

OPINION 8
WHAT IMRAN KHAN FORGOT

AVENUES 10
TOP COURSES & OFF BEAT CAREERS OF 2019

WORLD 14
UN EXAMINING SAUDI WOMAN'S ASYLUM BID

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PUJARA, PANT
RISE IN TEST
RANKINGS
16 SPORT

SC reinstates Alok Verma

But bars CBI chief from taking policy decision till selection panel call

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

In a major rebuff to the Centre and Central Vigilance Commission, the Supreme Court on Sunday reinstated Alok Verma to the post of CBI Director by setting aside their orders sending him on leave.

However, the court made it clear that on reinstatement, Verma will cease and desist from taking any major policy decisions till the Selection Committee's decision. Verma's two-year tenure as CBI Director ends on January 31.

On the issue of "divestment of power and authority" of Verma, the apex court said it is "still open" for the high-powered committee, which selects the CBI chief, to consider the matter within a week since the CVC is probing the charges of corruption against him.

The high-powered committee includes the Prime Minister, the Chief Justice of India (CJI), and the Leader of Opposition.

"We deem it proper to direct that Verma, Director CBI, upon reinstatement, will cease and desist from taking any major policy decisions till the decision of the committee permitting such actions and decisions becomes available within the time frame indicated," a Bench headed by the CJI said in its 44-page order.

The Bench also comprised Justices SK Kaul and KM Joseph. The judgment was penned by CJI Ranjan Gogoi. However, the CJI didn't attend court and it was pronounced by Justice Kaul.

By its Tuesday's order, the SC set aside the October 23, 2018, orders of the CVC and the Department of Personnel and Training that divested Verma of his powers and appointed CBI's Joint Director M Nageshwar Rao to look after the duties and functions of the agency's director.

Verma and Special Director Asthana were sent on "leave" after corruption charges were leveled against each other and the CBI filed a

FIR against Asthana. While Verma had moved the apex court against the Government's orders, Asthana has not sought any relief from the SC but has moved the Delhi High Court for quashing of FIR against him in a corruption case.

The SC referred to its verdict in the Vineet Narain case and subsequent amendment in law to drive home the point that legislative intent has been to ensure "complete insulation of the office of the CBI Director from all kinds of extraneous influences, as may be, as well as for upholding the integrity and independence of the institution of the CBI as a whole".

The 1997 Vineet judgment relates to investigation of allegations of corruption against high-ranking public officials. The top court referred to a provision of the Delhi Special Police Establishment (DSPE) Act, which said the CBI Director cannot be transferred without the consent of the Selection Committee.

"If the word 'transferred' has to be understood in its ordinary parlance and limited to a change from one post to another, as the word would normally convey and on that basis the requirement of 'previous consent of the committee' is understood to be only in such cases, i.e. Purely of transfer, such an interpretation would be self-defeating and would clearly negate the legislative intent," the Bench said.

It said the institution of CBI has been perceived to be necessarily kept away from all kinds of extraneous influences so that it can perform its role as premier investigating and prosecuting agency "without any fear and favour and in the best public interest".

"The head of the institution, the director, therefore, has to be the role model of independence and integrity which can only be ensured by freedom from all kinds of control and interference except to the extent that Parliament may have intended," it said.

Continued on Page 5



BALL IN SELECTION PANEL COURT

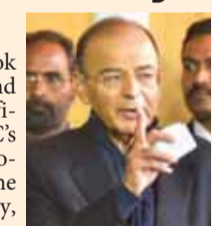
- Alok Verma's two-year tenure as CBI Director ends on January 31
- On the issue of "divestment of power and authority" of Verma, the apex court said it is "still open" for the high-powered committee, which selects the CBI chief, to consider the matter within a week since the CVC is probing the charges of corruption against him
- The head of the institution, the director, therefore, has to be the role model of independence and integrity which can only be ensured by freedom from all kinds of control and interference except to the extent that Parliament may have intended, said the apex court

Verma leave order bonafide: Jaitley

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The Government took the decision to send the CBI's two senior officers on leave on the CVC's recommendation to protect the integrity of the investigating agency, Finance Minister Arun Jaitley said on Tuesday, describing the action as "perfectly bonafide".

Reacting to the Supreme Court on CBI chief Alok Verma, Jaitley said the Government would comply with the orders of the apex court.



Continued on Page 5

Now, none can save PM from Rafale probe: Rahul

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Congress president Rahul Gandhi on Tuesday said no one can save Prime Minister Narendra Modi from Rafale investigation as the SC has reinstated CBI chief Alok Verma, who was unceremoniously removed by the Modi Government.

Speaking to the media outside Parliament, Rahul said the CBI chief was "ousted" at 1 am as he was about to begin an investigation into the Rafale jet agreement.



Detailed report on Page 7

Unanimous LS clears 10% general quota Bill

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

With most Opposition parties grudgingly backing what they called a political "jumla" and the Government describing it as a "historic" measure, the Lok Sabha on Tuesday night passed the landmark Bill seeking to provide 10 per cent reservation in jobs and education for the economically backward candidates among the general category. The Government will table the Bill in the Rajya Sabha on Wednesday.

With an eye on upper caste votes in the forthcoming Lok Sabha election, all major political parties supported the legislation even though they questioned the timing and legal "firmness" of the move. As many as 323 members voted in support of the Bill and only three voted against it.

Replying to an over four-and-a-half-hour debate, Social Justice Minister Thaavarchand Gehlot sought to allay doubts raised by several Opposition members about the legislation's fate if challenged in the Supreme Court, saying he can say with confidence that the apex court will accept it.

The Modi Government's policy and intention is good and that is why it has enabled the reservation for the poor in the general category with constitutional amendment, he said, seeking support of all parties for the passage of the Constitution (124th Amendment) Bill 2019.

"Your doubts are unfounded. Put them to rest," he told Opposition members, many of whom dubbed the Bill as "jumla" and "gimmick" questioning its legal standing and accusing the Government of bringing it in haste with an eye on the Lok Sabha polls.

Gehlot claimed that the Bill is in line with Prime Minister Narendra Modi's assertion when he assumed power in 2014 that his Government would be devoted to the cause of the poor and work for "sabka



Flowers blossom at Parliament house during the ongoing Winter Session of Parliament in New Delhi on Tuesday PTI

saath sabka vikas" (With all, development for all).

Modi and Congress president Rahul Gandhi were present in the House when the Bill was passed.

AIMIM member Asaduddin Owaisi opposed the constitutional amendment Bill saying the Bill is fraud on the Constitution.

The Constitution (124th Amendment) Bill 2019 seeks to amend the Constitution by introducing provisions for reservation for economically weaker sections, he said, adding it presently mentions only social and educational backwardness as the criteria for quota.

"I oppose this Bill. This is

a fraud on the Constitution," he said.

Union Minister Arun Jaitley made a forceful pitch for the passage of a Bill providing 10 per cent quota for the poor among the general category, saying almost every party, including the Congress, had supported the measure in their poll manifesto.

Making an intervention in the Lok Sabha, he rejected suggestions that the measure may fall foul of a Supreme Court judgment putting a cap of 50 per cent. The bar, he added, is for caste-based reservations, while the Bill seeks quota for the economically weaker sections in the general category.

Continued on Page 5

HRD to add 10 lakh seats in institutions to make up for loss

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The HRD Ministry on Tuesday convened a meeting to work out the modalities to implement 10 per cent reservation for the "economically weaker" sections among general category in higher educational institutions. Sources said the Ministry is working out the number of seats that need to be increased in the institutions to be able to implement this quota.

Sources said initial estimates reflect that around 10 lakh seats will have to be added in institutions across the country, including Central universities, IITs and IIMs, among other prestigious higher educational institutions.

"The modalities are yet to be worked out about how the quota will be implemented. All the universities and educational institutions recognised by the University Grants Commission, whether Government run or private, will have to implement the quota," source said.

The Centre on Monday cleared the 10 per cent quota in Government jobs and education for the "economically weaker" sections, meeting a

key demand of upper castes. The related Bill was passed in the Lok Sabha on Tuesday and will come up in the Rajya Sabha on Wednesday.

As per the All-India Survey on Higher Education (AISHE), 2017-18, the country has a total of 903 universities, over 39,000 colleges and over 10,000 standalone institutions. The proposed reservation will be over and above the existing 50 per cent reservation enjoyed by the Scheduled Castes, the Scheduled Tribes and the OBC, and will take the total reservation to 60 per cent.

The Bill mandates criteria like an annual income below ₹8 lakh and not owning more than five acre of agricultural land for those seeking quota benefits.

Meanwhile, Prime Minister Narendra Modi will interact with students, teachers and parents about examinations and related stress this month end as part of the "Pariksha Pe Charcha" programme just like last year. Participants will also be able to join the interactive session from across the country and even abroad through video-conference.

SC forms 5-judge Bench, Ayodhya trial from Jan 10

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

A five-judge Constitution Bench of the Supreme Court will hear the Ram Janmabhoomi-Babri Masjid land title dispute case from January 10. The Bench will be headed by Chief Justice Ranjan Gogoi and also comprise Justices SA Bobde, NV Ramana, UU Lalit and DY Chandrachud.

"Take notice that the following matters (petitions in the Ayodhya land dispute) will be listed on Thursday the 10th January, 2019 at 10.30 am in Chief Justice's court before the Constitution Bench comprising the Chief Justice, SA Bobde, NV Ramana, Uday Umesh Lalit and Dr DY Chandrachud, JJ," said a notice uploaded on the apex court website.

On January 4, the top court had said that further orders in the matter would be passed on January 10 by "the appropriate Bench, as may be constituted".

As many as 14 appeals have been filed in the apex court against the 2010 Allahabad High Court judgment, delivered in four civil suits, that the 2.77-acre be partitioned equally among the three parties — the Sunni Waqf Board, the Nirmohi Akhara and Ram Lalla.

The apex court on October 29 last year had fixed the matter in the first week of January before the "appropriate Bench".



passed an order on October 29 relating to the hearing of the matter.

The plea for early hearing was moved by the Akhil Bharat Hindu Mahasabha (ABHM) which is one of the respondents in the appeal filed by legal heirs of M Siddiq, one of the original litigants in the case.

A three-judge Bench of the top court had on September 27 last year, by 2:1 majority, refused to refer to a five-judge Constitution Bench the issue of reconsideration of the observations in its 1994 judgment that a mosque was not integral to Islam. The matter had arisen during the hearing of the Ayodhya land dispute.

Various Hindutva organisations have been demanding an Ordinance on early construction of Ram temple at the disputed site. Recently, Prime Minister Narendra Modi had suggested that any decision on an Ordinance on Ram temple in Ayodhya can happen only after the completion of the judicial process.

Central trade union nationwide strike partially successful

PTI ■ NEW DELHI/AHMEDABAD

Services of PSU banks and Spost offices were partially affected on Tuesday on the first day of the two-day nationwide strike called by Central trade unions against the alleged anti-worker policies of the Central Government.

While the strike evoked mixed response in Bihar, Jharkhand, West Bengal, Gujarat, Goa, Tripura, it affected normal life in Kerala where trains were stopped, buses and auto-rickshaws kept off roads.

A union leader said 20 crore took part in the strike.

Superfast T-18 has Lucknow connect

PRABHA SHANKER ■ LUCKNOW

Train-18 or T-18, manufactured by Integral Coach Factory (ICF), Chennai, at the cost of ₹100 crore, has Lucknow links. In fact, the superfast train was designed by Sudhanshu Mani, who recently retired as general manager of ICF, Chennai, a resident of Indira Nagar colony.

Mani conceptualised the gleaming blue-nosed train with facilities even superior than Shatabdi Express. It comes fitted with amenities at par with the best in the world having on-board WiFi to GPS-based passenger information system, touch-free bio-vacuum toilets, LED lighting, mobile charging points and a climate control system that adjusts the temperature according to occupancy and weather.



It has plug door facility like the one in Metro trains which close when the train is in motion. It has a talk-back facility and in case of an emergency, passengers can talk to the train driver directly.

Continued on Page 5

Citizenship Bill pulls through LS despite Opp protest

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Amid opposition from the Congress, the TMC, Left parties and others as well National Democratic Alliance (NDA) allies Janata Dal (United) and Shiv Sena, the Lok Sabha on Tuesday approved a Bill seeking to provide Indian citizenship to non-Muslim minorities from Bangladesh, Pakistan and Afghanistan.

The contentious Bill provides Indian citizenship to the Hindus, Jains, Christians, Sikhs, Buddhists and Parsis from Bangladesh, Pakistan and Afghanistan after six years of residence in India instead of 12 years even if they do not possess any document.

Piloting the Citizenship (Amendment) Bill 2019, Union Home Minister Rajnath Singh told the Opposition that the Bill was not against the provisions of the Constitution and would give succour to persecuted



Activists under various student union outfits protest against Citizenship Bill in Khumlung, West Tripura, on Tuesday PTI

minorities in the three neighbouring countries.

Allaying apprehensions from Assam where its coalition partner Asom Gona Parishad (AGP) has resigned from the

BJP-led State Government, the Home Minister said the law is not meant for Assam only but for the entire country which would bear its "burden". Congress and the TMC

staged a walkout from the House in protest with the latter demanding that the Bill should have also included persecuted minorities from the Muslim community in these

CAPSULE

NILEKANI TO HEAD RBI'S DIGITAL PAYMENT PANEL

Mumbai: The Reserve Bank of India on Tuesday constituted a high-level committee under Aadhaar architect Nandan Nilekani to suggest measures to strengthen the safety and security of digital payments in the country.

HC DISMISSES PLEA TO REMOVE KEJRIWAL AS CM

New Delhi: The Delhi High Court dismissed removal of AAP leader Arvind Kejriwal as Chief Minister of the national Capital on the plea that he is facing prosecution in a criminal case.

PASWAN LOSES VIP STATUS AT PATNA AIRPORT

Patna: Denial of VIP privileges to Union Minister Ram Vilas Paswan at the airport here a day ago raised some eyebrows though an official asserted on Tuesday that the situation arose since orders for extending the facilities were not issued by the competent authority.

Continued on Page 5

Cabinet okays new fishing policy

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ LUCKNOW

Aiming to keep the fishing community in good humour ahead of the general elections, the state government approved a new fishing policy to regulate and allow distribution of water bodies in rural areas on lease.

Earlier on October 24, 2018, the Lucknow bench of the Allahabad High Court had asked the state government to formulate a fishing policy. A decision in this regard was taken at the Cabinet meeting held on Tuesday.

Briefing media persons, state government spokesperson and Health Minister Sidharth Nath Singh said that the lease would be given by a four-member committee, headed by the District Magistrate, after proper survey of water bodies and government-owned ponds and rivers. "The survey will be completed by April and the lease will be distributed thereafter," Singh said, adding that norms of the National Green Tribunal (NGT) would be enforced and fishing would be banned between June 1 and August 31 due to breeding season.

As per the new fishing



Health Minister Sidharth Nath Singh briefing media after the Cabinet meeting on Tuesday

policy, water bodies of half acre will be kept for public utility while ponds of 0.5 to 5 acres will be given on lease for fishing and production of 'singhara' (water chestnut).

Fishing communities like Nishad, Kevat, Mallah and Manjhi would be given preference in allotment. "Water bodies measuring over 5 acre will have to clear NGT norms though rules will be same," he said.

As per the policy, if there is a single applicant, it could be given to him directly but if there are more than one applicant, lease will be allotted through auction. Of the revenue collected from fishing, 25 per cent will go to village panchayat, 25 per cent to district panchayat and the rest to Fisheries department.

In another decision, the government decided to end double taxation on ethanol-mixed petrol. "The Centre had written to the state that oil companies were not ready to mix ethanol with petrol due to double taxation. Once the double taxation system is done away with, the price of petrol is likely to go down," the minister said without specifying the dip.

In another decision, the government set up of a Group

of Ministers (GoM) committee to recommend ways and means for financial self-reliance of local bodies. It will consist of ministers of Urban Development, Panchayati Raj, Rural Development and Finance.

The government also approved a proposal for free transfer of land of Noida Development Authority which houses a super speciality hospital at Sector 30 (Noida) to the Health department for further expansion as per MCI norms.

The Cabinet also decreased the annual rent to be charged from Indian Oil Corporation Limited (IOCL) for setting up an ethanol plant in Gorakhpur from 5 to 2.5 per cent of the total cost of land.

The state government had provided 50 acres of land of Dhuriapar cooperative sugar mill to IOCL by charging a rent of 5 per cent annual on the value of the land for 30 years. But as the IOCL expressed its desire to lower the rent, hence it was slashed to 2.5 per cent.

The government also handed over nine mining lease to UPIEDA and Dedicated Freight Corridor out of the 13 leases surrendered by the NHAI and others.

Five of family found dead

Lucknow (PNS): Mystery shrouds the death of five members of a family who all were found dead inside the house on Tuesday morning. Local police, who rushed to the spot, prima facie dumped the incident to be of 'suicide'.

Reports said that retired railway worker Begraj (65), a resident of Benipur village in Jahanabad, was asleep with members of his family at his house on Monday night. On Tuesday morning, Begraj, along with four other family members, was found in an unconscious state. The locals gave the information of the incident to the incharge of Shahi police outpost, following

which the incharge reached the spot with the police force. However police found four of them already dead and one died on way to hospital. The victims were identified as Begraj, his wife Ramwati (60), son Nem Chandra (35), son's wife Mamta (32) and Begraj's daughter Gayatri (28). Sources said that no injuries were found on the bodies of the deceased.

Local police after investigation claimed that they found a container having milk but as it had turned blue so it seemed that the victims probably committed suicide. However, they did not rule out the possibility of someone giving milk

mixed with poison to kill the family. Local police registered a case and sent the body for post-mortem examination. Meanwhile, villagers claimed that the family was killed.

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मुख्य अभियन्ता

STAMPEDE IN 2013 DURING KUMBH

UP govt to table probe report in House

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ LUCKNOW

The state government will table in the Assembly a report by a one-member commission which probed the stampede at Allahabad railway station during Kumbh in 2013, beside implementing its suggestions for the imminent Kumbh Mela starting at Prayagraj from January 14.

At least 38 people died and 50 others were injured in the stampede at the Allahabad railway station during Mauni Amavasya on February 1, 2013, while devotees were returning home after taking a holy dip at the Sangam.

"The government has also

worked on the recommendations of the commission for the coming Kumbh Mela so that the lapses are not repeated this time," spokesperson and Health Minister Sidharth Nath Singh said while briefing media persons after a Cabinet meeting on Tuesday.

The one-member judicial commission of Justice (Retired) Omkareshwar Bhatt blamed the Railways and UP State Roadways Corporation for the stampede at Allahabad junction railway station in 2013. "This time we have asked the authorities to look into the lapses that occurred in 2013 and directed them to initiate necessary precautions," Singh said.

The commission also held the change made on the platform at the last moment and the lack of holding area of passengers as the prime reason for the stampede.

Along with the Railways, the commission also blamed UPSRTC, Allahabad district administration and police for thoroughly failing in crowd management leading to the tragedy.

The commission concluded that the Railways did not make a clear assessment of the number of passengers for which arrangement of transportation had to be made on the occasion of 'Mauni Amavasya'. It said that inadequate

number of trains was pressed into service to transport devotees from the station to different cities. "Though it was announced to operate one Mela Special train every half-an-hour, it was not followed at all and trains were running late by two to four hours," the report said.

However, Singh blamed the previous Akhilesh Yadav regime for sitting on the probe report. "When the judicial commission had submitted its report to the government on August 14, 2014, why did the then Samajwadi Party regime not table it in the Assembly or take any action?" he questioned.

Prez to visit Kumbh on Jan 17

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ LUCKNOW

As Uttar Pradesh gears up for Kumbh Mela at Prayagraj, President Ram Nath Kovind will visit the mammoth congregation of faith on January 17. This was informed by Additional Chief Secretary (Information and Tourism) Avnish Awasthi in Lucknow on Tuesday.

Awasthi said that Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath would formally inaugurate the Kumbh on January 10 by opening the gates of Akshayvat and unveiling the statue of Goddess Saraswati

along with other government-run camps and other facilities.

Awasthi said President Kovind would be visiting Kumbh on January 17 while vice-president Venkaiah Naidu would also visit Sangam, though his date has not been finalised.

The top official said that the CM would inaugurate several religious and cultural camps at Kumbh on Thursday next and would address a media conference.

"During his visit, the CM will visit several places in Kumbh Mela area, including camps of saints and release a

coffee table book on Kumbh and open the media centre," he said. The CM will also review the ongoing preparations.

Claiming that the government has made elaborate arrangements for Kumbh Mela, which is double in comparison to 2013 Kumbh, Awasthi said that the total area of the mela had been doubled to 3,200 hectares from around 1,500 hectares while funds invested this time was ₹4,300 crore while it was ₹1,200 crore last time.

"We have constructed around 250 kilometres of

roads in the mela area while, for the first time, a tent city has been erected for pilgrims with basic facilities like toilets, changing room near bathing ghats," he said.

Without projecting any estimated number of pilgrims likely to visit the Kumbh starting from Makarsankranti on January 15 for the next 45 days, Awasthi said that in 2013, around 120 million people visited the mela and this time too the number was likely to go up as the government had invited people from across the country to take part in the mega event.

Modi to inaugurate clean water project for Agra

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ LUCKNOW

The much-awaited Gangajal project aimed at providing clean water to Taj city Agra will see the light of the day on Wednesday when Prime Minister Narendra Modi will inaugurate the project during his short visit to the city.

During his visit, the PM will

also lay the foundation stone for Integrated Command and Control Centre for Agra Smart City, upgradation of SN Medical College and other projects.

The Gangajal programme has a project cost of ₹2,880 crore and it will provide Agra with better and more assured water supply. It will benefit both residents of the city as well as tourists.

Upgradation of SN Medical College in Agra will be done at the cost of Rs 200 crore, which also includes the creation of a 100-bed maternity wing in the women's hospital. This will help provide better health and maternity care for the weaker sections of the society.

Integrated Command and Control Centre for Agra Smart City will be created at the cost of Rs 285 crore and will help develop Agra as a modern world class Smart City, befitting its stature as a premium tourist destination. The Prime Minister will

also address a public gathering at Kothi Meena Bazaar in the city during his two-hour stay. This will be the Prime Minister's second visit to Agra.

During his earlier visit on November 20, 2016, Modi had launched PM Awas Yojana (Gramin). Under this scheme, 65 lakh houses have been constructed till date, including 9.2 lakh in Uttar Pradesh. He launched rail infrastructure and services specific in the region.

Governor Ram Naik, Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath, along with several state ministers, will be present at the PM's programme on Wednesday.

Elaborate security has been put in place for the VIP visit with the rally ground being turned into a virtual fortress.

As per the schedule, Modi will reach Kheria airport by a special IAF aircraft at 3.15 pm on Wednesday where he will be welcomed by the Governor and the Chief Minister.

