remember whether Mikhail told me he doesn't want to be in hospital," the doctor added.

"As far as I remember, he was not physically restrained," he said to another question. Sheena (24), Indrani's daughter and Mikhail's sister, was allegedly killed by Indrani with the help of others in April 2012 over a financial dispute. PTI

# N-E needs more funds to catch up with rest of India: FC

Agartala: The 15th Finance Commission (FC) has endorsed the view of 'North East Vision 2020' document that says the region needs more funds to catch up with the rest of the country, the panel's chairman N K Singh said on Thursday.

A 15-member team of the commission, headed by Singh, on Thursday received a memorandum from the State Government and held a meeting with the Council of Ministers headed by Chief Minister Biplab Kumar Deb.

"We endorse the view recorded in the document of the North East Region Vision 2020 that the region needs ample funds to catch up with the rest of the country. We will consider the view while recommending funds," Singh said.

He said that the commission shares the vision of Chief

FINANCE COMMISSION FULLY SHARES THE VISION OF THE GOVERNMENT AND CHIEF MINISTER TO MAKE TRIPURA A MODEL STATE AT THE END OF THE GOVT'S TENURE

—NK Singh

Minister and Governor of Tripura to make it a model State.

The FC team had arrived yesterday and held deliberations with different stakeholders.

"The new leadership of Tripura is committed to make it a fair contributor in development of the nation. Tripuras growth trajectory is sound, he said.

A statement from the state

Government said that it has made a strong pitch for increased devolution to set up better infrastructure, especially in health, IT, power, education, tourism, disaster mitigation and other sectors.

The Government has laid importance on four points including access to Chittagong port in neighbouring Bangladesh to make Tripura a maritime hub for NE India, improve road connectivity to boost tourism, capitalize on Tripuras comparative factor advantages in skilled manpower and agro-related industries and granting a host of specific projects aimed to fulfil aspirations of the states tribal communities.

However, when asked about plans of revising the tax base for erstwhile special category states in NE India, Singh

said that he feels all northeastern states will have to become more reliant on their own resources in future.

Singh said that the state government during the last ten months has taken very important initiatives for development and laid importance in several important areas concerning the economy of Tripura.

"Finance Commission fully shares the vision of the Government and Chief Minister to make Tripura a model State at the end of the Government's tenure. I think they have an HRD plan to improve the overall HRD sector in the State. The Chief Minister also said the health sector in Tripura has a huge opportunity not only in health services here but to set up health institutes where a lot of people from Bangladesh can receive benefits," he said.

Singh said he finds it important to improve land and air connectivity which is necessary to give further boost to tourism.

Singh also said the commission had a very detailed discussion yesterday with three tier panchayats and district parishes.

Singh said the commission received a memorandum from Tripura Tribal Areas Autonomous District Council (TTAADC), who explained their plans and informed about different projects.

The TTAADC constitutes two thirds of the State's territory and is home to the tribals, who constitute a third of the States population.

Singh said the commission would submit a report to the Government at the end of this year. PTI

TIT-FOR-TAT ACTION

# 5 Pak troops killed along LoC: Report

MOHIT KANDHARI ■ JAMMU

A top commander of the Indian Army, heading strategic Northern Command headquarters in Udhampur, Lt-Gen Ranbir Singh on Thursday confirmed that Pakistani army has suffered heavy damages in the recent retaliatory strikes along the Line of Control in Rajouri and Poonch sectors.

Unofficial reports had earlier claimed that at least five Pakistan army personnel were killed and three others seriously injured when the Indian troops launched major retaliatory action to silence the roaring Pak guns on the LoC, which had been targeting forward posts of Army and civilian areas in twin border districts of Poonch and Rajouri.

The Line of Control witnessed strong retaliation close on the heels of a statement made by the Army chief Gen Bipin Rawat that the Army won't hesitate from taking strong action against inimical designs of Pakistan on the LoC.

On Thursday when media persons posed a straight query to Lt-Gen Ranbir Singh, GOC-In-C Northern Command, to confirm media reports related to



elimination of five Pakistani soldiers by Indian forces in retaliation in the last few days, Lt-Gen Singh said, "in the last few days, as you mentioned in your question, 5 Pakistanis were killed, it shows that Indian Army is always ready to give them a befitting reply. "We are one step ahead of Pakistan and are giving befitting reply to them", he added. Lt-Gen Singh was talking to media after inaugurating a bridge at Kalai in Poonch district.

In response to another question he said, "2018 has been a great year for the security forces, more than 250 terrorists were killed, 54 were caught alive, and 4 surrendered to the forces".

Meanwhile, on Thursday,

Pakistani army again resorted to heavy firing in Jhangar, Laam, Pukharni and Peer Bhadrashwar areas of Rajouri district, prompting the Indian Army to retaliate in equal measure.

On Tuesday, Pakistan killed BSF's assistant commandant in sniper firing on the international border in Hiranagar sector of Kathua district on Tuesday.

Last Friday, a Major rank army officer, soldier and a porter were martyred in Nowshera and Sunderbani sectors of Rajouri district.

Indian Army, meanwhile, continued to maintain high alert all along the LoC in view of reports that Pakistani troops could try to push infiltrators into the Indian side.

# HAL-built LCH completes weapon trials

KESTUR VASUKI ■ BENGALURU

Amidst controversy, the Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL), a Defence Public Sector Undertaking has achieved a milestone on its desi built Light Combat Helicopter. The LCH carried out air to air missile firing on a moving aerial target. According to a press release issued by HAL in Bengaluru on Thursday the tests conducted in integrated test range at Chandipur, Odisha recently.

"Wg Cdr Subash P John, VM (Retd), test pilot, Col Ranjit Chitale, (Retd), Flight Test Engineer from HAL and Gp Capt Rajeev Dubey, test pilot from IAF executed a flawless mission and achieved a direct hit on the aerial



target, destroying it completely," the release added.

The Light Combat Helicopter (LCH) is indigenously designed and developed by HAL and proved its capabilities to the requirements of the defence forces.

R Madhavan, CMD-HAL said "this is the first time in the country that a heli-

copter has carried out air to air missile engagement. None of the helicopters with the military services in the country has demonstrated such a capability. With this, LCH has successfully completed all weapon integration tests and is ready for operational induction".

Other weapons on LCH include a 20mm Turret gun and 70 mm Rockets, the firing trials of which have already been completed last year.

The release said "LCH is the only attack helicopter in the world capable of operating at altitudes as high as Siachen glacier. Designed and developed by Rotary Wing Research & Design Centre (RWRDC) of HAL in response to the operational needs of Indian Armed Forces and its capabilities far exceed that

of contemporary attack helicopters of its class".

Equipped with Helmet mounted sight and a forward looking infrared sighting system, LCH pilots can now detect and destroy any target on ground or in the air. Using these sights, pilots can now launch a missile onto any target without having to turn the helicopter. The fire and forget missile is effective against all types of aerial threat, including UAVs and micro light aircraft. Capable of operating from dispersed locations and flying at ultra-low levels, LCH can now effectively provide a protective umbrella from all aerial threats.

The DAC has accorded approval for procurement of initial batch of 15 LCHs (10 for IAF and 5 for Army).

## 20 lakh B'deshi Hindus to become Indians if Citizenship Bill is passed: KMSS

**Guwahati:** Krishak Mukti Sangram Samiti (KMSS), which is spearheading the protests against the Citizenship (Amendment) Bill, on Thursday claimed that around 20 lakh Hindu Bangladeshis would become Indians if the controversial Bill is passed.

Addressing a press conference, KMSS Adviser Akhil Gogoi slammed the BJP-led Government for its attempt to get the Bill passed despite widespread protests across the North East.

"The BJP and Himanta Biswa Sarma is saying that only eight lakh Hindu Bangladeshis, who are already staying here, will get citizenship. But our assessment is that 20 lakh people are present in Assam at this moment and they will get citizenship as soon as the Bill is passed," he added.

Elaborating on his claim, the prominent RTI activist said that a report of former Assam Governor Lt Gen S K Sinha had mentioned that over one crore people have entered India.

"When I met former Assam Assembly Deputy Speaker Dilip Kumar Paul, who is from BJP, he said around 15-20 lakh Hindu Bangladeshis are in Assam. Himanta Biswa Sarma himself had said that out

of the 40 lakh excluded from the complete draft of NRC (National Register of Citizens), 22 lakh were Hindus.

"Saugata Roy had said in Parliament that 28 lakh Hindu Bangladeshis are excluded from NRC. So, these different figures by various sources clearly say that around 20 lakh Hindus from Bangladesh are living in Assam, not eight lakh as claimed by BJP," Gogoi said.

He further claimed that as per Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics, there are around 1.7 crore Hindus, which is 10.7 per cent of that country's total population.

"If the Bill is passed, this will pave the ways for these 1.7 crore people in Bangladesh to come to Assam and get Indian nationality as there is no cut-off date in the Bill.

So, there is a possibility that a total of 1.9 crore people are likely to get Indian citizenship in coming years," Gogoi said.

He claimed that if that happens, the entire demography of Assam will change irreparably.

Gogoi accused the BJP-led government for garnering votes in the forthcoming Lok Sabha polls by bringing in three sensitive issues one after another. **PTI**

## Goa Congress dubs State's tourism policy as 'disastrous'

**Panaji:** The Congress party on Thursday said Goa's Draft Tourism Policy 2018, which has been put in the public domain for suggestions, was "disastrous" for the State and its residents.

The Opposition party said the socio-economic and socio-cultural impact of the policy has not been studied, and encourages privatisation of assets of the state-run Goa Tourism Development Corporation (GTDC).

Tourism Minister Manohar Ajaonkar on Wednesday chaired a meeting of MLAs to discuss the Draft Tourism Policy 2018. Talking to reporters in Margao on Thursday, Congress MLA and party spokesperson Aleixo Reginaldo Lourenco said he has written a letter to Ajaonkar in which he has objected to certain provisions in the policy.

"The policy is disastrous for Goa and Goans...The report (policy) is silent on the exact income or revenue generated by the tourism industry in Goa and how much of it percolates to local Goans," Lourenco said.

"The socio-economic and socio-cultural impact of the master plan or policy has not been assessed. How much and what kind of employment will accrue to Goans and the extent of in-migration to fill up the rest has not been studied at all," he added. **PTI**

## Bru refugees seek LS polling stations in Tripura relief camps

**Aizawl:** An umbrella organisation of the thousands of Bru refugees living in Tripura has appealed to Chief Election Commissioner Sunil Arora to set up polling stations for the Lok Sabha election in their relief camps.

Many of the refugees could not vote during the election to the Mizoram Assembly held on November 28 last as polling stations for them were erected 70 kilometres away near the state border, the organisation said in a letter to Arora.

Around 35,000 Bru refugees living in six relief camps at Kancharpur sub-division of North Tripura district are originally from Mizoram.

Elderly and ailing people, pregnant women and even many able-bodied persons could not vote as they had to travel 70 km by vehicles to reach Kancharpur to vote, leading to low poll percentage at those temporary polling stations, MBDPF president A Sawibunga, vice-president R Laldawngliana and general secretary Bruno Msha said in the letter. The State election department had set up 15 temporary polling stations at Mizoram-Tripura border village of Kancharpur to facilitate over 12,000 Bru voters lodged in the relief camps to cast their votes.

The letter submitted to Arora in Delhi on Tuesday also claimed that the Bru voters were provided lunch at the polling stations only after cast-

ing their votes, leaving many of them extremely hungry while standing in the queue to exercise their franchise.

The MBDPF also claimed that no revision of voters' lists have been conducted in the relief camps.

They appealed to Arora to give directions to the state election department to expedite conduct of electoral roll revision in the relief camps.

The Mizoram election department had conducted revision of voters lists of Bru refugees in their camps before the repatriation last year, despite opposition from the civil societies.

However, enlistment forms duly filled in by inmates of the relief camps were stolen at the election office of Mizoram's Mamit district on August 23, two days before the month-long repatriation of Bru families from Tripura to Mizoram was to start from August 25.

However, out of 5,000 odd refugee families, only 150 members of 42 families returned to Mizoram during the exercise. Thousands of Bru refugees from Tripura fled to Tripura during an ethnic violence in 1997. The clashes broke out after a forest official was killed by Bru National Liberation Front (BNLF) militants.

The Centre, in association with the Governments of Mizoram and Tripura, was repatriating the displaced Bru in phases. **PTI**

## Mizoram bans import of pigs to prevent swine disease

**Aizawl:** Mizoram Government has banned import of pigs and piglets to prevent outbreak of a disease that has cost the lives of thousands of swines in the State.

The Mizoram Government has instructed deputy commissioners of all the eight districts to issue prohibitory orders banning the import from other countries to stop, Animal Husbandry and veterinary Minister Dr K Beichhua said on Thursday.

The porcine reproductive and respiratory syndrome (PRRS) has cost the lives of over 10,000 swines in Mizoram since 2013 and it is believed that it happened due to import of pigs and piglets from Myanmar where the disease was known to be prevalent, officials said. Beichhua said the ban of import of pigs from other countries was the only way to prevent outbreak of the PRRS in the State. The PRRS is a disease affecting domestic pigs. The symptoms include reproductive failure, pneumonia and increased susceptibility to secondary bacterial infection, the sources said. **PTI**

## Manipur to oppose Citizenship Bill if clause to protect natives not included: Biren Singh

**Imphal:** Manipur Chief Minister N Biren Singh has said that the BJP-led Government in the State would not support the passage of Citizenship (Amendment) Bill unless there was a provision for protecting the indigenous people of the northeast.

Singh also stressed that his Government would want President's assent to Manipur People's (Protection) Bill, 2018 before passage of the Citizenship (Amendment) Bill, 2016.

The Manipur People's (Protection) Bill, passed unanimously by the Assembly last July, aims to grant the status of "natives" to Meiteis, Pangal Muslims, scheduled tribes and others, who moved to the state before 1951.

The rest, categorised as "non-Manipuris", will have to register themselves within one month of the notification of the law.

"Unless there is a provision for protecting the indigenous people of Manipur as well as the

other northeast states, the state government would not support the Citizenship (Amendment) Bill," the chief minister said after inaugurating several development projects in Chandul district on Wednesday.

He had earlier sent a memorandum to Union Home Minister Rajnath Singh, seeking President's nod for Manipur Peoples' (Protection) Bill.

"The stand of the Manipur government is very clear. Before the Citizenship (Amendment) Bill is passed by the Rajya Sabha, the President should give his assent to the Manipur People's Bill," he asserted.

The Citizenship (Amendment) Bill, which was passed in the Lok Sabha last week, provides for according Indian citizenship to Hindus, Jains, Christians, Sikhs, Buddhists and Parsis from Bangladesh, Pakistan and Afghanistan after six years of residence in India instead of 12 years, which is the norm currently, even if they do not possess any document. **PTI**

## Canadian woman molested at 5-star hotel in Mumbai

**Mumbai:** A 35-year-old Canadian woman was allegedly molested by an employee of a city-based five-star hotel during her stay there, a police official said on Thursday.

Sumit Rao (32), a staff member of the hotel located in Juhu area, has been arrested in connection with the alleged incident that took place on January 5, he said.

The woman, a Canadian national who works for an event management firm and often visits India, in her complaint alleged that while she was staying at the hotel, the man came to her room and molested her on the pretext of taking a selfie with her, the official said.

According to police, the woman brought the matter to the hotel management's notice

and then lodged a complaint at the Santacruz police station here on Monday.

The accused was arrested on Tuesday and booked under Indian Penal Code Sections 354 (assault or criminal force on woman with an intent to outrage her modesty) and 354 (d) (stalking), he said.

A probe was underway into the case, he added. **PTI**



President Ram Nath Kovind and First Lady Savita Kovind greet the crowd after performing 'Ganga Pujan' at Sangam during Kumbh Mela 2019 in Allahabad (Prayagraj) on Thursday **PTI**

## President, first lady participate in 'Ganga puja' at Sangam

**Allahabad:** President Ram Nath Kovind and his wife on Thursday visited Allahabad and performed 'Ganga puja' in the Sangam area during the ongoing Kumbh Mela, officials said.

The President and first lady Savita Kovind reached the Bamrauli airport on a special plane of the Indian Air Force around 9:30 am. They were welcomed by Governor Ram Naik, Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath and several cabinet ministers, the officials said.

President Kovind and his wife participated in 'Ganga puja' in the Sangam area along with the governor, chief minister, his deputy Keshva Prasad Maurya and Health Minister Sidharth Nath Singh among others. **PTI**

**PREMIUM MERCHANTS LIMITED**  
Registered office: Omaxe Square, Plot No. 14, 5th Floor, Jasola District Centre, Jasola, New Delhi-110025  
CIN: L51909DL1985PLC021077, Tel: +91 11 61119658  
Email Id: premiummerchants123@gmail.com, website:www.pmltd.com

**NOTICE**  
Notice is hereby given that the meeting no.06/2018-19 of the Board of Directors of the Company will be held on 7th February, 2019 (Thursday) at the registered office of the Company at Omaxe Square, Plot No. 14, 5th Floor, Jasola District Centre, Jasola, New Delhi-110025 at 3:00 PM to discuss the following agenda items:  
i. To take on record the Unaudited Financial Results of the Company for the Quarter ended as on 31st December, 2018 in terms of Regulation 33 of SEBI (Listing Obligation and Disclosure Requirement) Regulation, 2015.  
ii. To discuss any other business with the permission of Chair.  
Further, the trading window shall remain closed for all designated persons including promoters, directors, key managerial personnel, designated employees and other connected persons of the Company from 31st January, 2019 to 9th February, 2019 in accordance with the SEBI (Prohibition of Insider Trading) Regulations, 2015.

