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NEW DELHI, WEDNESDAY JANUARY 23, 2019; PAGES 16 ₹3

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PLAYER OF THE  
YEAR AWARD  
15 SPORT**

# Hailstorm, rain pelt down on rabi crops

**IMD predicts more farm damage as raging blizzard likely in J&K, HP, Uttarakhand today**

RAJESH KUMAR ■ NEW DELHI

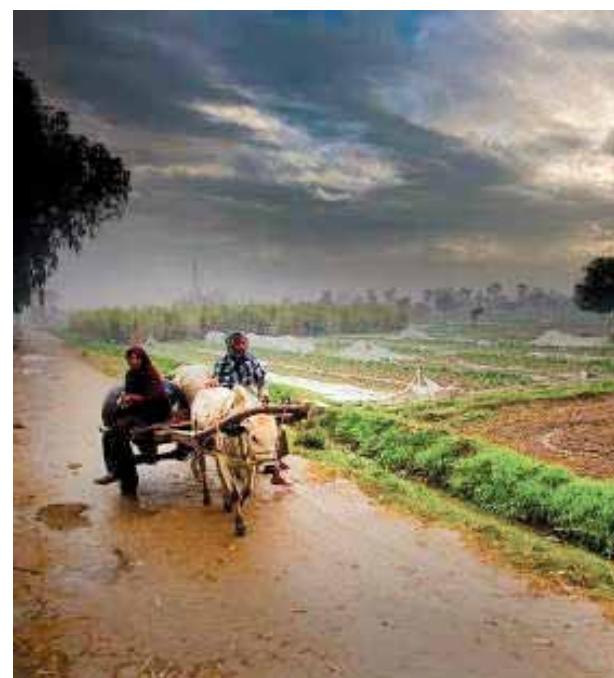
The hailstorm and rainfall that lashed Punjab, Haryana, Uttar Pradesh, Uttarakhand and Himachal Pradesh on Tuesday may damage the ongoing standing rabi crops, including wheat cultivation. The national Capital was also whipped by severe hailstorm and downpour since early on Tuesday.

According to Agriculture Ministry officials, while the production of wheat and other rabi crops was expected to come down this year as the sowing area has reduced as compared to that of the last year, the hailstorm will further damage the rabi crops.

"However, it is too early to estimate the damage from hailstorm. The State Government's Agriculture Department will assess the damage and inform the Ministry," said officials.

The India Meteorological Department (IMD) has predicted widespread rainfall, hailstorm with gusty wind and snowfall along with heavy rainfall over Jammu & Kashmir, Himachal Pradesh and Uttarakhand on Wednesday.

The IMD said rain and thunderstorm will continue on Wednesday in northern and northwest parts of the country due to intense western disturbance bearing down on North West India and cyclonic circulation developed over Afghanistan and Central Pakistan.



Haryana, 25.01 lakh hectare are under wheat cultivation.

As per latest Agriculture Ministry's data, sowing of winter or rabi crops, an indicator of the pace of farm activities, is down by nearly 5 per cent compared to last year. A significant fall in sowing in Gujarat, Maharashtra, West Bengal and Rajasthan has affected wheat and other crops, bringing the overall area under rabi crops down by nearly 5 per cent to 588 lakh hectares. The total area cultivated in the corresponding week in 2017-18 was around 618 lakh hectare.

Rabi cultivation data released by the Agriculture Ministry showed the area under rice is about 21.5 per cent lower than the same period last year due to a drop in rice cultivation in Tamil Nadu and Andhra Pradesh. Despite favoured conditions for the rabi crops, wheat cultivation, on the other hand, reported a 2.5-per cent deficit as compared to last year. As against an area of around 304 lakh hectare sown in 2017-18, the area under wheat cultivation is around 296 lakh hectare, mainly because of drop in sowing in drought-hit Maharashtra and Gujarat, as well as West Bengal.

There is nearly a 10 per cent drop in the sowing of gram, a major pulse crop of the season. This deficit has pulled down the overall pulses area by over 5.5 per cent. As compared to the 157.8-lakh hectare covered in the corresponding week

Rain lashed the plains while higher reaches of

Kashmir witnessed fresh snowfall for the second day. The snowfall and rain blocked the 300-km long Srinagar-Jammu national highway. The flight operations at the airport here were also affected. Four flights were cancelled and 11 delayed due to poor visibility. The Himachal Pradesh capital and picturesque Manali and Dalhousie on Tuesday witnessed more snow that snapped road links, however tourists made merry by hurling snow-

balls at one another.

Director of the Punjab Agriculture Department Jasbir Singh Bains advised wheat growers to not let rainwater stagnate in the field as it could be harmful to the crop.

Naseeb Singh, a farmer from Jind district, said rain at this time will help in containing the fungal disease yellow rust, but hailstorm will destroy crop. Wheat is the main rabi crop in Punjab and is grown in over 35 lakh hectare area in the State, also known as the food bowl of the country. In

2017-18, the pulse has been grown only in 95 lakh hectare so far. Coarse cereals, too, are faring badly, with an overall drop in area of nearly 14 per cent.

The area under jowar cultivation at 24.6 lakh hectare is around 19 per cent lower than the 30.27 lakh hectare last year; maize is down by 9.5 per cent to 14 lakh hectare.



Military police officials ride their motorcycles with headlights on as visibility becomes poor due to rain at 8:27 am, during a rehearsal for the Republic Day parade, in New Delhi on Tuesday PTI

## Silver lining in downpour: No speck of pollutants in Delhi

**Air quality at year's best**

SAPNA SINGH ■ NEW DELHI



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EC orders FIR against expert for 2014 poll rigging claim

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

With controversy erupting over allegations made by a self-proclaimed cyber expert who alleged Electronic Voting Machines (EVMs) can be hacked and the 2014 Lok Sabha polls were rigged, the Election Commission on Tuesday filed a complaint with the Delhi Police, asking it to register an FIR against him for his false claims which, it said, can "create fear" in voters' minds.

In its complaint to the Deputy Commissioner of Police (New Delhi District), the poll panel asked police to investigate the matter "promptly" for violation of certain sections of the Indian Penal Code dealing with spreading rumour to alarm the public and other provisions of related laws. Syed Shuja had on Monday claimed at an event in London that the EVMs can be tampered with and that the 2014 Lok Sabha elections were rigged.

Detailed report on Page 5

## Cong did nothing to stop loot: Modi

**Varanasi:** Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Tuesday referred to former premier Rajiv Gandhi's remarks on corruption in the country to attack the Congress, saying the party that ruled for years did nothing to stop the "loot", while his Government put an end to it and transferred about ₹5,80,000 crore directly to the people under various schemes.

Without naming Rajiv, he alluded to the former Prime Minister's remarks that only 15 paise of ₹1 reach the masses and said the Congress Governments over the years did nothing to stop the "leakage".

Addressing NRIs and Indian-origin people at the inauguration of the 15th Pravasi Bharatiya Divas convention in his parliamentary constituency of Varanasi in Uttar Pradesh, Modi described the diaspora as India's brand ambassadors and said they were the symbols of the country's capabilities.

The Government has

changed the perception that India cannot change, he said in the presence of Mauritian Prime Minister Pravind Jugnauth, External Affairs Minister Sushma Swaraj, Minister of State for External Affairs VK Singh and UP Governor Ram Naik among others. Chief Ministers of UP, Haryana and Uttarakhand — Yogi Adityanath, Manohar Lal Khattar and Trivendra Singh Rawat — attended the meet.

Modi said India's contribution was being recognised at the international level, especially its role with regard to

environment.

Taking a swipe at the Congress over the issue of corruption, Modi said it got to know about the disease, acknowledged the disease, but neither thought about it, nor did anything in the direction of curing the ailment.

"Many people here would have heard what a former Prime Minister had said about corruption. He had said the money that the Central Government sends, only 15 per cent of that reaches the people. If one rupee is sent from Delhi, only 15 paise reaches the villages, 85 paise disappear," Modi said, alluding to Rajiv's remarks.

"The party that ruled the country for so many years had given the system to the country, a truth that was accepted by the then Prime Minister. But what is regrettable is that later in its rule of 10-15 years, there was no effort made to end this loot and leakage," Modi said.

Continued on Page 4

Torrential rain washed away Suspended Particulate Matter (SPMs) from Delhi air and the air quality improved to year's best on Wednesday. This was the first time in New Year when Delhi's map was coloured "green" with satisfactory levels of Particulate Matter (PMs) on the National Ambient Air Quality Index (NAAQI).

Good news for Delhi and National Capital Region (NCR) is that the levels of PM 10 and PM 2.5 were recorded under the permissible limit with values 73 and 51 against 100 and 60 in microgram per cubic respectively.

As Indian Meteorological Department's (IMD) prediction proved correct, the national Capital breathed easy after hazardous pollution levels for the past few months gave way to the rainfall.

In its weekly weather forecast, the Regional Weather Forecast Department, New Delhi (RWFC) has forecast generally cloudy sky with drizzle. The minimum temperature will remain at eight degrees Celsius while the maximum temperature will fluctuate between 18 and 19 degrees Celsius.

For air quality, System of Air Quality and Weather

Forecasting And Research (SAFAR), a unit of Ministry of Earth Sciences (MOES), has forecast satisfactory for Thursday, for Friday, air quality will turn moderate, this further means that air quality will remain "good" till Friday.

According to SAFAR in air quality forecast, the concentration of PM 10 will oscillate between 74 and 141 microgram per cubic while levels of PM 2.5 will remain under the permissible limit.

According to IMD official, the Safdarjung observatory recorded 14.8 mm rainfall, Palam 22.8 mm rainfall, Lodhi Road 15 mm and Aya Nagar recorded 26.1 mm rainfall.

"The minimum tempera-

## IPS officer's brother among three ultras shot in Shopian encounter

KHURSHED WANI ■ SRINAGAR

Three Hizbul Mujahideen terrorists, including younger brother of a serving Indian Police Service (IPS) officer, were killed in an encounter with security forces in Shrimul village of south Kashmir's Shopian district on Tuesday.

The encounter took place a day after three ultras were gunned down in a similar operation in Hapatnar area of central district Budgam. Clashes erupted at the site of the encounter resulting in injuries to several persons, including four journalists.

A police spokesman said that the operation was carried out on the basis of "credible inputs about the presence of terrorists" that followed a cordon and search operation jointly by police and security forces in the area.

Security sources said one of the slain terrorists was identified as Shamsul Haq Mengnoo, a resident of Draggad village in Shopian district. Mengnoo was pursuing bachelors course in Unani Medicine and Surgery (BUMS) at a Government college here before joining militancy. Belonging to a well-off family of orchardists, his elder brother Inamul Haq is a 2012 batch IPS officer, presently posted in North-East.

Security sources said soon after the cordon was intensified in Shrimul village, terrorists hiding underground in an open area tried to escape while opening fire on the security forces. During the retaliatory action, three ultras were killed.

Inspector General of Police (Kashmir range) Syed Prakash Pani said security forces conducted "two good" operations in Budgam and Pulwama district on two con-

## 102 one-horned rhinos killed in 10 years

**Assam hogs list of casualties; 209 poachers arrested**

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Environment and Forests, showed that the maximum number of killing of 84 one-horned rhinoceros was reported from Assam.

West Bengal and Uttar Pradesh are the only two States which have reported such killings, with 17 deaths and one death, respectively, during the

period, according to data. Noida-based lawyer Ranjan Tomar had sought State-wise data on the number of one-horned rhinos killed by poachers in the last 10 years and offenders arrest from the WCCB, a statutory body formed to combat organised wildlife crime in the country.

"As per data available in the records of the bureau based on the information from the State forest and police departments, 102 one-horned rhinos have been killed and 209 poachers have been arrested in the last 10 years in India," the WCCB said in a written reply.

Continued on Page 4

## CAPSULE

**14 DEAD AS SHIPS WITH INDIAN CREW CATCH FIRE**

**Moscow:** Two ships carrying Indian, Turkish and Libyan crew members caught fire in the Kerch Strait separating Crimea from Russia, killing at least 14 sailors, according to reports. P12

**31 STRANDED ROHINGYAS HANDED OVER TO TRIPURA**

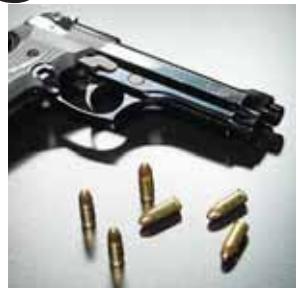
**Agartala/New Delhi:** The BSF on Tuesday handed over the 31 Rohingya Muslims, who were stranded on the India-Bangladesh border since January 18, to the Tripura police, after the paramilitary force and its counterpart, the BGB, failed to reach a decision during talks. P7

**BENGALI REFUGEES TO BE GIVEN CITIZENSHIP: SHAH**

**Malda:** Kick-starting the BJP's campaign in West Bengal, party chief Amit Shah on Tuesday said all Bengali refugees will be granted citizenship with the passage of the Citizenship Bill. Shah said the upcoming Lok Sabha polls will be for restoring democracy in the State. P6

# Man kills self while fiddling with gun

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI



**'Rajnish reportedly tried to stop Amit, while his other friend Bablu, who was at a distance also tried to stop him, but in vain. Amit pressed the trigger and a shot was fired which injured him'**

said the DCP.

"On the way, Amit asked Bablu to stop at the house of another friend identified as Rajnish," the DCP said, adding that, during the visit, Amit's friend Rajnish saw the weapon Amit was concealing in his clothes by chance.

However, Rajnish started enquiring about the gun and started questioning Amit, who insisted that he was keeping the gun only for his protection and nothing would happen to him.

To validate his statement, Amit allegedly took out the gun he was concealing and removed the magazine. Further, he placed the gun on his temple before pulling the trigger.

"Rajnish reportedly tried to stop Amit, while his other friend Bablu, who was at a distance also tried to stop him, but in vain. Amit pressed the trigger and a shot was fired which injured him," said the DCP.

The two of them reportedly consumed beer before deciding to leave for Amit's residence,

A 32-year-old man 'accidentally' shot himself dead while 'fiddling' with a gun at South Delhi's Sangam Vihar area. The incident occurred on Monday night when the man identified as Amit, while hanging out with his friends, as a jest, loaded the gun and removed the magazine after he allegedly placed it on the temple and pulled the trigger. A shot was fired, injuring the man, however, he later succumbed to injuries during treatment.

According to police, the deceased was identified as Amit Kumar (32) is a resident of Sangam Vihar. Deputy Commissioner Police (South) Vijay Kumar stated that a Medico Legal Case (MLC) call was received at Sangam Vihar Police Station around 1.30 am on the intervening night of Monday and Tuesday from Batra Hospital regarding admittance of an injured person with bullet injury, who was later referred to AIIMS Trauma Centre.

"During investigations, it was revealed that late night on Monday Amit had gone to meet a friend identified as Bablu at Gandhi Camp, Sangam Vihar.

The two of them reportedly consumed beer before deciding to leave for Amit's residence,

## Waterlogging after heavy downpour leads to gridlock

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI



(from Jangpura towards Lajpat Nagar) due to waterlogging.

"Commuters are expected to witness traffic congestions at Khyber Pass, Kela Ghat GPO, Chatter Rail, Digamber Jain Mandir near old Delhi railway station, Ashok Vihar flyover and Aurobindo Marg," said an official.

Further heavy waterlogging were noticed at Moolchand underpass, Bihar under railway bridge,

Chhatrasal Stadium main gate red light, IP estate, Samalkha red light, RTR T-point, Bhairon Marg under railway bridge and Devli.

## Bhati gang member held for firing at transgender

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

A 24-year-old cab driver alleged to be a member of "Sunder Bhati gang" was arrested by the Delhi Police on Tuesday for allegedly firing at a transgender in Hazrat Nizamuddin area of southeast Delhi.

The weapon used in the commission of crime has also been recovered by the Police.

The accused has been identified as Sagar resident of Shashi Garden, Trilokpuri. According to Chinmoy Biswas,

taken up," said the DCP.

"During investigation, specific inputs were received that members of the interstate Sunder Bhati Gang armed with fire arms who were involved in the above firing incident would come in a Honda Amaze Car from Barapula Flyover and would go towards Moolchand Hospital to commit crime following which a trap was laid and the accused was apprehended with two pistols and three live cartridges," said the DCP.

"During sustained interro-

gation, accused Sagar disclosed on the intervening night of January 19-20, along with his associate Chandra Kant gave lift to a transgender who they thought is a girl from the area of Trilok Puri and took the transgender near to Barapula Flyover.

When they reached near Barapula, they tried to sexually assault transgender. On refusal, accused Sagar whipped out a pistol and shot at transgender in the abdomen. They threw the transgender out of the car near Barapula and fled," said the DCP.

"He drives taxi in city. He

had joined Sunder Bhati Gang and started committing armed robberies and extortion with them. He procured two sophisticated pistols of 0.32 caliber from Murad Nagar, Uttar Pradesh and used to keep them for committing robberies as well as for safety from his enemies," said the DCP.

"The investigation of the case is in progress and his involvement in other cases is being explored.

Efforts are on to nab the co-accused Chandra Kant, who is absconding after the incident," the DCP added.

## KVS files plaint against fraudulent emails for teaching posts

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

The Kendriya Vidyalaya Sangathan (KVS) has filed a police complaint with the Kishan Garh Police Station after a number of candidates appearing and shortlisted for various teaching posts started filing complaints about getting unwanted scrupulous and fraudulent calls and e-mails demanding bribe money for facilitating in KVS recruitment.

"KVS has received several complaints through e-mail and telephonic calls from the prospective candidates shortlisted for the interview to be

held shortly for various posts such as Post Graduate Teacher (PGT), Trained Graduate Teacher (TGT), Primary Teacher (PT) (Music) and Librarian, that they are getting telephone calls from unscrupulous callers demanding money for facilitating in KVS recruitment," said an official.

In September 2018, the KVS started the recruitment process for a total of 8339 post of PGT, TGT, musician, librarian and principal for its schools across the country.

"Despite the Public Notice

if any candidate falls prey to the fraud perpetrated by the unscrupulous elements, then he/she shall be responsible for his/her conduct.

"After witnessing such complaints from the candidates, KVS has lodged a complaint with Delhi Police at Kishangarh Police Station in this regard and a "Public Notice" has also been issued and uploaded on the KVS website informing the candidates to be alert and aware of such fraudulent calls," said the official.

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# House to see if false plaint a contempt

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

The Delhi Assembly Secretariat is examining if a petition to Lokayukta claiming that details of assets and liabilities were not furnished by the ruling Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) MLAs invites proceedings for contempt and breach of privilege of the House.

Based on the petition by advocate and RTI activist Vivek Garg's complaint, the office of Lokayukta has issued notices to all the MLAs of Delhi Assembly asking them to furnish details and submit their replies till January 28.

Delhi Assembly Speaker Ram Niwas Goel said on Tuesday that the Assembly Secretariat is "examining whether baseless and unsub-

stantiated allegations raised by the petitioner (Garg) invite proceedings against him for contempt and breach of privileges of the House as well as its members (MLAs)."

In a letter to the Lokayukta Reva Khetrapal, the Speaker has raised several questions on the petition, urging her to file a complaint against the petitioner before a competent court.

The complaint by Garg was "politically motivated" as it targeted ruling AAP MLAs only, Goel alleged at a press conference.

He said the petition not signed by Garg was not only entertained by the office of the Lokayukta but also notices were issued on the basis of it. "It was a big mistake. Ideally, a preliminary enquiry

'It was a big mistake. Ideally, a preliminary enquiry from the office of Lokayukta or Law Department of government or Assembly Secretariat would have brought out the true picture'

from the office of Lokayukta or Law Department of government or Assembly Secretariat would have brought out the true picture," Goel wrote to the Lokayukta.

He said that all the MLAs including Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal, who were covered by the Lokayukta notice, could submit their replies.