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गरिमामयी उपस्थिति

राम नाईक

राज्यपाल, उत्तर प्रदेश

योगी आदित्यनाथ

मुख्यमंत्री, उत्तर प्रदेश

डॉ. दिनेश शर्मा

उप मुख्यमंत्री, उत्तर प्रदेश

सुरेश कुमार खन्ना

मंत्री, नगर विकास, उत्तर प्रदेश

डॉ. अनिल जैन

सांसद, राज्यसभा

प्रो. राम शंकर कठेरिया

सांसद, आगरा

चौधरी बाबूलाल

सांसद, फतेहपुर सीकरी

राम प्रताप सिंह

विधायक, एत्मादपुर

डॉ. गिर्राज सिंह धर्मेश

विधायक, आगरा कैंट

योगेन्द्र उपाध्याय

विधायक, आगरा दक्षिण

जगन प्रसाद गर्ग

विधायक, आगरा उत्तर

हेमलता दिवाकर

विधायक, आगरा ग्रामीण

चौ. उदयभान सिंह

विधायक, फतेहपुर सीकरी

महेश कुमार गोयल

विधायक, खैरागढ़

जीतेन्द्र वर्मा

विधायक, फतेहाबाद

रानी पक्षालिका सिंह

विधायक, बाह

दिनांक: 09.01.2019 | समय: अपराह्न 3:00 बजे | स्थान: कोठी मीना बाजार मैदान, आगरा

लोकार्पण की जाने वाली परियोजनाएं

- आगरा जल सम्पूर्ति (गंगाजल परियोजना)।
- महिला चिकित्सालय आगरा में 100 शैया मैटरनिटी विंग का निर्माण।
- आगरा नगर सीवर गृह संयोजन योजना (पार्ट-11)।
- एत्मादपुर से अहारन मार्ग के रेल सम्पार संख्या 78सी पर उपरिगामी सेतु।
- राजकीय पॉलीटेक्निक, शमशाबाद।
- अतिरिक्त फल एवं सब्जी मण्डी स्थल बरौली अहीर।
- पुलिस लाइन में 200 व्यक्तियों की क्षमता वाली बहुमंजिला बैरक का निर्माण।
- बाईपुर-सिकन्दरा आगरा में पशु चिकित्सा पॉलीक्लीनिक की स्थापना।
- सामुदायिक स्वास्थ्य केन्द्र अछनेरा।
- सामुदायिक स्वास्थ्य केन्द्र खन्दौली।
- तहसील बाह आगरा में अनावासीय भवनों का निर्माण।
- एस.एन. मेडिकल कॉलेज, आगरा में प्री फ़ैब्रीकेटेड बायोसेफ्टी क्लास (बी.एस.एल.-3)।
- केन्द्रीय कारागार आगरा में 120 बन्दी क्षमता की 02 नग बैरक (सर्किलवाल सहित) का निर्माण कार्य।
- क्षेत्रीय जन विश्लेषण प्रयोगशाला।
- एस.एन. मेडिकल कॉलेज, आगरा में सिमुलेटर (इमेजिन) की स्थापना।
- जिला कारागार आगरा में श्रेणी-2 के 16 नग आवासों का निर्माण।

शिलान्यास की जाने वाली परियोजनाएं

- सिविल एन्वलेव का निर्माण।
- एकीकृत कमाण्ड एवं नियंत्रण केन्द्र का निर्माण।
- प्रधानमंत्री स्वास्थ्य सुरक्षा योजना (फेज-4) के अन्तर्गत एस.एन. मेडिकल कॉलेज, आगरा का उच्चीकरण।
- रक्षा गलियारे का निर्माण।
- पूर्वी ताज नाले का जीर्णोद्धार।
- अरनौटा पिनाहट मार्ग के किमी-1 से 6 तक मार्ग का चौड़ीकरण एवं सुदृढीकरण।
- बाह ऊदी मार्ग के किमी-6 (400) से किमी-12 तक मार्ग का चौड़ीकरण एवं सुदृढीकरण।
- हेलीपोर्ट का निर्माण।
- पचगाई खेडा पेजयजल योजना।
- स्वचलित शौचालय का निर्माण।
- स्वास्थ्य केन्द्रों के विकास का कार्य।
- आश्रम पद्धति विद्यालय-इटौरा में अतिरिक्त आवासों का निर्माण।
- चौराहों का सुधार एवं सौन्दर्यीकरण।
- खैरागढ़-सैंया मार्ग (एम.डी.आर.-127) के किमी-28 से नगला बर व नगला बंजारा होते हुए नगला जंगजीत मार्ग का नव निर्माण कार्य (स्वीकृत लम्बाई-3.400 किमी)।
- माइक्रो रिकल विकास केन्द्रों का विकास कार्य।

Azam demands 5 pc quota for Muslims

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ LUCKNOW

Samajwadi Party leader Azam Khan on Tuesday demanded 5 per cent quota for Muslims out of the 10 per cent for economically weaker upper castes as proposed by the Central government.

"Muslims should get 5 per cent quota of the proposed 10 per cent reservation proposed by the Centre. Muslims are most deserving for being granted reservation in government jobs and educational institutions. Upper castes who are now being given reservation are neither economically nor socially backward. While Muslims face backwardness at three levels - social, economic and educational," said Khan in Rampur.

The SP leader said that deprivation facing Muslims were the same as faced by



Dalit communities and hence the community should be given reservation. "I am demanding this not only from the present Modi government but also from future governments," said Khan. "We had earlier demanded that Muslims be brought in the category of Dalits so that they can also get benefits. However, that could not happen due to political reasons. Reservation for Muslims was

also recommended by Sachar Commission a decade ago and the committee was appointed by Parliament," said Azam Khan. Earlier, speaking on the proposed reservation for economically weaker upper castes, Samajwadi Party spokesperson had termed the move as one intended to 'fool' people and pointed out that the BJP was yet to deliver on its past promises.

As the enhancement of quota would take the overall quantum of reservation in the state to over 50 per cent, Khan urged the Centre to include Constitution Amendment Quota Bill into 9th Schedule of the Constitution as was done in the case of Quota Bill of Tamil Nadu which provided 69 per cent reservation for OBCs, exceeding the 50 per cent cap on quota fixed by the Supreme Court.

Spread greater awareness about CHD amongst women: Expert

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ LUCKNOW

There is a need to spread greater awareness about the coronary heart disease (CHD) amongst women because of the growing incidences of obesity, diabetes, inactivity and because of the factor of increasing pollution. This was stated by head of the Cardiac Surgery department, SGPGL, Dr Nirmal Gupta. Talking to *The Pioneer*, he said there were many misconceptions which the people had regarding this disease, its symptoms and its treatment.

He said that it was a myth that cardiac disease happened only in the middle-aged group because it could occur in the younger age group also. He said that symptoms that the chest pain was the only indicator was not true because the pain could occur in the throat, the back and the upper part of the stomach also which is normally ignored for being gastric



pain. "In the case of chest pain, a pain towards the left side was the best indicator for coronary disease," he added.

He admitted that in females the coronary disease could have more fatal consequences. "The male members should not ignore if any woman in their house is unusually tired, unusually irritated, in acute depression and having bouts of nausea. Men generally brush aside these complaints by saying that the woman is making excuses to avoid working which is not

correct and an imminent check-up is required," he said. The doctor said that when a woman was showing such symptoms to start with she should be given a tablet of aspirin or aspirin and then brought to the doctor for a proper check-up.

Dr Gupta said that one big myth was that if the women were having menstruation then they will not have heart attacks because women in the age group of 25-30 years could suffer from SCAD (Spontaneous Coronary Artery Dissection).

The doctor said that it was also important to know that diabetics should not go in for an angioplasty.

He further pointed out, "It was also important for the patient to know that diagnosis of the coronary heart disease did not mean that one has to go in for angioplasty. One can also lead a healthy life with the help of controlled life style, proper medication and check-ups," he added.

Regarding obesity, he said that it was important for the women to follow the stomach-height ratio and endeavour to reduce their weight. He admitted that the number of patients who were largely brought to the cardiac hospitals were men. "It could be that women having coronary heart disease are not brought for check-ups to the doctors. "There is a need for greater awareness among women so that they can be brought for check-ups to the hospital," he added.

Dist admn gears up for Republic Day celebrations

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ LUCKNOW

The district administration is gearing up for Republic Day celebrations in the state capital. District Magistrate Kaushal Raj Sharma held a meeting with senior officials regarding the preparations on Tuesday.

A grand parade will be organised in front of Vidhan Bhawan which will witness the presence of Governor Ram Naik and Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath. The DM issued directions to the officials to ensure coordination for the preparations. He said people should be informed in advance about route diversions. "We have received 28 applications from the school students and groups for participation in the parade and they have time till January 9 to submit their applications for participation to the DIOS. The teams selected will be practising for the parade between January 12 and 21 at Reserve Police Lines," he said. The first rehearsal will take place on January 22 and the first full dress rehearsal on January 24 in front of Vidhan Bhawan.

4 held for theft

Lucknow (PNS): The Ashiyana police on Tuesday arrested four persons allegedly involved in several theft cases. Those arrested were identified as Ravi of Ashiyana, Vishal Tharu of Krishna Nagar, Mohammed Isha of PGI and Vicky Kashyap of PGI. The team recovered Rs 11,500 in cash, a stolen gas cylinder and several other household items. The police said the gang was active in Ashiyana and neighbouring localities.

IIT aspirants find papers easy to moderate

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ LUCKNOW

The JEE Main-2019 for BArch was conducted by the National Testing Agency on Tuesday at different centres in the city. Students who appeared in the examinations said that there were no changes in the pattern of Paper-2 of JEE (Main) when compared to the previous years. "The paper had three parts wherein Part-I was the Mathematics section with 30 questions, Part-II the Aptitude Section with 50 questions marking scheme and PART-III the Drawing section with three questions. All the questions in Part-I and Part-II were of multiple choice with a single correct answer objective type, informed an IIT aspirant while giving his feedback.

On the difficulty levels of the paper, he said, "Mathematics ranged from the easy to moderate level and some ques-

tions were repeated from the question papers of previous years. The aptitude test was easy. Drawing ranged from easy to moderate level as per the creativity levels of those appearing for the examination. Overall the paper ranged from easy to moderate level. No errors could be located."

NK Dubey from one of the well-known coaching institutes of the city said that in the drawing section the first question had three parts and students had to attempt any one. "This question was of 30 marks. The first question was to design the curtain of a small girl's room. The second question was to sketch your favourite film actor. The third was to sketch a scene of people sitting around a bonfire. In the second question of 20 marks a square design was given and the students had to draw it by drawing the replica to double its



size. In the third question of 20 marks the students had to draw a square with random designs using curved lines and colours," he said.

He further said that in the aptitude section there were questions on identifying the top view, front view of three-dimensional objects, shapes and iden-

tifying mirror images. There were 10 to 15 questions on general knowledge like full form of NASA, ISRO and also location of places with architectural importance.

Students said that they were not allowed to carry anything inside the examination hall except their Admit and Aadhaar cards. Those having proper medical prescriptions were allowed water bottles. Metal detectors were used at the entry gate and no bags or wrist-watches were allowed inside.

The reporting time for students was 7:30 am. However, the examination started at 9:30 am. Students reported that entry started at 8:15 am and they waited since 7 am. Ball point pens were given inside the examination hall and a wall clock was provided there. The students left the examination hall at 12:30 pm.



e-rickshaw drivers taking out a protest march to press against "harassment" by district administration and traffic officials, in Lucknow on Tuesday

Residents to help LDA make Gomti Nagar 'smart colony'

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ LUCKNOW

A high-power committee of Gomti Nagar residents has been set up to give suggestions to the Lucknow Development Authority (LDA) administration for improvement in the existing conditions so that it can become a smart residential colony. It is an initiative taken by LDA Vice-Chairman PN Singh to engage the residents to work with the development authority and help make Gomti Nagar a smart residential colony where they can breathe fresh air in eco-friendly surroundings.

Singh said time had come when the public participation was a must to attain the best possible results. He said it was not possible for the development authority to bring changes in Gomti Nagar as it was a gigantic task.

As many as 30 members have been inducted into the committee which will come into existence after it is registered with the Registrar Societies and all legal formalities are completed within a fortnight. It will then be an authorised body of residents that can take up their problems with the LDA administration officials.

President of Greenwood Apartment in Gomti Nagar has been inducted in the committee. He said he felt the main cause of pollution was traffic congestion and sincere effort should be made to improve the situation by conducting an in-depth study to find out solutions.

Most of its members like Vinita Singh and VN Mishra flayed groups of influential people who have blocked the connecting road by erecting big

gates for their security, causing inconvenience to people forced to take longer routes to reach their respective destinations.

As per rules, no one is authorised to block a road for personal use as it is meant for public use. But the roads are blocked at least at 33 places in different areas. Representatives of different Resident Welfare Associations (RWAs) have been made members of the committee as they are aware of the ground realities. Office-bearers of the committee will be elected when it becomes functional. The LDA Vice-Chairman said the committee would achieve success if it worked in true spirit. Presently, there are few smart colonies in cities such as Chandigarh, Hyderabad, Pune and Begaluru. If Gomti Nagar transforms into a smart colony, it would be the first in UP.

SC REINSTATES...

The Bench said all authorities should be kept away from "intermingling or interfering" in the functioning of the CBI director. Dealing with the situation where authorities may require to take action against CBI director, the Bench said public interest must be writ large against the backdrop of the necessity and such a "compelling necessity can only be tested by the opinion of the committee". The court also noted that the relevant law did not have any provision with regard to interim suspension or removal of the CBI director and made clear that any such decision has to be taken after taking consent of the high-powered selection panel.

The apex court noted that the CBI has grown over the years in its role, power and importance and today it has become the premier investigative and prosecution agency of the country. "The high stature and the pre-eminent position that the institution has acquired is largely on account of a strong perception of the necessity of having such a premier agency," it said.

UNANIMOUS...

Quoting the Supreme Court judgment, he said, "We are also of the opinion that the rule of 50 per cent applies only to reservation in favour of backward classes made under Article 16(4)." Attempts were made earlier too by Governments at the Centre and States in this regard but failed because they were done either through common statutory provisions or notifications, he said. Jaitley expressed hope that the Bill will pass the test of the basic structure of the Constitution as it does not seek to alter that. Clarifying the point that the law needs ratification of 50 per cent States, he said, "if you read Article 368 part III, amendment to fundamental rights does not require the approval of States." Citing example of amendment to Article 15 (5) with regard to promotion, he said, it was only done through Parliament approval. He said the Bill seeks to amend the Constitution by introducing provisions for reservation for economically weaker sections, he said, adding that it presently mentions only social and educational backwardness as the criteria for quota.

"We have to give equality of opportunity to citizens on caste basis and economic basis... Just as equal cannot be treated unequally. Unequally cannot be treated equally," he said. Quoting from the Congress manifesto, which called for such a quota, he asked it to "walk its talk" by supporting the Bill, describing it as

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

a test for the Opposition party. With Opposition members using 'jumla' jibe, Jaitley hit back saying if the mention of a similar quota for the general category in their manifestos was a jumla as well.

Taking a jibe at Opposition parties for their protests, he said if they are supporting the Bill, they should be wholehearted and not grudgingly doing it. Describing the reservation Bill as political gimmick, Opposition parties led by the Congress expressed apprehension that the law empowering 10 per cent reservation to the upper caste may not stand judicial scrutiny. Citing then PV Narasimha Rao's Government effort to bring in 10 per cent reservation on the basis of economic criteria, KV Thomas (Congress) said it was struck down by the Supreme Court. This legislation has been made in haste and has so many lacunas, he said, adding, it should be sent to Joint Parliamentary Committee for examination. "It was only yesterday that Union Cabinet approved the Constitution Amendment for 10 per cent quota for poor under general category on economic basis and was introduced in Parliament today. It raises question on the sincerity of the Government," he said.

It seems to be political 'jumla' to win election as newspapers have written today, he added. Participating in the debate, M Thambidurai (AIADMK) said reservation is not on economic backwardness but on social backwardness. He pointed out that Government has many schemes for upliftment of economically poor sections of the society and did that mean that these schemes have failed. Sudip Bandyopadhyay (TMC) said that the Bill was not about jobs but about misleading the youth. The Bill, he said, was about promising and not delivering and was a fake dream that will never become a reality. Anandra Adsul (Shiv Sena) also rendered his support to the Bill and said it was better late than never.

Stating that the Bill was moved as a "special agenda", B Mahtab (BJD) said that the House was bereft of moving any amendment to the Bill. Jitendra Choudhury (CPM) said that the Government wants to provide 10 per cent reservation to general category but where are the jobs. To make this Bill more comprehensive, the Bill should be referred to the Joint Parliamentary Committee or Standing Committee, he added.

Questioning the urgency of Bill, Supriya Sule (NCP) said if the Government had been sincere, this Bill would not have come on the last day of the last session.

She also said that one of the Cabinet Minister's expressed apprehension that the law may not get approval from the Supreme Court. She was referring to a remark made by Ramvilas Paswan who said the Government should ensure that it should not get into a legal tangle.

Dushyant Chautala (INLD) also said the legislation would be struck down by the Supreme Court. While supporting the Bill, Dharmendra Yadav (SP) said that upper caste also knows the intent of the Government as it is just an election gimmick. Jaiprakash Narayan Yadav (RJD) said the way the Bill has been brought in is nothing less than deceit for the upper caste. Nishkant Dubey (BJP) said the Modi Government has taken various steps to promote inclusive development of society.

CITIZENSHIP BILL...

"They have no place to go to, except India," he said, adding several leaders including first Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru were in favour of giving shelter to persecuted minorities in the neighbouring countries. Seeking to assuage the concerns in the North-East, which saw an 11-hour bandh on Tuesday against the legislation, Singh said the proposed law will not be confined to Assam alone. "The burden of those persecuted migrants will be shared by the whole country. Assam alone should not have to bear the entire burden. Government of India is committed to give all help to the State Government and people of Assam," he said. The BJP appeared to have been isolated over the issue as the BJP broke up with the saffron party while the NDA allies, the Shiv Sena and the JD(U), have opposed this legislation. Mizoram and Meghalaya Governments have opposed the Bill by adopting resolution against it in their respective Cabinet meetings.

The Home Minister said the Union Cabinet has also approved grant of ST status to six communities of Assam namely Tai Ahom, Koch Rajbongshi, Chutia, Tea Tribes, Moran and Matak. The Union Cabinet's decision can be seen as a balancing act by the Central Government to strong opposition to the Bill in Assam. "At the same time, full safeguards will be provided to protect the interests, rights and privileges of existing Scheduled Tribes of Assam. "A separate Bill will be brought to grant ST status to Bodo

Kacharis in Hill districts of Assam and Karbis in the rest of Assam. Sixth Schedule of the Constitution is also proposed to be amended to strengthen the Autonomous District Councils," Rajnath said. The Home Minister said the migrants -- Hindus, Jains, Christians, Sikhs, Buddhists and Parsis -- were earlier given protection against legal action in 2015 and 2016. "Long-term visa provision was made for them. The proposed amendment will make these persecuted migrants eligible to apply for citizenship," he said.

VERMA LEAVE...

"The Government took this decision to protect the integrity of the CBI... Government took the action of sending two senior officers of CBI on leave on CVC's recommendation," he said, referring to the decision to send Verma and CBI Special Director Rakesh Asthana on leave. The decision by the government on the issue was completely legal as the two officers in question were at loggerheads, he said.

"This action taken was perfectly bonafide as there were cross-allegations made by both the officers, and in accordance with recommendations of the CVC. The government felt that in the larger interest of fair and impartial investigation and credibility of CBI, the two officers must recuse themselves," the finance minister said. He said the court has referred the matter to the committee to decide on the issue within one week.

"The court apparently has strengthened the immunity given to the CBI director in the larger interest of the fair and impartial working of the CBI. At the same time, the court has devised an accountability mechanism. The directions of the court will obviously be complied with," he said.

Jaitley also pointed out that the government's decision on the issue was not against any particular individual.

"The government had accepted the CVC recommendations with full honesty and today a reinterpretation on the matter has been given by the SC today and we will take action according to the order," he said, adding that the CVC was an independent body and submitted its recommendations to the SC. Verma had challenged the government's October 23 order sending him on forced leave and appointing an interim chief, arguing that the CBI chief has a fixed two-year term and can be removed only by the high-powered committee. "The CVC had exercised its

power under the power of superintendence. We've not read the judgement of the SC, but it could be a view that the court has taken. That if superintendence results in the chief relinquishing his powers temporarily then the jurisdiction of the committee comes into play. "Therefore, the court has referred the matter to that committee to decide on that issue within one week. And in accordance with the directions of the court it will be complied with and the government will act in the same manner. The government is not biased," Jaitley said.

The Supreme Court reinstated Verma, setting aside the Centre's decision to divest him of his powers, but restrained him from taking any major policy decision till the CVC probe into corruption charges against him is over. The apex court said any further decision against Verma who retires on January 31, would be taken by the high-powered committee which selects and appoints the CBI director.

SUPERFAST T-18...

Chennai. "It is called aerodynamically profiled nose and its helps in reducing the resistance of air when a train is in movement. This way the train gets a desired speed," he said. "The name - Train 18 - was coined in view of the project which we had to complete by 2018. We took the project in April 2017 and planned to complete it within 20 months. Coincidentally, we completed the task in 18 months flat," he said.

Mani said it was a great challenge when the project got a go ahead from the Railway ministry. "It is purely a train set on the tracks. The coaches have been designed in a way that they give much comfort to the passengers. The RDSO had recently conducted a trial and declared it fit for run," he said.

Mani pointed out that the ICF had plans to manufacture as many as 10 train sets akin to the first T-18 by 2020. Mani once studied at Colvin Taluquards' College in Mahanagar. He later served in RDSO as director of Power Motive between 1991 and 2000 and as an executive director, Power Motive, between 2007 and 2010. He also served in the capacity of ADMR, Secunderabad, and DRM, Chennai, before joining as GM, ICF, Chennai.

"For me, RDSO is an institution which carves the best out of you. Whatever I did I learnt it was from the RDSO," Mani said crediting his success to the premier rail design organisation.

Workshop on H1N1 held at CMO office

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ LUCKNOW

You should not keep your hands on your mouth while sneezing or coughing because viruses will be transferred to others if you shake hands with them. This was stated by Dr BP Singh while speaking at a workshop on management of swine flu at CMO office on Tuesday.

He said the best method was to cover the mouth with cloth. He said swine flu was like any other flu in which the symptoms ranged from body ache, headache, throat pain, fever and it spread through droplet infection. "The germs spread through sneezing and coughing and remain active where they fall for the next 8-10 hours. On an average, a patient spreads these germs from one day before the fever to another seven days. The symptoms appear within the next one to four days on whom these germs fall," he explained.

He said that flu posed more danger to pregnant women, children, senior citizens, people suffering from diabetes, chest problems and HIV.

CITYBRIEFS



METRO TRIALS FROM CHARBAGH TO MUNSHIPULIA

The signalling and integrated trials of Lucknow Metro train will take place from Charbagh to Munshipulia on Wednesday. LMRC managing director Kumar Keshav said that the train would start from Charbagh station after a puja at 7.30 am. "The train will move through the balance section and then return to the Charbagh station. The trials will be carried out for three days and the train will move slowly and necessary data will be recorded and updated in the software," he said. Earlier, Keshav reviewed Chaudhary Charan Singh station, which is the largest in the underground section. This station is also the starting point of the 23-km red line route. The LMRC MD said after the overall completion of civil work, finishing of the station was in last stage.

STUDENTS ADMIRE CULTURAL HERITAGE

Students of 14 countries participating in a month-long international children's camp, hosted by City Montessori School, went on a sightseeing tour of Lucknow on Tuesday and looked in awe of the cultural heritage. The children visited Bada Imambara and Regional Science Centre among other places.



Delayed agri projects cost Govt ₹1.2L cr

Around 100 irrigation-related projects pending for about two decades have cost Govt exchequer heavily

RAJESH KUMAR ■ NEW DELHI

As many as 100 irrigation related projects pending for about two decades now due to several issues, including political, have cost the Government exchequer a mind-boggling ₹1,20,772.05 crore. These projects include some of the famous and significant ones like Sardar Sarovar in Gujarat, Indira Sagar Polavaram project in Andhra Pradesh, Gosikhand irrigation project in Maharashtra, Shahipur Kandi dam in Punjab, Saryu Nahar Pariyojna in Uttar Pradesh, Teesta Barrage in West Bengal, Dhansiri project in Assam, Kosi Barrage in Bihar, Gumani Barrage in Jharkhand and Rukura Indira Irrigation project in Odisha.

A performance audit of the Accelerated Irrigation

Benefit Programme (AIBP) by the Comptroller and Auditor General of India (CAG) revealed several deficiencies in the planning, implementation and monitoring of the scheme. The report was tabled in Parliament on Tuesday.

The performance audit revealed that the total cost overrun in 84 major and medium irrigation projects, including 16 completed and 68 ongoing projects was ₹1,20,772.05 crore which was 295 per cent of their original cost.

According to performance audit, the cost of Sardar Sarovar project was revised from ₹39,240.45 crore in May 2010 to ₹54,772.94 crore with stipulated completion by March 2020. This led to an increase in project cost by ₹15,532.49 crore (40 per cent) of which increase of ₹5,722.29 crore alone was



These projects include — Sardar Sarovar in Gujarat, Indira Sagar Polavaram project in Andhra Pradesh, Gosikhand irrigation project in Maharashtra, Shahipur Kandi dam in Punjab, Saryu Nahar Pariyojna in Uttar Pradesh, Teesta Barrage in West Bengal, Dhansiri project in Assam, Kosi Barrage in Bihar, Gumani Barrage in Jharkhand and Rukura Indira Irrigation project in Odisha

attributable to price escalation and ₹6,384.70 crore was due to change in design and inclusion of additional requirements.

The cost Krishna Koyana LIS of Maharashtra was revised at 2013-14 price level from ₹2,224.76 crore to ₹4,959.91 crore. This led to an increase in project cost by ₹2,735.15 crore (122 per cent) of which ₹244.64 crore alone was attributable to price escalation, ₹282.77 crore was due to other causes and ₹41.51 crore was due to change in design.

The cost of Chokha Rao project in Telangana was revised

from ₹6,016 crore to ₹13,445.44 crore in 2017. This led to an increase in project cost by ₹7,429.44 crore (123 per cent) due to changes in the scope of work. The cost of Indiramma flood canal in Telangana was revised from ₹1,331.30 crore to ₹5,940.09 crore in 2016 due to change in Standard Schedule of Rates, deviation in the project execution and changes in the scope of work.

Velligallu of Andhra Pradesh, Lower Wardha, Wang and Krishna Koyana LIS of Maharashtra were delayed ranging from four to 25 years

in approval of Detailed Projects Reports. These projects were finally approved for a total amount of ₹7,498.77 crore. The canal length of 3,420 metre of Kachnari Diversion scheme of Madhya Pradesh could not be constructed due to non-availability of actual command area (CCA of 220 ha) on site during execution. This showed that the DPR had not correctly assessed the availability of command area.

The work of concrete lining of the Madhya Ganga Canal project sanctioned in July 2007 at a cost of ₹117.87 crore was

stopped after completion of work up to 31.55 km out of 66.20 km on the pretext of affecting the groundwater recharge. "This showed that the requirement and feasibility of providing concrete lining had not been adequately analysed at the DPR stage leading to avoidable expenditure on bed lining," it said.

Of the 73 delayed MI schemes, 40 minor projects were completed after delays ranging from two months to 12 years and 33 were ongoing with time overrun ranging from one month to five years.