By Order of the Board,  
For Premium Merchants Limited  
Sd/-  
(Balbir Singh)  
Director  
Place: New Delhi  
Date: 17.01.2019  
DIN: 00027438

**MAHARASHTRA JEEVAN PRADHIKARAN DIVISION, AURANGABAD.**  
Office of the Executive Engineer, Maharashtra Jeevan Pradhikaran Division, Behind Hotel Vits, Vedant Nagar, AURANGABAD  
Office: 0240-2328406  
E-mail: emjprabdf@gmail.com

**e-Tender Notice No. 10 for 2018-2019**  
Executive Engineer, M.J.P. Division Aurangabad invites e-Tender for the work of Under JS-II Makranpur Water Supply Scheme at Tq. Kannad Dist. Aurangabad, in the State of Maharashtra valued at Rs. 1,95,78,954/- please visit website www.mahatenders.gov.in for detailed information & this tender will be available on www.mahatenders.gov.in from dt. 16/01/2019. All relevant dates will be as per the tender published in web portal www.mahatender.gov.in  
Date: 16/01/2019  
NOTE: Right to reject One or all tenders without any reason are reserved by Competent Authority  
Sd/-  
(P.D. BHAMARE)  
Executive Engineer  
Maharashtra Jeevan Pradhikaran  
Division Aurangabad  
DGIPR/2018/2019/5911

**PROCLAMATION REQUIRING THE APPEARANCE OF ACCUSED PERSONS**  
See Section 82 Cr.P.C.  
Whereas complaint has been made before me that accused **1. Urmila Devi** W/o Sh. Ram Bhardwaj and **2. Jitender Kumar** S/o Sh. Ram Bhardwaj R/o Quarter No. 854C, Rail Coach Factory, Husainpur, Kapoorthala, Punjab has committed (or are suspected to have committed) the offence FIR No. 247/04 u/s 498-A/406/34 IPC P.S. Samaipur Badli, Delhi and it has been returned to a warrant of arrest thereupon issued that the said **1. Urmila Devi** and **2. Jitender Kumar** cannot be found and whereas it has been shown to my satisfaction that the said **1. Urmila Devi** and **2. Jitender Kumar** absconded (or are concealing themselves to avoid the service of the said warrant). Proclamation is hereby made that the said **1. Urmila Devi** and **2. Jitender Kumar** accused of FIR No. 247/04 u/s 498-A/406/34 IPC are required to appear before this Court to answer the said complaint on or before **22.02.2019**.  
By Order: Ms. Riya Guha  
Metropolitan Magistrate (North Distt.),  
Mahila Court-02, Room No. 104,  
1st Floor, Rohini Court, Delhi  
DP/02/ON/19

**CANCELLATION OF 12329/12330 SEALDAH-ANAND VIHAR (T)-SEALDAH WEST BENGAL SAMPARK KRANTI EXPRESS TRAINS (WEEKLY)**  
Due to operational reasons the 12329 Sealdah-Anand Vihar (T) West Bengal Sampark Kranti Express (Weekly) train will remain cancelled on every Tuesday upto 12.03.2019, and 12330 Anand Vihar (T)-Sealdah West Bengal Sampark Kranti Express (Weekly) train will remain cancelled on every Wednesday upto 13.03.2019.  
For any kind of information passengers are requested to contact Railway Enquiry No. 139 or visit Railways website www.enquiry.indianrailways.gov.in.  
Security Helpline No. 182 and Passengers Complaint Helpline No. 138  
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Electricity Department, Store-I Division,  
**NEW DELHI MUNICIPAL COUNCIL**  
Vidyal Bhawan, Dr. A.P.J. Abdul Kalam Road, New Delhi-110011  
e-Procurement Tender Notice  
Tender ID - 2019\_NDMC\_165963\_1  
Name of work: Purchase of 4 mtr height Solar Integrated Lighting Poles with Battery, LED Post Top complete with all accessories for installation at prominent roundabouts in NDMC area.  
Estimated Cost : ₹ 24,79,218.00  
Date of Release of Tender : 16.01.2019 at 02:00 PM  
Last date/time for receipt of tenders : 24.01.2019 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. Executive Engineer (E) S-I  
To be the global Benchmark for a Capital City

**Re-Tender Notice**  
1. Tender Title: Procurement of Under Water Diving set with BA set.  
2. Tender Ref. No: NIT-04/TFS/2018  
3. Tender ID: 2018\_Fire2\_2267\_1  
Due to administrative reason, the competent authority has decided to go for re-tender through the e-procurement portal of Government of Tripura; <http://tripuratenders.gov.in>. Bidders are advised to go through the new tender document and new price bid before submitting the bids.  
The bids will be receipt through the e-procurement portal till 28.01.2019, up to 15.00 hrs. The pre-qualification cum technical bids would be opened on 29.01.2019 at 11.30 hrs.  
For more details please visit: <https://tripuratenders.gov.in>  
For and on behalf of Governor of Tripura,  
Sd/-  
(Uttam Kr Bhaumik,IPS),  
Joint Director, Fire Service,  
ICA/C-2247/19  
Nodal Officer (E-Tender)

**GUJARAT WATER SUPPLY & SEWERAGE BOARD.**  
SECTOR-10/A, GANDHINAGAR  
**BRIEF SHORT NOTICE INVITING ON LINE TENDER FOR FIXING RATE CONTRACT FOR SUPPLY OF C.I.D. JOINTS WITH EPDM RUBBER RING FOR THE YEAR 2018-19**  
GWSSB invites online tender through e-tendering for Manufacture, Supply & Delivery of C.I.D. Joints with EPDM Rubber ring (80 to 700mm Dia.) with ISI Mark/Confirming to Relevant IS from Indian Manufacturer only. Interested bidder who wish to participate in above tender may view the detailed tender notice & down load the Tender documents at free of cost from website. <https://www.nprocure.com>  
The last date of submission of online tender is 7-2-2019.  
No./JNF/VPN/2018/G-2624

## Cyber problems

Lax data protection norms and callous understanding of security are making India a prime target for cyber criminals



Data has been declared as the new oil. Much like the early days of oil exploration by companies, there is a rush to secure the most valuable data as soon as possible and extract, or rather mine it, for enrichment. But because data is not a physical asset, protecting it is a lot more complicated than safeguarding oil, gold or anything physical. Data, by its very nature of being amorphous, can reside anywhere and everywhere in the world. One's data on social networks is based in the United States, or possibly Ireland and maybe even Iceland. But it should not matter where one's data resides as long as it is safe. Unfortunately, many Governments and intelligence agencies think otherwise. This is why the Indian Government has been insisting that online companies — from social media networks, email service providers and even e-commerce majors — host their data within India. But the fact is that Indian agencies and companies, with possibly the exception of Indian financial services firms, have been very callous with data. Breaches have led to copious amounts of Aadhaar information being inadvertently released. Besides, several Indian mobile applications have had their data stolen. Phishing attacks, which are not quite data breaches, are extremely common in India, given low levels of digital literacy in a nation that is rapidly going online. The recent Global Risks Report released by the World Economic Forum (WEF) highlighted this fact. Of course, this is not to downplay other major risks that India faces, such as the tremendous fear of population displacement due to global warming, but data breaches in our country are extremely disturbing.

In the aftermath of the right to privacy that the Supreme Court upheld, the Government should have urgently come up with a set of laws to enshrine that right. Instead, it is moving after a more draconian set of laws that will intercept and store information, potentially violating the apex court's ruling. Sure, there is an urgent need to control the spread of malafide information on social media, and there might be the need for the Government to control and register applications available on mobile phones. But it also needs to establish a set of laws that protects user data. While companies should be allowed to make money from user data, these laws should outline what is kosher and what is not. Unfortunately, it appears that there has been no urgency to introduce them unlike the triple *talaq* Bill simply because, as mentioned above, low levels of digital literacy have meant that most Indians shrug off data breaches. This needs to change and advocates for data privacy should work towards greater digital literacy programmes across the country instead of being talking heads. Because only when millions of Indians demand that their personal information be protected, will it be secured. Instead, India remains the Wild West when it comes to the internet. And until that changes, stories of data breaches and personal information being compromised will remain far too common.

## Let justice prevail

The swift elevation of two Supreme Court judges is raising more questions about probity



If last year's press conference by four senior-most judges of the Supreme Court, including current CJI Ranjan Gogoi, had compromised the pristine institutional worth of the judiciary over its capacity to be transparent and neutral, the latest elevation of two Supreme Court judges has further aggravated that issue. For while that dealt with the system of allocation of case files, which some senior judges felt were not as part of due processes and seemed opaque and motivated, this calls into question the wisdom and functioning of the collegium. Many questions remain with regard to the out-of-turn elevations of Justice Dinesh Maheshwari, Chief Justice of Karnataka High Court, and Justice Sanjiv Khanna of Delhi High Court to two of the five vacancies in the Supreme Court. Technically, there is nothing wrong with supersession based on weightage to merit and excellence of capabilities, something which has been honoured before and has had precedents. But when the supersession concerns 32 judges, then questions are raised. Like why the collegium, headed by none other than Gogoi, overturned decisions taken by it in December about elevating two other competent names and the government rushed to appoint the new nominees? And why five names were not cleared together instead of a staggered format? Agreed, inter-secular matters pertaining to the highest court of the land must be kept within a certain framework of civility, decorum and not laid open to public speculation but considering the rumblings are now galloping with a frequency and the judiciary is in the end the most public of institutions, a fair amount of procedural transparency is but expected. Naturally, everybody would want to know why 32 judges, who have been considered good enough for their courts, were overlooked en bloc and had there been a fair bit of reasoning, nobody would be attributing ulterior motives to the process of appointment. Also, it would not have demoralised Chief Justices and judges of High Courts, who have worked hard to ascend tiers of seniority, to suddenly find that criterion being set aside arbitrarily instead of being aligned with merit as it is with all other public services. Such ambiguity leads to theories of pressure from the executive or charges of favouritism and encourages more speculation about the impartiality of a verdict.

Although the Congress may be joining the demand for transparency now, fact was judicial appointments were known to be politically expedient through the 70s, the establishment patronage mattering more than individual capability. That process has come a long way since with ex-chief Justice Dipak Misra making it mandatory for the collegium members to list their reasons for choosing candidates in the public domain, thereby streamlining the selection process. Perhaps it is the objective questionnaire of ticking off and crossing boxes on a judge's reputation, integrity and appreciation that makes this exercise a numerical rather than a comparative assessment of strengths. Though the Supreme Court rejected the National Judicial Appointment Commission, arguing how widening the purview of selections by including politicians and civil society notables violated the constitutional requirement of separating the judiciary and maintaining its independence, the collegium, as it appears today, is clearly at risk of being seen as an oligarchical rather than a fair entity. The Supreme Court, by virtue of being at the peak of the judicial pyramid, has to appear just and inspire public confidence in its probity, not fuel public doubts.

Sumit  
Via email

# opinion 08

## The Trump possibility

Aesthetically repugnant as he may be, many of the US President's policies, if he walks the talk, represent an opportunity for India to further its national interest



ISHAN JOSHI

Of all the speeches, tweets and off-the-cuff remarks which together constitute President Donald J Trump's articulation of the US' global policy priorities and ideological positions (or lack thereof), there has never been one that defines his presidency more than his address to the United Nations in end-2017.

It was the most unambiguous speech by a world leader to the globe's most ambiguous institution in recent history. In a sense, it was a rather effective exercise in showing the mirror to the UN. He started off by putting the cat firmly among the pigeons by reminding the gathering that President Harry S Truman was instrumental in establishing the UN as an organisation specifically for post-WW II nation-states to help build democratic institutions in their respective countries that would strengthen member-states' sovereignty and help them serve their citizens better.

It was a timely intervention. After all, someone needed to juxtapose what was intended with what the UN has become — a sinecure for the elite of various nations which passes ineffective and often unimplementable resolutions, an illiberal club which has ended up bestowing legal rights to groups at the cost of the individual and an organisation that happily tolerates grotesque aberrations of a Libya or Sudan finding a place on its human rights council, for example.

Trump also laid out his doctrine for America's place in the world which, over the past year and a bit since his speech, seems to have been broadly accepted by the American establishment though his style of doing things is, perfectly understandably, unacceptable to many, including the simpatico. But let us not confuse style with substance. This doctrine emphatically underlines the supremacy of the nation-state in global interaction and/or cooperation while championing sovereignty, security and prosperity for them individually.

Crucially, he was careful to emphasise the demonstration effect of robust, liberal, democracies even as he iterated that Washington was not in favour of imposing a way of life on others and was accepting of diversity in governance models across the globe which may not albeit be ideal. Where he was explicit was in calling out Iran/Yemen, as corrupt, despotic (Islamist) dictatorships and Cuba/Venezuela as corrupt, totalitarian (Socialist) dictatorships. He did, of course, take a swipe at Russia and China, without naming them, for their expansionist moves in the Ukraine and the South China Sea respectively as well. But there was a qualitative difference in the latter criticism, rooted as it was more in fighting both countries as global power competitors as opposed to the "bogus internationalism" of the so-called Islamist/Socialist countries



which are ideologically committed to undermining the global order premised on nation-states or blocs thereof as the primary unit of interaction. (North Korea and Syria, also attacked by Trump, represent proxy threats for the US and are a discussion for elsewhere.)

His definition of such rogue nations as the "wicked few" and his exhortation to "decent nations not to become bystanders" were just sound and fury signifying American strategic interests, so they need not detain us here. But his frontal attack on bogus internationalism and exhortation to all UN member nation-states to put their country first just as he was putting America first provides India the opportunity it needs to recalibrate its own place in the world at a time of geo-strategic flux.

In calling for a renewal of the founding principle of the UN, which is its member-states' sovereignty, focussing on outcomes not ideology and adhering to what may be termed principled realism, the US, if it continues down this path, has opened up space for India to attempt and secure its strategic interests in a substantial manner. To be facile, all we need is to replace Iran with Pakistan in the countries listed by Trump at the UN and we

are good to go! The reality, of course, is more complicated than that; for example, Saudi Arabia should in an ideal world make it to any list of despotic Islamic regimes but it is neither in the US' nor India's interest to proffer such a suggestion. The situation, however, is not so complicated as to not provide New Delhi enough leverage to make space for itself at the high table, provided we keep our domestic internal security situation under control, economic growth robust and democratic institutions ticking over despite the odd setback or two. Especially, given Washington's targeting as articulated by Trump in his UN speech of those nations which support and promote the aims of "Al Qaeda, Hezbollah, Taliban and others", the last-mentioned presumably keeping the door open for inclusion of terrorist *tanzeems* operating in the Indian State of Jammu and Kashmir in this list.

Of course, in isolating pseudo-socialist totalitarian regimes and repressive Islamic theocracies — though that does not mean one doesn't deal with them in one's national interest even if with a pinched nose — Trump is focussed on US interests; the trick for New Delhi to pull off is to see how far our interests align with

Washington's given this once-in-a-generation opportunity. It is not only about meta-narratives but also the smaller issues on which there is an emerging convergence of views.

For example, Trump was emphatic in telling the UN that pressure by its refugee organisation on the US to allow refugees stateside was in effect dictatorial, chipped away at sovereignty and untenable. At the cost of resettling one refugee in the US, we can help 10 make a better life in their own countries, he said. New Delhi, grappling with similar pressure despite not having the economic wherewithal of the US in regard to, say, accommodating Rohingya refugees, should obviously take note. It is the citizens of low-income neighbouring countries who bear the cost both of refugees fleeing conflict and oppression or plain economic migrants.

US emphasis on result/outcome-orientated global actions, however, does require a fundamental reform of the United Nations itself. That is where the real opportunity for India lies if it can find common ground with the US. For example, given his transactional approach, President Trump has been quick to articulate the long-standing grouse of the

American conservative establishment that the US' contribution to the UN budget is 22 per cent of the total despite the US being just one of the UN's 193 member-states. But he was quick to add even while encouraging other members to contribute more that the investment was worth it if peace and global order could be delivered. The disproportionate military/financial contribution of the US in terms of the influence it has on the world body is a sentiment India is in a good position to exploit if it is adroit in the steps it needs to take to secure its strategic objectives.

The US President's paean to the nation-state and advocacy of independent, strong, prosperous countries guiding the UN as the best way to secure peace in our time as opposed to letting far-off, faceless bureaucracies such as the UN have the deciding say is in consonance with the approach of the Indian deep state. It's better to have people taking ownership of their future rather than be led by a paternalistic global elite that in the name of seeking mutual bliss-points ignores the oppressive nature of the regimes that push this line.

(The writer is an independent journalist and commentator based in New Delhi.)

## SOUNDBITE

Nations were built by those with positive mindsets and a national vigour, not by the compulsive contrarians.

Union Minister  
—Arun Jaitley



The compulsion of killing militants/terrorists shouldn't be treated as a cause for celebration. A great year would be one in which no young man would join militancy.

NC leader  
—Omar Abdullah



People make mistakes, let's not go too far here. I am sure whoever has done it will realise and come out a better person.

Former Indian captain  
—Sourav Ganguly



The Indian Army is one step ahead of Pakistan and is giving a befitting reply to every single ceasefire violation.

Northern Command chief  
—Lt Gen Ranbir Singh



## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

### Choose wisely

Sir — This refers to the editorial, "Karnataka drama" (January 16). The turmoil that has brewed in Karnataka makes it amply clear that our leaders, irrespective of the party they belong to, are hungry for power and money. Given the ugly scenes in Karnataka as also in other States, it is now understood that split election verdicts only fan more political games played by political parties. It's high time voters cast their mandate decisively and get themselves a stable and good Government they all deserve.

Sumit  
Via email

### Criticise with logic

Sir — This refers to Congress leader Mallikarjun Kharge's demand to make public the findings of the Central Vigilance Commission (CVC) that led to the sacking of Alok Verma. Kharge's demand isn't surprising given that the Congress, being the main Opposition party, never generated any constructive idea or extended friendly coop-

eration to the Government during its term. On the contrary, it frequently indulged in Modi baiting and hating without caring about the nation's interest.

Alok Verma, formerly the director of the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI), was sacked on a majority decision taken by the high-level selection committee. No comment in this regard deems appropriate, both moral-

ly and logically. Did Kharge not protest against the selection of Verma as the CBI director?

Undoubtedly, fair, sound and logical criticism is an imperative for democratic politics but arrogant demeanour, errant behaviour and vicious rant are considered as vile practices that demean the democratic spirit.

Nimai Charan Swain  
Bhubaneswar

### Treading the right path on Citizenship Bill

This refers to the article, "Historical injustice" (January 15) by A Surya Prakash. The writer has rendered a great public service by highlighting an important issue of minority communities, namely, Hindus, Sikhs, Jains, Zoroastrians, Buddhists and Christians of Pakistan and Bangladesh, who had to leave their motherland in the face of persecution. They had no other option but to take shelter in India, mostly in Jammu, after Partition and later after the birth of Bangladesh in 1971. Ever since independence, Indian Governments, beginning with Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru, under the plea of the policy of secularism, refused to grant citizenship to these unfortunate migrants, who were forced to flee their places of birth because of their radical Islam-centric policies. These refugees somehow managed to survive, thanks to local people's generosity.

Thanks to the broad-mindedness of Prime Minister



Narendra Modi and his Government refugees are now being granted their citizenship rights. There was no way these non-Muslim minorities could have gone back to their original homes and survived. To look at this human problem from the prism of secularism would be tragic and lunatic.

M Ratan  
Via email

debacle, May should have ideally resigned, like former Prime Minister David Cameron did, but that was not to be. In fact, she has survived the no-confidence motion as well.

May's victory has, however, given her temporary respite. She will have to come up with an alternative Brexit plan in no time. By agreeing to leave the EU, Britain had inflicted upon itself self-harm. With such a massive divide among people across the society, no one knows what lies ahead and what should be done. Some support no deal at all, others want no Brexit at all. The best option, however, is to get back to the EU and seek better terms. But then, where is the time? March 29 will be the deciding day.

There are around 1.3 million people living in 27 European countries, while 3.8 million EU citizens are residing in the United Kingdom. The interest of both sides needs to be taken into account. Indeed, Britain is going through one of its worst political crises.