"Unfortunately, the petitioner has succeeded in dragging your august office too into this needless controversy," Goel said.

The Speaker in his letter to the Lokayukta pointed that the petitioner's claim that the MLAs were bound to declare their assets and liabilities as per Lokpal and Lokayukta Act 2013 was not correct.

This provision does not apply to the MLAs as can be seen

from the provision of Section 14 of the Act. Also, as per a Government of India memorandum, the public servants need not furnish details of assets and liabilities now, Goel said citing rules and documents.

Goel said from the provision of Section 14 of the Act. Also, as per a Government of India memorandum, the public servants need not furnish details of assets and liabilities now, Goel said citing rules and documents.

He said that all the MLAs including Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal, who were covered by the Lokayukta notice, could submit their replies.

"I have, however, suggested the MLAs who wrote to me seeking suggestions over the notice, that there is no pron as such for filing details of assets and liabilities by them before a

competent authority," he said.

There could not be any objection over filing of details by the MLAs about their assets and liabilities but it should be only according to law. It cannot be "forced" by a "ill-conceived and politically motivated" complaint, he added.

Garg in his complaint before the Lokayukta had claimed the ruling party MLAs including the Chief Ministers had not furnished details of their assets and liabilities before the competent authority for three consecutive years.

The Opposition BJP in Delhi Assembly had earlier said that its four MLAs will file details of their assets and liabilities and had accused the ruling Aam Aadmi Party of resisting similar disclosure by its legislators.



by the Delhi Government have jeopardised the Metro phase IV projects, leading to substantial delay and inconvenience to people as conditions are contravention to the Metro phase III and Metro Rail Policy 2017," said Gupta, adding, "These conditions are unconstitutional and unacceptable by any standard.

changes have been made by the State Government in the revised detailed project reports of six corridors.

Meanwhile, Leader of Opposition (LoP) in Delhi assembly, Vijender Gupta said that Kejriwal must withdraw unilateral and rootless conditions blocking Delhi Metro Phase-IV as Delhi metro has been profit making since its inception. "The conditions are self-imposed by the Delhi Government without any sanction of the Metro Railways (Amendment) Act, 2009 and the later Metro Rail Policy 2017," said Gupta, adding, "These conditions are unconstitutional and unacceptable by any standard.

**Advisory issued for smooth flow of traffic on R-Day**

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Following the Republic Day full dress rehearsal on Wednesday Delhi Traffic Police issued advisory to ensure smooth flow of traffic in national Capital. Metro services will be available for commuters at all stations on Wednesday, but there will be no boarding and de-boarding at Central Secretariat and Udyog Bhawan Metro Stations from 5 am till 12 pm.

According to Delhi Traffic Police the Parade will start at 9.50 AM from Vijay Chowk and proceed for Red Fort Grounds. There will be a related function at India Gate at 09.00 AM.

Joint Commissioner of Police (Traffic) Alok Kumar stated that no traffic on Rajpath from 11.00 PM on Jan 25 at Rafi Marg, Janpath, Man Singh Road till Parade is over," said Joint CP.

"C-Hexagon-India Gate will be closed for traffic from 2.00 AM on Republic Day till Parade crosses Tilak Marg. From 10.00 AM on 26.01.2019 Traffic on Tilak Marg, BSZ Marg and Subhash Marg will not be allowed on both directions. Cross traffic will only be allowed depending upon the movement of the Parade. "Road users are requested to plan their journey in advance accordingly and avoid the route of Parade, from 0200 hours to 1230 hours, for their own convenience," said the Joint CP.

"Though there will be no restriction for people from North Delhi going towards New Delhi Railway Station or Old Delhi Railway Station yet it is advised that they plan their journey in advance and take sufficient extra time to reach their destination to avoid possible delay," said the Joint CP.

In case any unidentified object or suspicious person is seen, information must be conveyed to the nearest policeman on duty.

Flying of sub conventional aerial platforms like paragliders, para motors, hang gliders, UAVs, UASs, microlight aircrafts, remotely piloted aircrafts, hot air balloons, small size powered aircrafts, quadcopters or para jumping from aircraft etc. are prohibited over the jurisdiction of national Capital Territory of Delhi from January 9 upto February 9.

**Initiate criminal prosecutions against MVID Hospital officials: DCW to police**

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

### DIPHTHERIA DEATHS

Considering report submitted by Health Department of North Delhi Municipal Corporation (NMC) on diphtheria deaths last year in September, Delhi Commission for Women (DCW) asked Delhi Police to initiate criminal prosecutions against officials of the department as well as the authorities of Maharishi Valmiki Infectious Diseases (MVID) Hospital on Tuesday.

The Commission has also requested the police department to submit an action taken report by January 31. Around 21 children succumbed to Diphtheria between 6th and 19th September 2018 at the hospital due to unavailability of Anti-Diphtheria Serum (ADS).

In the notice issued to Joint Commissioner, Northern Range, Delhi Police, DCW Chief Swati Maliwal wrote, "It is important that an FIR under relevant sections of the law for

criminal negligence and mismanagement is immediately registered in the matter against the Health Department officials and MVID Hospital authorities and a proper investigation is undertaken in the matter." According to DCW spokesperson, the Commission had instituted an inquiry into the matter and in this regard notices were issued to NMC. In its reply dated December 27, 2018, the Health Department of NMC submitted the report saying that the reason of the death was the unavailability of ADS.

"It had been reported that children died because of unavailability of anti-diphtheria vaccine in the hospital despite the hospital being a specialist center for the disease. It was also reported that the patients are being forced to purchase injections from outside," the report read.

Around 21 children lost their lives in September 2018. The report of the inquiry conducted by NMC stated that not a single dose of Anti-Diphtheria Serum (ADS) was available at MVID Hospital between December 2, 2017 and September 22, 2018, however, the patients died due to heart complications.

spokesperson said.

The spokesperson further said, "It is clear that the deaths of over 21 children in the hospital last year could have been prevented had the vaccine been procured in a timely manner. Instead, the North MCD dragged its feet in the matter and for over 9 months, there was no vaccine available in the hospital."

Saying that the deaths of the children were a direct result of the criminal negligence and seemingly corrupt conduct of the NMC authorities, the Commission has requested the Delhi Police to submit an action taken report by January 31.

Around 21 children lost their lives in September 2018. The report of the inquiry conducted by NMC stated that not a single dose of Anti-Diphtheria Serum (ADS) was available at MVID Hospital between December 2, 2017 and September 22, 2018, however, the patients died due to heart complications.

They will be taken on sightseeing tours in and around the national capital. Four helicopters would precede the parade commander.

**58 tribal guests, 22 tableaux to mark 90 min R-Day parade**

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI



A view of Maharashtra tableau, to be displayed at the upcoming R-Day parade, during a press preview in New Delhi on Tuesday Ranjan Dimri | Pioneer

Fifty-eight tribal guests from various parts of the country, 22 tableaux of States and Central Government departments, and performance by schoolchildren will mark the 90-minute parade of this year's Republic Day.

The event on Saturday, where South African President Cyril Ramaphosa will be the chief guest, will begin with the laying of wreath at the Amar Jyoti at India Gate by Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

Twenty-two tableaux from various states and central government departments on developmental, cultural and historical themes will be part of this year's Republic Day parade.

Some of the tableaux on cultural themes will have integrated folk dances, a Home Ministry office memorandum said.

As many as 26 national award winning children, seat-

**Over quarter of city children under 5 underweight: Study**

With more than a quarter of five being underweight, children in the national Capital may encounter stunted growth making them vulnerable to various diseases, a National Family Health Survey revealed on Tuesday. The data revealed that around 27.3 per cent of children in Delhi are underweight with age-weight ratio falling below than the recommended standards of World Health Organisation (WHO).

According to Raghu Ram Malliah, Director, Neonatology at New Delhi's Fortis La Femme, the malnutrition, in long run, can hinder a child's physical and mental development.

Malnutrition is not just lack of food but it is a combination of factors like insufficient protein, energy and micronutrients, poor care and feeding practices, inadequate health services, frequent infections or disease, and poor water and sanitation.

**HC grants bail to man held with live bullet at Kejriwal's residence**

PTI ■ NEW DELHI



likely to take some time, I am of the view that the petitioner has made out a case for grant of regular bail."

The court said that he be released if not required in any other case and directed that he shall not do anything that may prejudice the trial or the prosecution witnesses.

The man had sought bail saying that he was not possessing the live cartridge consciously and had even deposited his wallet with the security staff prior to entering the secure zone.

The prosecution had opposed the bail application saying the facts showed that he would have been aware of the presence of the bullet and, as such, cannot take the plea of absence of conscious possession.

It also said that investigation was complete and charge sheet was in the process of finalisation.

It, however, added that the investigation till date had not revealed any adverse antecedents of Imran.

Police had earlier said the man had come to the chief minister's residence with 12 imams and maulvis to discuss the issue of increasing salary of the staff working at the Delhi Waqf Board.

During the search, a live cartridge of .32 bore was allegedly found in his purse by the security staff deputed at Kejriwal's residence. Imran was handed over to the local police and accordingly, a case was registered at the Civil Lines police station under relevant sections of the Arms Act, police had said.

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**YOUR SUPPORT IS VITAL..**





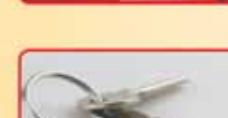
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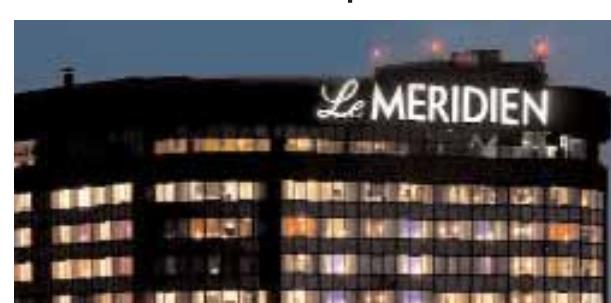
**Process to get Le Meridien premises vacated begins**

CHANDAN PRAKASH ■ NEW DELHI

New Delhi Municipal Council (NDMC) has started the process to get the premises vacated of the up market Le Meridien hotel following the order by Delhi High Court for irregularities in paying of license fee, a senior NDMC official said.

Further, an enquiry against former NDMC Chairman Jalal Shrivastava under rule 8 of All India Services (Discipline & Appeal) has been ordered by Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) to probe the charges against him.

According to a senior NDMC official, a settlement was done illegally with hotel management by accepting a



one-time payout of over Rs 150.92 crore, which resulted in a loss of approx Rs 376.05 crore to the civic body.

As per MHA order, "The President of India has appointed Vishwpati Trivedi (IAS, Retd.) to probe the charges framed against the former Chairman of NDMC and submit the findings within a peri-

od of six months".

The letter issued by the MHA stated that Shrivastava, being the chairperson of the civic body, did not maintain absolute integrity and committed gross misconduct by fraudulently approving and thereafter accepting Rs 150.92 instead of Rs 526.97 outstanding against

the hotel.

"It was also observed that Shrivastava committed gross misconduct by blatantly approving and settling the future license fee by applying wrong criteria for calculation of license fee. It resulted in loss of hundreds of Crores to government exchequer and wrongful gain to the Hotel, the letter stated.

According to sources in the NDMC, the criteria to calculate license fee was reduced to four instead of mandatory 21.

The letter further reads

"The misconduct done by Shrivastava exhibit lack of integrity, devotion of duty amounting to unbecoming a government servant as it violated Rule 3 of All India Service (Conduct Rule), 1968".



# EVM hacking claim triggers political storm

**EC orders FIR against Shuja, self-proclaimed cyber expert**

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

A day after a self-proclaimed cyber expert claimed that EVMs could be 'hacked', a huge political storm erupted across the country with the Opposition and ruling parties trading charges against each other prompting the Election Commission of India (ECI) to lodge an FIR against the claimant Syed Shuja.

The BJP dubbed the allegations of rigging in the 2014 polls a "Congress-sponsored conspiracy" designed to "defame" Indian democracy and its Election Commission. Finance Minister Arun Jaitley called the claims 'garbage' and the next 'big lie' after 'Rafale',

"Indian Journalists Association London President Ashis Ray told me he has sent

being present at the Press conference where Shuja claimed that the 2014 general election was "rigged" through the EVMs, stated that he was there as part of invitation from the organizers and claimed that all the political parties including the election watchdog was invited for the presser in London. The Congress, however, distanced itself from the event.

While the BJP and the Government alleged that the Congress had organised the EVM hackathon in London, Congress alongwith other Opposition parties demanded a proper probe in the matter and reiterated their demand for VVPAT voting.

Senior Congress leader Kapil Sibal, who was noticed



invitations to all political parties including BJP and also Election Commission... He (Ashish Ray) sent me a personal e-mail also. I told him that I will be in London for some personal work and he insisted that I should come as

they are going to make an important revelation. So I went," Sibal said. Ray was one of the organisers of the event.

Reiterating Shuja's claims that a day after the 2014 elections, 11 members of his team which was working on EVMs

were murdered, Sibal sought a thorough probe.

The ruling party launched a stinging attack on the Congress and said it has already started looking for an "alibi" for its certain loss in the coming Lok Sabha polls. Union

Minister and BJP spokesperson Ravi Shankar Prasad said the Indian Journalists' Association is headed by Ashis Ray who is a "committed Congressman and writes for National Herald".

Ray "campaigns" for the Congress on social media and has often attacked Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Prasad claimed, adding that he had also organised Rahul's public event in London.

Prasad also dismissed Sibal's claim that he was present in his personal capacity, saying he was intelligent enough to know implications of his being there. He claimed that Sibal went there by deliberate design.

He said the invite for the event had claimed that the hacking of EVMs will be shown but the "gentleman" appeared in the US wearing a mask.

"I could not understand this drama. He (Shuja) offered no proof and nor did he present himself to questioning by the media. No evidence, no cor-

roboration and no question and such big allegations were levelled," he said.

Prasad also expressed his party's "deep pain" at the allegation in the London event that Union Minister Gopinath Munde was "murdered" because he was aware of the 2014 poll "rigging" and was set to disclose it. He dismissed it as rubbish. Munde died in a road accident in New Delhi weeks after the BJP won the 2014 elections.

Uttar Pradesh rivals BSP's Mayawati and SP's Akhilesh Yadav, who have joined hands to contest the Lok Sabha polls,

demanded that the upcoming polls be held using ballot papers instead of EVMs. Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu too stated leaders of 22 parties would meet the Election Commission soon to discuss the EVMs and the voter verifiable paper audit trails (VVPAT) system.

## IN SHORT

### BSF HANDS OVER 31 ROHINGYAS TO POLICE

New Delhi: The Border Security Force on Tuesday handed over the 31 Rohingya Muslims, who were stranded on the India-Bangladesh border for three days, to the Tripura Police, ending a standoff with its counterpart, the BGB, on the issue, officials said. They said the border guarding force signed papers and handed over the 31 Rohingyas to the staff of the Amtoli police station in West Tripura district police at 11 am. The decision was taken after the Border Security Force headquarters here obtained an approval from the Home Ministry, they said.

### PLEA IN SC CHALLENGES 10% QUOTA TO EWS

New Delhi: A plea challenging the Centre's decision to grant 10 per cent quota to economically weaker people of general category in jobs and education was filed in the Supreme Court on Monday. The plea, challenging the Constitution (103 Amendment) Act, 2019 which paved the way for grant of reservation to poor general category candidates, has been filed by businessman Tehseen Poonawalla and is likely to come up for hearing during the week.

### SC DIRECTS BUS OWNER TO GIVE COMPENSATION

New Delhi: The Supreme Court Tuesday directed a bus owner to give compensation to his driver who died after falling from the roof of the vehicle, saying the person stayed with the bus for days on end as part of his duty. A bench of Justices Arun Mishra and Navin Sinha noted that due to the nature of the duty, the victim stayed with the bus and would not go home for weeks.

### 50% DISABILITY LIMIT IN HEARING: APEX COURT

New Delhi: A limit of 50 per cent disability in hearing or visual impairment is a legitimate restriction for the post of judicial officer, the Supreme Court held Tuesday. The observation was made by the apex court's Bench of Justice Ashok Bhushan and Justice KM Joseph while dismissing a plea by advocate V Surendra Mohan who had applied for the post of Civil Judge (Junior Division) under partially blind category with 70 per cent disability.

### HUSBANDS GO BROKE ON MAINTENANCE: SC

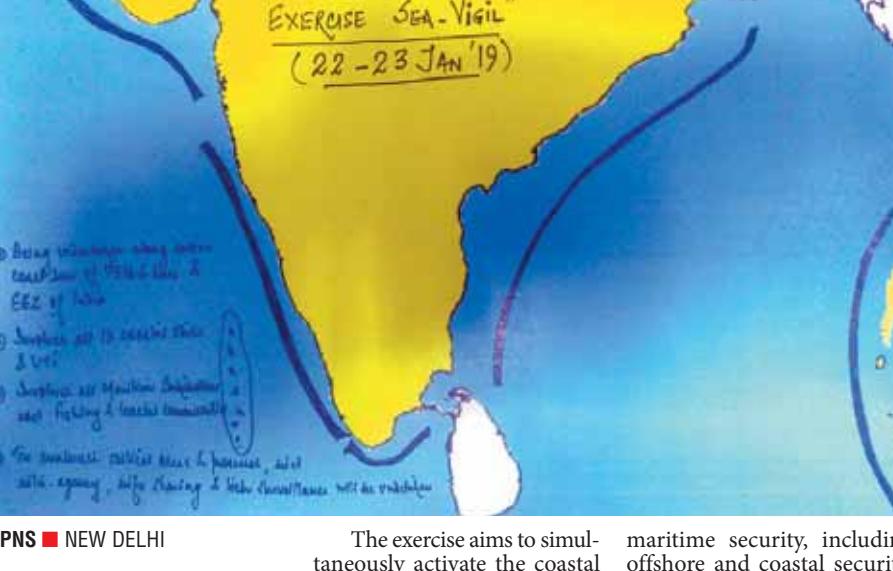
New Delhi: When estranged wives ask for maintenance, husbands start saying they are living in penury or have gone insolvent, the Supreme Court has observed. The observation was made by the apex court while asking a Hyderabad based doctor working in a reputed hospital not to leave the job just because his estranged wife was seeking maintenance.

### GOVT APPOINTS 30 JOINT SECRETARIES

New Delhi: The Centre on Tuesday effected a mid-level reshuffle in the bureaucracy by appointing 30 joint secretaries in various Ministries and departments including Defence, Economic Affairs and Cabinet Secretariat. The Appointments Committee of the Cabinet (ACC) headed by Prime Minister Narendra Modi issued the orders for the new appointments.

## SEA VIGIL TO TEST STEPS TAKEN SINCE 26/11

# Navy kicks off largest-ever coastal defence exercise



PNS ■ NEW DELHI

In an effort to test the operational readiness of all the stakeholders to ward off any attack like the 26/11 Mumbai terror attacks in 2008 wherein terrorists came in through the sea route, the Navy has commenced the largest ever coastal defence exercise Sea Vigil along the entire 7,000 km coast of the country. The two-day fist of its kind national level exercise starting on Tuesday also covers the Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ). The exercise covers the entire 7,516.6 km coast covering 13 coastal states and union territories and stake holders also include fishing and coastal communities, Navy spokesperson DK Sharma said here on Tuesday.

Explaining the objectives of Exercise Sea Vigil, he said it aims to comprehensively and holistically validate the efficacy of the measures taken since '26/11'. Seaward monitoring during the exercise will entail patrolling off coast, in Offshore Development Areas and off our islands by the Indian Navy, Indian Coast Guard, supported by the State Marine Police.

Closer coast, strategic assets, ports, Single Point Moorings (SPMs) will be patrolled by designated agencies. Seaward monitoring will also entail inputs from technical means, including intelligence sources. Shore-based monitoring will entail enhanced vigil by the State Police along the coast, monitoring of fish landing centres by state fisheries departments as also monitoring of port areas by respective port authorities.

