

OPINION 6
LAWS HIGHER THAN SUTRAS**MONEY 8**

FINMIN TO PREPARE FRESH PROPOSAL FOR AI SALE

WORLD 12

IRAN 'CATEGORICALLY REJECTS' US TANKER ATTACK ALLEGATIONS

DELHI LUCKNOW BHOPAL BHUBANESWAR RANCHI RAIPUR CHANDIGARH DEHRADUN HYDERABAD VIJAYAWADA

Published From

*Late City Vol. 29 Issue 169

*Air Surcharge Extra if Applicable

the pioneer

www.dailypioneer.com

I LIKE EDGY CHARACTERS:
SHAHID 10 VIVACITY

Panel soon for '1 nation, 1 poll'

PM lauds parties' views, committee to give feasibility suggestions

DEEPAK K UPRETI ■ NEW DELHI

Claiming that "most political parties supported" the "One Nation, One Election" proposal, the Government on Wednesday said Prime Minister Narendra Modi will constitute a committee for giving "time-bound" suggestions on the issue.

"We had invited 40 political parties, out of which presidents of 21 parties participated and 3 other parties sent their opinion on the subjects in writing. Most parties gave their support to One Nation, One Election," Defence Minister Rajnath Singh told mediapersons after the meeting.

Interestingly, Rajnath said, "The CPI(M) and the CPI had a difference of opinion but they didn't oppose the idea, just the implementation of it."

However, CPI(M) general secretary Sitaram Yechury reiterated his party's categorical opposition to the move terming it fundamentally anti-federal and anti-democratic and thus against the Constitution. He dubbed the Government's move as "not practical" and an "artificial move" that would tamper with the constitutional scheme of accountability of the Government to the legislature. Yechury and CPI's D Raja, however, attended the meeting convened to push for Modi's party proposal.

The Congress, the TMC, the BSP, the SP, the DMK and the TDP were among the par-



Prime Minister Narendra Modi chairs a meeting of the heads of political parties in New Delhi on Wednesday

Ex-CEA's GDP claims ignored data: EAC-PM

'Subramanian's miscalculation due to blind trust on pvt monitor, exclusion of agri, services growth'

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The Economic Advisory Council to the Prime Minister (EAC-PM) on Wednesday rejected the claims of former Chief Economic Adviser Arvind Subramanian regarding over-estimation of GDP growth after 2011, saying his analysis ignores data on services and agriculture and shows blind trust in private firm Centre for Monitoring Indian Economy (CMIE).

In a paper released by EAC-PM, India's GDP estimation methodology stands at par with its global standing as a major and responsible economy. Primary contributors of the paper are economists Bibek Debroy, Rathin Roy, Surjit Bhalla, Charan Singh, Arvind Virmani.

Last week, the advisory body had said it would issue a point-to-point rebuttal of the Subramanian's research paper.

In a research paper, Subramanian, who stepped down last year, said India's



Ex-CEA Arvind Subramanian

complex economy and its evolution, the paper said he has used 17 high frequency indicators, but ignores the representation of "services sector (60 per cent in GDP) and agriculture sector" (18 per cent of GDP) in the analysis.

The paper notes that Subramanian used 17 indicators to express his skepticism about the growth rates after 2011-12. Majority of the 17 indicators have been taken directly from the CMIE, private agency that is not a primary source of information but collects it from different sources, it said.

For anyone who reads Dr Subramanian's paper, it is evident that he trusts CMIE but distrusts CSO (Central Statistics Office)... This blind trust in a private agency (CMIE) and blind distrust in a Government institution that has served India (CSO) appears unwarranted for a neutral academic," it said.

The paper further said the former CEA has overlooked the tax data.

The EAC-PM paper said Subramanian chooses to overlook tax data arguing that "we do not use tax indicators because of the major changes in direct and indirect taxes in the post-2011 period which render the tax-to-GDP relationship different and unstable, and hence make the indicators unreliable proxies for GDP growth."

Continued on Page 4

from the Opposition camp who gave the meeting a miss, but National Conference's Farooq Abdullah, PDP leader Mehbooba Mufti and NCP chief Sharad Pawar attended it. The AAP deputed Raghav Chadha for the meeting even as it demanded a vision document on the matter.