As per audit report, ₹179 crore incurred on repairs and maintenance of the Sardar Sarovar Canal network was booked by the project authorities during April 2010 to March 2017 under AIBP.

The CAG performance audit notes that the projects have been languishing due to subject mis-governance apart from land acquisition issues, the projects has hit inter-state coordination, financial, rehabilitation and resettlement walls.

Opp, Govt lock horns over RS Session extension



A view of the Rajya Sabha Session on Tuesday

PTI

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Opposition and Government on Tuesday locked horns over the decision of the latter to extend the functioning of the Rajya Sabha by a day to facilitate the passage of the 10 per cent reservation earmarked for the economically backward upper castes.

While the Centre claimed that it is the authority of the Government and the Chairman of the House to extend the sittings, the Opposition insisted that they should have been consulted before making the announcement.

Both sides during the day held several rounds of meetings amid setting a record sort of by six adjournments of the Upper House to resolve the issue but ended with Deputy Chairman Hariwansh adjourning to meet on Wednesday prompting the Opposition members to sit in protest in the House even after adjournment of the day.

Opposition parties led by Leader of Opposition Ghulam Nabi Azad also held a protest in front of the Mahatma Gandhi statue late evening while the Lok Sabha continued to discuss and debate the proposed Quota Bill.

Leaders of Opposition parties in the Rajya Sabha and the Leader of the House discussed the extension of the ongoing Winter Session by one more day with Chairman M Venkaiah Naidu who in turn discussed the issue with the Leader of the House and

Finance Minister Arun Jaitley.

Jaitley asserted that it was the prerogative of the Government to call, advance, extend Session of the Parliament or of either of the two Houses. He referred to Rule 12 of the Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business in the Council of States (Rajya Sabha) which states "The Council shall sit on such dates as the Chairman, having regard to the state of business of the Council, may from time to time direct."

During the discussion with the Opposition leaders, Minister of State for Parliamentary Affairs Vijay Goel pointed out to the precedents in 2011 and 2013 when the Session of the House was extended similarly towards the end of the Session.

Amid the ruckus, Health Minister JP Nadda moved The Indian Medical Council (Amendment) Bill, 2018, for consideration and passage after T Subbarami Reddy could not move the statutory resolution disapproving the Companies (Amendment) Ordinance. This move was also protested Jairam Ramesh and TMC Derek O'Brien even reached the podium and sought to know how this matter could be taken when House was not in order.

The House also witnessed unruly scenes, with almost entire Opposition on its feet over alleged misuse of CBI and demand for discussion on the issue under rule 267 suspending the listed business.

INSHORT

INDIA TO US: WITHDRAW OR MODIFY TRAVEL ADVISORY

New Delhi: The Government has urged the US to "withdraw or modify" its advisory against travelling in India, which was issued after Zika cases were reported in Rajasthan and Madhya Pradesh, saying the outbreak has subsided.

CINEMATOGRAPH ACT: I&B MIN PROPOSES CHANGES

New Delhi: The Information & Broadcasting Ministry has proposed changes in the Cinematograph Act to impose strict penalties to combat film piracy and sought comments from people on a draft bill. In order to check film piracy, particularly release of pirated version of films on the internet which causes huge losses to the film industry and government exchequer, the I&B ministry intends to have an enabling provision in the Cinematograph Act, 1952, a statement said.

DGP'S APPOINTMENT: SC TO HEAR PLEAS ON JAN 15

New Delhi: The Supreme Court said it will hear on January 15, petitions of various State Governments seeking to implement local laws regarding selection and appointment of Director General of Police. The top court said it will hear the pleas of Bihar, Punjab and Haryana along with the petitions filed by West Bengal and Kerala.

ASSAULT ON BUSINESSMAN BY EX-MP: SC TAKES NOTE

New Delhi: The Supreme Court took note of alleged incident of former MP Atiq Ahmed kidnapping a businessman in a jail in UP and assaulting and forcing him to transfer his business.

No one can save Modi from Rafale probe, says Rahul

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Congress president Rahul Gandhi on Tuesday said no one can save Prime Minister Narendra Modi from Rafale investigation as the Supreme Court has reinstated the CBI chief who was unceremoniously removed by the Modi Government.

Speaking to media outside Parliament, Rahul Gandhi said the CBI chief was "ousted" at 1 am as he was about to begin an investigation into the Rafale jet agreement and Prime Minister Modi and his Government cannot run away from a probe into the deal.

He said the entire nation will know "without a shadow of doubt" that he has taken ₹30,000 crore of people's money and given it to his "friend" Anil Ambani, Rahul Gandhi said on his first reaction to the Supreme Court order for CBI Director Alok Verma.

"The CBI chief was ousted at 1 am in the night because he was about to begin a probe into the Rafale deal. The CBI chief has been reinstated and we have got some relief. Now let's see what happens. They cannot run away from Rafale, it is impossible. Modi ji ran away from a debate. He should have discussed with us the

Rafale issue, in the people's court. No one can save them from Rafale, as Rafale is the truth. No one can run away from the truth," he said.

Shortly after Verma was sent on leave late in October, Rahul had accused Modi of allegedly removing him in an attempt to stop the officer from investigating the Rafale "scam". The party has often pressed the charge against the Government since. It had also said that divesting Verma of his statutory powers abruptly — amid a feud with his deputy Rakesh Asthana — was illegal.

The Congress party has been targeting Modi on the deal alleging the price of each Rafale aircraft has sharply increased from ₹526 crore, negotiated by the previous UPA Government, to ₹1,600 crore and that the contract will help Anil Ambani get ₹30,000 crore benefit through offset contract. Ambani too has rejected the charges.



Modi care: Guidelines for pvt investments for opening new hospitals in cities issued

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Almost four months after it launched the Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana (PMJAY) providing hospitalisation cover of up to ₹5 lakh per family per year from poor strata, the Centre has now issued broad guidelines for private investments in setting up of hospitals in Tier 2 and Tier 3 cities for smooth functioning of the scheme.

The PMJAY was launched from September 23, 2018, for providing hospitalisation cover of up to ₹5 lakh per family per year to over 10 crore poor and the deprived families (approx. 50 crore people) in the empanelled hospitals throughout the country.

So far 33 States/UTs have signed MOU for implementing



PMJAY out of which 29 have already launched the scheme.

"The objective of the broad guidelines is to improve the supply of healthcare services in the underserved areas to ensure maximum utilisation of the benefits under PMJAY and to improve the demand for quality healthcare services at affordable prices to general public," said a senior official from the Union Health Ministry.

As per the guidelines, he said that under model I, a doctor owned hospital can have 30 to 50 beds, under model II is doctor manager partnership-multispecialty (100 beds) while under model III, multispecialty hospi-

tal can have 100 beds or more.

To incentivise private sector, incentives will be provided during land allotment, various clearances will be facilitated with specific timelines among others.

While private sector will have the responsibility to build, design, finance, manage operate and maintain with quality standards, besides taking market risk and provide services at PMJAY rates, the Government will be entrusted the task of ensuring sufficient unencumbered land on lease or through bidding, facilitate various permissions and clearances through special window with timelines, compulsory empanelment of the hospitals for PMJAY and other Government scheme, ensure timely payments for services.

LS consent to DNA Bill

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Lok Sabha on Wednesday passed a Bill that provides for regulation of use and application of Deoxyribonucleic Acid (DNA) technology for establishing the identity of certain categories of persons, including offenders, victims, suspects and undertrials.

The DNA Technology (Use and Application) Regulation Bill, 2018 regulates the use of the technology to establish the identity of persons in respect of criminal matters listed and civil matters such as parentage disputes, emigration or immigration, and transplantation of human organs.

Replying to the debate, Science and Technology Minister Harsh Vardhan said the DNA testing is being done on persons comprising a minuscule per cent of less than one per cent.

On concerns of members on the misuse of the Bill, the Minister said the misuse can happen of anything at any level. Even the blood sample collected by the clinical laboratories has the potential of misuse. Terming it a comprehensive Bill, he said it has taken a long duration of 14-15 years to bring this bill to this stage.

The Bill provides for establishment of a National DNA Data Bank and Regional DNA Data Banks. Every Data Bank will main-

tain the indices including crime scene index, suspects' or undertrials' index and offenders' index. The Bill also provides for seeking consent of the individual when DNA profiling is used in criminal investigations and identifying missing persons. However, consent requirements have not been specified in case of DNA profiling for civil matters. Participating in the debate on the Bill Sanjay Jaiswal (BJP) said that future of the world is on the DNA Technology while Kalyan Banerjee (TMC) was of the view that the Bill was very good for the criminal justice system, civil justice system and more so for the people of the country.

Information Technology Development Agency (I.T.D.A.)
(Department of IT, Government of Uttarakhand)
IT Bhawan, Plot No. IT-07, IT Park, Sahasrabhara Road, Dehradun - 248001
Ph: 0135-2668330, email: dirdta-uk@nic.in

Ref: 1236/ITDA-630/2019 Dated: 08.01.2019
Tender Notice No: 10/ITDA-630/2019 dated 08/01/2019
e-Tender

Selection of Service Provider for Providing Project Management Cell (PMC) for Uttarakhand State Data Centre

RFP (Request for Proposal) is being issued by ITDA, Department of IT, Uttarakhand to the reputed IT companies meeting the qualification criteria, for Selection of Service Provider for Providing Project Management Cell (PMC) for Uttarakhand State Data Centre. The RFP document can be downloaded from www.uitenders.gov.in from 09/01/2019. The tender document fee of Rs 10000/- (Rupees Ten Thousand Only (non-refundable)) through demand draft/Banker's Cheque favouring "Director, ITDA" payable at Dehradun should be submitted along with the Bid. The parties willing to participate in the bidding will be invited to apply through the Electronic Tendering Procedure (e-Tendering) as per the guidelines issued by Government of Uttarakhand available on the above mentioned web site under the link "Bidders Manual Kit". Director ITDA reserves the right to cancel the tender at any point of time, without assigning any reason thereof. **DIRECTOR**



Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu met Congress President Rahul Gandhi at latter's residence in New Delhi and is learnt to have discussed plans of uniting all Opposition parties against the BJP. Naidu also met Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal, NCP's Sharad Pawar and NC leader Abdullah. Ever since the TDP moved out of the NDA, Naidu has been seeking to forge an anti-BJP front

Iran ready to use influence over Taliban to bring peace to Af: Diplomatic sources

New Delhi: In case India wants to use Iran's channels of communication with the Taliban, then Tehran will be open to such a proposition, Iranian diplomatic sources have said, at a time when there was renewed focus on peace and reconciliation process in Afghanistan.

They said though Iran's influence over the Taliban was not comparable to that of Pakistan's, still it would try to use the clout over the terror outfit for bringing peace and stability in the war-torn coun-

try. Major powers like the US and Russia have been reaching out to the Taliban as part of efforts to push the stalled Afghan peace process.

The issue of peace and reconciliation in Afghanistan is likely to figure during talks between External Affairs Minister Sushma Swaraj and her Iranian counterpart Javad Zarif on Wednesday.

In a significant move, India had sent two former diplomats in "non official" capacity to a conference on

Afghan peace process in Moscow in November which was attended by a high-level Taliban delegation.

The conference organised by Russia was attended by representatives of Afghanistan as well as from several other countries, including the US, Pakistan and China.

The Iranian sources said Tehran was ready to use its influence over Taliban on behalf of the Afghan government. If India wants Tehran's channels of communication with the militant outfit, we are

always open to do that, they said. India has been maintaining a policy of not engaging with Taliban and pressing for an Afghan-owned and Afghan-led peace initiative to bring peace and stability in the war-ravaged country. The Iranian sources said a Taliban-dominated Afghanistan will be security challenge to Iran, India, but it will be an existential threat to Pakistan.

Iran is learnt to have conveyed its view to Islamabad about how Taliban can be real threat to its existence. **PTI**

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Tender Form along with detailed specification may be collected from this office on or before 17.01.2019 on payment of Rs. 500/- cash or download our website (www.upcsr.org) with DD of Rs. 500/- in favour of undersigned Filled tender form along with 2% earnest money of quoted value should reach this office on or before 17.01.2019.

Director
U.P. Council of Sugarcane Research
Shahjahanpur

SC paves way for re-opening of Sterlite plant in Tuticorin

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Tuesday paved the way for the re-opening of Vedanta's Sterlite copper plant at Tuticorin, which was at the centre of massive protests over pollution concerns, by refusing to stay the green tribunal order that had set aside the Tamil Nadu Government's decision to close it.

The apex court also stayed the December 21, 2018 decision of the Madurai Bench of Madras High Court which had ordered status quo in respect of re-opening the plant.

The impugned order dated December 21, 2018 passed by the Madurai Bench of the Madras High Court shall remain stayed," a bench comprising Justices RF Nariman and Navin Sinha said.

"The directions that have been passed by the National Green Tribunal, by its judgment dated December 15, 2018, will continue to subsist and will be subject to the ultimate outcome of the appeal," it said. The top court also sought response from Vedanta on the state Government's appeal against the National Green Tribunal (NGT) order to reopen the plant.

The State had moved the top court saying that the NGT had "erroneously" set aside various orders passed by the Tamil Nadu Pollution Control Board (TNPCB) last year with regard to the Sterlite plant. It had said the tribunal had consequentially directed the TNPCB to pass fresh orders of renewal of consent and issued authorisation to handle hazardous substances to the Vedanta Limited.

'Protect zoo birds against contagious viral'

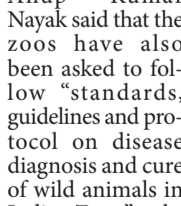
PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Following death of peacocks, chicken and ducks due to avian influenza (H5N1) in Munger and Puri districts in Bihar and Odisha respectively, the Central Zoo Authority (CZA) has alerted all zoos in the country to protect the birds in captivity against the highly contagious viral disease which affects only members of the birds family.

The virus is transmitted mainly through migratory birds. But even these winged beauties are prone to virus threat.

Issuing alert in this regard, CZA member secretary Dr

Anup Kumar Nayak said that the zoos have also been asked to follow "standards, guidelines and protocol on disease diagnosis and cure of wild animals in Indian Zoos," published by the CZA in collaboration with the Indian Veterinary Institute. CZA is autonomous body of the Central Government responsible for oversight of zoos across the States.



The State authorities have also been advised to improve bio-security measures in the zoos to avoid spread of the viral disease among captive

animals.

Patna's Sanjay Gandhi Zoo director Amit Kumar said the zoo will remain closed for public till situation is under control. The zoo was closed after strains of

avian influenza virus were found in six dead peacocks last December. The samples of the second lot of dead birds have been sent to a lab and reports are awaited, he added.

The move aims to minimize the possibility of catching the infection among birds. "The zoo is being thoroughly sanitised. The zoo will be opened for visitors only after

we get the negative reports from the lab where samples of the birds are being sent time to time as per the CZA protocol," said Kumar.

In few parts of Odisha too, bird flu has taken its toll on poultry birds. The State Government has declared areas in Kendrapara district bird flu hit and have vaccinated 35,000 poultry birds. As a precautionary measure, the Naveen Patnaik Government has asked schools and Anganwadi Centres not to provide eggs to children. Similarly, sale of eggs and chicken has been banned in Krishna Prasad block for next few days, said an official from the State Government.

NORTH CENTRAL RAILWAY, ALLAHABAD
No.: Notification No. DRM/C/Agra/Earning Contract/ E-Tendering/2018 Dated: 03.01.2019
Important Notice

All Tenderer are hereby informed that **Earning Contract** like as Catering, Parcel Leasing, Publicity, Parking etc. in Commercial department of Agra division will be processed through **E-tendering**. For which **Digital Signature** is compulsory with Tenderer. Hence all Tenderer are informed to approach **CCA** Authorized agency for making **Digital Signature** and obtain from agency, thereafter Tenderer will registered his name and other details at on line **Internet Explorer-IREPS** Portal.

Sr. Divisional Commercial Manager
North Central Railway, Agra Division

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Quota politics

Unexpected announcement of a 10 per cent reservation for economically weaker sections is not a political masterstroke



The aftermath of the Mandal Commission report recommendations being implemented in India was to transform society in this country, and while it could never reverse the millennia of caste discrimination, it was believed at that time that the correct thing to do is to make India's growth more inclusive. And while that has, to an extent worked, it has like many other solutions to long-festering problems, turned into a case of opening a Pandora's Box of new problems. There is nowadays, for example, a perverse demand by caste leaders, once considered on the upper-end of the

spectrum, to be declared backward so as to take advantage of reservations. Other castes that have benefited from reservations have zealously tried to protect their 'turf' and have actively prevented other castes from getting a piece of the action, whether it is in Government jobs or educational institutions. Also, as evidenced by the demand for quotas by land-owning upper castes such as Jats and Gujjars in a belt near the capital to the Marathas in Maharashtra, upper castes are finding it increasingly difficult to compete in this environment and are being left behind. And this is a delicate balancing act for Governments both at the State and Central level because in large swathes of India, castes still tend to vote *en masse*.

So on the face of it, a reservation for economically weaker sections of society should be a political masterstroke. However, coming so late in the day, the cynic will obviously view it through politically-tinted glasses and believe that this is a way of keeping upper-caste votes within the Bharatiya Janata Party for Narendra Modi, who appears increasingly fretful of the general election coming up in three months. But there are a few issues here, the first is the need to pass a Constitutional amendment. While some caste-based parties might oppose it, smarter members of the Opposition could ensure it gets stalled in Parliament. And then there is the Supreme Court, which has previously ruled that breaching the 50 per cent reservation mark is unconstitutional, save in Tamil Nadu where prior reservations of 69 per cent were grandfathered in. Will the Supreme Court allow this amendment to pass? That is something for the justices to consider, which they almost certainly will have to. And if previous attempts at reservations for upper castes by State Governments is any indication, the shaky foundations of the Bills will be demolished by the highest court of the land.

But then comes the biggest problem of all: Where are the jobs? The Government of India and its public sector units still remain India's largest employer but over the years it is hiring fewer and fewer people and one could rightly think that this move is a cop out for Modi as his Government has failed to create enough jobs over the past few years, in no small part thanks to his own policies such as demonetisation. So all said and done, this is not a done deal as yet and Modi, faced with his facade crumbling, is trying to go all out to ensure a second term despite squandering the immense political capital he had back in 2014. But this could be a case of 'too little, too late.'

Ahom identity

AGP may have stood out as a champion but its real intention is to dent BJP's LS tally



In the end it is all about seizing the pre-poll narrative for the general election and whoever does that better, may just get some customers or force a self-serving discussion. That is why the Asom Gana Parishad (AGP)'s withdrawal of support to the BJP-led Government in Assam is more about finding a politically opportune moment than real dissatisfaction. Yes, the AGP is right in arguing that the new citizenship amendment Bill as proposed by the BJP, granting citizenship to Hindu refugees from across the border till the cutoff year of 2014, is detrimental to

Ahom identity and the right of indigenous people over their land, indeed the wherewithal of its politics. However, it was not that the AGP didn't know that this was coming though, it can be reasonably argued, it found itself in a box in launching a counter campaign. It knew that the ruling Sarbananda Sonowal government would not fall if it withdrew support as it had overwhelming numbers (74 to AGP's 14) and was unsure about its standing as an independent party that had the faith of the people. The panchayat polls of December restored its confidence as did the Assembly election results that got the Congress back in reckoning in some states. But it was when other NDA allies became restive, demanding a pound of flesh or two from a dented BJP, that the AGP decided to get into the ring. Sensing the national sentiment at the moment, the AGP has realised that while the state government could run without it, it could threaten the BJP's winning prospects in the Lok Sabha with its pullout. The BJP not exactly riding the wave pre-2014, may not get the monolithic heartland verdict and would need every extra seat from the Northeast, which it has been nurturing and betting on. In about four seats, the BJP needs the AGP to effect a swing or defeat an entrenched Congress vote. Pundits predict if the Congress woos AGP and other parties to form a state level alliance and ensures a convergence of vote shares, then they could halt the BJP juggernaut in the general election and push its tally back from the seven seats it won in 2014.

The AGP's main contention is a refugee influx, irrespective of religion, would change the demographic contours of the border districts that would forever be a prey base for the larger national parties and ensure the local parties are squeezed out. The BJP is clearly following a me-too model that has worked for the Congress and other Opposition parties at one time. As waves of Bangladeshi migrants crossed the borders, each Opposition party is equally guilty of legalising their stay and shoring up its respective votebank. If it was Muslims before, it is Hindus now. So the AGP has little choice now but to stand out as a strong regional voice. Meanwhile, the BJP is losing the tide of opinion as far as its allies are concerned. First, it was the TDP, then it was the PDP in Kashmir, followed by the Upendra Kushwaha-led Rashtriya Lok Samta Party. The Shiv Sena still likes to trouble it now and then while the latest withdrawal missive from Apna Dal (Sonelal) has revived the perception of the BJP as an arrogant big brother feeding off the smaller parties and then grinding them to dust. As we said, it is all about the visual narrative. Depending on trade winds, all allies jump ships.

What Imran Khan forgot

It is ironical that the Pakistan Prime Minister should want to teach India how to treat its minorities when the country has created a new minority with the passing of every decade



PRAFULL GORADIA

Pakistan Prime Minister Imran Khan has offered to teach India how it should treat its minorities. Is it not likely that when he said this, he was experiencing a flashback to his cricketing days, when our fast bowlers were not comparable to his country's pace attack? Traditionally, in the undivided India, it was Punjab that produced pacemen. The one outstanding name that comes to this writer's mind is that of Mohammad Nissar, the fastest opening bowler the sub-continent had produced. Certainly, even now, the pack of speed merchants may have something to teach our players.

An Oxonian had once said: Imran is cricket and cricket is Imran. Similarly, Zubin Mehta is music and cannot be imagined in terms of cricket. It is also difficult to reconcile Imran Khan's image with prime ministership. It is not possible that while he was talking of minorities, he was thinking about how to teach India play cricket and to play in India at the Eden Gardens? It goes without saying that Imran Khan has not seen the holocaust of Hindus and Sikhs, starting with Rawalpindi in 1947, nor would he know how his Christian compatriots had rejoiced at the birth of Pakistan only to subsequently regret it, plus, of course, being frequently accused of blasphemy. The Communist Party had wholeheartedly sponsored Partition, only to later beat its breast — it was simply eliminated by the torrent of Islam.

The Ahmediyas, whose hero, Sir Muhammad Zafarullah Khan, had drafted the Pakistan Resolution of March 1940, also had their taste of 'glory' of the state they helped birth. Imran Khan was certainly not born then to witness the magnificent work done by Zafarullah Khan. Nor perhaps in 1953, when the latter's house in Lahore was set on fire, which induced him to flee to Pakistan to not return until his dying days. The rest of the years he spent at The Hague in the Netherlands to bring majesty to the glittering Benches of the International Court of Justice. In the meantime, the charismatic Prime Minister, Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, expelled the Ahmediyas from the sanctified garden of Islam.

Another Ahmediya hero who brought glory to Imran Khan's country was Dr Abdul Qadeer Khan, whose tuggish doings in the Netherlands enabled him to obtain the secrets of atomic bomb — all, of course, in the cause of Khidmat-e-Allah, the first Islamic nuclear bomb. He too was rewarded by his faith being expelled.

This writer was educated by two men. The first was his grandfather, one of whose friends was Ahmed Ali Jinnah. He relished Parsi humour and claimed to culturally be a Parsi. Although he was not a practicing Muslim, he acquainted my grandfather with his insights into Islam. That when a Muslim wishes to convert someone, it is with the best intention of opening a possible chance of the convert entering *jannat*. No other god can



enable a non-believer to cross the gateway of heaven.

The second gentleman who taught this writer was his spoken Urdu teacher who did not overtly suggest a conversion, but did say that the future lay with Islam. Just extrapolate the progress of a number of religions. The Yehudis (Jews) have reduced in number and shrunk to a fraction of what they were. The Christians have scattered into many denominations. Many a worshipper in Europe has given up worship. Christianity's priests have come to Asia, where according to the late Pope John Paul-II, there are innumerable souls to harvest. Contrast these performances with the progress of Islam, whose tide is continually rising.

It is ironical that Prime Minister Imran Khan should want to teach India how to treat its minorities. He has held out Pakistan as an example of good treatment. He is probably unaware that Dr Rafiq Zakaria, in his widely read book, *The Man Who Divided India*, clearly stated that but for the Muslims of Uttar Pradesh (especially Aligarh), Bihar and Mumbai (then Bombay), Pakistan might not have been. Young men from Aligarh went all the way to Punjab to campaign for the 1945-46 general election, which proved decisive for Partition. They propagated Pakistan as the new Medina. Moreover, if India should seriously follow the Pakistani example, it should

reduce its minority population to three per cent from the 22 per cent in Pakistan of 1947. Does the cricketing legend expect his country, with its vast land space, to absorb up to 25 crore Muslims now in India? He could not have forgotten his cricket and probably believes that greater the population, higher are the chances of throwing up more players. If not, the new Prime Minister has forgotten that his country has created a new minority with the passing of every decade.