The exercise aims to simultaneously activate the coastal security mechanism across all states and Union Territories. The Indian Coast Guard was designated as the agency responsible for coastal security in territorial waters, including island territories. The exercise will also go deeper, being spread over seaward, coastal, and hinterland areas.

Evaluation of critical areas and processes, including inter-agency coordination, information sharing and technical surveillance will be undertaken.

On the first of its kind drill, he said so far smaller exercises are conducted in coastal states on a biannual basis, including combined exercises amongst adjoining states are conducted. The national level reflects the distance that has been covered since '26/11' and the relative maturing of the organisation for coastal security to take on this large-scale endeavour.

At the apex level National Committee on Strengthening Maritime and Coastal Security (NCSMCS) with Cabinet Secretary at the helm was established to review important matters pertaining to Coastal Security and for effective centre-state coordination.

Likewise committees have also been established at State and District level. At the operational level, it included setting up of Joint Operations Centres (JOCs) of the Navy and Coastal Security Operations Centres of the Indian Coast Guard. A multi-tiered patrol and surveillance mechanism with focus on technical surveillance and augmenting Maritime Domain Awareness (MDA) through the coastal radar chain and other systems was adopted. Real-time information sharing through the National Command Control Communication and Intelligence (NC3I) Network;

Post '26/11', the Indian Navy was designated as the agency responsible for overall

signed soon between the CISF and the Archeological Survey of India (ASI). "Nitti grity has been almost finalized in the matter. The pact can be inked anytime soon," said the sources.

The ASI had approached the CISF personnel in these monuments to meet security challenges such as encroachments and for managing crowds which increase on weekends and festivals.

Presently, Taj Mahal and Red Fort are the only two ASI-protected monuments in the country that are being guarded by the CISF, a central force

# Indian Citizenship won't be given without State Govts' consent: MHA

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Union Home Ministry clarified on Tuesday that Indian citizenship would not be granted to any foreigner without the consent of State Governments concerned after the passage of the Citizenship (Amendment) Bill. Home Ministry spokesperson Ashok Prasad said every application for Indian citizenship will be enquired into by the deputy commissioner or district magistrate concerned, who will carry out due diligence and submit it to the State Government concerned.

"The State Government also has to conduct an enquiry through its agencies. Only then, an individual will be granted Indian nationality. Without the state government's recommendations, no one will be given Indian citizenship," Prasad told reporters here.

The Citizenship

Amendment Bill 2019, being strongly opposed by a large section of people and organisations in the Northeast, seeks to provide Indian citizenship to persecuted minorities — Hindus, Sikhs, Jains, Buddhists and Christians — from Bangladesh, Pakistan and Afghanistan after they have stayed in India for seven years, instead of 12 years at present. This is applicable to those who came to India before December 31, 2014.

The six religious minorities from Pakistan, Bangladesh and Afghanistan were earlier given a special dispensation for grant of long term visas. People belonging to Hindu, Sikh, Buddhism, Jain, Parsi and Christian religions from Pakistan, Bangladesh, Afghanistan will have to prove they belonged to any of the three countries and were persecuted on religious lines among other things for Indian

citizenship. A large section of people and organisations in the Northeast have opposed the Bill saying it will nullify the provisions of the Assam Accord of 1985, which fixed March 24, 1971 as the cut-off date for deportation of all illegal immigrants irrespective of religion.

Home Minister Rajnath Singh has already said the Bill will apply to all States and Union Territories and the beneficiaries can reside anywhere in the country. "The burden of these persecuted migrants will be shared by the whole country. Assam alone would not have to bear the entire burden and the Government is committed to giving all help to the State Government and people of Assam," Singh had said.

Home Ministry sources said the ministry is considering a proposal to provide incentives to those people who want to settle anywhere in India, except the Northeast.

# Extensive transfer, posting of CBI officers to cleanse system: Officials

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The extensive transfer and posting of officials by interim CBI chief M Nageswar Rao is aimed to break the caucus of well entrenched officers posted in the agency headquarters for over three years and restore the professional credibility.

Nineteen out of the 20 transfers executed on Monday comprise cadre officials. The lone officer Prem Gautam is an IPS officer who is the SP of the Economic Offences Wing and has been given additional charge of Deputy Director (Administration/Personnel) after relieving the current incumbent Anish Prasad, who had allegedly put former Special Director Rakesh Asthana's number on surveillance without due procedure, sources said.

More transfers are in the offing in the coming days at various levels in the agency, the sources said.

In major reshuffle, Rao transferred around 20 officers on Monday, including some officers handling crucial cases like the 2G scam. The case of SP Vivek Priyadarshi who was probing the 2G case and was posted in the headquarter for

over a decade has now been transferred to Chandigarh.

Likewise, SP SK Nair posted as SP in BSFC, Mumbai who was probing the Mehul Choksi/Nirav Modi case relating to PNB scam has been transferred to Anti-Corruption Bureau in Mumbai. SP OF BSFC, P Balachandran has also been transferred as SP Cochini.

SP Mohit Gupta who was entrusted by then CBI chief Alok Verma to probe the case against his deputy Rakesh Asthana has been brought to the BSFC, Delhi.

"The exercise was aimed to cleanse and purge the system. The purpose was also to fill the vacancies in branches which are handling crucial cases and to restore checks and balances and strengthen vigilance mechanism in the agency," an official in the know of developments said.

Rao after taking over as the interim chief of the agency for the second time on January 11 had undone the decisions taken by Verma, who was reinstated by the Supreme Court on January 8.

The first cycle of transfers was done on October 24, last year, a day after Rao was made acting director of the agency for the first time.

He was appointed to the post after the government divested Verma and Asthana of their powers following a bitter feud between the two top CBI officers.

Verma was removed by the high-powered committee led by Prime Minister Narendra Modi and comprising of Justice A K Sikri and leader of Congress Mallikarjun Kharge, two days after his reinstatement.

Government again gave the charge to Rao in an interim capacity.

# CCS approves ECHS benefits to Assam Rifles pensioners

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Government has approved granting of Ex-Servicemen Contributory Health Scheme (ECHS) to Assam Rifles pensioners. The beneficiaries will include pensioners and their dependents residing in India and Nepal subject to certain conditions.

The Assam Rifles, one of the oldest para-military forces mostly deployed in the Northeast has officers from the Army and the home ministry has the administrative control of the force. The soldiers are recruited from all over the nation.

Giving details of the decision taken the Cabinet Committee on Security (CCS), officials said here on Tuesday that there are more than three lakh beneficiaries including dependents. As per the home ministry records, there are about 92,000 Assam Rifles pensioners including about 27,000 residing in Nepal.

# Pak forces attack Indian fishing boat; India lodges protest

New Delhi: The Pakistani maritime agency fired on an Indian fishing boat with seven persons on board and sank it on January 17, following which India has lodged a strong protest with Pakistan over the incident, official sources said on Tuesday.

Six Indian fishermen on board the boat 'Sudama Puri' were rescued by Indian Coast Guard while one fisherman was missing after the incident which occurred 64 nautical miles south west off Mitha Port in Gujarat, they said.

PTI



President Ram Nath Kovind presents Bal Shakti Puraskar 2019 in the field of innovation to Aswath Suryanarayanan sports to Angel Vijay Deekula during the Rashtrapati Bhawan in New Delhi on Tuesday

PTI

ARCHANA JYOTI ■ NEW DELHI

After year-long confabulations, the plan to provide Central Security Industrial Force (CISF) security cover to the four iconic monuments — Sun Temple in Konark in Odisha, Daulatabad Fort, Bibi Ka Maqbara (Tomb of the Lady) and Ellora caves, all three in Aurangabad in Maharashtra — is now all set to see the light of the day.

Sources in the Union Culture Ministry said that a memorandum of understanding (MoU) in this regard will be



set up by the Union Home Ministry for protection of country's industrial units and

Museum in Hyderabad, National Museum in Delhi and Victoria Memorial in Kolkata. When contacted, Superintending Archaeologist (Aurangabad Circle) Dr. Dilip Kumar Khamari confirmed that the three monuments will be under CISF ambit if a proposal in this regard is given the green signal. But he refused to divulge further details of the proposal which was conceived early last year.

However, sources said that the four top heritage sites are facing security threats, encroachments and unman-

ageable crowd flow. "The decision to deploy CISF personnel at these four monuments was taken early last year after completion of a technical survey by the paramilitary force, which figured out the modalities of the new posting such as number of personnel that would be required, the security equipment needed and the kind of security that needs to be provided at these tourist centres," said the sources.

Located on a pyramid-shaped hilltop to the northwest of Aurangabad, and a UNESCO World Heritage Site, featuring Buddhist, Hindu and Jain mon-

uments, and artwork, dating from the 600-1000 CE period.

Dedicated to the Hindu 'God Surya', what remains of the Sun Temple complex has the appearance of a 100-foot (30 m) high chariot with immense wheels and horses, all carved from stone. Once over 200 feet (61 m) high, much of the temple is now in ruins.

There are 3686 centrally protected monuments/sites under the ASI, majority of which are manned by private security agency. The Taj Mahal has 280 CISF security personnel while the Red Fort has 290.

# Shah vows to banish TMC, illegal immigrants from Bengal

SAUGAR SENGUPTA ■ KOLKATA

A saffron Government, if it comes to power in the State, will end cross-border infiltration and "syndicate tax raj" in Bengal, BJP president Amit Shah on Tuesday said while launching a venomous attack on the Mamata Banerjee Government.

Shah who was holding a rally at Malda in North Bengal said reminding, the first precondition for a State-level changeover is a thunderous victory for the saffrons in the

coming Lok Sabha elections.

"Trinamool Congress needs to be uprooted from this State so as to bring to an end its syndicate tax raj," Shah said reminding "in order to see the back of this Government which has promoted gun and bomb workshops in the place of traditional factories we will have to first defeat them in the general elections."

Setting a target of 23 seats Shah said "we will have to win 23 seats from this State so that we can throw them out of power in the next State election."

Attacking the Trinamool Congress, adding the coming general polls will not only determine the future of India but also write the history of Bengal in a different way.

The 2019 elections will determine whether this TMC Government which has murdered democracy in Bengal and set up syndicate tax raj, will remain in Bengal or will be uprooted," Shah adding "in Gujarat you don't have to cough up money to the syndicates for buying cement, bricks and sand to construct a house.

Government for providing asylum to the cross-border infiltrators Shah said, "I can assure you that if BJP comes to power it will not let any infiltrator enter Bengal." The TMC Government loves infiltrators, which is why it is allergic to national register for citizens protesting its implementation, Shah said promising to bring NRC to Bengal if it comes to power in this State.

The BJP Government will provide citizenship to all the Hindu, Sikh, Buddhist and Jain refugees during the NRC regime he said.

Mocking the grand United India rally organized last Saturday by Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee at the historic Brigade Parade Ground in Kolkata and attended by 23 national leaders Shah said "this was a rally where there were 9 aspirants for the Prime Minister's post. This means there were nine Prime Ministers whereas in BJP there is only one, that is Narendra Modi," adding the people will definitely choose the better and later option.



BJP national president Amit Shah waves at supporters during a public rally at Nitaypur in Malda on Tuesday

PTI

# 'Shut down madrasas across country to crush ISIS roots'

Shia Waqf Board chairman writes to PM



**Lucknow:** Uttar Pradesh Shia Central Waqf Board Chairman Waseem Rizvi has written a letter to Prime Minister Narendra Modi, urging him to shut down primary-level madrasas across the country in order to check terror group ISIS' influence on Muslim children.

Rizvi, who has supported the demand for Ram temple in Ayodhya and uniform civil code, said Muslim children, if they want, can take admission in madrasas after completing high school.

"It can be seen that children are soft targets for running any mission and at this point of time ISIS is a dangerous terror organisation which is gradually getting hold over the Muslim population across the world.

"...If madrasas are not

shut down, about half of the country's population will become supporters of the ISIS ideology in 15 years' time," Rizvi said in the letter.

He said the support to the ISIS is clearly visible in Kashmir where children are being alienated from people of other religion in the name of Islamic education.

"In the rural areas of the country also, the primary madrasas in the name of donations are harming the future of our children and promoting fundamentalist thinking... This is damaging both the country and the Muslim children," he said.

Taking admission in madrasas after schooling will not only help them take normal education till the high school level along with children of different sections of society and religion, but also will deter them from getting easily influenced by fundamentalist thinking, Rizvi said.

He has previously supported the demand of Ram temple at the disputed site in Ayodhya and a mosque, 'Masjid-e-Aman', in Lucknow.

# 31 stranded Rohingyas handed over to police

Sent to 14-day judicial custody



Rohingya Muslims, who were arrested from Churabari village near the Tripura border, being taken to the district court from a police station in Karimganj district on Tuesday

Ministry about the final result of the talks and gave it the situation report.

While the BGB claimed they had come from India, the BSF said they had not as there was no tell-tale sign of breach of the barbed wire fence on the Indian side.

BGB commander in Bangladesh's eastern Brahmanbaria region Lt Colonel Golam Kabir told PTI in Dhaka that the "BSF wanted to push them into our territory but eventually, they took them back".

The officials added that the state police will verify the details of the Rohingyas, and the BSF has been asked to render assistance for the task.

It is suspected that these people had travelled to the border area from Jammu & Kashmir, the officials said adding, that the truth can only be established after an investigation. Pranab Sengupta, officer-in-charge of the Amtali police station, told PTI that the 31 Rohingyas, including nine women and 16 children, were sent to the Tripura Medical College for a check-up and "were found to be alright".

They (Indians officials) tried to convince us that the Rohingyas entered into India from Bangladesh which we refused to accept as these people were carrying Indian refugee cards,' Kabir added.

PTI

Police was taken after the BSF and the BGB failed to reach a decision during talks on the issue.

The 31 Rohingyas underwent a medical check-up and were later produced before a court in West Tripura district which sent them to 14-day judicial custody, the officials said.

Deputy Inspector General of the BSF Brijesh Kumar said,

"We took the matter up with the BGB and requested them to take the Rohingyas back to Bangladesh. They denied.

Several rounds of talks with the BGB had failed. So, we handed them over to police."

A battalion commander-level meeting was held at the Zero Line on Sunday, the officials said.

Officials in New Delhi said the BSF informed the Home

He said the BSF had been

## 2 more people die of swine flu in Rajasthan, death toll reaches 54

**Jaipur:** Two more people died due to swine flu in Rajasthan on Tuesday, taking the death toll to 54, an official spokesperson of the State Health Department said.

The two deaths were reported from Bikaner and Karauli.

As many as 54 people have died due to swine flu in the state from January 1 to till date.

The spokesperson said 1,414 people tested positive for the H1N1 virus. Looking at the situation, the medical and health department Monday launched

## Maha Brahmin community holds protest for 4% quota

**Mumbai:** An organisation claiming to work for Brahmin rights on Tuesday held a dharna here demanding four per cent reservation for the community instead of inclusion in the Centre's 10 per cent quota for economically backward sections in the general category.

The protest, in Azad Maidan in south Mumbai, by the Samasta Brahmin Samaj Maharashtra, an umbrella body of 24 groups, saw around 1500 people, including priests, from Nashik, Thane, Pune and other parts of the State.

A delegation which met Maharashtra Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis later told reporters that the CM was positive on their demands except that of quota. Vishwajeet Deshpande, an organisation functionary said, "All other demands except reservation for Brahmins were accepted by the Govt. However, reservation is our key demand for which we will continue our protest."

He added that the 10 per cent quota announced by the Narendra Modi Government is for 250 castes and religions.

"We want 4 per cent quota, which is half of the population percentage of Brahmins in Maharashtra. We will intensify

our agitation if the Government fails to give reservation before Lok Sabha code of conduct comes into force," he said.

He added that their demands include creation of a separate financial board for the Brahmin community to help economically weaker sections, a separate 'atrocious act' to protect the community as well as student hostels in every district for the community.

The group also demanded free education from kindergarten to post graduation, completion of the Shivaji memorial and Bharat Ratna for freedom fighter Veer Savarkar.



A Chestnut-tailed Starling or Grey-headed Myna visits a Semal flower in Guwahati on Tuesday

PTI

## Movie buffs to get special treatment at NMIC

It will remain open for public every Sunday, Tuesday between 11-6 am

**TN RAGHUNATHA ■ MUMBAI**

In what will provide an opportunity to movie aficionados to undertake an absorbing journey of over a century of Indian cinema, the newly inaugurated the National Museum of Indian Cinema (NMIC) at the Film Divisions campus will remain

open for public between 11 am and 6 pm every Sunday and Tuesday.

The NMIC — housed in two buildings, the New Museum Building and the 19th century historic palace Gulshan Mahal — which was inaugurated on by Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Saturday — opened for the first time on Sunday and it remained opened for the second day on Tuesday.

The NMIC provides a glimpse into Indian film history and help film students, filmmakers, fans and critics to learn and understand cinema as a

medium of artistic expression in the country and globally.

The museum has on display artefacts like vintage cameras, projectors, editing and recording equipments, costumes, photographs and other materials portraying the journey of Indian cinema since the dawn of Indian cinema in 1913 with the first full-length feature film, "Raja Harischandra" made by the legendary Dhundiraj Govind Phadke, known as Dadasaheb Phalke.

The New Museum Building has four Exhibition Halls which encapsulate: Gandhi & Cinema;

it not only depicts the movies made on the life Mahatma Gandhi but also showcases the deep impact his life had on cinema. The Children's Film Studio in the museum gives visitors, particularly children, an opportunity to explore the science, technology and art behind filmmaking. It offers hands on experience on various facets associated with making cinema like camera, light, shooting, experience of acting, etc. — presented in an interactive format.

The exhibits displayed include chroma studio, immersive experience zone, stop-motion animation studio, virtual makeover studio, etc.

The NMIC showcases the creative use of technology by Indian film makers over the years to produce cinematic impact on the silver screen. It also showcases the charismatic kaleidoscopic presence of the vibrant cinematographic culture across India.

Gulshan Mahal is an ASI Grade-II Heritage Structure which has been restored as part of the NMIC project. The displays present here showcase the journey of over a hundred years of Indian cinema.

## Navy resumes operation to retrieve trapped miner's body abortively

ly operated vehicles.

After day-long efforts, they only managed to move the body a few metres from where it was left on Sunday and brought it near the bottom of the main shaft, officials said.

The Navy personnel had earlier managed to pull the body, seen 200 ft along the horizontally dug small hole, about half way to the bottom of the shaft. But, it could not be brought out due to apprehension that further moving it could result in its disintegration, Susngi said.

Efforts to retrieve the body would continue on Wednesday, he added.

The Navy personnel had earlier managed to pull the body, seen 200 ft along the horizontally dug small hole, about half way to the bottom of the shaft. But, it could not be brought out due to apprehension that further moving it could result in its disintegration, Susngi said.

The body has been pulled near the bottom of the main shaft... The process to bring the body to the top will take some more time due to the presence of some obstructions inside the mine," spokesperson of the

PTI

operation R Susngi said.

Efforts to retrieve the body would continue on Wednesday, he added.

The Navy personnel had earlier managed to pull the body, seen 200 ft along the horizontally dug small hole, about half way to the bottom of the shaft. But, it could not be brought out due to apprehension that further moving it could result in its disintegration, Susngi said.

PTI

ly operated vehicles.

After day-long efforts, they only managed to move the body a few metres from where it was left on Sunday and brought it near the bottom of the main shaft, officials said.

The body has been pulled near the bottom of the main shaft... The process to bring the body to the top will take some more time due to the presence of some obstructions inside the mine," spokesperson of the

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## Who let the cranks out?