Bal Govind  
Noida

Send your feedback to:  
letterstopioneer@gmail.com

**FIRST COLUMN**

## Hidden yet impending risk

Greater corporate leverage means firms are less able to withstand negative shocks to income or asset values, say **MEGHA JAIN** and **AISHWARYA NAGPAL**

One of the underlying problems faced by firms is to finance assets. As per key principles of financial management, a proper mix of debt and equity capital is the foremost financing decision towards an assertive governance framework. Interestingly, despite seminal concerns against value creation through debt financing, debt has been an integral part of a typical corporate leverage. Leverage refers to lever action. In the capital structure, debt is a bar to move greater Returns on Equity. Corporate debt of non-financial firms across major economies rose from around four trillion dollar in 2004 to over \$18 trillion in 2014, thereby indicating rapid acceleration of debt growth. Average emerging market corporate debt-to-GDP ratio, too, widened by 26 per cent in the same period but with marked heterogeneity. As per the IMF (2014), the debt-to-equity ratio of India's corporate sector stood at 83 per cent, the highest among emerging market peers. Although rising emerging market corporate leverage can bestow significant benefits, such as expediting productive investment and economic growth, reflecting a healthy financial system, but ultimately, it raises concerns related to sensitivity to imminent shocks and crisis situation.

High debt levels, relative to equity in corporate balance sheets, create leverage, which can accentuate losses to owners and generate elevated debt service requirements. This can in turn lead to exacerbated cash flow stress, deteriorating credit worthiness and debt rollover risks. Moreover, if credit risk is underpriced, spikes in default rates may permeate through the financial system as investors and creditors, including the banking system, will incur losses. One of the important alterations in the corporate leverage structure in emerging markets like India is its ever-changing composition.

Though loans still constitute the largest component of the corporate debt, the proportion of bonds has been rapidly increasing — from nine per cent of overall debt in 2004 to 17 per cent of overall debt in 2014 — with a majority of the increase materialising after the global financial crisis of 2008. However, the acceleration of corporate issuance since the crisis is largely explained by global push factors. The growth and changing composition of corporate leverage can mainly be attributed to an unprecedented monetary expansion in advanced economies and a shift in the global financial landscape. A preponderant factor has been the accommodative global monetary policy that has jolted emerging markets.

Through these channels, expansionary global monetary conditions can facilitate greater corporate leverage through relaxation of emerging market borrowing constraints, owing to widespread availability of lower-cost funding and appreciated collateral values. To cite an example, as monetary policy becomes expansionary in developed countries, central banks will have to respond in part by keeping their rates lower in order to alleviate pressures on their currencies. Thus, the key risk associated with mounting emerging market corporate leverage is reversal of post-crisis accommodative global financial conditions. Firms, that are most leveraged, stand to endure the sharpest rise in their debt-service costs, once monetary policy rates in advanced economies rise. Furthermore, interest rate risk can be aggravated by rollover and currency risks. Although bond finance tends to have longer maturities than bank finance, it exposes firms to more volatile financial market conditions. In addition, local currency depreciation associated with rising policy rates in advanced economies would make it increasingly difficult for emerging market firms to service their foreign currency-denominated debts if they are not hedged adequately.

In the backdrop of recent occurrences, the contraction of global bank lending (mainly via deleveraging in certain banking systems) has been replaced by expansion of capital market lending via bond issuance. These shifts from bank lending to capital markets, and the shift of foreign exchange risk from bank balance sheets to corporate balance sheets, are aggravated by the recent phase of exceptional low interest rates and quantitative ease in developed economies. In non-financial sectors, leverage can symbolise a source of systemic financial instability as it can amplify changes in fundamentals and make households, Governments and non-financial businesses more responsive to shocks.

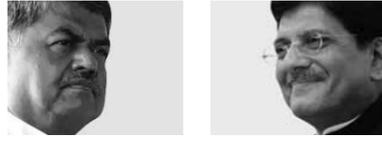
Mounting debt burden in developing economies is certainly endangering prospects for global growth. Finally, corporate distress could readily be transmitted to the financial sector and contribute to adverse feedback loops. Greater corporate leverage can render firms less able to withstand negative shocks to income or asset values. This vulnerability has implications on the financial system partly because corporate debt constitutes a significant share of emerging market banks' assets. Shocks to the corporate sector could quickly spill over to the financial sector and generate a vicious cycle as banks curtail lending. From a policy-making outlook, it only reflects the value of the Government stepping up to the plate on public investment.

(The writers are Senior Research Scholars, Faculty of Management Studies, University of Delhi)

**IF HE (AMIT SHAH) CONTINUES TO DESTABILISE THE KARNATAKA GOVERNMENT, HE WILL HAVE TO DEAL WITH EVEN MORE SERIOUS DISEASES.**

—CONGRESS MP HARI PRASAD

**POINT COUNTERPOINT**



**THERE MAY BE A CURE FOR FLU BUT IT IS DIFFICULT TO FIND A CURE FOR THE MENTAL STATE OF CONGRESS LEADERS.**

—UNION MINISTER PIYUSH GOYAL

# Unsung human rights for women

It is imperative that access to quality family planning information and services is easy and women are given the power of choice and decision-making



SWAPNA MAJUMDAR

When 17-year-old Suguna Devi, a resident of Khagaria district of Bihar, had her first child within a year of her marriage, celebrations were short-lived. Born prematurely and underweight, the infant died a couple of days later. Within a month of this tragedy, Suguna became pregnant again. Fortunately, this time, her daughter survived. But giving birth in quick succession had made Suguna weak. After three months of struggle to take proper care of her baby, Suguna realised that she was going to be a mother again.

According to the National Family Health Survey (NFHS-4) statistics, 13 per cent of currently married women are not using contraception. Yet, they either want to stop having children or want to wait for two or more years before having their next child. Access to contraception can help the woman take this decision. She can decide how many children she wants and will not be compelled by circumstances. Providing contraceptive information, services and supplies so as to allow women and girls take their own decision was what India had promised seven years ago at the 2012 London Summit on Family Planning (FP2020). India had pledged to expand access to contraceptive choices to its 45 million women, who do not use any modern contraception method, by 2020.

But as statistics show, this goal is unlikely to be reached. The 2015-16 NFHS data showed that huge gaps still exist. Of the 45 million women, 31 million are not using any contraception. Further, the report found 14 million women used unreliable traditional methods, which enhanced the risk of pregnancy by three times when compared to using modern methods (birth control pills, condoms, sterilisation and intrauterine devices).

What is surprising is that despite a decline in India's total fertility rate (the average number of children that would be born per woman in her life) — from 2.7 children per woman in 2005-06 to 2.2 in 2015-16 — there was also a drop in contraceptive use (any method) — from 56.3 per cent in 2005-06 to 53.5 per cent in 2015-16 (NFHS-4). There has also been a decline in the use of modern methods of contraception — from 48.5 per cent in 2005-06 to 47.8 per cent in 2015-16 — even though more contraception methods are now available for free under India's family planning programme.

But Khagaria's high Total Fertility Rate (TFR) of four is a clear indication that contraception services still elude women. Moreover, this high TFR has not only remained unchanged over the last decade but surpasses both State and national TFR, which stands at 3.3 and 2.2 respectively. Therefore, not much has changed in terms of usage of contraceptive services over the last 10 years. Incidentally, Bihar retains its position as the State with the highest TFR in India of 3.3 children per woman, according to UN Fund for Population Activities' report titled, 'The State of World Population 2018'.

One of the reasons for this is that nearly 41 per cent of the population in Bihar has an unmet demand for modern contraceptive methods. This is the highest in our country. Coupled with unmet



“ BY PROVIDING INFORMATION ABOUT REPRODUCTIVE AND SEXUAL HEALTH AS WELL AS CONTRACEPTIVE CHOICES, TRAINED COUNSELLORS CAN HELP COUPLES SPACE THEIR CHILDREN. THE FAMILY PLANNING COUNSELLING CORNERS CAN GIVE WOMEN THE FREEDOM TO DEFER HAVING CHILDREN BY USING TEMPORARY CONTRACEPTIVE METHODS. COUNSELLING IS A CRUCIAL COMPONENT IN DECISION-MAKING ”

need in the State is the fact that teenage birth rate stands at 12.2 per cent. This is the third highest among 20 States in the country after West Bengal (18.3 per cent) and Assam (13.6 per cent). While adolescent pregnancy raises the risk of mother and child death, what further increases the risk for these teenage births is their low Body Mass Index (BMI). Approximately, 45.2 per cent of the girls, aged 15-18 years in the State, have a BMI less than 18 kg/m, indicating that they are underweight. Further, 60.3 per cent of the women aged between 15 and 49 years suffer from anaemia. This means that the chances of post-partum haemorrhage, especially for these 3.5 lakh teenage births in Bihar, are higher and expose the women and girls to maternal mortality and morbidity. The survival of children, who are underweight, and that of anaemic mothers is also bleak. Bihar's infant mortality rate (IMR) is 38 per 1,000 live births compared to 34 for the rest of the country.

High-risk births occur because girls and women are unable to understand the risks of early pregnancy. Nor are they empowered to delay or space their pregnancies. Bihar has the lowest spacing time duration (44.4 per cent) with approximately 15 lakh high-risk pregnancies, compared to the national average of 51.9 per cent. Less than three years between pregnancies enhances the risk of maternal and child mortality. This is also a big reason for high Maternal Mortality Rate (MMR) in Bihar, which stands at 208 per 100,000 live births, as per Sample Registration System survey 2015. This is way above the national MMR of 130.

Every woman should be able to decide whether, when and how many children she wants to have. But several factors prevent her from doing so. Early marriage is one of the major rea-

sons why girls are unable to exercise agency. Bihar not only has the highest number of child marriages in India (39.1 per cent) — the national incidence of child marriage among girls aged between 10 and 18 years is 4.5 per cent, according to NFHS-4 — the State also has the maximum number of districts (20 out of 38) in the country that remains plagued by child marriage.

So, in Khagaria district, which has the highest prevalence of child marriage in the State, it is not uncommon to see early marriage that is followed by quick motherhood. The percentage of girls marrying below the legal age of marriage in Khagaria is 34.4 (NFHS-4).

Not only is the high percentage of early marriage in rural Bihar (91.4 per cent) worrying but the fact is also that 78.9 per cent of the marriages in the age group between 15 and 19 occur among the poor households (2018 NCPDR-Young Lives study). Poverty often means that education remains out of reach for these girls. A 2017 Population Council study found that two in three unmarried girls and less than one in seven married girls were currently in school. Families appeared to invest less in girls with 41 per cent of unmarried girls not attending school regularly.

Once they are married, fertility for women like Suguna begins too young. Lack of information, coupled with inability to access reproductive and sexual health services, means too many and frequent pregnancies. But by ensuring that adolescents are aware of the services available to them and educating them about their sexual and reproductive health, the Government can help them plan their pregnancy.

This is where family planning corners located at public health centres in Bihar have a pivotal role to play. By providing information about reproductive and sexual health as well as on contra-

ceptive choices, trained counsellors at these family planning counselling desks can help couples space their children. Since unmet contraceptive needs lead to unwanted fertility, an increased use of temporary methods to stop child-bearing may lower total fertility significantly. Family planning counselling corners can give women the freedom to defer having children by using temporary contraceptive methods. And counselling is a crucial component in decision-making.

If couples are educated and allowed to make an informed choice, based on the advantages and disadvantages of contraceptives available, they will want family planning services. There is a clear relationship between TFR and contraceptive prevalence rate. Data has shown that where there is very low contraceptive prevalence, fertility is very high as is in Bihar. In States like Tamil Nadu and Andhra Pradesh, fertility is lower because contraceptive prevalence is much higher.

By providing an appropriate range of contraceptive services, India can avert 23.9 million births and prevent one million infant deaths and over 42,000 maternal deaths by 2020. It has been proven that as contraceptive use rises, maternal and infant deaths decline. It is estimated that MMR could be reduced by a third through spacing of births. A Lancet study has shown that India would save \$18.2 billion in consumption expenditure in 2020 if the FP2020 goal were to be achieved. This would also improve the chances of achieving the Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 3.7 goal of eliminating unmet needs by 2030. But it is imperative that access to quality family planning information and services is ensured and women are given the power of choice in planning their families.

(The writer is a senior journalist)

# Essentials for a progressive alliance

Given their recent experiment during the by-elections in Uttar Pradesh, where the SP and BSP registered a combined victory, they are confident that their alliance at the national level will be a success. But both elections are different and the deal needs some fine-tuning to emerge victorious



BISWAJEET BANERJEE

After the demolition of the Babri Masjid in 1992, the then Chief Minister of Uttar Pradesh, Kalyan Singh, resigned because his Government failed to protect the disputed structure despite having given an assurance in the Supreme Court that the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) Government will ensure protection and security of the mosque. This incident led to another bout of State elections in Uttar Pradesh. The BJP was confident that it would return to power, riding high on the Hindutva wave that swept the country then. Kalyan Singh emerged as the Hindu mascot and the 1993 election was contested around him and Ram Mandir.

Amid this political cacophony, Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP) founder Kanshi Ram and the then Samajwadi

Party (SP) supreme Mulayam Singh Yadav joined hands. The BSP and SP contested the 1993 Uttar Pradesh elections as allies. Uttar Pradesh once again became a crucible of political experiments, to see whether 'caste' could get the better of religion, because in local parlance, it is believed that religion is the glue that binds all castes. The result was an eye-opener for all. The alliance decimated the BJP and its count came down from 221 to 108 and Mulayam Singh Yadav became the Chief Minister.

In the last 26 years, much water has flown down the Gomati river and the BSP and SP have once again decided to join hands. This time, the mantle is in the hands of BSP Chief Mayawati and SP president Akhilesh Yadav. On January 12, they made the silhouette of this alliance public with both parties deciding to contest 38 seats each and leaving four seats for other parties, which include Amethi and Rae Bareilly for the Congress and two others for the Rashtriya Lok Dal (RLD). Later, developments showed that SP was ready to give another seat to RLD from its quota. So it will con-

test on 37 seats. Plain arithmetic shows that the alliance between the SP and BSP can give jitters to the BJP because in 2014, the saffron party and its allies got 43 per cent votes, which translated into 73 seats in Uttar Pradesh. The party won 71 seats on its own — the highest tally in Uttar Pradesh — and its ally, Apna Dal, won two seats. On the other hand, SP got 22 per cent votes and BSP, 20 per cent, while the Congress secured six per cent. SP won five seats — all of them in the so-called Yadav belt, while the Congress was victorious only in Amethi and Rae Bareilly which are the party's pocket boroughs.

Interestingly, all these parties contested elections against each other. Moreover, in 2014, the then Congress-led UPA Government, which was supported by SP and BSP from the outside, was facing massive corruption charges and the mood of the people was against the ruling regime.

In this scenario, the BJP played a shrewd political card by projecting the then Chief Minister of Gujarat, Narendra Modi, as the party's prime ministerial candidate. The BJP sold the

Gujarat model as a precursor of development and promised *ache din* to the people. Just four to five months before the 2014 elections, signals were clear that the Congress would not return to power and this time, Narendra Modi would head the country. Even in Uttar Pradesh, the BJP gained ground after the Muzaffarnagar pogrom, which divided western Uttar Pradesh along sharp religious lines. Reports of exodus of Hindu families from Kairana and Shamli further added fuel to an already communal-charged atmosphere.

The situation in 2019, however, is different. The BJP is now facing anti-incumbency. Decisions like demonetisation and the haphazard implementation of the Goods and Service Tax have made the BJP Government unpopular among the masses. The Centre for Monitoring Indian Economy in its recent study said that over 35 lakh people have lost jobs because of demonetisation when high-value currency notes were culled in one go in 2016. Issues of lack of employment and alleged corruption in the Rafale deal gave the Opposition

parties a hammer to beat the Modi Government. To top it all, the agrarian crisis, including non-payment of cane arrears and stray cattle menace in Uttar Pradesh, has made the BJP unpopular among the masses.

In this scenario, the SP-BSP alliance seems to be a potent combination to take on the BJP. Even as the Congress will not be a part of the alliance, and its leaders have declared that the grand old party will contest the election separately, theoretically, it seems that the SP-BSP alliance will sweep the 2019 Lok Sabha election and will win around 50 seats out of a possible 80 in Uttar Pradesh. Yogendra Yadav, the psephologist, has claimed that if the BJP, BSP and SP are able to retain their vote percentage of 43 per cent, 20 per cent and 22 per cent, respectively (which these parties got in 2014), the BJP will win 41 seats, which is 32 less than its tally of 2014, while the BSP-SP alliance will get 41 seats, up by 36 seats, compared to the last elections.

But then, elections are not a game of psephology. They are based on permutations and combinations

that vary every passing day and can impact the result, which can be unexpected sometimes. A sitting lawmaker of the SP said that on the face of it, party workers are happy that the SP entered into an alliance with the BSP but results cannot be depicted merely on the basis of the 2014 election. "In 2014, there was a wave in favour of Modi but in 2019, there is no wave either for or against the BJP. People are angry with the ruling party but that anger needs to be transformed into votes. This is a tedious job and needs to be meticulously worked on," he said.

What has given the Opposition confidence is the results to by-elections in various States. In Uttar Pradesh itself, a united Opposition defeated the BJP in Gorakhpur, Phulpur and Kairana parliamentary elections. Gorakhpur was said to be the BJP's citadel, where Chief Minister Adityanath had won five times in a row. Deputy Chief Minister Keshav Prasad Maurya, too, won the Phulpur, constituency in 2014. Both leaders vacated their seats after they joined the State Cabinet. Kairana in western Uttar

Pradesh was represented by BJP stalwart Hukum Singh. In all these seats, SP, BSP and RLD contested unitedly.

But in politics, people say, by-elections cannot predict the outcome of the general elections. This holds true for the 2019 elections too. One thing is clear that in Uttar Pradesh, where caste plays an important role, selection of candidates will be of paramount importance. A leader, who is popular and is working with the people, can turn the situation in favour of the alliance. But if a candidate is given a ticket merely because he is rich but has no roots among the masses, could prove catastrophic for the alliance.

Second, merely announcing alliance will not unite caste base of both parties at the ground level. Both leaders need to chalk out a strategy to bring a thaw between intermediary castes like the Yadavs, Kurmis and Dalits, who otherwise are always at loggerheads at the village level. If the sense of unity does not percolate down, it will be a requiem for the alliance.

(The writer is Executive Director (News) with Lucknow edition of The Pioneer.)

# Naresh Goyal offers to invest ₹700 crore in Jet Airways

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Jet Airways Chairman Naresh Goyal has offered to invest up to ₹700 crore in the crisis-hit airline as well as pledge all his shares on the condition that his stake does not fall below 25 per cent, according to a letter.

Amid the full-service carrier grappling with financial woes, Goyal has written to SBI Chairman Rajnish Kumar with reference to the resolution plan under discussion and in view of Etihad's position, "despite the significant cash crunch and imminent grounding, which the airline is facing".

The letter also comes against the backdrop of strategic partner Etihad reportedly putting forward strict conditions, including that Goyal should give up control, for infusing funds into the airline.

Goyal said he is committed to an "infusion of funds into the company to the extent of ₹700 crore" and pledging all his shares.

This is subject to the condition that his shareholding post such infusion is at least 25 per cent, he said in the letter.

"Should this not be possible, then I would not be able to infuse any funds or pledge my shares, unless Sebi accords me an exemption permitting me to increase my reduced stake (if it is to be below 25 per cent) without triggering the Takeover Code", Goyal, who currently holds 51 per cent stake in the airline, said.