The saga of creating ever new minorities began with the Sikhs at Rawalpindi; soon thereafter, the Hindus. Then came the turn of the Ahmediyas at Lahore. Pakistan's Christians, who had backed Partition, in due course became unpopular enough to be frequently accused of blasphemy and awarded the death sentence by being stoned. The Balochs, of course, were never fully trusted but gradually became suspected if not also positively distrusted. The latest is the turn of the Shias, who are routinely killed by bombs while praying. There is also a proposal to expel Shias from the fraternity of Islam. They are followers of Imam Hussein, who was the grandson of Prophet Muhammad. A distinguished Shia was Qaid-e-Azam Jinnah without whom Pakistan might not have been.

Even since his college days, this writer has been told that all Sunni Muslims of the world belong to a single community,

which is their first loyalty. It is, therefore, a mystery why most Pakistanis are callous about the safety, security and welfare of their brethren in India. Regimes in Islamabad pursue their own interests without caring for any repercussion in India. Earlier, their great *guru* was the US. Now, they look to China for direction; ostensibly, others be damned. This is as old a syndrome as 1947. Within two months, Pakistan had no compunction in invading the Kashmir Valley.

As long ago as in 1951, Dr Zakir Husain, the then vice chancellor of the Aligarh Muslim University and later Rashtrapati, took the lead along with 13 other Muslims eminences to submit a memorandum to Dr Frank P Graham, the United Nations representative in Kashmir on August 14, 1951 said:

"It is indeed a pity that India has never thought of taking the help of its Muslim citizens, most of whom can be the country's useful allies against Pakistani misdeeds. There is no doubt a problem. The only viable Muslim leadership in the country is ecclesiastical. The luminaries, who are not *maulvis*, do not have sufficient following. Addressing Muslim citizens through the *ulema* has its limitations. The substantive interest of the masses lies in a peaceful life where the individual and his family can try and prosper, to educate the children and so on. Whereas the thrust of the *ulema*

would be to protect and promote the influence of Islam, leaders in India should, therefore, find a channel of informing and seeking cooperation of our Muslim brethren directly."

The memorandum was also signed by Sir Sultan Ahmed, Sir Mohammed Usman, both former members of the Viceroy's Council. The signatories included the Nawab of Chhatari, Chief Justice of Allahabad, Sir Iqbal Ahmed, Sir Fazal Rahimtoola, AK Khwaja, TM Zarif, BH Zaidi and Hafiz-ur-Rehman; the last two were MPs. Their submission also said: "If the Hindus are not welcomed in Pakistan, how can we, in all fairness, expect Muslims to be welcomed in India? Such a policy must inevitably, as the past has already shown, result in the uprooting of Muslims in this country and their migration to Pakistan, where as it became clear last year, they are no longer welcome, lest their influx should destroy Pakistan's economy."

There was also a background to this fear. Several Muslim League leaders had repeatedly emphasised in the years preceding Partition that when the country was divided, there must be an exchange of population. Sir Feroz Khan Noon had gone to the extent of threatening the re-enactment of the violent orgies of Chengiz Khan and Hulagu Khan.

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

SOUNDBITE

We will not hesitate in imposing the NSA on those who run gangs that aid the use of unfair means during board exams and mass-copying antics.



UP Deputy CM —Dinesh Sharma

We (Norway) will intensify cooperation on issues relating to the sea, including a new joint task force on the blue economy focussing on integrated ocean management.



Norway Prime Minister —Erna Solberg

Actors get paid a lot while technicians don't get paid enough. This should change because a good film needs every single member of that team.



Filmmaker —Zoya Akhtar

The decision to allow private FM channels to broadcast AIR news empowers me as a citizen. What else does a democracy need?



I&B Minister —Rajyavardhan Rathore

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Election propaganda

Sir — The West Bengal Government has been denying permission to the Bharatiya Janata Party's proposed *rath yatra* in all the 42 parliamentary constituencies as it may lead to law and order problems. The Calcutta High Court has gauged the agenda of the organisers of the *yatra* and has rightly refused permission for the same. One only hopes that the Supreme Court will also appreciate the concerns of the State Government and deny permission for the *rath yatra*. The Union Government has failed to deliver on its promises to the masses and this is a last-ditch effort by the RSS-BJP combine to woo the people by playing the Ayodhya card yet again.

Shalini Gerald
Chennai

Careful decision

Sir — This refers to the editorial, "Behind the scenes" (January 8). Emboldened by its tremendous wins in Chhattisgarh, Rajasthan and Madhya Pradesh, the Congress should have acted

A path to elections with no holds barred

This refers to the editorial, "Behind the scenes" (January 8). We all know that apart from the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), the Samajwadi Party (SP) and the Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP) are the two main protagonists in Uttar Pradesh, the largest State of India in terms of population. What started during last year's by-polls, where most opposition parties united against the ruling party, this pre-election alliance between the SP and BSP is only a natural progression. But unlike various Opposition combinations that exist only in the air, the SP-BSP combine seems to be a real possibility. It was sensible on the part of BSP supremo Mayawati and SP chief Akhilesh Yadav to leave aside the Congress because the grand old party remains only a fringe player in Uttar Pradesh. Second, more the number of seats these two parties get, better will be their bargaining power to form a Government.



Besides, the alliance between the two parties has sent across a message that the next general election will witness more State-specific alliances than a broad nation-wide arrangement against the ruling BJP. But one thing is certain that the 2019 general election is going to be a no-holds-barred battle.

Bal Govind
Noida

Azhar A Khan
Rampur

Taking lessons

Sir — This refers to the editorial, "Real lionheart" (January 7). The English phrase, 'A kind gesture can reach a wound that only compassion can heal', best suits the lion-leopard story. Such compassion and affection between inter-species holds lessons for humanity. Every

individual must be more compassionate and be more than ready to assist others in their bad times. Humanity is far greater than exploiting the enemies.

Dimple Wadhawan
Kanpur

Real empowerment

Sir — It is not the State Government's business to interfere in the rituals of a religion. In doing so, it will only be hurting the sentiments of the people because traditions are one that are followed since ages. As long as the rituals are harmless and are respected by one and all, including the women, one cannot understand why the State Government must interfere at all.

As a matter of fact real empowerment for women will not come when they break old traditions by entering the gates of a temple, where their entry has been banned. Our society will be enlightened only when it protects its women.

Suruchi
Via email

Send your feedback to: letterstopioneer@gmail.com

FIRST COLUMN

Smelling trouble in Uttar Pradesh

The collaboration of SP-BSP and troubles with its own allies have made matters worse for the BJP. But the party remains hopeful



KALYANI SHANKAR

It is often said that 'Uttar Pradesh is India and India is Uttar Pradesh'. A win in India's most populous State can prove to be a game-changer for any party, nationally, as it accounts for 80 out of the 545 parliamentary seats. Besides, Uttar Pradesh has gifted many Prime Ministers to our country. As the two foetured-friends — Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP) and Samajwadi Party (SP) — inch closer towards a grand alliance in Uttar Pradesh ahead of the 2019 Lok Sabha election, minus the Congress, the poll scene is becoming interesting. The Congress could still become a coalition partner if there is any breakthrough in alliance talks. But as of now, the two regional satraps want to keep the Congress out as it does not have a place in their scheme of things as yet. They want to win the maximum number of seats in their stronghold and take matters from there to a post-poll scenario to do the final bidding for the top job.

First, the SP and the BSP do not need the Congress which is a lightweight in that crucial State. Second, the Congress' votes are not transferable. Third, the SP feels that its experience of aligning with the Congress during the 2017 Assembly election did not work. Also, the Congress did not include the lone SP legislator in the recent Madhya Pradesh Cabinet. Though it was the Congress that had been stressing on the need to bring regional parties together to take on the BJP after its recent wins in Rajasthan, Chhattisgarh and Madhya Pradesh, it failed to honour the demands of smaller parties. Fourth, BSP supremo Mayawati is worried about some Dalit votes moving to the Congress' camp. She has made her political calculations keeping her party's interests in mind. Fifth, both parties feel that a three-cornered contest would benefit the alliance as it can stop the Congress' votes from going to the BJP in protest against the grand old party joining the alliance as the former's core voters are from Dalits, Other Backward Classes and minorities.

The grand alliance might include Ajiit Singh's Rashtriya Lok Dal (RLD) and some smaller parties. The RLD, once strong amid sugarcane farmers of western Uttar Pradesh, has just begun to re-organise itself. The alliance is also trying to get Om Prakash Rajbhar's Suheldev Bhartiya Samaj Party and the Krishna Patel faction of Apna Dal. Not only does the tie-up has arithmetic but also chemistry as the once bitter enemies — Mayawati and SP chief Akhilesh Yadav — are now on 'aunt and nephew' terms. In 2014, the BJP had a vote share of 42.63 per cent in Uttar Pradesh, while the SP-BSP combine got 42.19 per cent — its almost the same. With Mayawati winning 22.23 per cent of the votes even in 2017 and the SP securing 28.32 per cent, together, they polled over half of the total votes. If the Congress also joins the alliance, the combined vote share of the three parties will be more than that of the BJP's. There is a divided opinion in the Congress about it joining the alliance. This is in sharp contrast to 2017, when the party, in one voice, favoured a tie-up with the SP. One section feels that making the contest triangular is bound to hurt the BJP. The grand alliance might have a strategic understanding with the Congress to help each other.

But where does all of this leave the BJP? Experts say that it means the alliance might pick up about 50 seats. Then the BJP and the Congress would be left with 30 seats. The Congress could pick up two seats — that of the Gandhis and perhaps one or two more. The BJP can at best hope to get 24 or 25 seats. After the recent loss of three Hindi heartland States — Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh and Chhattisgarh — it might lose another 30 seats. In other States, it might shed 20 seats. So, expectation is that the BJP could lose as many as 100 seats. The party would have to cover up the gap from other regions to reach the 282 mark that it won in the 2014 Lok Sabha poll. But how much can they make up in West Bengal, south and Odisha? Moreover, the BJP does not have any big alliance partner. The Telugu Desam Party has quit and the Shiv Sena is threatening to break alliance. The Peoples Democratic Party has left and the Akali Dal is disgruntled. About 18 smaller parties have left the NDA fold since 2014. However, the BJP does not agree with this analysis. They believe that the people will vote for Modi. The party is hopeful that with a strong leadership, effective communication, disciplined organisation, unlimited funds and a divided Opposition, it can make a come back.

However, one can sense a certain degree of worry within the party. BJP chief Amit Shah is subdued and the top leadership is already on a course-correction mode. It will be looking for a new narrative in its national council meeting next week. But Modi can spring surprises. One week is said to be long in politics and three months is quite long to make any prediction. One thing is certain that the BJP will emerge as the single largest party with or without forming the Government.

(The writer is a senior political commentator)

POINTCOUNTERPOINT

I APPEAL TO THE EDUCATED YOUTH TO JOIN PDP AND HELP IN BRINGING THE PEOPLE OUT OF THEIR MISERY. ALL THE GARBAGE IN THE PARTY HAS GONE NOW.

—PDP LEADER
MEHBOOBA MUFTI



THE PEOPLE, WHO WERE HONEST, DECENT AND HARDWORKING TILL THEY WORKED WITH HER (MUFTI) ARE DUBBED GARBAGE NOW.

—NC LEADER
OMAR ABDULLAH

Rabies threatens our lion

Progressive control pathways and procedures for international certification of rabies-free status should be established to save our wild cats from the madness syndrome



HARI SHANKER SINGH

If you thought that rabies concerned only dogs, then one must look back to the records at the King Edward Memorial Pasture Institute and Medical Research Institute, Shillong. It had published a scientific article in 1950 recording two instances of a positive microscopic finding in the brain — evidence of rabies — of the Bengal tiger in Assam, the first in 1943 and the second in 1950. In the first case, the tiger severely mauled 18 people in just over 24 hours before it was killed but made no attempt to eat any of the victims. In the second case, the tiger terrorised the inhabitants of five or six villages and attacked 14 people, at least five heads of cattle and a dog, of whom one person and the dog were killed on the spot and two others died in hospital the following day. Subsequently, the animal was killed.

The rabies virus was found in both cases. And though these two cases were examined following complaints of unseemly behaviour, several others were ignored. A few cases of leopards dying ostensibly due to rabies were also reported in south India during the British period. The rabies-inflicted stray dogs, living on the boundaries of Kruger National Park in South Africa and other reserves, are threats to predators such as lions, leopards, hyena and wild dogs. Perhaps deaths of predators by rabies do not get the exposure they deserve. The veterinary advisor for the Siberian Tiger recommended the vaccination protocol for use in all wild tigers to save them from viral disease.

Four years ago, a similar behaviour was observed in two lions — first was a male lion in Girnar on May 31, 2011, and the second was a young lioness in the Khamba range of the Gir forest on December 15, 2015. In both cases, the frenzied felines chased people and attacked a few of them, including the forest staff. The injured people were vaccinated and saved but both lions died within a few days. Symptoms like biting of tyres and frequent roaring in the daytime indicated the presence of rabies but cases were never examined to know the truth. The extent of damage by the fatal Canine Distemper Virus (CDV) attack, ostensibly a mutation or aggravation caused by the rabies virus, was taken seriously only when 23 lions died in September 2018 in the Gir forests.

In the past, deaths of the lion by virus attacks were detected but ignored because the number was not high. Unlike the lion, tigers or leopards do not live in groups. Thus, death of one or two of them at a site by the fatal disease was ignored. It was recorded as a natural disease but facts prove otherwise. Almost every other day, news reports cite the recovery of dead leopards, tigers, lions and several other carnivores from their habitats but the cases have never been examined by virologists to confirm the cause of deaths.

In a study, four concomitant incidents of rabies related deaths were recorded in Gujarat during 2012-2014. Brain samples were collected from two buffaloes, nilgai and mongoose and rabies virus was found in all of them. Further, the genetic relationship of these isolated specimens was determined and the rabies virus transmission among the wild and domestic mammals was established. In Deva village in Allahabad district, two cows and a young buffalo cub were bitten by a rabies-infected dog. All

“DOMESTIC LIVESTOCK, INCLUDING DOGS, CONSTITUTE MAJOR FOOD FOR WILD ANIMALS. CASES OF TIGER AND LEOPARD DEATHS ARE REPORTED FROM TIME-TO-TIME, BUT THE INSTITUTE ENGAGED IN THE FIELD OF WILDLIFE RESEARCH DOES NOT GIVE PRIORITY TO SUCH AN IMPORTANT PROBLEM”



died within two weeks. Finally, the dog was killed and the carcass was disposed off in a remote area of the village. What had happened to carnivores such as jackals and foxes, which consumed the carcass, is not known but the villagers confirmed that the carnivores had not been spotted. Why is it that the jackals are fast disappearing from the villages? Why are the hyenas becoming rare in the countryside? Why is it that the population of the wild dog (dhole) declined drastically in its habitats such as the Satpura Tiger Reserve and then recovered in a few years and again declined drastically? Is it due to the spread of rabies or any other virus? Has rabies' presence in the domestic dog caused the loss of wildlife in an unbelievable scale? Perhaps yes. Casualties of the major wild carnivores in India due to transmission of rabies, CDV, FIV or other viruses are high but it is impossible to provide facts about the scale of the crisis. After the lion deaths due to a CDV attack in the Gir forests, investigations indicated that like the African lions, the CDV and other viruses are present in some wild lions in the Gir forest. All of these become fatal when other diseases such as Babesia protozoa are transmitted from an unhealthy prey.

The World Health Organisation (WHO) reported that rabies is a vaccine-preventable viral disease which occurs in more than 150 countries. Dogs are the source of a vast majority of human rabies deaths, contributing up to 99 per cent of all rabies transmis-

sions to humans. Human deaths due to rabies are known and have been well-documented but it is also primarily a disease of terrestrial mammals, including dogs, wolves, foxes, jackals, big cats (lions, leopards and tigers), mongooses, badgers, bats and monkeys. Rabies is endemic to India and accounts for 36 per cent of the world's human deaths due to this disease. The true burden of rabies in our country is not fully known; although as per a WHO report, it causes 18,000-20,000 deaths every year. Nobody knows how many wild carnivores die due to this disease. India had over 19.1 million domestic dogs in 2007 and a majority of them belonged to the category of feral or stray dogs. A substantial number of this forms the prey base for carnivores, especially for leopards, tigers, lions, hyenas, wolves and jackals.

In India, dogs play an important role in rabies transmission to wildlife. However, little is known about the role of wild animals in rabies transmission. As per a study in the US, the rabies disease unexpectedly re-emerged in wildlife. Rabies is a viral zoonosis associated with many species of carnivores, including cats, jackal, hyena and bats, which are the primary hosts of the Rabies virus. Although sporadic cases of rabies in wildlife have been documented across the African continent, convincing evidence for the circulation of rabies in populations of wild carnivores has been found only in south Africa, where wild canids, such as jackals and bat-eared foxes, are assumed to be primary hosts of the virus. Although

wolves, wild dogs, jackals and foxes are susceptible and readily succumb to the disease, they can disseminate the disease in other wildlife.

The carnivores — lion, tiger, leopard, hyena, wolf, and jackal — are susceptible to diseases as they largely prey upon domestic animals, including dogs and pigs which are a carrier of pathogens. Domestic livestock, including dogs, constitute major food for these wild animals. Cases of tiger and leopard deaths are reported from time-to-time, but the institute engaged in the field of wildlife research does not give priority to such an important problem. In the absence of adequate studies, it is difficult to assess deaths of wild carnivores due to rabies but it seems a major hurdle, although not accepted till date of wildlife conservation in India.

To eliminate rabies in wildlife, 'progressive control pathways' and procedures for international certification of rabies-free status should be established. To achieve this, wildlife managers should know the extent of the problem. The sample of every dead animal should be examined scientifically in institutes that deal with wildlife or virology. Institutes, too, need to focus on the scale of natural deaths rather than just concern themselves with environment impact assessment (EIA). It has taken us long to maintain a healthy population of the big cat. Let us not lose them to another threat.

(The writer is Member, National Board for Wildlife)

A diversified investment strategy

Dynamic asset allocation is the ideal way to invest. It helps one to strike a balance between associated risks and rewards. This strategy holds the potential to outshine all other forms of investments when market conditions remain volatile



HIMA BINDU KOTA

When it comes to investments, the adage, 'Don't put all your eggs in one basket', comes to mind. Diversification essentially means the strategic allocation of investments among different assets and their categories to spread the money around so that exposure to any one type of asset is limited. This helps manage risk and reduce volatility of portfolio over a period of time. One of the keys to successful investing is to learn the art of maintaining fine balance between comfort level and time horizon.

If one invests conservatively for retirement at a young age, he/she may run the risk of investment growth not keeping pace with inflation. Conversely, if one invests too aggres-

sively, when one is older, they may face a situation where their savings are exposed to market volatility. This can erode the value of their assets at an age when one has fewer opportunities to recoup losses.

One way to balance risk and reward in an investment portfolio is to diversify assets. Although diversification does not ensure profit or guarantee no losses, it may help mitigate risk. It does help in reducing the number and severity of ups and downs. Diversification does not aim to maximise returns but limits the impact of volatility on a portfolio. To better understand this concept let us look at the table along with this article which contains hypothetical portfolios with different asset allocations from 1926 to 2017.

The most aggressive portfolio shown in the table comprises 60 per cent domestic stocks, 25 per cent international stocks and 15 per cent bonds. It has an average annual return of 10.02 per cent. The best 12-month return stood at 134 per cent, while its worst 12-month

ASSET ALLOCATION OF DIFFERENT PORTFOLIOS

	Aggressive Growth	Balanced	Conservative
Average Annual Return	10.02%	8.05%	6.34%
Best 12-month return	134.46%	74.29%	30.76%
Worst 12-month return	-61.26%	-39.53%	-16.65%
Best 20-year return (annualised)	15.49%	13.65%	11.01%
Worst 20-year return (annualised)	2.54%	3.02%	2.95%

return lost nearly by 61 per cent. This is too much of volatility for investors to endure.

However, as we can see, a slight change in the asset allocation tightened the range of those swings. It is also clear that additional fixed income investments to a portfolio slightly reduces one's expectations for long-term returns. But this may significantly reduce the impact of market volatility. This is a trade-off many investors feel is worthwhile, particularly as they get older and more risk-averse.

Factoring time into diversification strategy: People are generally

accustomed to thinking about their savings in terms of goals — retirement, college, a down payment or a vacation. But as one builds and manages his/her asset allocation, regardless of which goal he/she is pursuing, there are two important things that must be considered: First, the time horizon is the number of years when one would need the money back and second, attitude toward risk.

To take an example, a young adult may think of a goal that is 25 years away, like when he/she retires. Since the time horizon is fairly long, he/she may be willing to take addi-

tional risk in pursuit of long-term growth. The investor may be under the assumption that there's enough time in hand to regain lost ground in an event of short-term market decline. In that case, higher exposure to domestic stocks may be appropriate.

However, risk tolerance plays a crucial role here as well. Regardless of the time horizon, one should undertake risk with which he/she is comfortable. So even if one is saving for a long-term goal, or is more risk-averse, he/she may want to consider a more balanced portfolio with some fixed income investments. Regardless of the time horizon and risk tolerance, even if one is pursuing the most aggressive asset allocation model, he/she may want to consider including a fixed income component to help reduce overall volatility of the portfolio.

The other thing to remember about time horizon is that it keeps changing constantly. So, let's say one's retirement is 10 years away, he/she may want to re-allocate their asset to

help reduce exposure to higher-risk investments in favour of more conservative ones like bond or money market funds. This can help mitigate the impact of extreme market swings on portfolio, which is important when one needs the money relatively soon. Once they enter retirement, a large portion of the portfolio should be more stable. Lower-risk investments can potentially generate income. But even in retirement, diversification is key to help manage risks. So just as one should never be 100 per cent invested in stocks, it's probably a good idea to never be 100 per cent allocated in short-term investments if time horizon is greater than one year.

After all, even in retirement one needs exposure to growth-oriented investments to combat inflation and help ensure that the assets last for what could be a decades-long retirement. Regardless of the goal — time horizon or risk tolerance — a diversified portfolio is the foundation of any smart investment strategy.

(The writer is Assistant Professor, Amity University)



FOREIGN EYE



BASTARDISATION OF THE OVERALL POLITY

Education was the immediate victim of the buffoonery and opportunism of the Sri Lankan leaders. The gradual deterioration of education also had predictable outcomes: It crowned the nincompoops as masters of universal knowledge. What hides the magnitude of the real problem is the reliance on tradition indicators like adult literacy rate, percentage of children of school age who attend primary and secondary school, et al. (Daily Mirror editorial)



2019 will be the year of data science, Internet of things, skill development, innovation based technologies, talent analytics, automation, block chain technologies, advanced IT & smart courses, says DR TP SETHUMADHAVAN

In the era of digitalisation, skill will be the deciding factor to improve the employability of educated/ unemployed youths. Without appropriate skilling, it will be difficult to sustain in the career market.

Digitalisation, E-commerce, food processing, health services, ayurveda, yoga, accounting, banking, financial and insurance services will show robust growth in the country. Umpteen opportunities will be created in accounting, logistics, supply chain management, retail management, network media, digital marketing, e-banking and mobile banking in the country. For productive employment and decent work, we need to work for opportunities for new skills and new sectors.

Technical, supervisory, managerial and customised skill development programmes will attain popularity. National level skill universities may emerge which will facilitate lots of transformations in the job market.

During 2018, Make in India, Digital India and Skill India can't create envisaged employment opportunities in manufacturing, information and communication technology and skill development in the country. Realising the shortfall, Government of India may facilitate to create more employment opportunities as part of pre-election home work.

INDIA'S ECONOMY & EMPLOYMENT

India has been ranked as the 58th most competitive economy in the World Economic Forum's global competitiveness index for 2018. Its competitive advantage includes market size (rank third), innovation capability (rank 31) and business dynamism with ranking of 58.

More investments will be necessary to spur innovation beyond hubs of excellence and diffuse economic growth more broadly. Indian companies can access the third largest market in the world and would benefit from increased trade openness to drive productivity growth.

Separation of EU from UK as a sequel to Brexit will become reality during 2019 even though a lot of apprehensions exist in this sector. Indians top the list of overstayers in UK according to Britain's Foreign and Commonwealth office. Globally, Britain and India are looking at opportunities for co-operation with India beyond Brexit.

According to the report by the Centre for Sustainable Employment of Azim Premji University, 10 per cent increase in GDP results in less than one per cent increase in employment. The rate of unemployment among the youth and higher educated has touched 16 per cent. Indian economy will overtake Britain's economy during 2019. Half of the world's population will become online during 2019. India's GDP growth will attain 7.6 per cent.

McKinsey studies reveal that there will be increased participation of women in the economy which would increase the GDP. India Skills 2019 report suggests that hiring

REPORT CARD 2019

of women is expected to go up by 15 to 20 per cent especially in the banking, financial services, insurance, automotive, IT, software, hospitality, travel and tourism sectors.

CAREER & JOB PROSPECTS

Agribusiness, veterinary science, fisheries technology, food processing, dairy technology, food technology, poultry product technology, post harvest technology, high value agriculture, environmental science, logistics, supply chain management, courses related to packaging, nanoscience, organic/natural farming will be the focus areas during 2019.

Services sector will create more than 67 per cent employment opportunities in the country. New Year will exhibit spectacular growth employee recruitment and 11-15 per cent increase in salary hike. Net employment outlook will be reduced during the first two quarters in India. There will be stagnation in 2019 first two quarters in India due to general election. But gradually it will increase to three percentage points higher than the previous quarter.