Constant talk of EVMs being hacked is nothing but a systematic and insidious way to undermine democracy



**L**et us get one thing straight, even a stand-alone electronic machine, no matter how simple, can be manipulated. If you have the knowledge, expertise and time, you can hack your kitchen appliances like a toaster or blender. If you have a lot of time and an unlimited budget, you might even be able to do so over the air, but the sheer expense and effort required to do that makes it unviable. The reason we are talking about basic kitchen appliances is that they are as simple as an Indian electronic voting machine (EVM). A microwave or advanced food processor is not let alone anything that is connected to the internet of things. If the question is whether an EVM can potentially be hacked, it might be possible. But can it happen in reality is a different question altogether and the accusations being thrown by random, untrustworthy people have to be dismissed with a degree of condescension.

A basic degree of understanding the way an Indian election is conducted needs to be understood. If you have ever voted in an election, you would have seen the huge number of voting agents of every colour at every contested seat. Most Indian voters are smart enough to look and register who they have voted for. If they notice something grossly out of line, they would immediately find the booth agent for their party of choice and the complaint is forwarded with alacrity. In fact, the biggest risk in Indian elections has always been and will continue to be human intervention. Fake votes are cast in the name of others thanks to corrupt electoral agents and by musclemen. This still happens with alarming regularity in some rural areas and where single political forces dominate. That said, the rise of electronic and online media, which brings such instances to light rapidly in most cases, has managed to reduce the problem. In talking about EVMs being the problem, some folks would rather that you focus on an issue that does not exist and make excuses for their electoral failures. It is also an insidious plot to undermine democracy by some politicians who are out of power and we must see through that.

That said, the Election Commission of India, in addition to denying these allegations, must make a strong effort to show that their voting machines are secure. At the same time they should work overtime to ensure that the machines are securely stored and accounted for. Stories emerged during recent polls across India that EVMs were found in strange places. Again the human element comes into play just like it does in paper ballots. To those who doubt the veracity of the elections in India, including some journalists, we would urge them to learn a bit more. India cannot bear the cost and the time of conducting paper ballot elections, and hopefully the latest issue by some nobody trying to position himself as the Edward Snowden of India should be dismissed. After all, Snowden and Julian Assange have emerged as Russian agents out to undermine American democracy. So we should treat this latest crackpot with the same contempt.

## The memorial push

The Mumbai mayor has now moved to a zoo campus to make way for Thackeray museum



**C**ity zoos aren't exactly forests but a reminder of what we've lost out on in our relentless march towards civilised living — the call of the wild. So long these have been dots of biosphere that enable us to experience the animal world in the gush of the Maximum City. But turns out that just like the forests, we will end up encroaching into these as well and prioritise urban living over allowing other creatures the right to co-exist. So it is that the Mumbai mayor is reluctantly moving into a heritage bungalow in the Byculla zoo as his earlier official residence,

also a heritage building, is being converted to a memorial for Shiv Sena founder Balasaheb Thackeray. In other words, one is to safely deduce that no property in the country's commercial capital could be found to accommodate mayor Vishwanath Mahadeswar. It seems he can only live in heritage structures to continue colonial rituals even if we cannot afford them anymore and though he had wanted two on the posh Malabar Hill and Carmichael Road, he had to reconcile to the Byculla bungalow, which, last heard, was renovated at ₹80 lakh. The BMC has used much of this to build a gate on the access road to the bungalow to provide the mayor privacy and install sound barriers to keep the animals away. But given the mayor's busy schedule, the hosting of several events and the newly-created, expansive parking lot, it is difficult to understand how animals can be immune to either noise pollution or human depredations.

Of course, his old Shivaji Park bungalow at Dadar is also a grade II heritage structure though the Thackeray memorial administrators insist that they are complying with the norms, environmental and structural, to ensure that no damage is done to it. Except the working shed and re-imagining the use of the basement space, nothing is being touched upon, they claim. But since the building comes under CRZ 1 (Coastal Regulation Zone), even the slightest changes in peripheral construction require the nod from several agencies, including the Union Environment Ministry. The proposed construction has already been challenged in the Bombay High Court for alleged flouting of norms, so formal construction can begin only when that's settled. But for now a *bhoomipujan* is sealing that predicted legitimacy with Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis clearing ₹100 crore for development of the memorial and handing over the bungalow to Sena president Uddhav Thackeray at a token ceremony. The political import of this being an olive branch by both sides in poll season is not lost on anybody. Neither is the fact that by respecting what is an emotional issue for the Shiv Sena, the BJP is keen to heal the recent wounds caused by ongoing public spats and the on-off threats to snap ties of almost two years. The political will to accommodate the Sena's concerns, to the extent of even asking the mayor to vacate his place against his wishes, can be understood considering that the clearance for the Thackeray memorial was given by the Congress-NCP regime. The larger question is do we pursue a memorial mania just because there are precedents of iconisation even in European history? Isn't it enough that contemporary history teaches generations after us what matters the most — the contribution of our movement leaders? The Sena trust could run several welfare programmes for the youth and keep the legacy alive in a far more vibrant manner than simply housing a museum in a heritage bungalow. That's just caging a leader known as the "tiger" once.

## Vote for world peace

Had it not been for the success of the first general and Assembly elections in 1952, the great experiment of democracy would have failed in India and the world would not have been what it is



PRIYADARSHI DUTTA

**S**ukumar Sen, an Indian civil servant — the first Chief Election Commissioner of India no less — arguably deserved a 'Nobel Prize for Peace' in his official capacity for actually launching this country into the trajectory of democracy. Were it not for the successful completion of the first general and Assembly elections in 1952, the exalted principles of democracy, as enshrined in the Constitution, could have received a rude setback.

Imagine for a moment in 1953, when Sir Winston Leonard Spencer Churchill, to give him his full breadth, got his Nobel Prize for Literature (in absentia) "for his mastery of historical and biographical descriptions as well as for brilliant oratory in defending exalted human values", Sen receiving the same in the Peace category. His citation could read, "for peacefully conducting the world's largest elections in India in 1952 on the basis of universal adult suffrage notwithstanding an abysmally low literacy rate of the electorate, thereby launching the Asian nation on the path of democracy believed to be a preserve of affluent and industrialised nations of the West".

In reality, the Nobel Prize for Peace, 1953, was awarded to General George C Marshall Junior (1880-1959), former US Secretary of State, for his plan ('Marshall Plan') aimed at economic recovery of Western Europe after the World War II. No Nobel Peace Prize was given over the next two years. The free world failed to fathom the significance of independent India's espousing democracy. India spearheaded the struggle for de-colonisation in Asia and Africa. It was also a harbinger of parliamentary democracy in the non-Western world. One fifth of the world's population, enlisted to the cause of democracy, was no mean achievement at the onset of the Cold War. India kept out of power blocs and military pacts.

In early 1975, or 25 years after the Constitution of India came into force, there were only 40 democracies in the world. They were predominantly in rich and industrialised nations of the West. It was not until the 1980s, or more noticeably the 1990s, after the cessation of the Cold War, that significant democratisation happened worldwide. There are around 125 electoral democracies in the world today.

The role of democracies in contributing to regional peace is well-acknowledged. Democracies rarely get involved into conflicts with each other or display hegemonic designs. They also tend to promote an open society. They, thus, have a moderating effect on global situation.

Mao Zedong led China to become a People's Republic within a year of India's independence. It, thus, took a very different political trajectory than India's. Both nations shared cordial ties in the beginning before relationships soured. But China's going over to communism, initially as an ally of the erstwhile USSR, and subsequently as adversary, introduced definite tension in international rela-



tions. Its support to North Korea encouraged the communist regime to attack South Korea on June 25, 1950, thus triggering the Korean War (1950-1953).

The US failed to tame China and had to resume harmonic diplomatic relationship in 1972 after a quarter century of alienation. The then US President, Richard Nixon, visited Beijing to meet Mao Zedong and seal that negotiation between the two politically incompatible. But China never lost its capacity to give headache to its neighbours and the free world in general with its aggressive posturing on geopolitical and economic matters.

Our other neighbour, Pakistan, also could not develop genuine democracy. Its record of military dictatorship extends from Field Marshal Ayub Khan in the 1950/60s to General Pervez Musharraf in the new millennium. It has become a hub of Islamic extremism and terrorist groups. Its greatest rebuff to democracy was Islamabad's persistent refusal to accept the result of general elections of December 7, 1970, which sparked off the Liberation War of Bangladesh.

The genocide of 1971, mostly of the Hindus in east Bengal, by the Pakistani Army, remained an excruciating chapter of history. India's democracy is the fruition of Constitutional agitations of the 19th century, followed by mass movements led by MK Gandhi between 1920 and 1942. The first produced a nucleus of men versed in the legislative science and Western democratic principles. The sec-

ond led to the growth of contact between the leadership and the masses. The demand for the introduction of elective principles in India long ante-dated the demand for independence. The demand for introducing elective principles (in legislative councils) was raised by the likes of Justice MG Ranade, antiquarian Rajendralala Mitra, Surendranath Banerjee and several other leaders in the last quarter of the 19th century. There was not even remotely a demand for independence then.

Democracy, based on universal adult franchise, is a gift of our Constitution-makers. To ensure free and fair elections, they envisaged an autonomous Election Commission under Article 324. However, universal franchise is an upshot of our freedom struggle, which was waged in the name of every Indian, regardless of gender, social, economic and educational status.

But to implement the same at the ground level posed a huge administrative challenge. The delimitation of constituencies, based on the Census of 1941, creating an accurate voters' list, building capacity and mobilising Government employees on election duty were tough challenges for a newly-independent nation affected by Partition, mass migration and integration of princely states.

There was no dearth of sceptics who predicted that India's first general election would prove to be its last. They argued that a population with a dismal literacy rate of 16.6 per

cent was unfit to handle democracy. Critics, however, were proven wrong. A 51.5 per cent voters' turnout was recorded, which was by no means unsatisfactory.

The Election Commission made elaborate publicity arrangements to educate the voters. Sen himself went over to radio and gave a series of talks to enlighten the voters on a range of issues. January 25, 1950, was the day when the Election Commission of India was instituted. Since 2011, the day is being marked as 'National Voters' Day' to motivate and facilitate the voters to exercise their franchise. Democracy is a continuous revolution, which must be fed interrupted.

"Democracy is by no means a Western institution, it is a human institution. Wherever man has attempted to evolve political institutions, he has hit upon this wonderful institution called democracy," observed Subhas Chandra Bose in his presidential address at the Maharashtra Provincial Conference in Pune on May 3, 1928. Yet like a polar satellite, there was a danger of it going to pieces, if not properly launched. India's first Chief Election Commissioner set an example. Today, the Election Commission conducts elections five times that size. Little do we realise how immensely they contribute to world peace.

(The writer is author of recently published book, 'The Microphone Men: How Orators created a Modern India'. Views expressed are his personal)

### SOUND BITE

The sense of duty among people before India's Independence has now turned into a sense of entitlement.

Prime Minister  
—Narendra Modi

A self-reliant diaspora can be an asset in bringing new perspectives, investments and ability to connect home countries with India.

Mauritius Prime Minister  
—Pravind Jugnauth

I feel there are people waiting for me to fail. My failure is important to them. I understand their cynicism but I can never be like them.

Actor  
—Kangana Ranaut

Young people must strive to serve the less fortunate and learn to be empathetic to needs and sufferings of fellow citizens.

Vice President  
—M Venkaiah Naidu



### LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

#### Unanswered questions

Sir — This refers to the editorial, "Didi's headline act" (January 21). The prelude to a mouth-watering political drama has been written for 2019 with an appetiser in Kolkata.

A range of opposition parties came together to address a mega rally there wherein soaring speeches were delivered, gracious gestures exchanged and clever slogans worked to prime the crowds whose expectations were running high. They all had a common target: The Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) in general; and Prime Minister Narendra Modi and party chief, Amit Shah, in particular.

The election was presented as a binary — the BJP alone on one side with the rest of the country on the other. In the aftermath of Trinamool Congress chief and West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee's rally, the pertinent questions that need answering now would be — what would be the role of the Congress in the political near-future?

JS Acharya  
Hyderabad

#### Exposing the real culprit of Syrian problems

This refers to the article, "Syria's carnival of treachery" (January 21) by Gwynne Dyer. In their capacities as Presidents of two close NATO allies, both Recep Tayyip Erdogan and Donald Trump are always in constant contact, especially on international issues of mutual concern. Recently, the US President decided to withdraw American troops from northern Syria, exercising his Constitutional prerogative as he strongly believed that the Islamic State (IS) was almost eliminated on the ground. It is expected that the withdrawal should be in full coordination with Turkey so that there would not be any security vacuum on the ground to be filled by terrorists again. The YPG, an affiliate of a terrorist organisation, PKK in Syria, has been awarded with immense support from Pentagon in the name of fighting IS, another terrorist organisation. Therefore, YPG is understandably upset with President Trump's decision. Those in the international media like 'independent journalist Dyer' are also shocked with this decision.

As everybody may recall, Turkey launched two military operations against IS in northern Syria in 2017 and

2018, and cleared thousands of square kilometres from the terrorists. Three lakh Syrians, including Arabs, Kurds and Christians, who fled their villages and sought shelter in Turkey since 2011, returned to their homes after the field was secured, thanks to Turkey's operations. Who were not happy on the ground and among the foreign forces were those who dreamt day and night for the creation of a belt immediately on the other side of the Turkey-Syria border, controlled and administered by YPG terrorists. In brief, it is not Turkey and its democratically-elected President who are against the Kurds, where millions of them are living as equal citizens of the country and have their voice in all walks of life, including politics. It is a terrorist organisation called PKK, masquerading as PYD/YPG in Syria, which does not wish to give any chance of life beyond its totalitarian vision to anyone, including the Kurds of Syria, while continuously staging cross-border attacks in Turkey for the past 40 years. Dyer's article is an insult to intelligence.

Sakir Ozkan Torunlar  
Ambassador of Turkey, New Delhi

developing social sectors, adopting labour-intensive technology, empowering Dalits and women and ensuring social security for the needy. Otherwise, such barbaric inequality will force us to live in a dog-eat-dog environment where equality and fraternity are absolute no-no.

Sujit De  
Kolkata

#### Prosperous society

Sir — This refers to the editorial, "Wealth inequality" (January 22). It is true that there is a huge gap between the rich and poor in India. And this state is the same across the world. This mammoth gap cannot be curbed immediately but at least we need to make a start to build a society where everyone can live decently and gleefully. The data exhibited by Oxfam is very much similar to the Pareto principle. If the gap widens between the richer and poorer, a prosperous society can't be formulated.

Kirti Wadhawan  
Kanpur

Send your feedback to:  
letterstopioneer@gmail.com

inequality. A Gini of 0 denotes perfect equality and 100 absolute inequality. The Gini coefficient was as high as 48 percentage point in 2013 but jumped to an alarming 63 percentage point in 2016. After coming out of bottle, the Gini, as it were, had grown 15 percentage points in just three years. The top one per cent

of income tax filers earned 15 per cent of total income in 2013. After three years, the top one per cent of income tax filers were allowed to gulp 45 per cent of all income in 2016.

Not only is India's inequality growing but doing so now at a much faster pace. This glaring inequality must immediately be bridged by inclusive growth,

## FIRST COLUMN

### Ladies, keep a smart purse

A majority of women today cannot take financial decisions and look up to their counterparts. To ensure a healthy nation, they must start investing



HIMA BINDU KOTA

Over the years, the strategic and influential role of women leaders in the modern economy has increased manifold and they have started contributing to the economy. They have become significant for the advancement of a nation. However, even today, a majority of women are not involved in the financial decision-making process and leave it to the men — their fathers, brothers or husbands. But all of this can change as women are economically independent and have been taking the responsibility of their earnings and investments. With inflation and taxes eating up a chunk of one's salary, savings alone are not enough to meet financial goals of a family. One needs to invest in order to get the best returns. Investments must be linked to goals. So, women have to become savvier about savings, taxes and investments, when compared to old times. In fact, financial needs, and, therefore, investment options of women are also different. When compared to men, they have more breaks in their careers, maybe due to marriage, child birth and because they have to take care of their children or the elderly.

In addition, there is also a rise in the number of single women. Women need to be financially literate in order to stay financially independent and ensure that their goals are always in line with that of their family. So, is there an age when women should start looking at investments? Actually, there is no particular time to start saving or investing. The earlier one starts, the better it is.

**In your 20s:** At this stage, most women choose their career path, which sets the tone for their future. This should also be the time for them to set the tone for investments. One of the basic tenets of investments is to start early. Equities can be a good investment choice in the 20s as one can take more risk when he/she is young. A young woman can choose to invest in equity mutual funds for long-term goals as mutual funds give one the benefit of professionals managing the money. Every working professional will retire sooner or later. Young women in their 20s can open a Public Provident Fund (PPF) account where she can start investing from as low as ₹500 to a maximum of ₹1,50,000 per year. These are the least risk investment products.

**In your 30s:** At this age, women are usually married and some might even have children. Besides, they have the additional responsibility of caring for the family. Women must remain invested in mutual funds and must also hold life insurance policies. One life insurance policy for each earning member in the family is a must. It is also important to invest for the child's future. Systematic Investment Plans mutual funds are a good way to start. A mother should opt for the Sukanya Samridhi scheme, which provides higher interest in order to save if she has a girl child. This is also a good time to invest in real estate or buying a home as well and enjoy the multiple benefits of long-term security, tax benefits, hedge against inflation, and in some cases, rental income. Some banks also give concessional interest rates to women in case they want to avail loans. Women should make the most of it. This is also a good time to invest in a suitable health insurance plan, which will take care of medical emergencies. Having sufficient money market funds or liquid funds is crucial to help tide over emergencies.

**In your 40s:** This is a time to think more in lines of capital protection than capital appreciation. So, fixed deposits should be the flavour as it helps in getting assured returns and one can use them to take loans as well. Most women and their spouses think about funding their kid's higher education. If one hasn't saved enough, they can take educational loan. This loan gives one tax benefits under Section 80E of the Income Tax Act. One should never use the retirement savings to fund one's child's education because it will be difficult to rebuild those savings. Once one has used his/her savings to fund some goals, the money used should be redirected to the retirement savings. Another important point is that some women buy gold jewellery as they consider it to be a good investment. Gold jewellery doesn't have great resale value because of wastage and other charges. Investment in gold should always be in the form of coins or bars. One could even invest in gold mutual funds.

**In your 50s:** As one nears retirement, he/she should start moving some of the risky investments to safer avenues like debt mutual funds. But women shouldn't give up investing in equities yet, and have a small portfolio of their investments in equities to beat inflation, which will most probably have a huge impact on savings once they retire. Investing in Senior Citizen Savings Scheme or fixed deposits for senior citizens upon retirement can also be beneficial. It's high time that women start investing smartly so that they can gain from higher returns and ensure stability for their financial future and in turn, become the backbone and strength of our nation.

(The writer is Assistant Professor, Amity University)



KALYANI SHANKAR

Can the Opposition unite to pose a challenge to the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) in the coming months? There are so many ifs and buts although West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee organised a mammoth rally in Kolkata's Brigade grounds last week.

The who's who of the Opposition gathered to prepare a roadmap for a coalition against the ruling BJP. Addressing the 'United India rally', Banerjee predicted that the BJP's days were numbered and that the "expiry date" of the Modi-led Government had come. The rally was, perhaps, the beginning of Opposition efforts to oust the BJP Government ahead of the 2019

Lok Sabha election. Though the idea could not move forward earlier, when Karnataka Chief Minister HD Kumaraswamy took oath on May 23 last year. Several Opposition leaders had graced that occasion too.

But this time, it is likely to be followed up with another rally in Amravati, Andhra Pradesh, by Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu and another one in Delhi, organised by Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) chief Arvind Kejriwal. An impressive list of leaders from 20-plus parties — including former Prime Minister Deve Gowda, former Union Ministers Sharad Pawar, Arun Shourie and Shatrughan Sinha, Chief Ministers Chandrababu Naidu, Arvind Kejriwal and HD Kumaraswamy, former Chief Ministers Akhilesh Yadav, Farooq Abdullah, Omar Abdullah and Geogap Apang among others — were a part of the Kolkata rally.