When shareholding of an entity in a listed company goes beyond a certain threshold, then the open offer requirement is triggered under Sebi's Takeover Code.

State Bank of India (SBI) is the lead lender of a consortium of Indian banks that has provided loans to the airline, and the stakeholders are considering a resolution for Jet Airways that is facing acute

financial problems.

On December 31, 2018, the carrier defaulted on a loan repayment to the consortium.

"I am informed that under Indian law, amounts payable by the company to promoter group entities, should be treated at par with the other overdue creditors of the company and the same, upon conversion into equity is considered as cash," Goyal said in the letter.

He has also sought a fair and equitable resolution in the best interests of the airline and all its shareholders.

"I respectfully submit that unless my shareholding goes below 10 per cent and/or my group is not represented on the board, I would continue to be held out as a promoter, and be faced with the attendant exposures/risks of being a promoter," Goyal said in the letter dated January 16.

Hence, it is only fair and equitable that "our shareholding be at least 25 per cent", Goyal said.

Shares of the airline rose over 5 per cent to close at ₹284.80 on the BSE.

"As part of a continuous engagement with SBI, Naresh Goyal has communicated his position on the resolution plan to SBI, which is under consideration," the airline said in a filing to the BSE.

The filing was in response to a clarification sought from Jet Airways on Goyal's proposal to infuse ₹700 crore into the airline subject to certain conditions.

On Thursday, the SBI said lenders are considering a resolution plan for Jet Airways to ensure long-term viability of the debt-laden company.

The airline, on Wednesday, said discussions are "progressing well" with stakeholders on a comprehensive resolution plan that also contemplates equity infusion and consequent changes in its board of directors.

## Jet Airways shares zooms over 5%

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Shares of Jet Airways erased early losses and ended over 5 per cent higher on Thursday after Chairman Naresh Goyal offered to invest up to ₹700 crore in the airline on the condition that his stake does not fall below 25 per cent.

The scrip bounced back and ended 5.09 per cent higher at ₹284.80 on the BSE. During the day, the stock had plunged 5.31 per cent to ₹256.60.

At NSE, shares of the company soared 5.28 per cent to close at ₹283.95.

In terms of equity volume, 48.12 lakh shares of the company were traded on BSE and over 6 crore shares changed hands at NSE during the day.

Goyal said he is committed to an "infusion of funds into the company to the extent of ₹700 crore" and pledging all his shares. This is subject to the condition that his shareholding post such infusion is at least 25 per cent, he said in the letter which was seen by PTI.

Jet Airways Chairman Naresh Goyal has told the State Bank of India (SBI) that he is ready to invest up to ₹700 crore in the airline on the condition that his stake does not fall below 25 per cent.

Goyal's offer comes against the backdrop of strategic partner Etihad reportedly putting forward strict conditions, including that Goyal should give up control, for infusing funds into the crisis-hit carrier.

In a letter to SBI Chairman Rajnish Kumar, Goyal said he is writing with reference to the resolution plan under discussion and in view of Etihad's position, "despite the significant cash crunch and imminent grounding, which the airline is facing".

# Ghosn appeals against Japan bail rejection

**Appeal came as the French Government called for him to be replaced at the head of Renault**

AFP ■ TOKYO

Lawyers for former Nissan boss Carlos Ghosn on Thursday appealed against a decision by a Tokyo court to refuse him bail, as he faces charges on three counts of financial misconduct.

Since his stunning arrest on November 19 the auto tycoon has languished in a Tokyo detention centre, facing questioning over allegations he under-reported his salary and tried to shift personal losses onto the company.

On January 11 he was formally charged on two of the counts and his request for bail refused again. Even his own lawyer has admitted he is likely to be kept behind bars until a trial — which could take six months.

The court has previously refused to release the 64-year-old Franco-Lebanese-Brazilian businessman on the grounds that he could present a flight risk and destroy evidence.

The appeal came as the

French Government called for him to be replaced at the head of Renault, the only one of the three companies he used to head that has retained him.

Japanese firms Nissan and Mitsubishi Motors jettisoned him as boss almost immediately after his arrest, but Renault was more cautious and appointed an interim leader while Ghosn fought the charges.

If the bail appeal is turned down he faces at least a two-month period in pre-trial detention. This can be extended almost automatically by one month at a time.

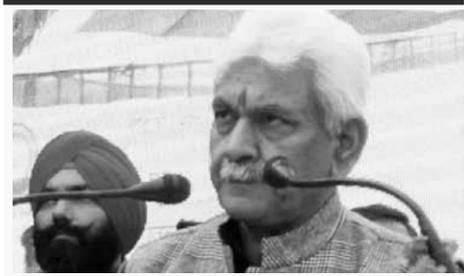
His wife Carole has appealed to Human Rights Watch over his detention, saying he was being held in "harsh" conditions and subjected to round-the-clock interrogations in an attempt to extract a confession.

Ghosn has been seen only once in public since his detention, in a dramatic court appearance.

He had clearly lost a lot of weight but seemed otherwise in good health. He passionately proclaimed his innocence and his love for Nissan, a company he is widely credited with saving from the brink of bankruptcy.

"I have been wrongly accused and unfairly detained based on meritless and unsubstantiated accusations," Ghosn told a packed courtroom.

## Business Corner



Minister of State (Independent Charge) for Communications & Minister of State for Railways Manoj Sinha on Thursday dedicated to the nation a new BG Line between Amb Andaura to Daulatpur Chauk via Chintpurni Marg Platform No.1 at Amb Andaura station, Extension of Platform No.1 at Una Himachal station



B.V. Rama Gopal, Director (Refineries), IndianOil, inaugurated 'SAKSHAM-2019' (Sanrakshan Kshamata Mahotsav), the month-long oil & gas conservation mass awareness campaign, at Refineries Headquarters in New Delhi on Wednesday. He administered the 'SAKSHAM' pledge and later in his address to the functional heads and senior members of Team RHO, urged IOCIans to cultivate conservation of energy as a habit in daily life



Prime Minister of India, Narendra Modi visited the power pavilion at the 9th edition of the Vibrant Gujarat Global Summit on Thursday and interacted with the senior officials of Power PSUs. CK Mondol, RED (WR-I), NTPC and officials of other Power Sector PSUs were present during the visit by the Prime Minister



M. Ravi Kanth, CMD HUDCO, inaugurated the 40th international training programme on 'planning and management of sustainable urban infrastructure', supported by Ministry of External Affairs under the Indian Technical and Economic Cooperation (ITEC) programme. The 6 week training is being attended by 30 urban sector professionals from 22 countries



Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar laid the foundation stone for POWERGRID 400/220/132 KV Sitamarhi Sub-station at Parmanandpur, Sitamarhi. The programme was presided over by RK Singh, Union Minister of State (Independent Charge) for Power, New and Renewable Energy as chief guest on this occasion. The ₹620-crore project will improve power position in Bihar

# BHEL to set up EV chargers along Delhi-Chandigarh Highway

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Bharat Heavy Electricals Limited (BHEL) will set up a network of Solar-based Electric Vehicle Chargers (SEVC) on the Delhi-Chandigarh Highway. The project is covered under the FAME scheme [Faster Adoption and Manufacturing of (Hybrid &) Electric Vehicles

in India] of the Department of Heavy Industry (DHI), Government of India.

The establishment of EV chargers at regular intervals over the entire 250 kms stretch between Delhi and Chandigarh would allay range-anxiety among the Electric Vehicle users and bolster their confidence for inter-city travel.

BHEL's scope of work in the project includes design, engineering, manufacturing, supply and installation of the EV charging stations along with a Central Monitoring System. Each SEVC charging station will be equipped with a rooftop solar power plant to supply green energy to fast and slow chargers planned to be installed at the location.

# Netherlands to sign 10 MoUs at Vibrant Gujarat Summit

PTI ■ AHMEDABAD

The Netherlands said on Thursday it is signing 10 MoUs at the Vibrant Gujarat Global Summit starting on Friday with focus on sectors like smart city and waste management, healthcare and agricultural cooperation.

The European country is being represented by a delegation, which has more than 100 members, at the three-day business conclave being held at Gandhinagar.

The delegation, led by Netherlands' Minister of Finance for Taxation and Customs, Menno Snel, consists of representatives from 45 companies, three trade associations and government agencies.

"We met Chief Minister (Vijay) Rupani... We have 45 companies, out of which 10 are signing MoUs. Our delegations have been growing."

Lots of MoUs are on strategic cooperation," Snel told reporters here Thursday.

Out of 10 MoUs, five were signed Thursday and the rest will be inked during the summit, he said.

The MoUs deal with mobility management, waste-to-energy conversion, delivery system in diagnostics, saline farming, and protected cultivation of horticultural crops.

A Dutch company, Pal-V, which makes flying cars, is also participating in the summit.

Pal-V plans to deliver its first vehicles, which will have seating capacity for two persons, to customers in Europe by 2019 or early 2020.

# ₹ logs 1st gain in five sessions, rises 21 paise against dollar

PTI ■ MUMBAI

The Indian rupee reversed its four-day losing streak by recovering 21 paise to close at 71.03 against the US dollar on Thursday on increased selling of the greenback by exporters and lower crude oil prices.

Besides, liquidity infusion by central banks through open market operations and unveiling a RBI new policy for overseas borrowings, allowing all eligible entities to raise foreign funding under the automatic route and removing sectoral curbs, supported the rupee.

At the Interbank Foreign Exchange, the rupee opened stronger at 71.15 a dollar against the previous close of 70.24. The local unit moved in a range of 70.92 to 71.40, before finally ending at 71.03, showing a gain of 21 paise.

The rupee Wednesday plunged by 19 paise to close at 71.24 against the US dollar.

"Indian rupee has broken the four days losing streak, after liquidity infusion by central banks through open market operation. Central bank eased overseas borrowing rules for companies, which also helped rupee to recover from the lower levels," said V K Sharma, Head PCG and Capital Markets Strategy, HDFC Securities.

Meanwhile, the dollar index, which gauges the greenback's strength against a basket of six currencies, was trading lower by 0.01 per cent at 96.04.

Furthermore, losses in crude oil and gains in domestic equities also supported the trading sentiment in the forex market.

Brent crude, the global benchmark, was trading at \$60.56 per barrel, lower by 1.24 per cent.

"The Brent crude rally halted today on the face of strongly rising crude oil production coming out of the US. The news on Brent reflected in the INR movement which rose after depreciating for four straight days. The rupee was among the top five best performing EM currencies today," said Sunil Sharma, Chief Investment Officer, Sanctum Wealth Management.

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 Branch Office: DHFL, Dreams Mall, First Floor, L.B.S Marg, Bhandup (West), Mumbai - 400078

**DEMAND NOTICE**  
 Under Section 13(2) of the Securitisation And Reconstruction of Financial Assets And Enforcement Of Security Interest Act, 2002 read with Rule 3 (1) of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002. The undersigned is the Authorised Officer of Dewan Housing Finance Corporation Ltd. (DHFL) under Securitisation And Reconstruction Of Financial Assets And Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 (the said Act), in exercise of powers conferred under Section 13(2) of the said Act read with Rule 3 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002, the Authorised Officer has issued Demand Notices under section 13(2) of the said Act, calling upon the following Borrower(s) (the "said Borrower(s)"), to repay the amounts mentioned in the respective Demand Notice(s) issued to them that are also given below. In connection with above, Notice is hereby given, once again, to the said Borrower(s) to pay to DHFL, within 60 days from the publication of this Notice, the amounts indicated herein below, together with further interest as detailed in the said Demand Notice(s), from the date(s) mentioned below till the date of payment and/or realization, payable under the loan agreement read with other documents/writings, if any, executed by the said Borrower(s). As security for due repayment of the loan, the following assets have been mortgaged to DHFL by the said Borrower(s) respectively.

Name of the Borrower(s)/ Guarantor(s)	Demand Notice Date and Amount With NPA date	Description of secured asset (Immovable property)
(LC No. 00001597 of DELHI Branch) Satish Kumar Puri (Borrower) Gagan Puri (Co Borrower) Saroj Puri (Co Borrower)	27/12/2018/ ₹ 788095/- (Seven lakh Eighty Eight Thousand Ninety Five) (NPA date: 01-09-2018)	Flat No- 20 A Ground Floor Block G & Ju, Pitampura, New Delhi, New Delhi-110034
(LC No. 00001959 of DELHI Branch) Gopalsons Steels Pvt Ltd (Borrower) Shashi Sachdev (Co Borrower) Rohit Sachdev (Co Borrower)	27/12/2018/ ₹ 14220596/- (One Crore Forty Two lakh Twenty Thousand Five Hundred Ninety Six) (NPA date: 01-11-2018)	Flat No 1 Plot No 23 2nd Flr Rear Uhs Block B South Western Portion Ashoka Arcade H No B 23, Grater Kailash 1 Delhi, New Delhi-110048
(LC No. 00002567 of DELHI Branch) Malik Bricks Field (Borrower) Mansingh Bricks Field (Co Borrower) Somwati Kumari (Co Borrower)	27/12/2018/ ₹ 15417765/- (One Crore Fifty Four lakh Seventeen Thousand Seven Hundred Sixty Five) (NPA date: 01-11-2018)	Plot No.- B-16/1, First Floor, Kh- No-70, Block-B, West Jyoti Nagar, Vill- Sikdarpur, Illaga- Shahdara, Nr- Opposite, BSES Office, Delhi, New Delhi- 110094
(LC No. 00003354 of Gwalior Branch) Narendra Pal Singh (Borrower) Poonam Devi (Co Borrower)	27/12/2018/ ₹ 649706/- (Six lakh Forty Nine Thousand Seven Hundred Six) (NPA date: 01-08-2018)	Flat No 233 Second Floor, G Block, G Block, Sector Mu- 01, Greater Noida, Uttar Pradesh, New Delhi- 110096
(LC No. 00001495 of DELHI Branch) Vinod Kumar (Borrower) Sunita Devi (Co Borrower)	27/12/2018/ ₹ 1017300/- (Ten lakh Seventeen Thousand Three Hundred) (NPA date: 01-12-2018)	Slum Quarter Janta Flat No. E-71-B First Floor, Block-E Near Crpf Camp, Tilak Vihar, Delhi, New Delhi- 110018
(LC No. 00004625 of Karnal Branch) Amit Kumar (Borrower) Asha (Co Borrower)	27/12/2018/ ₹ 1750292/- (Seventeen lakh Fifty Thousand Two Hundred Ninety Two) (NPA date: 01-11-2018)	Kherwat No 35, Khata No 37, Vill 36/21/2 4-0 22/2, Vila Rakha Najli, Near Behind Naveen School Moha, Sonapat, New Delhi- 110040
(LC No. 00001596 of DELHI Branch) Rahul Sharma (Borrower) Samrity Sharma (Co Borrower) Alchemy India (Co Borrower)	27/12/2018/ ₹ 12973268/- (One Crore Twenty Nine lakh Seventy Three Thousand Two Hundred Eighty Eight) (NPA date: 01-11-2018)	Plot No 15 Second Floor Road No 5 Sarvapriya Vihar, Delhi, New Delhi- 110017
(LC No. 00001650 of DELHI Branch) Rahul Sharma (Borrower) Samrity Sharma (Co Borrower) Alchemy India (Co Borrower)	27/12/2018/ ₹ 4248001/- (Forty Two lakh Forty Eight Thousand One) (NPA date: 01-11-2018)	Plot No 15 Second Floor Road No 5 Sarvapriya Vihar, Delhi, New Delhi- 110017
(LC No. NOD38397 of DELHI Branch) MANPREET SINGH (Borrower)	27/12/2018/ ₹ 2157479/- (Twenty One lakh Fifty Seven Thousand Four Hundred Seventy Nine) (NPA date: 01-11-2018)	Floor No. 3rd Floor, Plot No. C- 64, Block-C, Sector. Fateh Nagar, Village. New Delhi, New Delhi, New Delhi- 110018
(LC No. 00000266 of DELHI Branch) Nafees Ahmed (Borrower) Rehana Bano (Co Borrower)	27/12/2018/ ₹ 1316699/- (Thirteen lakh Sixteen Thousand Six Hundred Ninety Nine) (NPA date: 01-12-2018)	Flat No 705 Ground Floor Block C Pocket 11 Dda Janta Flat Jocola, New Delhi, New Delhi- 110025
(LC No. 00001436 of DELHI Branch) V.S. Matrix Private Limited (Borrower) Amit Gupta (Co Borrower) Jyoti Gupta (Co Borrower)	27/12/2018/ ₹ 5598518/- (Fifty Five lakh Ninety Eight Thousand Five Hundred Eighty Eight) (NPA date: 01-09-2018)	M_Machine_Name:- Wire Stripper Set, Ap_Model_No:- Bw- 882dh
(LC No. 00001544 of DELHI Branch) Rajmit Physiotherapy Centre (Borrower) Raj Kumar Yadav (Co Borrower) Vijay Yadav (Co Borrower)	27/12/2018/ ₹ 2002829/- (Twenty lakh Two Thousand Eight Hundred Twenty Nine) (NPA date: 01-10-2017)	M_Machine_Name:- Radiography System, AP_Model_No:- 002
(LC No. 00001824 of DELHI Branch) A M Vinyl Pvt Ltd (Borrower) Ashok Chopra (Co Borrower) Deeksha Chopra (Co Borrower) Atul Chopra (Guarantor)	27/12/2018/ ₹ 21187957/- (Two Crore Eleven lakh Eighty Seven Thousand Nine Hundred Fifty Seven) (NPA date: 01-05-2018)	M_Machine_Name:- High Speed Circular Knitting Machine , Ap_Model_No:- Am-0030
(LC No. 00001573 of DELHI Branch) Saverna Wholesale Club Pvt Ltd (Borrower) Vaibhav Singhal (Co Borrower) Seema Gupta (Co Borrower)	16/11/2018/ ₹ 15911201/- (One Crore Fifty Nine lakh Eleven Thousand Two Hundred One) (NPA date: 01-11-2018)	M_MACHINE_NAME :- SORTEXAP_MODEL_NO :- SC320

If the said Borrowers shall fail to make payment to DHFL as aforesaid, DHFL shall proceed against the above secured assets under section 13(4) of the Act and the applicable Rules, entirely at the risks of the said Borrowers as to the costs and consequences. The said Borrowers are prohibited under the Act from transferring the aforesaid assets, whether by way of sale, lease or otherwise without the prior written consent of DHFL. Any person who contravenes or abets contravention of the provisions of the said Act or Rules made there under, shall be liable for imprisonment and/or penalty as provided under the Act.

Date: 18-01-2019  
 Place: DELHI

Sd/-  
 (Authorised Officer)  
 Dewan Housing Finance Corporation Limited

Corrigendum No.-1 to E-Tender Enquiry No. 14/CCD-291/Vol-IV Dated: 21-12-2018

**HARYANA VIDYUT PRASARAN NIGAM LIMITED**  
 Shakti Bhawan Panchkula, GIN: U4010HR1997SGC033683

The last date of online bid submission is extended up to 28-01-2019. Detail NIT & Tender Document is available at website: <https://haryanaeprocurement.gov.in> (66kv S/stn, Rattangarh E-tender ID 108789).

