

OPINION 8
 THE TRIPOD OF RIGHTS

WORLD 12
 20 DEAD AS BOMBS TARGET SUNDAY MASS IN PHILIPPINES

SPORT 16
 SAINA WINS INDONESIA MASTERS TITLE

NEW DELHI, MONDAY JANUARY 28, 2019; PAGES 16 ₹3



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I CAN DO MORE THAN COMEDY: SHREYAS 13 VIVACITY

CAPSULE

TRAIN 18 NAMED VANDE BHARAT EXPRESS
 New Delhi: Acknowledging its made-in-India status, the Indian Railways has named the indigenously manufactured semi-fast Train 18 as Vande Bharat Express, which will ply from Delhi to Varanasi. P5

AGRI PACKAGE FOR FARMERS LIKELY TODAY
 New Delhi: The Cabinet on Monday is likely to approve a package for farmers to boost their income and address distress in the farm sector, sources said, adding that the move will come ahead of the general elections. P4

LEFT GOVT DISRESPECTS KERALA CULTURE: MODI
 Thiruvananthapuram: Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Sunday lashed out at the CPI(M)-led Government in Kerala and said the Sabarimala issue had exposed how the communist Government is trying to disrespect the Kerala culture. P7

INCREASE INSTITUTIONS OF EMINENCE TO 30: PANEL
 New Delhi: The Empowered Expert Committee set by the HRD Ministry has recommended to increase the number of Institutions of Eminence to 30 from the current 20.

Queer turn in CBI probe against Kochhars

Agency shifts IO, orders enquiry into his role in leak of information about raids

RAKESH K SINGH ■ NEW DELHI

The Chanda Kochhar graft case took a curious turn on Sunday with the CBI claiming that it transferred investigating officer Sudhanshu Dhar Mishra to Ranchi after a "discreet" enquiry against Mishra suggested his role in leaking information about the searches against the accused persons. Following this, the searches were conducted after the charge was given to new investigating officer Mohit Gupta, agency sources said.

Mishra was transferred a day after he registered the FIR on January 22 against Chanda Kochhar, her husband Deepak Kochhar and Videocon Group MD Venugopal Dhoot for graft and criminal conspiracy. Gupta took the charge on January 23 and the searches were conducted the next day.

CBI officials said after a review some time ago, the preliminary enquiry (PE) was sped up and was converted into a regular case. Immediately after the registration of the case,



the probe officials proposed searches on the premises of the accused persons, the officials said.

However, a discreet enquiry was conducted as it was suspected that there was a possibility of information

Riddle wrapped in enigma

But the IO could have been made a scapegoat for the delay in converting PE into a regular case as the question remains unanswered as to why other senior officers in the supervisory loop kept silent over the procrastination. Another question that remains unanswered by the CBI is that if Mishra was suspected of leaking the information then why he was allowed to file the FIR especially when the agency had inputs on his role in delaying the preliminary enquiry

regarding searches being leaked, agency officials claimed. "A discreet enquiry was conducted and role of the Superintendent of Police and IO in the ICICI loan scam case, Sudhanshu Dhar Mishra, was

strongly suspected. Hence he has been transferred pending detailed enquiry in the matter," a CBI official said.

"ICICI Bank case is one of the very important cases that was pending without progress," claimed an agency official, adding, the role of Mishra and others, if any, in "keeping the PE pending" is also being looked into.

Interestingly, the CBI did not issue any formal statement on the controversy surrounding Mishra's transfer.

The CBI sources sought to justify the transfer blaming Mishra for keeping the preliminary enquiry pending without any reasons. But Mishra could have been made a scapegoat for the delay as the question remains unanswered as to why other senior officers in the supervisory loop kept silent over the procrastination in converting the PE into a regular case. Senior officials cannot escape responsibility for the delay in conversion of the preliminary enquiry into a regular case as there is an e-office

system in place in the agency and every one can see the status of a particular case at the click of a button, the sources further said.

Another question that remains unanswered by the CBI is that if Mishra was suspected of leaking the information then why he was allowed to file the FIR especially when the agency had inputs on his role in delaying the preliminary enquiry.

The officials also did not elaborate on the name of officials who cleared the registration of the FIR in the ICICI loan fraud case.

The agency had on January 24 conducted searches on the premises of Videocon Group in Mumbai and offices of Nupower Renewables and Supreme Powers in Mumbai and Aurangabad. Nupower Renewables and Supreme Powers are controlled by Chanda Kochhar's husband Deepak Kochhar.

The FIR alleged that during the tenure of Chanda Kochhar as MD of ICICI, six

loans worth ₹1,875 crore were cleared for Videocon Group and its associated companies in which in two cases she herself was on the sanctioning committees.

In its FIR, the CBI has also named several top bankers, including the present CEO of ICICI Bank Sandeep Baxi, alleging that they were also members of the sanctioning committees to give loan to Videocon.

The role of Chairman of New Development Bank KV Kamath, Goldman Sachs India chairman Sonjoy Chatterjee, Standard Chartered Bank CEO Zarin Daruwala, Tata Capital head Rajiv Sabharwal and Tata Capital senior advisor Homi Khusrookhan need to be investigated, according to the FIR.

The names of these bankers figure in the FIR that was registered after a year-long PE.

Following reports of the ICICI case FIR, former Finance Minister Arun Jaitley advised the CBI against "investigative adventurism".

E-rickshaws seize power, cost discoms ₹150cr/year

Electricity theft cases high as only 1/4 of 1 lakh e-ricks registered

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI



Power distribution companies in the national Capital are putting the annual loss at approximately ₹150 crore due to organised theft of electricity for charging e-rickshaws. Power experts and discom sources said the organised racket of power theft is being run due to lack of proper charging facilities in the city, especially in areas close to metro stations.

As per estimates, there are more than one lakh e-rickshaws plying on the city roads and only one-fourth of them are registered, despite a subsidy scheme provided to them by the Government.

"Considering that most of the e-rickshaws are not registered, the loss due to charging through illegal connections is around ₹150 crore," they said.

There are three power distribution companies — BYPL and BRPL of BSES, and Tata Power Delhi Distribution (TPDDL) — that supply electricity in Delhi.

"We are committed to eradicate the menace of power theft and keeping a close watch on the illegal e-charging set-ups in the area of distribution. I appeal to all e-rickshaws own-

ers to take legitimate connections and charge their vehicles in a legitimate and safe manner," TPDDL CEO Sanjay Banga told PTI.

On an average, an e-rickshaw consumes around 7-10 units per day. This comes to about 2,500-3,600 units per e-rickshaw per annum. Power theft is at its peak at night due to bulk charging at facilities set up by the racketeers, discom sources said.

There are scores of areas across the city where such rackets operate, although police help is sought whenever they are detected, added the sources.

Sangam Vihar, Kalkaji, Tughlakabad, Sarai Kale Khan, Dakshin Puri, Raghuraj Nagar, Tagore Garden, Madipur, Seelampur, Yamuna Vihar, Shastrri Park, Karawal Nagar, Mustafabad, Nand Nagri, Karol Bagh, Keeskarwala Keshampuram, Civil Lines are some areas where power theft for e-rickshaw charging is "rampant", discom sources said.

"Most of these e-rickshaws are charged in batches as part of an organised illegal network controlled by local strongmen. The e-rickshaw owners pay fixed money in the range of ₹100 to ₹150 per day to the "parking and charging" mafia. This comes down to ₹50 per e-rickshaw if charged through a legal connection," they claimed.

In the latest tariff order, the Delhi Electricity Regulatory Commission has fixed the rate of ₹5.50 per unit for e-rickshaw charging.

A TPDDL spokesperson said illegal charging of e-rickshaws is a "big menace" and results in approximately 40 lakh KWh of power loss every year to the company that supplies electricity to north and northwest parts of the city.

The company is employing technology to track power theft in its area of distribution and has installed AMR (Automated Meter Reading) based energy systems at distribution transformers.

Continued on Page 4

SC puts off Ayodhya hearing as Justice Bobde not available

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Sunday cancelled the January 29 hearing of Ram Janambhoomi-Babri Masjid land title dispute case due to non-availability of one of the judges of the five-judge Constitution Bench hearing the matter causing further delay in settling the politically sensitive issue.

"The sitting of the Constitution Bench, headed by Chief Justice of India (CJI) Ranjan Gogoi, stands cancelled as Justice SA Bobde will not be available on January 29," said a notice issued by the Supreme Court registry.

"Take notice that due to non-availability of Justice SA Bobde on January 29, 2019 (Tuesday), sitting of Constitution Bench in Chief Justice's court, comprising the Chief Justice, Justices SA Bhushan and SA Nazeer, stands cancelled.

"Therefore, Constitution Bench matter will not be taken up for hearing," the notice stated.

The five-judge Bench was re-constituted on January 25 as Justice UU Lalit, who was a member of the original Bench, had recused himself from hearing the matter. When the new Bench was constituted, Justice NV Ramana was also excluded from the re-constituted Bench.



No reason was cited for the exclusion of Justice Ramana in the new Constitution Bench.

In the fresh Bench, justices Bhushan and Nazeer made a comeback to hear the matter.

Both of them were part of an earlier Bench headed by then CJI Dipak Misra (now retired). It had on September 27, 2018, refused to refer to a five-judge Constitution Bench the reconsideration of the observation in its 1994 judgment that a mosque was not integral to Islam.

While Misra and Bhushan had said it has to find out the context in which the five-judge Bench had delivered the 1994 judgment, Justice Nazeer had given a minority verdict disagreeing with the two judges. Nazeer had said whether a mosque is integral to Islam has to be decided considering religious belief which requires detailed consideration.

On January 10, Justice Lalit had recused himself after expressing disinclination to participate in the hearing any further as he had appeared as a lawyer for former Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Kalyan Singh in a related matter "sometime in the year 1997".

Bulandshahr slain cop's phone found in key accused's house

Prashant Natt who allegedly shot the inspector is in jail since December 18

PTI ■ MEERUT



The official mobile phone of an inspector killed in the December mob violence in Uttar Pradesh's Bulandshahr district has been recovered from the residence of the man who allegedly shot him, officials said on Sunday.

The recovery comes nearly two months after the incident in Bulandshahr's Siana area where on December 3 a mob fought pitched battles with police, apparently after right-wing activists were angered by the discovery of cow carcasses strewn outside a village.

Inspector Subodh Kumar's phone with a CUG (closed user group) number was recovered along with five more phones on Saturday from the house of key accused Prashant Natt, a senior police officer said. Natt, who had allegedly shot the inspector during the violence, was arrested on December 18 from Sikandrabad and is languishing in prison.

"We had got information from sources that inspector Subodh Kumar's mobile phone could be kept hidden at Natt's house and we procured a search warrant from the court to check his place," Additional

Superintendent of Police, City, Atul Kumar Shrivastava, said.

"The CUG mobile phone of the inspector was recovered from Natt's house during the search. Some other phones were also found and all the phones have been sent to a forensic lab for finding more details like their call records," he told reporters.

However, the pistol that was used to open fire on the inspector is still missing, and the Additional SP said a "search is on for it".

Natt, 26, a resident of Chingrawathi village, would work part-time as a driver in Delhi and nearby areas, and other times worked locally as a labourer, police said.

During the violence, 20-year-old Chingrawathi resident Sumit Kumar was also killed of gunshot.

An FIR was lodged at the Siyana police station against at least 80 people for murder, attempt to murder, rioting,

sedition, damaging public property, among other charges. Twenty-seven were named.

"So far, 38 accused have been arrested in connection with the violence," Siyana Circle Officer Raghendra Mishra told PTI on Sunday.

Those arrested include Bajrang Dal's Bulandshahr unit convener Yogesh Raj, Bharatiya Janata Yuva Morcha's Siyana unit head Shikhar Agarwal, Army jawan Jeetender Malik, and Kalua, who first attacked the inspector, surrounded by five to six men.

A separate FIR for cow slaughter was filed on December 3 in which six accused have been arrested.

Three of them, Azhar Khan, Mehboob Ali and Nadeem Khan, were on January 14 booked under the National Security Act by the Bulandshahr administration, which said their release may disrupt public order.

Pench Princess on record-breaking spree, proud mother of 8th litter

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

A Royal Bengal tigress in Madhya Pradesh's Pench Tiger Reserve (PTR), popularly known as Collarwali Baghin, continues to break records as she has yet again given birth — the eighth time — to four cubs. Before this eighth litter, she was already a proud mother of 26 cubs.

The heartwarming news has come on the eve of an international meet being held in Delhi from Monday where 12 tiger-range countries will discuss the status of target set in 2010 to double global wild tiger population.

In 2010, 13 countries had committed to and endorsed the St Petersburg declaration for doubling global wild tiger population and the global tiger recovery programme. This is the third such stocktaking after two previous ones in 2012 and

2014, which were held in Delhi and Dhaka, respectively.

Globally, between 3,500 and 3,800 tigers are estimated to be in the wild with 2,226 of them in India alone.

Collarwali, who lives in the Karmajhiri range in the core area of Pench, had given birth to 26 cubs in seven litters between 2008 and 2017, field director Subhranjan Sen said. Officially called T-15, she is a major tourist attraction at the tiger reserve and has become almost as popular as "Machhli", the legendary Ranthambore National Park tigress who died last year.

The Department of Posts had issued a special cover envelope featuring Collarwali last year. Also called the "Queen of Pench" and "Pench Princess", Collarwali was born to another famous tigress, "Barimada", who featured in the documentary Spy in the Jungle.



The radio collar that lent her name "Collarwali Baghin" had been fitted on her in 2009, when she was four, for monitoring her movement. Just four of the reserve's 50 tigers and tigresses are radio-collared. The collar fitted on the "Collarwali Baghin" worked for about two years, and fell off

her neck in August 2016.

While India and Nepal have doubled their tiger population since the 2010 declaration, officials from the National Tiger Conservation Authority (NTCA) said, most other countries, with the exception of Thailand, are largely struggling.

Banks authorised to seek lookout notice against wilful defaulters

New Delhi: In a bid to prevent big economic offenders like Vijay Mallya and Nirav Modi from fleeing the country, the Government has empowered PSU banks to request lookout circulars (LOCs) against wilful defaulters and fraudsters, officials said on Sunday.

The Home Ministry has also authorised the Serious Fraud Investigation Office (SFIO) to request LOCs if it feels the suspect may flee India.

The Ministry issued two circulars, authorising CMD or CEO of public sector banks and the SFIO to request designated authorities to issue LOCs against any wilful defaulter or fraudster if they think the person may flee the country.

Detailed report on P10



T-15, popularly known as Collarwali Baghin or Queen of Pench or Pench Princess

City's air quality continues to stay poor

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Delhi's tryst with poor and highly toxic air quality continues unabated with Sunday being no exception. The air quality was recorded in the 'poor category' and it may deteriorate further due to drop in wind speed that slows down dispersion of pollutants. The neighboring districts such as Gautam Budh Nagar, Faridabad, Ghaziabad, Gurugram and Greater Noida also recorded 'poor' air quality, officials said.

According to the Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB) data, the overall air quality index (AQI) in the city was 269, which falls in the 'poor' category. Though, the

Air quality in the national capital had drastically improved after heavy rains and was recorded in the 'satisfactory' category. An AQI between 100 and 200 comes under 'moderate' category, 201 and 300 is considered 'poor', 301 and 400 'very poor', while that between 401 and 500 is 'severe'.

The overall PM2.5 level — fine particulate matters in the air with a diameter of less than 2.5 micrometers — in Delhi was 131, while the PM10 level was 205, it said.

The Centre-run System of Air Quality and Weather Forecasting (SAFAR) said current air quality of Delhi is in 'poor' category. As per SAFAR forecast, air quality is likely to deteriorate towards lower-end

of very poor as cold wave conditions are looming large. The cold wave conditions will tend to slow down the wind speed.

"Gentle fog is now mainly confined to early morning hours. The AQI may slowly deteriorate and predicted to

touch lower end of very poor range during next two days and then may improve if rainfall occurs," the SAFAR said.

Temperature to dip further

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

With weatherman recording 5.2 degrees Celsius on Sunday, four notches below the average, the temperature is likely to dip further.

Sunday's maximum temperature settled at 18.8 degrees Celsius, three notches below the average for this time of the season.

The India Meteorological

Department (IMD) has forecast the temperature to dip further on Monday with cold wave conditions during the day and moderate fog in the morning.

"Clear sky with strong surface winds during the day and cold wave conditions are likely to prevail at isolated pockets," an official said.

The maximum and mini-

mum temperatures on Monday are likely to settle around 19 and 4 degrees Celsius respectively, the official added.

The humidity levels oscillated between 100 and 49 per cent.

On Saturday, the minimum temperature settled at 10 degrees Celsius while the maximum temperature settled at 18.6 degrees Celsius.

Decomposed bodies of elderly couple found in apartment

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

In a shocking incident reported from Southeast Delhi's Amar Colony, the decomposed bodies of an elderly couple were found inside their residence at Mount Kailash apartment on Saturday.

According to police, a police control room (PCR) call was received on Saturday at around 10.30 am regarding a senior citizen who had reportedly gone missing.

The complainant told police that their last conversation on phone was on January 16, 2019, following which the senior citizen could

not be contacted. "The caller then approached Amar Colony police station and police rushed to the address of the senior citizen only to find that the flat was locked from the inside.

The phone number was switched off and hence at the insistence of relative and neighbours, the lock of the flat was broken," said Deputy Commissioner of Police (Southeast) Chinmoy Biswal.

The house was searched and police discovered the decomposed bodies of an elderly man and woman lying in the floor of one room.

"The deceased were identified as Virender Kumar Khaneja (77) a retiree from private sector along with his wife Sarla (72). Their son Amit Khaneja lives in USA and does not come here," said the DCP, adding that beat officials were paying regular visits to the couple. "Their last visit was on January 15, 2019. Beat staffs had fixed their water problem," he said.

Prima facie police said that there were no signs of forced entry into the residence. "Further investigation is ongoing into the unnatural death of the couple," the DCP added.

Traffic to be diverted today for Beating Retreat drill

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

The Delhi Police have put up an elaborate traffic arrangements for the rehearsal of Beating Retreat and Illumination which will be held at Vijay Chowk on Monday.

Delhi Traffic Police have planned traffic diversions which will be in force from 3.30 pm to 9.30 pm.

According to the official statement issued, Vijay Chowk will remain closed for general traffic.

Traffic will not be allowed on the following stretches, Rafi Marg between Sunehri Masjid and Krishi Bhawan, Raisina Road from Krishi Bhawan towards Vijay Chowk, beyond Dalhousie Road, Krishna Menon Marg and Sunehri Masjid towards Vijay Chowk and Rajpath between Vijay Chowk and "C" — Hexagon which will be totally pedestrianised.

Parking will be

available after 7 pm for those coming to see illumination behind the water channels between Rafi Marg and 'C' Hexagon.

DTC and other city buses will also be diverted from their normal routes from 3.30 pm to 9.30 pm, buses bound for Central Secretariat and Connaught Place coming from Shantipath will be taking the Panchsheel Marg-Simon Boliver Marg-Vande Matram Marg—Shankar Road to Park Street and buses bound for Central Secretariat will terminate at Udyan Marg and return via Kali Bari Marg-Mandir Marg to Shankar Road, it said.

Connaught Place bound buses will be taking Mandir Marg, Kali Bari Marg, GPO.-Baba Khadag Singh Marg to reach Connaught Place and return via Bhagat Singh Marg - Peshwa Road-Mandir Marg-Shankar Road and Vande Matram Marg.

Buses coming from South

Delhi on Tuglak Road and bound for Connaught Place and Central Secretariat will be diverting from Aurobindo Chowk to Safdarjung Road-Kamal Attaturk Marg-Panchsheel Marg — Simon Boliver Marg.

Buses coming to Mandi House and Feroz Shah Road and proceeding to Connaught Place via Barakhamba Road will terminate at Shivaji Stadium and return via Kasturba Gandhi Marg.

Connaught Place bound buses coming on Shahjahan Road will be proceeding to Shivaji Stadium via 'C' Hexagon to KG Marg.

Further, Joint Commissioner of Police (Traffic) Alok Kumar has also requested the general public to observe the traffic rules and follow the directions of traffic personnel deployed at all intersections and updates would be shared through various social media handles of the Delhi Traffic Police.

Sheila accuses BJP, AAP of reneging on promises

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Delhi Congress president Sheila Dikshit on Sunday accused the Bharatiya Janta Party (BJP) and the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) of reneging on promises made to the people of the city and said her party would win all the Lok Sabha seats in the national Capital in the upcoming general election.

Accusing the AAP of making tall claims instead of working for the people, she asked the people not to vote for it in the Lok Sabha elections. "The Lok Sabha polls are very important, do not vote for a party that tells lies and makes promises only," she said.

Dikshit asserted that the Congress was on the rebound in Delhi and people wanted it to form the next Government at the Centre. "This large gathering rekindles hope that the Congress will win all the seven seats in Delhi," she said.

People still remember the development Congress Governments brought to the city, Dikshit, a three-time chief minister of Delhi, said. "They voted for the BJP and the AAP in previous elections but got lies

and hollow promises in return," she alleged.

Mounting an attack on the BJP, Dikshit said the national capital was the filthiest under the party-ruled municipal corporations. "I had never seen Delhi so filthy before," she said.

Dikshit attacked Modi Government, saying its decisions like the Goods and Services Tax and demonetisation have had a negative impact on people.

"What happened to the promise of giving ₹15 lakh and bringing back black money. The BJP only misled people," she charged.

She said that during the Congress rule, the metro fares were hiked only twice, whereas the Kejriwal Government raised the fares twice in a year.

The Metro project was never delayed when the Congress was in power. Now, the Phase III of the Metro was running behind schedule and there was no news about when will phase IV start, she said.

Dikshit also attacked the AAP Government over the worsening public transport system and air quality in Delhi.



DPCC president Sheila Dikshit with working presidents Rajesh Lilothia and Harun Yusuf during workers meeting. Ranjan Dimri | Pioneer

Underground reservoir foundation laid in Patparganj

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

In its constant endeavour to provide uninterrupted water supply and sewerage infrastructure and to keep pace with the growing water demands in the national Capital, Delhi Deputy Chief Minister Manish Sisodia on Sunday laid the foundation stone of underground reservoir (UGR) and a booster pumping station (BPS) at Patparganj with 110 lakh litre capacity.

Addressing the gathering, Sisodia said that with the commencing of the project, uninterrupted water supply would be ensured in the area. "We have been working on the project for two years and feeling happy to inaugurate it. This project is scheduled to be completed in 24 months but I request authorities and officials to complete it before the deadline," he said.

The project has been designed to cater the need of people considering future population growth in the area in coming 15- 20 years, Sisodia said.

He also announced to open a Mohalla Clinic to provide healthcare facilities in the surrounding areas.

The move came in line with the objectives of the Delhi Government to improve water supply in the city and the providing better living conditions in the area, a senior Delhi Jal Board official said.

The official said that the project is another brick in the consistent efforts of the Delhi Government to bring such areas into its improved water supply network. "The Board is trying its best to provide consumers with an efficient water management system and has rationalised water distribution in the national capital," he said.

The work of 110 lakh liters capacity UGR & BPS and laying of peripheral main in Patparganj would be completed within 24 months and would benefit more than one lakh residents of the area.

Once completed, the project will benefit more than one lakh residents living in areas such as Acharya Niketan, Pratap Nagar, Shashi Garden, Jawahar Mohalla, Bismil Camp,



Pandav Nagar and adjoining areas. The total cost to be incurred on this project is approximately 30.34 crores. Vice Chairman Dinesh Mohaniya and senior officials of the Delhi Jal Board (DJB) also attended the function.

Minor tries to do A Wednesday, loclas save him from certain jail

SP SINGH ■ GHAZIABAD

Inspired by the movie, "A Wednesday" a minor in Ghaziabad threatened to rock the city by planting bombs on January 26, 2019, Republic Day, said police on Sunday.

The police said that on January 24 evening and also on January 25 morning, 'UP 100' received a threatening call on its internet portal.

The caller gave a threat that he will plant bombs in several strategic locations in Kavi Nagar Police Station area and blast them simultaneously.

The threat being grave in nature, the police registered a case and initiated an investigation.

During investigation, it was found that the call had been made from a laptop internet portal connected to a Wifi from Hans Apartments, Radiant School, in RK Puram, falling under Kavi Nagar Police Station area of this city.

The investigation officer who quickly solved the mystery, found a minor involved in the crime.

To mislead the police, the accused who posted the threat gave the mobile number of a family friend on the portal. But during interrogation, he cracked and confessed to the crime.

However, as the local residents collectively requested the police to be lenient, the police released the child with a warning.

Earlier, the UP 100 received a threatening call on which basis police solved the mystery in which the caller posted threat to blow up several important places in Kavi Nagar Police Station area of Ghaziabad, under whose jurisdiction many central Government offices fall.

"Though the case was solved on the very first day itself, seeing the gravity, it was documented" said SP City Shlok Kumar.

30-yr-old man beaten to death by mother, lover

New Delhi: A 30-year-old man was allegedly beaten to death by his mother and her lover on Saturday night at East Delhi's New Ashok Nagar area. The man had allegedly seen his mother and her lover in a questionable position, following which, they got into a fight. Enraged, the mother and her lover reportedly beat him to death with bricks and stones.

The deceased was identified as Ravindra (30). It was revealed that he lived with his mother Subhadra (51), her lover Ajit (30) and their three-month-old son. He was reportedly aware of their relationship but was not happy with it.

On Saturday night, Ravindra had come home drunk and saw his mother and her lover in an objectionable state. This led to an argument which turned violent. His mother Subhadra and Ajit brutally beat him up resulting in his death. They did not inform anyone until the Sunday morning, when they called an ambulance, sources said.

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1.	Appointment of Project Management Agency (PMA) for Construction of 10Nos GIS Substation in UPCL under Integrated Power Development Scheme(IPDS)	CCP-1/59/2018-2019	0.43 Crore	1.29 Crore	0.86 Lakh	2,360.00	18/02/2019 upto 17:00 Hrs	19/02/2019 at 15:30 Hrs

For further details, please visit the website:www.uktenders.gov.in
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23 police officer get medal for exemplary service

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Twenty-three Delhi Police officers including six women have been awarded police medal for their services on Republic Day.

Four police officials have been awarded with medals for gallantry and two officers have received President's police medal for distinguished service, while 17 police officials have received medal for meritorious service.

Nuzhat Hassan, special commissioner of police and RA Sanjeev, additional commissioner of police, were awarded President's Police Medals for distinguished service.

Four police personnel were awarded Police Medals for gallantry. Among the four who

have been awarded with Police Medals for gallantry are inspectors Rahul Kumar and Ravinder Kumar Tyagi and assistant sub-inspectors Rajendra Kumar and Gurmeet Singh.

Rahul Kumar was part of the 2008 encounter at Batla House in Delhi in which two suspected terrorists, Atif alias Bashir and Mohd Sajid alias Pankaj and police officer MC Sharma were killed.

The Batla House encounter, as it came to be known as, had taken place on September 19, 2008, and two suspects were arrested.

The deceased and other militants arrested were found responsible for over 65 terror incidents in different parts of India.

Four police personnel were awarded Police Medals for gallantry. Among the four who have been awarded with Police Medals for gallantry are inspectors Rahul Kumar and Ravinder Kumar Tyagi and assistant sub-inspectors Rajendra Kumar and Gurmeet Singh

Seventeen personnel have been awarded Police Medals for meritorious service.

Among those to be awarded are AK Singla, additional commissioner of police (crime), who had served as DCP (election cell), and Joy Tirkey, deputy commissioner of police (crime), who has been involved in the investigation of sensitive cases like the CBSE paper leak and the mysterious

Burari deaths. Others have been awarded Police Medals for meritorious service are additional CP Raj Kumar Singh, Geeta Rani Verma, DCP, Mohammad Iqbal, assistant commissioner of police, inspectors Atul Kumar Verma, Ravinder Kumar Tyagi and Jai Shree Gosain, sub-inspectors Kausal Kumari and Mahesh Singh, assistant sub-inspectors Satender Singh and Rajbir Singh, head constables Virender Singh, Prem Chand, Jagannivasan R, Poonam Verma and Promila.

Inspector Jai Shree Gosain, has been awarded with the Police Medal, joined Delhi Police as an ASI in 1988. From 2000 to 2013, she was posted

with the Special Cell and was involved in operations resulting in the elimination of over 60 militants and other criminals.

This included Parliament House shootout case of 2001 in which four militants were arrested and a large quantity of explosives along with Rs 10 lakh were recovered and the Red Fort shootout.

Inspector Atul Kumar Verma, who has been awarded the Police

Medal, has cracked several important cases including Dhaula Kuan Rape Case of 2010, murder of TV Journalist Soumya Vishwanath, murder of IT executive Jigisha Ghosh and the recent sensational murder of an RTI activist in Taimur Nagar.

Mega Foundation Stone Laying Ceremony of

11,000 New Classrooms

in Delhi Government Schools



Monday, 28th January, 2019 at 10 AM

Venue: Sarvodaya Kanya Vidyalaya, New Friends Colony, Delhi

Chief Guest

Arvind Kejriwal

Chief Minister, Delhi

Guest of Honour

Manish Sisodia

Dy. Chief Minister, Delhi

Presided by

Satyendar Jain

PWD Minister, Delhi

In august presence of

Hon'ble MLAs

Parent-Teacher Meeting (PTM)

28th January 2019 (Monday)

Morning Shift : 10:00 AM to 01:00 PM | Evening Shift : 02:00 PM to 05:00 PM

(10 AM onwards- Live streaming of Mega foundation stone laying ceremony of 11000 New Classrooms)

If your child is studying in a Delhi Govt. school, make sure you attend the PTM. Meet all your child's teachers and discuss the issues related to your child's education.

- Manish Sisodia, Dy. Chief Minister, Delhi

Cabinet may approve relief package for farmers today

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The Union Cabinet is expected to soon approve a relief package for farmers grappling with falling prices of their crops and to tackle distress in the farm sector, according to sources.

The likely relief package is seen as an attempt to assuage the farming community's discontent ahead of the general elections.

...The Agriculture Ministry's proposal on addressing income deficit syndrome of small and marginal farmers is on the agenda (at the Cabinet meeting), a source said.

Meanwhile, the Cabinet has deferred its meeting which was scheduled for Monday, as per sources.