From the podium, Banerjee appealed to the country, 'Delhi

mein sarkar badal do' (change the Government at the Centre). Other Opposition leaders, too, echoed similar sentiments. This was the first big effort by the Opposition after the BJP lost badly in the three Hindi heartland States — Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh and Chhattisgarh — last month.

The Opposition combine boasts a wealth of leaders but as Deve Gowda pointed out, it would be very difficult for different party leaders to forget their differences and come together. There are so many Opposition parties of various hues and ideologies that are pulling in different directions, the possibility of which is not a national coalition but state-specific alliances.

Most importantly, ego of regional chieftains comes in the way of unity. In fact, the Congress is working on this strategy and so are other parties. For instance, in Uttar Pradesh, the Samajwadi Party (SP) and the Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP) have come together, keeping the Congress out. In West Bengal, will

# analysis

09

## POINT COUNTER POINT

THE WEST BENGAL GOVERNMENT IS TRYING TO BLOCK EVERY PROGRAMME OF AMIT SHAH, BE IT A RALLY, YATRA OR THE LANDING OF HIS CHOPPER.

—UNION MINISTER PIYUSH GOYAL



WE BELIEVE IN DEMOCRACY. POLICE GAVE THE PERMISSION TO LAND AMIT SHAH'S HELICOPTER. BJP IS MISINFORMING THE PEOPLE.

—WEST BENGAL CHIEF MINISTER MAMATA BANERJEE

## Giving back to the roots

India needs to address the concerns of ethnic Indians anywhere in the world, without jeopardising its relations with host countries. A more proactive diaspora policy is required



AMIT SINGH

**T**he then Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee had conceptualised the Pravasi Bharatiya Divas to acknowledge the existence of overseas Indians in the national narrative, give them a connective tissue to their country of origin and make them stakeholders in the country's development. Significantly, he inaugurated the first conclave on January 9, 2003, to commemorate the "expatriate" Mahatma Gandhi's return to India from South Africa after 20 years. On that date in 1915, Gandhiji set foot on home soil and drew on his experiences to rejuvenate India's freedom struggle. Historically, the overseas Indians funded the activities of the Indian National Congress and the Indian National Army in gaining Independence. They also led the Ghadar Movement against the British Raj. Fifteen editions down the line, the Divas, currently being held in Varanasi, Uttar Pradesh, has even solidified their role in the country of their birth with the theme being the "Role of the Indian Diaspora in Building a New India."

Prime Minister Narendra Modi, who is faced with an uphill task of redefining India as well as global politics, is poised to give equal opportunities to overseas communities. The large presence (more than 25 million) of the diaspora across the world has compelled New Delhi to positively engage its untapped asset in fulfilling its internal as well as external dreams. Indians abroad have the potential to advance the country's profile through their intellect, finance, expertise and enterprise. They played a critical role during the 1990s, when our economy opened up for the first time, and in 1998, when we were faced with Western economic sanctions following the Pokhran II nuclear tests.

Moreover, in the contemporary globalised world, the diaspora has emerged as a powerful factor in developing workable relations between nation states and been a catalyst in strengthening bilateral relations between India and host nations. It is also playing a pivotal role in India's soft power diplomacy, which is one of the major components of New Delhi's foreign policy strategy. The India-US Civil Nuclear Deal would not have happened if ethnic Indians in the US had not lobbied successfully. Our lobby groups, in fact, have done a lot to change the perception of India on Capitol Hill despite regime changes. And at a time when the world talks about how overseas Chinese plough back resources into their home country, it is significant that India retained its position as the world's top recipient of remittances in 2018, too, with \$80 billion. Interestingly, the total remittances are estimated to be equivalent to 2.8 per cent of India's Gross Domestic Product (GDP). According to an Indian Economic Review survey, using National Sample Survey Organisation data, these remittances helped in poverty reduction and changing consumption behaviour in rural areas. Researchers found that receiver families progressed very well in spending on healthcare and amenities that pushed up their ease-of-living index.

Therefore, knowing the potential of the Indian diaspora, Modi deliberately interacted with the overseas community during his trips to the US, Australia, Myanmar, Fiji, Saudi Arabia and UK among others. He even liberalised visa services for them and encouraged them to be partners in new projects.

The Government is also thinking about con-

MANY IN THE PEOPLE OF INDIAN ORIGIN (PIO) COMMUNITY BELIEVE THAT THE GOVERNMENT TOTALLY IGNORED THE INDIAN DIASPORA, EXCEPT WHEN IT OCCASIONALLY ADDRESSED CERTAIN ISSUES AS PER ITS OWN CONVENIENCE. NEW DELHI WANTS TO ENGAGE THE PIOS BUT WITHOUT ANY LIABILITIES. THE REASON IS QUITE CLEAR — THE PIOS AT PRESENT DO NOT CREATE ECONOMIC INFLUENCE FOR THE INDIAN GOVERNMENT AS COMPARED TO THE NRIS



nnecting diaspora communities across generations, particularly trying to revive ties with original settlers, whom we call People of Indian Origin (PIOs). This is a good step as NRIs, also known as the 'new' diaspora and being more affluent, tend to top the headline acts and seem to project themselves as better influencers.

The push for an inclusive approach can be traced as far back as 2000, when the Government set up a high-level committee on Indian diaspora for assessing issues concerning Indians overseas, suggesting new policy and organisational frameworks and recommending a country-specific agenda to intensify India's diplomatic engagement. On the recommendation of that committee, the government implemented numerous policy initiatives, including the decision to celebrate the Pravasi Bharatiya Divas and institute the Pravasi Bharatiya Samman awards. The most significant initiative announced by Vajpayee at the inaugural edition was that PIOs in certain countries would get dual citizenship.

handling of racial attacks on Indians in Australia, when New Delhi watched the whole episode as a mute spectator and engaged only in lip service to pressure Canberra. Another example of the government's apathy was in 2007 when the Hindu Rights Action Force (HINDRAF) internationalised the wretched condition of ethnic Indians in Malaysia. The government's initial response was tight-lipped. This came as a shocker considering it had given a stern response in 2003, when nearly 300 Indians, mostly IT professionals in Kuala Lumpur, were "maltreated" and "interrogated" by Malaysian authorities. It had warned that any repeat of such incidents would affect bilateral ties.

Nonetheless, one can also argue that the victims of ill-treatment on March 9, 2003 were Indian citizens/NRIs. On the other hand, the protest of November 2007 concerned Malaysian citizens of Indian descent and, therefore, the government refrained from interfering in what could be interpreted as interference in the internal matters of Malaysia.

However, the fact of the matter is that most PIOs still consider themselves as Indians and, whenever they are in trouble in the host countries, look at their motherland in protecting their interests.

Interestingly, New Delhi also wants to engage the PIOs but without any liabilities. The reason is quite clear — the PIOs, at present, do not create an economic constituency for the Indian government compared to NRIs. Therefore, one must engage in some form of meaningful reciprocal links with PIOs.

However, many in the PIO community now believe that the government totally ignored the Indian diaspora, except when it occasionally addressed certain issues as per its own convenience. They were upset by the government's

"Bharat" rather than the "Pravasi." The Modi Government has realised this predicament and, therefore, has made it a biennial instead of an annual event.

Now, it is high time for the government to revise its almost two-decade-old report and chalk out a proactive diaspora policy. In fact, the ruling BJP should not forget its election manifesto of 2014, where it made it clear that it would work with Non-Resident Indians (NRIs) and Persons of Indian Origin (PIOs) by adopting a proactive diplomacy strategy, to develop what it referred to as "Brand India."

It stated that "the NRIs, PIOs and professionals settled abroad are a vast reservoir to articulate the national interests and affairs globally. This resource will be harnessed for strengthening Brand India."

India should be obligated to address the concerns of ethnic Indians anywhere in the world, without jeopardising its relations with host countries. Only then, the condition of PIOs as well as India will improve globally, as PIOs constitute more than 75 per cent of the Indian diaspora. This is, therefore, an opportune time for New Delhi to substantially, rather than symbolically, recalibrate its diaspora policy that will redefine its terms of engagement. This recalibration can pay rich dividends to its foreign policy objectives and will also help them be a valuable human resource for developing a new India. As the Prime Minister himself acknowledged, while addressing the first PIO Parliamentarians' Conference in New Delhi, law makers from countries ranging from the US and the UK to Reunion Islands in the Indian Ocean could boost India's economic growth.

(The writer is Assistant Professor, Atma Ram Sanatan Dharma College, University of Delhi)



FOREIGN EYE



OFFER PROTECTION TO THE WORKERS

Bangladesh is not alone in having a garment sector in which workers are ruthlessly exploited. An investigation found a Chinese toy factory where women were paid on average 1p to make a doll which sells for £34.99 in the UK. So long as such factories are controlled by interests close to authoritarian governments, improvements can only be piecemeal and often cosmetic.

(The Guardian editorial)

## The many perils of a coalition

The impressive show of unanimity among Opposition leaders at a rally in Kolkata for the first time presented a prospect of a pre-poll alternative to the BJP. But for that to fructify, challenges are many. Most important of all is to stay united



KALYANI SHANKAR

Can the Opposition unite to pose a challenge to the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) in the coming months? There are so many ifs and buts although West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee organised a mammoth rally in Kolkata's Brigade grounds last week.

The who's who of the Opposition gathered to prepare a roadmap for a coalition against the ruling BJP. Addressing the 'United India rally', Banerjee predicted that the BJP's days were numbered and that the "expiry date" of the Modi-led Government had come. The rally was, perhaps, the beginning of Opposition efforts to oust the BJP Government ahead of the 2019

Lok Sabha election. Though the idea could not move forward earlier, when Karnataka Chief Minister HD Kumaraswamy took oath on May 23 last year. Several Opposition leaders had graced that occasion too.

But this time, it is likely to be followed up with another rally in Amravati, Andhra Pradesh, by Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu and another one in Delhi, organised by Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) chief Arvind Kejriwal. An impressive list of leaders from 20-plus parties — including former Prime Minister Deve Gowda, former Union Ministers Sharad Pawar, Arun Shourie and Shatrughan Sinha, Chief Ministers Chandrababu Naidu, Arvind Kejriwal and HD Kumaraswamy, former Chief Ministers Akhilesh Yadav, Farooq Abdullah, Omar Abdullah and Geogap Apang among others — were a part of the Kolkata rally.

From the podium, Banerjee appealed to the country, 'Delhi

mein sarkar badal do' (change the Government at the Centre). Other Opposition leaders, too, echoed similar sentiments. This was the first big effort by the Opposition after the BJP lost badly in the three Hindi heartland States — Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh and Chhattisgarh — last month.

The Opposition combine boasts a wealth of leaders but as Deve Gowda pointed out, it would be very difficult for different party leaders to forget their differences and come together. There are so many Opposition parties of various hues and ideologies that are pulling in different directions, the possibility of which is not a national coalition but state-specific alliances.

Most importantly, ego of regional chieftains comes in the way of unity. In fact, the Congress is working on this strategy and so are other parties. For instance, in Uttar Pradesh, the Samajwadi Party (SP) and the Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP) have come together, keeping the Congress out. In West Bengal, will

Minister Modiji need not worry," said Banerjee. Even the Congress agreed that the decision should be taken only in a post-poll scenario. The Opposition, therefore, will go without a challenger to Modi despite its galaxy of leaders. The BJP will, taking advantage of this scenario, opt for a presidential style of campaign.

The third challenge is for the regional satraps to show an extraordinary determination to sweep the polls in their respective States. They did well in 2014 by winning an impressive number of seats. A repeat performance would go a long way in challenging Modi and his Government.

The fourth challenge is a 'one-on-one fight' against the BJP. This would avoid a division of Opposition votes but it appears difficult. The Prime Minister is counting on a divided Opposition to win the 2019 battle.

The fifth and the most important point is that the Opposition has no new narrative — just Modi-bash-

ing will not fetch them votes. Unless they come up with a new vision, voters will not get enthused. Recently, Modi reacted in his characteristic style: "My stand on corruption has made some people angry as I prevented them from looting public money; they have formed the *maha-gathbandhan*." Modi is simply sticking to his corruption plank.

There is no doubt that Opposition unity is very difficult to achieve but there is no harm in trying. After all, the BJP came to power with just 31 per cent vote share in the 2014 Lok Sabha poll.

As one of the Opposition leaders said, "Manzil bahut door hai, Raasta bahut kathin hai; Dil mile na mile, Haath mila ke chalo" (our destination is far and the path is difficult; despite our differences, we have to tread the path holding hand together). The coming days and weeks will show whether the opposition means what it says.

(The writer is a senior political commentator and syndicated columnist)

# India may beat US in steel demand: Min



PTI ■ NEW DELHI

India is expected to edge past the US with regard to steel consumption this year, Steel Minister Chaudhary Birender Singh said on Tuesday.

Addressing the fourth edition of India Steel 2019, the minister said, "Growth trend in steel consumption in India will continue, due to strong manufacturing sector, diversified demand demographics, accelerated expenditure on infrastructure, anticipated increase in GDP and strong focus on 'Make in India'."

"We are likely to leave behind US in terms of steel consumption this year," Singh

said.

A budget of around ₹6 lakh crore was allocated for infrastructure development in the current financial year, he noted.

"So, based on these enabling factors and with huge potential yet to be tapped, the per capita consumption can easily be increased from the current levels," he added.

Steel Secretary Binoy Kumar said that the National Steel Policy 2017 along with the Policy for Preference to Domestically Manufactured Iron & Steel Products have resulted in savings of more than ₹8,000 crore till date.

Underlining the impor-

tance of not showing any disadvantage to the sector, he added that the government was also reviewing the DMI&SP policy and trying to find convergence between DMI&SP policy and Public Procurement Order 2017 of DIPP.

"Under the ambit of the policy, 16 more steel products were brought under Quality Control Order, which now covers a total of 53 products. The endeavour is to bring more products under the Quality Control Order in an effort towards prohibiting production, import and distribution of substandard products," he added.

The sources said efforts to monetise certain assets of IL&FS are progressing and the group is expected to come out of the woods in the next four to five months.

Against this backdrop, the sources said the ministry would soon approach the RBI seeking dispensation for deferment of provisioning of loans with respect to some IL&FS group firms.

The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has strict norms in place regarding non-performing assets for banks and a relaxation is expected to help the Government in getting more time to resolve problems at IL&FS.

The sources said the Government has identified a few IL&FS subsidiaries having ample funds in their escrow

## IL&FS crisis: Govt to seek special dispensation from Reserve Bank

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The Government will soon approach the RBI seeking a special dispensation for deferment of provisioning requirements for bank loans extended to some IL&FS group firms amid ongoing efforts to monetise assets of the crisis-hit group, official sources said Tuesday.

Some companies of the diversified IL&FS group, which has debt burden of over ₹91,000 crore, have failed to repay loans. Following the crisis at IL&FS late last year that raised concerns over liquidity in the system, the corporate affairs ministry had superseded its board.

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The sources said the Government has identified a few IL&FS subsidiaries having ample funds in their escrow

accounts but are unable to service their debt obligations.

The Government is likely to cite the current situation, including availability of funds in escrow accounts of certain IL&FS companies, for seeking the special dispensation, they added.

On Tuesday, the Ministry reviewed the progress made in dealing with the problems at the group.

Following the series of defaults by some group companies, the Government superseded the board and appointed seasoned banker and Kotak Mahindra Bank MD Uday Kotak as chairman in October 2018.

The IL&FS group companies are estimated to have outstanding loans of about ₹60,000 crore to banks and financial institutions, while the total debt is over ₹91,000 crore.

State-owned LIC is the single largest shareholder in IL&FS group with 25.34 per cent while Japan's Orix Corporation owns 23.50 per cent shareholding.

Among others, Abu Dhabi Investment Authority has 12.5 per cent stake, IL&FS Employees Welfare Trust (12 per cent), HDFC Ltd (9.02 per cent), Central Bank of India (7.67 per cent) and State Bank of India (6.42 per cent), at the end of March 2018.

In August 2018, the debt crisis at the IL&FS group came to the fore when one of its companies defaulted on repayment of ₹1,000 crore debt to Sidihi.

## IL&FS effect: Icra puts 6 funds from HDFC, UTI, Birla under watch

PTI ■ MUMBAI

Domestic rating agency Icra has placed the ratings of six mutual fund schemes under watch with negative implications due to their exposure to the crippled infra lender IL&FS group entities.

The schemes being put under watch include a short term debt funds and banking and PSU debt funds from HDFC, banking and PSU debt fund, bond fund, dynamic bond funds from UTI, Aditya Birla Sun Life short term opportunities fund, Icra said in statement on Tuesday.

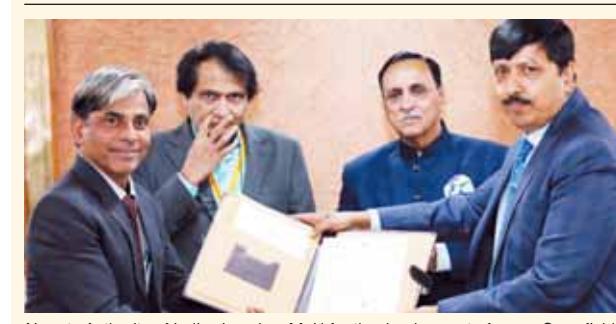
The rating action is due to the "deterioration in the credit quality" of the underlying investments of these schemes driven by their exposure to special purpose vehicles (SPVs) of IL&FS Group, the agency said.

These schemes have exposure to Hazaribagh Ranchi Expressway, Jharkhand Road Projects Implementation Company, and Jorabat Shillong Expressway, the agency said.

"The default risks by various SPVs of IL&FS have increased after the recent management communication to the trustees expressing to stop future repayments citing their interpretation of an order given by National Company Law Appellate Tribunal on October 15, 2018," the agency explained.

Two SPVs of IL&FS demanded a refund of the debt payment executed by them after October 15, 2018 from their trustees, it added.

## Business Corner



Airports Authority of India signed an MoU for the development of a new Greenfield Airport at Dholera in Gujarat in the presence of VijayRupani, Chief Minister, Govt of Gujarat and Suresh Prabhu, Union Minister of Civil Aviation, Government of India on January 19, 2019 during Vibrant Gujarat Summit 2019 at Gandhinagar, Gujarat. Dholera Airport is being developed as a Joint Venture among AAI, Government of Gujarat and National Industrial Corridor Development and Implementation Trust (NICIDT). The MoU facilitates Airports Authority of India for establishment of Dholera Airport. The project is likely to kickstart in April 2019.



NTPC has been awarded for Technology Adaptation & Best Performer (Financial) at 6th PSU Awards by Governance Now, news magazine for governance, policies, politics and people. The Award was received by Nandini Sarkar, Company Secretary, NTPC from Manoj Tiwari, Member of Parliament and Poonam Dhillon, Veteran Actress and Social Activist in a ceremony held on 17th January, 2019 at New Delhi.



Balraj Joshi, CMD, NHPC, India's premier hydropower company delivered Keynote address at the 16th Annual Conference on Hydro power in India on 22nd January 2019 in Le Meridien, New Delhi. The two day conference organised by Power Line provided a forum to discuss in detail the issues, solutions and new developments in Hydro Power Sector.



Sponge Iron Unit (SIU), Paloncha of NMDC Limited has re-commenced its operations today with lighting up of plant after a long gap of shut down due to administrative reasons. The existing capacity of the plant is to produce 100 T/Day of sponge iron of good quality. At present, the plant is started with 50% of its rated capacity due to long shut down of the plant.