Name of Office: Executive Engineer, Civil Works Division, HVPNL, Panchkula  
 RO NO. 74903 Dt. 17-01-2019

**हaryana सरकार**

**TENDER NOTICE**

Sr. No.	NAME OF BOARD/CORP./ AUTH	NAME OF WORK NOTICE TENDER	OPENING DATE CLOSING DATE (TIME)	AMOUNT / EMD (APPRO.) IN RUPEES	WEBSITE OF THE BOARD CORP./ AUTH	NODAL OFFICER/ CONTACT DETAILS/EMAIL
1	HSIDC	PROVIDING 04 NOS. TRAFFICE LIGHTS IN IMT MANESAR.	16.01.2019 31.01.2019	47.08 LACS	<a href="http://www.hsfdc.org.in">http://www.hsfdc.org.in</a> Tender No: SE/GGM/2019/128.111264	se.electrical.hsfdc@gmail.com
2	HSIDC	ELECTRIFICATION AND STREET LIGHT IN NEWLY CARVED OUT R&R POCKET AT HSIDC INDS. ESTATE,BAHADURGARH	16.01.2019 31.01.2019	10.26 LACS	<a href="http://www.hsfdc.org.in">http://www.hsfdc.org.in</a> Tender No: SE/GGM/2019/118.111039	se.electrical.hsfdc@gmail.com
3	HSIDC	SHIFTING OF 33 KV AND 11 KV LINE FALLING IN THE ROW OF 66KV LINE IN IMT FARIDABAD.	16.01.2019 31.01.2019	63.05 LACS	<a href="http://www.hsfdc.org.in">http://www.hsfdc.org.in</a> Tender No: SE/GGM/2019/1208.111036	se.electrical.hsfdc@gmail.com
4	HSIDC	DESIGN, MANUFACTURE,SUPPLY,ERECTION,TESTING AND COMMISSIONING OF 2*25/31.5 MVA,66/11KV SUBSTATION WITH SAS IN PHASE-2 AT I.E. BARWALA(PANCHKULA) ON TURKEY BASIS	17.01.2019 07.02.2019	1277.92 LACS	<a href="http://www.hsfdc.org.in">http://www.hsfdc.org.in</a> Tender No: SE/PKL/12	se.electrical.hsfdc@gmail.com
5	HSIDC	WORK OF PROVIDING MOBILE LIGHTING TOWER,HIGH MAST AND HT/LT LINE WITH TRANSFORMERS IN HSIDC STONE MINE AT VILLAGE KHANAK IN TOSHAM(DISTT.BHIWANI).	17.01.2019 01.02.2019	90.35 LACS	<a href="http://www.hsfdc.org.in">http://www.hsfdc.org.in</a> Tender No:HSIDC/SE/PKL/13	se.electrical.hsfdc@gmail.com
6	GMDA	DISMANTLING OF RAW WATER PUMP HOUSE AT WTP,BASAI,GURUGRAM.'PROVIDING,INSTALLING,COMMISSIONING AND HANDLING OVER 3 NOS VAF PUMP 3570 CUM/HR.WITH 12 MTR.HEAD 3 NOS.MOTOR + 3 OTHER WORK	15.01.2019 01.02.2019	187.33 LACS	<a href="https://www.gmda.gov.in">https://www.gmda.gov.in</a> Job No.3 & 4/2019	0124-2746617 xen1.gmda@gov.in
7	GURU JAMBHESHWAR UNIVERSITY	CONSTRUCTION/EXTENSION OF BOYS HOSTEL NO.4 I/C PH,ET AND FIRE FIGHTING(BLOCK-C)	23.01.2019 21.02.2019	800 LACS	<a href="http://www.gjust.ac.in">http://www.gjust.ac.in</a> Tender No: ET/2018-19/80	01662-263105 uwg@jshu@gmail.com
8	HSPV HISAR	SHIFTING OF 11 K.V DHANI ROOP NAGER FEEDER AND OTHER 11 KV PASSING OVER THE PLOT OF SECTOR-1A AT FATEHABAD	CLOSING 23.01.2019	10.45 LACS	<a href="http://etenders.hry.nic.in">http://etenders.hry.nic.in</a>	Exec Engineer
9	MDU ROHTAK	SUPPLY OF FURNITURE FOR MATH DEPARTMENT AND NEWLY CONSTRUCTED PHYSICAL EDUCATION BUILDING + 3 OTHER WORK	11.01.2019 30.01.2019	63.86 LACS	<a href="https://mdurohtak.haryanaeprocurement.gov.in">https://mdurohtak.haryanaeprocurement.gov.in</a>	01262-393175 ven.civil@mdurohtak.ac.in
10	HAFED	LEASING OUT OF HAFED BARLEY MALT PLANT,JATUSANA,(REWARI)	16.01.2019 06.02.2019	EMD-2 LACS	<a href="http://www.hafed.gov.in">www.hafed.gov.in</a>	0172-2580520 hafed@hry.nic.in

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION KINDLY VISIT : [www.haryanaeprocurement.gov.in](http://www.haryanaeprocurement.gov.in) or [www.etenders.hry.nic.in](http://www.etenders.hry.nic.in) RO NO. 74911

Adani to foray into petrochemicals

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Billionaire Gautam Adani-run Adani Group will partner German chemical giant BASF to foray into the petrochemicals sector with a ₹16,000 crore factory at Mundra in Gujarat.

majority," it said. The companies did not give details of the joint venture. The potential investment comprises the development, construction and operation of production plants, including propane dehydrogenation (PDH), oxo C4 complex (butanols and 2-ethyl hexanol), glacial acrylic acid (GAA), butyl acrylate (BA) and potentially other downstream products.

continues to be a very large importer of petrochemicals given the rapid expansion of the middle class, and this leads to a significant outflow of precious foreign exchange. Our partnership with BASF is a big step forward in enabling our country's 'Make in India' program, as this partnership will allow us to produce in Mundra several of the chemicals along the C3 chemical value chain that we are currently importing."

Flipkart India raises ₹1,431 cr from Singapore-based parent firm

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Flipkart India, the wholesale arm of Walmart-owned e-commerce company Flipkart, has received about ₹1,431 crore from its Singapore-based parent, according to documents filed with the Corporate Affairs Ministry.

policy norms for e-commerce firms with foreign investment. The new rules — effective from February 1 — bar online marketplaces with foreign investments from selling products of the companies where they hold stakes, and ban exclusive marketing arrangements.

Indo-US trade below potential, restrictions should be eased: USIBC chief

PTI ■ AHMEDABAD

Amid bilateral trade tensions, USIBC President Nisha Biswal said Thursday that the trade between India and the US is much below its potential, and both the sides should ease restrictions and put in an "overarching" framework.

India announced retaliatory tariffs on 29 US products six months ago after US President Donald Trump imposed heavy tariffs on imported steel and aluminium items.

continues to grow...It is now where near the potential of what it should be. And that really requires both sides to take significant steps to ease restrictions or access to flow of investments and flow of trade in both directions," she said.

NIFTY 50

Table with columns: SCRIP, OPEN, HIGH, LOW, LTP CHANGE. Lists various stocks and their price movements.

BSE 500

Table with columns: Script, Open, High, Low, LTP. Lists 500 stocks and their price movements.

Larsen & Toubro Infotech acquires Ruletronics for \$7.48 mn

New Delhi (PTI): Larsen & Toubro Infotech (LTI) on Thursday said it had acquired Ruletronics for an enterprise value of USD 7.48 million (about ₹53 crore).

USIBC chief: Indo-US trade below potential, restrictions should be eased

Amid bilateral trade tensions, USIBC President Nisha Biswal said Thursday that the trade between India and the US is much below its potential, and both the sides should ease restrictions and put in an "overarching" framework.

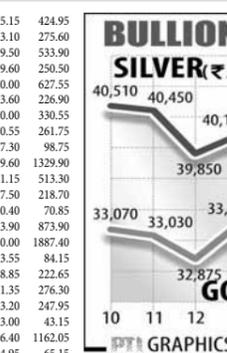


Table with columns: SCRIP, OPEN, HIGH, LOW, LTP CHANGE. Lists various stocks and their price movements.

NIFTY NEXT 50

Table with columns: SCRIP, OPEN, HIGH, LOW, LTP CHANGE. Lists 50 stocks and their price movements.

TOP GAINERS TOP LOSERS

Table with columns: Axis Bank, Sun Pharma, etc. Lists top gainers and losers.

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H-1B holders get poor working conditions in US

THINK-TANK

PTI ■ WASHINGTON

H-1B workers are frequently placed in poor working conditions and vulnerable to abuse...

be exploited, according to the report.

"H-1B workers themselves are underpaid, vulnerable to abuse, and frequently placed in poor working conditions...

In a report, the South Asia Center of the Atlantic Council also sought safeguards like providing fair working conditions...

The report said adopting adequate safeguards would also ensure the H-1B programme contributes to the US economy...

The report comes days after US President Donald Trump said he is soon coming out with reforms that will give H-1B visa holders certainty to stay in America...

The think-tank suggested three key reforms and said these should apply to all employers and not simply a subset of them.

"The first, and most important, reform is to substantially raise the wages of H-1B workers...

The report has been authored by Ron Hira from Howard University and head, South Asia Center of the Atlantic Council, Bharat Gopalaswamy.

Second, employers should demonstrate they have actively recruited US workers, and offered positions to qualified people, prior to turning to the H-1B programme, it said.

Trump taps 3 Indian-American experts for key admin posts

PTI ■ WASHINGTON

US President Donald Trump has nominated three influential Indian-Americans including a woman nuclear expert to powerful administration positions...

The nomination of Baranwal, Bamzai and Patel was sent to the Senate Wednesday.

So far, Trump has nominated or appointed more than three dozen Indian-Americans in key positions.

Nikki Haley, the first cabinet ranking Indian-American and Raj Shah, the first Indian-American deputy Press Secretary, have left the Trump administration.

Baranwal holds the post of Director, Gateway for Accelerated Innovation in Nuclear (GAIN) initiative.

If confirmed by the Senate, she will be heading the powerful Office of Nuclear Energy. She will also be responsible for the department's nuclear technology research and the development and management of the department's nuclear technology infrastructure...

Baranwal holds the post of Director, Gateway for Accelerated Innovation in Nuclear (GAIN) initiative. She will also be responsible for the department's nuclear technology research and the development and management of the department's nuclear technology infrastructure...

May wins confidence vote, calls on MPs to work together to deliver Brexit

PTI ■ LONDON

British Prime Minister Theresa May has called on MPs to "put self-interest aside" and "work constructively together" towards Brexit after surviving a no confidence vote and averting a general election.

The Prime Minister won by 325 votes to 306 - a majority of 19 - on Wednesday, a day after her Government suffered a historic parliamentary defeat over her Brexit divorce deal with the European Union.

Speaking outside 10 Downing Street after the voting, May said the Government has won the confidence of Parliament. This now gives "us all the opportunity to focus on finding a way forward on Brexit", she said.

"Overwhelmingly, the British people want us to get on with delivering Brexit, and also address the other important issues they care about," the Conservative leader said.

This is now the time to put "self-interest aside", May said. "Now MPs have made clear what they don't want, we must all work constructively together to set out what parliament does want."

"That's why I am inviting MPs from all parties to come together to find a way forward. One that both delivers on the referendum and can command the support of Parliament. This is now the time to put self-interest aside", she said.

The prime minister said she believes it was her duty to deliver on the British people's instruction to leave the European Union. "And I intend to do so," May said in the tele-



Britain's Labour Party leader Jeremy Corbyn after his speech during a visit to Hastings, south east England, on Thursday

vised interview after the winning vote of no confidence. Earlier, Labour leader Jeremy Corbyn argued that May's "zombie" administration had lost the right to govern during a six hour debate on his motion.

His party has not ruled out tabling further no-confidence motions.

After her victory, May told MPs that she would "continue to work to deliver on the solemn promise to the people of this country to deliver on the result of the referendum and leave the European Union."

She invited leaders of all parties to have individual meetings with her on the way ahead for Brexit, starting tonight, but called on them to approach them with a "constructive spirit".

"We must find solutions that are negotiable and command sufficient support in this House," she added.

During her address from 10 Downing, the prime minis-

ter said she has held "constructive" meetings and will be meeting MPs along with senior Government officials in the coming days.

May also reiterated a promise to return to the Commons on Monday to give MPs another vote on her plans. "The House has put its confidence in this government," she said in the House of Commons.

"I stand ready to work with any member of this House to deliver Brexit and ensure that this House retains the confidence of the British people." The Democratic Unionist Party, which props up May's minority government, also voted to keep her administration in power despite their strong opposition to the Brexit deal.

May's divorce deal to leave the EU was overwhelmingly rejected by MPs on Tuesday, triggering a no-confidence motion against her government and leaving the country with no plans for Brexit on March 29.

Pak SC asks Govt to lift travel ban on Bilawal

PTI ■ ISLAMABAD

Pakistan's Supreme Court on Thursday ordered the Government to lift the travel ban imposed on opposition leader Bilawal Bhutto-Zardari and the Sindh CM, and asked the country's anti-corruption body to probe their involvement in the \$35 billion 'fake accounts case'.

As many as 172 suspects were placed on the Exit Control List (ECL) on the recommendations of a JIT formed by the apex court. A person cannot fly abroad if his name is placed on the ECL.

The Supreme Court, in a detailed judgement, ordered the government to remove the names of opposition Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) chairman Bilawal and Sindh Chief Minister Murad Ali Shah from the ECL. It, however, referred the report and material collected by the JIT in the Rs 35 billion 'fake accounts case' to the National Accountability Bureau (NAB), Dawn news reported.

The JIT report focused on "32 fake accounts" which were allegedly used to give massive financial benefits to former president Asif Ali Zardari, his sister Faryal Talpur and several others. "Removing of the names will not prevent (the) NAB to probe and in case sufficient material is found connecting these individuals with cognisable offences, it will not be precluded from making an appropriate request to the federal Government to place their names on (the) ECL again or take any appropriate action provided by law," according to the judgement authored by Justice Ijaz-ul-Ahsan.

GLOBE TROTTER

JOURNALIST MURDERED IN GHANA: POLICE

Accra: A Ghanaian undercover journalist who helped expose corruption in African football has been shot dead in the Capital Accra, police said Thursday. Ahmed Husein was part of a team led by award-winning journalist Anas Aremeyaw Anas whose undercover investigation led to the banning of some football referees and officials.

30 HELD FOR SHOWING BLACK FLAG TO PM OLI

Kathmandu: Over 30 people were arrested by the Nepal police Thursday for protesting against the construction of a dry port here and displaying black flag to Prime Minister K P Oli who laid the foundation stone for it.

NEW YORK BREAKS TOURISM RECORD IN 2018

New York: A record-breaking 65.2 million tourists visited New York in 2018, its tourist board said Wednesday, with British people particularly keen to visit the Big Apple from overseas. According to new figures from NYC & Company, around 51.6 million Americans and 13.5 million foreign tourists visited the city last year - compared to 13.1 overseas visitors in 2017.

ZIMBABWE POLICE ARREST 600 FOR FUEL PROTEST

Harare: Zimbabwe police armed with AK-47 rifles arrested a prominent activist and pastor on Wednesday, along with scores of others, in a harsh crackdown over protests against dramatic fuel price hikes in the economically shattered country.

Model claiming Trump secrets deported from Thailand

AFP ■ BANGKOK

A Belarusian model who claimed she had evidence of Russian efforts to help Donald Trump win office was deported from Thailand on Thursday after being convicted of participating in a "sex training course".

Anastasia Vashukevich, known by her pen-name Nastya Rybka, was held with several others in a police raid last February in the sleazy seaside resort of Pattaya.

In a case that veered between salacious and bizarre, Vashukevich said she had travelled to Thailand after becoming embroiled in a political scandal with Russian aluminium tycoon Oleg Deripaska -- a one-time associate of Trump's disgraced former campaign director Paul Manafort.

She then set tongues wagging by promising to reveal "missing puzzle pieces" regarding claims the Kremlin aided Trump's 2016 presidential election victory.

But the material never surfaced and critics dismissed the claims as a publicity stunt.

In the risqué Pattaya seminar led by Alex Kirillou, a self-styled Russian seduction guru, some participants wore shirts that said "sex animator" - though one person at the time described it as more of a romance and relationship course. Vashukevich pleaded guilty alongside seven others to multiple charges, including solicitation and illegal assembly at a Pattaya court on Tuesday, which ordered the group be deported.

On Thursday afternoon, Vashukevich and the majority of the convicted were put on an Aeroflot flight for Moscow, bringing to an end the Thai side of a baffling case.

Dutch journalist deported from Turkey over alleged terror links

AFP ■ ISTANBUL

A Dutch journalist based in Turkey was deported from the country on Thursday, a day after she was arrested, on suspicion of links to terrorism, Turkish officials said.

Fahrettin Altun, communications director at the Turkish presidency, confirmed her expulsion but said it "was in no way related to her journalistic activities during her stay in Turkey".

The officials said Ans Boersma's deportation was not related to her journalistic activity but that Ankara had received a tip-off from the Dutch police that she had links to a terror group.

"The Turkish authorities have recently received intelligence from the Dutch police that Ms Boersma had links to a designated terrorist organisation and a request for information about her movements in and out of Turkey," he said.

It was not immediately clear to which terror group the journalist had alleged links. A number of groups including the outlawed Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK) and the Islamic State have carried out a spate of attacks in Turkey in recent years.

"Due to the seriousness of the threat, we work closely with our friends and allies, including the Netherlands, and rely on their insights to identify and neutralise threats against Turkish and European security," Altun said.

Until now, the Turkish authorities, with help from their international partners, have blacklisted tens of thousands of individuals with links to terrorist organisations as part of an ongoing effort to combat extremism, he noted.

Another Turkish official, who wished to remain anonymous, said Boersma's press credentials were valid until January 31, 2019. Human rights defenders have raised concerns over a clampdown on freedom of expression in Turkey under President Recep Tayyip Erdogan, with dozens of journalists and civil society activists put behind bars.

N K Textile Industries Limited. Registered office: Omaxe Square, Plot No. 14, 5th Floor, Jasola District Centre, Jasola, New Delhi-110025. CIN: L17299DL1983PLC163230, Tel: +91 11 61119313. Email Id: n.ktextiles123@gmail.com, website: www.nktil.com

NOTICE. Notice is hereby given that the meeting no.06/ 2018-19 of the Board of Directors of the Company will be held on 7th February, 2019 (Thursday) at the registered office of the Company at Omaxe Square, Plot No. 14, 5th Floor, Jasola District Centre, Jasola, New Delhi-110025 at 4.00 P.M to discuss the following agenda items:

By Order of the Board, For N K Textile Industries Limited. Director (Balbir Singh). Place: New Delhi. Date: 17.01.2019. DIN: 00027438

Corrigendum No.-2 to NIT No. 1007 (QDP-1155) dated 20-11-2018. HARYANA VIDYUT PRASARAN NIGAM LIMITED. Shakti Bhawan, Sector-6, Panchkula, CIN: U4010HR1997SGC033683. Online tender are invited for VARIOUS TYPE 132KV CONTROL AND RELAY PANELS. Earnest Money (In Rs.) : 4,44,000.00

SYNDICATE BANK, DICHHAON KALAN, DELHI. DTC Depot, Dichhaon Kalan, Najafgarh Po. New Delhi-110043. E-mail: br.9080@syndicatebank.co.in. Ref No. 31794. Date: 20-12-2018. To: Ashok Sharma S/o Om Parkash : M-3/25A, Model Town-III, New Delhi-110009

GMDA. Gurugram Metropolitan Development Authority. Plot No. 44, Sector 32, Gurugram. Press Note. It is for the information of general public that a survey is being conducted by G.M.D.A. team for collecting various data required in preparation of comprehensive mobility plan of Gurugram-Mansarovar Urban complex.