The Agriculture Minister

has recommended several options to provide both short and long-term solutions to address agrarian distress. However, a final call will be taken in the Cabinet meeting as a huge cost is involved, they said.

One of the options proposed is waiving interest on crop loans for farmers who pay on time, costing an additional ₹15,000 crore to the exchequer.

There is also a proposal to completely waive premium for taking insurance policy for food crops. The Centre is also evaluating the scheme followed by the Telangana and Odisha Governments wherein a fixed amount is transferred directly into the bank account of farmers, the sources further said.

Agriculture Minister

Radha Mohan Singh had recently indicated that the government would announce an agriculture package before the 2019-20 budget. The NDA government will present an interim budget on February 1.

Experts said the government has less time to implement any new scheme. The measure has to be such that it can be implemented faster to reap the political gains during the elections.

It may be noted that the central government has taken farmers' issues seriously after the ruling BJP was defeated in Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan and Chhattisgarh in the recent state polls, where rural distress was a key factor.

Farmers are in distress owing to fall in prices of most crops in view of bumper crop.

Pak team arrives in India, to visit Chenab basin in J&K

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

A Pakistani delegation arrived in India on Sunday to visit the Chenab river basin in Jammu & Kashmir for inspection, as mandated under the Indus Water Treaty, sources said.

Pakistan's Indus Commissioner Syed Mohammad Mehar Ali Shah arrived in Amritsar along with his two advisers, sources said.

"This tour is an obligation imposed on both the countries by the Indus Waters Treaty 1960 between India and Pakistan. Under the treaty, both the commissioners are mandated to inspect sites and works on both the sides of Indus basin in a block of five years," a senior official said.

Since signing of the treaty, a total of 118 such tours on both the sides have been

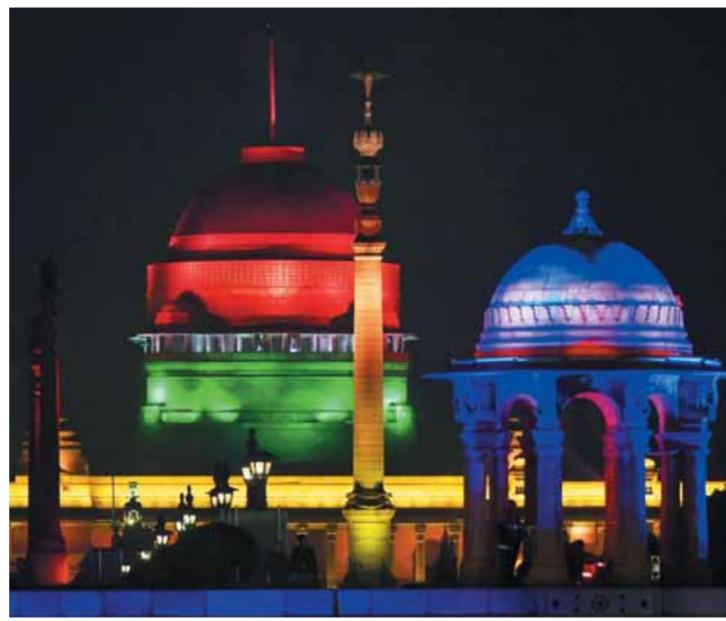
undertaken.

The last tours of the commission in Pakistan and India were held in July 2013 and September 2014, respectively. No tour could be held in the current five years block, which ends in March 2020.

This tour will be followed by a visit of India's Indus Commissioner to Pakistan at a mutually convenient date, the official added.

This tour was originally scheduled in October 2018 but was postponed because of local bodies and panchayat polls in Jammu and Kashmir.

Under the Indus Water Treaty, waters flowing in three Indus tributaries — the Sutlej, the Beas and the Ravi — have been allotted to India, while the Chenab, the Jhelum and the Indus waters have been allotted to Pakistan.



An illuminated Rashtrapati Bhavan after the full dress rehearsal for Beating Retreat ceremony in New Delhi on Sunday

Fed up with paper leaks, youths demand 'Pradhan Mantri CHEAT Fund Yojna'

PIANS ■ NEW DELHI

Youths from across the country gathered here on Sunday to urge Prime Minister Narendra Modi to launch a Pradhan Mantri CHEAT Fund Yojna for job aspiring youths who cannot afford the high cost of buying a leaked paper.

The meet, in which over 60 youth representatives from across the country participated, was organised at Delhi's Constitution Club by Yuva-Hallabol to highlight the frustration and disappointment among the educated unemployed youth.

Yuva-Hallabol is a nationwide movement against unemployment that includes aspirants to the SSC, UPSC, state agencies, railways, police and teachers.

Yuva-Hallabol, in its letter to Modi, mentioned: "Today, we write to you with a lot of pain and hope. We want to serve the nation too. We are educated and skilled. There are over 24 lakh vacancies in government sectors. Yet we are not

able to secure a job."

"One of the major reasons we are not getting a job is the wide-spread corruption and irregularity in recruitment exams. Just over the past year, more than two dozen exam papers have leaked," the letter read.

"Please announce and launch a Pradhan Mantri CHEAT Fund Yojna, PMCFY for the job aspiring youth who cannot afford the high costs of buying a leaked paper. It would be very helpful if you implement this welfare scheme with immediate effect," it said.

"We will apply for a loan to buy leaked papers and secure the jobs. Once we get a job, we give you 100 per cent guarantee that we repay all the money loaned by the Government," Yuva-Hallabol said in the letter.

Yuva-Hallabol leader Anupam told IANS: "...the educated unemployment rate has reached 16 per cent, the unemployed youth are ready to expose the failures and hollow claims of this Government."

Identify, develop 36 stations as 'eco-smart stations': NGT to Rlys

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The National Green Tribunal has directed the Railways to identify and develop at least 36 stations as "eco-smart stations" within two weeks.

A bench headed by NGT Chairperson Justice Adarsh Kumar Goel asked the public transporter that 'Polluter Pays' principle may be invoked by regulatory authorities, including the Railways, for compliance of Solid Waste and Plastic Waste Management Rules, 2016.

The tribunal also asked the railway administration to get water and energy audits conducted within three months, initially at the 36 identified major stations, to reduce the use of energy and water.

After the 36 stations are identified, an action plan may be prepared within a month and furnished to the tribunal via e-mail, the NGT said.

"The 36 stations may be developed as model stations, can be replicated in phases and may be called 'eco-smart stations'. Such stations may be identified within two weeks

'The railway stations identified as major railway stations may have their own websites to receive grievances and suggestions, particularly with regard to cleanliness and hygiene issues'

gestions, particularly with regard to cleanliness and hygiene issues," the bench said.

The Railways may coordinate with the urban local bodies concerned for solid and plastic waste management and may also consider banning the use of plastic on the stations, it said.

The NGT had earlier directed the railways to submit an action plan for maintaining cleanliness on platforms and tracks and had asked the Comptroller and Auditor General to conduct a performance audit at regular intervals.

The green panel had said there was an urgent need for the railways to put in place an effective implementation and monitoring mechanism with provisions of fixing accountability of individuals in respect of solid waste disposal, littering of solid and plastic wastes, defecation etc.

The NGT was hearing a petition filed by lawyers Saloni Singh and Arush Pathania seeking steps to check pollution on railway properties, particularly on tracks.

You should feel sad if you fail to vote: PM to youth

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Ahead of the Lok Sabha elections due this summer, Prime Minister Narendra Modi Sunday said casting vote is a sacred duty and those who do not use the democratic right should feel the "pain" of not exercising their franchise.

In his monthly 'Mann ki Baat' radio address, he also hailed the role of the Election Commission for its "meticulous organising abilities" in holding polls.

He pointed out that those born in the 21st century will cast their vote for the first time in the Lok Sabha polls.

"They face the opportunity to shoulder responsibilities pertaining to the country. They have embarked upon the journey of being partners in nation building. The time has come for a confluence of individual dreams and the nation's dream," he said.

He urged the youth to register themselves as voters, if they are eligible. "All of us must realise that being a voter, earning the right to vote is an important rite of passage in

one's life, it's one of its achievements. Simultaneously, the sentiment that voting is our sacred duty, should grow within us naturally. For any reason, if one is not able to vote, it should pain one," he said.

He said those who are unable to vote should feel saddened to witness any wrong taking place in the country. "I had not cast my vote ... That day I did not go and vote ... And as a result, my country has borne the brunt," he said explaining the feeling.

The prime minister said, people have to realise the importance of this responsibility. "This must be our leaning; this should be our disposition. This inclination should be ingrained within us like a sanskaar (enculturation)," he said.

He urged eminent personalities to come forward and jointly contribute in campaigning for spreading awareness on voter registration and casting vote.

"I sincerely hope that large number of eligible young people will get themselves registered as voters, thus forging a

partnership in the quest to further strengthen our democracy," he said.

Modi pointed out that on January 25, 1950, the Election Commission came into being, a day before India became a republic.

He said, the scale at which elections are held in India is a matter of great awe for the world. He also said it is natural for every citizen to feel proud of the Election Commission and its meticulous organising abilities.

He said the country leaves no stone unturned to ensure that every citizen of India who is a registered voter, rightfully avails of the opportunity to cast his vote.

Modi highlighted how polling personnel fan out to remotest corners to enable voters exercise their franchise.

"These facts are bound to instil a sense of pride, of the commitment of the Election Commission. Caring for that lone voter, for ensuring that he or she enjoys full opportunity to exercise the right to vote ... This is the beauty of our democracy," he said.



Tourists enjoy fresh snowfall in Shimla on Sunday

Adityanath lays foundation stones of 9 projects in Gorakhpur

Lucknow: Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath on Sunday laid the foundation of nine projects worth ₹50.75 crore at the district women hospital in Gorakhpur.

"The State is playing lead role in improving the health services. There has been significant success in prevention of encephalitis, and in the coming time, it will be completely eliminated," he said.

He informed that next round of JE vaccination will start on February 25.

The Chief Minister said that there has been a wide expansion of facilities at the BRD Medical College, and a research centre on viral disease is being built.

Criticising the previous Governments in the State, he said Uttar Pradesh inherited corruption from them. **PTI**

Leaders who don't keep promise get 'beaten up' by people: Gadkari

TN RAGHUNATHA ■ MUMBAI

In a statement that raised eyebrows in political circles, Union Minister and senior BJP leader Nitin Gadkari said here on Sunday that those leaders who sold dreams but failed to deliver on their promises would be thrashed by the people in the polls.

Known for not mincing words in his speeches, Gadkari once again triggered a major debate in the national political circles through a statement which provides room for interpretation and a possible linkage to Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

Speaking at a function here, Gadkari made a telling comment: "Sapne dikhane wale neta logon ko acche lagte hain, par dikhaye hue sapne agar pure nahi kiye to janta unki



pitayi hi karti hai (The leaders who sell dreams feel good about themselves. But, if they fail to deliver their promises will be thrashed by the people at the hustings).

Gadkari went onto add: "Isliye sapne wahi dikhao jo pure ho sakein...Mai sapne dikhane wale mein se nahi hu.Mai jo bolta hu wo 100% danke ki chot par pura hota hai (That's why you only have such dream that you can realise. I am not one of those who sell dreams. I am the one who accomplishes 100 per cent of what I say)".

Though Gadkari's comments are general in nature, they are bound to be linked with the lack of fulfillment of several promises made by Prime Minister Narendra Modi during the 2014 Lok Sabha elections. Modi's main poll promises like "Ache Din" and "Rs 15 lakh in of the bank accounts of each and every Indian" and creation of 2 crore jobs every year. Gadkari, who enjoys the total backing of RSS, is being seen as a person who might be projected as a consensual Prime Minister's candidate in the post 2019 post-poll scenario in the event of the ruling BJP failing to get more than 200 seats in the polls.

Through his Sunday's remarks, Gadkari has indirectly reminded Modi that he would have to pay for making promises that he could not keep.

Isha Koppikar joins BJP

PNS ■ MUMBAI

Bollywood actress and "Khallass" item girl Koppikar joined the BJP in the presence of Union Minister Nitin Gadkari here on Sunday.

Soon after she joined the party, she was appointed as the working president of the BJP's women transport wing.

Beginning her career, Isha made her Bollywood in 2002 in Ram Gopal Varma's "Company". She has acted in Tamil, Telegu, Marathi and Kannada films.

Best known for her item song "Khallass" and for playing a lesbian in 'Girlfriend', Isha is a mother of four-year-old girl. She is married to hotelier Timmy Narang.



E-rickshaws seize power, cost discoms ₹150cr/year

From Page 1

It also conducts energy audit of these transformers on a regular basis, he added.

Meanwhile commenting on the issue, a BSES spokesperson said that power-theft not only causes losses, but it also poses a huge safety issue. "Such practices also burdens honest consumers," he said.

The official said that BSES is committed to fight against power theft of all kinds. In its campaign against power-theft, BSES uses several different approaches, including using technology and analytics. "This has helped the discoms reduce 'Aggregate Technical & Commercial' losses to a record low of around nine per cent, he said.

First ship from India reaches Chabahar

AVEEK SEN ■ NEW DELHI

Work on Chabahar Port is in full swing. The follow-up committee of Chabahar project was established in Afghanistan on 2 December as per schedule after last meeting in October, 2018 in Iran. But it isn't just talk and meetings. The first container ship carrying a cargo of 3,700 TEU after the shipping line was established between the Indian ports of Mumbai, Kandla and Mundra & Chabahar Port, Iran arrived at Chabahar Port on January 27.

Now, there will be regular ships plying every 2 weeks between these 3 Indian ports and Chabahar port. This solves the long running problem of shipment getting delayed by a week or two on moving from Bandar Abbas to Chabahar via other middle eastern ports.



Behrouz Aghaei, the Director General of Sistan and Baluchistan's Ports and Maritime Organization, Iran, said the cargo ship from India arrived at Shahid Beheshti dock of Chabahar Port on January 27 at 10.30am and will move onward to Bandar Abbas.

The Chabahar Port is India's gateway to Afghanistan as Pakistan has blocked all overland trade. It opens up India's trading options with the mineral-rich Central Asian countries and would link to Russia via the INSTC (International North South Transport Corridor).

Rail tickets worth nearly ₹1 crore seized from travel agency

Patna: Railway tickets worth nearly ₹1 crore were on Sunday seized by RPF sleuths here from the premises of a travel agency which was found to be involved in illegal sale of these and two persons arrested in this connection.

According to a release issued by the Railway Protection Force, the premises of Puja Travels, which ran from the basement of a hotel, were raided following a tip-off about illegal sale of tickets which was confirmed by the IRCTC.

Two employees Chandan Kumar and Pankaj Kumar Gupta were arrested from the spot. Five tatkal tickets worth ₹5,692 and 93 reserved tickets of a future date having a total value ₹4.30 lakh were also recovered from the spot.

In addition, 3,085 rail tickets of previous dates worth ₹85.90 lakh, three mobile phones and ₹52,000 in cash were recovered from the spot, the release said.

A case has been lodged against the two arrested accused under the Railway Act and further investigations were on, the release added. **PTI**

8 on 'funeral' trip die as car falls into gorge in Champawat

Dehradun: Eight persons died and ten others were injured when the vehicle in which they were taking a body for cremation fell into a gorge in Lohaghat area of Champawat district on Sunday, the police said.

The vehicle was on its way to the cremation ground in Ghat from Barakat when it fell into a 300-metre deep gorge killing six on the spot, Champawat SP Dharendra Gunjyal said. Two more people succumbed to their injuries in the hospital, he added.

Among the injured, who were admitted to a nearby hospital, was the son of the 70-year-old woman being taken for cremation, he said. **PTI**

Bengal CID unearths Pak-based racket of cheating people in India, two held

Kolkata: The West Bengal CID has unearthed a Pakistan-based racket of cheating gullible people in India in the name of lottery prizes, and arrested two top officials of a beverage company here for their involvement as agents of the racketeers, an official said here on Sunday.

The Criminal Investigation Department (CID) official said the matter came to light after the probe agency lodged a suo motu case in Egra Police Station of East Midnapore district on January 13.

"The allegations in FIR are that certain Pakistan based racketeers are cheating gullible people in West Bengal and other places in India in the name of lottery prizes.

"People are informed by numbers starting with +92/0092 through phone/WhatsApp by racketeers that they have won huge amounts in lottery prizes which would be given on payment of "processing fees".

"Once these fees are deposited in bank accounts, the same is quickly withdrawn by agents of racketeers in India and later sent abroad through various hawala channels and exports, etc." the official said.

During the probe, role of some officials of Kolkata-headquartered Pran Beverages (India) Pvt Ltd in receiving and transferring funds abroad through various means surfaced.

On Friday, CID officials arrested two officials of the company Rajesh Ghosh and Bidhan Kirtaniya for their alleged involvement in the case.

While 44-year-old Ghosh is a Director, Kirtaniya (38) is the Manager, Sales Administration of the company.

They have been booked under various sections of the Indian Penal Code and Information Technology Act related to offences of cheating, receiving and concealing stolen property.

The two were produced before the Contai court which sent them to police custody. **PTI**

Cold wave to continue for 3 days: MeT

RAJESH KUMAR ■ NEW DELHI

The India Meteorological Department (IMD) on Sunday predicts that cold wave conditions will continue over the three days in Delhi and NCR, north and northwest parts of the country, with the night temperature expected to drop to 4 degrees Celsius by Monday.

According to IMD, the national Capital may get rain/drizzle between January 30 and February 1.

The night temperatures in most parts of north-west India will likely fall by about 2 degrees Celsius, according to predictions. In Delhi, the minimum temperature is recorded 5.2 degrees Celsius four notches below the season's average. The maximum temperature in Delhi could rise by a degree or two by mid-week.

Meanwhile Drass in Jammu and Kashmir's Ladakh

region was recorded of minus 28.7 degrees Celsius temperature on Sunday, Leh recorded minus 15.5 degrees Celsius and Kargil minus 20.7 as the night's lowest temperatures. Keylong in Himachal Pradesh witnessed minus 17 degree Celsius.

"After good rainfall activities many parts of North India, dry weather has taken over during the last 24 hours as the present Western disturbance is only affecting the hills. The cold wave could continue well into the week till 30th, when widespread rains are predicted across Punjab, Haryana, Chandigarh, Delhi, West Uttar Pradesh and Rajasthan," the IMD said.

"Thereafter, an active Western Disturbance will approach the Western Himalayas due to which rainfall activities expected how



other parts of north-west India recently, has moved eastward. The winds are now northerly or north-westerly. They are coming from colder regions in the hills, which have received widespread snowfall. This is why cold wave conditions will prevail over the northern plains including Punjab, Haryana, Chandigarh, Uttar Pradesh, Rajasthan and Delhi in the next 3-4 days," the IMD said. The night chill, however, is not expected to last long, as the minimum temperature is expected to shoot up in the second half of next week. A fresh western disturbance is likely to cause widespread rain and snow over western Himalayan region and thundershowers over some parts in the plains of northwest and central India between

January 30 and February 2, according to the IMD's weather bulletin. IMD also said that El Nino neutral conditions are currently prevailing over equatorial Pacific Ocean. The patterns of convection and winds are mostly near average over the tropical Pacific. The latest numerical forecast products available, indicate that El Nino neutral conditions are likely to continue. Besides, neutral Indian Ocean Dipole (IOD) conditions are observed over Indian Ocean and majority of the forecasts indicate that the neutral IOD conditions are likely to continue during the coming months. Skymet Weather Services has also predicted a similar weather pattern over the north-west plains. The weather department declares a cold wave if the temperature drops to 4 degrees Celsius or below and such a situation continues for at least two days.

many parts of Punjab, two parts of Haryana and isolated pockets of Delhi and NCR," it said. The minimum temperature dropped to six degrees Celsius in the national capital on Saturday, three notches below the season's average. Skymet Weather has predicted that the entire North-western India will remain under the grip of a cold wave for at least three days.

"The western disturbance, which caused rain in Delhi and

BJP to advance Citizenship Amendment Bill in Budget session

DEEPAK K UPRETI ■ NEW DELHI

The BJP will 'press through' Citizenship Amendment Bill in the coming Budget Session which was blocked in the Rajya Sabha in the last winter session by the Congress and other Opposition parties, hoping that the Bill may give it 'good dividends' in West Bengal in 2019 Lok Sabha poll.

The BJP which is facing an uphill task in the 2019 Lok Sabha polls, particularly in Uttar Pradesh, expects Eastern India could offset its possible reverses in the Hindi heartland.

"Citizenship bill is our commitment to the people and we will have it passed," said a senior BJP leader and referred to party's major campaign of upto 130 public rallies in next two months including two of

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on February two and February eight in West Bengal. A third public rally of the Prime Minister is also planned in the State.

The Citizenship Bill was passed in the Lok Sabha in the Parliament's winter session of Parliament, but was stalled in the Rajya Sabha.

The Congress had staged a walk out in the Lok Sabha protesting non-inclusion of Muslims in the category of persecuted minorities. The Bill includes the Hindus, Jains, Christians, Sikhs, Buddhists and Parsis who would be given Indian citizenship if they provide evidence of prosecution in Bangladesh, Pakistan and Afghanistan and completed six years of residence in India.

Voting on it is expected in the Rajya Sabha during the budget session beginning

January 31. The Bill has apparently alienated a section of people from in Assam, Mizoram, Nagaland, Arunachal Pradesh, Tripura, Meghalaya and Manipur who fear that passage of the Bill could lead to large scale migration from Bangladesh and affect the rights, demography and identity of indigenous populations.

Defending the controversial citizenship bill, Assam's Finance Minister and Senior BJP leader Himanta Biswa Sarma said its implementation is a must for the state to ensure it does not face a Kashmir-like situation in the future.

The Bill has unleashed protests across much of the Northeast and prompted the Asom Gana Parishad to walk of the BJP-led government in Assam last month.

Train 18 named Vande Bharat Express by Rly

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Indian Railways has named the indigenously manufactured semi-fast Train 18 as 'Vande Bharat Express', which will run between the national capital and Varanasi. Prime Minister Narendra Modi is likely to flag off this fully air-conditioned train soon, which will connect his Lok Sabha constituency with Delhi.

Announcing the decision, Railway Minister Piyush Goyal said, "Train 18 will now be known as Vande Bharat Express. It's a train built completely in India by Indian engineers, in a span of 18 months. It'll ply from Delhi to Varanasi. It is an example that it's possible to make world-class trains under Make in India," Goyal said on Sunday.



The 16-coach train, built in 18 months at a cost of Rs 97 crore by the Integral Coach Factory (IVF), Chennai, is regarded as a successor to the 30-year-old Shatabdi Express. It's also the first locomotive-less train in the country.

Addressing the media, the minister said, "It was named Train 18 during its initial days and now it has been given a new name after taking suggestions from the general public".

The train will be fully air-

conditioned and will stop at Kanpur and Allahabad and will have two executive chair cars, the minister said adding that it will have superior quality of air suspension for comfortable journey of the passengers, Goyal said.

"It is completely made in India and various names were suggested by the general public but we have decided to name it Vande Bharat Express. A gift on the occasion of Republic Day to the people. Will request the Prime Minister to flag it off," the minister said.

The Railway Minister also said that he has requested the Railway Board to scale up its production to reduce its overall cost and once the country will have surplus production, it will be exported as well.

Corporate honchos to pledge support to leprosy eradication

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Corporate honchos from across the world under the banner of International Chamber of Commerce (ICC), world's largest business organisation, will pledge their support to the Global Appeal 2019 against Leprosy soon here to help create much-needed awareness about the crippling disease to ensure its logical end.

The Global Appeal has been initiated by Yohei Sasakawa, WHO Goodwill Ambassador for leprosy and Chairman of the Nippon Foundation. He has been awarded the Gandhi Peace Prize for 2018 in recognition of his work towards the eradication of the disease worldwide including India where his organisation in India, Sasakawa-India Leprosy Foundation (SILF) has been focusing on providing treat-



ment and social and economic upliftment of the sector across the country.

Though leprosy is curable, it continues to be mired with stigma and discrimination, restricting the people from the sector to come forward to avail timely medical treatment and adequate rehabilitation. No wonder, despite various efforts, India remain home to nearly half of the total 2 lakh leprosy people in the world.

It is expected that with

involvement of over 45 million member firms associated with the ICC in around 100 nations will hold series of sensitization and awareness workshops among their employees to end the disease, which if not treated in time can leave the patient not only disabled.

In the past too, Global appeal has been announced in partnership with various partners including the International Bar Association which endorsed the pledge to

end stigma and discrimination against people affected by leprosy.

Incidentally, India which has several discriminatory laws against persons affected by leprosy, it was just in 2016 and then recently repealed a few of them after much hue and cry from the sector and activists.

"In 2016, for example, it repealed the draconian colonial-era Lepers Act, while earlier this month it repealed a law allowing leprosy as legitimate grounds for divorce. Both initiatives are to be commended," WHO regional director for South-East Asia Poonam Khetrpal Singh too noted recently in her statement.

"Community based economic rehabilitation, prevention of discrimination through awareness particularly among school kids and people in general is necessary to not only take care of those who have

been affected and ostracised but also of their children who suffer stigma even when they do not have the disease," said Vineeta Shanker, Executive Director SILF.

Previous partners have included human rights groups, religious and faith leaders, business chiefs, and university chancellors, informed Tejseen Zaidi, Communication Manager from the SILF.

As per the official figures available till March 2018, about 0.9 lakh leprosy cases were reported, as compared to 0.86 lakh cases in 2016-17 and 0.88 lakh cases in 2015-16.

Also, some States and Union territories are now reporting a higher prevalence rate — Odisha (1.38), Bihar (1.18) and Lakshadweep (2.25). Currently, India's overall leprosy prevalence rate is 0.70 per 10,000 population, up from 0.66 previously.



A NEW CHHATTISGARH

"OF THE PEOPLE, BY THE PEOPLE, FOR THE PEOPLE"

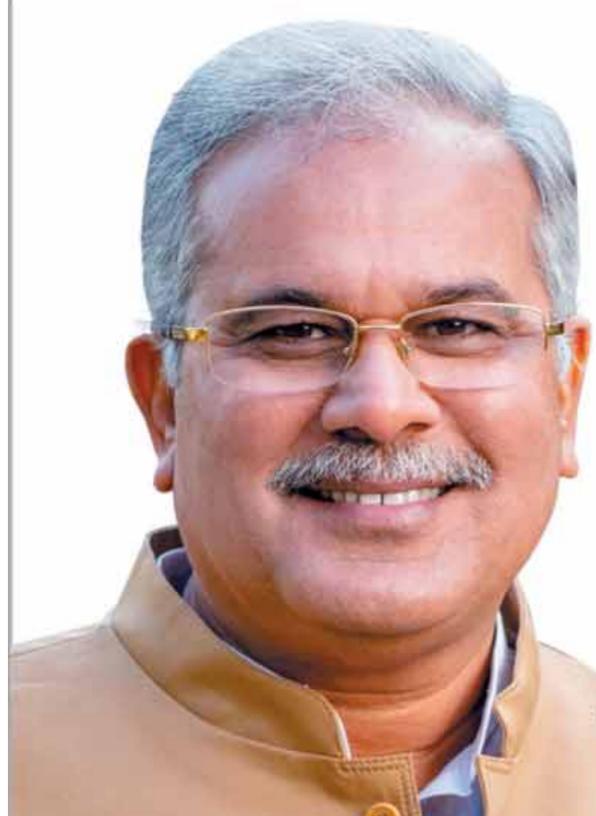
.....IN IT'S TRUE SENSE

Decisions that were undertaken in a matter of few days

- Farmers**
 - ◆ Within 2 hours of swearing in- Rs. 6100 Cr. Loans of more than 16.65 lac farmers have been waived off
 - ◆ The rate of paddy procurement for farmers is now Rs. 2500 per quintal - the highest in the country
 - ◆ Irrigation tax Rs. 207 Cr. waived off for 15 lac farmers.
- Tribals**
 - ◆ 1764 Ha. agricultural land returned to the tribals of Lohandiguda, Bastar where TATA couldn't start their plant after its acquisition
 - ◆ The rate of Tendupatta collection raised by Rs. 1500 per sack to Rs.4000 for the economic empowerment of the tribals
 - ◆ Bastar and Sarguja Development Authorities have been announced that would be led by the local MLAs
- Villages**
 - ◆ Inclusive growth of villages under the scheme- Narwa, Garuwa, Ghurwa, Bari (Rivulets, Livestock, Domestic Dump, Farms)- where in the villages will be made self-sufficient.
- Land Rights**
 - ◆ Land Right Pattas of the tribals that were cancelled arbitrarily under the forest Rights Act, Shall be reviewed
- ◆ Emphasis on providing Community and individual forest rights to maximum number of applicants with reconsideration of rejected claims
- ◆ Ban lifted on sale- purchase of small plots of land up to 5 dismil
- Justice**
 - ◆ Special Investigation Teams (SIT) formed to probe the Jhiram Ghati massacre and the multi-million rupee PDS Scam.
 - ◆ Action to be taken against the fraudulent Chit Fund companies
 - ◆ A committee headed by a retired SC judge will be formed that will review the cases of innocent tribals wrongly put in jail
 - ◆ Review in the functioning of District Mineral Foundation to curb the corruption and optimize development of the state's resources
- Education**
 - ◆ Recruitment of Assistant Professors in Colleges and School Teachers to uplift the standard of higher education
- Journalist Protection Act**
 - ◆ A committee headed by a retired SC judge to formulate an Act for the protection of journalists. Chhattisgarh would be the first state with such a Act

Delivering justice can also create history and change the fate of the people

The new government in chhattisgarh has demonstrated its commitment to this belief and its decisions getting resolute by the day.



Bhupesh Baghel
Chief Minister, Chhattisgarh



Pro Active - Pro People

Congress, TMC ignored Pranab da: Sushil Modi

SAUGAR SENGUPTA ■ KOLKATA

Close on the heels of bequeathing Bharat Ratna on former President Pranab Mukherjee, the BJP on Sunday set about redeeming its political proceeds telling the Bengali populace how the Congress, Trinamool Congress and its ignored "one of the greatest sons of Bengal in recent times."

Addressing a rally at Howrah, Bihar Deputy Chief Minister Sushil Modi said the former President was another victim of its dynastic politics.