The Shiv Sena skipped the meeting owing to its foundation day celebrations but BJP's other allies JD(U) and the SAD were represented by Nitish Kumar and Sukhbir Singh Badal respectively. Odisha Chief Minister and

BJD leader Naveen Patnaik and NPP leader Conard Sangma too attended the meeting. The TRS was represented by its working president KT Rama Rao. BJP's new working president JP Nadda represented the party in the meeting.

BSP chief Mayawati tweeted saying she would have attended the meeting if it was on electronic voting machines (EVMs). "One Nation, One Election" is not an issue before the country, she said, adding "elections through ballot papers are actually the national issue and our party will continue its

struggle for it."

SP leader Akhilesh Yadav said several parties would not agree to the PM's proposal. "They should focus on the promises they have made to people, we hope they will work more on fulfilling those promises," Akhilesh tweeted.

The SP is not opposed to the idea though.

The TMC has demanded a white paper on the issue and cautioned against rushing to the subject without giving adequate thought to it.

The PM later tweeted, "Had a great meeting with

presidents of various political parties. Multiple issues of national importance were discussed. I thank the various leaders for their informed suggestions."

Modi had invited the heads of all political parties which have at least one member either in the Lok Sabha or the Rajya Sabha for the meeting to discuss several issues, including the "One Nation, One Election" idea, celebration of 75 years of Independence in 2022 and the 150th birth anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi this year.

Continued on Page 4

Vehicular pollution shoots up ozone levels in Delhi-NCR

SAPNA SINGH ■ NEW DELHI

Ozone pollution has escalated in Delhi's air as per the findings of Centre for Science and Environment (CSE).

Ozone, the deadly gas, has emerged as a dominant pollutant along with the Particulate Matter (PM) on at least 28 days during the summer this year as compared to only 17 days in 2018 summer, which is much higher than the standards.

Significantly, levels of ozone gas have been measured on a higher side in National Capital Region (NCR).

The analysis has found that among all NCR cities, Faridabad is on top with 80 per cent of days when ozone was exceeding the standards, followed by Ghaziabad with 67 per cent and Gurugram with 21 per cent days.

Interestingly, Noida shows much less impact with only 1 per cent of the days exceeding the standards.

Revealing the research findings, CSE in its report highlighted the places where ozone was measured high. Marking areas like Siri Fort,

Najafgarh, and some areas of NCR — Faridabad, Ghaziabad, CSE mentioned that levels of ozone in these areas have crossed the permissible limit to very high. "The NCR region experienced the biggest spikes," said CSE.

Ozone is not directly emitted from any source, but is formed from reaction between gases in the air under the influence of sunlight and high temperature. "Controlling emissions from vehicles and industry is the solution," said CSE.

The analysis concluded this summer, when the Capital witnessed searing temperatures, average ozone levels exceeded the prescribed standard on 16 per cent of the days overall.

CSE Executive director (research and advocacy) Anumita Roychowdhury said this is a matter of serious concern as ozone is a highly reactive gas and can have immediate adverse effect on those suffering from asthma and respiratory conditions.

Continued on Page 4

Trump kicks off 2020 re-election bid rally to 'Keep America Great'

PTI ■ WASHINGTON

US President Donald Trump formally launched his 2020 re-election campaign with a jam-packed rally in Florida on Tuesday, urging his supporters to "keep this team in place" for four more years as he vowed to "Keep America Great".

The 73-year-old real estate investor-turned-politician, who became the 45th President of the United States of America in 2017, told a crowd of 20,000 people in Orlando that the economy of the US under him has become "the envy of the world".

Trump said his victory three years ago was a "defining moment in American history" and vowed to maintain his "America First" policy as he touched the hallmarks of his 2016 campaign, hard-line immigration policies and defence spending.

He said that the country has made significant progress during his presidency and all that is at risk if he were to be defeated in the presidential elections next year.

Unveiling a theme of "Keep America Great", Trump in a speech that lasted 79 minutes exuded confidence of winning the general elections. In his 2016 election campaign, he had popularised the slogan "make America great again".

Addressing his supporters who filled the Orlando's Amway Center, brimming with enthusiasm for the President, Trump said, "We're going to keep on going. We're going to keep on fighting and we're going to keep on winning, winning, winning".



defeated in the presidential elections next year.

Unveiling a theme of "Keep America Great", Trump in a speech that lasted 79 minutes exuded confidence of winning the general elections. In his 2016 election campaign, he had popularised the slogan "make America great again".