Retail sector in rural, tier two and tier three cities will exhibit double digit growth in sales and employment. Healthcare, textile and IT sectors exhibit only single digit growth in sales and employment. Packaging industry will generate more employment.

Hospitality, tourism, retail, supply chain, logistics and agri business management sectors will exhibit higher growth rate similar to 2018 in 2019. There will be more takers for retail management, hospitality management, hotel management, airline and airport management and transport management courses.

Aviation and Cyber security will generate more employment opportunities. Automation, machine learning and block chain technology will decide the future of work as suggested by ILO which will start replacing the traditional sectors. By 2022, nine per cent workforce would be in new jobs which do not exist today.

Around 37 per cent would be in jobs which will radically change the skill sets. About 21 per cent of workforce will face existential threat. Around 20-25 per cent jobs will be in organised sector and the share of organised sector will reach 10 per cent from the current 8 per cent level. Thus, organised

workforce will be around 46 to 48 million by 2022.

Courses like English, economics, social sciences, customised psychology programmes, foreign languages, developmental studies, embryology, public administration, media studies, paramedical courses like physiotherapy, optometry, nursing, audiology and speech language pathology, nutrition and dietetics will attract more students.

ADVANCE IT

Artificial Intelligence (AI) will become the motive force for the fourth industrial revolution. AI, big data, automation and quantum computing could fundamentally alter the economic progress. Data science and machine learning are some of the emerging sectors which can create lot of employment opportunities. Skills in cloud services, big data analytics, machine learning and artificial intelligence are going to be critical for the data science professional.

Data scientist, data analyst, data architect, data statistician, ML engineer, ML Specialist, technical architect and data engineer are some of the most popular roles in which they can work. Digital services sector will show robust growth in the year to come.

Gartner studies suggest that 75 per cent of the 10 lakhs registered companies' jobs in India are going to invest in machine learning and data science. Traditional companies started acquiring digital companies in India. Banking and financial services are in the forefront with almost 44 per cent of jobs falling in the domain commerce has also emerged as the largest market for data science professionals which account for 12 per cent of the analytics jobs in 2019. Other sectors where data science professionals are in demand are healthcare (12 per cent), energy (eight per cent), telecom (six per cent) and media (six per cent).

AUTOMOBILE & ENGINEERING

By 2030 more number of electric or hybrid vehicles will be commercially available across the world. Integrated courses like mechatronics, embedded computing, system design, automobile engineering, biomedical sciences, bio informatics, developmental sciences, humanities and social sciences will acquire more importance.

Global move to reduce the use of fossil fuels like petrol and diesel will pave way for electric, solar or hybrid vehicles which in turn facilitate spectacular growth in automobile design and engineering. There will be more takers for students aspiring for integrated post graduate courses and interdisciplinary research in the country.

Manufacturing sector, which is providing only 14 per cent employment opportunities, can create up to 25 per cent employment opportunities in 2019. Construction and infrastructure sectors will create more employment opportunities which can facilitate architecture, civil, mechanical, electrical and electronics, elec-

tronics and communication, computer, IT and biomedical engineering. Core engineering graduates require skill development programmes as part of value addition to get appropriate job positions. Green technology will emerge as one of the potential sectors in India giving due initiatives to improve quality of air we breathe and clean, affordable & reliable sources of energy.

POWER & ENERGY

Decentralisation, digitisation and decarbonisation will emerge as new technologies in the energy sector. The industry will see proliferation of solar and wind sector. The energy companies will be increasingly concerned with the sources and quality of services it provides with innovations in tune with the technological interventions. A digital network is beginning to connect distributed systems of energy.

Water, sanitation, waste management, energy, roof top electricity systems, prefabricated technology and infrastructure are emerging as the prospective areas. Next generation infrastructure revolution will improve efficiencies, drive growth, offer citizens homes, work places, transport systems and utilities.

Government of India is aiming to commercially introduce 5G services in the country by the end of 2020 in line with the world. Internet connectivity would become much faster and would form the backbone of the emerging era of Internet of things. The transition from 4G to 5G will serve both consumers and multiple industries.

Ericsson report reveals that it will enable 27 \$ billion revenue opportunity for Indian telecom operators by 2026. Education, healthcare, innovation in design and engineering including development of high tech metro rail systems will generate more employment opportunities in 2019.

Legal framework set for use of drones will create more opportunities in mapping like GIS, GPS, GST, surveying and photography. Government has approved full digital ecosystem for granting permission to use drones. This will facilitate opportunities in precision agriculture, aviation sector and start-up industry.

FOOD INDUSTRY

At a time when prospects for ready to eat and ready to cook products are emerging across the world, food processing sector will exhibit annual growth rate of 20-25 per cent in the country. Food outsourcing will improve and food market will emerge as 55 per cent of retail market during 2019.

LOGISTICS

Air cargo business will exhibit a growth of 12.9 per cent in the coming year to achieve National Civil Aviation Policy vision of reaching 10 million tons cargo volume by 2027. According to the Associated Chambers of Commerce and Industry of India (ASSOCHAM) studies, it will generate more employment in tier two and tier three

cities where domestic cargo terminals are on the verge of expansion. The ASSOCHAM suggested to implement a rating system for cargo terminals in line with Airport Service Quality ratings which will create lot of opportunities in infrastructure, facilities and logistics.

HEALTHCARE

As part of AYUSH, Ayurveda, Yoga, Unani, Sidha and Homeopathy courses will attract more number of students. Ayurveda will globally emerge as one of the most wanted courses in the years to come.

Telemedicine will be one of the growing sectors in the coming year and will create employment opportunities in rural areas. Through 2.5 lakh service centers it will train 80 crores of people in the rural areas of 32 countries. Government of India has identified Singapore start-up RING as the nodal agency for Telemedicine.

ART & DESIGN

Fashion industry will exhibit spectacular growth during 2019. Online shops will attain more than 50 per cent of the market. Moreover, AI will help online shoppers to assess fit and shape more accurately. Amazon, Flipkart will add 80000 jobs in e-commerce sector.

Art and design will create a lot of employment opportunities globally. There will be a rise in the number of students aspiring for footwear design, fashion technology, apparel design, fashion design, furniture design, fashion communication, knitwear design, jewellery design and bachelor of design programmes of Footwear Institute of India, National Institute of Design, National Institute of Fashion technology and Indian Institute of Technologies will increase during the year 2019.

BANKING, FINANCE, MANAGEMENT

Banking recruitment will increase during 2019. The Institute of Banking Personnel Selection (IBPS) had already called for probationary officer/ clerical or specialist officer cadre.

Advertising will show an additional annual growth of two per cent during 2019. Chartered accountant, ICWAI, chartered institute of Management accountant programme, Chartered management accountant, CIMA global, Asset management, Risk assessment, financial analyst, actuarial science, project management and ACCA programme will attract more students. Combined accounting course with GST compliant courses will emerge from ISDC, UK which can create more employment opportunities.

Prospects for commerce, business studies, management programmes, international business, trade related courses, intellectual property rights and patent law will attain more importance at post graduate and doctoral level studies. Courses related to performing arts, visual communication, business economics, business communication and android development, will create more job opportunities.

Start-up: In tune with the growth in 2018, India will continue to emerge as the third largest start-up ecosystem in the World. Barriers to start business will come down but entrepreneurship will regain.

Entrepreneurs will also include new mothers who want more time at home and 75 per cent more females than males prefer working from home. Students will try to become employers after establishing start-ups in ICT, agri-allied, food processing, education and other services sectors.

FOREIGN EDUCATION

Substantial changes will be witnessed in the trends in overseas education during 2019. The United States will give priority to advanced degree holders from the US Universities for H1B visa will benefit Indian students. This will facilitate more students to pursue for graduate programmes in the US.

Brexit will be implemented during first half of 2019 and will promote overseas education opportunities for EU and UK. Career opportunity in UK will be improved further. UK may relax ban on post study work visa ban as a sequel to National skill and education policy.

Germany and France may witness economic recession and will affect international students. But Macron's reforms will try to correct some of the challenges faced as a sequel to recession. Overseas students will prefer India for higher education.

China will implement novel programmes in AI, Robotics, IOT and Analytics. Technology, Entrepreneurship, start-ups and skill development are some of the areas where India is exhibiting spectacular growth. The US, Canada, Australia and Singapore will again emerge as the potential destinations for Indian students. The US's pay structure for employees working under H1B visa and the recent sops will attract more Indian students. But US may witness economic recession during second half of 2019. Ireland, Netherlands, New Zealand, France, Germany and Ireland will continue to give post study work visa up to two years.

The writer is an educational and career consultant and director, UL Education

A Bachelor of Architecture graduate from Hyderabad secured 98.97 percentile. In the Common Admission Test (CAT) 2018, results of which were released on Saturday (January 5, 2019). VNS Juhi Vallabh, who took a gap year after graduation to prepare for the test, said she concentrated more on basics to crack the test.

"I joined a coaching institute and gave my 100 per cent during the preparation. I took about 20 mock tests and used the results of these exams to make changes in my preparation. Google was another tool which I used to clear the doubts that I had," said Juhi adding that she was strong in English, but had to concentrate more on Maths as the subject was missing in Bachelor of Architecture.

Juhi, a resident of Nallakunta,

Hyderabad girl bells the CAT



I joined a coaching institute and gave my 100 per cent during the prep. I took about 20 mock tests and used the results of these exams to make changes in my preparation. Google was another tool which I used to clear the doubts

said she wants to specialise in marketing in MBA (Master of Business Administration) and is no more interested in architecture.

"While studying BArch, I realised that I'm more interested in the management side of marketing. Also, during the summer vacation, I started helping my dad who is into media marketing and really liked what he is doing. That's when I decided that I want to pursue MBA," Juhi added.

Till Class XII, Juhi studied in Hyderabad and then moved to Madhya Pradesh to pursue graduation from School of Planning and Architecture in Bhopal and graduated in May 2018.

In total, 11 candidates secured 100 percentile this year from across the country. All the students belong to engineering or technology stream.

Atal Tinkering labs

With a vision to 'Cultivate one million children in India as Neoteric Innovators', Atal Innovation Mission (AIM), housed at NITI Aayog, is establishing Atal Tinkering Laboratories (ATLs) in schools across India. The objective of this scheme is to foster curiosity, creativity and imagination in young minds; and inculcate skills such as design mindset, computational thinking, physical computing etc.

AIM, in collaboration with the Global Education and

Leadership Foundation, has created the Ethical Leadership in Tinkering and Innovation (ELTI) module to inculcate the ethics and values that form the bedrock of innovation for social good in young minds of the ATL network. The module makes use of activities to provide students a framework to promote hands-on learning and tinkering with students in India. The ELTI module is rolled out to ATLs and can be accessed online at http://aim.gov.in/pdf/ATL_ELTI_Module.pdf

This experiential pro-

gramme includes hands-on activities that are both challenging and thought-provoking, aiming at reigniting conversations on the code of conduct and ethics in innovation, and taking decisive action to combat challenges in a sustained manner. The module is aimed at ATL in-charges/ teachers/mentors who would follow it to teach the students about ethical leadership skills. The module has been created in Do-It-Yourself mode so that students can themselves conduct the activities and self-learn.



Gone are the days when Indian students either opted for engineering or medical after the completing high school. Today's generation is not shying away from taking the road less travelled. Unlike yesteryears, they now have a pool of options to choose from depending upon their personal interests and skill sets.

This trend has also caught on with individuals studying overseas. The 2018 Open Doors Report on International Educational Exchange reveals that Indian and other international students in the US are turning to off-beat courses.

While traditional Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM) courses continue to be their top preferences, some specialised courses like Robotics, Automation and Mechatronics are witnessing an increasing demand and will gain popularity this year.

ROBOTICS

Thanks to the rapid progress of AI (Artificial Intelligence), robots are no longer considered dumb-machines that are only capable of doing simple, repetitive tasks. With the arrival of humanoid like Sophia and SoftBank's Pepper, robots have made huge leaps in recent years. Simultaneously, the career options for students who specialise in robotics has expanded.

From doing research work to designing industrial robots, they can get the opportunity to work in a variety of industries. Therefore, the number of students opting for courses related to robotics is likely to go up in 2019.

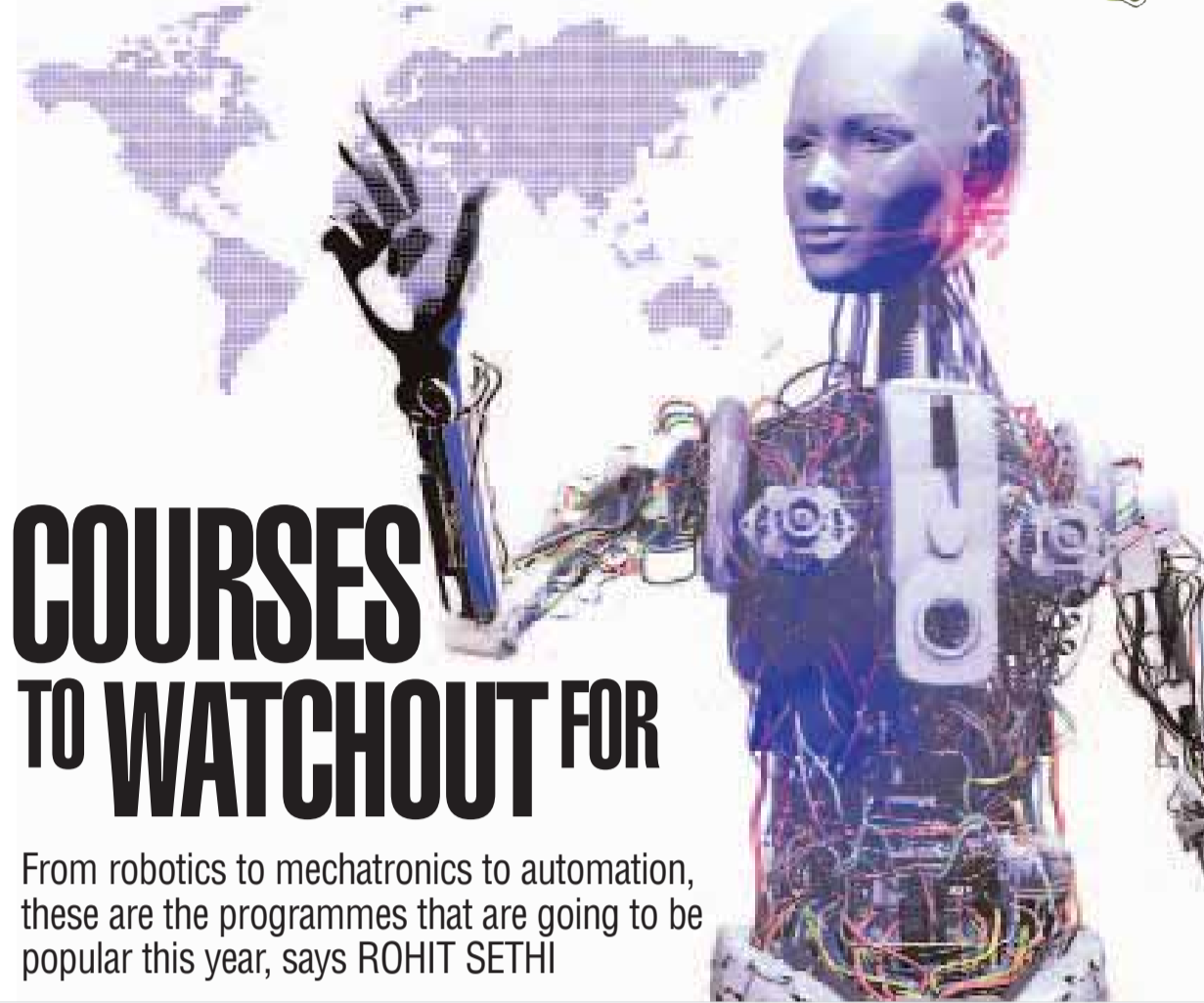
AUTOMATION

With the fourth industry revolution upon us, automation has already started making profound impacts on the business world. Be it manufacturing, automotive or retail, nearly every sector is now investing heavily on automating tasks that are tedious, repetitive and dangerous.

As traditional job roles are evolving, the demand for automation experts is growing by the day. This explains why a large number of international students are now inclining towards automation courses. Other than automation engineering, certification courses in industrial automation are also expected to take off next year.

MECHATRONICS

Mechatronics is a fairly new branch of engineering that has caught the attention of students off late. As described on Stanford University's online portal, it is at the intersection of mechanical engineering, electronic engineering and software engineering. Mechatronics engineering focuses on technologies involved in building intelligent electro-mechanical systems. After completion of their course, graduates can look for work opportunities in various areas including automation and robotics, AI and expert systems, sensing and control systems, computer integrated manufacturing systems, and transportation and vehicular systems. Since it's a specialised field, only a few universities at pre-



COURSES TO WATCHOUT FOR

From robotics to mechatronics to automation, these are the programmes that are going to be popular this year, says ROHIT SETHI



WHILE SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY, ENGINEERING AND MATH COURSES CONTINUE TO BE TOP PREFERENCES, SOME SPECIALISED & OFF-BEAT COURSES WILL SEE A RISE

sent, offer this course in undergraduate and post-graduate levels.

DISABILITY PROGRAMMES

According to a World Bank report, a billion people across the world live some form of disability. At a time, when people of disabilities make for the 15 per cent of the global population, the demand for disability support workers is on a rapid rise in many countries. In Australia, for example, the Healthcare and Social Assistance sector is speculated to grow by 16.1% by 2025, creating as many as 2,50,500 new jobs. Students with a degree in disability programmes can find a wide range of jobs.

Be it a speech therapist or a full-time caregiver, the options are plenty. Students can also decide to work for Government bodies after graduation. Most medical schools in popular study destinations offer specialised courses in disability care.

INFECTION CONTROL

Another course that is tipped to gain popularity in 2019 is infection control. This specialised field of study prepares students to work in a range of settings such as hospitals, healthcare facilities, Government departments, private labs among others. While only a handful of universities offer regular courses in infection control, students can go for certificate courses or part-time programmes. In most countries, however, they need to get a license before they start their professional life.

Students are also getting lured by other interdisciplinary programmes like Geophysics, Marine Engineering, Game Design and Development, says the 2018 Open Doors Report on International Educational Exchange.

When it comes to Indians, the scenario is not much different. Although the majority of them still prefer to choose a safe career path, popularity for unconventional courses are slowly growing.

The writer is the director at ESS Global

HR trends 2019

The HR trends that will take centrestage this year are personalised employed engagement among others, says ANCHAL KHANNA

It's New Year and there will be HR practices that will be trending in 2019. Some of the projections for 2018 like as personalised employee engagement and more intense use of AI will continue to gain momentum next year, but some new trends are likely to take centerstage because of defining events that took place in the past year.

Recognise and reduce unconscious Bias: As the call for equal opportunity and equal pay for equal work done gains steam, Indian companies and MNCs alike are trying to put in place policies that are more inclusive. Diversity and inclusion is no longer a catch phrase but very much an important agenda for the Indian corporate world. This includes using technology for blind hiring, sensitising all employees and more inclusive onboarding processes. Much more effort will be directed towards improving diversity in the workplace, maybe even setting diversity goals as part of their talent acquisition process.

Employee wellness made more comprehensive: Corporates have begun to realise how much employee wellness contributes towards the bottom line. When employees are stress free and happy they are much more productive. Companies will need to put in place creative strategies to ensure that the well-being of their workforce is holistic.

The definition of wellness needs to expand to include not just physical well-being, but also mental, financial and spiritual wellness. Tracking wellness on phones, wearable devices, customising wellness experiences, introducing stress regulation training, mindfulness and meditation, offering programmes that help employees with investments to reduce debt or maintain a certain lifestyle post retirement will become some of the focus areas of employee wellness.

A relook at implementing PoSH in the workplace: In the light of the #MeToo movement companies will want to sensitize and train employees to be fully compliant with the requirements of the Prevention of Sexual Harassment Act of 2013. Organisations will want to have their PoSH policy in place — from creating awareness about the meaning of sexual harassment, to forming the internal complaints committee, and promoting a safe working environment.



Anchal Khanna
CEO, SHRM India

Greater emphasis on Employee Development: As India continues to be among the fastest growing economies in the world, attracting and retaining talent will become crucial. Indian companies recognise that and are putting more and more emphasis on upskilling and developing their employees.

They are using unique approaches to arrive at this goal — providing portals that enable self-learning and development, including development in their performance management systems, partnering with well-known academic institutions to build skills and develop leaders, etc.

Homegrown HR solutions providers: There's been a spike in companies that provide locally developed HR solutions specific for the Indian economy. While SAP and Oracle have a significant presence, smaller vendors with indigenously developed software are finding their place in the burgeoning HR technology market. If the data protection legislation comes into force in India, it will only fuel this growth more.

The field is experiencing a wave of innovations which will transform the way we practice it from now on.

The good news for job-seekers, there will be an increase in average hiring volume from 25% in 2018 to 31% in 2019. Hiring will be a trend in all the key sectors like Technology, BFSI, Healthcare, Manufacturing and Retail.

However, as per the survey results, the top 3 sectors that will do high-volume hiring (more than 500+ employees annually) would be BFSI, IT & Retail. In BFSI sector around 42% of companies will hire more than 500+ employees in 2019. And in IT sector 33% of organizations will hire around 500+ employees this year.

The top three functions that will see maximum hiring in 2019 would be:

- Sales
- Technology
- Business Operations

■ Sales
■ Technology
"Organisations, globally, are wakening up to this fact and increasingly looking for talent that is learning agile and can continue to perform and keep with the changing job role demands in the present and future. Learning agility will be the second most in-demand skill for organisations during Hiring in 2019," Ketan Kapoor, CEO, Mercer-Mettl says.
In 2019, Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM) courses will remain on the top of popular courses choice among the students in every country, as it has rapidly evolved from just being popular in the United States. Furthermore, STEM courses do provide numerous technological

MINDIT

advancements in the world, the reason many students opt for them.
"We are expecting to see a rise in specialised courses such as Robotics, Automation, Mechatronics, Disability programmes, and Infection control courses. All countries will be favoured in 2019, but it depends upon the need of the students," says Rohit Sethi, director, ESS Global.
For instance: The UK is getting quite popular for one year Master's programme among international students. Whereas, Germany has seen a rise in Engineering graduates. Talking about countries like Australia and Canada, they will be the leading countries among the study abroad aspirants due to a huge range of programmes and stay back opportunities.
With cutting-edge technologies like AI and machine learning becoming more and more integral to business operations in the IT/ITES sector, the demand for professionals with evolved, tech-led skillsets will only increase further in 2019.
Expertise in areas such as data compliance and cybersecurity will also be



much sought-after, given how critical data privacy and information security have become in the global business discourse. I also foresee organisations collaborating with reputed online learning platforms such as

ShineLearning.com to undertake large-scale upskilling and reskilling of their in-house talent.
"This skills-centric approach will benefit both the employers and the employees; while recruiters will be able to seamlessly address the growing demand for skills within their organisations, professionals can access significantly better career opportunities by upgrading their existing skillsets. With rapid technological advancement paving the way for a high-growth, high-value jobs ecosystem, we can expect continuous learning, unlearning, and relearning to become the motto of the new-age workforce," Zairus Master, CEO, Shine.com opines.



The Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences at the University of Strathclyde, Glasgow is offering Indian students the opportunity of a scholarship award up to £4,000 towards the cost of their tuition fees for each year of the undergraduate and postgraduate courses in International Relations and Diplomacy .This is applicable to the full-time programmes beginning in September 2019. Courses: MSc Diplomacy & International Security, MSc European Politics, MSc International Relations, MSc International Relations, Law & Security, MSc Public Policy, MSc Politics, MSc Political Research.
Eligibility: To be eligible, applicants must: Be a resident in India, Be available to commence their academic studies by the start of the academic year in September 2019, Be applying for a full-time undergraduate or post-graduate programme, Some scholarships have restrictions on other funding you can accept. This means you have to decide which scholarship to accept. For any University of Strathclyde award you are successful in applying for, you will receive the higher award only.
For more information:

STUDY CENTRES

With more and more people looking for alternative medicine treatment, the options are growing by leap and bounds in this field. One such field is magnetic therapy — a natural and painless treatment with no side effects. It involves knowledge about the human body, various diseases and their treatment by using magnets. A magnetic therapist can find employment in private/public hospitals, naturopathy hospitals or alternative treatment therapy centres. The minimum qualification for getting admission to certificate, degree and diploma courses in magnet therapy is 10+2 and graduation for PG courses. A few colleges where one can study are:
■ **Bihar Acupressure Yoga College, Patna. Course:** Bachelor of Magneto Therapy
■ **Holy Angels College of Alternative Medicines, Mumbai. Course:** Bachelor of Magneto Therapy
■ **All India Alternative Medical Council, Nainital. Course:** Bachelor of Magneto Therapy
■ **All India Paramedical Technology and Alternative Medicine Council, Ludhiana. Course:** Bachelor of Magneto Therapy
■ **Acupressure Health Mart, New Delhi, Kolkata, Raipur. Course:** Master Diploma in Magnet Therapy



OPERATIONS AT MANKIND PHARMA

Location: Delhi
Stipend: ₹10,000 per month
Link: internshala.com/i/17269
Application deadline: January 17, 2019

HUMAN RESOURCES (HR) AT FUTURE GENERALI LIFE INSURANCE

Location: Delhi
Stipend: ₹2,000 per month
Link: internshala.com/i/17270
Application deadline: January 17, 2019

MARKETING AT TREE AND YOU

Location: Delhi
Stipend: ₹3,000-₹5,000 /Month
Link: internshala.com/i/17271
Application deadline: January 17, 2019

CREATIVE DESIGN AT SCRAPLABS

Location: Delhi
Stipend: ₹5,000-₹10,000 per month
Link: internshala.com/i/17272
Application deadline: January 18, 2019

SOCIAL MEDIA MARKETING AT ASPEN ADVENTURES

Location: Delhi, Noida
Stipend: ₹5,000 per month
Link: internshala.com/i/17273
Application deadline: January 20, 2019

DATA ANALYSIS AT NARVAR

Location: Bengaluru
Stipend: ₹30,000 per month
Link: internshala.com/i/17274
Application deadline: January 17, 2019

WEB DEVELOPMENT AT PROACE INTERNATIONAL

Location: Work From Home
Stipend: ₹9,000-₹12,000 per month
Link: internshala.com/i/17275
Application deadline: January 18, 2019

IN BRIEF

AMRITA SINGS MOU WITH INDIAN NAVY

Amrita Vishwa Vidyapeetham has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Indian Navy for academic and research collaboration in the field of aerospace, anti-submarine warfare, cyber security, management, and medical research. The MoU would encompass collaborative research and development in all possible areas of mutual interest and strength, including M.Tech and PhD programmes for naval officers.
Speaking at the occasion C Parameswaran, Director, Corporate and Industry Relations, Amrita Vishwa Vidyapeetham, Coimbatore said: "This is a historic moment. This is the first time that the Indian Navy has signed an MOU with a private university. Our scientists and researchers eagerly look forward to doing cutting-edge research with the officers to help strengthen the country's defenses."

ONE-YEAR PROGRAMME

The Indian School of Public Policy invites applications for the first round of admissions for its flagship programme in Policy, Design and Management. Designed for aspiring public policy managers, practitioners and administrators, the programme will ground students in a strong policy foundation, and arm them with core skills in policy design, implementation, management and assessment. The last date to submit application (first round) is January 15, 2019.
The first session will commence from August 2019 at the programme campus in Qutab Institutional Area, New Delhi.

SUMMER INTERNSHIP PROGRAMME

Internshala, in collaboration with Aniket Singh, the author of 'Intern Abroad This Summer' series of books, has launched the 'Aniket Singh Summer Internship Program'. Through this program, students can avail once in a lifetime summer internship opportunities at three top academic institutes - University of Southampton, UK, IISc Bangalore, and IIT Gandhinagar with full scholarship of up to ₹2 lakhs. Any engineering student, across disciplines, can apply to the internships from January 5-11, 2019.
Aniket Singh is an IIT Madras alumnus and is working at Apple Inc in California, US. He has been working towards making top research internships in the world more accessible for Indian students. He is also the author of 'Intern Abroad This Summer' series, which outlines how to find and score top research internships in the world.
For details, visit: <https://internshala.com/aniket-singh-summer-internship-program>

IELTS CHANGES

The Nursing and Midwifery Council in the UK has announced changes to its English language proficiency requirements for overseas nurses and midwives wishing to work in the UK. Under the change, nurses and midwives wishing to work in the UK will still be required to achieve a minimum overall score of 7.0 in IELTS. However, a 6.5 score in the writing section of the test will be accepted alongside a 7.0 score in each of the Reading, Listening and Speaking sections of the test.
Commenting on the announcement, Michael King, Managing Director, BC Examinations and English Services India, Pvt Ltd said: "The British Council is committed to creating opportunities for people to succeed in India and across the world. We look forward to continue providing support and guidance to those nurses and midwives looking to work in the UK."

CAT'S CALL PREDICTOR

Shiksha has launched one of the first ever IIM & non-IIM Call Predictor featuring 250-plus colleges across India at its portal for MBA aspirants. The CAT 2018 results are already out. There are about 1.5 lakh CAT takers, who will start filling application for the colleges based on their performance.
The newly launched tool will help students to shortlist which colleges they may get based on the CAT score and focus on the preparation for their qualitative round. There are numerous factors that influence the college selection. With the Call Predictor, candidates can take a quick decision.

Jalan panel examines reserve size of RBI

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

A high-level panel led by former RBI governor Bimal Jalan Tuesday held its first meeting to decide on an appropriate size of reserves that the central bank should maintain and the dividend it should give to the government.

The six-member panel is likely to submit its report in April, sources said.

The panel has been entrusted with the task of reviewing the best practices followed by central banks worldwide in making assessment and provisions for risks which a central bank balance sheets are subject to.

The panel having former economic affairs secretary Rakesh Mohan as its vice chairman will propose a suitable profit distribution policy taking into account all the

likely situations of RBI, including the situation of holding more provisions than required.

The government and RBI under previous governor Urjit Patel had been at loggerheads over the Rs 9.6 lakh crore surplus capital with the central bank.

The finance ministry was of the view that the buffer of 28 per cent of gross assets maintained by RBI is well above the global norm of around 14 per cent.

Following this, the RBI board in its meeting on November 19, 2018 decided to constitute a panel to examine Economic Capital Framework.

The committee also includes Economic Affairs Secretary Subhash Chandra Garg and two members of RBI central board -- Bharat Doshi and Sudhir Mankad. RBI Deputy Governor NS

Vishwanathan is the sixth member of the committee.

In the past, the issue of the ideal size of RBI's reserves has been examined by three committees — V Subrahmanyam (1997), Usha Thorat (2004) and YH Malegam (2013).

While the Subrahmanyam committee recommended that contingency reserve should be built up to 12 per cent, the Thorat committee said the reserve adequacy should be maintained at 18 per cent of the total assets. While the RBI board did not accept the views of the Thorat committee, it decided to go ahead with the recommendation of the Subrahmanyam panel. The Malegam committee recommended that adequate amount of profits should continue to be transferred each year to contingency reserves.

Nilekani panel to boost digital payments

PTI ■ MUMBAI

The Reserve Bank of India Tuesday constituted a high-level committee under Aadhaar architect Nandan Nilekani to suggest measures to strengthen the safety and security of digital payments in the country.

The five-member panel on deepening of digital payments has been constituted with a view to encourage digitisation of payments and enhance financial inclusion through digitisation, the RBI said in a statement.

"The committee shall submit its report within a period of 90 days from the date of its first meeting," it added.

The panel has been tasked with reviewing the existing status of digitisation of payments in the country, identifying the current gaps in the ecosystem and suggesting ways to bridge them and assessing the current levels of digital payments in financial inclusion.

It will also "suggest measures to strengthen the safety and security of digital payments... (and) a road map for increasing customer confidence and trust while accessing financial services through digital modes".

It has also been asked to undertake cross country analyses with a view to identify best practices that can be adopted in our country to accelerate

digitisation of the economy and financial inclusion through greater use of digital payments.

Another term of reference of the panel, the RBI said is to suggest a medium-term strategy for deepening of digital payments. Besides Infosys co-founder Nilekani, other members of the panel are former RBI deputy governor H R Khan, former MD and CEO of Vijaya Bank Kishore Sansi and former secretary in ministries of IT and steel member is Sanjay Jain, chief innovation officer, Centre for Innovation, Incubation & Entrepreneurship (CIIE), IIM Ahmedabad.

Royal Enfield chief quits

New Delhi: Royal Enfield, the two-wheeler arm of Eicher Motors, Tuesday announced a top management change following the resignation of its President Rudrat Singh.

Eicher Motors CFO Lalit Malik will take on the additional interim responsibility of the Chief Commercial Officer with immediate effect, Royal Enfield said in a statement. Singh, who had joined the company in January 2015 to lead the commercial organisation, has decided to pursue opportunities outside of Royal Enfield owing to personal commitments, it added.

Housing sales rises 6% in 8 major cities in 2018: Report

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Housing sales rose six per cent in 2018 in eight major cities as developers reduced prices and offered indirect discounts to lure customers, property consultant Knight Frank India said in its report released on Monday.

Sale of residential units increased in six cities — Delhi-NCR, Mumbai, Bengaluru, Chennai, Hyderabad and Ahmedabad; but declined in two cities — Kolkata and Pune.

Higher sales volumes resulted in drop in the number of unsold units by 11 per cent to nearly 4.7 lakh units. Compared with other property consultants, Knight Frank has reported lowest rise in housing sales during 2018 at 6 per cent.

JLL India said housing sales rose 47 per cent in seven cities, ANAROCK data suggested 16 per cent rise in seven cities, and PropTiger showed 25 per cent rise in sales in nine big cities.

The difference in the figures is an account of variation in locations in the respective reports.

"An improving regulatory environment, reducing prices, indirect discounts and an increasing infusion of residential products that are more in tune with the homebuyers' preferences have culminated in a six per cent year-on-year (YoY) growth in sales during 2018," Knight Frank India said. Sales volumes in 2018 were estimated to be 2,42,328 units as against 2,28,072 units in the previous year. Bengaluru saw the highest annual increase in sales of 27 per cent YoY in 2018, riding on the back of economic stability and job security, the report said. The NCR market saw sales improve by 8 per cent YoY in 2018, on the back of stronger sales traction in Noida and Greater Noida.

Sales declined in Kolkata (-10 per cent) and Pune (-1 per cent) in 2018, against 2017.

BUSINESS CORNER

JLR SALES UP 16.23% AT 4,596 UNITS IN 2018

New Delhi: Tata Motors-owned Jaguar Land Rover Tuesday reported 16.23 per cent increase in its sales in India at 4,596 units in 2018. The company had sold 3,954 units in 2017, Jaguar Land Rover India said in a statement. The sales achieved in 2018 was the highest calendar year volume to date for the company. These were driven by models such as Land Rover Discovery Sport, Range Rover Evoque, Jaguar F-PACE, XE and XF, it added. Commenting on the sales performance, Jaguar Land Rover India President and Managing Director Rohit Suri said, the auto industry faced strong headwinds in 2018, especially in the second half with tight liquidity conditions, increased upfront insurance costs and increased lending rates. "Despite that, the growth of Jaguar Land Rover in India has been very encouraging for us and we continue to focus on strong product launches and an ever-improving customer experience in 2019 for the two iconic brands, Jaguar and Land Rover," he added. In 2018, the company had introduced over 10 new products, including the Range Rover Velar, Range Rover Evoque Convertible, Model Year 2018 Range Rover and Range Rover Sport and Jaguar F-PACE in 2-litre petrol.

TVS MOTOR CO CALLS FOR CUT IN GST RATE ON TWO-WHEELERS

New Delhi: TVS Motor Company Chairman Venu Srinivasan Tuesday joined the chorus calling for reduction in GST rate on two-wheelers, saying the mass mobility item should not be benchmarked against luxury goods. Last week, the chairman of the country's largest two-wheeler maker, Hero MotoCorp, Pawan Munjal had called for GST rate cut on bikes and scooters to 18 per cent from the current rate of 28 per cent. "Given the importance of the two-wheeler segment as an item for mass mobility, the GST rates for two-wheelers undoubtedly need to be reconsidered," Srinivasan said in a statement. He further said rising urbanisation, increasing purchasing power and the enhanced need for connectivity particularly in the mid-sized and smaller cities across India, has fuelled the two-wheeler revolution for personal mobility. "It (two-wheeler) certainly cannot be benchmarked against the prevalent GST rates for luxury goods at 28 per cent, especially given the current state of inconsistencies with the integrated multi-modal public transport systems across India," he added. Srinivasan further said with new safety norms and BSVI integration also around the corner, both of which will increase two-wheeler prices, "it has become even more imperative to relook at the GST rates for two wheelers to ensure social inclusion that is sustainable in the longer run." Last week, Munjal had stated that reduction in tax rate would not only help millions of two-wheeler customers, but also the entire value chain dependent on the sector. He stated that such a step was absolutely imperative to ensure growth in the auto sector to create and sustain inclusive economic growth. Bajaj Auto Managing Director Rajiv Bajaj also reportedly supported the demand for cut in GST on two-wheeler stating such a step would help mitigate increase in costs that would come with the implementation of new safety and emission norms.

NIFTY 50

SCRIP	OPEN	High	LOW	LTP CHANGE	
NIFTY50	10786.25	10814.45	10733.25	10802.15	30.35
SUNPHARMA	433.80	449.00	432.35	448.75	17.95
ICICIBANK	367.80	381.80	366.60	379.30	11.60
SBIN	295.80	306.00	294.75	305.50	9.20
TATAMOTORS	176.10	180.50	176.10	179.95	4.60
YESBANK	188.00	193.20	185.00	191.80	4.65
AXISBANK	686.00	653.75	630.60	652.15	14.70
IRULHSGFIN	738.55	819.00	780.50	809.50	15.60
GRASIM	820.00	839.45	811.30	835.70	15.05
BAJAJ-AUTO	2667.00	2700.00	2635.50	2694.85	36.30
JSWSTEEL	290.10	295.85	288.10	293.45	3.60
INFRAEEL	292.70	300.40	290.00	297.15	3.40
INDUSINDBK	1563.15	1588.00	1551.00	1577.00	17.85
VEDL	194.50	197.00	191.90	195.60	2.10
TATASTEEL	485.65	493.35	483.80	490.80	5.30
MARUTI	7380.00	7454.80	7322.10	7440.00	77.95
BHARTIARTL	323.75	331.75	323.25	328.30	3.05
IITC	282.00	285.50	281.35	283.25	2.25
BAJAJFINSV	6430.00	6460.00	6355.00	6442.00	34.85
DREDDY	2561.00	2586.85	2551.00	2571.30	12.65
IOC	133.60	134.20	132.70	133.95	0.50
ASIANPAINT	1401.00	1412.70	1395.50	1400.00	4.00
HCLTECH	948.00	948.00	933.10	944.10	2.55
TITAN	944.20	950.00	938.55	946.50	2.45
TECHM	688.00	692.40	685.20	688.05	0.55
CIPLA	516.00	517.20	511.25	514.00	-0.05
HEROMOTOCO	2994.00	2994.50	2930.25	2957.20	-0.75
EICHERMOT	1975.00	2006.00	1975.00	1980.00	-30.40
WIPRO	325.00	327.50	322.60	323.65	-0.60
LIT	1387.50	1393.85	1375.00	1381.00	-2.80
INFY	674.95	677.45	668.55	670.00	-1.70
RELIANCE	1105.10	1109.95	1096.00	1101.00	-3.75
TCS	1905.40	1906.40	1883.30	1891.00	-6.90
ONGC	149.10	149.10	146.10	147.10	-2.80
POWERGRID	197.90	198.50	195.80	197.35	-1.10
COALINDIA	234.50	235.15	232.15	233.10	-1.40
ADANIPORTS	383.00	383.00	375.75	379.10	-2.55
HDFCBANK	2122.00	2123.50	2096.65	2102.90	-17.75
HINDUNILVR	1792.00	1793.50	1761.10	1769.95	-15.00
HDFC	1983.00	1983.00	1948.00	1955.85	-17.05
ULTRACEMCO	2951.00	2943.45	2840.00	2892.35	-24.60
BAJFINANCE	2510.00	2582.00	2525.05	2531.00	-32.40
M&M	720.00	733.20	717.50	723.00	-6.55
HINDALCO	208.50	209.25	205.30	206.40	-2.15
GAIL	355.60	359.15	352.80	353.35	-3.75
NTPC	148.00	149.50	146.00	147.10	-1.60
HINDPETRO	249.50	249.70	246.40	247.00	-2.80
BPCL	325.10	335.90	330.05	336.50	-4.90
KOTAKBANK	1103.00	1104.20	1125.95	1128.00	-18.60
UPL	765.50	765.00	748.00	751.00	-12.75
ZEEL	462.50	463.80	448.75	449.10	-13.85

NIFTY NEXT 50

SCRIP	OPEN	High	LOW	LTP CHANGE	
NIFTY NEXT 50	27276.75	27799.50	27625.80	27689.10	-17.50
AUROPHARMA	732.05	751.85	730.00	748.80	24.05
LUPIN	823.80	843.75	821.15	840.30	19.85
PUNJ	980.40	1020.00	976.95	1000.00	195.80
L&TF	146.40	148.80	144.80	148.55	2.85
SRLIFE	600.00	626.90	600.00	612.90	10.45
SAIL	53.75	54.50	53.25	54.30	0.90
SRTANSFIN	1177.00	1196.80	1165.80	1192.80	16.50
BIOCEN	621.05	634.00	618.35	628.90	8.25
GICHPRLI	322.70	325.30	320.00	324.00	4.05
PETRONET	216.50	220.50	215.80	219.80	2.75
PEL	2275.00	2334.95	2259.80	2305.00	25.45
DLF	179.80	182.80	178.55	181.35	1.55
MOTHERSUN	157.00	159.50	155.10	158.35	1.25
OIL	176.75	177.65	174.00	175.85	1.25
IDEA	36.50	37.30	36.25	36.90	0.25
BANKBARODA	122.90	124.15	121.70	123.50	0.80
COLPAL	1305.40	1317.55	1295.00	1311.00	8.00
SUNTV	597.25	602.80	590.75	598.70	3.35
GICRE	263.60	265.00	261.80	265.00	1.40
LICHSGFIN	481.30	486.90	475.50	486.65	1.30
HDFCLIFE	392.90	396.00	389.20	394.00	0.95
NHPC	26.10	26.10	25.85	26.00	0.05
CADILAC	349.20	352.95	347.10	349.50	0.60
DMART	1575.30	1578.70	1563.05	1573.00	1.85
ABB	1307.00	1309.05	1292.00	1300.00	-1.80
AMBUJACEM	217.10	219.65	215.20	217.60	-0.40
NMDC	95.10	95.85	94.20	94.75	-0.20
CONCOR	684.00	684.00	672.25	679.50	-1.65
PIDILITIND	1103.00	1108.00	1092.60	1099.90	-2.70
ACC	1484.00	1487.50	1468.40	1474.00	-3.95
ICICIGI	869.00	877.90	861.00	863.10	-2.35
INDIGO	1109.40	1128.35	1101.05	1110.35	-3.40
NIACL	179.45	180.20	178.05	178.90	-0.60
ABCAPITAL	97.20	98.60	97.15	97.20	-0.40
ASHOKLEY	93.20	94.15	92.45	93.00	-0.40
HINDZINC	273.05	285.05	272.10	273.10	-1.45
BEL	91.50	91.85	90.05	90.80	-0.60
OFSS	3599.00	3617.00	3566.10	3571.00	-25.20
DABUR	422.35	422.50	414.00	417.45	-3.50
MRF	6670.00	6697.60	6626.00	6649.00	-479.55
SCSCLTD	19515.00	19544.90	19250.30	19302.90	-207.50
SIEMENS	1062.00	1067.00	1050.00	1050.00	-12.05
SHREECEM	16851.20	16898.80	16613.00	16720.00	-201.70
MARICO	384.15	391.40	380.25	381.85	-4.95
BHEL	72.10	72.50	71.00	71.30	-0.95
MCDOWELL-N	609.70	610.45	598.20	599.50	-8.10
BRITANNIA	3155.00	3155.00	3080.00	3098.00	-45.80
GODREJCP	801.00	804.90	775.25	780.15	-20.40
HAVELLS	694.00	696.90	667.05	668.85	-24.70
BANDHANBNK	482.00	501.00	471.00	479.70	-18.35

BSE 500

Script	Open	High	Low	LTP
RCOM	13.78	14.15	13.67	14.01
GRUH	276.00	283.00	253.05	256.00
BANDHANBNK	482.00	500.70	470.85	477.05
YESBANK	188.00	193.20	185.00	192.30
SUZLON	5.36	5.44	5.32	5.39
SBIN	295.00	305.80	294.70	305.10
ICICIBANK	367.90	381.60	366.75	380.20
SUNPHARMA	431.95	448.20	431.95	447.15
IRULHSGFIN	789.50	817.85	780.00	812.70
AXISBANK	635.50	653.90	630.70	650.90
VEDL	194.00	197.10	192.05	195.70
TATAMOTORS	176.30	180.50	176.10	179.35
TATAELXI	974.00	990.50	960.10	973.35
HINDALCO	208.00	209.50	205.30	206.40
NBCC	62.70	63.25	61.85	62.45
DHFL	230.30	232.30	226.65	231.10
ASHOKLEY	93.50	94.15	92.30	93.10
RELIANCE	1106.35	1109.90	1096.10	1103.95
HDFC	2007.00	2007.00	1948.20	1955.00
PCJEWELLER	81.20	83.50	78.85	82.65</

Khan: War would be suicidal

Accuses India of rejecting his peace overtures

PTI ■ ISLAMABAD

Pakistan Prime Minister Imran Khan has accused India of not responding to his peace overtures and said that any war between two nuclear-armed nations would be suicidal for them. In an interview with Turkish news agency TRT World, according to his Pakistan Tehreek-i-Insaf (PTI) party, Khan again expressed his desire for talks with India. He said that even a Cold War was not in the interests of the two countries.

"Two nuclear armed countries should not even think of a war; not even a Cold War because it could worsen any



time. The only way is bilateral talks. Two nuclear armed countries at war is like a suicide," the

party quoted him as saying. He said India did not respond to his peace overtures. India has

been maintaining that terror and talks cannot go together. "India was offered to take one step towards and we shall take two. But India rejected Pakistan's offer for talks several times," Khan said.

Khan also said that India would never be able to suppress the rights of the Kashmiri people.

The Indo-Pak ties strained after the terror attacks by Pakistan-based terrorists in 2016 and India's surgical strikes inside Pakistan-occupied Kashmir.

The ties further nose-dived in 2017 with no bilateral talks taking place between them.

White House calls detentions of Canadians in China unlawful

AFP ■ TORONTO

The White House is calling the detentions of two Canadians in China unlawful and Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau and President Donald Trump have agreed to continue to seek their release, officials said Monday.

China grabbed the Canadians in apparent retaliation for the arrest of a top Chinese tech executive last month. Trudeau spoke to Trump in a phone call Monday.

"President Trump spoke with Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau today, during which the two discussed the

unlawful detention of two Canadian citizens in China as well as bilateral trade issues," White House Press Secretary Sarah Huckabee Sanders said in a statement.

The White House hasn't spoken publicly about the detained Canadians until now. U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo and a State Department spokesman previously called for their release. "The Prime Minister thanked the President for the strong statements of support by the United States in response to the arbitrary detention of two Canadians in China. The two

leaders agreed to continue to seek their release," Trudeau's office said in a summary of the call. The Chinese detained Canadian ex-diplomat Michael Kovrig and entrepreneur Michael Spavor last month on vague allegations of "engaging in activities that endanger the national security" of China.

The arrests came after Meng Wanzhou, the chief financial officer of Chinese telecommunications giant Huawei, was arrested in Canada on Dec. 1 at the request of the United States, which wants her extradited to face charges that she and her company misled

banks about the company's business dealings in Iran.

Trudeau and Trump spoke about the U.S. extradition request and "they reaffirmed the importance of respecting judicial independence and the rule of law," Trudeau's office said.

Trump previously said he might intervene in the Huawei case if it would help clinch a trade agreement with China, upending U.S. efforts to separate the court proceeding from U.S.-China trade talks and contradicting Canadian officials who said the arrest was not political.

Man attacks children in Chinese school; 20 hurt

PTI ■ BEIJING

A disgruntled former worker of a Beijing primary school armed with a hammer attacked and injured 20 children, three of them seriously, officials said Tuesday, the latest such incident in China. The attack at the Number One Primary School in Beijing's Xicheng district took place just around noon, media reports said.

The suspect, the school's former repair worker who was angry after he failed to pass his probation, hit the children's skulls one by one using a hammer, Hong Kong-based South China Morning Post quoted a former school maintenance worker surnamed Liang as saying.

Police in the Xicheng district said in a statement on Weibo that they have detained the 49-year-old male suspect surnamed Jia. Jia was a migrant worker from Heilongjiang province whose contract ended at the start of the year, and police suspect that the attack was motivated by the anger at having his employment terminated, the

Post report said. Several of the students were rushed to the intensive care unit of the nearby Xuanwu Hospital following the attack. Three of the children have serious but non-life-threatening injuries, media reports quoted police as saying. The children were attacked while they were doing exercise on the school's running track. The attacker was standing nearby. He was stopped by a Physical Education teacher, the Post report said. Video footage posted on the social media showed dozens of angry parents demanding details from staff. They were repeatedly urged to stop filming by the head teacher. A teacher said "a worker at our school attacked 20 students in a first-floor stairwell. It is not like what everyone is saying, he did not use a knife," the report said.

A doctor posted on social media: "The mayor today came to the hospital to wait with us while the children were being medically treated. We have paused several operations to save all the children". A hospital bystander said:

"Police have tightened security at Beijing Children's Hospital and Xuanwu Hospital. Nurses are rushing in and out of the operation rooms".

A man has been detained on suspicion of carrying out the attack, the Post report said. Attacks on kindergarten schools and civilians in malls by disgruntled people have become common in China lately.