## PIRAMAL SARVAJAL PROVIDES POTABLE WATER TO NARELA AND HOLAMBI KALAN COLONIES

PTN ■ NEW DELHI

In 2014, Piramal Sarvajal won a first-of-its-kind tender by the Delhi Jal Board, to set up decentralized-drinking-water-solutions across various settlement colonies. Over the last four years the residents of Narela and Holambi Kalan have benefited from the affordable, access to safe drinking water. The available bore well water had Total Dissolved Solids (TDS) as high as 1300ppm, making it unfit for consumption. The situation at another settlement colony Holambi Kalan was similar with the water being delivered in tankers sourced from the stream 'Holambi Kalan Bawana Neher' with Total Dissolved Solids (TDS) of over 800 ppm.

## A NEW TOY SPECIAL TRAIN SERVICE BETWEEN KALKA-SHIMLA

In order to provide a new service on Kalka-Shimla Section, Northern Railway has decided to run a Special train from 26.01.2019 to 25.04.2019 as per following schedule:-

52459/52460 Kalka - Shimla - Kalka New Toy Train

Train No. 52459	STATIONS		Train No. 52460
	Arr.	Dep.	
—	05:10	Kalka	22:05
09:50	—	Shimla	—

Always Buy Train Tickets from Railway Counters / Authorised Railway Travel Agents only

Note : For any kind of Information passengers are requested to contact Railway Enquiry No. 139 or visit website www.enquiry.indianrail.gov.in

Security Helpline No. 182 and Passenger Complaint Helpline No. 138

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## Unconditional cash transfer to farmer better option: SBI Report

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The Government should opt for the unconditional cash transfer to farmers to alleviate agrarian distress rather than Universal Basic Income (UBI) scheme, the SBI said in a report on Tuesday.

At present, it may not be feasible to initiate Rythu Bandhu Scheme on national level as land data in several states, including Jharkhand, Bihar, Gujarat, and Tamil Nadu are yet to be digitised, the SBI said in its 'Ecowrap' report.

The study said that there have been reports saying that Government is planning to provide direct cash support to the farmers in lieu of various farm level subsidies/support.

"In Budget 2019-20, Government had estimated Agriculture subsidy (plus support) at ₹98,100 crore (Crop Insurance: ₹13,000 crore, Interest Subsidy: ₹15,000 crore and Fertilizer Subsidy: ₹70,100 crore)," the report said.

Such move comes on the back of suggestions in public domain by noted agri-economists as well as Niti Aayog that perhaps Rythu Bandhu Scheme that is fiscally prohibitive to launch on a pan India level should be netted against fertiliser subsidies, interest plus insurance support, it said, adding that instead of this the farmers should be provided the benefit as direct cash in their account.

"We however believe this argument has flaws, though a cash transfer scheme is always a better option than an Universal Basic Income (UBI) scheme. Many countries have found that UBI does not address the structural problems and is at best a solution in interregnum," the report noted.

## Sensex snaps 5-day winning streak on weak global cues

PTI ■ MUMBAI

The domestic equity market took a breather on Tuesday after a five-day rising spree as investors booked profits in metal, financials and auto counters, amid weak cues from international markets after IMF lowered its global growth projections for 2019 and 2020.

The 30-share BSE Sensex dropped 134.32 points to end at 36,444.64, while the broader NSE Nifty finished 39.10 points lower at 10,922.75.

Participants were seen taking money off the table after the recent rally, even as the wider sentiment remained positive, underpinned by better-than-expected Q3 earnings by several bluechips.

The BSE Sensex, after resuming higher at 36,649.92, advanced to 36,650.47 on buying by domestic institutional investors (DIIs) as well as retail participants.

## Jaypee Infratech bankruptcy: Lenders may extend deadline to submit revival plan by 15 days

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Lenders and home buyers of Jaypee Infratech may extend by around 15 days the January 27 deadline to submit proposals to revive the debt-ridden firm as shortlisted bidders have sought more time, sources said.

State-owned NBCC, Kotak Investment, Singapore-based Cube Highways and Suraksha group have been shortlisted as bidders for Jaypee Infratech, which is undergoing insolvency proceedings in the National Company Law Tribunal (NCLT).

The Committee of Creditors (CoC) is considering a proposal to extend the bidding deadline by around 15 days and a decision would be taken soon, sources said.

The CoC had last month approved the evaluation criteria to be adopted to select a bidder for taking over the realty firm.

Jaypee Infratech's interim resolution professional (IRP)

Anuj Jain had in October started a fresh initiative to revive Jaypee Infratech on NCLT's direction after lenders rejected over ₹7,000 crore bid of Suraksha group.

He had invited expressions of interest from companies to submit a resolution plan to revive Jaypee Infratech, which has many stuck housing projects in Noida and Greater Noida.

In 2017, the NCLT had admitted the application by an IDBI Bank-led consortium seeking resolution for Jaypee Infratech under the Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code (IBC).

The tribunal had appointed Jain as IRP to manage the company's business and invite bids from investors.

Consequently, Lakshdeep, part of Suraksha group, had emerged as a front-runner to acquire the firm. However, in May last year, lenders rejected the ₹7,350 crore bid by Lakshdeep as they found it inadequate.

The realty firm has an outstanding debt of nearly ₹9,800 crore, of which ₹4,334 crore pertains to IDBI. Other lenders are IIFCL, LIC, SBI, Corporation Bank, Syndicate Bank, Bank of Maharashtra, ICICI Bank, Union Bank, IFCI, J&K Bank, Axis Bank and Srei Equipment Finance.

Jaypee Infratech, a subsidiary of Jaypee Group's flagship firm Jayaprakash Associates, is developing about 32,000 flats, of which it has delivered 9,500 units.

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# Exporters may get boost under new FTP

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

can also be given on state levies," the official added.

Exporters are likely to get incentives based on parameters like research and development, product-specific clusters and production pattern under a five-year foreign trade policy (FTP) to be released later this year, an official said.

The commerce ministry is working on recasting the existing export incentive schemes in line with the global trade norms of the World Trade Organisation (WTO).

"We are recasting our export incentive schemes. In the new FTP, they would be in compliance with the global trade rules. The new incentives could focus on R&D activities, production parameters, product-specific clusters. Rebate

nies.

The official said there are several product-specific clusters in sectors such as automobile, textiles and leather and providing direct incentives to them would help boost manufacturing and exports.

Under an FTP, the government announces incentives for exporters. Currently, duty benefits are provided under merchandise export from India scheme (MEIS) and services export from India scheme (SEIS).

Recasting of the existing support measures assumes significance as the US has challenged these schemes under the dispute settlement mechanism of the WTO. America has alleged that these incentives are harming American compa-

According to Federation of Indian Export Organisations (FIEO), the new scheme should include refund of indirect taxes like on oil and power; state levies such as mandi tax.

"The new scheme should help boost the country's exports," FIEO President Ganesh Gupta said.

Since 2011-12, India's exports have been hovering at around USD 300 billion. During 2017-18, the shipments grew about 10 per cent to USD 303 billion. Promoting exports helps a country create jobs, boost manufacturing and earn more foreign exchange.

During April-December 2018-19, the country's total merchandise exports grew 10.18 per cent to USD 245.44 billion.

## Insurance sector to see strong growth: Moody's

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Moody's Investors Service Tuesday said India's insurance and reinsurance sectors will grow strongly driven by strong economic growth and evolving regulatory regime.

It said robust GDP expansion, coupled with current low insurance penetration, should support double digit growth for the non-life sector over the next 3-4 years. During fiscal 2018, total gross premiums for the non-life and life insurance sectors grew 11.5 per cent to Rs 6.1 lakh crore (USD 94 billion), bringing the 5-year compound annual growth rate (CAGR) to 11 per cent. "India's strong economy and evolving regulatory regime continue to support growth for its insurance and reinsurance sectors," Moody's said in a report titled Insurance — India: Continued regulatory evolution is credit positive for India's insurance sector.

Moody's said it expects India's real GDP to expand by 7.4 per cent and 7.3 per cent in fiscal 2019 and 2020, making the Indian economy one of the world's fastest-growing.

The Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India (IRDAI) is proactively introducing regulations that will support insurers' balance sheets and improve their access to capital, a credit positive," Moody's Assistant VP and Analyst Mohammed Londe said. Liberalisation of the reinsurance sector — with the admission of foreign reinsurers since 2017 and IRDAI's steps to ensure that they can compete with incumbents — will specifically benefit the non-life sector. Regulatory reforms will also improve the sector's capital strength, Moody's said. "In 2015, IRDAI raised the ceiling on foreign ownership of Indian insurers to 49 per cent from 26 per cent, encouraging global players to buy holdings in local entities.

Besides, the government's launch of a new program in 2018 to provide health insurance for 100 million families is credit positive as it will help grow health premiums and provide insurers with cross-selling opportunities, it noted.

## BUSINESS CORNER

NISSAN WHEELS IN KICKS SUV AT ₹9.55 LAKH



New Delhi:

Japanese automaker Nissan Tuesday launched its new SUV model Kicks in India, priced between ₹9.55 lakh and ₹14.65 lakh (ex-showroom). The new model, designed specifically for the Indian market, will be available in petrol and diesel fuel options powered by 1.5 litre engines. Kicks will compete with the likes of Hyundai Creta and S-Cross from Maruti Suzuki, which are priced in the range of ₹8.85 lakh and ₹15.1 lakh. Commenting on the new model launch, Nissan Motor Co Senior Vice President and Chairman of management committee for Africa, Middle East and India Payman Kargar said the vehicle reflects company's commitment to bring the best of Nissan global products and technology to India. "Our research and development (R&D) and design teams in India developed the SUV in collaboration with our teams in Japan, America and Brazil," he added. Nissan India Operations President Thomas Kuehl said, with its progressive design, the Kicks will stand out in the competitive SUV segment in India. As per the company, the model would deliver a fuel efficiency of 14.23 km per litre for petrol variants and 20.45 km per litre for diesel trims. The petrol versions are priced at ₹9.55 lakh and ₹10.95 lakh, while the diesel variants are priced at ₹10.85 lakh, ₹12.49 lakh, ₹13.65 lakh and ₹14.65 lakh.

### MARUTI STARTS BOOKING FOR UPDATED BALENO

New Delhi: The country's largest carmaker Maruti Suzuki India (MSI) Tuesday said it has commenced bookings for updated version of its premium hatchback Baleno. The new Baleno can be booked with an initial payment of Rs 11,000, MSI said in a statement. The company expects to launch the model later this month or early next month. Giving details about the model, MSI said the updated Baleno will come with new and aggressive front design. The model will offer additional safety features like speed alert system, co-driver seat belt reminder and rear parking assist sensors, it added. These features are over and above the standard dual airbags, child seat restrain system (ISOFIX), pre-tensioner and force limiter seat belts and ABS with EBD. Since 2016, Baleno has featured among India's top selling cars. With 14 per cent growth in first nine months of 2018-19 over last year, Baleno holds the industry record of fastest 5 lakh sales milestone within a record time of 38 months. The company has sold over 5.2 lakh units of the model cumulatively till date.

## Jindal's daughter-in-law launches MFI Svamaan

PTI ■ MUMBAI

JSW Group chairman Sajjan Jindal's daughter-in-law Anushree on Tuesday announced a micro-lending venture to help uplift the under-served segments.

Her husband Parth Jindal is the chairman of Svamaan Financial Services, the newly-launched entity. "This is a for-profit entity registered as an NBFC-MFI. I always wanted to do something for the society, hence this," Anushree told PTI

over the phone. Anushree has a background in accounting and finance and the idea of starting a microfinance occurred while doing a course on rethinking financial inclusion at the Harvard Business School last year. The company was incorporated last year and after getting regulatory approvals made its first loan disbursal on January 14, she said, adding the immediate goal is to reach 1 lakh borrowers by 2021. Initially, the venture will concentrate on livelihood loans of up to ₹25,000

and will branch out into lending up to ₹3 lakh to micro-enterprises soon, she said.

She said family money has been put into the business as initial capital, which is as per the regulatory norms. Reserve Bank regulations require NBFC-MFIs to have ₹5 crore in net owned funds. The venture will initially be focusing on Maharashtra and Karnataka and has plans to enter Odisha and Chhattisgarh by 2020, Anushree said and maintains that it is good business to be in, pointing out to

data on growth achieved by the industry in the last few years.

After achieving the initial target of 1 lakh borrowers, Anushree said, the company will be taking a call on further capital infusion.

Dinner table talk on finance is, however, limited as there are so many businesses ranging from steel to new-age initiatives like electric vehicles spearheaded by her husband or her mother-in-law's CSR activities that also have to be spoken about, she said.

The Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India (IRDAI) is proactively introducing regulations that will support insurers' balance sheets and improve their access to capital, a credit positive," Moody's

Assistant VP and Analyst Mohammed Londe said. Liberalisation of the reinsurance sector — with the admission of foreign reinsurers since 2017 and IRDAI's steps to ensure that they can compete with incumbents — will specifically benefit the non-life sector. Regulatory reforms will also improve the sector's capital strength, Moody's said. "In 2015, IRDAI raised the ceiling on foreign ownership of Indian insurers to 49 per cent from 26 per cent, encouraging global players to buy holdings in local entities.

Besides, the government's launch of a new

program in 2018 to provide health insurance for 100 million families is credit positive as it will help grow health premiums and provide insurers with cross-selling opportunities, it noted.

### NIFTY 50

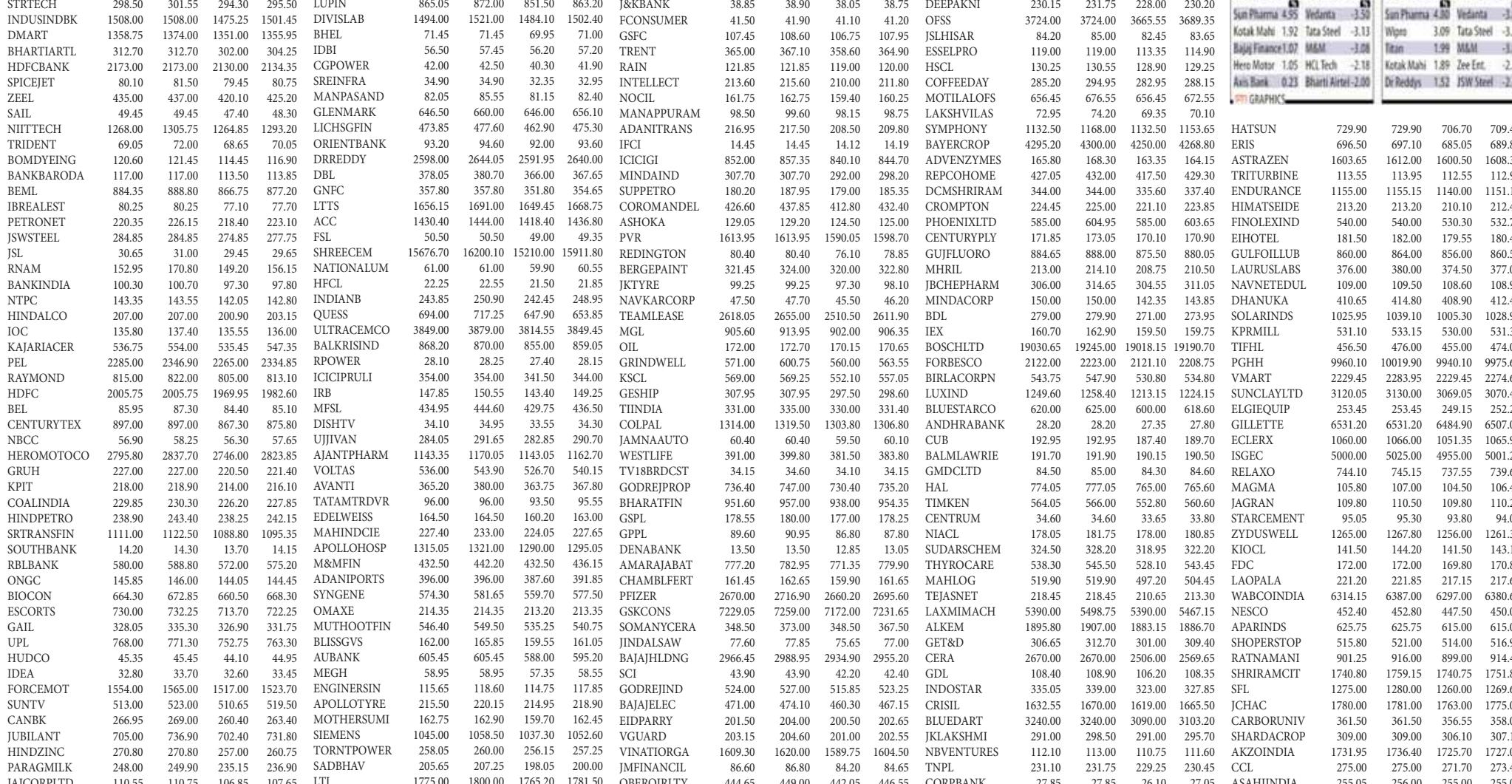
### BSE 500



### NIFTY NEXT 50



### NIFTY NEXT 50



# Ships with Indian, Turkish crews catch fire off Russia

**14 sailors died**



In this video grab, the two vessels, the Maestro and the Candy, on fire near the Kerch Strait linking the Black Sea and the Sea of Azov, in Kerch, Crimea on Monday

AP

PTI ■ MOSCOW

Two ships carrying Indian, Turkish and Libyan crew members caught fire in the Kerch Strait separating Crimea from Russia, killing at least 14 sailors, according to media reports.

The fire broke out on Monday off Russia's territorial waters. Both vessels were flying Tanzanian flags. One of them was a liquefied natural gas carrier and another one was a tanker. The fire broke out as the two ships were transferring fuel from one to the other.

One of the ships, the Candy, had a 17-member crew, including nine

Turkish citizens and eight Indian nationals.

The other one, the Maestro, had 15-member crew, including seven Turkish nationals, seven Indian citizens and an intern from Libya, Russian news agency Tass quoted maritime authority as saying.

Fourteen people were killed in the accident, Crimea's head Sergei Aksyonov told reporters on Tuesday.

"I cannot say anything about the cause of the fire. We currently have information about 14 dead sailors. Other sailors have not reached hospitals yet. Kerch hospitals are expecting to receive them, they will get medical assistance," he

said.

The minister did not specify the nationalities of persons killed in the accident.

As many as 12 people have been rescued, while six are still missing. Search and rescue efforts are underway.

"Presumably, an explosion occurred (on one of the vessels). Then the fire spread to another vessel. A rescue tug is en route," said a spokesman for the Russian Maritime Agency.

Some three dozen sailors managed to escape the burning ships by jumping off the vessels.

There were no chances to find survivors in the fire, the spokesperson said.

"As of 6am, the status of the operation has been reclassified to search from rescue because

there is no hope to find survivors," the spokesperson said.

The fire has not been extinguished. "The blaze is ongoing," he said.

Severe weather conditions at sea have prevented rescue ships from taking victims to the shore for medical treatment, the report added. The Kerch Strait is a key waterway that holds strategic importance for both Russia and Ukraine.

It is an important economic lifeline for Ukraine that allows ships leaving the port city of Mariupol to access the Black Sea.

It's also the closest point of access for Russia to Crimea, a peninsula Moscow annexed in 2014. A Russian-built bridge over the Kerch Strait opened in May last year.

## GOVERNMENT OF JAMMU AND KASHMIR OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER PWD (R&B) COST. DIV. NO. II, JAMMU CORRIGENDUM

Name of work:- Providing / Installation/ Commissioning of electro - mechanical automatic boom barrier alongwith CCTV, tyre killer & pre-fabricated security booth at High Court Complex, Jammu.