SEARCH FOR KIDNAPPED. General Public is hereby informed that a survey is being conducted by G.M.D.A. team for collecting various data required in preparation of comprehensive mobility plan of Gurugram-Mansarovar Urban complex. Kishore Yadav. General Public is hereby informed that a survey is being conducted by G.M.D.A. team for collecting various data required in preparation of comprehensive mobility plan of Gurugram-Mansarovar Urban complex.

N Korea yet to take concrete steps to dismantle nukes: Pence

PTI ■ WASHINGTON

The US awaits "concrete steps" by North Korea to dismantle its nuclear weapons that threaten America and other countries in the region, Vice President Mike Pence has said.

Pence's statement came during his address to the global chief of mission conference on Wednesday and gains significance as the White House is preparing for another summit between President Donald Trump and the North Korean leader Kim Jong-un.

The two leaders have recently exchanged letters.

Kim and Trump held a historic meeting in Singapore on June 12 last year where they issued a vague goal for the "complete denuclearisation" of the Korean Peninsula without describing when and how it would occur.

SAS soldier saved lives in Nairobi attack: reports

AFP ■ LONDON

A heavily-armed man seen working with Kenyan forces and helping victims during the Nairobi attack this week was a member of Britain's special forces, British media reported on Thursday, citing officials.

"Without this British special forces soldier, many more lives would have been lost," the Daily Mirror quoted a senior British military source as saying.

"His selfless action will be remembered by those he rescued and privately celebrated and acknowledged by his colleagues," the military source said.

Original sale deed dated on 20.04.2006, Plot no 43 A, Zid no.5076, Sr. 1992 and dated 24.01.2002, Zid no.3641, Sr. 1334 S.R. II MORADABAD, have been lost by my client Mr. Sonveer Singh s/o Late Sh. Ranveer Singh. If found by anyone inform me within 15 days otherwise it will presumed that nobody/financial institution/Bank etc has no objection and the property is free for encumbrances. My client will free to do any act regarding above property no claim will be accepted.

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Table with 5 columns: Sl. No., Nature of facility, Limit, Outstanding liability, NPA Date. Row 1: 9080720000565, 350000, 186745, 30/06/2018. Row 2: TOTAL, 350000, 186745.

PIONEER AGRO EXTRACTS LIMITED. Regd Office: Chhoti Nehar, Malakpur, Pathankot-145025. Tel: 0186 2345352-53 55. Website: www.pioneer.co. Email: compliance@pioneeragro.co.in. Telephone: 91-186-2345352, 53. CIN - L15319PB19993PLC012975. Notice is hereby given pursuant to Regulation 29 read with Regulation 47 of SEBI (Listing Obligations and Disclosure Requirements) Regulations, 2015 that a meeting of the Board of directors of the Company is scheduled to be held on Friday, January 25, 2019, at 11 A.M at Chhoti Nehar, Malakpur, Pathankot, Punjab, inter alia, to consider the unaudited financial results of the Company for the Third quarter ended December 31, 2018.

कार्यालय अधिवासी अतिथिना, केन्द्रीय नगर, उत्तराखण्ड जल संस्थान, जल भवन, 'बी' स्टाक, नेहरू कॉलोनी, देहरादून. चक्रांक - 1166 / ई-निविदा / 2018-19. ई-निविदा सूचना. उत्तराखण्ड जल संस्थान की ओर से केन्द्रीय नगर, देहरादून द्वारा निम्न कार्यों हेतु ई-निविदा, टू-बिड सिस्टम (एकलकी बिड एवं कार्टिजियन बिड) आधार पर निम्नानुसार अन्वेषित की जाती है।

Table with 8 columns: क्र. (Sl. No.), कार्य विवरण (Work Description), कार्य विवरण (Work Description). Rows 1-20 detailing various engineering and supply contracts.

Trend Blazer

'I don't regret anything'

Actress **JACQUELINE FERNANDEZ** credits her success and failure for keeping her balanced and calm. The actress says she doesn't regret any of her decisions.

"The journey (in Bollywood) has been very rewarding, I have been blessed with opportunities to deliver my best and work with some of the biggest names," Jacqueline said. She says she has learnt a lot through the journey. "Meeting new people and coming across new experiences have given me several lessons which have been fruitful in not just dealing with the challenges in the industry. The love and support of the audience is my biggest asset that I have earned in my professional career," added she.



'I don't have any plans for marriage as of now. Wedding season is not like a cricketing season which should be continued for an entire year. There is still a lot of time for my marriage to happen, but when it will happen, I will be ready for that in a Rohit Bal outfit.'

—Sidharth Malhotra



As actress **SONI RAZDAN** awaits the censor board's green signal for her film *No Fathers In Kashmir*, her daughter and actress **ALIA BHATT** has come out in support of the film. Alia wrote on social media, "Was so looking forward to mom's *No Fathers In Kashmir*... The team worked super hard for this honest teens love story in Kashmir. Really hope the CBFC would lift the ban. It's a film about empathy and compassion. Let's give love a chance." The film is directed by Ashvin Kumar, who has been struggling to get a U/A certificate for it.



Miley denies rumours

Singer **MILEY CYRUS** has denied rumours that she is pregnant. The singer wrote on social media to dismiss speculation surrounding a potential pregnancy. "I'm not 'Egg-xpecting' but it's 'Egg-celent' to hear everyone is so happy for us' we're happy for us too! 'Egg-cited' for this next chapter in our lives," the star joked alongside a photo of her "baby belly", which was covered with the egg meme.

Now that the musician has had the last laugh, she told people "everyone leave me alone and go back to staring at an egg."

The recently married star sparked rumours that she was pregnant when she was spotted in Miami with what some tabloids alleged was a baby bump.



PEEK-A-BOO

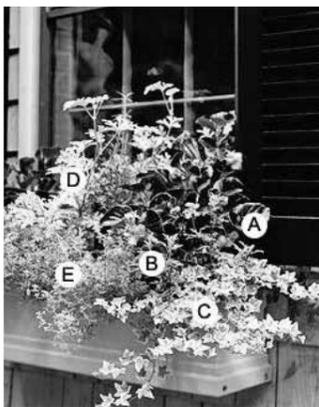
Boutique windows are the next big interior trend. TEAM VIVA picks up a few ideas from the experts

So far lumped together as part of interior decor and may be as a backdrop of luscious curtains, windows — from their shape, size, frames, shades and faux recesses — have emerged as the statement piece of your home in 2019. They are the perfect prop for the blend of functionality and art, depending upon the space, position and lighting. Designers and trend forecasters are now working on windows as the pivot of spaces and an anchor of your personality, your personal perch as you let the outer world drift in and shape your worldview.

**WOOD AND ECO-FRIENDLY COATINGS**  
Living as we do in environmentally-challenged times, architects are working on ecologically-friendly and sustainable alternatives in keeping us comfortable and close to Mother Nature. So wooden windows are back in homes and workplaces with bold painted frames. Companies like Gorlini Bespoke Windows is increasingly using water-based paints as a conscientious choice. Using renewable organic waste materials that are unfit for human consumption, its team has developed bio coatings that help reduce the greenhouse effect caused by CO2 emissions. In line with the latest green policies adopted worldwide, their exceptionally-low environmental impact makes it worthwhile. Such coatings are also "high performance" and while other paints might take longer to dry and lesser time to fade away, this one has a faster drying record and greater non-yellowing properties.

Wooden shutters are making a comeback because they are classic and add a graphic feature to your home either open or shut. They allow natural light to filter through in a pleasant sort of way and allows light to stream around in dots and blobs.

**GIVE NATURE A CHANCE**  
Experts believe that it doesn't matter about whether or not there is enough space for the window. As long as it is in the room, there is always a chance to make it attractive. No matter what the size, the sill can be highlighted by stacking an array of plants. Or there



could be a wall formation of planters on either side of the window to lend a bit of character. "Plants are essential when it comes to decorating a small balcony or window sill. Avoid using too much floor space of the balcony, do not overcrowd it," says Punam Kalra, creative director of I'M. She further suggests placing small potted plants below the window sill on the outside for that refreshing feel and brightness.

For those who live in apartments and crave for gardens, putting themed plant and flower pots on window extensions is the next best thing. Says Kalra, "One can also place vines and planters in bottles. Waste bottles of soft drinks can be decorated and painted as per the colour scheme of your interior and can be used to skirt your windows.

**GREEN FABRIC**  
Amita Kanwar, design director at Window Passions, says, "As we are increasingly moving towards sustainable fashion, curtains in organic fabrics like cotton and linens are the best to go by. The focus is on nature-inspired and eco-friendly materials to create an elegant and earthy atmosphere."

You can replace draperies with match-stick blinds. Especially if you've got a small space for your windows, opting for slim blinds will let the natural light in. Use botanical-printed blinds to create a vibe of a wooded meadow. Or go extravagant with Roman and European prints. Experts suggests that the newest and best way to give your room a dramatic look is to incorporate floor-length windows and tall curtains.

Bamboo roll-up blinds may give you a tropical freshness and can block out the harsh light during the peak of summer. If it's opulence, then there are silk shades, subtle, lush and luminescent.

**ACCESSORISE YOUR WINDOW**  
Experts suggest that according to the colour and decor of the room, one can also use different accessories to decorate windows. Hanging dream-catchers and wind chimes, for instance, is a way to give it a more boho-chic appearance. Another idea is to string rice lights around the window frames to make it glow in the dark. Or arrange wooden photo frames and portraits in symmetry with square windows, especially if your room colour hovers around pastels. Installing a translucent art panel in front of a window creates a unique screen while lending an aura to a painting or glass work.

**SQUARES OVER ARCHES**  
Likewise, while shapes remain popular, they're decidedly rectilinear. Arched-top and similar curved shapes may appear dated for some of today's more popular home styles. Squared-off edges and crisp lines are definitely the way to go.

**EXPANSIVE GLASS**  
The growth in outdoor living has driven demand for opening glass walls and lift-and-slide doors, as well as larger windows mulled together. From dramatic views to increased daylight, the benefits are appealing to both buyer and builder alike.

well as larger windows mulled together. From dramatic views to increased daylight, the benefits are appealing to both buyer and builder alike.

A V I N T A G E F E E L

As a modern iteration of what is new and fiercely unique, the 14th edition of the Blenders Pride Fashion Tour celebrates the self and the individual through its new concept — Pride. Fashion designer Rohit Bal showcased his collection 'Gul-Dastah', curating a magical affair with his designs. Showstoppers Sidharth Malhotra and Diana Penty, looked stunning in his pieces.

The collection was an ode to the beauty of flowers, dedicated entirely to the treasures of the natural world and inspired by botanical paintings and works by some of the great masters of the renaissance period. It renders a vintage feel and has been done on both traditional and contemporary silhouettes on organic fabrics using thread embroidery to gold wire and zaradozi.

Talking about his curation 'my heritage, my pride', Rohit said, "I am a traditionalist and that too, a pure, classic, undiluted traditionalist. I am deeply rooted in my culture, my origins and the incredible heritage of India. From the Lotus to the Peacock, I live my heritage. There is mystery, mysticism and sheer magnificence in our heritage and it has become an essential part of my soul."



KUSHAN MITRA



The SUV conundrum

Once upon a time car companies clearly defined line-ups of products but nowadays everything is a bit more confusing



So you want to buy a luxury Sports Utility Vehicle? It might never go off-road in its life. Heck, it might never leave metalled roads all its life but you like the commanding seating position high off the ground even if that involves a clumsy climb into your seat. And you also think that it is safer, at least when you have an accident where some idiot in a two-wheeler runs into you. You could ignore the fact that these cars are big and heavy, usually not the most economical but you know what, at least they do drive a lot better than they used to.

If you remember early SUVs, where a company suddenly had an idea to put plush seats into an off-roader and make them less capable at the same time, they were not quite stable in a turn. Those of us old enough remember the Maruti Gypsy when it came out were warned of the fact that these cars could roll over if you went into a corner too fast. And they did.

But things are different now. SUVs still ride way above the earth, yet even though they have a softer suspension, most of them can handle very well. A few companies have started to manufacture 'sporty' SUVs such as BMW's X4 and X6, of which I drove the former in America and was stunned at the way the car went around a race track. Sure, it was no BMW M5 but it was still incredible. Then there is Mercedes' GLC 43 AMG Coupe, which is no slouch either, and it looks rather good. Audi has been putting bigger and bigger engines in their SUVs and then there are the Porsches and the latest from Lamborghini which redefines 'Sporty SUV' into 'Super SUV' like a supercar.

But let us bring this back to another manufacturer, Jaguar Land Rover. Yes, it has its performance SUVs as well, although in India you can only get the madcap Range Rover SVR, which redefines physics in my opinion because I have never seen something else that massive move so fast, so quickly. Even the Saturn V rocket lumbered off the launch pad. This thing does not and it ensures that everyone in a 10-km radius can hear it. But that is a different story. Because, once upon a time Land Rover produced only the Land Rover, what we call the 'Defender' nowadays, that kept the British Army mobile as it gradually withdrew from every corner of the world. Then one day, the idea of making a slightly nice version came to mind and the Range Rover was born and the Queen of England loved it. For those a bit less rich, the Land Rover Discovery came out, which could go over pretty much anything. And that is the way it was in the 80s and 90s, three types of vehicles, which were not the most reliable, but that is the way things were.

Now, it is a different story. Heck, even Jaguar makes a SUV, the rather good-looking F-Pace, and Land Rover makes quite a few. There is the Discovery Sport, Evoque, Evoque Convertible, Discovery 5, Velar, Range Rover Sport and the range Rover, the last named of which is also available in an ultra-premium Autobiography specification. But which one of these should you buy? Sure, at

the top and the bottom, they are fairly well defined, but when I look at the middle I get rather confused, and I guess anybody who walks into a JLR showroom would. They are all rather nice cars as I have driven several of them over the past year. While I do have some niggles, the three-screen set-up on the top-end cars is very confusing because you get the same function on both central screens but it appears they use two different user interfaces, and then the others have their own small problems. The Range Rover is massive, it is the car that Audi and BMW are targeting with the Q8 and X7 respectively.

The overlaps are a bit jarring, and not just because the engines are similar, because that is the same case with all the luxury manufacturers. Between the Evoque and F-Pace, both stunning cars, slightly different on the handling front but only if you push it. The Velar and Discovery 5 are different, but pricing overlaps and you are trying to figure out what you want for a car. When you are spending that kind of money, a car is not so much functional as it is a display of wealth and influence. So maybe the Velar, but if you spend a little bit, and in percentage terms just a little bit more you could get the range Rover Sport, maybe one with an exciting engine. It is rather confusing.

SUVs RIDE WAY ABOVE THE EARTH, YET EVEN THOUGH THEY HAVE A SOFTER SUSPENSION, MOST OF THEM CAN HANDLE THE ROAD BUMPS WELL. A FEW COMPANIES HAVE STARTED TO MANUFACTURE 'SPORTY' SUVs

I would personally choose the Discovery 5 though. Sure its lopsided registration plate panel is a bit jarring to the eye, but it is quite nice inside and a little bit easier to work your way through the controls. And there is the fact that if you did need to go on the sand dunes of Rajasthan, or ford a raging torrent near Corbett or deal with the slushy western Ghats in the monsoon, it can do all that very easily. Sure, a Range Rover can do most of those things, but you would think a few times before taking a two crore car off-road, even if it is a tester. I have a soft spot for the F-Pace, but for me Jaguar is still a car company. I cannot make peace with the Lamborghini Urus.

Next week onwards, a whole set of new launches starts with the Toyota Camry Hybrid, the third-generation Maruti WagonR, the Tata Harrier, the new Mahindra TUV300. 2019 will be a brand new year. All these new cars will meet the coming safety norms that are mandatory from the middle of the year and should be exciting to drive.

# SCIENCE AND RELIGION



Maria Wirth

Usually an -ism is associated with a narrow doctrine, developed by one person like Marxism, Stalinism, Maoism or has otherwise a negative image like Nazism or "Islam-ism", which is meant to be seen as different and worse than Islam. That Juda-ism, which always was at the receiving end of Christianity and Islam, also got an -ism just would confirm that the -ism is not as 'noble' as the ending of the two "only true" religions.

Did the West try to obfuscate the fact that the Eastern traditions, foremost of all the Indian, had profound philosophies at their core and portray them also as 'belief-systems' with unverifiable dogmas at their core? For millennia these Eastern traditions have lived harmoniously together without fighting each other but rather debating each other, in stark contrast to Christianity and Islam.

One thing is clear: Christianity/ Islam on one side and India's traditions on the other are two very different categories.

One group makes unverifiable claims about the truth, demands blind belief in those claims and threatens with dire consequences, while the other group freely enquires into the truth by inner exploration, debates, guided by the ancient texts and saints who had experienced being one with all.

For one group the goal of life is to reach heaven and avoid hell after death by religiously sticking to the doctrine which is taught. The other group sees the goal in realizing the blissful truth that we are one with all in the depth of our own being while we are alive.

One group depends on conversion and indoctrination to gain followers, while Hinduism is Sanatana (eternal) Dharma (righteous way of living).

Every Christian or Muslim had forefathers who were not Christians or Muslims. At the start, often the sword was used to convert, as the 'truth' of the dogmas was not self-evident and even went against common sense. Later, indoctrination of children and blasphemy laws kept the followers subdued.

The reason why conversion is necessary for the dogmatic religions is simple:

Suppose a community on some island is completely unconnected to the modern world. They will never become Christians or Muslims because they need to be told a



story from the past about God sending his only son to earth 2000 years ago, or about Allah sending Mohammed as his last prophet some 1400 years ago.

Yet if these islanders deeply enquired into what is true and how to live a righteous life, they might come to similar conclusions like Sanatana Dharma, as it does not depend on some event in history. It requires deep enquiry into That what truly is eternally.

Yet let me go back to my personal discovery of a connection between science and 'religion'.

Meanwhile, I had stopped going to mass. When I told it to my mother, her reaction was, "And what if you go to hell?" "I won't go to hell," I replied. If there is a God, he surely won't be so petty-minded to insist on a specific way of worshipping him. I also had had some inkling that indeed, there may be a God. An article on modern physics had explained that all is basically one energy and the different forms in this world are not really solid or separate entities. Strangely, this made sense and I felt: If there is a God then that one energy must be him.

Yet in the 1970s, we students at Hamburg University were so 'modern and progressive' that we would have rather bitten our tongues than admit that we believed in God. Yet it was ok to be

interested in Buddhism or Transcendental Meditation (TM) or Bhagawan Rajneesh, as Osho was called then.