In January 2017, a farmer slashed and injured 12 children with a knife at a kindergarten in Youyi town, Pingxiang city. Four children were seriously injured while eight others received minor injuries. The attacker was executed on Friday, the Supreme People's Court said Monday.

In October last year, a woman was detained on suspicion of stabbing 14 children at a kindergarten in Chongqing.

In June, two children were stabbed to death outside a Shanghai kindergarten. Nine children died in a knife attack at a school in Shaanxi province in April.

Kim Jong-un visits China ahead of possible 2nd summit with Trump

PTI ■ BEIJING

North Korean leader Kim Jong-un arrived in China on Tuesday on an unannounced visit, in an apparent effort to coordinate with his only major ally ahead of a possible second summit with US President Donald Trump over denuclearisation of the Korean peninsula.

Kim is visiting China from January 7 to 10 on the invitation of President Xi Jinping, state-run Xinhua news agency reported on Tuesday. He is expected to celebrate his 36th birthday here on Tuesday. According to reports, he was accompanied by his wife, Ri Sol-ju, and senior officials, including Kim Yong-chol, his right-hand man in diplomatic negotiations with the United States and South Korea. Kim's visit came only days after he warned of taking an alternative path if the United States does not ease sanctions and pressure on his isolated country.

The visit also comes amid reports that negotiations are under way for a second summit between Kim and Trump. The two met in June in Singapore for the first summit. Kim visited China last year to meet Xi before and after his first meeting with Trump. Speculation had grown on Monday that Kim was possibly making his way to China after South Korea's Yonhap news reported that a



In this Monday photo provided on Tuesday by the North Korean government, North Korean leader Kim Jong Un walks with his wife Ri Sol Ju at Pyongyang Station in Pyongyang, North Korea, before leaving for China. While President Donald Trump waits in the wings, Kim arrived in Beijing on Tuesday for his fourth summit with China's Xi Jinping, yet another nod to the leader Kim most needs to court as he tries to undermine support for international sanctions while giving up little, if any, ground on denuclearization. AP

North Korean train had been seen crossing the border. Both countries' media confirmed the visit on Tuesday morning when Kim's distinctive green and yellow train arrived at a station in Beijing.

His visit to Beijing, which is to be closest ally of Pyongyang, comes at a time when China itself is locked in a trade war with the US over

Trump's demand to reduce the USD 375 billion trade deficit with the US.

Trump while seeking Xi's support in forcing Kim to relent and give up the nuclear and missile programme has also blamed the Chinese leader last year for tardy progress after his first summit with Kim at Singapore in June. Since the Singapore summit, there is growing scepticism in the US over Kim delivering on his promise to do away with the nuclear programme despite Washington's assurance over North Korea's security.

Also, China and Russia — both the permanent members of the UN Security Council — have been putting pressure on the US to lift UN sanctions against North Korea.

7 dead in shooting in Mexican city

AP ■ MEXICO CITY

Seven men have been killed in a shooting attack at a bar in Mexico's Caribbean coastal city of Playa del Carmen, authorities said Monday. State and local police said the attack occurred late Sunday at the "Las Virginias" bar in a low-income section relatively far from the beachside tourist resort zone. Six men were found shot to death in the bar, and another died at a local hospital. One man was wounded but survived the attack. He told police he was drinking beer

with friends when gunshots broke out.

The attackers have not yet been identified. Playa del Carmen is located on the coast facing the island of Cozumel, Mexico's leading cruise ship destination. Once a quiet fishing and ferry town, Playa del Carmen has grown exponentially in the last two decades, with lower-income neighborhoods springing up on the inland side of the coastal highway. The resort is midway between Cancun, to the north, and Tulum, to the south, in the

coastal state of Quintana Roo, which has seen homicides more than double in the last year, with 688 killings in the first 11 months of 2018, compared to 322 in the same period of 2017.

At that rate, Quintana Roo could end 2018 with a homicide rate of about 50 per 100,000, on a par with El Salvador. The Caribbean coast — especially Cancun and the area south known as the "Riviera Maya" — had long been largely spared the drug violence affecting other areas, but that no longer appears to be the case. Local sources

report that the feared Jalisco cartel has moved into the region, disputing control with local gangs.

In September, two Mexican marines were found stabbed to death in Cancun. In a single day in August, police found eight bodies strewn on the streets of Cancun.

In January 2017, gunmen attacked the state prosecutors' office in Cancun, killing four people. A day before that, a shooting at a music festival in Playa del Carmen left three foreigners and two Mexicans dead.



Women and children leave the Beijing No. 1 Affiliated Elementary School of Xuanwu Normal School following an attack in Beijing, China, Tuesday. A male attacker injured 20 children Tuesday inside the primary school in China's capital, officials said. AP

'B'desh to cultivate more effective ties with India'

PTI ■ DHAKA

Bangladesh would cultivate more effective ties with India and China, pursuing a vigorous economic diplomacy, newly appointed Foreign Minister Abdul Kalam Momen said Tuesday. Momen, 71, also said Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina directed him to intensify cooperation with neighbours on the basis of "solid partnership" and ensure that the foreign office acts as a partner of other ministries to draw more foreign investments in the country.

"My main focus will be to pursue a vigorous economic diplomacy with all major countries and particularly the neighbours," Momen told PTI in an interview a day after assuming the office, indicating that the new government wanted to reap the benefit of the friendships with both India and China.

An economist by background, Momen said his office would effectively do its part to elevate the country's status as a higher middle income by 2021 as envisaged by the premier and draw the required foreign assistance in implementing the government's ambitious development plans. Momen said intense relations with neighbours like India and China would remain as a major policy while he would try to cultivate more effective ties with



Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina

all major foreign nations like the US, the UK and France keeping Bangladesh's integrity intact.

"In no time in the recent history, our relations with India was so good. We will maintain it and rather take it to another level," he said. Simultaneously, Bangladesh would try to reap benefits of its ties with China as it offered a huge amount as credit for the country's development, Momen said.

Bangladesh's ties with India last year grew steadily, with high-level visits from both sides. Prime Minister Hasina visited India in May last during which she held talks with Prime Minister Narendra Modi. The last few years have been a "golden chapter" in

India-Bangladesh relationship when complicated issues of land and coastal boundaries were resolved, Modi said at the time.

During 2018, the two countries launched many development cooperation projects, including the construction of the Akhaura-Agartala rail line and the restoration of Kularua-Shahbazpur section of railway line.

Asked about major challenges, Momen referred to the Rohingya crisis and preferred to call it "an economic issue" but feared it could affect the regional stability unless addressed through a concerted effort involving nations in the neighbourhood.

"The issue needs to be

solved as soon as possible, otherwise it would affect stability of the entire region," he said. More than 700,000 Rohingya refugees have crossed into Bangladesh from Rakhine since August 2017 when Myanmar launched a brutal military crackdown, dubbed by UN as a "textbook example of ethnic cleansing" and "genocide" by international rights watchdogs, sparking a global uproar.

Momen is a new face in the ruling Awami League. He previously served as Bangladesh's politically appointed permanent envoy to the UN with concurrent accreditation to South American republics of Chile and Peru. He started his career as a civil servant in early 1970s to later become an economics professor in the US.

Having a doctorate degree in economics and MBA in business from Boston's Northeastern University and MPA in public administration, public policy and international economics from the Harvard University, Momen was elected from the northeastern Sylhet constituency.

His elder brother, AMA Muhith, was elected to parliament during the same constituency during the last parliament election and served as Bangladesh's longest serving finance minister in Hasina's cabinet.

S'pore foils cat-in-trousers smuggling bid

Singapore (AFP): Singapore immigration authorities said Tuesday they had foiled a bid to smuggle four kittens into the city-state stuffed down a man's trousers after hearing meows coming from the suspect's crotch.

In a statement, they hailed their "fur-midable" officers for stopping the "impossible" attempt to transport the animals in a car through a border checkpoint with neighbouring Malaysia. "Our officers were checking the travellers in the car, they heard a meowing and saw the bulge in the man's pants," an immigration authority

spokeswoman told AFP. The officers asked the 45-year-old Singaporean whether he had anything to declare, before discovering the live kittens secreted in his trousers.

The spokeswoman said that hiding items, such as contraband cigarettes, under clothing is a common method of smuggling. "But to stuff four live kittens into one's trousers - this is the first time we've seen it," she added.

The kittens survived the ordeal - the Agri-Food and Veterinary Authority, which is

now investigating the case, said they had been put in quarantine and were active and well. It is not clear why the man was trying to bring the kittens into Singapore on January 2, although it could have been to sell on as pets.

If found guilty, the alleged smuggler faces up to a year in prison and a maximum fine of USD 7,300. Singapore imposes strict requirements for those wishing to bring cats into the country legally, which include obtaining an import licence and health certificate. Immigration authorities warn that animals smuggled into Singapore may be carrying diseases, such as rabies.



Satellite images can precisely assess poverty

PTI ■ LONDON

High-resolution satellite data can very precisely assess the status of poverty at household level in rural areas of developing countries, according to a study. If countries are to achieve the UN Sustainable Development Goals, it is particularly important to track the living conditions in poor nations around the world where the future population growth is highest, according to a study published in the journal PNAS.

It can be difficult to make a global assessment of poverty and poor economic conditions, but an eye in the sky can provide a good hint of the living conditions of populations, researchers



other things, the size of buildings and areas of uncultivated soil and the length of the growing season on a number of family run farms. The images also reveal how people use the landscape around their homes and how this changes over time. The researchers show that a thorough analysis of satellite images can explain 62 per cent of the variation in the economic conditions of the individual households. As satellite images are relatively cheap and increasingly freely available, the study demonstrates that space-based monitoring is a cost-effective method to track socio-economic development as a supplement to

expensive household surveys with interviews. In particular, the use of satellite data makes it possible to analyse the economic development at much greater geographical scale and with a high temporal frequency.

"The use of satellite images makes it much, much cheaper to keep track of how far we are in reaching the UN's goals for sustainable development," said Gary R Watmough, who headed the research and is now employed at the University of Edinburgh, Scotland.

"If conventional assessments of the households' economic conditions were used, the cost would be more than USD 250 billion," Watmough said.

Tax refunds will go out on time: Trump official



Transportation Security Administration agents help passengers through a security checkpoint at Newark Liberty International Airport in Newark, N.J., Monday. Senate Minority Leader Chuck Schumer, D-N.Y., suggested Sunday that the partial government shutdown is disrupting operations.

AP ■ WASHINGTON

With the government shutdown in its third week and concern mounting over a possible delay in tax refunds, a Trump administration official said Monday that taxpayers who are owed money will be paid on time. Russell Vought, acting director of the White House budget office, said customary rules will be changed to make the payments possible. He told reporters Monday that an "indefinite appropriation" was available for the refunds, which would go out as normal.

The partial government shutdown couldn't have come at a worse time for the Internal Revenue Service. Tax-filing season opens soon, and while those who owe Uncle Sam will likely still have to pay up by April 15, people who were due money back have been worrying about a delay if the closure persists.

About three-quarters of taxpayers receive annual

refunds, giving them an incentive to file their returns early. Many lower-income people count on refunds as their biggest cash infusion of the year. The IRS might recall a large number of furloughed employees to process returns — probably without pay — in accordance with its usual contingency plans. Still, hundreds of billions in refunds would likely still be delayed because funding wouldn't be available, under current rules.

Some experts question whether the Trump administration has the legal authority to reverse earlier policies to allow government money to flow into refunds during a shutdown. Vought framed the move as part of President Donald Trump's goal to make the shutdown "as painless as possible."

The administration's announcement came as US House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, now wielding majority control of the House, signaled her intention to begin passing

individual bills to reopen federal agencies in the coming days — starting with the IRS' parent Treasury Department to ensure Americans receive their refunds. Some Senate Republicans have been growing increasingly anxious about the extended shutdown and could support such legislation from the Democratic-led House.

With the White House announcement on refunds, "They're reversing a long-standing legal position," said Howard Gleckman, senior fellow and tax expert at the Urban Institute. But, he added wryly, "Who's going to sue? It would be hard to show damages. ... So they might be able to get away with it."

A senior administration official cited a 2011 position of the chief counsel at the IRS that such payments are legally allowed during a shutdown. The official spoke on condition of anonymity because they weren't authorized to speak publicly to reporters.

UNHCR examining Saudi woman's asylum bid as family due in Bangkok

AFP ■ BANGKOK

The asylum claim of a Saudi woman who resisted deportation from Thailand will take several days to assess, the UN said Tuesday, as the 18-year-old's family, who she accuses of abusing her, was due to arrive in Bangkok. Rahaf Mohammed al-Qunun arrived at Bangkok's main airport on a flight from Kuwait after running away from her family, who she alleges subjected her to physical and psychological abuse.

Qunun said she planned to seek asylum in Australia, fearing she would be killed if sent back by Thai immigration officials who stopped her at the airport on Sunday. Saudi Arabia's human rights record has been under heavy scrutiny since the murder of journalist Jamal Khashoggi last year.

Initially, Thai authorities said Qunun would be sent back to Saudi Arabia. But as her plight pinballed across social media — including tweets about how she had barricaded herself in a hotel room — they abruptly changed course and allowed her to leave the airport Monday in the care of the UN's refugee agency.

The UNHCR said it was "very grateful" officials did not send Qunun back against her will. "It could take several days to process the case and determine next steps," the UNHCR representative in Thailand, Giuseppe de Vicentis, said in a statement. Thailand is not a signatory to a UN convention on refugees, and asylum seekers are typically deported or wait years to be resettled in third countries.

The UNHCR insists anyone with an asylum claim should not be sent back to the country they fled under the principle of non-refoulement. In a short press release distributed to media outside their



In this photo released by the Thailand Immigration Police, Saudi Arabia's Charge Affaires Abdalelah Mohammed A. Alshehry, left, shakes hands with Chief of Immigration Police Maj. Gen. Surachate Hakparn at the Saudi Arabia Embassy in Bangkok on Tuesday. Thailand's Immigration Police chief met Tuesday with officials of the Saudi Embassy in Bangkok and said the officials told him they are satisfied with how the case of the young Saudi woman who claims to be fleeing her abusive family has been settled.

embassy in Bangkok Tuesday, the Saudi government said it had not demanded her deportation, adding the case is a "family affair," but under the "care and attention" of the embassy.

In an earlier and separate explanation released on Twitter, the embassy also denied sending officials to Suvarnabhumi airport to meet Qunun as she arrived via Kuwait or impounding her passport — as she alleged. It also said the embassy had made contact with her father, a senior regional government official in the

kingdom, "to inform him on her situation."

Thai immigration chief Surachate Hakparn told reporters that Qunun's father and brother were due in Thailand later on Tuesday. He said he would talk to the UN refugee agency about the potential of a meeting between the family members.

"Rahaf is not a political asylum case," he insisted. "It is not political at all." Ultra-conservative Saudi Arabia has some of the world's toughest restrictions on women, including a guardianship system that

allows male family members to make decisions on behalf of female relatives. Qunun has said she believes she will be imprisoned or killed if sent back, and that her family is so strict it once locked her in a room for six months for cutting her hair.

Under the hashtag #SaveRahaf, the young woman's desperate pleas became a social media sensation, and she was able to post live updates and videos from the Bangkok airport in both Arabic and English, racking up more than 80,000 followers.

Vikram Misri takes charge as India's new envoy to China

PTI ■ BEIJING

Vikram Misri on Tuesday assumed charge as India's new ambassador to China and met top Chinese officials to discuss Sino-India ties, at a time when the two Asian giants are trying to boost their bilateral ties.

Misri presented a copy of his credentials to Hong Lei, Deputy Director General of Protocol at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Beijing.

He met Wu Jianghao, Director General of Asian Affairs of the Chinese Ministry of Foreign Affairs and exchanged views on India-China bilateral relations, the Indian Embassy here tweeted.

A 1989-batch India Foreign Service (IFS) officer, Misri, 54, replaced Gautam Bambawale who retired in November last year.

Misri has taken the charge of the country's envoy at a time when India and China are trying to deepen their cooperation in various areas, leaving behind 2017 Doklam standoff which was the most serious military face-off in decades.

Before his appointment as India's ambassador to China, Misri served as Indian envoy in Myanmar.

He has served in various capacities at the headquarters of the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) as well as in the Prime Minister's Office. He has also served in various Indian Missions in Europe, Africa, Asia and North America.

He was born in Srinagar and did his schooling from the Scindia School in Gwalior and earned a Bachelor's degree in History from the Hindu College, University of Delhi. Misri is also an MBA from XLRI, Jamshedpur.

US court rejects Rajat Gupta's bid to overturn insider-trading conviction

PTI ■ NEW YORK

In a fresh setback to India-born former Goldman Sachs director Rajat Gupta, a US court here has rejected his bid to throw out his 2012 insider-trading conviction, affirming a lower court's ruling in the case. The Second Circuit Court of Appeals, in an order issued Monday, said "we have considered all of Gupta's arguments on this appeal and have found them to be without merit. The judgment of the district court is affirmed."

Gupta, 70, is a free man now after completing a prison term in 2016 on insider trading charges but has been fighting to overturn his conviction, arguing that he served two years in jail for conduct that is not criminal even though the government lacked evidence to show he "received even a penny" for passing confidential boardroom information to now jailed hedge-fund manager Raj Rajaratnam.

Gupta's team of lawyers had argued in papers before the Second Circuit Court of Appeals that the judgement of the Manhattan district court finding Gupta guilty of insider trading "should be reversed" and his "conviction should be vacated".

In its ruling, the appeals court said that "Gupta's convictions of engaging in and conspiring to engage in an insider trading scheme were based on evidence that on several occasions Gupta, while serving on boards of directors of various companies, disclosed material nonpublic information about those companies to his friend and business associate Raj Rajaratnam, founder of the Galleon Group, a family of hedge funds that invested billions of dollars for its principals and clients." Gupta filed the appeal based on a landmark ruling by the Manhattan appeals court that for an insider trading conviction prosecutors must show that a defendant received a personal benefit for passing illegal tips. Gupta's lawyers have cited the ruling that led to the reversal of insider convictions of hedge-fund managers Todd Newman and Anthony Chiasson in December 2014. The appeals court noted that there is ample evidence that Gupta and



Rajaratnam were business associates. Gupta had invested several million dollars in Galleon funds. In 2005, Gupta and Rajaratnam invested in another investment fund capitalised with USD 50 million; Gupta originally contributed USD 5 million; he later doubled his investment with USD 5 million loaned to him by Rajaratnam. In early 2008, Gupta was made chairman of Galleon International, which, as of April 2008, managed assets totaling some USD 1.1 billion and could earn performance fees; Gupta was given a 15 per cent ownership stake in that fund.

The appeals court ruled that the jury was instructed that in order to convict Gupta on any given count, it must find that Gupta anticipated that Rajaratnam or others at Galleon would trade on the basis of the non-public information provided by Gupta and that Gupta, in return for providing this information, anticipated receiving some personal benefit.

"There was ample evidence to permit the jury to find that Gupta intended Rajaratnam to trade on the basis of the confidential information Gupta passed to him and that Gupta personally benefited," the appeals court said.

It cited the September 23, 2008 phone call Gupta made to Rajaratnam just minutes after getting off a Goldman board meeting during which he had learned that billionaire Warren Buffett was about to invest USD 5 billion in Goldman. It also cited the call Gupta made to Rajaratnam on October 23, 2008, again just minutes after learning in a Goldman Sachs board-of-directors conference call that Goldman would report a quarterly financial loss, a first in its history as a public company.

'Unfairly detained': Ex-Nissan boss Ghosn protests innocence

AFP ■ TOKYO

Former Nissan boss Carlos Ghosn said Tuesday he had been "wrongly accused and unfairly detained" at a high-profile court hearing in Japan, his first appearance since his arrest in November rocked the business world. Entering the court handcuffed and with a rope around his waist, the once-revered titan of the auto industry mounted a passionate defence against a string of financial misconduct allegations. The 64-year-old was thinner — his family says he has lost up to 20 kilogrammes (44 pounds) due to the rice-based diet in his Tokyo detention centre — and his hair was greying. He appeared in a dark suit without a tie and wore dark green plastic slippers.

"I have been wrongly accused and unfairly detained based on meritless and unsubstantiated accusations," he told the Tokyo District Court in a clear and steady voice. Throughout proceedings, he



showed no emotion and mostly faced forward or looked down, glancing occasionally at the gallery in the packed courtroom as journalists and sketch artists rushed in and out. His cheekbones were more prominent as a result of the weight loss but the executive otherwise appeared in decent health, coughing occasionally during the hearing.

In a career spanning decades, during which he won praise for turning around the struggling Japanese car maker, he said he had "always acted

with integrity" and had never before been accused of any wrongdoing.

"I have acted honourably, legally and with the knowledge and approval of the appropriate executives inside the company," stressed Ghosn. From the moment on November 19 that prosecutors stormed his private jet at a Tokyo airport, the twists and turns of the Ghosn case have gripped Japan and the business world.

At one point, the Franco-Lebanese-Brazilian tycoon appeared on the point of

release, only for prosecutors to produce further allegations against him to continue his custody.

In an indication of the interest the case has sparked in Japan, more than 1,000 people waited outside the court from the early hours in the hope of getting one of just 14 tickets for the public gallery.

Tuesday's hearing itself caught observers off-guard as Ghosn's lawyers deployed a rarely-used article of the Japanese Constitution to force the court to explain the reasons for his detention. Presiding Judge Yuichi Tada read out the charges against Ghosn and said he was being detained because he was a flight risk and there was a possibility he would conceal evidence.

The suspect has "bases in foreign countries" and may "escape", Tada said. Go Kondo, one of Ghosn's lawyers, countered: "There is no risk that he will run away. He's CEO of French company Renault. He's widely known so it's difficult for

him to escape." Ghosn is expected to be kept in custody until at least January 11.

He faces a host of allegations of financial impropriety. Prosecutors have formally charged him over suspicions he under-declared some five billion yen (\$44 million) from his salary in documents to investors over five fiscal years from 2010 — apparently to avoid accusations he was paid too much.

Authorities also suspect he continued this scheme over the next three tax years, seeking to defer another four billion yen of his salary until after retirement. A third, more complex, accusation is that he sought to shift personal foreign exchange losses onto Nissan's books and then paid a business contact from Saudi Arabia some \$14.7 million — supposedly from company funds — who allegedly stumped up collateral for him. Ghosn has not been formally charged over the latter two allegations and systematically rebutted all of

them in court. "I never received any compensation from Nissan that was not disclosed," he said.

He added that Nissan never incurred any losses from his foreign exchange contracts and that the Saudi partner, Khaled Juffali, was "appropriately compensated" for "critical services that substantially benefited Nissan". A statement issued on behalf of Juffali's company, the first since the allegations emerged, said the compensation was for work done to benefit Nissan, including resolving a local business dispute and lobbying for the approval for a new plant in Saudi Arabia.

A towering figure in the auto industry, Ghosn is credited with turning around a struggling Nissan — also giving him a high profile rare for foreign executives in Japan. He forged an unlikely three-way alliance between Mitsubishi Motors, Renault and Nissan that now outsells any other rival group.

Human trafficking takes on 'horrific dimensions'; almost a third of victims are children: UN report

PTI ■ UNITED NATIONS

Trafficking victims from South Asian countries including India are detected in many parts of Europe, according to a new UN report that said human trafficking has taken "horrific dimensions" with children accounting for a third of those being trafficked.

The 'Global Report on Trafficking in Persons 2018' from the UN Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) draws on information from 142 countries, examining trafficking trends and patterns.

The report said human trafficking is taking on "horrific dimensions", with sexual exploitation of victims the main driver. Children now account for 30 per cent of those being trafficked, and far more girls are detected than boys.

Victims from South Asia (and South-West Asia) are also detected in many parts of Western and Southern Europe. They account for about 5 per cent of the total detected victims in this subregion.

"Victims are trafficked from most South Asian countries, including Bangladesh, India, and Pakistan, and to a limited extent also from Nepal



and Sri Lanka. Victims from Afghanistan have been detected in the Nordic countries, the Netherlands, and the United Kingdom," it said.

The report further said that as an origin area for trafficking to the rest of the world, victims from South Asia have been detected in more than 40 countries around the world.

The main destinations appear to be the countries of the Gulf Cooperation Council in the Middle East. To a lesser extent, victims from South Asia have been detected in Western and Southern Europe and in North America. Victims from South Asia - Bangladesh and India - have also been detected

in South-East Asia.

Based on the limited information available for Bangladesh, Maldives, Nepal and Pakistan, female victims in this sub-region account for 59 per cent of the total detected victims.

UNODC Executive Director said Yury Fedotov said that "human trafficking has taken on horrific dimensions as armed groups and terrorists use it to spread fear and gain victims to offer as incentives to recruit new fighters," citing child soldiers, forced labour and sexual slavery as examples.

While the average numbers of reported victims had fluctuated during the earlier years for which UNODC had collected

data, the global trend has shown a steady increase since 2010. Asia and the Americas are the regions which have seen the largest increase in the numbers of victims detected, which may be explained by improved methods of detecting, recording and reporting data on trafficking — or a real increase in the number of victims.