As Mukherjee would not fit into the dynastic schemes of Janpath's schemes he was not only ignored for the Prime Ministerial chair but also never considered for the Bharat Ratna — a gross Governmental error that was rectified by Prime Minister Narendra Modi who conferred India's topmost honour on the "highly qualified son of Bengal," Sushil Modi said.

"Bengal has been on the forefront of everything. No region in India had produced so many great men as Bengal did. Notwithstanding it was ignored perennially to the extent that it is counted among one of the most backward States today," the Bihar BJP leader said, adding the saffron outfit would put Bengal on the developmental tracks if it was voted to power.

Apparently wary of promising high sounding nothing



ings (read jumlas) like it happened ahead of 2014 general elections a more circumspect Dy Chief Minister promised his audience, "Within a decade of coming to power we will show what development means to the people of this State. We will completely change Bengal within ten years of voting to power in this State."

On the chances of winning the elections in Trinamool Congress-ruled State the lesser Modi said Chief Minister

Mamata Banerjee's days were numbered as her regime would soon come crashing like it happened to late Prime Minister Indira Gandhi after the close of infamous Emergency.

"After clamping Emergency Indira Gandhi thought that she would sweep the parliamentary elections. But soon she could realize her folly and her empire came crashing down. A similar fate is awaiting Mamata Banerjee whose despotic and oppressive rule would be uprooted by the BJP with the help of the people of Bengal — have faith on the pro-saffron wind blowing in this State," he said.

Comparing Banerjee's regime with the one ran by former Bihar Chief Minister Laloo Yadav, the Dy Chief Minister of that State said "like it happened during Laloo Yadav's Bihar — when no booth was left uncaptured and no election went unrigged — elections are rendered into a farce in your State."

In Bihar ruled by Nitish Kumar not a single death "nor even an injury occurs even during rural polls. But in TMC's Bengal we heard how one hundred people died during last year's panchayat elections and how most of the booths were captured," he said adding "the people would throw the TMC out if they get a chance to vote and this time round such chance was going to be created for them."

UP Govt to withdraw 18 cases related to Muzaffarnagar riots

Muzaffarnagar: The Uttar Pradesh Government has decided to withdraw 18 cases related to the Muzaffarnagar riots and asked the district authorities to approach the court, sources said on Sunday.

UP's special secretary of law JJ Singh has directed Muzaffarnagar district magistrate Rajeev Sharma to withdraw the cases, they said.

On the directive from Lucknow, the district authorities have started preparing to approach the court for permission to withdraw the cases. The cases were filed under relevant sections of the Indian Penal Code, including 147 (rioting), 148 (rioting, armed with deadly weapon) and 397 (attempt to cause death), the sources said.

The directive came after the

On the directive from Lucknow, the district authorities have started preparing to approach the court for permission to withdraw the cases. The cases were filed under relevant sections of the Indian Penal Code, including 147 (rioting), 148 (rioting, armed with deadly weapon) and 397 (attempt to cause death)



State Government sought details of 125 cases filed in relation to the Muzaffarnagar riots of 2013. Additional district magistrate Amit Kumar told PTI that

the State Government had sought the details to review the possibility of withdrawing the 125 cases pending in courts. Several leaders of the ruling

BJP, including MPs Sanjeev Balyan and Bharatendra Singh, MLAs Sangeet Som and Umesh Malik, have been named in these 125 cases. Minister in the

State Government Suresh Rana and Hindutva leader Sadhvi Prachi are also accused in cases related to the Muzaffarnagar riots.

However, the cases asked to withdraw do not include the names of these BJP leaders.

Communal clashes in Muzaffarnagar and adjoining areas in August and September 2013 had claimed 60 lives and displaced over 40,000 people. The State Government had formed an SIT to probe the riot cases. The SIT has filed charge sheets in 175 cases.

Police had registered cases against 6,869 people and arrested 1,480 people in connection with the riots.

According to the SIT, 418 accused have been acquitted in 54 cases due to lack of evidence.

Quarrel over drainage pit leads to twin-murder

Mangaluru: A quarrel over digging a drainage pit adjacent to the compound of a house led to the murder of two persons in Udupi district, police said on Sunday.

The incident took place on Saturday. The two had intervened to settle a dispute over the digging near their friend Lohith's house by his neighbour Harish Reddy who was a rowdy, police said.

When Lohith objected to

the digging, Reddy allegedly threatened him and continued the work, they said.

It was then the victims intervened — Yatish, a personnel assistant to a local Congress party leader Rakesh Malli, and Bharath, an auto-rickshaw driver, the police said.

This angered Reddy so much that his accomplices fatally attacked Yatish and Bharath, they said.

A case has been registered and an investigation on.



Devotees visit replica of Lord Venkateswara temple built on the confluence of Indian Ocean, Bay of Bengal and the Arabian Sea during its inauguration, in Kanyakumari on Sunday

Cong's Lucknow HQ gets new look

Priyanka Vadra, Scindia's new offices will come up there

Lucknow: The Congress headquarters at Mall Avenue in Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh, where the party's high profile office-bearers Priyanka Vadra and Jyotiraditya Scindia will have their offices to run the Uttar Pradesh campaign is being painted in fresh white.

The sprawling double-storeyed building is being

dressed up for the new occupants as the mood turns upbeat among party loyalists.

A new 'war room' is being constructed and a conference hall for workers to meet leaders in private is also being built. There are 12 computer terminals. Surrounded by high-rises that have cropped up in the past few years, the state Congress headquarters for long has been a sad reflection of the party's decline in the state. There is now hope among the cadres that things could change.

Anil Kumar Sharma, assistant permanent secretary

(Organisation) who pedals over 14-km to reach the office daily points to the repairs that are taking place in the building. "Similar repairs" were underway in the Uttar Pradesh Congress Committee (UPCC) set up by Priyanka Vadra.

There is some aggression creeping back as well. "In the war between falsehood, lies and truth, Priyanka will certainly lead the Congress to victory in the forthcoming Lok Sabha elections," says Sharma.

For that to happen the physical repairs of the state party headquarters as well as that of the party will need to

take place.

The NSUI office on the campus lies neglected. Inaugurated in 1986, the office next to a bust of Indira Gandhi has a rusted lock at its gate, which rarely opens now, says a party man. Empty packets of chips are littered around. People dump garbage in front of it.

UPCC spokesman Virendra Madan downplays plans for renovation and makeover and says it has nothing to do with Priyanka Vadra's appointment as general secretary in charge of eastern Uttar Pradesh.

Bihar's 'Bahubali' legislator joins Congress roadshow

Patna: Independent legislator and criminal-turned-politician Anant Singh, popularly known as Bahubali, on Sunday joined the Congress roadshow in support of party president Rahul Gandhi's rally in February.

Anant Singh, who is facing several criminal cases, was seen along with Rajya Sabha MP and former Union Minister Akhilesh Singh and hundreds of other party members in the road show to mobilise people for Gandhi's rally on February 3 here.

The Congress is busy organising an anti-BJP rally - 'Jan Aakash' - at Gandhi Maidan here. This is the first time in 28 years that the Congress is holding a massive rally in the state on its own.

Confirming Anant Singh's presence at the road show, Akhilesh Singh told the media: "He is a strong and popular leader, it will help the party garner support for the rally."

Both Akhilesh Singh and

Anant Singh belong to the Bhumihar caste, which is widely seen as the vote bank of the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) in Bihar for over two and a half decades.

Anant Singh, independent legislator from Mokama Assembly constituency of Bihar, is known for his muscle and money power. He said that he would contest the upcoming Lok Sabha polls from Munger parliamentary constituency as a Congress candidate.

Akhilesh Singh said it is not yet decided who will contest from where as talks are ongoing with allies regarding a Grand Alliance. In 2015, Anant Singh resigned from the ruling Janata Dal-United and contested and won the Assembly polls from behind bars. In the past, he has been arrested several times for serious crimes like kidnapping and murder. At present he is out on bail.



Newly initiated 'Naga Sadhus' wait to perform rituals on the bank of the Ganga, during Kumbh Mela in Allahabad on Sunday

CITIZENSHIP BILL Burden of new citizens will be borne by entire country: Sonowal

Guwahati: Assam Chief Minister Sarbananda Sonowal on Sunday said the Citizenship Bill was a national policy and once it becomes an act, the burden of new citizens would be borne by the entire country.

Attempts are being made to confuse people but the State Government which has come to power with a popular mandate would do nothing to harm the interests of the local people, Sonowal said.

Speaking at the foundation stone laying ceremony of the Nalbari Medical College and Hospital at Borigaon, Sonowal said the bill can never threaten the existence of the indigenous people of Assam which has a legacy of great personalities like Srimanta Sankardev, Azan Lachit Borpuhan, Bagh Hazarika and other.

The Chief Minister also urged the All Assam Students Union (AASU) to extend full



Attempts are being made to confuse people but the State Government which has come to power with a popular mandate would do nothing to harm the interests of the local people

cooperation in successful implementation of Clause 6 of the Assam Accord for ensuring constitutional, administrative and legislative safeguard for the indigenous people.

He asked the intelligentsia to present the true picture of the bill before the people of the state, while criticising the previous Congress Government for neglecting development in the region as well as the interests of the local people.

The previous Congress Governments imposed IMDT Act in the State to protect ille-

gal immigrants and made no significant efforts to update the NRC, Sonowal said.

The NRC updation process received a major shot in the arm with the National Democratic Alliance (NDA) government under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi coming to power at the Centre, he said.

After the final publication of the NRC, people of State would get a clear picture about the genuine citizens and illegal immigrants, Sonowal added.

We should quit India if Bill is passed: Akhil Gogoi

Guwahati: Krishak Mukti Sangram Samiti Leader Akhil Gogoi on Sunday said if proper respect is not shown to the Assamese people and the Citizenship Amendment Bill is passed, then "we must have the courage to tell the Government that we may consider not staying with India".

Addressing a protest rally against the proposed legislation at Panitola in Assam's Tinsukia district, Gogoi said, "If the Government gives us the respect we deserve, we are with the nation but if the sentiments of the indigenous Assamese are ignored and the bill is passed, then each Assamese must have the courage to say that they will not be a part of India."

The proposed legislation seeks to provide Indian citizenship to non-Muslims from Bangladesh, Pakistan and Afghanistan, and many parties and organisations have claimed that it will have an adverse impact on the demography of the sensitive border State. They said the provisions of the bill will nullify the 1985 Assam Accord, which provides for deportation of all illegal migrants, irrespective of religion, who had entered the state after March 1971.

Gogoi, who has been spearheading the agitation by 70 organisations against the bill, said, "We want to make it clear that if the need and situation arises, Assam must be able to say that they are prepared not to stay with India ... if the Government respects us, we will stay with India or we will quit."



Manipur to hold all-party meet

IANS ■ IMPHAL

Manipur Chief Minister N Biren has convened an all-party meeting on Monday on the contentious Citizenship (Amendment) Bill, 2016. Manipur is one of the northeastern states which has been seeing various agitations in protest against the passing of this Bill on January 8 by the Lok Sabha.

The Janata Dal (United) has already announced that it will not take part in the meeting. JD (U) state president Hankhanpao said the Chief Minister had refused to summon an emergency session of the state assembly to hold a threadbare discussion on the bill.

"We fail to understand that anything useful will emerge from the all parties' meeting."

On Sunday, the Manipur People's Party also announced that it will refrain from participating in the meeting on Monday.

A statement from the MPP said that it had

made its position on the issue clear to the public and there is nothing to be discussed now.

"The BJP led government should have summoned the emergency session. We shall not participate in the meeting since the chief minister is whimsically sweeping the people in any direction", it said.

A sit-in protest were staged in many parts of the state on Sunday. An effigy of Prime Minister Narendra Modi was burned at a market in Khetriga in Imphal East district.

The North East India Development Party launched a signature campaign from Sunday. Functionaries of the party said that the campaign which will cover the entire state will continue till the Bill is scrapped.

Chief Minister N. Biren said: "Now that the union home minister has assured that the interest of the indigenous peoples of the NE region shall be protected people should call off the agitations."

Power-packed wedding: Bigwigs make it to Raj Thackeray's son wedding



Family Members along with newly-wed Amit Thackeray and Mitali Borude pose for a picture during their reception in Mumbai on Sunday

TN RAGHUNATHA ■ MUMBAI

In a clear indication of the clout enjoyed by MNS chief Raj Thackeray in Maharashtra politics, several prominent personalities from various walks of life, including leaders of various political parties, film and sports personalities and industrialists, attended the wedding of his son Amit with fashion designer Mitali Borude held at a five-star hotel here on Sunday.

At the held in the famous family held after a gap of 28 years, all the members of Thackeray family - including Shiv Sena president Uddhav Thackeray, his wife Rashmi, son Aditya, his estranged elder brother Jaidev Thackeray and sister-in-law Smita Thackeray made it to the power-packed

wedding.

Raj and his wife Sharmila, were seen warmly welcoming guests at the wedding.

Maharashtra Governor Ch Vidyasagar Rao and chief minister Devendra Fadnavis represented the state government at the wedding. Fadnavis' wife Amruta accompanied the chief minister at the wedding.

Senior Congress leader Sushil Kumar Shinde attended the wedding with his family members. NCP chief Sharad Pawar, his daughter Supriya Sule, nephew and former deputy chief minister Ajit Pawar and his family members made it to the wedding.

Union Minister and senior BJP leader Nitin Gadkari graced the wedding and blessed the couple, while Maharashtra

Pankaja Munde came to the wedding with her family.

Congress leader Ahmed Patel, who is close to both Sonia Gandhi and Rahul Gandhi, apparently made it to the wedding on behalf of two Gandhis.

Legendary cricketer and Bharat Ratna Sachin Tendulkar and his wife Anjali attracted quite a bit of attention at the wedding. Renowned singer Asha Bhosale, with whom Raj Thackeray enjoys an excellent rapport, made it to the wedding and blessed the couple.

Yesteryear actress Sulochana was also spotted at the wedding. Industrialist and philanthropist Ratan Tata and actor Aamir Khan were other attractions at the wedding.

Bollywood actor and late chief minister Vilasrao



Shiv Sena chief Uddhav Thackeray with wife Rashmi and son Aditya arrive to attend MNS Chief Raj Thackeray's son Amit Thackeray's wedding ceremony in Mumbai on Sunday

Deshmukh's son Ritesh and his elder brother Amit Deshmukh attended the wedding.

Shivaji Historian Baba Purandare, who enjoys good relations with the MNS chief, also made it to the wedding. Amit and Mitali, both child-

hood friends, were engaged on December 11, 2018, which happens to be the wedding anniversary of Raj and Sharmila. Raj Thackeray's daughter Urvasi and to be daughter-in-law Mitali had launched their own fashion label, 'The Rack', a few years ago.

Reject negative forces: PM to TN voters | Modi slams Cong, Left parties

KUMAR CHELLAPPAN ■ MADURAI

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Sunday exhorted the electorate of Tamil Nadu to reject the forces of negativity and not to be carried away by those who sow the seeds of suspicion and doubts in the minds of the people.

Addressing a rally of BJP workers from ten Lok Sabha constituencies in Southern Tamil Nadu at Madurai on Sunday, the Prime Minister paid rich tributes and homages to former Chief Minister late J Jayalalitha with whom he had enjoyed a good rapport. Those who expected some hints from the Prime Minister about the possible alliance partners of the BJP in the upcoming Lok Sabha elections were in for disappointment as he chose not to mention anything about the election. Modi chose to limit his speech to the achievements made by the NDA Government during the last four and half years and abstained from attacking any of his rivals.

He said Tamil Nadu has been benefited by the Swachh Bharat scheme he had launched in 2014. "We had constructed nine crore toilets out of which 47 lakh were built in Tamil Nadu. Our mission is to have at least one medical college in every three Lok Sabha constituencies," said Modi.

The Prime Minister had some good news for the people in southern Tamil Nadu. "Chennai will be soon con-



Prime Minister Narendra Modi being garlanded by Tamil Nadu BJP unit president Tamilsai Soundararajan and others at BJP rally in Madurai on Sunday PTI

nect to Madurai with the high speed Train-18, designed and built at Perambur near Chennai. Many countries have shown keen interest in buying such trains from India. Tamil Nadu stands to benefit from the mass production of Train 18 as thousands of jobs would be generated as India goes ahead with the project," said the Prime Minister.

He said a ₹25,100 crore project is on the anvil to connect the nation with the holy city of Rameswaram and Dhanushkodi, the land's end by rail and road.

"The Government has sanctioned the proposal to build new rail bridge connect-

ing Rameswaram with the hinterland. This will bring back the old days when we had rail connectivity between Chennai and Dhanushkodi," the Prime Minister added.

The only political point he mentioned was about the Maha Ghatbandhan (though he did not name it or the main players) which was on the anvil. "People who were looting the county have come together to remove the security guard so that the crimes committed by them would not come to light. But so long as the security guard is there, they won't succeed in their mission. All those who were part of the looting and corrupt practices would be

brought before the court of justice to stand trial," said Modi. There were nearly 50,000 people who had gathered to listen to the Prime Minister despite the scorching sunlight.

"We are disappointed because the Prime Minister did not give any hint about electoral alliances," said one of the party leaders.

Earlier, the Prime Minister laid the foundation stone for a state-of-the-art All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS) at Thoppur in the district. The new AIIMS featuring a 750 bed super speciality hospital, a medical college with 100 MBBS seats and a nursing college with 60 seats will cater

to the needs of the people in the southern districts of Tamil Nadu, said the Prime Minister in his brief speech after the laying of the foundation stone.

Modi also inaugurated on Sunday the super speciality blocks built at the medical colleges at Thanjavur, Tirunelveli and Madurai under the Pradhan Mantri Swasthya Suraksha Yojana (PMSSY).

He also inaugurated 12 post office based passport seva kendras across the region as part of the Union Government's plans to bring governance to the doorsteps of the people in the region.

The Prime Minister began his speech by paying homages to former Chief Minister late J Jayalalitha who was in the forefront demanding the setting up of an AIIMS like institution in the State.

"The AIIMS at Madurai is part of our vision of Ek Bharat Sreshtha Bharat vision. The institution is expected to serve the entire population of Tamil Nadu by making accessible to them world class health care at affordable rates. We have launched Ayushman Bharat scheme targeting 10 crore families in which each family would be provided ₹5 lakh per year to meet the expenses they incur during hospitalisation of the family members. I have been old that 89,000 people have been benefited because of this programme and ₹200 crore has been reimbursed under this scheme till date," said the Prime Minister.

'Abuse me but don't mislead farmers, youth of the country'

KUMAR CHELLAPPAN ■ KOCHI

Prime Minister Narendra Modi tore into the Opposition, especially the Congress and the Communists, whom he described as bereft of any ideas or programmes for the progress of the country.

"They have only one agenda and that is to abuse Narendra Modi from the moment they wake up in the morning till they go to bed in the night. Let them do so. Let them abuse me, but they should not spread falsehoods on farmers, youth and the poor people of the country," said Modi while addressing the Bharatiya Yuva Marcha rally held at Thrissur in Kerala on Sunday.

He lambasted the Congress for lowering the prestige of Indian Constitution and democracy. "Recently we saw a Congress leader addressing a press meet held at London to question the Electronic Voting Machines and the Election Commission of India. The questioned the ethos of Indian democracy. Is this how they respect the democracy?" asked the Prime Minister.

Modi pointed out that the Congress and the Communists blame all institutions in the country. "They have zero



Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurates Mounded Storage Vessel at LPG Bottling Plant in Kochi on Sunday PTI

regards for the Country's Constitution. They accuse the Armed Forces, Election Commission, judiciary, CBI, Enforcement Directorate, CVC and all other institutions. For them all these institutions are wrong and they are the only right people," Modi said.

The Prime Minister came down heavily on the Communists for their stance on Sabarimala Temple. "The Communist Government is showing disrespect to Sabarimala Temple. They are undermining and destroying the culture and civilisation of Kerala which had stood the test of time for thousands of years. The Congress is also not behind them in this endeavour," the PM added.

Pointing out that three Ministers of Communist Government had to quit on charges of corruption in three years, Modi said Communists and the Congress were subvert-

ing the country's strategic programmes. The Congress leaders who had to settle personal scores between themselves used India's space programme for their personal interests.

"A brilliant scientist like Nambi Narayanan who played a crucial role in India's space programme was made a scapegoat by the Congress and Communist leaders. We, the NDA Government, helped him to resuscitate his reputation by honouring him with Padma award," said Modi.

The Prime Minister listed the achievements made by the NDA Government during the last four and half years. "You elected me as the chowkidar of the country because of my promise that I'll never allow anyone to loot the country. Let them keep on abusing me, but I'll never fail you," said Modi. He also charged that the Congress leaders were still in the hangover of the internal emergency.

Priyanka inducted in Cong because Rahul flopped: UP Minister

Mathura: Priyanka Gandhi was made party's general secretary because Congress president Rahul Gandhi "flopped" in politics, UP Power Minister Srikant Sharma said on Sunday.

Cabinet Minister asserted that induction of the party president's sister would not be able to revive the Congress' electoral fortunes.

"Had Rahul not flopped, where was the need for bringing Priyanka?" Sharma asked in reply to a reporter's question on Priyanka Gandhi's possible impact in the ensuing Lok Sabha elections. Priyanka Gandhi is not a new face in the Congress, she has been canvassing for the party in Amethi

and Rae Bareilly since 1998, the minister pointed out.

"Her induction in the party would not make any impact in the forthcoming Lok Sabha elections," he said.

Sharma said the elimination of Congress from SP-BSP alliance is a testimony to the fact that the party is at the lowest step in the state politics.

"The way Prime Minister Narendra Modi is working for poor, labourers, peasants etc., it would be difficult to penetrate his fort," said the minister. Sharma also sought to downplay the importance of grand alliance among the anti-BJP parties, terming it as a "caucus of corrupt". PTI



Devotees and members of Hindu Jagran Manch (HJM) participate in a march 'Walk for Ayyappa' in relation to violence faced by devotees at Sabarimala's Ayyappa temple in Kolkata on Sunday PTI

Thane man with link to 'ISIS-inspired' group held by Maha ATS

Mumbai: The Maharashtra Anti-Terrorism Squad (ATS) has arrested a man in connection with an alleged ISIS-inspired group that wanted to carry out mass attacks at big events using poisonous chemicals, police said on Sunday.

The arrest was made on Saturday from Mumbai in neighbouring Thane district and a laptop, tablet computer, hard disk, pen drives, router, mobile phones and diaries were seized from his residence, an ATS official said.

The ATS had earlier arrested eight people, and detained a minor, from Aurangabad and Thane after several teams carried out searches through



January 21-22, an official said. They were charged under Indian Penal Code section 120B (criminal conspiracy) and relevant provisions of the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act (UAPA) and the Bombay Police Act.

This group, during interrogation, had named the accused who was arrested on Saturday, he added. PTI

Gorakhpur's Cong unit wants Priyanka to fight LS poll from there

PTI ■ GORAKHPUR

The Gorakhpur's Congress unit on Sunday raised a demand for fielding Priyanka Gandhi from there, depicting her as a modern "Jhansi ki Rani".

The district unit of the party raised the demand in two posters that came up in the stronghold of Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath, who represented Gorakhpur between 1998 and 2017 in the 12th, 13th, 14th and 15th Lok Sabha.

In the first poster, the Congress party workers demanded that Priyanka Gandhi be made the Congress candidate from Gorakhpur for the 2019 Lok Sabha elections. PTI



People near the accident site where a pickup van was hit by a train, at Tilapara of Chirang, on Sunday PTI

Men have key role in fight for gender equality: SC judge

Gandhinagar: Men have a key role to play in the fight for gender equality, Supreme Court Judge DY Chandrachud on Sunday said as he called for the need to de-construct the stereotype of gender roles.

Justice Chandrachud, who was part of the five-judge bench that allowed women of all ages to enter the Sabarimala temple in Kerala, said violence and discrimination faced by females were compounded by people's "insensitivity to women's rights and issues".

He was addressing graduating students at the convocation ceremony of the Gujarat National Law University here in the presence of his colleague from the Supreme Court, Justice AK Sikri.

"Women have to deal with shocking gender wage gaps, forms of violence and harassments, forced adherence to feminine, impossible standards of beauty, compounded by what I think might be the worst of all - insensitivity to women's rights and issues," Chandrachud said.

"The fight for gender equality cannot be fought by women alone. Men have a key role to play in demanding and supporting this societal shift by being a part of conversation and of the movement," he added.

Chandrachud called for the need to de-construct the stereotypes of gender roles, an exercise that "must be practised every passing days".



The country is faced with "disturbing inequalities and disparities in access to opportunities, including access to education," the SC judge said

and exhorted the law students to use their privilege to "try and change injustices of society".

"The same values which grant privilege to some rob others of their humanity. There is, hence, an urgent need to address this.

"And if you choose to remain a beneficiary and do nothing, you are complicit in furthering a grave injustice," he told the audience.

The judge said instances of a child being denied basic education because of his parents' financial status, a person being denied housing because of religion, a woman not getting access to public spaces because of her menstrual status, or a Dalit subjected to indignity present "glaring examples of the

inability of our society to grant a citizen an equal and humane existence". "The Constitution envisions an egalitarian society, but it is you the citizens, and particularly students of younger generation who can make this Constitutional vision a reality for the morrow," Chandrachud said.

Addressing the gathering, Justice Sikri called for the need to "uphold the law and Constitution and save democracy" at a time when its values were "at stake" the world over.

He said judges have to perform "a vital role" at a time when the world is "undergoing transformation of a different kind", and when there is "backsliding of democratic values". PTI

J&K BJP in favour of reservation for people living along Border

Jammu: The BJP's Jammu & Kashmir unit on Sunday advocated reservation for the people living along the International Border (IB) and accused the PDP of creating hurdles during the coalition Government's rule in fulfilling various promises made by the saffron party to the public.

Thanking Governor Satya Pal Malik for providing quota to the Pahari community, BJP's State chief spokesperson Sunil Sethi said the administration would do justice to the people living in pitiable conditions along the IB by providing reservation to them in line and on par with the residents of the Line of Actual Control.

"This will ensure upliftment of these ignored masses," he said. Sethi said his party had promised the residents of areas adjoining the IB that they will be given justice by way of reservation in education and jobs as is available to the resident of Line of Actual Control.

"The BJP is committed to fulfilling all the promises made to the people. It was the PDP in the alliance Government which

was always creating hurdles in this direction," he said in statement here.

"In recent times, IB is seeing more firing and infiltration, and the residents of these areas are required to be given benefits for living in such dangerous and risky areas," the BJP leader said.

He said the nation cannot ignore the immense contributions of border residents who are part of first defence along with security forces and the country is indebted to the high spirit and nationalism exhibited by them.

Meanwhile, the National Panthers Party activists led by chairman and former minister Harsh Dev Singh Sunday staged a protest against the administration for "failing" to accord Scheduled Tribe (ST) status and reservation in government jobs to the Kolis community along with Pahari speaking people. PTI



Statue of Unity: Crocodiles to be relocated for tourist safety

Ahmedabad: Crocodiles from two ponds near the Statue of Unity in Gujarat's Narmada district are being relocated for the safety of tourists visiting the Sardar Patel memorial, officials said on Sunday while dismissing reports that the move is linked to seaplane service.

As many 20 cages have been set up along the banks of the two ponds, officially known as Dyke 3 and 4, to trap the crocodiles, an official informed.

These dykes are artificial water bodies created to stabilise the water released from the Sardar Sarovar Dam before it reaches the entry point of the main Narmada canal, the official explained.

Aradhana Sahu, Conservator of Forests, (Vadodara Wildlife Circle) said that 12 crocodiles have been caught so far, though she

added there was no specific target for the number of these reptiles that need to be captured.

"The area around the Statue of Unity near Kevadiya village is attracting huge number of tourists. Since there are crocodiles in these ponds, there exists a threat to the tourists. We have begun the process of relocating the reptiles elsewhere," Sahu said.

"We have not set any specific target of the number of crocodiles to be caught and relocated. Till now, we have shifted 12 crocodiles. They were caught from Dyke 3 and Dyke 4, which are close to the Tent City. As per a rough estimate, there will be around 300 crocodiles in that area," she said.

A field officer overseeing the operation said 20 cages, with meat and fish as bait, have been installed near the two ponds.

"As soon as the crocodile comes out to eat the food kept in the cage, they get caught inside. We have kept all the captured crocodiles in our rescue centre. They will be released in the main reservoir of the Sardar Sarovar Dam in the near future," said Idrish Topiya, Assistant Conservator of Forests.

However, both Sahu and Topiya denied reports that the crocodiles were being removed from the dykes to make way for a proposed seaplane service to cater to SoU tourists.

"I want to make it clear that we have not made any plan yet to shift all the crocodiles of that area. The seaplane service is not in the picture yet. We have not received any intimation about it. We are doing this just for the safety of tourists," Sahu emphasised. PTI

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

BRIEF SHORT NOTICE INVITING ONLINE TENDER FOR FIXING RATE CONTRACT FOR SUPPLY OF C.I. SLUICE VALVES WITH ISI MARK FOR THE YEAR 2019

GWSSB invites online tender through e-tendering for Manufacture, Supply & Delivery of C.I. Sluice valves (50 to 1200mm Dia.) with ISI Mark from Approved Vendors of GWSSB Only. Interested bidder who wish to participate in above tender may view the detailed tender notice & down load the Tender documents at free of cost from website. <https://www.nprocure.com>

The last date of submission of online tender is 7-2-2019.
No/INF/VPN/2019/G/2727

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

BRIEF SHORT NOTICE INVITING ON LINE TENDER FOR FIXING RATE CONTRACT FOR SUPPLY OF C.I. AIR VALVES FOR THE YEAR 2019

GWSSB invites online tender through e-tendering for Manufacture, Supply & Delivery of C.I. Air Valves (15 to 200mm Dia.) from Approved Vendors of GWSSB Only. Interested bidder who wish to participate in above tender may view the detailed tender notice & down load the Tender documents at free of cost from website. <https://www.nprocure.com>

The last date of submission of online tender is 7-2-2019.
No/INF/VPN/2019/G/2726

PAPER WITH PASSION

Whose Ratna really?