I even took initiation into TM. The Beatles had paved the way. I loved those 20 minutes of meditation in the morning and evening. Yet there was a lot of negative reporting in German newspapers about TM at that time. The Church had set up commissioners for sects, and warned one can go mad by meditating. Parents were asked to keep an eye on their children so that they don't fall prey to the brainwashing of those sects. Maybe, this negative propaganda had its influence because I stopped meditating after two years.

Even more than TM, the Hare Krishna 'sect' was demeaned and ridiculed by the media. Their followers were portrayed as weird, mad chaps. Hinduism already had a bad image. I had learnt in primary school that it was about a terrible caste system and untouchables. Now the media did their best to make it look even worse. In December 1979, I planned to go to Australia with a stopover in India. This stopover became a turning point in my life. It lasted meanwhile 37 years. The reason why I stayed on in India ironically was because of the much maligned Hinduism. I realized the amazing depth and breadth of Hinduism and wondered,

why it was portrayed so wrongly as a primitive, oppressive religion when it is actually the best option for mankind. The Dalai Lama said that India has great potential to help the world. He is right and the negative propaganda in the West is wrong. Hinduism is least dogmatic and closest to the truth. If it binds at all, it binds or rather unites (yog) the individual with the Divine.

Back to my stopover. I visited the southern tip of India, Kanya Kumari. A little off the coast on a huge rock, there is a memorial for Swami Vivekananda. At a bookstall there, I bought 'Jnana Yoga'. I had not heard of Swami Vivekananda, but wanted to learn about Indian thought while in India.

Swami Vivekananda had swum to this rock to meditate in December 1892. His guru, Ramakrishna Paramahansa, had died in Calcutta six years earlier. The young man had realized that under British rule his countrymen had purposely been cut off from their culture. He wanted to wake them up, give them back their self-respect and pride in their Hindu tradition.

On this rock, he decided to participate at the World Congress of Religions in Chicago in 1893, and present Advaita Vedanta, one of the highest flowerings among the different Indian philosophical systems. Advaita Vedanta is explained in

the Upanishads, the last part (=anta) of the Vedas, and postulates that essentially, everything is a Whole (a-dwaita = not two).

Swami Vivekananda became the star of the World Congress. He got a standing ovation, and was asked to give a lecture tour in the US. He was sought after by influential persons, including scientists like Tesla. But the Christians went after him. In his own words at a lecture at the Victoria Hall in Madras after coming back to India:

"There is not one black lie imaginable that the Christian missionaries did not invent against me. They blackened my character from city to city, poor and friendless though I was in a foreign country. They tried to oust me from every house and to make every man who became my friend my enemy. They tried to starve me out." Why did the Christians do this? Did they fear that people realize that Advaita Vedanta makes far more sense than their dogmatic belief-system?

I read 'Jnana Yoga', and it was fascinating. Swami Vivekananda expressed clearly what I vaguely had felt to be true. For example that all is interconnected or rather: ONE. Everything in this creation, including ourselves, is permeated by the same great intelligence, like waves are permeated by the same ocean. The waves may be convinced that they are separate from the ocean as they have a distinct form and name. But ultimately all the waves are nothing but the one great ocean and nothing is lost when their form is lost. Similarly, though we may consider our person as separate from others, in truth we are the one consciousness and nothing of substance is lost when form and name are lost.

Further, Swami Vivekananda claimed that the so-called reality is not really real. It is a sense deception, in a similar way, as at dusk a rope is mistakenly seen as a snake, even though in reality there is only a rope. Truly true, he claimed, is our inner being (Atman) that permeates everything and makes all appearances miraculously shine forth. It is infinite, eternal. It is not an object that can be seen with the eyes or thought of with the mind.

"Brahman is not what the eyes can see but That whereby the eyes can see. Brahman is not what the mind can think but That whereby the mind can think..." declares the Kena Upanishad. It is, however, possible to be Brahman. Rather, we are it already - "Ayam Atman Brahman" (the individual consciousness is one with the universal consciousness) is one of the Mahavakyas (great utterances) of Vedanta. (To be continued)

(The writer is a German psychologist and author who writes in German and English. Her book 'Thank you India' has recently been published. Views expressed are personal.)

# WHAT HAPPENS TO THE SOUL AFTER DEATH?



Yogiraj Siddhanath

Is Death the final goal of life or is there life after death? And if there is life, what are the turns and twists and evolutionary journey in the life after death, until the soul is reborn again? This question has long perturbed humankind caught between medical sciences which have for long tried to prolong life, thinking it to be the only one, and the rishis and yogis who have claimed to conquer ultimate Death freeing themselves from the unending cycle of birth and death.

For realised beings of the Vedic era, there is no "after death", because for the soul there is no death, so how can there be "after death"? What normal people call death is in reality only the end of the physical body. The earth known as Mrityu Lok, is the plane of mortality, where life ends with the decay and death of the physical body perceived by our five senses.

The journey of the soul after death, which in India we call devachan or devasthan was originally discovered and intuited by the ancient sages of India thousands of years ago,

and one can find the details of this in the Brahmanical rituals of the shraad. Narratives of near death experiences in modern times have validated many of the stages in this journey.

According to the Sanatan system of knowing, the soul though itself an immortal entity residing in a physical body, has a lifespan. This lifespan differs from individual to individual, as per their personal karma. According to its lifespan, the soul lives in the physical body, does good deeds, neutral deeds, bad deeds, living according to the karma released to it for this lifetime. Then comes old age, the body starts to decay and like our garments get old and torn and have to be discarded, the body too is discarded by the soul.

Here begins the journey of the soul after death of the physical body.

At the first instance the soul leaves the outermost coat, which is the physical casement, or the physical garment, but the coat of its subtler emotional and mental garments remains. The body is burnt, the physical body, the garment, which is not the soul -- the apparent self is burnt, and the true self, the soul, covered by its passions, emotions and the mind passes out of the body.

For seventy-two hours after the body shell is burnt or buried the soul remains in the plane called the Pret Lok. The soul hovers in the burial or cremation ground as the emotional, mental and intuitional body disengages itself from the physical and ethereal body while working out its grossest karma, those that are closest to the physical body.

On the third day, according



to the shraad ritual the soul is offered food that it enjoyed when in the body. It's laid out so that the spirit, which is there, satisfies its last leftover desires, to move from Pret Lok to the next plane, called the Pishachya Lok.

Once in the Pishachya Lok, the soul works out the subtler karmas of its emotional and passionate body, satisfying its carnal desires before it can break through the Pishachic shell. To facilitate the breaking of the shell a ritual is performed on this day to release the soul from its limited passionate and emotional consciousness, to get it into a state of mental consciousness. When that puja is done, the shell breaks.

Around the tenth day the soul, having more or less satisfied all its desires starts its transition to the Pitr Lok, the plane of the ancestors. Here the ancestors and in the case of disciples their Satguru will appear to lead the soul through the maze. Even though most of the residual karmas are worked out, in the initial stages even of Pitr Lok some differences and bitterness are resolved. Nullifying all its karma the soul gets purer and joins its ancestors, those who are enlightened.

The soul then finally rests in the Dev Lok, the heavenly spheres. After working out all its good and bad karmas the soul rests. This is its journey from the earthly terrestrial sphere of Bhur, to the intermediate astral stage of Bhuvaha to the celestial heavenly sphere of Svaha.

Then again it reincarnates, descending from Svaha, to

Bhuvaha to Bhur, taking once again, an intuitional body, then a mental body, an emotional then an etheric body, and finally a physical body in the womb of a mother who is most suitable for its karma. Parents who will give the maximum facilities for its spiritual evolution are chosen by the soul.

This not just a belief in India, it's a fact and many have had firsthand experience of it. So death is nothing to be afraid of.

"Why do people think of me what I am not supposed to be?"

They call me death and yet I take them to Eternity.

Oh, this paradox of ignorance Deludes humanity."

Now we come to the most important part, what happens to a sincerely practicing yogi progressing along the chosen path in this process of life and death, in the terrestrial plane and after life? A meditating yogi, depending upon the practice and because of the speed of the evolutionary practice of yoga works out the karma of the devachan, life after death of the body, while in the body itself. The yogi does not go through the planes of bhuvaha and svaha, the yogi does not travel through the pret and pishachya lok nor the pitr lok. Some even transcend the dev lok, consciously leaving this body to merge into the finality of the Supreme Conscious Being.

(The author is a direct disciple of Mahavatar Babaji and conducts experiential satsangs where he shares his state of the Samadhi with the audience. He is deeply associated with Uttarakhand.)



# DJOKER RACES PAST TSONGA; SERENA, HALEP TRIUMPH

Novak defeats '08 finalist to step forward for record seventh title in Australia

AFP ■ MELBOURNE

Serena Williams stepped up her drive for a record-equalling 24th Grand Slam on Thursday by swatting aside Eugenie Bouchard, as world number one Novak Djokovic won an emotional 2008 Australian Open final rematch with Jo-Wilfried Tsonga.

But women's top seed Simona Halep and young gun Alexander Zverev had to dig deep to make the third round on a day of epic battles and the latest start to a match ever at the tournament.

American great Williams followed up her first round 49-minute romp by spending just 70 minutes on Rod Laver Arena to dispose of the Canadian 6-2, 6-2.

"It wasn't an easy match tonight," said the 37-year-old, seeded just 16.

"So I knew Serena, you've got to come out firing, she's a really good player and I haven't had many matches since last year." Williams is bidding to match Margaret Court's record of 24 Grand Slam crowns, and win an eighth in Australia, on her first return to Melbourne Park since lifting the trophy in 2017 while pregnant.



Serbian top seed Djokovic is also looking to make history by winning a seventh title.

He was too good again for France's Tsonga, who he beat in the 2008 final, rolling through 6-3, 7-5, 6-4.

"You could feel the tension on court at the beginning.

We felt a lot of emotion and tried to play a great game," said Djokovic as the memories of that tense final came flooding back.

In contrast, world number one Halep staggered through against American Sofia Kenin 6-3, 6-7 (5/7), 6-

R Federer vs T Fritz  
Live from 7:30am IST  
SONY TEN 2 NETWORK

4 — her second three-set test in a row.

"I have no idea how I won this, it's so tough to explain what happened on court," said the French Open champion, who now meets Venus Williams after the 38-year-old rolled back the years to beat France's Alize Cornet.

In another titanic battle, Canadian Milos Raonic ousted 2014 champion Stan Wawrinka in four tightly-contested sets that all went to tie-breaks, while eighth seed Kei Nishikori was stretched to a draining five sets against Ivo Karlovic.

Seventh seed Dominic Thiem limped out when he retired while losing 7-5, 6-4, 2-0 to young Australian wildcard Alexei Popyrin.

Zverev, hailed as a flag-bearer for the next generation, also struggled against veteran world number 36 Jeremy Chardy, before putting him away 7-6 (7/5), 6-4, 5-7, 6-7 (6/8), 6-1.

Amid rain delays and drawn-out matches, Spain's Garbine Muguruza and Britain's Johanna Konta didn't get on court until half-past midnight — the latest start to a match in the event's history.

US Open champion and fourth seed Naomi Osaka had it relatively easy, sweeping past Slovenia's Tamara Zidansek 6-2, 6-4 with the roof closed on Margaret Court Arena due to the rain.

The 21-year-old's break-

through at Flushing Meadow over Serena Williams last year made her a new standard bearer for tennis in her Japanese homeland and Asia, and she is working hard on living up to the hype.

"I thought I served alright, this was my first time playing her and I'm just happy to win to be honest," Osaka said after setting up a clash with Taiwan's Hsieh Su-wei.

In contrast, Asia's top-ranked men's player Nishikori needed an energy-sapping 3hr 48min to get past big-serving Croat Karlovic 6-3, 7-6 (8/6), 5-7, 5-7, 7-6 (10/7) in humid conditions.

Sixteenth seed Raonic emerged the victor against Wawrinka, a three-time Grand Slam champion who is on the comeback trail from injury.

The Swiss, unseeded for the first time since his debut in 2006, fell 6-7 (4/7), 7-6 (8/6), 7-6 (13/11), 7-6 (7/5).

Despite being seeded six and seven respectively, neither Elina Svitolina or Karolina Pliskova has progressed further than the last eight at the Australian Open.

But self-assured Svitolina is bubbling with confidence after dismantling Viktorija Kuzmova 6-4, 6-1, while Pliskova woke up after losing the first set to race past Madison Brengle 4-6, 6-1, 6-0.

Other women through included Italy's Camila Giorgi and China's Wang Qiang. Men still in the hunt included Croat Borna Coric and Spain's Pablo Carreno-Busta.



## Vinesh nominated for Laureus World Sports Awards

PTI ■ MONACO

As Indian wrestler Vinesh Phogat has become the first Indian to receive a nomination in the prestigious Laureus World Sports Awards to be held here on February 18.

The 24-year-old Indian, who made a sensational comeback after battling a long injury lay-off to win a Gold medal at the Gold Coast Commonwealth Games and Jakarta Asian Games, has been nominated for the Laureus World Comeback of the Year.

The Haryana wrestler, who was stretchered off after dislocating her knee during the quarter-finals of 50kg freestyle event at the 2016 Olympic Games, has been nominated alongside US Tour Championship winner Tiger Woods, who won his first tournament in five years.

Also nominated are four inspirational Winter Olympic athletes; Japanese figure skater Yuzuru Hanyu, Canadian snowboarder Mark McMorris, US ski racing legend Lindsey Vonn and Dutch Paralympic champion Bibian Mentel-Spee.

The last time an Indian sporting feat made its way to the Laureus World Sports Awards was in 2004 when the Indian cricket team and Pakistan cricket team shared the Laureus Sport for Good award for playing an International match despite political tensions between the two countries.

Most recently, Magic Bus from India won the Laureus Sport for Good award in 2014. However, Vinesh makes history as the first Indian athlete to be nominated in one of the seven main categories at the Laureus World Sports Awards.

### SINGLES

#### DEMBELE COMPLETES GUANGZHOU MOVE

**LONDON:** Moussa Dembele became the latest high-profile name to swap Europe for China when he left English Premier League side Tottenham Hotspur and joined Guangzhou R&F on Thursday. The 31-year-old Belgian international will cost the Chinese Super League (CSL) club about 12 million euros (\$13.5 million) and he can expect to receive a significant hike in wages. Dembele, who could soon be joined in China by West Ham United's Marko Arnautovic, is regarded as one of the finest midfielders in the Premier League when fit. But his appearances have become increasingly limited in recent seasons because of injury. "Now it feels like my family, part of my family," Dembele told *Spurs TV*, reflecting on his departure after six-and-a-half years at the Premier League title challengers. "I go away with an unbelievable feeling and with a certain love for the club." Dembele, who has more than 80 caps for Belgium, joined Tottenham in August 2012 from Fulham.

#### STONE RULED OUT OF WEST INDIES TOUR

**LONDON:** England pace bowler Olly Stone will miss the tour of the West Indies after suffering a back injury. Stone has been hampered by stiffness in his lower left back since taking part in a practice session on Sunday. The 25-year-old went for scans in Barbados that confirmed the extent of the injury was serious enough to rule him out of the Tests against the West Indies. Stone had hoped to make his Test debut in the three-match series, but the Warwickshire seamer will have to wait for his maiden five-day appearance. "Following the result of scans, Olly Stone has sustained a bone stress injury to the left lower back. He will return home from the Caribbean later this week and have further tests in the UK," a statement from the England and Wales Cricket Board said on Wednesday. Stone impressed with his speed and hostility during four appearances in England's one-day series win against Sri Lanka in October.

#### DERBY WIN FA CUP SHOOT-OUT

**LONDON:** Southampton's dismal season hit a new low as the Premier League strugglers were dumped out of the FA Cup by second tier Derby after a penalty shoot-out. In a third round replay heavily influenced by the latest controversy over the use of VAR, Ralph Hasenhuttl's side blew a two-goal lead in the closing stages at St Mary's. The tie finished 2-2 after extra-time on Wednesday, with Derby winning 5-3 on penalties. Having avoided falling behind when VAR dubiously ruled out a goal from Derby's Craig Bryson in the first half, Saints went ahead through Stuart Armstrong's 68th minute header. Nathan Redmond doubled their lead with a cool finish two minutes later. Derby got one back with 14 minutes left when Harry Wilson's free-kick went straight in and was allowed to stand by VAR despite Southampton's claims that several Rams players were offside. Just six minutes later, Martyn Waghorn headed Derby's equaliser from Wilson's superb cross to force extra-time.

#### INJURED WARNER TO RETURN AUSTRALIA

**NEW DELHI:** Australian opener David Warner, who is working towards a return to international cricket after serving a ball-tampering ban, has picked up an elbow injury during his ongoing stint with the Bangladesh Premier League. Warner will leave the tournament early to have his injury assessed, joining his former skipper Steve Smith in the injured list. "While the extent of the injury remains unknown, Warner will continue to play for the Sylhet Sixers before he departs, meaning he will feature in matches on the 18th and 19th," Cricket Australia's official website 'cricket.com.au' said in its report. Warner will be returning to Australia next Monday to have his injury assessed. The opener looked close to his best in the BPL, scoring two half-centuries in five innings, including a whirlwind unbeaten 61 on Wednesday night.

Agencies

## Saina, Srikanth enter Malaysia quarters

PTI ■ KUALA LUMPUR

Top Indian shuttlers Saina Nehwal and Kidambi Srikanth produced yet another fine display to progress to the quarterfinal of the Malaysia Masters here on Thursday.

Saina, seeded seventh, took 39 minutes to tame Hong Kong's Pui Yin Yip 21-14, 21-16 in her second round women's singles encounter.

The London Olympics Bronze medallist will play second seed and 2017 world champion Nozomi Okuhara of Japan in the last-eight stage of the first Super 500 tournament of the year on Friday.

World No 9 Saina holds an 8-4 overall head-to-head record against



Okuhara, which includes back-to-back wins over the current world No 2 in the last two tournaments — last year's Demark Open and the French Open.

In men's singles, Srikanth continued his unbeaten run with a hard-fought 23-21, 8-21, 21-18 win over Hong Kong's Wong Wing Ki Vincent to set up a fight with fourth seeded Korean Son Wan Ho. The seventh seeded Indian, who had a title-less run last season, has a 4-5 head-to-head count against the Korean world No 5.

Former Commonwealth Games champion Parapulli Kashyap, however, bowed out of the tournament after his fight ended with a 17-21, 23-25 loss to Anthony Sinisuka Ginting of Indonesia.

Women's doubles pair of Ashwini Ponnappa and N Sikki Reddy also suffered 18-21, 17-21 loss to Indonesian combination of Ni Ketut Mahadewi Istarani and Rizki Amelia Pradipta.

## Ronaldo heads Juve to Supercoppa glory



AFP ■ JEDDAH

Cristiano Ronaldo scored the only goal to hand Juventus their first trophy of the season with a 1-0 win over ten-man AC Milan in the Italian Super Cup on Wednesday in Saudi Arabia.

Ronaldo — signed by the Italian giants last year from Real Madrid as they target a first Champions League title since 1996 — headed in a 61st-minute winner.