Addressing his supporters who filled the Orlando's Amway Center, brimming with enthusiasm for the President, Trump said, "We're going to keep on going. We're going to keep on fighting and we're going to keep on winning, winning, winning".

Continued on Page 4

Om Birla picked as LS Speaker unanimously

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

NDA nominee Om Birla was on Wednesday elected Speaker of the Lok Sabha. Prime Minister Narendra Modi and the Opposition assured him of their wholehearted support in the smooth conduct of proceedings in the House and he himself resolved to be even-handed in his treatment to all the parties irrespective of their numerical strength.

Elected unanimously, Birla received fulsome praise from the Prime Minister who mentioned his social work in Kota, humanitarian initiatives in 2011 Gujarat earthquake and 2013 floods in Uttarakhand. Modi expressed confidence that the new Speaker with his gentle smile would conduct the House in a just manner and be tough even with the Treasury Benches.

Birla was declared elected by pro-tem Speaker Virendra Kumar.

The two-time MP from Rajasthan's Kota-Bundi Lok Sabha constituency, Birla, a surprise pick by the PM, was led to the presiding officer's chair by Modi.

Continued on Page 4

DEOL GETS EC NOTICE OVER POLL EXPENSES

Chandigarh: Film actor and Chandigarh MP Sunny Deol has been asked by EC to explain his poll expenditure during the recent Lok Sabha elections after it was found to have crossed the statutory limit of ₹70 lakh. ■ P4

NO RAIN IN DELHI TO PUSH MERCURY UP FOR 4 DAYS

New Delhi: Temperatures are likely to increase in the national Capital and adjoining areas over the next three-four days as chances of rain are slim at present. However, downpour is likely next week.

ATHAWALE USES HUMOUR TO TAKE DIG AT RAHUL

New Delhi: Union Minister and Republican Party of India leader Ramdas Athawale on Wednesday left Prime Minister Narendra Modi, UPA chairperson Sonia Gandhi and Rahul Gandhi along with other Lok Sabha members in peals of laughter by his witty remarks, some aimed at Rahul. ■ P4

Continued on Page 4

CAPSULE**EVIDENCE LINKS MBS TO KHASHOGGI KILLING: UN**

Geneva: There is "credible evidence" linking Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman to the murder of journalist Jamal Khashoggi, a UN expert said on Wednesday, calling for sanctions on the Crown Prince's personal foreign assets. ■ P12

STORY OF THE DAY**INDIA'S POLITICAL PARTIES****INDIA'S POLITICAL PARTIES**

Huda City molester nabbed

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

The Delhi Police Special Cell on Wednesday arrested the 25-year-old man who was wanted for allegedly molesting a woman at Huda City Centre Metro Station complex in Gurugram a few days back.

The accused had allegedly flashed at the woman and was wanted by police for outraging

the modesty of a woman.

"The accused has been identified as, Dinesh (25) a resident of Sector-57, Gurugram and a native of Hamirpur district in Uttar Pradesh (UP). He was apprehended on Wednesday," said Pramod Singh Kushwah, the Deputy Commissioner of Police (DCP), Special Cell.

It was alleged by

woman that, on June 14 when the complainant was walking out of Huda City Centre Metro station, while she was climbing down escalators, one person flashed exposed himself inappropriately.

A 29 year old Delhi based interior designer had earlier alleged that a man masturbated on her when she was climbing

down an escalator at the Huda City Centre Metro Station complex.

The victim said she had gone to visit a friend in Gurugram on June 14 and the incident happened when she came out of a clothing store on the first floor of the metro station.

"After exiting the store, I felt something was wrong on my back. I turned and realised that a man masturbated on me. I was shocked, scared and traumatised. I confronted him. He flashed me and said indecent words; I slapped him," the victim alleged.

After taking cognisance of the woman's complaint on Twitter, Gurugram police has registered First Information Report (FIR) under section 354A/509 of Indian Penal Code (IPC) at Metro police station in the neighbouring Gurugram. The accused was clearly seen in the CCTV grab and his movements were

suspected by the sleuths to locate and bring him to justice, a police official said.

3 snatchers arrested

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

The Delhi Police has arrested three robbers who first used to choke the victims and make them unconscious and then snatched their belongings in the East Delhi area.