The award should celebrate rare talent and we cannot let it be used as a tool for settling political wrongs



When we do not find a Bharat Ratna for four years, admitting to a colossal vacuum of national genius and worth, and then suddenly find three jewels — two of whom are no more with us, and one of long-time provenance — then it means that we have been blindfolded and woken up to sudden enlightenment. Or as this year's roll call of national honours shows, set our goals deliberately, namely the general elections. Nothing else can explain why the NDA government has strayed from just rewarding ideological affiliates to celebrating a rainbow coalition of

non-partisan and big names from public life. Except that the neutral choices seemed far more politically motivated than they would otherwise. And the messaging was far from subtle. Little wonder then that Gita Mehta, sister of Odisha Chief Minister and BJD leader Naveen Patnaik, refused the Padma Shri bestowed on her, saying the intent behind it would be misconstrued in an election year and she would much rather have people believe that she got it for her worth. It is no secret that the BJP is trying to woo Patnaik, who is hell-bent on maintaining a political equidistance. It also explains why life-long Congressman and ex-President Pranab Mukherjee wondered aloud what he had done so great to merit the nation's highest award. Of course, Mukherjee's choice is in tandem with the BJP's appropriation of Congress icons, from Mahatma Gandhi — who dominated the Republic Day flotilla — to Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel. The BJP clearly wanted to show that the Congress didn't even bother to reward the dyed-in-the-wool partyman for his contribution to the sustenance of its governments only because he didn't kowtow to its first family. It is no rocket science to understand how both he, though he may not talk about it, and many across the spectrum were surprised about him being passed over for prime ministership in 1984 and 2004, mainly because of opposition from the Gandhis. With Jawaharlal Nehru, Indira and Rajiv Gandhi also Bharat Ratnas, the BJP seems to be attempting to soothe hurt pride of a dedicated public servant, who at one time was heading the maximum number of the now abolished GoMs (group of ministers), and equate him as an equivalent of the dynasty. But if the BJP believes that backing Pranab would get it sympathy from Bengal, appealing to the gentry's respect of him, it is highly mistaken. Just as it is mistaken that Mukherjee himself, while maintaining cordial relations with Prime Minister Narendra Modi, will feel grateful enough to critique the Congress. Even while gracing the RSS event, he had ended up emphasising plurality and inclusiveness and not disappointed the Congress one bit. Naming Assamese author, singer composer Bhupen Hazarika for Bharat Ratna — and playing his song during the R-Day parade — was again a desperate attempt to assuage the Assamese sense of identity. Given that the Citizenship Bill has stoked a wave of ethnic protests across the Northeast with even Mizos staying away from R-Day, the BJP hopes to build bridges by positing one who commands reverence across the region. With the Asom Gana Parishad walking out as an alliance partner, the BJP has a boiling cauldron it can ill-afford to stir in pre-election season. In fact, the Bharat Ratna to Nanaji Deshmukh, while intended to appease the RSS, still doesn't seem biased considering his socialist credentials. Even the Opposition would find little fault in his contribution to rural development or his sustainable solutions on water management and agriculture. The only homage to anti-Congressism comes from his role in the anti-Emergency movement.

In the end, everybody, citizens included, should question the increasing politicisation of the nation's highest civilian award and insist upon a national poll on the greatest Indian of the year. Granted some have been political tributes to founding fathers and their struggles, others have rightly honoured men of rare talent and stature. But just because a template is skewed by non-transparency doesn't mean it cannot or should not be set right. Bharat Ratna should celebrate rare talent and cannot be allowed to be used as a tool for settling political wrongs. Just as a Padma Bhushan to Nambi Narayanan cannot be looked at as an apology for wrongly labelling one of India's best cryogenic specialists a spy.

Something fishy

The problem of fish laced with chemicals ought to get the authorities worried before it becomes a public health issue



Tests by food inspectors have found large amounts of ammonia and formalin in fish that is being sold in several markets across Delhi. This comes a few weeks after Bihar banned the sale of fish across the State due to formalin and the issue of the chemical became a massive issue in Goa. Ammonia is used by fish transporters in the ice to slow down melting and formalin is used to keep the catch looking fresh. But both chemicals are carcinogens and otherwise harmful to human health. With a few proper refrigerated trucks as well as the lack of a proper cold chain in India, fish are often transported on ice in trucks, which can take a few days to travel from the shore to inland cities. Transporters and fish wholesalers must have figured out that ammonia and formalin are good for margins without realising the dangers of the chemicals they use.

Unfortunately, it is not just the fish and seafood industry that suffers from the problem of added chemicals in food. The use of steroids and antibiotics in the poultry and dairy industries is a major problem that we have not addressed. And fresh food, unlike packaged food, does not come with warning labels about chemicals. Many of these harmful substances cannot be washed off, particularly in meat and fish, because they have been absorbed into the muscle. These, when built up in humans, cannot just cause cancers but also impotence, heart disease and other problems. With fish being considered the best source of protein and oils, Indians ought to be eating more of it but this scandal could prove devastating to the fishing industry just like the avian flu epidemic that destroyed the demand for poultry. Most consumers buy fresh food based on trust and if it collapses, that is the end of it. If people are to regain faith in eating fish, more food safety officers should be deployed. And while our bureaucrats have acted tough on companies like Nestle, they should also inspect and examine fresh food items such as meat and fish more regularly. Even though the fishing communities are large vote-banks for politicians in coastal States, there needs to be some political will behind this as well because if demand for fish collapses in the aftermath of this scandal, thousands of fishermen will be jobless. And that is not a risk any politician should take.

The tripod of rights

The most poetic promise made in the Constitution relates to liberty, equality and fraternity. But the three words contain a harmless contradiction — that liberty and equality cannot go together



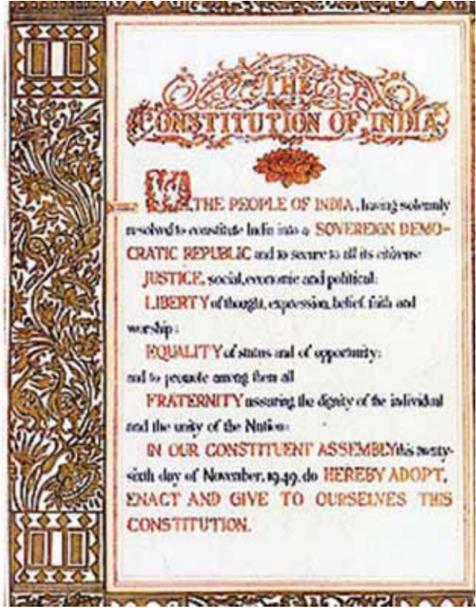
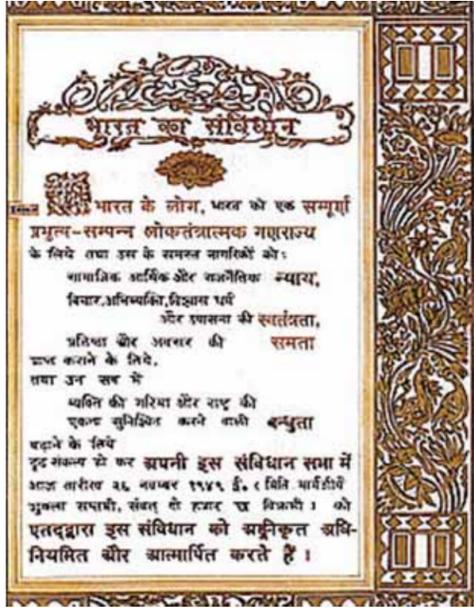
PRAFULL GORADIA

As India celebrated its Republic Day, one's mind goes to the Constitution and the wonderful promises it made. The most poetic of them all is liberty, equality and fraternity, a vow taken from the central slogan of the French Revolution that began in 1789. The three words incidentally contain a harmless contradiction; namely, that liberty and equality cannot go together. If a society wants to have equality, it has to willy-nilly curb liberty. If say, the income of all its citizens is desired to be equal or equitable, inevitably, the Government must place control on higher incomes. And, perhaps, also add subsidy to the lowest incomes. An extreme of this social desire was tried by the communist states led by the Soviet Union.

The contradiction between liberty and equality has best been illustrated by the Hindu faith in karma. How can any society place control over good or better karma? And if a person's karma is excellent, his *bhagya* or luck is also likely to be commensurate. How can the society or its Government curb it in order to ensure equality among the citizens? If a person with poor karma performance is expected to have poor luck, he could be subsidised or even fed and clothed for free. But what about the other facets of good luck rewards? Then there is also the risk of the Government running out of money if too many of its citizens are unlucky, poor and need subsidies.

Article 15(1) states: "The state shall not discriminate against any citizen on grounds only of religion, race, caste, sex, place of birth or any of them." This Article is commendable in insisting that there would be no discrimination on any ground. In other words, it means absolute equal treatment by the state. Yet, Article 30 promises minorities the right to establish and administer educational institutions. "(i) All minorities, whether based on religion or language, shall have the right to establish and administer educational institutions of their choice." This stands in contradiction of Article 15. It gives this right and freedom to the minorities, which are not allowed to be members of the majority community, namely the Hindus. Minorities comprise mainly Muslims. Christian schools are in such demand that they normally face no problem, nor do the linguistic minorities encounter any difficulties. Article 30 (1A) gives the minorities the privilege of being assured the allocation of land that is affordable by the proposed school or its society.

A more fundamental question arises out of this inequality. That was raised by Acharya Justice Dr Durga Das Basu, who rightly contended that a minority, which deserves such special privilege or protection, is one which became one (a minority) by circumstances beyond its influence or control like a war between two or more countries. In the case of Muslims of the sub-continent, it is they who demanded a separate homeland, a Darul Islam or a New Medina called Pakistan. And it had



to be granted by the departing British rulers and conceded to by the Congress because the Muslim electorate in the 1945/46 general elections overwhelmingly voted for Pakistan. To quote from Hamid Khan's authoritative book, *Constitutional and Political History of Pakistan*: "The results showed a decisive victory for the idea of Pakistan. The League won all Muslim seats in the Central Assembly and 446 out of a total 495 Muslim seats in provincial Assemblies. In Bengal, the Muslim League won 113 out of a total 119 Muslim seats and was able to form a Government with Huseyn Shaheed Suhrawardy as Chief Minister. In the Punjab, the Muslim League captured 79 out of 86 Muslim seats. In Sindh, a Muslim League Ministry was formed. Only in the North-West Frontier Province did the League fall short of a majority by winning only 17 out of a total of 36 Muslim seats. These elections proved conclusively that the Muslim League alone represented the Muslims of India."

Partition was the single-point manifesto of the Muslim League, which obtained nearly unanimous support in the elections. The League's proposal, repeated by MA Jinnah and seven of his senior colleagues, was that there should be an exchange of population. Thereby, ideally, all Muslims should gather in Pakistan and all non-Muslims would emigrate to Hindustan. Justice Gopal Das Khosla, ICS, was commissioned to survey the Punjab and report

“ THE CONTRADICTION OF EQUALITY HAS BEST BEEN ILLUSTRATED BY THE HINDU FAITH IN KARMA. HOW CAN ANY SOCIETY PLACE CONTROL OVER GOOD OR BETTER KARMA? AND IF A PERSON'S KARMA IS EXCELLENT, HIS BHAGYA IS ALSO LIKELY TO BE COMMENSURATE. HOW CAN THE SOCIETY OR ITS GOVERNMENT CURB IT IN ORDER TO ENSURE EQUALITY AMONG CITIZENS? ”

on the immediate post-Partition situation. The report was printed in an Oxford University Press published book entitled *Stern Reckoning: A Survey of the Events Leading Up to and Following the Partition of India*. Therein, the Justice wrote that an exchange of population was an integral part of Partition. After all, the vivisection of the country was necessary because as Jinnah said that Hindus and Muslims could not co-exist in the same country. If they were able to co-exist, where would be the need for the division?

Article 27 states, "Freedom as to payment of taxes for promotion of any particular religion. No person shall be compelled to pay any taxes, the proceeds of which are specifically appropriated in payment of expenses for the promotion or maintenance of any particular religion or religious denomination." The writer petitioned the Supreme Court in 2007, requesting that the Haj subsidy be withdrawn as the Constitution declares that India is a secular country. If, however, the Government was not prepared to do so, he should be exempted from the payment of Income Tax. The subsidy was paid from the consolidated fund of India as the Income Tax was credited to the same fund. Four years later, Justice Markandey Katju delivered a long judgement. Its gist was that the Haj subsidy was like an expenditure made by the Government as incidental to maintaining law and order at the Kumbh Mela or on making

arrangements for a visit to Mansarovar. To reduce or abolish the Haj subsidy would damage the edifice of secularism that Jawaharlal Nehru had so painstakingly built.

The following year, namely 2008, Justice Aftab Alam decided, in a petition filed by one Syed Intesar Mehdi, that the Haj subsidy should be progressively reduced and discontinued in the course of 10 years. The subsidy was not in conformity with the tenets of Islam, the judgement said. Incidentally, the late Syed Shahabuddin, IFS and a former MP, had told this writer twice that this subsidy should be gradually withdrawn. So much for the implementation of our secular Constitution.

In conclusion this writer would like to quote Acharya Basu from his book, *Introduction to the Constitution of India*, 2002, that makes a telling point: "The leaders of divided India incorporated in their draft Constitution, certain safeguards for minorities, notwithstanding the Partition, because they refused to concede on the principle that the Muslims in India constituted a separate nation. That India constituted one nation, whose unity and integrity must be maintained, was proclaimed in the very Preamble of the draft Constitution of divided India. The Muslims, who did not go to Pakistan, did so with their eyes open to this Preamble and the safeguards for minorities included in the Constitution."

(The writer is a well-known columnist and an author)

SOUNDBITE

It's very unfortunate. Biju Patnaik and Kanshi Ram should have been conferred the Bharat Ratna before Pranab Mukherjee.



JD(S) secretary general —Danish Ali

With regret I must decline the Padma Shri as there is a general election looming. The timing might be misconstrued.



Author —Gita Mehta

India must do whatever it can to encourage that the Taliban shun extremism and become mainstream.



Former National Security Advisor —Shivshankar Menon

Competition is good for science but bad for scientists. While it is intrinsic, the system tends to exacerbate it.



Nobel Laureate —Venkatraman Ramakrishnan

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Shockwaves

Sir — This refers to the editorial, "Priyanka's Gandhigiri" (January 25). The appointment of Priyanka Gandhi as the general secretary of the Congress provides an additional blow to the BJP, which already seems to be rather jittery. That so many BJP leaders, including the Prime Minister, have commented on her entry proves this.

Tharcus S Fernando
Chennai

Ripple effect

Sir — This refers to the editorial, "Priyanka's Gandhigiri" (January 25). So has the Congress eventually realised that it takes more than what Rahul Gandhi boasts to revive itself in a State that is widely believed to hold the key to Raisina Hill? Either way, her appointment is an admission that the party stands virtually decimated in Uttar Pradesh. It is so politically distraught that it has been pressured into playing its last "Gandhi card" to ward off being reduced to a marginal player. Indeed, Priyanka could be the one with charm — at least adequate enough to convince party stalwarts who believe that Rahul Gandhi is no match-winner. Whether Rahul's "front foot strategy" and Priyanka's entry actually revive the party's prospects is a big imponderable for the 2019 poll. The BJP has certainly been impacted; its fallback on the "dynasty" criticism proves that.

Priyanka is a sure bet for the Congress

This refers to the editorial, "Priyanka's Gandhigiri" (January 25). Priyanka Gandhi's full-fledged entry into active politics has sent a ripple of excitement across the country. It has lent more colour to the already colourful kaleidoscope of Indian politics. It could also force a rethink on the part of the Bahujan Samaj Party and Samajwadi Party to accommodate the Congress into their alliance to avoid a triangular contest. Priyanka certainly has the 'X' factor. She is sure to make it in the rough and tumble of politics as she is said to have the political instincts of her grandmother, Indira Gandhi. She is sure to make a difference to the Congress' fortunes. Her mass appeal is such that it will be counter-productive for the BJP to mount a scathing personal attack on her and drag her husband into the game of politics. Fighting Narendra Modi and Yogi Adityanath in eastern Uttar Pradesh will be a difficult task. It is like bearding the lion in his den. Yet, Priyanka is widely seen as a leader



capable of pulling it off. No wonder, she is seen as the "brahmastra" unleashed by the Congress to queer the pitch for Modi. However, recapturing the pre-eminence enjoyed by the Congress is going to be a long haul, if it takes place at all, given the rise and relevance of regional and social justice parties over the decades.

G David Milton
Maruthancode

Stiffer challenge

Sir — This refers to the editorial, "Priyanka's Gandhigiri" (January 25). Finally, the Congress has used its 'trump card'. So far, Priyanka Gandhi's presence was restricted to the Gandhi family's pocket boroughs of Rae Bareilly and Amethi. But now since she has been given the

charge of eastern Uttar Pradesh, she is expected to play a bigger role in the 2019 general election.

But the Congress must not forget that the dynamics of Uttar Pradesh politics are completely different. The fight is largely between the Bahujan Samaj Party-Samajwadi Party duo and the BJP. The Congress still remains a fringe player over there. At best, Priyanka Gandhi

can attract crowds in her rallies but converting them into votes would be the greatest challenge for her political career.

Bal Govind
Noida

Political repercussion

Sir — This refers to the editorial, "Priyanka's Gandhigiri" (January 25). The re-entry of Priyanka Gandhi Vadra into active politics is a card well played by the Congress. This leader will now be judged on the basis of her performance and not just for her family's legacy.

Of course, she also carries the baggage of her husband, Robert Vadra, who is facing corruption charges. Priyanka should know that the goodwill enjoyed by the party in Uttar Pradesh and her resemblance to former Prime Minister Indira Gandhi may not be enough to translate votes. Uttar Pradesh will decide not only the Congress' prospects but also Priyanka's career to an extent.

Mayank Khatri
Ujjain

Send your feedback to: letterstopioneer@gmail.com

FIRST COLUMN

Vegans, carnivores and technology

Our eating habits won't change so process must. Machines alone can't save us but by growing meat in labs can shift the odds in our favour



GWYNNE DYER

Right now, growing cells as meat instead of animals is a very expensive process," said Yaakov Nahmias, founder and chief scientist of Israel-based startup Future Meat Technologies. But it will get cheaper and it probably will be needed. Global population is heading for 10 billion by 2050 (the current world population is 7.7 billion). Average global incomes will triple in the same period, enabling more people to eat meat-rich diets.

"We need a significant overhaul, changing the global food system on a scale not seen before," said Professor Tim Lang of the University of London, one of the 37 scientific co-authors from 16 different countries who wrote a report by the EAT-Lancet Commission on Food, Planet and Health that will soon be launched in Jakarta. But we've heard it all before. It takes seven kilos of grain to grow one kilo of beef. Seventy per cent of the world's fresh water is used to irrigate crops. We have appropriated three-quarter of the world's fertile land for food production and we'll need the rest by 2050. The world's stock of seafood will have collapsed by 2050. It's all true but we're sick of being nagged.

And still they are bang on. The EAT-Lancet Commission even has a diet that will save the planet. Cut your beef consumption by 90 per cent (ie one steak a month). Eat more beans and pulses (three times more) and more nuts and seeds (four times more). Going vegetarian or vegan will help even more. That's all true, too, but I don't think it's going to happen. Or at least, it's not going to happen by everybody turning vegan, vegetarian, or just 'flexitarian.' No doubt in due course there will be high taxes on meat and fish and official propaganda campaigns to persuade people to change their eating habits and some people will change. Some people already have: The Vegan Society in Britain claims that the number of vegans in the country has quadrupled in the last four years. But not enough people will switch to a plant-based diet soon enough, or maybe ever. We need to bring the rest of the population along and few things are more persistent than cultural dietary preferences like eating meat.

India is home to almost one-third for the world's vegetarians but local variations are immense and deeply entrenched: Seventy five per cent of the people are vegetarians in the northwestern state of Rajasthan but fewer than two per cent are in the southern States of Andhra Pradesh and West Bengal. The most enthusiastic meat-eaters are in the richer countries. And as other countries join their club (like China), they start eating more meat too. So clearly, there would be a huge market for real meat that didn't come from cattle, pigs, sheep and chickens but tastes right, feels right in the mouth and doesn't trash the environment.

We're not talking about the famous \$325,000 hamburger patty made from beef cells immersed in a growth medium that was triumphantly cooked on television six years ago. We're talking about a proper steak with muscle, fat cells and the right shape, taste and texture — but not one produced by the familiar process that uses huge amounts of fertile land, releases large amounts of greenhouse gases and involves slaughtering live animals. That is Yaakov Nahmias' goal and he's pretty close now. Future Meat Technologies produces its 'cell-based meat' in bioreactors, growing it on lattices that gives it shape and texture but we're not talking about giant vats in a lab. He plans to give small units to existing farmers, who might still be rearing some beef cattle, too, for the luxury end of the market.

"With these two plays — a more efficient bioreactor and a distributed manufacturing model — we can essentially drop the cost down to about \$5 a kilogram [\$2.27 a pound]," said Nahmias. Meat giant Tyson Foods recently put \$2.2 million of seed money into his company and a dozen other start-ups are chasing the same goal: Memphis Meat, JUST, Finless Foods, Meatable — a total of 30 labs around the world. How big a threat is this 'cell-based meat' to the traditional cattle industry? Big enough that the US Cattlemen's Association has petitioned the government to restrict the words 'meat' and 'beef' to products "derived directly from animals raised and slaughtered." A tricky definition, since it would mean that wild deer are not made of meat but the ranchers are clearly running scared.

Coming up behind cell-based meat there's the even newer concept of 'Solar Foods'. A Finnish company is using electricity from solar panels to electrolyse water and produce hydrogen. The hydrogen is fed to bacteria and the product is an edible food that is half carbohydrates, half fats and protein. It is just as good as soya as an animal food and it uses no land at all. No greenhouse gas emissions either and the first factory producing it opens in two years' time. Technology alone can't save us but it can certainly shift the odds in our favour.

(The writer is an independent journalist)

OPERATION LOTUS IS STILL ON. BJP OFFERED ONE OF OUR MLAs A HUGE AMOUNT OF MONEY. THIS IS HOW THEY ARE STILL WORKING ON POACHING.

—KARNATAKA CHIEF MINISTER
 HD KUMARASWAMY

POINT COUNTERPOINT



WE AREN'T INDULGING IN ANY OPERATION LOTUS. THEIR MLAs ARE TRYING TO GO AWAY FROM THEM DUE TO THEIR INTERNAL FIGHT.

—FORMER KARNATAKA CHIEF MINISTER
 BS YEDDYURAPPA

China's war against Taiwan

It's imperative for the Middle Kingdom to recognise that any provocative statement will make the Taiwanese people more resilient against it. Only peace talks can resolve matters



SUMIT KUMAR

Delivering a speech to mark the 40th anniversary of the 1979 'Message of Compatriots in Taiwan' on January 2, Chinese President Xi Jinping said, "A Taiwan independent from mainland China is not an option and no person or party can stop the trend towards unification." Xi also reportedly said that China would not renounce the idea of using force to re-unify Taiwan with China. He further said, "Independence would only bring profound disaster for Taiwan" and assured the island a bright future under a "one-country, two-system framework."

In an equally strong reply to President Xi's speech, Taiwan's President Tsai Ing-wen argued that her Government does not accept the "1992 Consensus," and emphasised that a vast majority of Taiwanese stand resolutely opposed to "one country, two systems." She further said that the development of cross-strait relations must be based on "the four musts": China must face the reality of the existence of the Republic of China (Taiwan) and not deny the democratic system that the people of Taiwan have established together; China must respect the commitment of the 23 million people of Taiwan to freedom and democracy and not foster divisions and offer inducements to interfere with the choices made by the people of Taiwan; China must handle cross-strait differences peacefully, on the basis of equality, instead of using suppression and intimidation to get Taiwanese to submit; and it must be the Government or Government-authorized agencies that should engage in the negotiations. Any political consultation that is not authorised or monitored by the people cannot be called "democratic consultation." This is Taiwan's position, a democratic one.

Of course, the tension between Taiwan and China is not new. In fact, the genesis of the conflict between them goes back to 1949, when losing the mainland China to the Mao-led Communist Party of China, Chiang Kai-Shek retreated to Taiwan, establishing Taipei as the capital of the Republic of China Government. Subsequently, China and Taiwan claimed to represent all of China.

The ouster of Taiwan from the membership of the United Nation General Assembly and its Security Council as well as the US' decision to recognise China as a country, ending its diplomatic ties with the Republic of China in 1979, boosted China's position against Taiwan. At the same time, the Chinese leadership focussed on using the 1992 Consensus between representatives of the Chinese Communist Party and the Kuomintang (KMT) party of Taiwan as the strongest tool to claim Taiwan as a part of China.

However, since President Tsai came to power in 2016, she made one thing very clear that her Government does not recognise the 1992 Consensus. At the same time, Tsai's New Southbound policy to strengthen Taiwan's ties with Southeast Asian countries and build a strong relationship with South Asian countries, including India, and other developments caused heartburn in the Chinese leadership. As if these developments were not enough for China to initiate punitive actions against

“THE TENSION BETWEEN TAIWAN AND CHINA IS NOT A NEW PHENOMENON. IN FACT, THE GENESIS OF THE CONFLICT GOES BACK TO 1949 WHEN LOSING MAINLAND CHINA TO THE MAO-LED COMMUNIST PARTY, CHIANG KAI-SHEK RETREATED TO TAIWAN, ESTABLISHING TAIPEI AS THE CAPITAL OF THE REPUBLIC OF CHINA. SUBSEQUENTLY, CHINA AND TAIWAN CLAIMED TO REPRESENT ALL OF CHINA”



Taiwan, US President Donald J Trump's special focus on elevating ties with Taiwan accentuated the rift between China-Taiwan relations. This is evident from the fact that after being elected as President, Trump received a telephone call from Tsai Ing-wen and also initially questioned the 'One China Policy'. Trump signed into law the National Defence Authorisation Act (NDAA) for the 2018-19, which mentions strengthening defence partnership between the US and Taiwan as continuing US legal commitments.

The NDAA also stated that the US should invite Taiwan to participate in military exercises and consider re-establishing port-of-call exchanges between the navies of the two sides. Trump signing the Taiwan Travel Act cleared the way for the visit of high-ranking officials to Taiwan. A new *de facto* US Embassy was inaugurated in Taipei, among other things. In December 2018, the US President signed into law the Asia Reassurance Initiative Act, which reiterates American commitment "to counter efforts to change *status quo* and support peaceful resolution acceptable to both sides of the Taiwan Strait."

In turn, while China has been extensively using its economic power to force several countries — Nigeria, Panama and others — to de-recognise Taiwan as an independent country, it also opened a new air route over the narrow Taiwan Strait separating China and Taiwan and has been carrying out military details in the vicinity. China put pressure on the International Civil Aviation Organisation to not initiate Taiwan as a guest of the Icao Assembly in September 2016. Beijing wrote letters, asking dozens of international air-

lines to change the way they refer to Taiwan on their websites and threatened to disrupt their operations in China if they did not comply.

Amid China's offensive strategy against Taiwan, the defeat of the Democratic Progressive Party (DPP) in the local elections of Taiwan encouraged Beijing because the Chinese leadership saw the DPP's electoral loss as the rejection of the Tsai Government's efforts to make Taiwan an independent country. At the same time, the victory of the KMT in the elections was a welcome development, given its pro-China stand. In fact, Chinese state-run media depicted the election reversals as a vindication of Xi's measures to isolate Taiwan and undercut its international standing.

But the fact remains that the defeat of the DPP in the local elections must not be seen as an indication of the change in the thinking of the people of Taiwan as far as the country's independence and sovereignty are concerned. The reality is that in a poll, 75 of the Taiwanese respondents saw China and Taiwan as two different states. Viewing mainland China as a perverted form of Chinese culture, Taiwanese also consider their culture and tradition as pure Chinese and feel proud of their democratic institutions, freedom of Press and other liberal values. They do not want to give up these hard-earned markers.

To argue that the DPP's loss in the elections resulted from the Tsai Government's assertive policy towards China would be misplaced. In fact, a number of domestic issues, including her Government's labour and pension policy, Tsai's poor leadership, lack of strong strategy, her Government's

performance on marriage and economic policy among others were responsible for the DPP's loss in the elections. On the other hand, the KMT planned an effective election strategy to defeat the DPP.

While saying that the use of military power cannot be ruled out to bring Taiwan under the control of China, the Chinese President completely overlooked the fact that today, Taiwan enjoys strong ties, although unofficial, with a number of countries, including all the other major powers of the world. It is also a fact that countries across the globe have recognised Taiwan as a champion of democratic institutions. At the same time, it is also a core interest of the US to see Taiwan flourish as a promising democratic and independent country. Given the fact that the people of Taiwan are aware of China's dubious stand on 'one country, two systems' in Hong Kong and Tibet, Xi could not win over Taiwanese with these tactics.

Thus, it is imperative for the Chinese leadership to recognise the direction of the wind as far as the China-Taiwan issue is concerned. Any provocative statement will only make the people of Taiwan more resilient against China. At the same time, it is also the responsibility of the global community to see that Taiwan must remain a strong democratic country. It is only through peace talks that the two sides can end conflict, leading to strengthening peace, security and development in the Taiwan strait and the region.

(The writer is Visiting Fellow, National Chengchi University, Taipei, and Research Fellow, Maulana Azad Institute of Asian Studies, Kolkata)

Challenges of inclusive housing

The housing sector demands high-level creativity. Conventional bureaucratic approach and existing laws can merely scratch the problem



MOÏN QAZI

Every day, countless families struggle to keep a decent roof over their heads. There are millions of low-income families, who live in overcrowded, unsafe spatchcock dwellings, crammed between dusty paths and open sewers with virtually no sanitation, environmental risk factors and lack of even the barest infrastructure. These are usually socially homogenous encampments where unskilled poor live among themselves, disconnected from others, making it harder for them to access mainstream economy.

The dwellers experience exclusion, discrimination and lack of hope to access adequate and affordable housing. They are under constant threat of being evicted without notice. A single eviction could destabilise multiple blocks, not to account for the block to which the family is begrudgingly relocated. Most of their possessions — water containers and tents among

others — are periodically steamrolled by eviction agencies.

There is little more critical to a family's quality of life than a healthy and safe living space. However, this section of India's poor lives in inhuman conditions and is often under the threat of displacement, harassment and arrest. Over the last decade, India has substantially expanded its net of welfare policies, aimed at lifting millions from poverty. It seems that the time has come for making 'right to shelter' a reality. Priority for housing ought to be higher than education and health.