Reference: E-NIT No. 150 of 2018-19/Div-2 Dated: 10-01-2019

The following changes to the terms and conditions of the above noted work are hereby made with immediate effect:-

Please read:- Item No. 01 of BOQ

RAMP TYRE KILLER 6.00MTR

Blocking height of spires above the Ground level: 160 - 500mm Distance between centers of two adjacent spikes: 100±10mm Rising/lowering time: 02-03 Second Drive Unit Electro-Hydraulic Top cover plate of the Tyre Killer shell withstand: Wheel Load100Tons Control Unit: Microcontroller Electric motor capacity Approx. 1.5 kw, 3 Phase Protection class: IP54 All Electronics Parts should be CE Certified. Colour: Blocking spike shall have hardened and tempered steel with red colour, drive box in grey colour and top surface shall have stripes of black and yellow colour.

Instead Of:- Item No. 01 of BOQ

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RAMP TYRE K

Given the importance of accounting in trade, commerce and Government, jobs in this field will never lose their significance, says DR NARENDRA SHYAM SUKHA

# ACCOUNT YOUR FUTURE

**A**ccounting helps you keep a track of money and who isn't interested in money? Accounting with daily journals, ledgers, bank reconciliation statements, profit and loss statements and income and balance sheets present an unbiased picture of the financial position of an organisation.

Accountants tell the true position with regard to its liabilities, cash sources, viability of managerial and investor decisions and compliance with taxation and corporate laws.

Further, accounting helps a business, venture or a nation plan, control and execute their budgets and expenditures, forecast revenues or turnovers, purchase new assets or take on new liabilities, monitor financial health, take decisions with regard to personnel hiring or recruitment and regulate growth in the economy. Considering the vital importance of

accounting work to trade, commerce and Government, is it any wonder that accounting jobs never lose their significance.

According to *payscale.com*, the top salary for an accountant, not being a Chartered Accountant, could go up to ₹487,303 a year. There is steady and assured growth for an accountant over the progression of her career. Experience affects accountant salaries markedly. The highest growth can take place during the middle to late career milestones. In a related survey of those working in accounts on the same platform, it was found

**EXPERIENCE AFFECTS ACCOUNTANT SALARIES MARKEDLY. ACCORDING TO PAYSCALE.COM, THE TOP SALARY FOR AN ACCOUNTANT, NOT A CA, COULD GO UP TO ₹5 LAKH A YEAR**



that an overwhelming 100 per cent gave their profession five out of five stars. While females made up for only five per cent of those in the profession, males made an abnormally high 80 per cent.

Most accountants become record-keepers, especially at the entry-level. However, they are supposed to check and maintain calculations, create sales and cash flow reports, administer payrolls, prepare balance sheets, carry out billing activity, manage budgets and inventory. At a mid to senior level, the accountant may also be expected to file taxes or go through historical reports to create turnover forecasts. Sometimes, internal audits may be needed to identify trouble areas in performance. An accounting staff must also monitor whether office personnel are adhering to company policies and relevant statutes. It takes skill for the accountant to prepare management reports with the right amount of accuracy, detail and illustration.

Ordinarily, commerce graduates with an additional diploma or certification in specialised accounting practices may start working as an accountant. Internships as an accountant help in cementing working knowledge and adding authority to your resume. Knowledge of application software such as Quickbooks, Tally or Microsoft Excel is indispensable to reconcile new age imperatives with existing competencies. Accounting work is seldom understood by solo entrepreneurs and small businesses and so the accountant must be a self-starter. However, in other organisations, she may be required to work as part of a team and collaboration must also be part of your skill set.

Accountants, today, may require

additional competencies because of the expansion of digitisation to every sphere of business. SAP is one of the most widely used enterprise application programmes being used in industry and to obtain veracity and genuineness of training, it is crucial to choose a SAP authorised training delivery partner to complete your certification in this software.

Over time, an accountant may grow into the roles of finance manager, account manager, financial controller, chartered accountant, chief financial officer or a finance director.



Remember that you need not be a number cruncher to be an accountant. Arithmetic skills are honed by constant practice. Initially, you may even find reporting work to be boring and repetitive. But it will pay the bills while you earn and you can always enroll in and complete more advanced courses that lead into a leadership role. Financial roles are little understood and open-mindedness can get a long way in this enticing profession.

The writer is founder chairman, ICA Edu Skills

## QUOTE OF THE DAY

**"Education is the ability to listen to almost anything without losing your temper or your self-confidence"**

— Robert Frost

### HEALTH PROGRAMMES

The School of Health Sciences (SOHS), Indira Gandhi National Open University (IGNOU) invites application for its four new skill-based health programmes. The aim is to create trained health care personnel for improving health care delivery across the country. These programmes are:

#### Certificate in General Duty Assistance (CGDA)

The short duration programme prepares the candidate in non-clinical tasks or the activities like use of assistive devices, patient care, transporting patients, general hygiene and grooming,



Biology.

**Duration:** Six months to two years.

#### Certificate in Home Health Assistance (CHHA)

This short duration training programme focuses on the acquisition of skills necessary to provide support by undertaking non-clinical tasks.

**Eligibility:** Class XII pass in Science stream with Biology.

**Duration:** Six months to two years.

#### HOTEL MANAGEMENT

The Hotel School invites applications for admission in three-year BVoc degree in Hotel Management.

In this course, students will be taught subjects like food production, bakery and confectionery, front office, housekeeping, reception handling, food and beverage, management, English and communication skills and others.

Students will learn how every aspect of a food service operation contributes to the guest experience and will explore unique features of a variety of food and beverage operations.

**Eligibility:** Class XII pass in Science stream with Biology.

**Duration:** Six months to two years.

#### Certificate in Geriatric Care Assistance (CGCA)

This short duration skill based programme trains candidates to provide support to old age people or patients by undertaking non-clinical tasks such as assessment, patient positions, movements, feeding, hygiene, grooming and much more.

**Eligibility:** Class XII pass in Science stream with Biology.

**Duration:** Six months to two years.

#### Certificate in Phlebotomy Assistance (CPHA)

This short duration skill based training programme focuses on the acquisition of skills necessary to draw quality blood samples from patients, storage, transport to laboratory for medical testing and practice infection control measures.

**Eligibility:** Class XII pass in Science stream with Biology.

**Deadline:** February 7, 2019.

## Annual alumni meet



Dignitaries along with alumni of IP University's Management School during their annual alumni meet

## TIPTOP

### Hone child's growth with early childhood education

PANKAJ KUMAR SINGH shares why early childhood education is essential for subjective, social and physical development of a child

Early childhood is crucial time for subjective, social and physical development of a child. Improvement is affected by characteristics of the young, their family, and the more extensive social conditioning around the surrounding.

Physical well-being, discernment, dialect, and social and enthusiastic improvement thereafter supports school preparation. Openly supported, focus based, through early youth improvement programmes advances the prosperity of youthful youngsters.

Most parents think that Early Childhood Education (ECE) is not so important for their child's development and therefore send them directly to prelingual primary schools.

Therefore, often they end up ignoring the basic education which a child needs to learn from the beginning. A strong assemblage of proof demonstrates that young children who get fitting nourishment with passionate and subjective incitement around the surroundings are better arranged for school and learning.

Early age improvement programmes are intended to enhance their subjective learning and prepare socially enthusiastic preschool children thus impacting preparation for learning in the school setting. Proper upbringing, education, personal development is very necessary today. ECE is about honing and moulding the child which will

eventually form the basis of their lifelong journey. Let's discuss some essential benefits of ECE:

**Socialisation:** Socialisation with individuals other than the family in a protected situation is the fundamental component to the underneath territories. As guardians, we instinctively comprehend that it's critical to acquaint our children with other youngsters and bolster their progress into their very own kinship gatherings. The prior we do this, the better, as it enables children to conquer modesty and increase fearlessness.

In the event that we leave this for late in time, we end up obstructing their social advancement.

**The idea of cooperation:** Figuring out how to share, collaborate, alternate and drive forward inside a protected learning condition, guided by experts inculcates this practice. This is particularly essential for the parents who may not be accustomed to offering the same to their child at home.

**Focusing on integrated development:** The methodology taken to guide the solid establishment of the youngster's social, physical and mental advancement, sets them up for a lifetime of learning. Teachers specialised in early childhood education are mostly prepared in recognising regions where attention is required for youngsters and therefore help in

building projects and exercises around these requirements. The company of such experts are additionally critical as in such settings pre-schoolers are agreeable and comprehensive.

**Values and morals:** A child learns values and morals from the environment that they are growing from their parents, relatives and school. So, it's very important that we give much importance to inculcating values and morals in school.

There is no better place to take in this one, other than in a chaotic

preschool condition, where everything is shared and class and conduct are both instructed and adapted to naturally.

**Flexibility:** It's critical that early youth instructors and guardians cooperate to create versatility in child as early as expected. By making a reliable, secure and reasonable social condition, with clear desires and unsurprising outcomes, children can inculcate abilities in overseeing themselves and their feelings. It's an educator's business to give a testing situation where children can learn through direct encounters.

**Confidence, concentration & self-esteem:** Children need opportunities to be involved in an abundance of social experiences, where they can explore and practice the social skills of patience. A solid feeling of prosperity gives youngsters certainty, positive thinking and confidence which will urge children to investigate their abilities and aptitudes. Positive cooperation with other youngsters and instructors will advance them into a positive, solid and secure perspective of themselves that will enable them to approach circumstances and issues unhesitant for the rest of their lives.

The writer is founder and MD, Cambridge Montessori Preschool

## National science contest



Founder and chancellor of VIT, Dr G Viswanathan, hands over the prizes to the winners of annual National Level Science Contest

Vidyashram, senior secondary school, Vellore, won the first prize in the quiz contest and received ₹15,000 cash prize, while P Greeshmanth, M Avinashand Ch Bhavadeep of St Mary's Public School, Nellore, AP, won the second place & received ₹10,000 as cash prize.

In the quiz contest for students in Class XI and XII, Anand, Krishna Rajmohan and Suhail of Bhavans Vidya Mandir, Kochi, Kerala, won the first

place and received ₹20,000 as cash prize, while the second prize with a cash award of ₹15,000 went to Mohan Mythresh, Manish KR and Vignesh C of Sunbeam CBSE school, Vellore.

Among those who took part in the prize distribution function included Pro Vice Chancellor Dr S Narayanan, Dr A Mary Saral, dean, School of Advanced Sciences and Professors Dr R Vijayaraghavan, Dr E James Jebaseelan Samuel and Dr N Arunai Nambi Raj.

In the idea presentation contest, the first place was bagged by E Aswathi of AKM Higher Secondary School, Kottoor, Kerala and received ₹10,000 as cash prize, while the second prize with a cash award of ₹7,500 went to S Bavedra, P Pavithra and S

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## Design is one of the most challenging, fast-moving, and visionary fields to work in and it can be financially rewarding as well, says DR SANJAY GUPTA

There's no place quite like the design industry. It's where creativity and technology meet, and where innovation thrives. Design is absolutely everywhere—from the clothes we wear to the apps we use, from the cars we drive to the chairs we sit on. As a designer, you have the power to shape the world. There are many careers that can be launched after taking a design course. Those with a passion for fashion may become retail clothing buyers, display merchandisers or fashion designers. Media jobs include magazine cover designer, photographer, design associate and layout editor. Then there are marketing opportunities like graphic designer, packaging developer, concept and design technician or production manager. The retail industry careers include showroom design consultant, store designer, display coordinator and visual merchandiser.

Design is one of the most challenging, fast-moving, and visionary fields to work in and it can be financially rewarding, too. Below are five high-paid fields.

### DIGITAL DRAWING & ILLUSTRATION

One can choose to be animators, graphic designers, illustrators, game developers, game artists, designers, creative directors, web artists, art directors, installation designers, eBook illustrators, storyboard artists, instructors, professors, or freelance artists. This field is slightly different from pure design. It teaches the artists the use of a wide range of software, artistic and technical techniques to create art. Digital design and illustration programmes prepare students for

careers in the world of digital design and art by combining traditional painting and drawing skills with new media digital applications and output strategies. Digital designers and illustrators get to work in diverse industries like advertising, multimedia, gaming, graphic design, film and video, architecture, automotive, the medical industry and even in criminal investigations as forensics.

### TRANSPORTATION DESIGN

Professionals who work in transportation design are known as industrial designers. They produce designs for automobiles, aircraft, watercraft, mass transit systems and two-wheeled vehicles, taking into consideration aesthetics, ergonomics, manufacturing, marketing, safety and economics. They also specialise in areas like hybrid vehicle, recreational vehicle or aircraft interior design. Transportation designers usually start their careers with a bachelor's degree in industrial design, and many go on to earn a master's degree. Learning how to take a product concept and design a producible item is the focus of a transportation designer. Transportation designers can specialise in an industry, such as aviation or mass transit, or a specific transportation type, such as hybrid or electric transport. A bachelor's in industrial design programme provides the training in CAD software and in product design needed by these professionals.

### PRODUCT DESIGN

This is all about creating 3-D products through an efficient process of idea generation, development and evaluation. Product designers have an understanding of the relationship between art, science and technology, and have the ability to exploit each of these things in different ways to create new products.

### GAME DESIGN

The industry has witnessed tremendous growth over the last 10 years. With the market touching the ₹1,300 crore mark in 2012, it has encouraged various international animation companies to outsource work to India. A game designer is someone who has a vision of what the game is as it goes through iterations during its development cycle. Besides computer and console gaming, mobile games are a new part of the gaming sector. Established jobs for a game designer include working with game developers or game publishing companies. These can range from small — to large-sized companies producing games for other vendors.

One career path to game design could be starting as a game tester and then gradually moving on to game designing. This can offer a good grounding in the industry and enable insights into different areas, since employers seek some experience for mid-level positions.

### DESIGN MANAGEMENT

This is all about the business side of design. It encompasses the ongoing processes, business decisions, and strategies that enable innovation and creation of effectively designed products, services, communications, environments, and brands. At a deeper level, design management links design, innovation, technology, management and customers to provide competitive advantage for organisational success.

Earlier, design management was seen as limited to the management of design projects. Over time, it has evolved to other aspects of the organisation on a functional and strategic level. Design management professionals can work in various industries, including advertising and marketing, architecture, graphic design or motion pictures. Entry-level design management professionals can work as marketing assistants, production assistants and project management assistants. More experienced design management professionals can seek employment as brand strategists, advertising executives, product developers, project managers, marketing managers and business directors.

The writer is Vice-chancellor at World University of Design

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### MIND IT

expectations that can't be achieved. For example one should question our mind — Is 20 hours of study realistic pattern? Always set practical boundaries for your daily to do list to make it a success.

**Plan ahead:** Spending time working away from home means that there will be fewer hours available in the day to accomplish the same number of jobs around the house.

**Don't procrastinate:** Delaying things may lead to piling of more and more work in the end. Another disadvantage of

procrastination is that it only keeps adding more stress at the top of daily work load.

**Prioritise responsibilities at work:** One should make a mental chart of tasks of high importance, medium importance and least importance. This will help cope up with the essentials first as to reduce mental stress of laying off things.

**Try not to bring work at home:** Unless in extreme cases like board meetings or crisis at work one should never carry work at home. This acts like de-catalysis in family life. Hence one should try best to achieve

official goals at work only.

**Stick to your schedule, do not divert:** The reason for that is that when you plan things, then you always stay informed. It means you know when you will be able to finish a particular assignment or college project. You can always include breaks or a small outing as part of the schedule. It will work as an incentive to stick to schedule, knowing when to do what; otherwise, you may end up with a pile up of work, including new stuff that you were not aware of because you didn't schedule. Write things up, make notes, plan well, and you will find it much easier to balance your life between study, work, and personal life.

**Manage stress levels:** Stress is an

inevitable part of being a student and a worker, so learn how to keep it in check. Take regular breaks, get enough sleep, stay physically active, get out into the great outdoors and let yourself enjoy some of what life has to offer.

**Watch for signs of burn-out:** If your job performance or academic results begins to flag, take action. Falling asleep in class, drinking excessive amounts of caffeine, losing interest in your job or studies or becoming irritable are warning signs. A balance is easier to achieve when you make a sincere effort towards it.

The writer is Paltavi Prakash, Motivational Speaker and Founder-CEO of Knowledge Seed Learning Centre

## STUDY CENTRES

Rheumatology is a sub-specialty of medicine that deals with diagnosis, identification and medication of disorders relating to disorders related to joints, muscles, bones, and tendons. Rheumatologists treat ailments, which can result in inflammation, pain and swelling and work in tandem with Orthopaedic surgeons, physiotherapists, occupational therapists, prosthetists, orthotists and podiatrists.

To pursue a career in this field one needs a strong background in Physics, Chemistry, Biology and Mathematics. After MBBS degree one has to go for MD (Medicine) as Rheumatology. A few colleges where one can study are:

■ **Indian Spinal Injuries Centre, New Delhi. Course: DNB Rheumatology**

■ **Christian Medical College, Vellore. Course: DM Rheumatology**

■ **King Georges Medical University, Lucknow. Course: DM Rheumatology**

■ **Institute of Post Graduate Medical Education and Research, Kolkata. Course: DM Rheumatology**

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# Kohli sweeps ICC awards

**Virat becomes the first cricketer to win Sir Garfield Sobers Trophy, ODI and Test Player of the Year awards in a single calendar year**

PTI ■ DUBAI

The peerless Virat Kohli on Tuesday became the first cricketer to make a clean-sweep of the ICC's annual individual awards and was also named captain of the world body's Test and ODI teams of the year, line-ups which were dominated by Indian players.

Kohli became the first player in history to win the Sir Garfield Sobers Trophy for ICC Cricketer of the Year, his second consecutive, the ICC Test and the ODI Player of the Year awards following an extraordinary 2018. Besides, the rapidly-rising wicketkeeper Rishabh Pant claimed the ICC's Emerging Cricketer of the Year award.

"Not only is Kohli the first player to win these three major ICC awards together but he has also been named the captain of the ICC Test and ODI teams of the year for a fabulous run in international cricket," the ICC said in a statement.

Kohli scored 1,322 runs at an average of 55.08 in 13 Tests with five hundreds during the calendar year while in 14 ODIs he amassed 1202 runs at an astonishing average of 133.55 with six centuries. He also scored 211 runs in 10 T20Is.

"It's a reward for all the hard work that you do throughout the calendar year. Having recognition at the global level from the ICC is something you feel proud of as a cricketer because you understand that there are many players playing the game," Kohli was quoted as saying by the world body in a release.

"... Obviously a very proud moment for me and something that gives you more motivation to keep repeating the same things because you have to keep the standard of cricket up and keep bringing in consistent performances," he added.

Three players each from India and New Zealand featured in the ICC's Test team of the year, while four each from India and England are part of the ODI side of the year 2018.

The Test team included Pant, in just his breakthrough Test year, and fast bowler



**KOHLI SCORED 1,322 RUNS AT AN AVERAGE OF 55.08 IN 13 TESTS WITH FIVE HUNDREDS DURING THE CALENDAR YEAR, WHILE IN 14 ODIES HE AMASSED 1202 RUNS AT AN ASTONISHING AVERAGE OF 133.55 WITH SIX CENTURIES. HE ALSO SCORED 211 RUNS IN 10 T20IS**

Jasprit Bumrah, who was the only player apart from Kohli to be named in both the sides.

The ODI team has opener Rohit Sharma, spinner Kuldeep Yadav and Bumrah from India along with Kohli, while England are represented by Joe Root, Jonny Bairstow, Jos Buttler and Ben Stokes.

The 30-year-old Kohli, who first came into limelight when he led India to victory at the ICC Under-19 World Cup in Malaysia in 2008, finished the year as the top-ranked batsman in Tests and ODIs.

The highest scorer in both forms of the game in 2018, he was one of only two batsmen to score more than 1,000 runs in Tests and only among three to do so in

ODI cricket.

Kohli was the unanimous choice of the voting academy for the Sir Garfield Sobers Trophy with South Africa fast bowler Kagiso Rabada coming in second to him for both this award and the Test Player of the Year honour.