AC Milan played the last quarter of an hour a man down after Ivorian midfielder Franck Kessie saw red for a bad tackle on Emre Can.

"I have my first title with Juventus so I'm happy," said the Portuguese star who now has 28 trophies including five Champions League and league titles from England and Spain, and a European Championship with Portugal.

"I really wanted this, to get off to a good start in 2019. This is only the start, we'll take it one step at a time. We've got this cup, now we must keep working hard to achieve the next trophy," warned Ronaldo.

The match had been overshadowed by controversy with calls for it to be relocated over human rights issues in Saudi Arabia with women only allowed to attend the game if they were accompanied by a man.

On the pitch the players suffered in the heat with temperatures hitting 25 degrees Celsius amid freezing conditions in northern Italy.

In the end Juventus came away with a record eighth Super Cup title, one more than AC Milan who have won seven.

"It was very hot and the important thing was to win," said coach Massimiliano Allegri who won the trophy for the second time, having lost to AC Milan in 2016 and Lazio last year.

"Ronaldo? We always say the same thing... that's why we signed him. He is decisive and scores big goals, but the whole team put in a good performance."

AFP ■ MADRID

Antoine Griezmann scored one and set up another but could not prevent Atletico Madrid tumbling out of the Copa del Rey as Girona progressed on away goals after a thrilling 3-3 draw.

Real Madrid and Sevilla each avoided upsets on Wednesday, their first-leg victories proving enough despite losses to Leganes and Athletic Bilbao respectively. Defeat for Real, however, means they have now won only two of their five matches this year while Santiago Solari's frosty relationship with Isco shows no signs of improvement.

Isco started, but struggled, and was replaced in the 68th minute. For Atletico, Griezmann came off the bench in the second half and turned the tie in their favour on Wednesday, teeing up Angel Correa and then scoring himself to give his team a 3-2 lead at a rocking Wanda Metropolitano.

But Girona pulled out one more surprise to go through to the quarter-finals as Seydou Doumbia's shot found the corner in the 88th minute, snatching a 4-4 draw on aggregate after last week's first leg finished 1-1.



Griezmann had scored then too, and in between against Levante on Saturday. This was his eighth goal in as many matches.

A sumptuous volley from Valery Fernandez and Cristian Stuani's header had put Girona in charge after Nikola Kalinic had given Atletico an early lead.

However in the 61st minute, Griezmann entered the field. In the 65th, he set up a goal, Kalinic letting his team-mate's pass run but doing enough to distract Girona's defence. Correa nipped in and fin-

## Hungry Mary eyes Gold at Olympics



PTI ■ MUMBAI

Legendary boxer Mary Kom, the only woman to clinch six world championship titles, is now eyeing the elusive Olympic Gold medal next year as her crowning glory.

The 35-year-old pugilist from Manipur said winning Gold at the 2020 Tokyo Olympics will be a big challenge.

"Muhammad Ali was my inspiration when I learned boxing. After all these years, I feel there's nothing much to achieve. I already (have) all the medals in the game."

"I have medals from the Olympics, Asian Games, six World

titles, Commonwealth Games. But I am still hungry to achieve only one (medal), that is the Gold at the Olympics," Mary Kom said on Thursday.

"Being an athlete, I am dreaming (hoping) for that one chance," added "Magnificent Mary", who is the event ambassador of the January 20 *Tata Mumbai Marathon*.

But the star boxer admits that the 2020 Olympics, to be held in Tokyo, will be a big challenge.

"It is a very big challenge. Even London 2012 was also a big challenge for me. It was the first time I fought in the 51kg category. After that, I missed the qualification for Rio (Olympics)."

"This time I am trying (to qualify). If there is possibility, I will get young boys (who are) stronger than me (for training)."

Mary Kom said she wasn't surprised that she was the number one boxer. "I am not surprised that I am ranked No 1. I am so happy that my performances have been recognised. I am grateful for the love and support that I have received from the entire country. Your prayers have helped me win a lot of medals," she added.

## Atletico out on away goals



Arias and snuck into the corner. Madrid were beaten 1-0 by Leganes, Martin Braithwaite giving hope to the hosts, who failed to take a number of chances to launch an unlikely comeback. Real had won the first leg 3-0.

"We got through but the performance was weak," Solari said. His team now turns their attention to Saturday's crunch La Liga game against Sevilla, who slipped to a 1-0 defeat at home to Bilbao. Gorka Guruzeta scored the winner for a rejuvenated Bilbao side but Sevilla still progress 3-2 on aggregate.

# INDIA EYE PERFECT FINISH TO HISTORIC TOUR

## After maiden glory in Tests, Men in Blue look to seal first ever bilateral series in Australia

PTI ■ MELBOURNE

**B**uoyant and self-assured in equal measure, India would be eyeing a maiden bilateral ODI series triumph on Australian soil after the path-breaking Test conquest when they take on the home team in the tour finale here on Friday.

The three-match series is level at 1-1 after Australia won the first ODI in Sydney by 34 runs and India won the second in Adelaide by six wickets.

The Men in Blue have never won a bilateral ODI contest on Australian soil, and their only two series' wins in this format have come in 1985 (World Championship of Cricket) and 2008 (CB Series).

In fact, this is only the second bilateral ODI series India have played in Australia, losing 4-1 in 2016 when they toured here last.

Also, by winning this third ODI in Melbourne, India will finish the current 2018-19 tour without having lost a series here.

While India will take winning momentum into this third ODI, their only worry at the moment is the fifth bowling option.

So far in the series, senior pacers Bhuvneshwar Kumar and Mohammed Shami have been impressive, while the two left-arm spinners Kuldeep Yadav and Ravindra Jadeja have provided control and breakthroughs in the middle overs.

In the absence of Hardik Pandya, India have used a full-time seamer as their fifth bowling option both at the Sydney Cricket Ground and the Adelaide Oval.

Khaleel Ahmed (0-55) and Mohammed Siraj (0-76) failed to impress in their singular outings.

It becomes a particularly crucial aspect considering that India will go in with the same batting line-up as in the first two matches. With Virat Kohli not keen on bowling Ambati Rayudu again in the series, they need to get their five-bowler attack right on the money.



Seam bowling all-rounder Vijay Shankar and leg spinner Yuzvendra Chahal are in contention and both had a rigorous workout during the optional training session on Thursday at the MCG. Shankar provides the third seam bowling option, and as an extra batsman, elongates the batting line-up.



Australia vs India Live from 7:50am IST. SONY SIX & TEN 3 NETWORK

However, the argument against Shankar is whether the Indian team management can trust him enough to deliver 10 overs on ODI debut. Siraj struggled to do so and Kohli was left wondering how he would bowl him for a last three-over spell. This is where Chahal might prove to be a more reliable option, even if India have to play two pacers and three spinners. The bigger boundaries at the MCG, and Chahal's ability to bowl economical and attacking spells as well as use the new ball within the first 10 overs, might be a factor in his favour. If Kohli does pick Shankar for his ODI debut, it would disturb the set batting line-up and make space for Kedar Jadhav. The fifth bowler's 10

Team	P	W	L	T	N/R	Success%
Australia	123	74	45	1	3	61.78
India	21	10	11	—	—	47.61
Aus-Ind	14	9	5	—	—	60.42

Date	Result
06-02-2004	Australia won by 7 wickets
10-02-2008	India won by 5 wickets
05-02-2012	Australia won by 65 runs (D/L)
18-01-2015	Australia won by 4 wickets
17-01-2016	Australia won by 3 wickets

group that took part in optional training on Thursday, along with Shankar, Chahal, Jadhav, Mahendra Singh Dhoni and Shikhar Dhawan. Dhoni's form, which has been a constant concern for a while now, has been decent so far and he has two consecutive half centuries to draw confidence from. Australia, on the other hand, will be worried about lack of runs from their opening duo, Finch and Alex Carey, with their middle-order having to do the bull work in the last two matches. The home team made two changes from Adelaide. Leg-spinner Adam Zampa came in for off-spinner Nathan Lyon, who couldn't pick a wicket in the first two ODIs, while pacer Jason Behrendorff was ruled out owing to a sore back. Billy Stanlake is his replacement, while all-rounder Mitchell Marsh has been ignored again.

## Hardik is crucial for team's balance: Dhawan

PTI ■ MELBOURNE

Indian opener Shikhar Dhawan on Thursday said suspended fast-bowling all-rounder Hardik Pandya is 'crucial' for the team's balance but rejected suggestions that the side was struggling for a fifth bowler in the ongoing ODI series against Australia.

India take on Australia in the series-decider on Friday. There are bound to be changes to the team composition in the light of Khaleel Ahmed and Mohammed Siraj failing to impress in the first two matches.

Dhawan came out in support of the two young pacers, but added that the presence of an all-rounder in the side is imperative for balance.

"The balance that Hardik (Pandya) creates when he's in the team is very crucial for our team," Dhawan acknowledged in the pre-match press conference.

"Even when Kedar (Jadhav) plays, the overs of off-spin he bowls are very beneficial for us...I would say he is our golden arm, and he always takes wickets when he comes on. So often, he's broken a big partnership. An all-rounder in Tests and limited-overs' cricket is equally important," he added.

Talking about Ahmed and Siraj, Dhawan said the youngsters will mature and get better with time.

"It's not a worry (about the bowling). They just came in. They are young blokes. We will back them. That's how they're going to learn, when they play



Shikhar Dhawan prepares to bat during nets session ahead of 3rd ODI. BCCI

against a good side," he said. "If they go for runs, that's where they have to lift themselves up and think more about their game and strategies. That's how they'll become more mature players. It's good that they are getting chances over here," he added.

Dhawan said the team is looking to make history by winning the first ever bilateral ODI series on Australian soil, following up on the 2-1 Test series' win here. He felt the batting line-up, including veteran Mahendra Singh Dhoni, finding form only bodes well for their preparations ahead of the 2019 ODI World Cup.

"Winning the series will mean a lot to us. Winning both Tests and if we win tomorrow, it is going to be a big achievement for us. We are going to value it and cherish it," he said.

## NZ announce squad for India ODIs

PTI ■ WELLINGTON

**N**ew Zealand on Thursday brought back Tom Latham and Colin de Grandhomme for the ODI series against India starting next week in Napier, fielding the strongest possible squad to take on the world No 2 side.

Both Latham and de Grandhomme were rested during the 3-0 clean sweep of Sri Lanka, but were included in the 14-member squad for the first three ODIs of the five-match series against India starting next on Wednesday. Skipper Kane Williamson and pacer Trent Boult, who were rested for the lone Twenty20 against Sri Lanka last Friday, are too named in the squad alongside fit-again Mitchell Santner.

Santner made his comeback in the lone Twenty20 against Sri Lanka after being sidelined by injury for 10 months.

New Zealand coach Gary Stead said the squad had been selected keeping in mind two priorities — first planning for the World Cup and secondly to give the Kiwis the best possible chance of winning the series against world No 2 India.

"Our two main priorities have been to select and prepare a squad capable of winning what is shaping as a massive series against India, and gathering as much information as possible ahead of the World Cup," Stead said. "Tom and Colin are experienced players in this format and will offer quality in their respective roles."



### SQUAD

Kane Williamson (captain), Trent Boult, Doug Bracewell, Colin de Grandhomme, Lockie Ferguson, Martin Guptill, Matt Henry, Tom Latham, Colin Munro, Henry Nicholls, Mitchell Santner, Ish Sodhi, Tim Southee, Ross Taylor.

## Finch promises natural aggressive game

PTI ■ MELBOURNE

**A**ustralia captain Aaron Finch on Thursday declared that he will return to his "natural" aggressive game in the series-deciding third ODI against India after being left "frustrated" by a cautious approach while searching for runs.

Finch has been going through a bad patch for a long time and the sword is literally hanging over his head.

After a below-par showing in the Test series, Finch's struggle with the bat continued in the ODIs as he scored just 12 runs in the first two games.

"I am little bit frustrated. I am trying to bat a little bit longer for one thing. When you are searching for runs, you can be searching for the right recipe, and over the last couple of days, I have had a look at footage. I have seen things that have worked out when I got a hundred for Australia last, and what didn't," Finch said ahead of Friday's final ODI.

"I want to give myself the best chance. Maybe, I have been too tentative in the last couple games and letting pressure build up."

Finch, who scored just 97 runs in six innings in the Test series against India before being dropped for the final game, has admitted that he has spent the last



few days in reminding himself he is "still a very good player".

"That's always a fine balance between attack and hanging in there, waiting for the right time to be aggressive and take on the opposition. I still feel I am a very good player," he said.

"I think 13 international hundreds suggest I do know what is required. It is about seeing through the initial part and putting pressure back on the bowlers. It is just about going back to my natural game, letting it flow and finding the right rhythm."

With the series evenly poised at 1-1, Finch said Australia is keen to come out victorious on Friday to register their first ODI series triumph since January 2017.

"We are very keen to win the series. It has been a while since we have won one," he said.

"Coming up against a real powerful Indian line-up, there have been some positives particularly with the bat and there has been a lot of improvement in the last 8-10 months to be really proud of in the two games. It's 1-1 also because our bowlers have been outstanding.

"A lot of improvement can be made but a lot to be proud of in this series as well. Winning the series is our main focus," he signed off.

## GANGULY BACKS PANDYA-RAHUL TO LEARN FROM MISTAKES

PTI ■ MUMBAI

**F**ormer Indian captain Sourav Ganguly on Thursday said "we should move on" from the controversy surrounding Hardik Pandya and K L Rahul's sexist comments because he is sure the two will learn from it and become better persons.

Speaking at an event here, Ganguly said he hasn't seen the 'Koffee with Karan'



episode in which Pandya and Rahul's misogynistic comments on women led to a provisional suspension on

them. But he offered a sympathetic view on the under-fire duo.

"People make mistakes, let's not go too far here. I am sure, whoever has done it will realise and come out a better person. We are human beings not machines that we will always be perfect. We should move on and make sure it doesn't happen again," Ganguly said on the raging controversy.

## Rajasthan Royals owner set to sell stakes

**NEW DELHI:** Indian Premier League franchise Rajasthan Royals' owners are all set to sell half of their stakes in order to give the side a much needed financial boost ahead of the 12th edition of popular league.

It has been learnt that the current franchise owners have approached key BCCI officials and intimated their decision to sell around fifty percent of their stakes. Manoj Badale is the principal owner of Rajasthan Royals.

"Yes, Rajasthan Royals are selling a major part of their stakes and the highest bidder will be getting it. What we have heard is that it is around fifty percent and some of the biggest business houses in the country are apparently interested in buying stakes," a senior BCCI official privy to the development said.

While there are no confirmations as of now but Sanjeev Goenka, former IPL franchise Rising Pune Supergiants' owner is keen on buying stakes. Another big industrialist based out of Western India with multiple business interests is also in the mix.

Goenka, who is also the principal owner of Indian Super League (ISL) team ATK, had bought the Pune franchise (Rising Pune Supergiants) for the two seasons when Rajasthan Royals and Chennai Super Kings were banned for their involvement in spot-fixing scandal.

"Mr Goenka has always been interested in coming back after he had a fairly good but short stint in the IPL. His team made it to the finals in one of the years. Let's wait and watch how it all pans out," the official said. PTI

# KERALA MAKE MAIDEN SEMIFINAL ENTRY

PTI ■ WAYAND

**S**cripting history, Kerala stormed into the semifinals of the Ranji Trophy for the first time with a 113-run win over Gujarat on the third day of the quarterfinal on Thursday.

This is the first time that the Kerala team has entered the last four stage of the prestigious tournament in over five decades. In the last season, the state made its maiden entry into the quarterfinal, but lost to Vidharbha.

Requiring 195 to win the match, Gujarat was shot out for 81 in 31.3 overs as Basil Thampi (5 for 27) and Sandeep Warrier (4 for 30) wrecked the strong rival batting line-up.

Gujarat didn't have the best start, losing opener Kathan D Patel in the sixth over. Patel was bowled by Thampi,

who struck a big blow in the last ball of the same over, trapping the prolific Priyank Panchal (3) to leave the visitors at 10 for 2.

Left-hander Rahul Shah was the only batsman to offer resistance with a fighting knock of 33 not out (70 balls, 4X4).

Gujarat skipper Parthiv Patel, probably the biggest threat for Kerala, was run out for a duck, by his opposite number (Sachin Baby).

Dhruv Raval (17) was the only Gujarat batsman other than Rahul Shah to get into double figures as the visiting side struggled on a pitch with variable bounce.

The fifth-wicket partnership of 39 between Rahul Shah and Raval was the highest of the Gujarat second innings as the rest of the batting line-up struggled against the impressive Thampi and Warrier.

Thampi, who was named man of the match and Warrier finished



with eight wickets each. Vidharbha grabbed a massive 204-run first innings lead against Uttarakhand on the third day. With Vidharbha's first innings yet to be completed and only two days left in the match, the hosts are all set to enter the semi-final of the coveted domestic tournament after ending the day 3 at an imposing 559 for 6. At 260 for 1, opener Sanjay Ramaswamy (141) and Wasim Jaffer (206) resumed the innings and stitched a massive 304-run

Batsman	M	I	Runs	AVG	HS	100	50
Sunil Gavaskar	348	563	25834	51.46	340	81	105
Sachin Tendulkar	310	490	25396	57.84	248*	81	116
Kumar Ranjitsinhji	307	500	24692	56.37	285*	72	109
Rahul Dravid	298	497	23794	55.33	270	68	117
VVS Laxman	267	436	19730	51.64	353	55	98
Wasim Jaffer	251	409	19079	51.56	314*	57	88
Vijay Hazare	238	367	18740	58.38	316*	60	73

ed and only two days left in the match, the hosts are all set to enter the semi-final of the coveted domestic tournament after ending the day 3 at an imposing 559 for 6. At 260 for 1, opener Sanjay Ramaswamy (141) and Wasim Jaffer (206) resumed the innings and stitched a massive 304-run

First Class double hundred, and second for Vidharbha. He was on the cynosure of all eyes, hitting 26 boundaries in his 296-ball stay at the crease.

Wicket-keeper Akshay Wadkar (98) and Aditya Sarvate (57 not out) then continued to frustrate the opposition bowlers.

Wadkar, who struck 14 boundaries in his 167-ball innings, missed a

deserving century. Sarvate and Akshay Wadhare (3 not out) were the unbeaten duo for the hosts at stumps.

**KARNATAKA LOSE 3 BENGALURU:** Spinners Krishnappa Gowtham and Shreyas Gopal shared seven wickets between them as Karnataka bundled out

Rajasthan for 222 to set themselves a 184-run target for a place in the last four.

Off-spinner Gowtham (4/54) snared four batsmen while leg-break bowler Gopal scalped (3/52) three. Mitchell picked up two wickets after conceding 26 runs.

Chasing the target, Karnataka were 45 for three in 18 overs at stumps, with

Test discard Karun Nair and Ronit More, batting on 18 and five.

Aniket Choudhary ordered the host top-order by sending back inform batsmen, Dega Nischal (1) and Krishnamurthy Siddharth (5). Other Ravikumbar Samarth (16) too did not last long as he was trapped leg before by Lomror.