Challenges for India are daunting and homelessness has become a powerful monster. An estimated 65 million people, or 13.6 million households, are housed in urban slums, according to the 2011 Census. It also showed that an additional 1.8 million people are homeless. Recent estimates by the Ministry of Rural Development and Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs indicate a housing shortage of nearly three crore units in rural areas and 1.2 crore units in urban areas. The grim aspect of the housing scenario is that the number of homeless is huge despite the fact that its composition of urban population is much lower compared to other coun-

tries. According to the World Bank, urban population, as a proportion of the total population in 2015, stood at 86 per cent in Brazil, 56 per cent in China, 54 per cent in Indonesia, 79 per cent in Mexico, 82 per cent in South Korea and 31 per cent in India.

By the accepted definition of slum (minimum 60 households), more than 2,500 Indian cities have slums; overall, there are 33,500 slums and the total population stands at 65.5 million. About 90 per cent of the residents have electric power and 56 per cent have access to water. These figures pose a huge challenge for planners. Affordable housing has assumed great importance because it generates direct and indirect employment in the medium-term and sustained consumption in the long-term. A 2014 study by the National Council of Applied Economic Research indicated that every additional rupee of capital invested in the housing sector adds ₹1.54 to the GDP and every ₹1 lakh invested in residential housing creates 2.69 new jobs in the economy.

The lack of official land titles is a major impediment to the acquisition of housing finance. People do not have documentary proof of being owners of the land on which they live. Many low-

income villagers have owned their land for generations. Landlessness and the lack of secure property rights are among those inequities that perpetuate poverty, hold back economic development and generate social tensions. Demographic shifts, combined with poor or non-existent land ownership policies, have spawned huge slums across the country.

For most of India's poor and the vulnerable, secure property rights, including land tenure, are a rare accessible luxury. Land tenure determines who can use land, under what conditions and for how long. Tenure arrangements may be based both on official laws and policies, and on informal customs. There was a time when landlessness affected a smaller chunk of the population. However, the number of landless people has been rising. The ones without land joined the ranks of the worst ones in extreme poverty and the task of poverty alleviation became even more difficult. Considering the links between landlessness and poverty or the need to score better successes against poverty, it is important to put a hard brake on the process of becoming landless. Land is a very price-sensitive commodity and its current short-

age in most city-centric areas is an impediment towards creating affordable housing in urban areas where it is most needed. Some suggestions from experts can serve as useful markers for policy-makers while designing Government programmes for housing.

- Governments should improve the legal and regulatory environment related to housing and increase the supply of affordable, legal shelter with tenure security and access to basic amenities.
- The Government must undertake physical upgradation of informal settlements. Informal urban settlements can be provided with infrastructure by widening roads, creating playgrounds, laying sewage pipes and installing water taps and toilets. These services create a high-level of tenure security without a formal change of legal status and encourage local improvements which can transform these slums into liveable habitats.
- Making in situ improvements to these settlements would allow slum residents to remain connected to their own critical social and economic networks.
- The Government should consider converting under-utilised urban land for affordable housing and economic development with realistic stan-

dards for development. It can recognise semi-formal titles of land as workable collateral for home improvement loans.

- The Government should also endow slum dwellers with land rights for residential use that are inheritable, mortgageable and non-transferable. Endowing them with mortgageable titles can open the gates for improving health, education and employment.

In response to the non-availability of tangible collateral from low-income households, as required by the formal financial sector, a new stream of lending has emerged, called 'housing micro-finance'. Institutionalised micro-finance systems have come up with innovative solutions. These draw on the best practices in micro-finance but remain adapted to the classical housing finance paradigm. This has been highly successful wherever Governments are offering long-term tenancies and shared-ownership housing in a supportive context. But the sector is still in need of a more sustainable business model to grow.

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



FOREIGN EYE



IT'S TIME TO LISTEN TO THE QUEEN

Those trying to derail Brexit are the ones who are, as Her Majesty puts it, "losing sight of the bigger picture." After all, it is they who are willing to rip up centuries of democratic understanding and procedure to keep us locked within the EU. So terrified of Britain flourishing, free from Brussels' dead hand, that they will happily destroy public trust in Parliament in order to succeed.

(The Sun editorial)

Govt empowers PSU banks to seek LOCs against defaulters

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

In a bid to prevent big economic offenders like Vijay Mallya and Nirav Modi from fleeing the country, the Government has empowered PSU banks to request lookout circulars (LOCs) against wilful defaulters and fraudsters, officials said on Sunday.



The Home Ministry has also authorised the Serious Fraud Investigation Office (SFIO), a statutory corporate fraud investigation agency, to request LOCs if it feels the suspect may escape from India.

The ministry issued two circulars recently, authorising chairman-cum-managing directors or chief executive officers of public sector banks and the SFIO to request designated authorities to issue LOCs against any wilful defaulter or fraudster if they think the person may flee the country.

The CMDs and CEOs of PSU banks can now ask the Home Ministry, Ministry of External Affairs, Customs and Income Tax Departments, Directorate of Revenue Intelligence, CBI, regional passport officers and police to issue an LOC to alert immigration check posts to stop anyone leaving India, a home ministry

official said. The SFIO and PSU banks can initiate the process if they suspect that the defaulter may leave the country to escape the law, the official said.

Earlier, investigating agencies would request LOCs in cognisable offences under the IPC or other laws in case the accused evaded arrest or did not appear before court despite issuance of non-bailable warrants and other coercive measures and there was a likelihood of the accused leaving the country to escape arrest.

An LOC is valid for a year unless its duration is specified. The government's fresh move came after three high-profile escapes involving liquor baron Vijay Mallya and diamondaires Nirav Modi and Mehul Choksi rocked the country, inviting embarrass-

ment for the Government. Mallya left India on March 2, 2016 after defaulting on loan amounting to ₹9,000 crore he had taken for his now-defunct Kingfisher Airlines.

Jewellery designer Modi and his uncle Choksi, managing director of Gitanjali Gems Ltd, fled the country in January 2018. They are accused of cheating the state-run Punjab National Bank to the tune of ₹13,000 crore.

The Government had last year brought the Fugitive Economic Offenders Act, empowering the authorities to attach and confiscate the proceeds of crime and properties of economic offenders, like bank fraudsters or loan defaulters who fled the country.

The law is aimed at quickly recovering losses to the exchequer or PSBs in cases of frauds.

Finance Minister Piyush Goyal to meet heads of PSU banks today

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Finance Minister Piyush Goyal will meet the CEOs of public sector banks Monday to take a stock of the banking sector, and discuss ways to improve their financial health, sources said.

The meeting assumes significance as it comes just three days ahead of the Budget 2019-20, the last from this government before the general elections expected to be held in April-May.

The full-day meeting is likely to be attended by Reserve Bank of India Governor Shaktikanta Das, who is going to announce his first monetary policy review on February 7.

Goyal, who was given additional charge of the finance ministry last Wednesday as Arun Jaitley is away to the US for a treatment, is his expected to discuss a host of issues including credit offtake and bad loan position of lenders.

Among the key issues, sources said, the meeting will review progress of various schemes of the government being implemented through the government. It will also review the credit flow to MSMEs, agriculture and retail sectors.

Besides, sources said, the meeting will also review financial performance of the banks for the nine months ended December 2018.

Non-performing assets (NPAs) would also come up for deliberation, they added. Public sector banks (PSBs)



have seen decline in bad loans by over Rs 23,000 crore from a peak of Rs 9.62 lakh crore in March 2018 due to various initiatives taken by the government.

At the same time, PSBs have also made a record in recovery of Rs 60,726 crore in the first half of the current financial year, which is more than double the amount recovered in the corresponding period last year.

According to the latest finance ministry data, non-NPA accounts overdue by 31 to 90 days (Special Mention Accounts 1 & 2) of PSBs have declined by 61 per cent over five successive quarters - from Rs 2.25 lakh crore as of June 2017 to Rs 0.87 lakh crore in September 2018.

In his first stint as finance minister for 100 days last year, Goyal was instrumental in setting up a committee headed by non-executive chairman of Punjab National Bank Sunil Mehta to examine whether creation of an asset reconstruction company or asset management company to help in faster resolution of stressed assets.

Budget plans ₹4000-cr infusion in general insurers



PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The upcoming Budget may have provision for Rs 4,000-crore capital infusion for public sector general insurance companies to shore up their capital.

The Budget 2019-20 is likely to be presented on February 1.

According to sources, the Department of Financial Services sought Rs 4,000 crore in the Budget for fund infusion in three insurance companies - National Insurance Company, Oriental Insurance Company and United India Insurance Company.

Depending on the capital that Budget provides, individual allocation would be made, sources added.

This capital is required to strengthen their financial health.

The profitability of many general insurance companies, including that of state-owned ones has been under pressure owing to rising underwriting losses and higher claims.

It is to be noted that the government, in Budget 2018-19, had proposed to merge National Insurance Company, Oriental Insurance Company and United India Insurance Company.

Finance Minister Arun Jaitley in the Budget speech had announced that the three companies would be merged into a single insurance entity. The process of merger is likely to be completed during the current fiscal.

As on March 31, 2017, the three companies together had more than 200 insurance products with a total premium of Rs 41,461 crore and a market share of around 35 per cent.

Their combined net worth is Rs 9,243 crore, with total employee strength of around 44,000 spread over 6,000 offices.

In 2017, state-owned New India Assurance Company and General Insurance Corporation of India were listed on bourses.

Initial estimates suggest that the combined entity formed by merging the three insurers will be the largest non-life insurance company in India, valued at Rs 1.2-1.5 lakh crore.

SC dismisses plea against IREO



PNS ■ NEW DELHI

In a major boost to the real estate sector, the Supreme Court today dismissed a petition filed by the Ex-CEO, Ramesh Sanka against the flagship company of IREO in India, namely IREO Pvt. Ltd.

Ramesh Sanka had filed the petition in the nature of public interest litigation alleging financial irregularities in the affairs of IREO Pvt. Ltd and large scale diversion of funds. Several homebuyers had also approached the apex court for raising their grievances.

The Supreme Court had issued notice to the governmental agencies to look into the allegations made by Mr. Sanka, claiming to be a whistleblower. The agencies

filed status reports in relation to the inquiry conducted by them in relation to allegations made before the Supreme Court. The Supreme Court after perusing the status reports had come to the conclusion that this was not a fit case for grant of any relief and has dismissed the petition giving a clean chit to IREO.

The Supreme Court while dismissing the petition observed that personal grievances cannot be allowed to be raised before the apex court and the same are not in the nature of public interest litigation. The Court while dismissing the petition safeguarded the rights of the customers by clarifying that they will be at liberty to pursue their legal remedies before appropriate forum.

India seeks revenue-sharing pact with China under RCEP

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

India is pushing for a revenue-sharing agreement with China under the proposed mega trade deal RCEP to ensure that domestic film producers get their rightful dues from revenue generated by showing Bollywood movies in China, an official said.

Currently, Bollywood movies make good money in China but due to absence of any revenue-sharing agreement, domestic film producers often do not get the due share from the huge profits generated in the neighbouring country from the movies, the official added.

The Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) is a mega free-trade agreement being negotiated by 16 countries, comprising 10-member ASEAN group (Brunei, Cambodia, Indonesia, Malaysia, Myanmar, Singapore, Thailand, the Philippines, Laos and Vietnam), India, China, Japan, South Korea, Australia, and New Zealand. "India wants this agree-

ment as part of the services sector negotiations with China as Indian movies are more popular there as compared to other member countries of RCEP bloc," the official added.

Though revenue-sharing agreement is a private contract, a formal agreement under RCEP would help Indian film producers get a better deal in China.

"It is part of negotiations. By this agreement, we would be creating a framework. They (China) are using our content and making huge money. So, they should pay the royalty for usage of the content," the official said.

Foreign films in China cannot be released without the permission of the government film agencies.

Aamir Khan-starrer Dangal was a super-hit in China and raked in over Rs 1,100 crore. His other movies including PK, and Secret Superstar were also hit in Chinese market.

The RCEP aims to cover goods, services, investments, economic and technical cooperation, competition and intellectual property

rights. The 25th round of negotiations are scheduled in mid-February in Indonesia.

The main issues that need resolution include number of goods on which import duties should be completely eliminated and norms to relax services trade among the 16-member countries.

Under the services, India wants greater market access for its professionals in the proposed agreement.

Trade experts have warned that India should negotiate the agreement carefully, as it has trade deficit with as many as 10 RCEP members, including China, South Korea and Australia, among others.

India wants to have a balanced RECP trade agreement as it would cover 40 per cent of the global GDP and over 42 per cent of the world's population.

India already has a free-trade pact with the Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN), Japan and South Korea. It is also negotiating a similar agreement with Australia and New Zealand but has no such plans for China.

Efforts on to double exports from \$321 bn: Suresh Prabhu

PTI ■ PANAJI

Union Commerce and Industry Minister Suresh Prabhu Sunday said new policies of the government will ensure the doubling of exports, currently pegged at USD 321 billion, in a few years.

He was speaking at the inauguration ceremony of a new office and laboratory complex of the Export Inspection Agency at Margao in south Goa.

"It is our endeavour to increase India's exports from the current \$321 billion to almost double in a few years. One of the principal potential areas for export is fisheries, especially at a time when for the first time, the country has come out with an agricultural policy," Prabhu said.

He said the policy focuses on five key elements, namely agriculture, horticulture, plantation, fisheries and meat. "All these are going to be exported. From the current USD 30 billion, we want to take it to USD 100 billion. Fisheries can create several lakh jobs in the country," he added.

Anti-dumping duty imposed on Chinese chemical import

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The Government has imposed an anti-dumping duty on a chemical from China, used in photography and manufacturing of dyes, for five years to protect domestic producers of the chemical intermediate from cheap shipments.

The anti-dumping duty on Meta Phenylethylenediamine (MPDA) imported from China will be in the range USD 573.92-USD 1,015.44 a tonne, according to a notification of the Central Board of Indirect Taxes and Customs (CBIC).

It is for the second time in a row that anti-dumping duty has been imposed on the import of the chemical from China. The duty was to expire in March 2019.

The levy has been imposed after the Directorate General of Trade Remedies (DGTR), under the Ministry of Commerce and Industry, made a recommendation for the same. DGTR was earlier known as the Directorate General of Anti-dumping and Allied Duties (DGAD).

On the recommendation of DGAD, a definitive anti-dumping duty was imposed on the

chemical in March 2014. Later, Aarti Industries filed an application before DGAD for review and continuation of the duty on the chemical.

Following 'Sunset Review' of an anti-dumping investigation on the imports of MPDA, the DGTR recommended for imposition of the levy for another five years.

MPDA is a chemical intermediate used for manufacturing dyes, engineering polymer and in photography and medical applications.

Under normal (room) conditions, it is a colourless or white colour solid, which tends to turn red, purple (dark colour) in air, on storage.

Countries carry out the anti-dumping probe to determine whether the domestic industries have been hurt because of a surge in cheap imports.

As a counter measure, they impose duties under the multilateral regime of the World Trade Organization.

The duty is aimed at ensuring fair trading practices and creating a level-playing field for domestic producers with regard to foreign producers and exporters.

Born2Run Delhi half marathon concludes

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

With a mission to inspire people to focus on fitness and live a healthy lifestyle, Born2Run hosted its first ever Born2Run Half Marathon today at Jawahar Lal Nehru Stadium, New Delhi. The marathon kick-started at 6 am till about 9 am with the race categories of 5 km, 10 km, and 21.1 km. A total of 5000runners participated in the Born2Run Half marathon.



Sheila Dixit, former Chief Minister of New Delhi graced the occasion with her presence at the marathon. Also present were Maan Kaur Singh (Age:102) and Gurdev Singh (Age:80), the mother-son duo. Mann Kaur has hit the headlines by becoming world's

fastest centenarian at American Masters Games in Vancouver in 2017

The vision of Born2Run is to establish a sustainable, community focused pan-India running event, encouraging athletes and amateur runners to lead healthy lifestyles and further improve their personal fitness through running. The key highlights of the event were its excellent route profile with ample hydration points, medical aid, ample parking facility, enough mobile toilets, planned transport facility and breakfast for the participating individuals.

PSUs to implement 10% quota for EWS from Feb

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Central public sector enterprises (CPSEs) will implement the 10 per cent reservation quota for economically weaker sections (EWSs) in respect of all direct recruitment vacancies from February 1.

There were 339 CPSEs with a total investment of over Rs 13.73 lakh crore as on March 31, 2018. They employed 10.88 lakh people, excluding casual and contractual workers, in 2017-18 compared to 11.55 lakh in the previous fiscal.

An order regarding the implementation of the EWS reservation has been issued by the Department of Public Sector Enterprises (DPE).

The DPE also asked the CPSEs to file a fortnightly report beginning from February 15 on vacancies filled by them under SC, ST, OBC, EWS and unreserved categories.

Cabinet likely to approve agri-package for farmers today

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The cabinet on Monday is likely to approve a package for farmers to boost their income and address distress in the farm sector, sources said, adding that the move will come ahead of the general elections.

"The cabinet meeting is scheduled tomorrow (Monday) and the agriculture ministry's proposal on addressing income deficit syndrome of small and marginal farmers is on the agenda," a highly placed source said.

The agriculture ministry has recommended several options to provide both short and long term solutions to address agrarian distress. However, a final call will be taken in the cabinet meeting as a huge cost is involved, the sources said.

One of the options proposed is waiving interest on crop loans for farmers who pay on time, costing an additional Rs 15,000 crore to the exchequer, the sources stated.

There is also a proposal to completely waive premium for food crops. The centre is also evaluating the scheme followed by the Telangana and Odisha governments wherein a fixed amount is transferred directly into the bank account of farmers, the sources added.

Agriculture Minister Radha Mohan Singh had recently indicated that the government would announce an agriculture package before the 2019-20 Budget, to be presented on February 1.

Experts said the government has less time to implement any new scheme. The measure has to be such that it can be implemented faster to reap the political gains during the election.

It may be noted that the central government has taken farmers' issues seriously after the ruling BJP was defeated in Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan and Chhattisgarh in the recent state polls, where rural distress was a key factor.

Textiles Minister for tapping potential of technical textiles

PTI ■ COIMBATORE

Since standardisation has been notified, India can become one of the most competitive economies in the field of technical textiles, Union minister Smriti Irani said Sunday.

Speaking after inaugurating a three-day 'reverse buyers sellers meet' and Global Textile Expo here, she told the foreign buyers from over 20 countries that HSN codes were notified for over 207 textile items.

In the area of cotton, India has a surging potential particularly in the field of medical textiles; and because of standardisation, the country can become the most competitive economies in the technical textiles, she said.

The minister also appealed to Tamil Nadu to unleash the untapped potential so that the state can be at the forefront.

She further said that the technical textiles market is likely to touch USD 3 billion in another two-and-a-half years.



Amongst all the schemes that has been enunciated and presented to the textile industry, she said, most of the benefits have been accrued and established by Tamil Nadu.

Irani also highlighted various schemes where Tamil Nadu gained the most, which include yarn bank scheme, powertext, powerloom cluster, group insurance scheme under social security and also GST.

Stating that the visiting foreign buyers may be wondering why she was talking

about the schemes, subsidies and taxation in this meet, which was to initiate buyers and sellers, the minister said, "We are hoping to lessen the burden on our units so that they become competitive in terms of price. We become best price point."

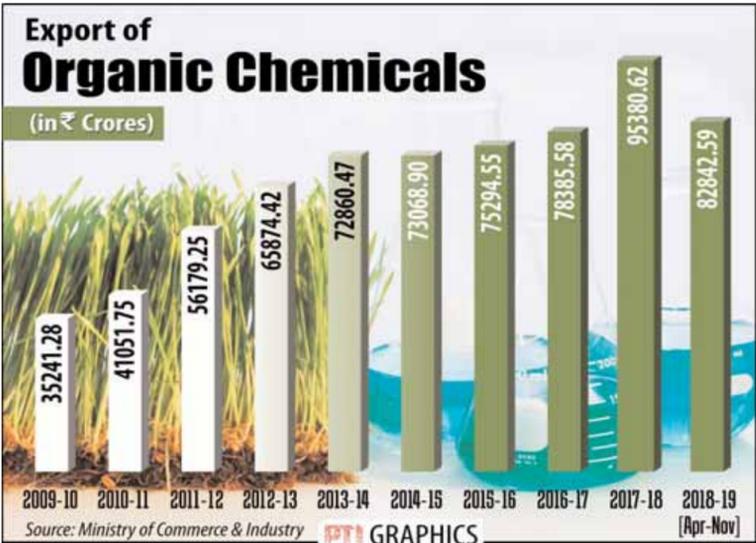
Tamil Nadu handlooms minister, O S Manian, appealed to youngsters to come forward to weaving and join the textile industry and showcase their talent and innovations to uplift the livelihood of weavers and the sector as a whole.

He also appealed to the Union textiles minister to take steps to establish a powerloom textiles market either in Somanur in Coimbatore district or Palladam in Tirupur district.

State Municipal Administration Minister S P Velumani, Deputy Speaker of Tamil Nadu Assembly Pollachi V Jayaraman and chairpersons of Texprocil, Pdexil also spoke on the occasion.

TOPPERS

Scheme	NAV	1Yr %	Fund-Reg(G)	Fund-Reg(G)	Fund-Reg(G)	Fund-Reg(G)	Fund-Reg(G)	Fund-Reg(G)	Fund-Reg(G)	Fund-Reg(G)	Fund-Reg(G)	Fund-Reg(G)		
Tata Digital India Fund-Reg(G)	14.6	15.22	JM Large Cap Fund(G)	64.56	-3.66	Mirae Asset Emerging	49.07	-7.99	L&T Equity Fund-Reg(G)	76.75	-11.87	L&T Emerging Businesses	23.64	-18.22
ICICI Pru Technology Fund(G)	58.91	13.24	Axis Long Term Equity Fund(G)	40.85	-3.94	Bluechip-Reg(G)			HDFC Small Cap Fund-Reg(G)	41.28	-11.99	Sundaram Select Micro	28.59	-18.46
SBI Technology Opp Fund-Reg(G)	62.44	10.75	Aditya Birla SL CEF-Global	23.22	-4.07	SBI Consumption Opp Fund-Reg(G)	112.99	-8.02	ICICI Pru Value Fund-11(G)	11.4	-12.04	Cap-Series IV-Reg(G)		
Franklin India Feeder - Franklin U.S. Opportunities Fund(G)	28.49	9.82	Aditya Birla SL India GenNext Fund(G)	78.12	-4.16	Kotak Equity Opp Fund(G)	111.1	-8.11	DSP Equity Opportunities Fund-Reg(G)	204.24	-12.11	Aditya Birla SL Midcap Fund(G)	271.02	-18.59
Aditya Birla SL Global Real Estate Fund(G)	18.92	8.42	Baroda Banking & Fin Serv Fund(G)	21.03	-4.28	ICICI Pru R.I.G.H.T Fund(G)	40.63	-8.12	Principal Nifty 100 Equal Weight Fund(G)	67.23	-12.22	Tata Resources & Energy Fund-Reg(G)	13.18	-18.64
ICICI Pru US Bluechip Equity Fund(G)	26.09	8.21	ICICI Pru LT Equity Fund (Tax Saving)(G)	349.5	-4.31	SBI Healthcare Opp Fund-Reg(G)	120.9	-8.18	ICICI Pru Exports & Services Fund(G)	53.73	-12.23	SBI Magnum MidCap Fund-Reg(G)	69.51	-18.75
Franklin India Technology Fund(G)	155.58	7.8	DHFL Pramerica Large Cap Fund-2-Reg(G)	11.8	-4.33	Invesco India Contra Fund(G)	44.86	-8.24	ICICI Pru Growth Fund-3(DP)	9.95	-12.27	Invesco India Infrastructure Fund(G)	15.72	-18.84
DHFL Pramerica Global Equity Opp Fund(G)	17.26	7.41	Kotak Standard Multicap Fund(G)	32.69	-4.6	Sundaram Value Fund-II-Reg(G)	15.14	-8.27	Templeton India Equity Income Fund(G)	44.03	-12.42	IDBI Small Cap Fund(G)	9.06	-18.96
Reliance US Equity Opp Fund(G)	14.12	7.29	ICICI Pru Multicap Fund(G)	273.61	-4.62	Tata Large Cap Fund(G)	203.45	-8.28	Edelweiss Long Term Equity Fund (Tax Savings)-Reg(G)	43.76	-12.46	Franklin India Smaller Cos Fund(G)	51.25	-19.06
Aditya Birla SL Intl. Equity Fund-A(G)	20.26	6.08	ICICI Pru Value Fund-5(G)	14.77	-4.77	SBI BlueChip Fund-Reg(G)	36.22	-8.29	Reliance Consumption Fund(G)	61.38	-12.49	UTI LT Adv Fund-V(G)	9.1	-19.06
Aditya Birla SL Digital India Fund(G)	50.94	5.95	UTI Mastershare-Reg(G)	114.54	-5.04	Aditya Birla SL Equity Fund(G)	682.21	-8.29	Kotak World Gold Fund(G)	7.95	-12.5	DSP Natural Res & New Energy Fund-Reg(G)	30.23	-19.07
Axis Multicap Fund-Reg(G)	10.68	4.91	Sundaram Large and Mid Cap Fund(G)	32.18	-5.13	Aditya Birla SL Global Commodities Fund(G)	12.41	-8.32	DSP Midcap Fund-Reg(G)	50.91	-12.62	ICICI Pru Infrastructure Fund(G)	46.71	-19.27
			Reliance Japan Equity Fund(G)	12.44	-5.35	Sundaram Global Advt(G)	16.21	-8.36	Edelweiss Eur Dynamic Equity Off-shr Fund-Reg(G)	10.32	-12.8	UTI Infrastructure Fund-Reg(G)	48.14	-19.31
			UTI Dividend Yield Fund-Reg(G)	62.35	-5.38	SBI Magnum Multicap Fund-Reg(G)	45.27	-8.37	Reliance Value Fund(G)	68.55	-12.81	SBI Infrastructure Fund-Reg(G)	13.7	-19.37
						Franklin India Equity Fund(G)	563.07	-8.41	Reliance Growth Fund(G)	1043.01	-13.02	IDFC Sterling Value Fund-Reg(G)	47.67	-19.44
						ICICI Pru Value Fund-3(D)	10.07	-8.46	ICICI Pru Nifty Next 50 Index Fund(G)	23.77	-13.05	BNP Paribas Mid Cap Fund(G)	29.96	-19.65
						Franklin India Bluechip Fund(G)	439.42	-8.48	Motilal Oswal Long Term Equity Fund-Reg(G)	15.96	-13.16	Kotak Small Cap Fund(G)	67.03	-19.65
						SBI Large & Midcap Fund-Reg(G)	209	-8.52	Franklin India Opportunities Fund(G)	69.04	-13.24	Aditya Birla SL Dividend	151.17	-19.66
						Franklin India Equity Advantage Fund(G)	75.91	-8.55	SBI Tax advantage Fund-II(G)	32.9	-13.28			
						Motilal Oswal Focused 25 Fund-Reg(G)	20.09	-8.67	Motilal Oswal Midcap 30 Fund-Reg(G)	23.14	-13.39			
						Reliance Multi Cap Fund(G)	92.33	-8.68	Principal Multi Cap Growth Fund(G)	134.53	-13.41			
						HDFC Equity Fund(G)	622.31	-8.71	Principal Personal Tax saver Fund	184.55	-13.55			
						Sundaram LT Tax Adv Fund-Sr I-Reg(G)	12.9	-8.75	IDBI Nifty Junior Index Fund(G)	20.25	-13.57			
						DSP Top 100 Equity Fund-Reg(G)	189.37	-8.75	Franklin Build India Fund(G)	38.39	-13.63			
						Tata Ethical Fund(G)	151.63	-8.77	Sundaram Diversified Equity(G)	94.14	-13.76			
						DHFL Pramerica Tax Plan(G)	29.09	-8.78	SBI Tax Advantage Fund-III-Reg(G)	21.96	-13.8			
						JM Multicap Fund(G)	28.93	-8.94	Kotak Emerging Equity Scheme(G)	35.95	-13.82			
						HDFC Growth Opp Fund-Reg(G)	107.11	-8.98	HDFC TaxSaver(G)	489.71	-13.86			
						Reliance Close Ended Equity Fund-II-A(G)	17.05	-9.05	Principal Global Opportunities Fund(G)	26.95	-13.98			
						Aditya Birla SL Focused Equity Fund(G)	54.73	-9.11	JM Value Fund(G)	29.38	-14.02			
						Sundaram LT Tax Adv Fund-Sr II-Reg(G)	13.79	-9.14	Principal Tax Savings Fund	196.51	-14.11			
						ICICI Pru Value Discovery Fund(G)	136.99	-9.19	ICICI Pru Value Fund-10(G)	10.71	-14.39			
						DSP World Gold Fund-Reg(G)	11.23	-9.22	Principal Emerging Bluechip Fund(G)	97.65	-14.39			
						IDBI India Top 100 Equity Fund(G)	22.53	-9.3	ICICI Pru Midcap Fund(G)	90.63	-14.61			
						SBI Equity Opp Fund-Sr I-Reg(G)	14.94	-9.41	L&T Tax Advt Fund-Reg(G)	50.68	-14.69			
						Tata India Tax Savings Fund-Reg(G)	16.71	-10.28	Baroda ELSS 96(G)	41.96	-14.7			
						Invesco India Feeder - Invesco Pan European Equity Fund-Reg(G)	10.45	-10.33	Tata Mid Cap Growth Fund(G)	127.11	-14.74			
						SBI Magnum Global Fund-Reg(G)	164.42	-10.49	HDFC Mid-Cap Opportunities Fund(G)	51.24	-14.87			
						Franklin India Focused Equity Fund(G)	37.76	-10.62	Aditya Birla SL Equity Advantage Fund(G)	376.08	-15.05			
						HDFC Capital Builder Value Fund(G)	279.29	-10.64	Invesco India Midcap Fund(G)	46.26	-9.45			
						Motilal Oswal Multicap 35 Fund-Reg(G)	24.33	-10.69	Principal Dividend Yield Fund(G)	50.24	-9.51			
						DHFL Pramerica Euro Equity Fund(G)	12.9	-10.73	Aditya Birla SL Banking & Financial Services Fund-Reg(G)	26.18	-9.63			
						Canara Rob Emerg Equities Fund-Reg(G)	87.19	-10.85	UTI LT Equity Fund - (Tax Saving) Reg(G)	81.62	-9.91			
						DSP Tax Saver Fund-Reg(G)	44	-10.86	Tata Large & Mid Cap Fund(G)	187.99	-9.95			
						Sundaram Rural and Consumption Fund(G)	39.33	-10.91	Sundaram Fin Serv Opp Fund(G)	37.79	-9.97			
						DSP Equity Fund-Reg(G)	35.57	-10.99	Tata India Tax Savings Fund-Reg(G)	16.71	-10.28			
						ICICI Pru Large & Mid Cap Fund(G)	303.66	-10.99	Invesco India Multicap Fund(G)	44.72	-15.53			
						IDFC Multi Cap Fund-Reg(G)	87.01	-11.12	Aditya Birla SL Mfg. Equity Fund-Reg(G)	12.67	-15.59			
						BNP Paribas Long Term Equity Fund(G)	35.29	-11.15	Baroda Mid-cap Fund(G)	8.68	-15.65			
						DSP Focus Fund-Reg(G)	21.04	-11.16	Sundaram Select Small Cap Series-III-Reg(G)	13.08	-15.75			
						SBI Magnum TaxGain '93-Reg(G)	135.95	-11.23	Sundaram Select Small Cap Series-IV-Reg(G)	13.08	-15.75			
						Franklin India Prima Fund(G)	908.58	-11.25	SBI LT Advantage Fund-III-Reg(G)	12.41	-16			
						L&T Long Term Advantage Fund-I(G)	48.31	-11.52	Templeton India Value Fund(G)	238.97	-16.01			
						UTI Core Equity Fund-Reg(G)	59.64	-11.54	Reliance Focused Equity Fund(G)	43.38	-16.06			
						UTI Banking and Financial Services Fund-Reg(G)	91.28	-11.57	Sundaram Select Small Cap Series-III-Reg(G)	13.05	-16.13			
						DHFL Pramerica Diversified Equity Fund-Reg(G)	12.36	-11.59	L&T Large and Midcap Fund-Reg(G)	44.06	-16.14			
						IDFC Core Equity Fund-Reg(G)	42.42	-11.64	L&T India Value Fund-Reg(G)	33.53	-16.16			
						Franklin Asian Equity Fund(G)	20.81	-11.77	L&T Midcap Fund-Reg(G)	127.54	-16.22			
						Tata Equity P/E Fund(G)	126.64	-11.84	Kotak Global Emerging Mkt Fund(G)	14.85	-16.34			
								ICICI Pru Dividend Yield Equity Fund(G)	15.85	-16.4				
								UTI Focussed Equity Fund-I(G)	12.47	-17.04				
								HDFC Focused 30 Fund(G)	72.44	-17.15				
								Sundaram Select Micro Cap-Series III-Reg(G)	30.59	-17.23				
								DHFL Pramerica Midcap Opp Fund-Reg(G)	17.16	-17.3				
								UTI Mid Cap Fund-Reg(G)	95.94	-17.45				
								UTI LT Adv Fund-III(G)	12.91	-17.58				
								SBI LT Advantage Fund-II-Reg(G)	12.86	-17.9				
								Invesco India PSU Equity Fund(G)	16.25	-18.09				
								Edelweiss Gr China Equity Off-Shore Fund-Reg(G)	24.01	-18.12				
								SBI Contra Fund-Reg(G)	102.57	-18.14				
								Sundaram Mid Cap Fund(G)	441.61	-18.16				
								IDBI Midcap Fund(G)	10.31	-18.17				
								Sundaram Select Micro Cap-Series II-Reg(G)	30.79	-18.19				