Most victims of trafficking detected outside their region of origin are from East Asia, followed by sub-Saharan Africa: whilst there has been an increase in the number of convictions for trafficking in these regions, the study concluding that large areas of impunity still exist in many Asian and African countries, and conviction rates for trafficking remain very low. Trafficking for sexual exploitation is the most prevalent form in European countries, whilst in sub-Saharan Africa and the Middle East, forced labour is the main factor driving the illicit trade.

Women and girls make up most trafficking victims worldwide: almost three-quarters of them are trafficked for sexual exploitation, and 35 per cent (women and girls) are trafficked for forced labour.

German, 20, confesses to massive data hack spurred by 'annoyance'

AFP ■ BERLIN

German authorities on Tuesday said a 20-year-old hacker had confessed to stealing and leaking private data from hundreds of politicians, including Chancellor Angela Merkel, because he was "annoyed" by some of their public statements.

The young German, who lives with his parents, was taken into custody after police searched the family home in the western state of Hesse on Sunday. The suspect was not remanded in custody however because he was fully cooperating with the enquiry and not deemed a flight risk, said Georg Ungefuk, a spokesman for the Frankfurt prosecution service's internet crime office ZIT.

"The accused said he published the data because he had been annoyed by certain statements made by those affected," Ungefuk told a press conference in Wiesbaden.

The suspect, who because of his young age falls under juvenile law in Germany, told police he acted alone.

Ungefuk added that the young man had shown "clear remorse" about the stunning cyber security breach which



affected around 1,000 German politicians, journalists and celebrities and piled political pressure on the government. The information leaked online comprised home addresses, mobile phone numbers, letters, invoices and copies of identity documents. The data was first released via Twitter in December but its spread gathered pace last week.

Among those hit were members of the Bundestag lower house of parliament and the European Parliament as well as regional and local assemblies. Deputies from all parties represented in the Bundestag were targeted with the exception of the far-right Alternative for Germany (AfD), the largest opposition group in parliament.

Wolves throw Liverpool out of FA Cup

Goals from Raul Jimenez and Neves sent the hosts into fourth round

AFP ■ WOLVERHAMPTON

Liverpool manager Jurgen Klopp believes an early injury to defender Dejan Lovren highlighted why he chose to name a second-string side in bowing out of the FA Cup 2-1 to Wolves on Monday.

Klopp made nine changes to the side that lost narrowly for the first time in the Premier League this season to Manchester City on Thursday, with Lovren one of only two players to retain their place.

However, the Croatian pulled up with a hamstring injury after just six minutes and was replaced by 16-year-old Ki-Jana Hoever.

"Hamstring, is what I heard - without any signs before," said Klopp on what forced Lovren off. "I asked everybody, no signs, nothing, just out of the blue, so that's the decision you have to make."

"I am not sure what you all would have said if immediately from the beginning if our centre-half situation was Fabinho and Ki-Jana; then probably a few very smart people would tell me that I don't respect the competition or whatever."

Goals from Raul Jimenez and Ruben Neves either side of half-time sent the hosts into round four, where



Wolverhampton's Ruben Neves, left, celebrates after scoring his sides second goal during the English FA Cup third round match against Liverpool at the Molineux Stadium

they will face Shrewsbury or Stoke City, despite Divock Origi's fine strike briefly bringing Liverpool level after the break.

Hoever's introduction meant Liverpool fielded three teenagers for the majority of the match with Rafael Camacho and Curtis Jones also

handed debuts.

However it was the visitors' most experienced player, Milner, who was at fault for the opening goal when Diogo Jota caught the former England international in possession in midfield and put Jimenez clean through for the Mexican to score his seventh goal of the season.

Without Mohamed Salah, Roberto Firmino and Sadio Mane, Liverpool were struggling to get any momentum going forward.

But the visitors were level out of nothing when Origi collected a loose ball on the edge of the area six minutes into the second period and smashed the ball high past John Ruddy.

Wolves, though, have made a habit of upsetting the Premier League's established top six in their first season back in the top flight.

After beating Chelsea and Tottenham and holding City, Manchester United and Arsenal in the Premier League, Liverpool can now be added to the list of scalps for Nuno Espirito Santo's side thanks to a wonder strike from Neves.

"He has talent, he has done it before and we encourage him to shoot from range," said Wolves boss Nuno Espirito Santo. "It was a good

strike." Only a brilliant save from Ruddy denied Xherdan Shaqiri a stunning equaliser and Liverpool a replay as the Swiss's free-kick was touched onto the inside of the post by the Wolves goalkeeper. Klopp had a final roll of the dice by throwing on Salah and Firmino for the final 20 minutes, but even their firepower failed to spark a fightback and Klopp's team selection will now be seriously questioned as he is still to deliver a trophy in his four seasons in charge.

However, with Liverpool still in pole position to deliver a first league title in 29 years, the German coach defended his selection to minimise the chance of his stars suffering injuries.

"We played a similar line-up and had three tough games in the last couple of weeks, so it was clear we had to change," Klopp added after a run of four Premier League games in 13 days over the festive period.

"The intensity of the last few games gave me the information it was not possible to start with these three up front. Only Dejan played a lot of games in the last three or four weeks, pretty much all the games...He played today and was injured."

SINGLES

PAK RESCHEDULES KABBADI SERIES

KARACHI: The Tri-nation Kabbadi International series involving India, Pakistan and Iran was rescheduled after the organisers on Tuesday failed to get security clearance for the inaugural matches in Jhang. The organisers said that the series was scheduled to start from Tuesday with a clash between Pakistan and Indian teams at Jhang but the tournament will now be held from January 10 to 14. "We didn't get security clearance from the interior ministry and now the event will start from January 10th from Bahawalpur and continue in Sahiwal and end in Lahore on the 14th," the organisers said.

EGYPT TO HOST AFRICA CUP OF NATIONS

DAKAR: Egypt will host the 2019 Africa Cup of Nations between June 15 and July 13, Confederation of African Football (CAF) president Ahmad Ahmad announced on Tuesday. The CAF executive committee preferred Egypt to South Africa as replacements for original hosts Cameroon, who were dropped due to delays in preparations and concerns over security. It will be the fifth time Egypt stage the biennial showpiece of African football after 1959, when the country was called the United Arab Republic, 1974, 1986 and 2006. Egypt only entered the running to host the Cup of Nations when fellow north African country Morocco announced they would not bid to do so.

WEAH JOINS CELTIC ON LOAN FROM PSG

PARIS: Scottish champions Celtic reinforced their striking options on Monday with the signing of USA international Timothy Weah on loan from Paris Saint-Germain for the rest of the season. Son of 1995 Ballon d'Or winner and Liberian president George Weah, the 18-year-old has scored two goals in three appearances for PSG this season but saw his opportunities limited by a star front three of Neymar, Kylian Mbappe and Edinson Cavani. "He has a long career ahead of him but he has those natural attributes in terms of his pace and technique. He's hungry too," Celtic manager Brendan Rodgers told the club's website.

KROOS FACING 3-WEEK INJURY LAYOFF

MADRID: Spanish football giants Real Madrid have announced that their German midfielder Toni Kroos faces three weeks on the sidelines after tearing his left hamstring. Kroos will miss both legs of the club's Copa del Rey tie against Leganes as well as La Liga matches against Real Betis and Sevilla. The 2014 World Cup winner, who celebrated his 29th birthday last Friday, has played 14 league matches so far this season, contributing one assist. Real Madrid have been beset with injuries since the beginning of the 2018-19 season, and are currently languishing in 5th place in La Liga.

RAMKUMAR, ANKITA MAKE WINNING START

MELBOURNE: India's Ramkumar Ramanathan and Ankita Raina recorded straight sets victories to make a promising start at the Australian Open qualifiers but Karman Kaur Thandi went down fighting in the first round here on Tuesday. Seeded 21st, Ramkumar knocked out Spain's Sergio Guterrez-Ferrol 6-3, 6-2 in his men's singles opening round. Appearing in her third Grand Slam Qualifiers, Ankita (ranked 205) got the better of Myrtille Georges (ranked 238) from France 6-2, 6-2 in her opening round.

CHAMPIONS CLUB THRASH KALYANPUR STRIKERS

LUCKNOW: Man of the match Pyoosh Kusumwal (54 runs and 4 wickets) and Pranjal Sharma's five wicket haul helped Champions Cricket Club thrash Kalyanpur Strikers Club by 225 runs in BBD 'D' Division Cricket League on Tuesday. Batting first, CCC piled up 275 runs in their quota of overs. In reply, KS were bundled out for mere 50 runs.



UP stretch the lead to 202 runs

KANPUR: Host Uttar Pradesh secured the crucial first innings lead, ended the second day at 377 for 5 in the second essay against touring Assam in the Ranji Trophy Elite Group C match at Green Park, Kanpur on Tuesday.

Middle-order batsman Rinku Singh unbeaten on 96. UP is now 202 runs ahead.

At Agartala, Rajasthan trounced Tripura by an innings and 77 runs to book a berth in the quarter-finals.

Led by pace spearhead Deepak Chahar, the Rajasthan bowlers bundled out Tripura for 106 in the second innings to guide their team to a massive victory and enable it to

storm into the last eight of the national championship.

With this emphatic win, Rajasthan became the first team from the group to qualify for the knockout rounds by topping the pool with 51 points, having won 7 of their 9 matches.

After bowling out Tripura for a paltry 35 in their first innings, Rajasthan took a dominant 183-run lead by scoring 218 in their first essay.

Chahar wreaked havoc as he returned with figures of 5-17 in just eight overs and was well supported by pacers Aniket Choudhary (2-18) and T M Haq (2-21).

Meanwhile, at Rohtak,

hosts Haryana needed 98 runs to win against Services, with nine wickets in hand.

Haryana conceded the first innings lead, but fought back and dismissed Services for just 79 in their second essay to tilt the match in their favour.

At Bhubaneswar, Odisha secured the crucial first innings lead against Goa. The hosts, who decided not to enforce the follow-on, ended the second day at 37 for 1 as the overall lead swelled to 273 runs.

At Jammu, Jammu and Kashmir, who chose to bat, were shot out for 151 with Ajay Yadav (5-16) being the wrecker-in-chief for the visitors.

Mumbai on brink of maiden win

PTI ■ MUMBAI

Hosts Mumbai, who are already out of contention for a quarter-final berth, are on the cusp of registering their first win of the season against Chhattisgarh in their Elite Group A game.

At the end of day two of the four-day game at the Wankhede Stadium, the 41-time champions needed 14 runs more to notch a consolation victory.

Mumbai ended the second day at 77 for 0 in their second innings, chasing a target of 91, with their openers Jay Bista (36 not out) and Vikrant Auti (32 not out) at the crease.



Mumbai, who had bundled out the opposition for 129 in the first innings on Monday, replied with 188 after starting day two on 118 for three.

The hosts then shot out the visitors for 149 in the second innings to place themselves on the cusp of their maiden outright win of the season.

First innings wreckers-in-chief, pacers Shardul Thakur (4-47) and Tushar Deshpande (4-

53) were again the main destroyers in the visitors second innings.

At Rajkot, Saurashtra posted 356 in their first innings with some vital contributions from the lower-order against reigning champions Vidarbha.

At close of play, Vidarbha were 63 for 2, having lost their openers Aharva Taide and Faiz Fazal, and adrift by 293 runs.

In another inconsequential Elite Group A tie, hosts Railways thrashed Maharashtra by an innings and 58 runs in New Delhi. Railways bundled out Maharashtra for 131 in the second to record the win and grabbed seven points.



"Jo khele woh khile"
Narendra Modi
Prime Minister

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9-20 JANUARY



hotstar

PUJARA, PANT RISE IN RANKINGS

PTI ■ DUBAI

Cheteshwar Pujara has gained a spot to be third in the latest ICC batsmen rankings, following his man of the series performance in India's maiden Test series win in Australia.

Wicket-keeper batsman Rishabh Pant has jumped as many as 21 places to be 17th, the joint-highest by a specialist India wicketkeeper along with Farokh Engineer, who did so in January 1973. M S Dhoni's highest Test ranking was 19th.

India captain Virat Kohli has maintained his number one position in the batsmen rankings.

Pant, a star at the ICC U19 Cricket World Cup in 2016 when he scored an 18-ball half-century against Nepal, has moved into the top-20 after only his ninth Test with an unbeaten 159. Pant had started the Australia tour in 59th place and made rapid progress, scoring 350 runs in a series that also saw him take 20 catches.

Pujara, who scored 521 runs to help beat Australia 2-1, is another batsman to gain in the latest rankings update, which also takes into account performances in the second Test between South Africa and Pakistan in Cape Town.

Pujara has gained one slot to reach third position while all-rounder Ravindra Jadeja (up six places to 57th) and rookie opener Mayank Agarwal (up five places to 62nd) are the others from his team to advance at the end of a historic series win.

Spinner Kuldeep Yadav has gained seven slots to reach a career-best 45th position after his figures of five for 99 in Australia's first innings even as Jasprit Bumrah has held on to 16th position and Mohammed Shami has gained one place to take the 22nd slot. Jadeja has gained one place to reach fifth among bowlers and has also leapfrogged Windies captain Jason Holder into second place among all-rounders.



BCCI announces cash awards

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The BCCI on Tuesday announced cash awards of ₹15 lakhs per match for each of the playing eleven that featured in India's maiden Test series win on Australian soil.

Virat Kohli and Co defeated Australia 2-1 in the four-match Test series Down Under, ending India's 71-year-old wait for the rare achievement.

Congratulating the team, the BCCI also announced cash awards

for all the reserve players, as well as the members of the support staff.

"The bonuses will be equivalent to the actual match-fee payable: which is ₹15 Lakhs per match for Playing XI and ₹7.5 Lakhs per match for the reserve players," the BCCI said in a release.

The coaches will be awarded with ₹25 lakhs each, while the non-coaching support staff will receive bonuses which will be equivalent to the pro-rata salary/professional fee.

ond place among all-rounders.

South Africa's Aiden Markram has moved back into the top 10 after his knock of 78 at Cape Town, gaining seven slots to reach 10th position. Temba Bavuma has moved into the top 30 for the first time (up five places to 26th) after his score of 75 while captain Faf du Plessis's first-innings century has lifted him six places to 16th position.

Among their bowlers, Vernon Philander has gained one slot to reach third position while Duanne Olivier has continued his surge to move up to 32nd place from 36th.

There has been no change in position or points for leaders India in the team rankings, while Australia have lost one point but remain in fifth position.



Bumrah rested from Aus ODIs, NZ tour

PTI ■ SYDNEY

In-form Indian pacer Jasprit Bumrah was on Tuesday rested from the upcoming ODI series against Australia and the subsequent tour of New Zealand with Mohammad Siraj replacing the hero of the team's maiden Test series triumph Down Under.

With 21 scalps, Bumrah ended the four-Test series as the joint-leading wicket-taker alongside Australian off-spinner Nathan Lyon.

"Keeping in mind the work load of the bowler, it was best felt to give him adequate rest ahead of the home series against Australia. Mohammed Siraj will replace Bumrah in the squad for the Australia and New Zealand tour," said the BCCI in a statement.

"Punjab pacer Siddarth Kaul has also been drafted into the squad for the three-match T20I series against New Zealand," it added.

Bumrah, who made his Test debut just 12 months ago, has become India's go to pacer in all three formats.

India play three ODIs against Australia starting here on Saturday before travelling to New Zealand for a five-ODI and three-T20I assignment starting January 23.



IPL to stay in India

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The Indian Premier League (IPL) will stay in the country despite a speculated clash of dates with the general elections but the glitzy T20 extravaganza will start earlier than usual, from March 23, the Committee of Administrators announced on Tuesday.

The two-member CoA, comprising chairman Vinod Rai and former women's captain Diana Edulji, met on Tuesday to discuss the venues and window for the league.

"We will have all the primary venues backed up by alternate venues in case there is a need to shift matches. This will be done in consultation with central and state government authorities as well as security agencies," Rai said.

"The specific reason for having a back-up venue is to ensure that we don't have any issue if there is polling or recounting or PM's rally in any of the states once the election dates are announced," he added.

The last time the IPL started in March was back in 2010. After that, the league has always kicked off in the first half of April and ended in late May.

The early start this year is because of the ODI World Cup in England which will get underway from May 30.

Rai said the specific venues and match dates will worked out later after due consultation with government agencies.

"Once we chalk out the itinerary, we will get the dates and venues cleared by various govt agencies," he said.

Tuesday's decision ended months of speculation about the league's venue this year given the possibility of a clash of dates with the Lok Sabha elections, the schedule of which is not yet out.

It is learnt that the cash-rich country has been kept in the country keeping in view the fact that the elections will be held in phases and it wouldn't be too much of a logistical issue to schedule the games accordingly.

"The CoA will have detailed discussions with all the Stakeholders before releasing the IPL 2019 Schedule," a BCCI statement read.

As per the new BCCI constitution, there has to be a 15-day gap between the end of the IPL and India's international engagements.

The IPL has been played outside India twice due to general elections. In 2009, the edition was moved to South Africa, while in 2014, some games were played in the UAE.

That the IPL will stay in the country was first hinted by BCCI officials during the players' auction in Jaipur last month.



Australian team members stand by as India's Virat Kohli accepts the winners trophy AP

Smith, Warner return no cure-all for Aus: Vaughan

Former English skipper feels Aussies are kidding themselves thinking all will be rosy when Smith, Warner return

PTI ■ SYDNEY

Former England captain Michael Vaughan feels Australia, beaten for the first time in a home Test series against India, are "kidding themselves if they think everything will be rosy when Steve Smith and David Warner come back".

In his column for *The Daily Telegraph* following India's maiden Test series triumph Down Under, Vaughan wrote that Australia's issues run far deeper than the absence of suspended Smith and Warner.

"If you think Australia's problems will be solved the moment Steve Smith and David Warner are available for selection again then you are wrong... Batting, bowling, selection and tactics were poor against India, and Australia has to admit they were just not good enough," wrote Vaughan.

"Clearly, if you take the two best players out of any team they will struggle. But losing Smith and Warner is an easy excuse to hide behind. India was beaten 4-1 in English conditions last summer, although the matches were closer than the final score suggests, but would have beaten Australia 3-1 had it not rained in Sydney for the last two days."

Considering the current scenario, Vaughan can't see Australia beating England in the away Ashes to be held after the 2019 World Cup.

"Unless they assess themselves brutally. Batting techniques have to be better and they need to be more consistent with the ball. Every facet of their Test team has to improve. They are kidding themselves if they think everything

will be rosy when Smith and Warner come back.

"For the Ashes this summer, Australia has to look at breaking up Mitchell Starc, Josh Hazlewood and Pat Cummins. They need a more skilful bowler, such as a Peter Siddle or Trent Copeland. They need someone who can match England's consistency and skill with the Duke ball and bowl the fuller length," he said.

Vaughan's column sparked a debate with former Australian batsman and selector Mark Waugh disagreeing with the Englishman.

"I'm not so sure about that Mr Vaughan. Assuming Warner and Smith get back to somewhere near their best I'm suggesting they will make a huge difference," Waugh tweeted.

Waugh suggested that any team would struggle if they were to lose two of the best batsmen in the squad.

"You take the 2 best batsmen out of any cricket team in the world and see what happens or even 1. Kohli, Root, Williamson etc," he added.

However, Australian spin legend Shane Warne, who had earlier criticised the Australian selectors for their "ridiculous and senseless selections" agreed with Vaughan.

"Unfortunately, I have to agree with @MichaelVaughan here Jnr. Yes Warner & Smith will help, but Aust cricket needs a complete overhaul re the following. Coaching at all levels, the ridiculous under 23 programme, academy etc. As we are not producing quality smart cricketers-why?" Warne tweeted.

Kohli leads India's best pace, fielding team: Chappell

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Former Australia captain Ian Chappell feels the Virat Kohli-led side is India's best in pace bowling and fielding but it is nowhere close to being the best in batting.

The historic victory in Australia has garnered widespread praise for Kohli's men with several former players lauding the gritty performance.

Asked if this was the best Indian team of all time on *ESPNcricinfo*, Chappell said, "This Indian side is the best fast bowling contingent I have seen from India and the best fielding side that I have seen from India."

"But it's not the best batting side. I have seen better batting combinations from India than this team," he added, but did not dwell on which batting line-up he considered the best.

Although Cheteshwar Pujara was adjudged man of the series for being the series' top-scorer, India's traditionally



The Indian cricket team and support staff pose for a photo AP

much-vaunted batting was, for once, overshadowed by the team's pacers.

The Indian pacers accounted for 50 of the 70 Australian wickets during the engagement.

The visiting pace trio of Jasprit Bumrah, Ishant Sharma and Mohammed Shami combined for an average of 21.62 in the four-match series, while Australia's pace battery, comprising Pat Cummins, Mitchell Starc and Josh Hazlewood, averaged over 30.

Chappell said the Indian bowlers did well to exploit the conditions.

"I thought the Indian bowlers did really well and overall they out-bowled the Australians. They got more swing than the Australian bowlers."

"I think the seam position of the Indian fast bowlers was very good. They kept it up the whole time and perhaps that's why they swung the ball more than the Australians," he explained.

'Aussie batsmen were needlessly aggressive'

PTI ■ SYDNEY

Former Australia international Simon Katich on Tuesday said the Indian pacers' ability to maintain "scoreboard pressure" on impatient and needlessly aggressive home batsmen proved to be decisive in visitors' maiden Test series triumph.

India won the four-Test series 2-1 with the fourth Test ending in a draw. Katich said that Australian batsmen couldn't manage period of pressure well enough.

"On previous tours they (pacers) haven't been doing well in these conditions. But in this series, this pace attack was magnificent and they built scoreboard pressure. They have got pace and variety, and they were also able to move the ball. Perhaps that has been the big difference in the two teams," Katich said.

"India's bowlers were really patient and Australia's batsmen haven't been patient enough to withstand that pressure. And very good spinners backed up the pacers, whether it was Ashwin, Kuldeep or Jadeja," he said.

Katich said Australian batsmen did not apply themselves after getting starts.

"At times the Australian batsmen showed they could apply themselves well but they couldn't do it for long periods of time. You need to do it day-after-day in Test cricket. Marcus Harris had had a good series — he has got time and a good technique. But he



got a lot of starts and didn't go on to make a big one, much like the other batsmen.

"When Australia look back at series, they will see they have got out trying to be too aggressive. They didn't show the right shot selection or right temperament at the right time in any game. There was too much on-tempo batting, rather than going with ebbs while respecting the opposition bowling."

Black Caps sweep ODI series



Ross Taylor celebrates after scoring hundred in the final game of ODI series in Nelson ICC

AFP ■ NELSON

Veteran Ross Taylor and rising star Henry Nicholls both smashed centuries as New Zealand beat Sri Lanka by 115 runs in the third one-day international in Nelson on Tuesday to complete a 3-0 series whitewash.

Taylor top-scored with 137, and Nicholls was unbeaten on 124 off just 80 balls, lifting the hosts to 364 for four

after they lost the toss and were sent in to bat.

It was a record ODI score at Nelson's Saxton Oval, where the average is just 275, and Sri Lanka never looked like reaching the mammoth total.

They were all out for 249 in the 42nd over, throwing away their final four wickets without scoring a run as the series ended with a whimper.

Thisara Perera, who scored a blis-

tering 140 in the second ODI, was again the tourists' standout performer, racing to 80 in 63 balls.

With the series already decided, Nicholls and Taylor used the dead rubber to send a message to New Zealand selectors ahead of this year's World Cup.

It was Nicholls' maiden ODI ton and the 27-year-old will hope his strong Test form is finally transferring to the limited overs format.

Taylor's 20th ODI century tightened the 34-year-old's grip on the New Zealand record he already holds for one-day centuries.

"I'm getting old and hopefully I've got a few more left in me," he said.

TAIL-END COLLAPSE

In his last 11 ODI innings Taylor has scored three centuries and six half centuries. He came to the crease with New Zealand struggling at 31 for two but combined with skipper Kane Williamson for a 116-run partnership to steady the innings.

When Williamson departed on 55, Taylor and Nicholls plundered the Sri Lanka attack with an aggressive 154-run stand.

Sri Lanka's senior bowlers were all wayward, particularly at the death, as the tourists conceded 57 runs in the final three overs.

Magnificent performance by Virat and his team: Richards



PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Congratulatory messages continued to pour in a day after India's historic Test series victory on Australian soil with legendary batsman Sir Vivian Richards labelling the visitors' performance as "magnificent".

"Let me take this opportunity to congratulate Virat and his team for such a magnificent performance Down Under. It was always going to be tough, but you guys came out smelling sweet," Richards said in a video

message.

The 66-year-old West Indian also lavished praise on Player of the Series, Cheteshwar Pujara, who scored 521 runs at an average of 74 with the help of three hundreds.

"And to Pujara just magnificent batsmanship... I just felt real gold stuff. Well done to everyone. Magnificent performance again. Congratulations to the Indian team and to my good mate Ravi well done again."

IMRAN CONGRATULATES

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Prime Minister and former cricket captain, Imran Khan on Tuesday congratulated India on becoming the first Asian team to win a Test series in Australia.

"Congratulations to Virat Kohli and the Indian cricket team for the first ever win by a subcontinent team in a test series in Australia," Khan tweeted.

Considered an inspirational former captain, Khan led Pakistan to their sole World Cup title till date, in Australia in 1992.