"This is well-deserved recognition for an extraordinary talent. His regard for the game and particularly for Test cricket is also recognized and appreciated," ICC Chief Executive David Richardson said.

"He is passionate in his support of the longest form of the game and its continued importance... Virat has become a great ambassador for our sport," he added.

Afghanistan leg-spinner Rashid Khan was runner up to Kohli for the ICC ODI Player of the Year award.

India won six Tests and lost seven during the voting period that ran from January 1 to December 31, 2018. In ODIs, Kohli led India to nine victories, with four losses and one tied match.

This was also Kohli's second successive ODI Player of the Year award.

In other awards, the Indian under-19 team's World Cup triumph in New Zealand was declared the Fans Moment of the Year with 48 per cent of votes.

Sri Lanka's Kumar Dharmasena was voted Umpire of the Year by international captains and the ICC match referees, winning the David Shepherd Trophy for

a second time.

The ICC Spirit of Cricket Award went to New Zealand captain Kane Williamson for "continuing to be a shining role model of how our game should be played, his behaviour setting an outstanding example on and off the field."

## THE AWARDEES

**ICC Cricketer of the Year:** Virat Kohli

**ICC Test Cricketer of the Year:** Virat Kohli

**ICC ODI Cricketer of the Year:** Virat Kohli

**ICC Emerging Cricketer of the Year:** Rishabh Pant

**ICC Men's Test Team of the Year:** Tom Latham (New Zealand), Dimuth Karunaratne (Sri Lanka), Kane Williamson (New Zealand), Virat Kohli (India) (capt), Henry Nicholls (New Zealand), Jason Holder (Windies), Kagiso Rabada (South Africa), Nathan Lyon (Australia), Jasprit Bumrah (India), Mohammad Abbas (Pakistan)

**ICC Men's ODI team of the year:** Rohit Sharma (India), Jonny Bairstow (England), Virat Kohli (India) (capt), Joe Root (England), Ross Taylor (New Zealand), Jos Buttler (England) (wk), Ben Stokes (England), Mustafizur Rahman (Bangladesh), Rashid Khan (Afghanistan), Kuldeep Yadav (India), Jasprit Bumrah (India).

## SINGLES

**DEY ENTERS INDONESIA OPEN MAIN DRAW**

**JAKARTA:** Indian shuttler Subhankar Dey notched up successive wins in the men's singles qualifying round to make it to the main draw of the \$ 350,000 Indonesia Masters on Tuesday. Subhankar, who had clinched his maiden title at Saar LorLux Open in 2018, defeated Australia's Daniel Fan 21-11, 21-15 before overcoming local hope Gatra Piliang Fiqihila Cupu 21-18 in the second World Tour Super 50 tournament of the year. He will face former world champion Viktor Axelsen, seeded sixth, in the opening round of main draw on Wednesday. However, the Indian mixed doubles pair of Pranaav Chopra and Sikki Reddy crashed out of the tourney after losing 15-21, 15-21 to Tontowi Ahmad and Liliyana Natsir.

**INDIAN SELECTORS TO GET CASH AWARD**

**NEW DELHI:** The BCCI on Tuesday announced cash awards of ₹20 lakh each for the senior selection committee members following India's maiden Test series win in Australia. Virat Kohli led India to a historic 2-1 win in the four-Test series before capping the Australian tour with a maiden 2-1 triumph in the ODI series. "It has been decided that the selection committee comprising five members will get a bonus of ₹20 lakhs each," BCCI said in a release. The selection committee comprises chairman MSK Prasad, Devang Gandhi, Jatin Paranjpe, Gagan Khoda and Sandeep Singh. Earlier, BCCI had announced cash awards of ₹15 lakhs per match for each of the playing eleven that featured in India's maiden Test series win on Australian soil.

**JUVENTUS EASE PAST CHIEVO IN SERIE A**

**MILAN:** Cristiano Ronaldo missed a penalty but Italian league leaders Juventus eased past bottom club Chievo 3-0 to pull nine points clear on top of Serie A. Portuguese superstar Ronaldo was off-form in the first league game after a three-week winter break. The five-time Ballon d'Or winner missed numerous chances with Chievo goalkeeper Stefano Sorrentino denying Ronaldo, who has scored 14 times in the league, a first goal from the spot this season. But Juventus were never worried by Chievo with Douglas Costa and Emre Can scoring in the first half and Daniele Rugani heading in a third six minutes from time.

**BELLERIN OUT FOR UP TO 9 MONTHS**

**LONDON:** Arsenal announced on Tuesday that defender Hector Bellerin will be out of action for up to nine months after rupturing knee ligaments in his team's win against Chelsea. Bellerin, 23, went down unchallenged during the second half of Arsenal's 2-0 victory at the Emirates on Saturday and was carried off on a stretcher. The 23-year-old will now miss the remainder of the season, and possibly the start of the 2019/20 campaign. "Hector will undergo surgery to repair this in the coming days. The rehabilitation process is expected to take between six to nine months and therefore rules Hector out of action for the remainder of this season," the club said.

**BOATENG PREPARED FOR BIT-PART ROLE**

**BARCELONA:** Barcelona's new signing Kevin-Prince Boateng accepts he has joined the club to be a back-up after the 31-year-old was officially unveiled at the Camp Nou on Tuesday. Boateng has moved to Barca from Italian side Sassuolo on a six-month loan deal worth an initial one million euros, with the option to buy. He will provide cover up front for Luis Suarez and Lionel Messi after Munir El Haddadi was sold to Sevilla. "I know I have not come to play in the starting line-up because there are incredible players in this team. I'm here because of my experience and to help."

**Agencies**

## Ruthless Rafa enters semis

AFP ■ MELBOURNE

Rafael Nadal continued his relentless march towards an 18th major title on Tuesday as an emotional Petra Kvitova swept into her first Grand Slam semi-final since a terrifying knife attack almost ended her career.

On day nine of the Australian Open, the fairytale runs of Stefanos Tsitsipas and Danielle Collins were also extended as they too swept into the last four.

Second seed Nadal inched closer to winning an event he has only claimed once before when he trounced unseeded American Frances Tiafoe 6-3, 6-4, 6-2 in another ruthless display from a man who has not dropped a set so far.

Tiafoe had announced himself by beating fifth seed Kevin Anderson, but was no match for a player at the peak of his powers as he attempts to become only the third man to win all four Slams twice and the first to do so in the Open era.

"I had some trouble at this event all my career, so I'm very happy with the way I played tonight," said the Spaniard, who faces another young gun Tsitsipas in the semi-finals.

"I feel lucky to be where I am."

Greek sensation Tsitsipas powered into the last four with a measured 7-5, 4-6, 6-4, 7-6 (7/2) win over Spain's Roberto Bautista Agut.

The 20-year-old, who ended Swiss great Roger Federer's tournament, became the youngest man to reach the semi's at Melbourne Park since Andy Roddick in 2003 and the first player from Greece — man or woman — to go so far at Grand Slam.

"I'm just living the dream, living what I've been working hard for," said the 14th seed, who lives in Cyprus but trains at the academy of Serena Williams' coach Patrick Mouratoglou in France.

Czech Kvitova had not gone past the last eight at a major since a burglar slashed her left hand in December 2016, forcing her out of the game for six months and leaving her with lasting nerve damage in the fingers of her racquet hand.

But the eighth seed has bounced back and is on a sensational 10-match unbeaten streak after claiming the Sydney International warm-up title.

She proved too much for Ashleigh Barty, crushing the local hope 6-1, 6-4, and was in tears afterwards as she reflected on her long journey back to the top.

"Really, I didn't imagine to be back on this great stadium and play with the best," the two-time Wimbledon champion said.

"I'm calling it as my second career. So it's the first semi-final of the second career. I'm really enjoying it."

Kvitova will face unseeded American Collins in the semi-final on Thursday and she desperately wants to reach Saturday's decider.

"I want it bad, that's right," she said.

Collins, the world number 35, had never won a Grand Slam match before entering this year's tournament but she stunned three-time major champion and



Rafael Nadal celebrates after defeating American Frances Tiafoe in quarterfinal clash at Rod Laver Arena in Melbourne on Tuesday AP

## PAES-STOSUR CRASH OUT

PTI ■ MELBOURNE

Veteran Leander Paes and his partner Samantha Stosur suffered a second round defeat in the mixed doubles event, ending India's campaign at the season's first Grand Slam on Tuesday.

The unseeded pair of Paes and Stosur won the first set 6-4 against Anna-Lena Groenfeld and Robert Farah but conceded the second set with the same scoreline.

The third set went into tiebreak with the fifth seed German-Colombian duo emerging victorious 10-8.

Paes and Stosur had beaten the pair Dutch-Czech pairing of Wesley Koolhof Kweta Peschke in the round of 32.

The 45-year-old Paes had made a first round exit in the men's doubles event with partner Mexican Miguel Angel Reyes-Varela.

Jeevan Nedunchezhiyan and his partner Nicholas Monroe were also knocked out in the opening round of the event.

second seed Angelique Kerber in round four.

And the 25-year-old continued her Cinderella run by bouncing back spectacularly to down Russia's Anastasia Pavlyuchenkova 2-6, 7-5, 6-1 in the quarter-finals.



Stefanos Tsitsipas celebrates after defeating Roberto Bautista Agut AP



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## Big data shows B&R cooperation yields win-win results

**The Belt and Road Forum for International Cooperation was held successfully in May 2017. Thanks to joint efforts from all parties, the Belt and Road (B&R) construction has yielded fruitful achievements**

The Big Data Report on Trade Cooperation under the Belt and Road Initiative 2018, compiled by the national big data center of B&R Initiative under the State Information Center and the Dalian Infobank Co., was released officially on May 6.

Tong Youjun, director of the B&R foreign trade big data research center and chairman of Dalian Infobank Co., made an analysis on the report.

China's foreign trade with countries along the B&R routes has seen rapid growth, with import growth exceeding export growth for the first time. In 2017, the total import and export volume of China and the B&R countries reached 1440.32

billion U.S. dollars, up 13.4 percent year on year, which was 5.9 percentage points higher than China's overall foreign trade growth rate, and accounting for 36.2 percent of the country's total import and export trade volume.

In terms of countries, China's trade volume with Asia and Oceania accounted for more than 50 percent, of which China's trade with Central Asia saw the fastest growth. The Republic of Korea (ROK), Vietnam, Malaysia, India and Russia ranked the top five by foreign trade volume with China.

In terms of domestic regions, east China saw the total value of imports and

exports in 2017 with the B&R countries accounted for nearly 80 percent of China's foreign trade with those countries. Guangdong, Jiangsu, Zhejiang, Shandong and Shanghai were the top five by foreign trade with the B&R countries last year.

In terms of commodity structure, mechanical and electrical products were the key commodities that China exported to the B&R countries, while electrical machinery and mineral fuels belonged to the key commodities that China imported from those countries.

In terms of trade body, private enterprises were the main forces, while

state-owned enterprises' trade volume with the B&R countries saw a sharp increase. In 2017, the total imports and exports volume between China's private enterprises and their counterparts in the B&R countries stood at 619.8 billion U.S. dollars, accounting for 43.0 percent of China's total trade volume with those countries. State-owned enterprises saw the growth of imports and exports volume with the B&R countries grow the fastest, up 24.5 percent from that in 2016.

By Zhang Yuan

**Further reading:**  
The Belt and Road Fo-

rum for International Cooperation was held successfully in May 2017. Thanks to joint efforts from all parties, the Belt and Road (B&R) construction has yielded fruitful achievements.

The concept of "extensive consultation, joint contribution and shared benefits" upheld by the B&R has gained wide recognition in the global arena. The B&R Initiative has shown promising future.

By far, China has signed 103 cooperation agreements with 88 countries and international organizations under the B&R Initiative. Of the 279 items in the outcome list released at the B&R Forum for International

Cooperation held last year, 255 have been converted into normalized work and 24 have been advanced in an orderly way.

Statistics show that more than 8,000 China-Europe freight trains have been dispatched to 14 European countries and 42 cities. Goods traded between China and related countries have exceeded 5 trillion U.S. dollars. Silk Road Fund has supported 19 B&R projects involving 80 billion U.S. dollars. China has signed cultural agreements with over 60 countries under the International Coalition for Green Development on the B&R. (Xinhua Silk Road Information Service)

will be widely used in areas including land, forestry, environmental protection, water resources, agriculture, disaster alleviation, weather and oceans.

By the end of 2018, the center had been able to receive, store, process and distribute real-time remote sensing data from 26 domestic satellites. (Xinhua)

## SCIENCE

### China launches maritime silk road satellite data service

A maritime silk road satellite data service center has opened in Fuzhou, east China's Fujian Province, according to the website of State Administration of Science, Technology and Industry for National Defense.

The data service center, providing standard data products, value-added products and satellite remote sensing application system,

(Xinhua)

## CULTURE

### Yunnan lady collects 600-plus pieces of Qipao in 20 years

With an impressive collection of more than 600 pieces of Qipao (or cheongsam), a stylish traditional Chinese dress for ladies, Jin Mei from Kunming, Yunnan Province enjoys a widespread reputation in the collection circle.

When Jin Mei was a child, she once saw photos of her grandmother and mother wearing Qipao and became immediately fascinated by the elegance of the dress. Later, she studied in Yunnan University as a postgraduate major in museum studies, which had laid foundation for her future collection.

In twenty years, Jin Mei has spent more than one million yuan in collecting

Qipao, the oldest of which has a history of 100 years. She is increasingly well-known in the circle and visited by thousands of artists and collectors from all over the world. She even held a Qipao show in Kunming. As her collection continues to grow, Jin Mei began to consider how to pass on the Qipao art.

In 2016, Jin Mei quit her job and set up a study institute in Songming County of Kunming. She also opened a workshop at the foot of the city's West Mountain, in which eight dressmakers engage in making Qipao in traditional ways and restore its classic charm.

From the "Travel in Yunnan" app

### Jiaozi Snow Mountain, a winter gem in Yunnan



A motor workshop of Ruili Yinxiang Industrial Group near the China-Myanmar border.

By Liu Ziyu

Crude oil imports greatly increased the province's trade volume with Saudi Arabia, Oman, the United Arab Emirates, Kuwait and other Middle-East countries.

The provincial trade with the U.S. reached 4.96 billion yuan, an increase of 15%.

And trade between Yunnan and the Belt and Road countries recorded a 30.3% growth in 2018, with a total value of 133.16 billion yuan.

These countries accounted for a 67.5% lion's market share in the province's foreign trade.

Yunnan mainly exported produce, elec-

trical mechanical products, fertilizers and labor-intensive products, while importing crude oil, nat-

Jiaozi Snow Mountain, which is 4,247 meters high in altitude and 120 kilometers away from Kunming, capital of Southwest China's Yunnan province, draws tourists from around the country for its gorgeous winter scenery, especially after a snowfall. The name jiaozi, which literally means "sedan chair", was inspired by the mountain's shape, as it resembles a traditional bridal sedan chair.

### Lijiang honored as China Charm Tourism City



Lijiang, Southwest China's Yunnan province, was named "China Charm Tourism City" at the grand ceremony for the 2018 China Lijiang NetEase Attitude City and the NetEase Global City Partner Conference held on Jan 11 in Lijiang.

Judges stated that Lijiang embodies the wisdom of ancient civilizations and of people of all ethnicities. Its greatness lies in its harmonious mixture of natural and manmade beauty.

Lijiang has 20 A-level tourist sites, of which five are 5A-level and seven are 4A-level. In recent years, Lijiang has been strengthening order and supervision within its tourism market in an attempt to improve the quality and level of tourism services

in the city.

Lijiang currently has a complete tourism industry that involves food, housing, travel, shopping and entertainment, making it an extremely attractive destination for tourists in Yunnan and across China.

The Snow Mountain Academy lecture series of the Old Town of Lijiang, submitted by Lijiang, was awarded the City Attitude Political Energy Award.

In addition, Yulong Snow Mountain Scenic Area, the InterContinental Lijiang Ancient Town Resort and the tourism development committee of Lijiang won the awards for Most Popular Scenic Spot in Yunnan, Best Yunnan Hotel and Yunnan Development Contribution, respectively.

(Chinadaily)

## POVERTY ALLEVIATION

### Rural tourism helps fight poverty in Lufeng County



Located in the center of Yunnan's Chuxiong Yi Autonomous Prefecture, Lufeng County was once a less-developed area. By giving full play to its resource superiority in recent years, the locals have become better off and the county is enjoying new prospects.

Depending on the location advantages and rich land resources, villagers in Lufeng's Tuguan Township are encouraged to plant peach trees. Besides selling peaches, they also hold a Peach Cultural and Tourism Festival every year, which has drawn tens of thousands of tourists from other cities and prefectures of Yunnan.

With the help of the World Dinosaur Valley scenic

spot, Lufeng developed a tourism village featuring local delicacies, folk culture and sightseeing tours. Villagers sell specialties like preserved meat, free-range chickens, honey and walnuts as souvenirs. In nine months, more than 40 groups and 9,600 visitors have paid study tours to the village.

To lift more people out of poverty, a number of scientific and technical corporations and biotechnology companies have been introduced to the county to set up branches in an agricultural industry park. Many families have become raw material suppliers for these companies which also provide jobs for the locals.

(Cxwhy wechat account)

## COOPERATION

### Yunnan foreign trade up by 24.7% in 2018

Yunnan's foreign trade volume in 2018 amounted to 197.3 billion yuan (around 29.22 billion U.S. dollars), a year-on-year increase of 24.7%.

According to Kunming Customs, Yunnan export value last year reached 84.77 billion yuan, up by 9.4%. Meanwhile, imports of the province added up to 112.53 billion yuan, an increase of 39.3%.

In 2018, the trade volume between Yunnan and ASEAN accounted for 46.1% of the province's foreign trade. Within ASEAN, Myanmar, Vietnam, Laos and Thailand are major trading partners

of Yunnan. Crude oil imports greatly increased the province's trade volume with Saudi Arabia, Oman, the United Arab Emirates, Kuwait and other Middle-East countries. The provincial trade with the U.S. reached 4.96 billion yuan, an increase of 15%. And trade between Yunnan and the Belt and Road countries recorded a 30.3% growth in 2018, with a total value of 133.16 billion yuan. These countries accounted for a 67.5% lion's market share in the province's foreign trade.

Yunnan mainly exported produce, elec-

trical gas, metal minerals, sulfur and others from its trading partners.

By Liu Ziyu

### 60,000 ears of corns add happiness to Chinese New Year



"The big red lantern means good luck in China and corn symbolizes the harvest. With the approach of The Spring Festival, Daguan Commercial City is decorated in a new way to provide a good shopping environment for local people," a person in charge said. Recently, when passing by Qingfeng Street in Daguan Commercial City, citizens were attracted by corn and lanterns hanging on the wall and stopped to take photos. It is reported that 60,000 ears of corns were used to decorate Qingfeng Street for an agricultural art display, which not only imply the joy of harvest but also enable Kunming people to closely experience the agricultural culture.

Photo by Yang Zheng

## EXCHANGES

### Yoga school to expand training across China

The China-India Yoga College plans to expand its training beyond Kunming, the capital of Southwest China's Yunnan province, as yoga gains popularity in China as a healthy lifestyle choice.

The college opened its first branch on Dec 24 at Yunnan University in the city of Lijiang as part of its nationwide partnership with universities.

A total of 50 branches will be set up to boost yoga education and teacher train-

ing, according to Chen Luyan, dean of the China-India Yoga College.

Nearly 100 yoga teaching and training centers will also be built to provide teacher training courses, yoga workshops and non-profit courses, according to Chen.

The China-India Yoga College recruits undergraduates and postgraduates at Yunnan Minzu University. It was founded in June 2015 as part of a China-India cultural exchange program.

(By Caozinan)



Students at Yunnan Minzu University are training