Axis Bluechip Fund(G)	26.68	3.93	UTI India LifeStyle Fund-Reg(G)	24.48	-5.4	Reliance Close Ended Equity Fund-II-A(G)	17.05	-9.05	Principal Global Opportunities Fund(G)	26.95	-13.98	Yield Fund(G)		
ICICI Pru FMCG Fund(G)	232.66	3.12	Mirae Asset India Equity Fund-Reg(G)	47.32	-5.55	Aditya Birla SL Focused Equity Fund(G)	54.73	-9.11	JM Value Fund(G)	29.38	-14.02	SBI LT Advantage Fund-I-Reg(G)	12.44	-19.72
Reliance Pharma Fund(G)	151.52	3.01	Aditya Birla SL MNC Fund(G)	730.95	-5.58	Sundaram LT Tax Adv Fund-Sr II-Reg(G)	13.79	-9.14	Principal Tax Savings Fund	196.51	-14.11	Canara Rob Infrastructure Fund-Reg(G)	41.77	-20.36
Sundaram World Brand Fund-Sr II-Reg(G)	13.81	2.29	Invesco India Largecap Fund(G)	26.74	-5.58	DSP Top 100 Equity Fund-Reg(G)	189.37	-8.75	ICICI Pru Value Fund-10(G)	10.71	-14.39	UTI LT Adv Fund-IV(G)	9.85	-20.48
Kotak US Equity Fund(G)	15.74	2.26	HDFC Top 100 Fund(G)	460.24	-5.6	Tata Ethical Fund(G)	151.63	-8.77	Principal Emerging Bluechip Fund(G)	97.65	-14.39	Edelweiss Mid Cap Fund-Reg(G)	24.78	-20.54
Sundaram World Brand Fund-Sr III-Reg(G)	13.97	2.25	Invesco India Feeder - Invesco Global Equity Income Fund(G)	12.31	-5.68	DHFL Pramerica Tax Plan(G)	29.09	-8.78	BNP Paribas Multi Cap Fund(G)	43.38	-15.27	Reliance Small Cap Fund(G)	38.02	-20.89
ICICI Pru Global Stable Equity Fund(G)	14.74	1.87	Axis Focused 25 Fund(G)	25.35	-5.69	JM Multicap Fund(G)	28.93	-8.94	IDFC Tax Advt(ELSS) Fund-Reg(G)	51.75	-15.32	L&T Business Cycle Fund-Reg(G)	14.02	-21.08
DSP US Flexible Equity Fund-Reg(G)	23.63	1.69	Invesco India Growth Opp Fund(G)	31.81	-5.78	HDFC Growth Opp Fund-Reg(G)	107.11	-8.98	IDFC Focused Equity Fund-Reg(G)	34.94	-15.41	Tata Infrastructure Fund(G)	50.34	-21.24
SBI Banking & Financial Services Fund-Reg(G)	16.12	1.67	Principal Focused Multicap Fund(G)	60.29	-5.86	UTI LT Equity Fund - (Tax Saving) Reg(G)	81.62	-9.91	IDFC Focused Equity Fund(G)	34.94	-15.41	Tata Infrastructure Tax Saving Fund(G)	22.29	-21.58
ICICI Pru Business Cycle Fund-2(G)	14.14	1.14	Kotak Tax Saver Scheme(G)	40.91	-5.95	Tata Large & Mid Cap Fund(G)	187.99	-9.95	SBI LT Advantage Fund-IV-Reg(G)	11.8	-15.48	DSP India T.I.G.E.R Fund-Reg(G)	82.26	-21.72
Tata Index Fund-Sensex Plan(G)	88.44	0.75	Baroda Large Cap Fund(G)	13.69	-5.98	Sundaram Fin Serv Opp Fund(G)	37.79</							

AT LEAST 15 DEAD IN MUDSLIDE IN PERU
Lima: An avalanche of mud and rocks crashed into a hotel during a wedding celebration in southeastern Peru, killing at least 15 people, authorities said on Sunday. "The avalanche broke through the walls of the hotel, entering into it with force," the mayor of the city of Abancay, where the hotel is located, told RPP radio.

BAGHDAD TO SUMMON TURKISH ENVOY
Baghdad: Iraq on Sunday said it would summon the Turkish ambassador over the death of a Kurdish protester after Turkish troops opened fire on demonstrators in the country's northwest. On Saturday night, Kurdish protesters stormed a Turkish Army position in the Shiladze region of northwestern Iraq to protest the deaths of four civilians they said were killed last week in Turkish bombardment.

RECORD BREAKING FLOODS HIT N AUSTRALIA
Cairns (Australia): Communities were cut off, farmers stranded and cows washed offshore as heavy rain pelted northeast Australia on Sunday, with one major river breaking 118-year-old floodwater records.

FOUR POLICE DEAD IN BOMB BLASTS IN IRAQ
Samarra: Four Iraqi policemen were killed on Sunday in two back-to-back bomb blasts at one of their positions north of the capital, near a former jihadist bastion, local officials and officers said.

NEW CONSTITUTION A NON STARTER: RAJAPAKSA
Colombo: Sri Lanka's Opposition leader Mahinda Rajapaksa has said Prime Minister Ranil Wickremesinghe's government lacks political capability and does not have adequate support in Parliament to pass the new Constitution, which he claimed that if introduced will divide the country. He also reiterated his demand for a fresh poll in the island nation.

Canada's PM fires his ambassador to China

AP ■ TORONTO

Prime Minister Justin Trudeau fired Canada's ambassador to China after the envoy said it would be "great" if the US dropped its extradition request for a Chinese tech executive arrested in Canada.

Trudeau said on Saturday that he had asked for and accepted John McCallum's resignation on Friday night.

McCallum made the remark to the Toronto Star on Friday. That came a day after he issued a statement saying he misspoke about the case earlier in the week and regretted saying Meng Wanzhou has a strong case against extradition.

The arrest of the daughter of the founder of Huawei Technologies Ltd. At Vancouver's airport Dec. 1 severely damaged relations between China and Canada.

The US wants her extradited to face charges that she committed fraud by misleading banks about Huawei's business dealings in Iran "Last night I asked for and accepted John McCallum's resignation as Canada's Ambassador to China," Trudeau said in a statement.

Trudeau said Jim Nickel, the deputy head of mission at the Canadian Embassy in Beijing, would represent his government in China. He thanked McCallum, a former minister in Trudeau's Cabinet, for his 20 years of public service.

China detained two Canadians shortly after Meng's arrest in an apparent attempt to pressure Canada to release her. A Chinese court also sentenced a Canadian to death in a sudden retrial of a drug case, overturning a 15-year prison term handed down earlier.

McCallum told Chinese



media in the Toronto area earlier in the week that the extradition of Meng to the United States "would not be a happy outcome."

He suggested the case was politically motivated and said the US could make a trade deal with China in which it would no longer seek her extradition, and two Canadian detained in China could then be released.

But on Thursday McCallum walked back the remarks and said he "misspoke."

Trudeau had earlier dismissed calls to fire McCallum, but he clearly had enough after the envoy spoke off script again. Trudeau and Foreign Minister Chrystia Freeland have stressed that Canada's government can't interfere politically in the case.

The leader of the opposition Conservative Party, Andrew Scheer, said McCallum should have been fired days ago because his remarks raised concerns about the politicization of the Meng case.

Scheer said McCallum caused damage to Canada's reputation by delivering different messages through different media on different days.

McCallum's remarks surprised many and fueled speculation that Canada might be trying to send a signal to China to reduce tensions.

A year ago, McCallum also made controversial comments

about how Canada had more in common with China than the United States under Trump.

McCallum has strong personal ties to China, and he pointed out to Chinese-language media this week that his wife is of Chinese ethnicity and his three sons have Chinese spouses.

Guy Saint-Jacques, a former Canadian ambassador to China, said he felt bad for McCallum but said it was the right thing to do.

"What is worse is this happening in the middle of the crisis when we need all-hands on deck," Saint-Jacques said.

He said the Chinese will now know that McCallum was not speaking for the Canadian government.

Roland Paris, a former foreign policy adviser to Trudeau, said "Mr. McCallum's remarks were continuing to cause confusion about Canada's position."

On a matter of this importance, the Canadian government has to speak with a single, clear voice." Robert Bothwell, a professor at the University of Toronto, said it is not an ambassador's job to speak out of turn.

"Of course, McCallum can obviously take refuge in arguing that what he said was largely true, but he can't escape the fact that it wasn't his job to say it. It does underline the hazards of sending a politician to do a diplomat's job," Bothwell said.

The fatalities included 15 civilians and five troops. Among the wounded were 17 troops, two police, two coast guard and 90 civilians

that region. The (Armed Forces of the Philippines) will rise to the challenge and crush these godless criminals."

Jolo island has long been troubled by the presence of Abu Sayyaf terrorists, who are blacklisted by the United States and the Philippines as a terrorist organization because of years of bombings, kidnappings and beheadings. A Catholic bishop, Benjamin de Jesus, was gunned down by suspected militants outside the cathedral in 1997.

No one has immediately claimed responsibility for the latest attack.

It came nearly a week after minority Muslims in the predominantly Roman Catholic nation endorsed a new autonomous region in the southern Philippines in hopes of ending nearly five decades of a separatist rebellion that has left 1,50,000 people dead.

Although most of the Muslim areas approved the autonomy deal, voters in Sulu province, where Jolo is located, rejected it. The province is home to a rival rebel faction that's opposed to the deal as well as smaller terrorist cells that not part of any peace process.

Western Governments have welcomed the autonomy pact. They worry that small numbers of Islamic State-linked militants from the Middle East and Southeast Asia could forge an alliance with Filipino insurgents and turn the south into a breeding ground for extremists.

"This bomb attack was done in a place of peace and worship, and it comes at a time when we are preparing for another stage of the peace process in Mindanao," said Gov. Mujiv Hataman of the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao.

20 dead as bombs target Sunday Mass in Philippines



In this photo provided by WESMINCOM Armed Forces of the Philippines, a soldier views the site inside a Roman Catholic cathedral in Jolo the capital of Sulu province in the southern Philippines after two bombs exploded on Sunday

AP ■ JOLO (PHILIPPINES)

Two bombs minutes apart tore through a Roman Catholic cathedral on a southern Philippine island where Muslim terrorists are active, killing at least 20 people and wounding 111 others during a Sunday Mass, officials said.

Witnesses said the first blast inside the Jolo cathedral in the provincial capital sent churchgoers, some of them wounded, to stampede out of the main door.

Army troops and police posted outside were rushing in when the second bomb went off about one minute later near the main entrance, causing more deaths and injuries.

The military was checking a report that the second explosive device may have been attached to a parked motorcycle.

The initial explosion scattered the wooden pews inside the main hall and blasted window glass panels, and the second bomb hurled human remains and debris across a town square fronting the Cathedral of Our Lady of Mount Carmel, witnesses said.

Cellphone signal was cut off in the first hours after the attack. The witnesses who spoke to *The Associated Press* refused to give their names or were busy at the scene of the blasts.

Police said at least 20 people died and 111 were wounded, correcting an earlier toll due to double counting. The fatalities included 15 civilians and five troops.

Among the wounded were 17 troops, two police, two coast guard and 90 civilians. Troops in armoured carriers sealed off the main road lead-

ing to the church while vehicles transported the dead and wounded to the town hospital. Some casualties were evacuated by air to nearby Zamboanga city.

"I have directed our troops to heighten their alert level, secure all places of worship and public places at once, and initiate pro-active security measures to thwart hostile plans," said Defense Secretary Delfin Lorenzana in a statement.

"We will pursue to the ends of the earth the ruthless perpetrators behind this dastardly crime until every killer is brought to justice and put behind bars. The law will give them no mercy," the office of President Rodrigo Duterte said in Manila.

It said that "the enemies of the state boldly challenged the Government's capability to secure the safety of citizens in

Conservatives say Trump caved, but confident he'll get wall

AP ■ WASHINGTON

No retreat, no surrender is how President Donald Trump frames his decision to temporarily reopen the government while still pursuing a border wall deal.

Some of his conservative backers have a different take: "pathetic" and "wimp."

Other Trump supporters seem willing to give Trump the benefit of the doubt, yet they insist that any ultimate government funding deal the president signs must include money for a wall.

Trump defended himself Saturday from the conservative backlash to his decision to end the 35-day-old partial government shutdown the longest in US history without money for his promised border wall.

He said if he didn't get a fair deal from Congress, the government would shut down again on February 15 or he would use his executive authority to address what he has termed "the humanitarian and security crisis" on the southern US border. After he announced his decision, a New York newspaper headline dubbed him "CAVE MAN."

Venezuela allows US diplomats to stay, defusing showdown

AP ■ CARACAS

Venezuela defused a potential showdown with the United States, suspending a demand that US diplomats leave the country as Washington called on the world to "pick a side" in the South American nation's fast-moving crisis.

Socialist President Nicolas Maduro broke relations with the United States on Wednesday after the Trump administration and many other nations in the region recognized opposition leader Juan Guaido as Venezuela's interim president, a move that Maduro called a coup attempt.

Maduro gave US diplomats three days to leave the country, but the Trump administration said it wouldn't obey, arguing that Maduro is no longer Venezuela's legitimate president. That set the stage for a showdown at the hilltop US Embassy compound Saturday night, when the deadline was to expire.

But as the sun set on Venezuela's capital, the Foreign Ministry issued a statement saying Maduro's government

was suspending the expulsion to provide a 30-day window for negotiating with US officials about setting up a "US interests office" in Venezuela and a similar Venezuelan office in the United States.

The US and Cuba had a similar arrangement for decades before the Obama administration restored diplomatic relations with the communist-run island.

The State Department did not confirm the Venezuelan Government's account, reiterating only that its priority remains the safety of its personnel and that it has no plans to close the embassy.

"That is true diplomacy," Maduro said after reading out the statement on national television. Earlier in the day, critics and supporters of Maduro's government faced off at the UN Security Council, reflecting the world's deep divisions over Venezuela, which is mired in political confrontation as well as an economic collapse that has caused millions to flee the country.

During the debate, which was requested by the US, Secretary of State Mike

Pompeo urged all nations to end Venezuela's "nightmare" and support Guaido.

"Now is the time for every other national to pick a side," Pompeo said. "No more delays, no more games. Either you stand with the forces of freedom, or you're in league with Maduro and his mayhem."

Russian Ambassador Vassily Nebenzia charged that the Trump administration is trying "to engineer a coup" against Maduro. He said Venezuela doesn't threaten international peace and security, and he accused "extremist opponents" of Maduro's government of choosing "maximum confrontation," including the artificial creation of a parallel government.

Nebenzia urged Pompeo to say whether the US will use military force.

Pompeo later told reporters who asked for a response, "I am not going to speculate or hypothesize on what the US will do next."

Pompeo was accompanied to New York by Elliott Abrams, who was named a day earlier as the US Special representative for Venezuela.

Netanyahu warns Hezbollah chief of Israel's 'lethal' power

AFP ■ JERUSALEM

Israel's Prime Minister warned the head of Lebanon's Hezbollah of his army's "lethal" power on Sunday, in reaction to Hassan Nasrallah cautioning the Jewish state against further strikes in Syria.

"The lethal striking force of the IDF (Israeli army) stands facing Hezbollah," Israel's premier Benjamin Netanyahu said at the start of a cabinet meeting. In an interview with Beirut based al-Mayadeen television on Saturday, Hezbollah chief Hassan Nasrallah had warned Netanyahu that Syria and Hezbollah could "at any moment" decide to "deal with ... Israeli aggression."

"Don't make an error of judgement and don't lead the region towards war or a major clash," Nasrallah said, stating that Hezbollah possessed "high-precision missiles" capable of hitting anywhere in Israel.

Israel's army has since 2013 claimed hundreds of attacks on what it says are Iranian military targets and arms deliveries to Tehran-backed Hezbollah.

UK Govt may scrap MPs' holiday to pass Brexit laws

AFP ■ LONDON

British MPs could sit longer hours and their February holiday may be scrapped as the government races to pass its Brexit legislation before Britain leaves the EU on March 29, Downing Street said Sunday.

Prime Minister Theresa May's government is looking at making the House of Commons sit on more Fridays — which it does not normally do — and extend debating time well into the evening on some days. It is also "reviewing" the week-long February recess, a Downing Street spokeswoman said. There are still eight laws the government wants to pass to prepare the statute books for Brexit, covering areas of trade, fisheries and agriculture, immigration, the environment and health-care. These includes any bill needed to implement a divorce deal with the EU, which MPs have yet to agree to.

"We remain committed to ensuring all necessary legislation is in place for exit day on March 29, 2019, and it is important to stress we are confident of meeting that commitment," the spokeswoman said. AFP

'Listen to Europe,' Dublin tells UK MPs ahead of Brexit votes

AFP ■ LONDON

British MPs seeking to pressure Prime Minister Theresa May this week to renegotiate her Brexit deal should heed EU warnings that it will not succeed, Ireland's foreign minister warned on Sunday.

Simon Coveney said attempts by Brexit supporters to remove or set a time-limit on a controversial "backstop" clause on the Irish border would never be accepted by Brussels.

"Listen to what people are saying in Europe," he told BBC television, saying May's Brexit deal was "a balanced package that isn't going to change."

"The European Parliament will not ratify a withdrawal agreement that doesn't have a backstop in it, it's as simple as that," he added.

He was speaking ahead of another showdown between May and the House of Commons over Britain's withdrawal from the EU, which is scheduled for March 29.

MPs this month rejected the divorce agreement she struck with the bloc last year.

One Tuesday night, in a series of votes on parliamentary amendments, they will set out what they want her to do next.

Some MPs want to delay Brexit or adopt a whole new strategy, but others are demanding changes to May's deal that they suggest could allow them to support it.

These focus on the backstop, an arrangement intended to keep open the border between the UK and Ireland by temporarily tying London to the EU's trade rules.

May has already spent months trying to amend the backstop with no success, but has promised to return to Brussels if that is what her MPs want. Health Secretary Matt Hancock denied Coveney's comments meant she could not succeed, telling the same BBC programme that he was taking a "negotiating position".

He said Dublin did not want Britain to leave the EU without a deal, which is the default position if MPs cannot reach agreement.

The European Commission this week conceded that without a deal.

Alert as hundreds feared dead in Brazil dam disaster

AFP ■ BRUMADINHO (BRAZIL)

An alarm warning of an imminent mining dam rupture went up early on Sunday in Brumadinho, the same Brazilian community where a dam collapsed killing 34 with hundreds more feared dead, firefighters and the mining company said.

An alarm warning of dangerously high water levels at a dam that is part of the Corrego do Feijao mining complex in southeastern Brazil went off at 5:30 am (0730 GMT), a statement by the mining company Vale said. A dam at the same mining site burst Friday, spewing millions of tons of treacherous sludge and engulfing buildings, vehicles and roads.

Firefighters said they immediately began evacuating communities near the dam. "Attention, general area evacuation!" blared a warning through loudspeakers in Brumadinho, population 39,000.

"Find the highest point in the city," the warning said.

Vale's CEO Fabio Schvartsman and Minas Gerais Governor Romeu Zema earlier warned that the death toll from the Friday rupture could rise.

"From now, the odds are minimal (to find more people alive) and it is most likely we will recover only bodies," Zema told reporters late Friday.

In Rio, Schvartsman spoke of a "human tragedy."

Russia marks end of Leningrad siege with military parade

AFP ■ SAINT PETERSBURG

Tanks and air defence missile systems rolled through the heart of Saint Petersburg on Sunday as the city formerly known as Leningrad marked the 75th anniversary of the end of a World War II siege that claimed more than 8,00,000 lives.

The parade in Russia's second city was the first time war-era and modern heavy weaponry, including the famed T-34 battle tank and multiple-launch rocket systems, have trundled past the Hermitage Museum to mark the end of the siege of Leningrad, sparking controversy with some survivors criticising "militarism".

President Vladimir Putin, a native of Saint Petersburg, skipped the show of force in the snow-covered Palace Square, although his itinerary includ-

US-TALIBAN TALKS As hopes rise of a deal, what comes next?

AFP ■ KABUL

More than 17 years after the US invasion of Afghanistan, Washington and the Taliban appear closer than ever to some sort of agreement that could bring the insurgents to the table for peace talks. However with the withdrawal of US troops seen as part of the deal, fears are rising about what an American exit could mean for Afghanistan, with security forces taking staggering losses, the government facing election upheaval, and civilians paying a disproportionate price after nearly two decades of bloodshed.

Here is a rundown of the status of the talks and what can be expected in the future.

The US and Taliban representatives have held several rounds of negotiations in recent months, part of a diplomatic

push to get the insurgents to agree to peace talks. The latest session ended in Qatar on Saturday after six straight days of negotiations -- the longest consecutive sit-down between the two sides to date.

Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates and Pakistan -- the only countries to recognise the Taliban regime of the late 1990s -- have also all participated in the talks, but the Afghan government has complained of being cut out of them.

The militants are negotiating from a position of strength: they have the upper hand on the battlefield, and US President Donald Trump's reported eagerness to start withdrawing troops from Afghanistan is weighing heavy on the discussions.

Ostensibly to find a way to bring the Taliban to the table

for peace negotiations with the government in Kabul to end the Afghan conflict.

Doing so could require some movement on long-standing demands from both sides. For the Taliban, that includes a timetable for the withdrawal of foreign forces in Afghanistan, while the US is seeking promises that Afghanistan will not be used again as a base for militants to launch attacks on foreign countries.

Other issues include a potential ceasefire, a prisoners exchange, and ways to bring the Taliban into the political mainstream without undermining the legitimacy of the elected government in Kabul. The Taliban is widely believed to want a return to power in Afghanistan and to reimpose sharia law, although there is some uncertainty over whether

they might loosen their hard-line stance after a US exit.

Nothing yet. But it is believed the US and Taliban have come closer to an agreement than ever before. For now, the two sides have agreed to keep talking. US special envoy Zalmay Khalilzad, who is heading the initiative for Washington, appeared upbeat, saying late Saturday that the talks were "more productive than they have been in the past. We made significant progress on vital issues."

But he added: "Nothing is agreed until everything is agreed, and 'everything' must include an intra-Afghan dialogue and comprehensive ceasefire."

The Taliban also cited progress, though spokesman Zabihullah Mujahid said reports of an 18-month withdrawal plan and a ceasefire are

"not true". Khalilzad has said he is returning to Kabul for consultations, and is likely hold a range of meetings with the Afghan government.

The Taliban have said they are planning to "share details of the meetings and receive guidance" from their leaders before moving forward, and vowed to resume "similar future meetings".

More talks are expected soon, but neither side has given any clarity on when, or when a deal might be announced.

Even if one is reached in the near future, it will only be the beginning of a peace process. A withdrawal would need to be managed carefully to prevent the collapse of Afghan security forces, and any negotiations between the Taliban and the Kabul government could take months, if not years.

Trend Slazer

'Clothes should be gender-neutral'

Actress **SONAM KAPOOR** says that clothes should be gender neutral. During the launch of designer Kunal Rawal's flagship store recently, Sonam, who was present along with father-actor Anil Kapoor, talked about the importance of gender neutrality in fashion.

She said: "I truly believe in gender fluidity. I think clothes should be gender neutral. For me, it is very exciting to wear clothes people perceive as menswear and when I see men wear clothes, which people perceive as womenswear, I think it is very cool. It is edgy and not in your face and for me, it is more rebellious than louder."

The actress's forthcoming film *Ek Ladki Ko Dekha Toh Aisa Laga* is slated to release on February 1.



WORD POWER

On the third day of the Jaipur Literature Festival, authors initiated a dialogue about how global best-selling writers are increasingly looking to get published in India



'Doing comedy made me earn respectable position in the industry but being an actor, it is very important to play versatile roles. I don't want myself to get slotted under one category. It could be challenging to convince people now that I can do more than comedy.'

—Shreyas Talpade

Actress **NIMRAT KAUR**, who is returning as Tasneem Qureshi in the final season of Hollywood series *Homeland*,

says she had a blast playing a negative character for the first time in her career. She said, "It was amazing. I had a wonderful time working with the team. The writers were brilliant. I really had an incredible time playing a negative role for the first time. It was very exciting and a lot of fun for me."

Nimrat was a part of the fourth season of the American spy thriller.

Anne confirms Princess Diaries 3

Actress **ANNE HATHAWAY**, who worked in the two *The Princess Diaries* films, has confirmed that she wants to do a third installment of the romantic comedy film franchise and so did her co-star Julie Andrews.

As for how far the new project is in development, the Academy Award-winning actress said a script is ready for it.

"There is a script for the third movie," she said during an appearance on *Watch What Happens Live* with her *Serenity* co-star Matthew McConaughey. "I want to do it, Julie wants to do it, and even Debra Martin-Chase (producer) wants to do it," she said.



India's vibrant publishing market is attracting major international bestselling authors, who say that there is a great potential for their books to find a good readership in India.

Once a book becomes successful in the country where it is first published, international rights for the books are acquired by leading publishing houses in other countries. India, being the second largest publishing market in the world, is one hot spot where perhaps every successful author wants to be published.

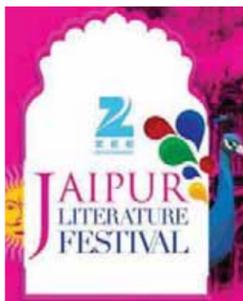
Former British politician and bestselling novelist Jeffrey Archer, for instance, finds more readers in India than anywhere else in the world. In pure statistical terms, his books also sell more in India than anywhere else.

What message does it send to award-winning or bestselling authors from other countries? That the market is ripe for harvest.

"I think there is a lot of potential here; I know some great writers from India, they write from their heart. I also think it is a great place to publish and I can only see more and more authors coming here," Australian author Markus Zusak of *The Book Thief* fame said on the sidelines of the festival.

Scottish novelist, playwright and short story writer Irvine Welsh echoed similar sentiments, stating that people in India are reading "a lot of books." He said that festivals like the

REPRESENTING WOMEN TAKING CHARGE OF THEIR OWN LIVES, OXFORD DICTIONARY ANNOUNCED NARI SHAKTI AS THE HINDI WORD OF THE YEAR 2018. IT HAS ATTRACTED A GREAT DEAL OF ATTENTION AND REFLECTS ETHOS, MOOD AND PREOCCUPATIONS OF THE PAST YEAR



JLF also provide a platform for authors like him to find new readers. "I think there is a great potential, he said.

Pulitzer Prize winning author Andrew Sean Greer, who is on a marathon book tour of India, attending lit fests in Chennai and Kolkata before coming to Jaipur, said that he is excited about the new readers his book "Less" is finding in India.

"In the United States, we don't have a culture of reading many books from outside. We do not import much whereas I find it to be very different here," Greer said.

He said winning an award like the Pulitzer does contribute to international recognition, but maintained that it is ultimately up to the readers, and the reading culture at large.

"When I come to festivals like this in India, the one thing that surprises me most is people here read and come. I am saying this because people have asked me questions about my

'gay' protagonist, which means they have read my book.

"Otherwise, they say that I have not read your book, or have read only half. There is genuine interest among readers and I think right now it's the place where every writer wants to be," Greer added.

Greer also said that while India is a "fascinating market" for international authors, Indian authors should also be published in other countries.

A slew of international authors, including the recipients of major literary awards and those who are a sensation in themselves like Archer, have gathered here to participate in the JLF.

In addition, Oxford Dictionary announced that *Nari Shakti* as its Hindi Word of the Year for 2018 at the festival.

"The Hindi Word of the Year is a word or expression that has attracted a great deal of attention and reflects the ethos, mood or preoccupations of the past year," a spokesperson from the Oxford Dictionary said.

Derived from Sanskrit, *Nari* means 'woman' and *Shakti* means 'power.' "Today the term is used to symbolise women taking charge of their own lives," the statement added.

The Hindi Word of the Year was chosen by the Oxford Dictionaries team in India with the help of an advisory panel of language experts including Ashok Kumar Sharma, Kritika Agrawal and Namita Gokhale among others.

—IANS

The highest honour

As some colossal contributions get recognised with the Padma awards, **SHANKAR MAHADEVAN** and **MANOJ BAJPAYEE** talk about setting new goals

EHSAAN AND LOY EQUIVALENTS OF AWARD: SHANKAR



Singer-composer Shankar Mahadevan feels "humbled and honoured" on being chosen for the Padma Shri. He also considers his musical partners Ehsaan Noorani and Loy Mendonsa as equal recipients of the country's fourth-highest civilian honour.

"It's an honour to be recognised by the government of India. It is the fourth-highest civilian honour in the country. I don't know if I am worthy of this but I definitely feel happy," said Shankar.

"A lot of my music has been created with my two partners — Ehsaan and Loy so, I would consider them as equal recipients of the award," added the National award winner.

The trio have given many hits for films like *Bhaag Milkha Bhaag*, *Kal Ho Naa Ho*, *Dil Chahta Hai* and *Lakshya*.

Getting Padma Shri means that "I have to work harder. There's more melodious music coming up."

"We are doing very good films. We are doing *Chhapaak* with (filmmaker) Meghna Gulzar, *Saaho*, *The Zoya Factor* and *Panga*," said the singer, who is currently being lauded for his work in *Manikarnika: The Queen of Jhansi*.

"I am glad that people are recognising that work and people are also liking the movie. I really hope it does well. Kangana (Ranaut) is fabulous in the film. It's a very important movie for the next generation to know about such an important character," he said about the film.

Teaching music to underprivileged children also keeps him busy. "Life is good," he concluded.

FEELING ECSTATIC: MANOJ BAJPAYEE



Actor Manoj Bajpayee is feeling "ecstatic" as his work has been recognised by the "highest office." He says getting a Padma Shri is an honour for "your journey and conviction."

"It's a huge honour for any professional because it's not an honour for just one particular film or performance. It's an honour for your journey, for your conviction and

belief that you had," Manoj said.

"Also, for the government it's a way of recognising contribution that one has made to cinema. So yes, I am feeling very happy about it. My family, friends and fans have been sending messages to me. I am feeling ecstatic that my work has been recognised by the highest office," he added.

Since his debut in Bollywood in mid-1990s, the National Award-winner has acted in mainstream as well as indie films. Last year, the *Bandit Queen* actor featured in seven films like *Aiyaary*, *Baaghi 2*, *Missing*, *Satyameva Jayate*, *Gali Guleiyan*, *Love Sonia* and *Bhonsle*.

"I have always been very careful with my career. I don't need to be extra careful (after this recognition). I am known for the work that I do. So, the similar pattern will go on... choosing the films which matter to me...which are coming from my own conviction and belief," said Manoj.

"People who have been watching my performances, my films, have been a big support. If they are proud of my filmography and work, I am proud of what I have done," he added. He will be next seen in *Sonchiriya*, which will hit the screens on March 1. The film is set in the 1970s, and focusses on a small town ruled by dacoits.

POSTHUMOUS AWARDEES BHUPEN HAZARIKA AND KADER KHAN



Recognising the colossal contribution of Northeast's multi-faceted cultural icon Bhupen Hazarika, he was picked posthumously to be conferred the Bharat Ratna, while late Bollywood actor Kader Khan has been named for the Padma Shri honour by the government.

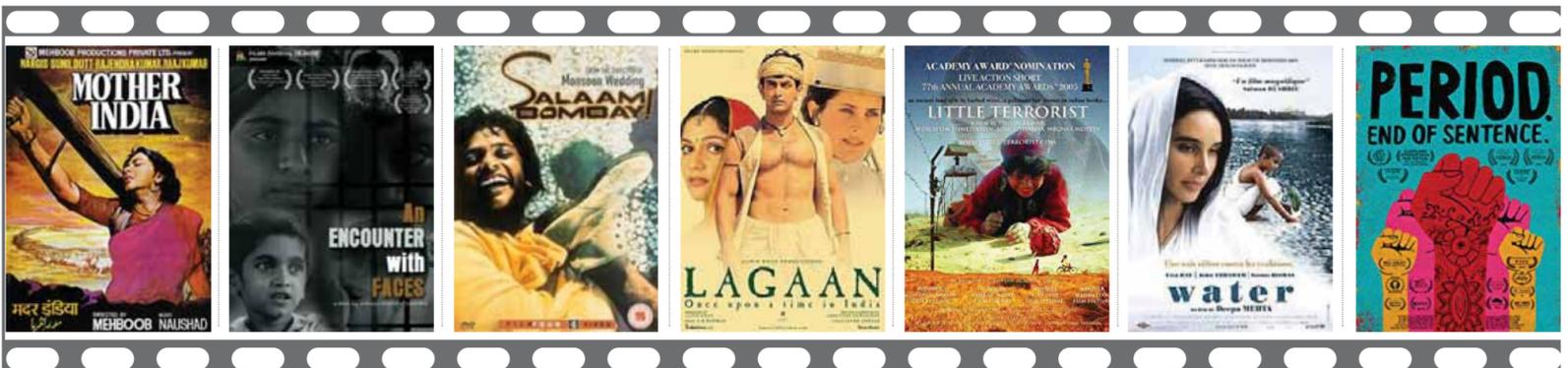
"The songs and music of Bhupen Hazarika are admired by people across generations. From them radiates the message of justice, harmony and brotherhood. He popularised India's musical traditions globally. Happy that the Bharat Ratna has been conferred on Bhupen da," tweeted Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

With a magnificent oeuvre as a poet, music composer, singer, actor, journalist, author and filmmaker, Hazarika continues to be regarded as a cultural philosopher.

The other posthumous award in this year's list is for Kader Khan, who died in December last year after prolonged illness in Canada. He has been recognised for his immense contribution to the world of films as a writer and actor par excellence. He was 81. —IANS

INDIA'S OSCAR JOURNEY

With more than 45 submissions over the years, only six films have been successful in securing the Academy Award nominations



India shares quite a tumultuous relationship with the Academy Awards. The country has submitted over 45 films for nomination in the past, only a fraction of which have been successful in securing so. With 2018 film, *Period. End of Sentence* being nominated in the Best Documentary Short Subject category this year, here's a look at the other Indian films that have had the privilege of an Oscar nomination.

MOTHER INDIA (1957) Mehboob Khan's *Mother India* starring Nargis and Sunil Dutt is a poignant film that narrates the hardships endured by a destitute village woman named Radha, and how she meanders through them and the rigmarole of dreary life, with the utmost adherence to morals. The film presents a moving picture of the

rough times that an average Indian woman goes through, and very movingly gives the message of significance of compassion, values and integrity. The film lost by one vote.

AN ENCOUNTER WITH FACES (1978) Nominated for an Academy Award for Documentary short subject, Vidhu Vinod Chopra's *An Encounter With Faces* is a heartwarming attempt in capturing the plight, perspectives and dimensions of delinquent children of Mumbai. Emotionally rousing, the film looks at their position — socially and culturally in the Indian societal fabric.

SALAAM BOMBAY! (1988) Arguably one of the finest films produced by India, Mira Nair's *Salaam Bombay!* is a class apart in master storytelling.

Movingly strung together by master director and raconteur Nair, the film presents a bleak picture of the gaps prevalent in erstwhile Indian society.

LAGAAN (2001) Intriguing, absorbing and genuine, Ashutosh Gowariker's magnum opus *Lagaan* is often looked at as a benchmark of excellence in Indian films. Set in pre-independent India, the film looks at the injustice of British colonialism meted on Indians through arbitrary taxes and how these Indians stake their rightful claim to their motherland through a game of cricket. Powered with inspired performances from Aamir Khan, Gracy Singh, Rachel Shelley and Paul Blackthorne, *Lagaan* invokes a sense of belonging, patriotism and love in the hearts of the audience.

LITTLE TERRORIST (2005) Nominated for the 2005 Academy Award for Best Live Action Short Film, Ashvin Kumar's *Little Terrorist* is a film about a Muslim boy from Pakistan who mistakenly crosses the border to India and finds an unexpected friend and ally in a Hindu Brahmin boy, Bhola. A story of acceptance, the film seeks to present a picture of the various prejudices we have as a society and how there exist a few good people that overlook these societal differences and espouse for a society of unity, love, happiness and inclusion.

WATER (2007) An Indo-Canadian film, Deepa Mehta's *Water* is the last installment of her 'Elements' trilogy that focusses on the stark misogyny, patriarchy and socio-cultural deprivation faced by widows in

India. Blunt, rustic and brutally honest, the film tells the story of a poverty-stricken widow as she fights convention and society to escape from the dogmas of India's patriarchal, anti-feminist set-up.

PERIOD. END OF SENTENCE (2018) Nominated in the Documentary Short Subject, Rayka Zehtabchi's *Period. End of Sentence* looks at the story of real life Padma Arunachalam Muruganathan's journey of fighting against the social stigma that surrounds menstruation and the plight of Indian women. Succinctly put and powerfully told, the film is a projection of the current behavioural tendencies of the Indian social psyche, and challenges to change it.

(The Oscars will be telecasted on Star Movies and Star Movies Select HD at 6.30 pm on February 25.)

RESTRICT SCREEN TIME

With addiction and cyberbullying at the top of the list, there are multiple pros and cons of growing up amid a plethora of devices and the internet, says MEENAL ARORA

Parenting in the digital age has a whole new meaning as the psychological development of children is highly impacted by digital media. Today, digital exposure has a huge part to play in the physical and mental growth and development of children. Growing up in this era has benefits like making information to entertainment available on our fingertips. However, this is only one side of the coin. With addiction and cyberbullying at the top of the list, there are multiple negative aspects of growing up amidst a plethora of devices and the internet. The question that most parents have is whether they should be worried?



Effect of excess exposure to digital media

Numerous parents who watch their children become accustomed to spending hours on their computers or tablets are concerned about their well-being and with good reason. This worry is not baseless as too much use of digital devices has been proven to negatively impact the physical as well as mental health of children. In fact, the National Health Service (NHS) of UK recently reported that 11 to 19-year-olds with mental disorders are more likely to be regular social media users. Further, it is common knowledge that too much digital exposure cuts down the time spent on healthy outdoor play. This leads to problems such as laziness, obesity and even depression. Moreover, too much digital media eventually has an impact of the eyes. The negative impact, therefore, is significant. However, the situation does not need to become this dire or worrisome.

net providing a wealth of knowledge to young ones, digital media can be used as a smart tool to bolster knowledge and increase exposure to a massive amount of useful information. Furthermore, exposure to media can polish the reading, writing and critical thinking skills of children. It can teach them how to form opinions and then express these opinions confidently among their peers.

enhance the process of teaching. Leading schools in India are now offering technology-aided learning, which includes interactive white-boards, robotic learning systems, online learning platforms, e-books and much more. The younger generation is much more comfortable reading and learning digital text than printed text, which is why schools are employing digital media, accepting it as a friend and not a foe.

The Center for Communication and Development Studies recently found that 25 per cent of all Indian children have access to smartphones and 18 per cent use smartphones solely as educational tools. With the inter-

Technology in the classroom: Enhancing education in the digital age
As the advantages of exposing children to digital media become apparent, schools have started equipping themselves with digital devices that

Moreover, as the job landscape is pervaded by technology, jobs across all industries are becoming tech-centric to a certain degree. In such a scenario, it is essential for students to be aware of leading technologies such as data analytics,

WITH INTERNET PROVIDING A WEALTH OF FACTS TO YOUNG ONES, DIGITAL MEDIA CAN BE USED AS A SMART TOOL TO BOLSTER KNOWLEDGE AND INCREASE EXPOSURE TO A MASSIVE AMOUNT OF USEFUL INFORMATION

artificial intelligence and cyber-security. Since these skills are much better grasped through practical and not just theoretical teaching methods, it is of utmost importance to introduce digital technology from children from an early age.

Interaction not isolation, learning not addiction

Technology is all around us and our children are going to be influenced by it, one way or another. The key is for parents and educators to encourage healthy internet and digital media practices. Parents must regulate screen time for children and place some degree of parental controls on the content that children have access to. Furthermore, children should be

made completely aware about the repercussions of excessive digital media usage. They must also create a safe space wherein children can freely talk about their experience with digital media.

By having conversations and building confidence in children, parents can make sure that digital media is used as a means of interaction and not isolation. That the wealth of knowledge on the internet only leads to learning and not addiction. With healthy regulation in place, parenting in the digital age can be much more efficient and much less daunting. With family movie nights, multi-player online gaming and many other ways to bond as a family, it can in fact make parenting much more fun.



MANTRA FOR PEACE, PROGRESS AND PROSPERITY

We can't have value-based economics or principled politics without working in accordance with ancient spiritual wisdom, says RAJYOGI BRAHMAKUMAR NIKUNJJI



We all wish to live in a peaceful and harmonious society. However, one in which every individual or group is self-centred — is not a society in the true sense of the word, for it lacks enduring unity of minds or commonality of abiding interests of its people. Thus, it falls short of an important cohesive force or uniting factor that should give to it solidarity and integrity. Even if the groups constituting it, have some common set of customs and social norms, these groups or individuals often break these when their self-interests clash with those of others. Such a society is, at best, a loosely-knit network of communities, classes, institutions or nations, each one of which thrives by manipulating the others for its own growth. And, a logical consequence of this is that, when a situation arises for a group to choose between what is of benefit to all and what is of greater well-being to that group, it opts for the latter, thus unleashing the forces of disruption, conflict and split.

In such a weak-kneed society, pressures exerted by each ego-centric cultural, religious, ethnic, caste or political group would naturally create social, political and economic tensions. These would further affect law and order as well as stability. It would be a set-back to united efforts to attain set goals. Thus, these would work as obstacles and cause stagnation, disturbance, deadlock and at times, even destruction. The individuals and groups, in such a society, may, in common parlance, be known as civilised and they may, in their daily life, show manners and etiquette but, obsessed by their narrow interests, they can go to any length and adopt any means to achieve their coveted goals even though these are detrimental to other sections of society or humankind as a whole.

For example, a self-centred individual, who has high influence in power circles, may get a piece of prime land or a flat allotted to him by manipulating or using political pressure even though more than a hundred persons, equally entitled, may have been waiting ahead of him in the queue, for years. Similarly, a self-centred community may demand certain advantages or benefits from some political party or a powerful politician, promising, in turn, voting en bloc for that party or politician and paying no heed to the fact that these demands are unreasonable and may cause communal disharmony. Thus, the fact that a person or a community is civilised, according to common usage of the word, is no guarantee for stability and progress if the people are not prepared to make even a little sacrifice for the common good of all, in which their own well-being also is assured. So, the mantra for peace, progress and prosperity of all is to tune our mind to the wisdom, summed up in the famous Sanskrit slogan: "Sarvay bhavantu sukhina, sarvay santu niramaya..." which means "Let all be happy and prosperous and let all be healthy". Unless and until this forms the basis of our politics, economics and business or industrial management, conflict, confrontation, tension and turmoil will always remain. But the question is how can we cultivate this attitude? For this, the second mantra is "Vasudhaiv kutumbakam" which means that the whole world is our family.

Without working in accordance with this ancient spiritual wisdom, neither can we have principled politics nor can we have value-based economics and neither can we have peace or make progress which would give us real happiness. In short, without following these two precepts or mantras we cannot have a value-based society.

Raising a child independently even if one has support from the family is a challenge that requires a lot of mental toughness and positive attitude towards life. Few of the biggest roadblocks are financial strangulation, loneliness, unwanted questions from the so-called society and emotional stress. The situation is just like a coin which has two disparate faces — one, the parent feels quite confident while raising their child on their own, making choices and living a life on his/her own terms. Whereas the other side brings excruciating pain of loneliness, dejection, anxiety and uncertainty.

There are different reasons why a person becomes a single-parent. They may choose this lifestyle. The challenges faced by him/her vary according to their circumstances. Here are few good practices which can be helpful if you are a single-parent.

BE FINANCIALLY INDEPENDENT

This is one topic which appears in almost every relationship with or without a spouse. It's better to have your own source of income irrespective of your family background, alimony or anything else. Being financially independent gives you and your child the freedom to live life your way. Nowadays, there are lots of options as a career to choose like being a blogger, teacher, freelance from home and what not.

DEALING WITH EMOTIONAL STRESS

All human beings need support — whether it's someone to watch the kids while you run out to do errands or simply someone to talk to when you feel

Stronger than ever

Being a single parent comes with a few roadblocks like financial strangulation, loneliness, unwanted questions from the so-called society and emotional stress, says VIVEK SHARMA



overwhelmed. The absence of such person abruptly or unwillingly creates a lot of trouble. You can ask friends and family members for help or could join a single-parent support group, or, if finances allow, hire a trusted sitter to help out with the kids or someone to assist with housework.

STRESS MANAGEMENT

Come out of your comfort zone. We have a tendency of not meeting people, crying in loneliness and pretending to be happy in front of others. Just be yourself, no need to punish yourself for something which was beyond your control. Look at things the way they are. Do not procrastinate or blow-up things out of proportion as it doesn't lead anyone anywhere. Life is like a big hard disk which captures every single event that happens in our lives. The only way to move on in life is to create more pleasant events rather than focusing on forgetting pre-recorded ones.

MANAGING QUESTIONS ASKED TO THE CHILD

Sometimes, we can't choose people around us, but we can certainly choose whom to associate with and to avoid. People who can't break you will try to influence your child negatively by asking uncomfortable questions. The best way to handle this is to tell the truth to your child. Questions will come up about the changes in your family, or about the absence of one parent. Answer your child's questions in an open, honest and age-appropriate way. Make sure that your child gets the help and support he/she needs to deal with difficult emotions.

“ If you tell the truth, you don't have to remember anything. —Mark Twain ”

FISH OIL MAY NOT IMPROVE ASTHMA

Fish oil supplements, once touted as the natural substance that could alleviate many of your chronic ailments, may not prove to be helpful to obese adolescents and young adults with uncontrolled asthma, new research suggests. The study, published in the American Journal of Respiratory and Critical Care Medicine, showed that four grams of fish oil a day for six months did not improve asthma control, as measured by a standard asthma control questionnaire, breathing tests, urgent care visits and severe asthma exacerbations. "We don't know why asthma control in obese patients is more difficult, but there is growing evidence that obesity causes systemic inflammation," said lead author Jason E. Lang, Associate Professor at the Duke University in the US. "Because the omega-3 fatty acids in fish oil have anti-inflammatory properties, we wanted to test whether fish oil would have therapeutic benefits for these patients," Lang added.



PREGNANCY CAN RAISE RISK OF HEART DISEASE

Women who have given birth have a higher chance of developing heart disease and strokes than those who are childless, a new study says. Previous studies have shown that women usually show changes in vascular properties, blood volume and heart rates during pregnancy. However, the impact of pregnancy on subsequent heart disease has been debated. In the new study, a team from the Huazhong University of Science and Technology in China, reviewed 10 studies. It involved nearly three million women worldwide, with more than 150,000 diagnosed with heart disease or strokes during the following six to 52 years. The findings, published in the European Society of Cardiology journal, showed that giving birth has a 14 per cent higher risk of heart disease and strokes. In addition, there was a significant association between the number of pregnancies and the risk of cardiovascular disease.



BRAIN CHEMICAL BEHIND FATTY FOOD CRAVING

Do you feel the urge to binge on golden hot chips, cheesy pizza, crispy chicken, heartwarming hamburgers, all when on a diet? Researchers have identified new brain circuits that may act as a brake on binge eating and junk food craving. In the study, led by a team from the University of Texas at Galveston on rats who had spent a month eating a low-fat diet, the team successfully inhibited the fatty food seeking behaviours. "Craving for foods high in fat, this includes many junk foods — is an important part of obesity and binge eating," said Jonathan Hommel, Assistant Professor at the University of Texas in the US. "When trying to lose weight people often strive to avoid fatty foods, which ironically increases motivation and craving for these foods and can lead to overeating. Even worse, the longer someone abstains from fatty foods, the greater the cravings," Hommel added. Several studies have demonstrated that denying certain foods causes increased craving and motivation for that food. However, the brain mechanisms that lead to this type of overeating are not known.



MEMORY LOSS IN ALZHEIMER'S CAN BE RESTORED

Researchers have developed a novel approach that may one day make it possible to reverse memory loss, caused by Alzheimer's disease. The team, led by University at Buffalo scientists, found that by focusing on gene changes caused by influences other than DNA sequences, called epigenetics, it was possible to reverse memory decline in an animal model of Alzheimer's. "We have not only identified the epigenetic factors that contribute to the memory loss, but we also found ways to temporarily reverse them in an animal model of Alzheimer's," said Zhen Yan, Professor at University at Buffalo in the US. The research was conducted on mouse models carrying gene mutations for familial Alzheimer's, where more than one member of a family has the disease and on post-mortem brain tissues from Alzheimer's patients. It is caused from both genetic and environmental risk factors, such as ageing.



OPTIMISM MAY LOWER DIABETES RISK

While it is known that a positive personality can help one succeed in life, a new study suggests that traits such as optimism may actually help reduce the risk of developing Type-2 diabetes. The study examined whether personality traits, including optimism, negativity, and hostility, were associated with the risk of developing Type-2 diabetes in postmenopausal women. Depression and cynicism were found to be associated with an increased risk of diabetes. In addition, high levels of hostility were associated with high fasting glucose levels, insulin resistance, and prevalent diabetes. For the study, published in the journal Menopause, researchers followed 139,924 postmenopausal women amongst which 19,240 cases of Type-2 diabetes were identified. Compared with women who were least optimistic, women who were the most optimistic had a 12 per cent lower risk of incident diabetes, results showed.



AFP ■ JOHANNESBURG

Pakistan shrugged off a four-match suspension imposed on captain Sarfraz Ahmed with a crushing eight-wicket win over South Africa in the fourth one-day international at the Wanderers Stadium on Sunday. The result levelled the

five-match series at 2-2. The deciding match will be in Cape Town on Wednesday. Pakistan's bowlers set up the win, bowling out South Africa for 164. Imam-ul-Haq made 71 before playing a loose shot when the scores were level as Pakistan cruised to victory with 18.3 overs to spare. Stand-in captain Shoaib

Imam, Usman propel Pak to win

Malik said at the after-match presentation that Pakistan only found out after they arrived at the ground that Sarfraz had been banned under the ICC anti-racism code.

The ban had still not been announced by the ICC when Malik walked out for the toss. Malik handled his bowlers and fielders astutely and South Africa were kept under pressure almost from the time he

won the toss and sent them in on a pitch which had early life. Shaheen Shah Afridi made two early strikes before Hashim Amla (59) and captain Faf du Plessis (57) made half-centuries and put on 101

for the third wicket. Malik's use of spinners Imad Wasim and Shadab Khan kept the scoring rate in check and both batsmen fell to the slow men before the fast bowlers returned.

Mohammad Amir dismissed the dangerous David Miller before fellow left-arm fast bowler Usman Shinwari claimed four wickets in six balls. He finished with four for 35 and was named man of the match. Imam, the top scorer in the series, looked in control from the start of Pakistan's

reply. He and Fakhar Zaman (44) put on 70 for the first wicket before he was joined by the in-form Babar Azam, who finished with 41 not out. It was South Africa's first defeat in eight matches on what has become known as 'Pink Day' with their players dressed in pink in aid of breast cancer awareness.



Cholamandalam Investment and Finance Company Limited

Corporate Office: No.2, Dare House, 1st Floor, NSC Bose Road, Chennai – 600 001.
Branch Office: 1st & 2nd Floor, Plot No.6, Main Pusa Road, Karol Bagh, New Delhi - 110 005 Contact No: 9899245509, 9968323319

PUBLIC NOTICE FOR AUCTION CUM SALE

SALE OF IMMOVABLE ASSETS CHARGED TO THE COMPANY THROUGH PUBLIC AUCTION ON 28.02.2019 UNDER THE SECURITISATION AND RECONSTRUCTION OFFINANCIAL ASSETS AND ENFORCEMENT OF SECURITY INTEREST ACT, 2002. Pursuant to taking possession of the secured asset mentioned hereunder by the Authorized Officer of Cholamandalam Investment and Finance Company Limited with the assistance of the Court Receiver who appointed by the Hon'ble Chief Metropolitan Magistrate Court, under the **Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002** for the recovery of amount due from borrower/s, offers are invited by the undersigned in sealed covers for purchase of immovable property, as described hereunder, which is in the physical possession, on 'As is where is basis' 'As Is What Is Basis' and 'Whatever Is There Is Basis' particulars of which are given below:-

S.N.	Borrower(s) / Co-Borrower(s) / Guarantor(s)	Demand Notice Date and Amount	Description of the Immovable property	Reserve Price	Earnest Money Deposit	Total Loan Outstanding as on
1.	Loan Account No. (XOHEDHE00001071579) Mr./Mrs. ANIL KUMAR SHAW (Borrower) Mr./Mrs. ANUP KUMAR JAISWAL, Mr./Mrs. AMIT KUMARSHAW JAISWAL, Mr./Mrs. SANJU DEVI SHAW (Co-Borrower) All are having address for communication at- 77-M-BLOCK HARI NAGAR, NEW DELHI- 110 064. also at-HOUSE NO 32/4BLOCK B,KHAZAN BASTI, MAYAPURI, NEW DELHI-110 064. also at-C-222, MAYAPURI IND PHASE II, SHOP 1B, MAYAPURI, NEW DELHI-110 064.	20.10.2016 Rs. 1,43,06,334.54 (Rupees One Crore Forty Three Lakhs Six Thousand Three Hundred Thirty Four and Fifty Four Paise Only) as on 20.10.2016	H.No. B-32/4, Block-B, Khazan Basti, Maya Puri, New Delhi- 110064.	Rs. 42,00,000/- (Rupees Forty Two Lakhs Only)	Rs. 4,20,000/- (Rupees Four Lakhs Twenty Only)	Rs. 1,42,82,119/- (Rupees One Crore Forty Two Lakhs Eighty Two Thousand One Hundred Nineteen Only) Further interest will be charged as applicable, as per the Loan Agreement on the amount outstanding in the notice and incidental expenses, costs, etc., is due and payable till its realization.
2.	Loan Account No. (XOHEDHE00001178652) Mr./Mrs. Sunil Guliani(Borrower) Mr./Mrs. Samriti Guliani, Mr./Mrs. Jyoti Mehta, Mr./Mrs. Sunjiv Mehta, Mr./Mrs. Jagmohan Lal Bajaj, Mr./Mrs. SES Light Private Limited, Mr./Mrs. Sanyogita Bajaj (Co-Borrower) All are having address for communication at:- A-3/120 Sector-3 Rohini Sector-7, New Delhi-110085. Also at- H.NO. 504, MIG, Urban Area, NIT Sector 22, Faridabad – 121001. Also at- Flat No. B-42/2, 1st Floor, DDA Flats, NarainaVihar, New Delhi – 110028. Also at- Property No. WZ-34, Basement Floor, Mukharjee Park Extn, New Delhi – 110009	30.09.2016 Rs. 2,45,15,207.13 (Rupees Two Crore Forty Five Lakhs Fifteen Thousand Two Hundred Seven and Thirteen Paise Only) as on 29.09.2018	WZ-34, Basement Floor, Mukharjee Park, Extn, New Delhi- 09.	Rs. 88,00,000/- Rupees (Eighty Eight Lakh(s) Only)	Rs. 8,80,000/- Rupees (Eight Lakh(s) Eighty Eight Thousand Only)	Rs. 1,32,26,914/- Rupees (One Crore Thirty Two Lakh(s) Twenty Six Thousand Nine Hundred Fourteen Only) Further interest will be charged as applicable, as per the Loan Agreement on the amount outstanding in the notice and incidental expenses, costs, etc., is due and payable till its realization.
3.	Loan Account No. XOHEDHE00001073704 Mr./Mrs. VINOD BANSAL (Borrower) Mr./Mrs. LORD BUDDHAS SOCIETY, Mr./Mrs. PREETI BANSAL (Co-Borrower) All are having address for communication at :- H.NO-1007 Dr Mukherjee Nagar, New Delhi-110009Don Bosco Global School Villjhade Ferozpur Road, Ludhiana, Punjab-142021. Shop No B5 Namdhari Chamber, Plot No.9, Block No 54, Gupta Road, W.E.A Basement Carol Bagh, New Delhi-110005	15.10.2016 Rs. 4,93,05,897.99 (Rupees Four Crore Ninety Three Lakh(s) Five Thousand Eight Hundred Ninety Seven And Paise Ninety Nine Only) as on 20.09.2016	Shop No B5 Namdhari chamber Plot No 9 B Gupta Road W.E.A Basement Carol Bagh New Delhi 110005	Rs. 45,00,000/- Rupees (Fifty Five Lakh(s) Only)	Rs. 4,50,000/- Rupees (Four Lakh(s) Fifty Thousand Only)	Rs. 3,33,40,133/- Rupees (Three Crore Thirty Three Lakh(s) Forty Thousand One Hundred Thirty Three Only) Further interest will be charged as applicable, as per the Loan Agreement on the amount outstanding in the notice and incidental expenses, costs, etc., is due and payable till its realization.
4.	Loan Account No. XOHEDHE00001129265 Mr./Mrs. Manvinder Singh Walia (Borrower) Mr./Mrs. Gurpreet Kaur (Co-Borrower) All are having address for communication at :- 1/9392, West Rohtash, New Delhi- 110 092 M/s. Aashi Enterprises, 1/6674, Ground Floor, East Rohtash Nagar, Shahdara, New Delhi – 110 032	19.12.2016 Rs. 1,23,45,017.22 (Rupees One Crore Twenty Three Lakh(s) Fourty Five Thousand Seventeen and Paise Twenty Two Only) as on 15.12.2016	Property bearing No.1/9392, admeasuring 107 Sq.yds, out of entire area 150 Sq.Yds, out of Khasra No.563/357, built on Plot No.5, Kheawat No.14, Khata No.60, situated in the abadi of near Gurudwara, Shahi Mohalla, West Rohtas Nagar, in the area of Village Uldhapur, Shahdara, New Delhi - 110 032	Rs. 98,00,000/- Rupees (Ninety Eight Lakh(s) Only)	Rs. 9,80,000/- Rupees (Nine Lakh(s) Eighty Thousand Only)	Rs. 1,49,56,082/- Rupees (One Crore Forty Nine Lakh(s) Fifty Six Thousand Eighty Two Only) Further interest will be charged as applicable, as per the notice and incidental expenses, costs, etc., is due and payable till its realization.
5.	Loan Account No. (XOHEEDL00001822311) Mr./Mrs. RAGINDER SINGH KOHLI (Borrower) Mr./Mrs. AMARJIT KAUR, Mr./Mrs. PARMINDER KAUR Mr./Mrs. JOLLY MOTORS (Co-Borrower) All are having address for communication a :-t J-1, TOP FLOOR, RAJOURI GARDEN, MAIN MARKET, NEW DELHI -110 027	24.08.2017 Rs. 2,09,62,804.06 [Rupees Two Crore Nine Lakh Sixty Two Thousand Eight Hundred Four and paise Six Only] as on 24.08.2017	Property admeasuring 232 sq.yds., bearing Property No.J-1, Top Floor, situated at Rajouri Garden, New Delhi.	Rs. 1,66,00,000/- [Rupees (One Crore Sixty Six Lakh Only)]	Rs. 16,60,000/- [Rupees Sixteen Lakh Sixty Thousand Only]	Rs. 2,55,75,961/- [Rupees Two Crore Fifty Five Lakh Seventy Five Thousand Nine Hundred Sixty One Only] Further interest will be charged as applicable, as per the Loan Agreement on the amount outstanding in the notice and incidental expenses, costs, etc., is due and payable till its realization.
6.	(Loan No.) XOHEDL00001451392 & XOHEDHE00001268156 Ravinder Kumar Wadhwa (BORROWER), Narankari Stone Crushing Works, GarimaTuli, AnujWadhwa, Meenakshi Wadhwa, TanujWadhwa, Surender Kumar Wadhwa (CO-BORROWER) Address- 29, Chandernok, Pitampura, New Delhi 110034 Also at- Plot No. 15, (Workers Housing Plot), Stone Crushing Zone, Pali Faridabad, 121004	10.05.2017 Rs. 4,01,86,044.12 [Rupees Four Crores One Lakh(s) Eighty Six Thousand Forty Four And Paise Twelve Only] as on 06.05.2017	Property admeasuring 500 Sq. Yards, Out of 4835 Sq. Yds, bearing Site/Stone Crusher Plot No. (Workers Housing Plot) Stone Crushing Zone, Pali, Faridabad,	Rs. 3,60,00,000/- Rupees (Three Crore Sixty Lakh(s) Only)	Rs. 36,00,000/- Rupees (Thirty Six Lakh(s) Only)	Rs. 5,34,49,595/- (Rupees Five Crore Thirty Four Lakhs Forty Nine Thousand Five Hundred Ninety Five Only) Further interest will be charged as applicable, as per the Loan Agreement on the amount outstanding in the notice and incidental expenses, costs, etc., is due and payable till its realization.
7.	Loan Account No. XOHEDHE00001268157 & XOHEDHE00001265918 Mr./Mrs. ANUPAM BANSAL (Borrower) Mr./Mrs. DURGESH BANSAL (Co-Borrower) All are having address for communication at B-4/80, B-BLOCK Ashok Vihar, Phase-II, New Delhi - 110 052 M/s Kaku Industries Pvt.Ltd. No.F-136, Sector-3, dsidc Bawana New Delhi-110 039 M/s Kaku Enterprises Pvt.Ltd. Plot No.243, PKT-F, Sector-3, DSIDC Bawana, New Delhi-110 039 Flat No. 1630, 2nd Floor, Lig Pocket- Gh1, Sector 28, Rohini, New Delhi- 110 085 Flat No. 1631, 2nd Floor, Lig Pocket- Gh1, Sector 28, Rohini, New Delhi- 110 085	21.12.2016 Rs. 3,37,27,323.24/- [Rupees Three Crore Thirty Seven Lakh(s) Twenty Seven Thousand Three Hundred Twenty Three And Paise Twenty Four Only] as on 15.12.2016	Property No.1: First and Second floor with roof rights (said portion) part of Property No.80, in Block B-4, admeasuring 80 sq.yds, situated in the layout plan of Ashok Vihar Residential Scheme, Phase-II, Delhi – 110 052 and bounded on: North: Plot No.81, South: Road, East: Road 30ft. wide, West: Service Lane 15 ft. Wide. Property No.2: Flat bearing No.1630, on Second Floor, admeasuring 45 sq.mtrs, under LIG-Category, in Pocket - GH-1, Sector-28, situated in the layout plan of Rohini Residential Scheme, Rohini, New Delhi-110085. Property No.3: Flat bearing No.1631, on Second Floor, admeasuring 45 sq.mtrs, under LIG-Category, in Pocket - GH-1, Sector - 28, situated in the layout plan of Rohini Residential Scheme, Rohini, New Delhi – 110 085	Property No.1: Rs. 2,35,70,000/- [Rupees Two Crore Thirty Five Lakh Seventy Thousand Only] Property No.2: Rs. 39,65,000/- [Rupees Thirty Nine Lakh Sixty Five Thousand Only] Property No.3: Rs. 39,65,000/- [Rupees Thirty Nine Lakh Sixty Five Thousand Only]	Property No.1: Rs. 23,57,000/- [Rupees Twenty Three Lakh(s) Fifty Seven Thousand Only] Property No.2: Rs. 3,96,500/- [Rupees Three Lakh(s) Ninety Six Thousand Five Hundred Only] Property No.3: Rs. 3,96,500/- [Rupees Three Lakh(s) Ninety Six Thousand Five Hundred Only]	Rs. 4,42,18,640/- (Rupees Four Crore Forty Two Lakhs Eighteen Thousand Six Hundred Forty Only) Further interest will be charged as applicable, as per the Loan Agreement on the amount outstanding in the notice and incidental expenses, costs, etc., is due and payable till its realization.
8.	Loan Account No. XOHEDL00001462931 ROHIT ROY(Borrower) ROY BROTHERS ORGANIC AGRO (P) LTD., TATIANA ZUEVA (Co-borrower) All are having address for communication at :- DC-302, Del Court, Jaypee Green, Greater Noida, Noida 201309, UP	10.05.2017 Rs. 2,35,58,798.90/- [Rupees Two Crore Thirty Five Lakh(s) Fifty Eight Thousand Seven Hundred Ninety Eight And Paise Ninety Only] as on 09.05.2017	Apartment No DC-3-302, Third Floor, Del Court, Jaypee Green, Block - G, Surajpur, Kasna Road, Greater Noida, Gautambudh Nagar 201309, UP Admesuring Builtup Area 3250 Sq Ft.,	Rs. 2,15,00,000/- Rupees (Two Crore Fifteen Lakh(s) Only)	Rs. 21,50,000/- Rupees (Twenty One Lakh(s) Fifty Thousand Only)	Rs. 3,04,09,193/- (Rupees Three Crore Four Lakh(s) Nine Thousand One Hundred Ninety Three Only) Further interest will be charged as applicable, as per the Loan Agreement on the amount outstanding in the notice and incidental expenses, costs, etc., is due and payable till its realization.
9.	Loan Account No. XOHEDHE00001094283 Mr./Mrs. GAGAN VOHRA (Borrower) Mr./Mrs. SARIKA VOHRA, Mr./Mrs. ALKA VOHRA (Co-Borrower) All are having address for communication at :- H.No-53 Second Floor, Gujrawala Town Part-II, New Delhi – 110 009 R.K. Bearing Co. India Block-W, Shop No. S-15 Mayapuri Phase-II, New Delhi – 110 064	20.10.2016 Rs. 2,65,07,401.29 Rupees Two Crore Sixty Five Lakh(s) Seven Thousand Four Hundred One And Paise Twenty Nine Only], as on 20.09.2016	No 53, Second Floor with roof rights GujranWala Town, Part-II, New Delhi -110009 Property admeasuring 225 sq.yds. together with built up area of 2148 Sqft	Rs. 1,65,75,000/- Rupees (One Crore Sixty Five Lakh(s) Seventy Five Thousand Only)	Rs. 16,57,500/- Rupees (Sixteen Lakh(s) Fifty Seven Thousand Five Hundred Only)	Rs. 3,81,99,129/- (Rupees Three Crore Eighty One Lakh Ninety Nine Thousand One Hundred Twenty Nine Only) Further interest will be charged as applicable, as per the Loan Agreement on the amount outstanding in the notice and incidental expenses, costs, etc., is due and payable till its realization.
10.	(Loan No.) XOHEDL00001614611 CHAHAT AGGARWAL (Borrower) SAVITA AGGARWAL, PAWAN KUMAR AGARWAL (Co-Borrower) Present at- NO.3066/7-B/1A, GROUND FLOOR, RANJIT NAGAR, NEW DELHI – 110 008.	16.04.2018 Rs. 1,45,06,860.92/- Rupees One Crore Forty Five Lakh(s) Six Thousand Eight Hundred Sixty and Paise Ninety Two Only as on 15.04.2018	Entire Ground Floor without terrace / roof rights (said portion) part of property bearing No.3066/7-B/1A admeasuring 200 sq.yds. out of khasra No.73 and 382/46 situated in the area of village shadipur in the abadi of ranjit Nagar new delhi bounded on East – passage, West – Road, North – Others Property, South – Others Property.	Rs. 1,39,00,000/- (Rupees One Crore Thirty Nine Lakh(s) Only)	Rs. 13,90,000/- (Rupees Thirteen Lakh(s) Ninety Thousand Only)	Rs. 1,58,26,015/- (Rupees One Crore Fifty Eight Lakh Twenty Six Thousand Fifteen Only) Further interest will be charged as applicable, as per the Loan Agreement on the amount outstanding in the notice and incidental expenses, costs, etc., is due and payable till its realization.
11.	(Loan No.) XOHEDL00001455428 XOHEDHE00000962202 ASHOK KUMAR JAISWAL(DECASED) (BORROWER), HIMANSHU JAISWAL, b) GEETA JAISWAL (LEGAL HEIRS/CO-BORROWER(S)/GUARANTOR) All are having address for communication at- 32/63-B, G/F, GALI NO. 11 BHIKAM SINGH COLONY VISHWAS NAGAR, NEW DELHI - 110032	02.05.2018 Rs. 1,04,14,443.95/- Rupees One Crore Four Lakh(s) Fourteen Thousand Four Hundred Forty Three and paise Ninety Five Only as on 01.05.2018	Property admeasuring 100 square yards, bearing property no. 366, comprised in Khasra No. 642, Village Chandrawali alias Shahdara, Old Post Office Street, Chotta Bazar, Shahdara, New Delhi Property House No. 32/63B, Ground and First Floor, Gali No. 11, Bhikram Singh Colony, Vishwas Nagar, Shahdara, New Delhi	Rs. 85,00,000/- Rupees Eighty Five Lakh(s) Only	Rs. 8,50,000/- Rupees Eight Lakh(s) Fifty Thousand Only.	Rs. 1,00,17,846/- (Rupees One Crore Seventeen Thousand Eight Hundred Forty Six Only) Further interest will be charged as applicable, as per the Loan Agreement on the amount outstanding in the notice and incidental expenses, costs, etc., is due and payable till its realization.

Important Information regarding Auction Process

1.	Date of Auction	28.02.2019
2.	Place of Submission of Bids and Place of Auction	1st & 2nd Floor, Plot No.6, Main Pusa Road, Karol Bagh, New Delhi - 110 005
3.	Type of Possession	Physical Possession
4.	Date of inspection of properties	13.02.2019
5.	Last date for Submission of Bids	27.02.2019

* A bidder may, on his own choice, avail the facility in the auction by making application in prescribed format which is available along with the offer/tender document on the given office address mentioned hereunder. Sale is strictly subject to terms and conditions incorporated in this advertisement and the prescribed Bid / Tender Document.. This notice is also to be treated as a 15days notice under Rule 8(5)(c) and 9(1) of the Security Interest Enforcement Rules, 2002, as the previous 30 days notice, if any, under Rule 8(6) and 9(1) given for auction sale of the above properties failed.

TERMS AND CONDITIONS OF AUCTION

- The property is sold on 'As is where is basis' 'As Is What Is Basis' and 'Whatever Is There Is Basis'.
- The Bidder is obliged to exercise full due diligence in all respects, including to inspect each of the details of the property mentioned above on the scheduled date & time.
- Submission of bids to Cholamandalam Investment and Finance Company Limited would be construed a deemed acceptance by the bidder that (i) he/she/it has exercised due diligence in all respects; (ii) is satisfied with all details/measurements of property; (iii) acknowledges full knowledge of terms and conditions that govern the auction and (iv) waives all his/her/its rights to make any contrary claims against company at any future date.
- The sale is subject to confirmation by the Authorised officer if the borrower/guarantor pays the entire outstanding amount in full before sale, no sale will be conducted.
- The Bidder shall remit Earnest Money Deposit (EMD) by Banker's Cheque / DD drawn in favour of Ltd for the respective Loan A/c. along with the bid form in a Sealed Cover addressed to The Authorized Officer, Cholamandalam Investment and Finance Company Limited up to 5.00 p.m. on or before 27.02.2019. Please note that, in reference to successful bidder(s), EMD is adjustable against the sale consideration receivable by Cholamandalam Investment and Finance Company Limited Also, EMD is refundable to the unsuccessful bidder(s).
- The successful bidder shall deposit 25% of the bid amount immediately on the sale being knocked down in his/her/its favour and the balance within 15 days by Banker's Cheque / DD drawn in favour of Cholamandalam Investment and Finance Company Limited for the respective Loan A/c Number.
- In case the successful bidder fails to deposit 25% of the bid amount immediately on sale being knocked down in his/her/its favour and/or the balance amount, within 15 days the deposit made by the bidder shall be forfeited without any prior intimation.
- The charges / fees payable for conveyance such as stamp duty, registration fee, maintenance charges electricity charges etc shall be borne by the successful bidder. The Authorized Officer will not be held responsible for any charge, lien, property tax or any other dues to the Government or local body or any other authority in respect of the property under sale.
- The Authorized Officer has the absolute right to accept or reject the bid or adjourn / postpone/cancel the sale/modify any terms and conditions of the sale without any prior notice or assigning any reason therefore.
- The Sale will only be in favour of successful bidder and not his/her nominee.
- This Notice is also to the Borrower(s) Guarantor(s) in particular and the public in general.

Place: Delhi Date : 28-01-2019

Sd/
Authorised Officer
Cholamandalam Investment and Finance Company Limited

Seventh heaven for Djoker

Novak routs old foe Nadal 6-3, 6-2, 6-3 in men's decider, wraps up record 7th Aus Open title

AFP ■ MELBOURNE

Novak Djokovic said he played his "best final in a Grand Slam" to win a record magnificent seventh Australian Open with a 6-3, 6-2, 6-3 rout of Rafael Nadal on Sunday.

"It's one of the best, if not the best, matches I've played in a Grand Slam final," the Serbian world number one said after winning his 15th major title in just 2hr 4min.

The demolition of second seed Nadal put Djokovic, 31, out on his own ahead of Roger Federer and Roy Emerson, who both won six Australian Open men's singles titles.

The top seed dropped to his knees and kissed the ground after vanquishing his greatest rival. "It's quite unreal we are still playing at this level and still competing for the biggest titles in sport and it's just an amazing evening," he said, pausing frequently to hold back his emotions.

"Under the circumstances, maybe this is the best quality tennis I have played against Rafa in a final."

'THIS IS AMAZING'

"I'm just trying to contemplate on the journey in the last 12 months. I had the surgery exactly 12 months ago," he added, referring to an elbow operation that saw him slump out of the world's top 20 before bouncing back to win Wimbledon and the US Open. "To be standing now here in front of you today and managing to win this title and three out of four Slams, this is amazing. I am speechless."

The pair's only previous final in Australia, in 2012, developed into a record-breaking 5hr 53min slugfest — the longest in Grand Slam history.

A repeat of that epic never materialised with Nadal uncharacteristically nervous at the start and Djokovic taking an immediate advantage that he would never relinquish. Djokovic said a fast start had always been his plan.

"(It was) exactly what I intended to do, to step out and bring on the intensity because I knew there would be intensity waiting for me on the other side."

The Spaniard had not lost a set and had not had his service broken since the third set of his first round match but that streak ended in a flash as the Serb came sprinting out of the blocks.

"I definitely needed a good start, we had both been playing well coming into the match," said Djokovic.

"I knew I had a good chance if could dictate the play."

TOTAL CONTROL

Djokovic was in total control on his own delivery and won his first four service games without conceding a single point, even inducing Nadal to miss a forehand completely on the way to grab-



Novak Djokovic, right, holds his trophy after defeating Rafael Nadal in the men's singles final at the Australian Open tennis championships in Melbourne

AP

bing the set in 36 minutes.

The second set followed a similar pattern, with Djokovic racing through games on his own serve, while Nadal struggled to hold.

The pressure told in the fifth game and Djokovic broke again when Nadal hit a lob volley long after an exchange at the net.

The on-song Serb was so fired up he broke Nadal again to go to 5-2 before serving out for a two-set lead with three aces in a row with just 1hr 16min on the clock.

The statistics were as telling as the scoreline: Djokovic had served eight aces to Nadal's one and made just four unforced errors while the Spaniard had coughed up 20. When Djokovic broke again in the third game of the third set it was just

THE DEMOLITION OF SECOND SEED NADAL PUT DJOKOVIC, 31, OUT ON HIS OWN AHEAD OF ROGER FEDERER AND ROY EMERSON, WHO BOTH WON SIX AUSTRALIAN OPEN MEN'S SINGLES TITLES

a matter of how quickly he would finish off Nadal.

The end was swift, as Djokovic withstood one break point at 3-2 before administering the last rites in a flurry of winners off both wings.

"Even if tonight was not my best day of course I had someone that played a lot better than me tonight," said Nadal.

Victory extended the Serb's win-loss record against Nadal to 28-25 and squared the Grand Slam final count between the pair at 4-4.

Djokovic has now completed a hat-trick of Slams following his wins at Wimbledon and the US Open.

He will go to Paris in May for the French Open seeking to become the only man in the Open Era to win all four majors twice.

'OSAKA DESERVES NUMBER 1 RANKING'

HARSHIT BISHT ■ NEW DELHI

Naomi Osaka's win over Petra Kvitova in the women's singles final of Australian Open on Saturday hitched the 21-year-old Japanese young superstar name in the record book of women's tennis, as she is going to be world number one women's player (when the list gets updated on Monday) becomes the first player since Jennifer Capriati to win the next Grand Slam after her maiden major title.

Speaking about Osaka's sensational performance in the night of final, former Indian number one singles player Somdev Devvarman was full of praise for the young achiever, who first grabs spotlight after mauling Serena Williams in one-sided US Open final in September 2018.

"The stakes were very high in the final. Not just the title that was on the line but also world number one that neither of the women had accomplished before."

"It was a very interesting game and I think the two girls played quite phenomenal in this match without a doubt winning plenty of great points."

"Osaka was brilliant in the tiebreak. And then she did really well especially in the third set to take a path from the break at the end of second and compose herself again, refocus and come back and win the match. It was an unbelievable effort from Naomi and a tough one for Kvitova," said Somdev who was one of the guest panelists for Sony Sports live studio show for Australian Open.

Speaking further about Naomi, the 33-year-old veteran, whose best performance in the season's first Grand Slam was way back in 2013 when he entered the second round said that she has proved that her US Open win wasn't a fluke and she is well deserved for the number one ranking.

"I think Osaka is one of the brighter futures for WTA circuit, US final was unfortunate (because of Serena's verbal dispute with referee overshadowing her win) but at the end of the day she won it very gracefully and here (in Melbourne) she did it once again proving that the US Open win was not a fluke."

"She is now the world number one and I think she is well earned, well deserved."

"In Australia, she only lost three sets on the way to the title. She is playing really well and obviously has improved a lot; she has learned how to deal with pressure. It's not easy to deal with pressure and expectations coming into the tournament as a number four seed but she has done a great job."

"We have to congratulate her on her feet, I think winning two Slams final back to back and that too after your first major is something that has never done long back. She has joined a very privileged group of Chris Evert and other greats and a group that has a lot of success at the WTA tour. Pretty great future for her ahead and I think she will be a wonderful ambassador for women's tennis," he concluded.



Naomi Osaka poses with the winners trophy after Australian Open final

AP

SINGLES

KVITOVA PULLS OUT OF FED CUP TIE

PRAGUE: Australian Open finalist Petra Kvitova will not play in the first-round Fed Cup tie as the Czech Republic face Romania on February 9-10, Czech media said on Sunday, quoting her manager. "She defends her titles in St Petersburg the week before that and in Doha the week after," manager Miroslav Cernosek told the website of the *DNES* broadsheet daily. "Neither I nor captain Petr Pala expect her to take part," he said, adding however that he expected Kvitova to join the Fed Cup team later. "She has always played... When she could. She is not one of those looking for excuses," he added. With Kvitova on the team, the Czechs have won six of the last eight Fed Cups. In last year's final, they swept the US team 3-0 in Prague.

ITALIANS ARRIVE FOR DAVIS CUP CLASH

KOLKATA: The Italian Davis Cup squad, led by world number 18 Marco Cecchinato, arrived here on Sunday for the World Group Qualifiers against hosts India at the South Club from February 1-2. In absence of Italy's top-ranked Fabio Fognini who has ruled himself out to treat an injury, Cecchinato will spearhead the team on the grass courts. Cecchinato who made a first round exit at the Australian Open against Serbia's Filip Krajinovic is expected to be a threat on the opening day of the tie. World number 35 Andreas Seppi is the next best Italians in terms of ranking. The other members of the contingent includes number 54 Matteo Berrettini, Thomas Fabbiano (102) and doubles world number 88 Simone Bolelli. A total of 24 teams will play in the knockout qualifiers on February 1 and 2 to decide which 12 teams will play the year-end Final in Madrid in November 2019.

RAHUL FAILS BUT INDIA A CLINCH SERIES

THIRUVANANTHAPURAM: KL Rahul scored only 13 on his return from suspension but India A sealed the series against England Lions with a comfortable 60-run win taking an unassailable 3-0 lead in the five-match series. In a low-scoring encounter, India A could manage only 172 in 47.1 overs but then did well enough to bowl out Lions for 112 in only 30.5 overs. On a slow deck, it was left-arm spinners Krunal Pandya (4/21 in 5.5 overs) and Axar Patel (2/26 in 5.5 overs), who inflicted bulk of the damage. If Axar dealt the opening blows, man of the match Krunal polished the lower-half after chipping in with useful 21 runs. Credit should also be given to Deepak Chahar as his 39 off 65 balls took India from 110 for 7 to 172 after skipper Ajinkya Rahane (0) and Rahul were dismissed cheaply at the top of the order.

SAURASHTRA CLOSE TO RANJI FINAL

BENGALURU: Benefiting from an umpiring howler, Cheteshwar Pujara put Saurashtra on brink of a victory with an unbeaten hundred but walked out of the ground amidst 'cheater' boos in the Ranji Trophy semifinal against Karnataka on Sunday. Pujara hit his 49th first class hundred and shared an unconquered 201-run fourth-wicket stand with Sheldon Jackson (90) to help his side end the fourth day at 224 for three, just 55 runs away from the victory. Hosts Karnataka added just two runs to their overnight total of 237 for eight before being bundled out, setting a 279-run target for the visitors. Pacer R Vinay Kumar provided the hosts the best possible start by getting rid of opener Snell Patel (0) and Vishvaraj Jadeja (0) without letting them bother the scorer. Abhimanyu Mithun scalped Harvik Desai (9) to leave Saurashtra gasping at 23 for three. *Agencies*

Hardik in spotlight as India look to seal series

PTI ■ MOUNT MAUNGANUI

A well-deserved break on the cards, India captain Virat Kohli will be aiming to seal the five-match series when his team square off against a confused New Zealand in the third ODI here on Monday.

The Indian captain has been given a break as part of BCCI's workload management programme and he would ensure that he finishes his assignment Down Under on a high after the maiden Test and ODI victories in Australia.

An unassailable 3-0 lead would be a fitting revenge to India's abject 0-4 humiliation during the 2014 limited overs series.

One of the primary focuses of Monday's encounter could be inclusion of Indian cricket's latest enfant terrible Hardik Pandya, who is coming back from provisional suspension for his loose talk on a TV chat show.

Pandya's presence lends solidity and balance to the side and the skipper has time and again admitted it.

The Baroda all rounder's replacement Vijay Shankar is a decent cricketer but is yet to possess the X factor that Pandya has.

That Shankar was given only two overs in the second ODI is an example that he is still not ready



Highlighting India's domination over the hosts in a unique and amusing way, the Easter District Police of New Zealand has come up with a warning for the citizens via Facebook



Police would like to issue a warning to members of the public about the exploits of a group touring the country at the moment. Witnesses report seeing this group badly assault an innocent looking bunch of New Zealanders in both Napier and Mt Maunganui in the last week. Extra care should be taken if you are carrying anything that looks like a cricket bat or ball. 😊



to shoulder extra responsibility.

Pandya is a few clicks quicker than Shankar whose bowling in the three ODIs that he has played has not been penetrative.

Pandya can also bat at No 6 if situation arises and his busy approach in batting can also get

the scoreboard ticking in middle overs as the skipper wants.

Otherwise Indian team doesn't require much tinkering.

New Zealand, on the other hand, has looked clueless against

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India's wrist-spin duo of Kuldeep Yadav and Yuzvendra Chahal, who accounted for 12 of the 20 wickets in the last two ODIs.

Kuldeep has looked the most menacing as he claimed two four-

wicket hauls in the first two ODIs, while Chahal returned with two wickets on both the matches.

Seamers Bhuvneshwar Kumar and Mohammed Shami also have done their job well, getting crucial breakthroughs for the team.

India's batting too have complemented the bowlers, looking rock solid in both the games with Shikhar Dhawan's return to form lending the team the much-needed support at the top.

If he had scored an unbeaten 75 in the first ODI, he cracked a 67-ball 66 in the second game.

Vice captain Rohit Sharma, who had flopped in the first ODI, too entertained the spectators here with a strokeful 87 en route his 14th century stand with opening partner Dhawan.

Skipper Kohli also looked in good nick in both the matches, while Ambati Rayudu seemed to have found his mojo back with a 49-ball 47 on Saturday.

An ageless Mahendra Singh Dhoni too continued his rampaging run with yet another unbeaten 33-ball 48 to take India across the 300-mark, while Kedar Jadhav has also grabbed the role of a finisher with both hands.

While the batting looked in place, there is a slight concern about the visitors fifth bowler's slot where Pandya might fit in.

For Black Caps, captain Kane Williamson, who had top-scored in the first ODI, looked good during his short stay in the second ODI, while all-rounder Doug Bracewell tried to take the game to the wires with a 46-ball 57 but none of the other batters could convert their starts.

Marin limps out, Saina is champ

PTI ■ JAKARTA

Ace shuttler Saina Nehwal claimed her first BWF title in two years after three-time world champion Carolina Marin of Spain limped out of the Indonesia Masters final due to a leg injury, here on Sunday.

The London Olympics Bronze medalist, who last won a BWF title in 2017 in Malaysia, was trailing 4-10 in the opening game when Marin decided to withdraw from the contest. "It is important year for all of us. It was not good to see at all. It is painful. I have been getting injured a lot in the last few years and to see something like this on court is really painful," said Saina, who had suffered a career-threatening knee injury at the 2016 Rio Olympics.

"I know how it is mentally because when I got that knee injury at the Olympics. I was very upset. I was crying like anything. So I know how difficult it is for a player to go through such kind of injuries but the sport is like that, it is cruel." It is a creditable performance for the Indian, who had suffered a shin injury late



Saina lends support to Carolina Marin after she suffers injury during summit clash



Saina Nehwal poses with the Gold medal

(PBL) against Sindhu after the injury. I didn't do any kind of training. Doctors asked me not to do any training," Saina said.

"But I am not happy with the way I got it today. Of course I am happy that I could reach the finals, beating difficult opponents like He Bingjiao. Both the tournaments, I am very happy with my performance. It is great to beat (Nozomi) Okuhara, Binjiao, Dinar (Dyah Ayustine).

"In the finals, of course Carolina had the upper hand and I wanted to fight and see how the match goes but it was unfortunate what happened," added the 28-year-old from Hyderabad.

Olympic champion Marin was favourite to win the title. Coming into this match, she led 6-5 in her head-to-head record against Saina, an opponent she beat last week at the Malaysia Masters semifinal in Kuala Lumpur.

The fast-moving Spaniard made a rampaging start to take the first two points before Saina started to engage her in rallies and caught the Spaniard at the net to log her first point.

But the Indian missed the backline a couple of times and also found the net to allow Marin lead 6-2 at the Istora Senayan.

The Spaniard looked in good form, unleashing her aggressive brand of badminton but an unfortunate injury brought a premature end of the match when Marin, leading 9-2, landed badly on her right leg and fall on the court in agony holding her knee.

After a medical time out, Marin tried to continue but eventually collapsed to the ground crying.

She conceded the match at 10-4 up, limping out of the stadium in tears.

For Saina, it turned out to be yet another impressive outing, following the semifinal finish at Malaysia Masters last week.

Next would be All England Championship, a title Saina has not been able to win yet.