The accused have been identified as Kunal alias Chachu (20 yrs.) of Nangloi, Manoj alias Rohit alias Kana (27 yrs.) of Trilokpuri and Vicky who is also a resident of Trilokpuri.

According to Jasmeet Singh, the Deputy Commissioner of Police (DCP) East District, a Police Control Room (PCR) call was received on June 15 in Panday Nagar Police Station about a robbery

of purse and mobile by three persons by choking the victim unconscious.

When the police team reached the spot, the victim Deepak Kumar, resident Soniya Vihar, stated that he was robbed by choking the neck and three people fled on a scooter with his mobile and purse containing some cash and his essential documents.

₹360 cr development work resumes on Southern Peripheral Road

PARVESH SHARMA ■ GURUGRAM

Development work has resumed on the Southern Peripheral Road (SPR). The stretch is set to be revamped with three flyovers and two underpasses at crucial junctions. The project plan has been prepared by the Gurugram Metropolitan Development Authority (GMDA).

A Detail Project Report (DPR) of the project has already been prepared.

The eight-kilometre stretch starts from Faridabad road. It will be connected to Vatika Chowk and the other at the Sector 55-56 intersection. There are also plans for three flyovers to ease traffic congestion at Rajesh Pilot Chowk, Tigray Mod, and the four-lane

intersection between Sectors 49-50 and 65-66.

These developments are part of the GMDA's larger plans to turn the SPR into an arterial road and ease the flow of traffic on the Delhi-Jaipur Expressway.

"The flyover and underpass would bring relief to tens

of lakhs of commuters who struggle currently through unending traffic jams on the stretch which traffic cops find difficult to manage," said a GMDA official.

According to the GMDA, the project will directly benefit around 12 sectors and 6 six villages. The agency has also stated collect samples of soil. It will also prepare traffic volume on the stretch.

The project will help the development of both residential and commercial real estate projects along the SPR. The areas to benefit from this include commercial sectors 74 and 75, residential sectors 63A to 67, and sectors 49 to 66," he said. "The stretch will provide great relief to thousands of commuters who travelled from Faridabad and neighbouring areas. The stretch will connect sectors as well as a rural area. Also, the authority will keep an eye on the traffic volume on a daily basis'

stretch every hour, putting it high on the GMDA's priority.

In addition, the SPR is set to get two underpasses, one at Vatika Chowk and the other at the Sector 55-56 intersection. There are also plans for three flyovers to ease traffic congestion at Rajesh Pilot Chowk, Tigray Mod, and the four-lane

intersection between Sectors 49-50 and 65-66.

These developments are part of the GMDA's larger plans to turn the SPR into an arterial road and ease the flow of traffic on the Delhi-Jaipur Expressway.

"The flyover and underpass would bring relief to tens

of lakhs of commuters who travelled from Faridabad and neighbouring areas. The stretch will connect sectors as well as a rural area. Also, the authority will keep an eye on the traffic volume on a daily basis," said A K Singla Superintendent Engineer, GMDA.

2 men supplying arms to criminals held

A country-made pistol, four desi kattas and 30 cartridges seized

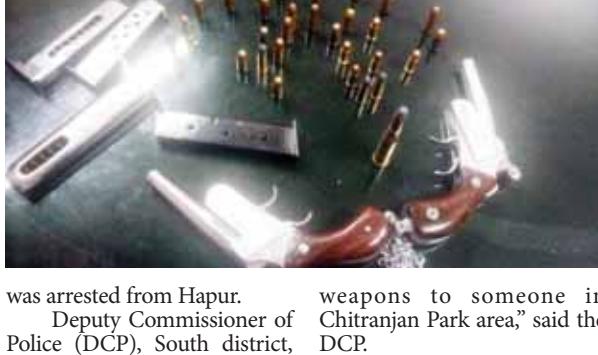
STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

The Delhi Police has arrested two persons for allegedly supplying arms and ammunition to criminals in Delhi and its peripherals. Police have recovered a 0.32 bore country-made pistol, four desi kattas of 0.315 bore and 30 cartridges

from the possession of the duo.

The accused have been identified Mohammad Parvez (42), a resident of Jasola village and Mohammad Iqbal, a resident of Hapur, Uttar Pradesh. Police said Parvez was previously convicted in a murder case registered at Kalkaji police station

"On June 18, specific inputs were received that one arm supplier identified as Parvez would be coming to supply illegal



was arrested from Hapur.

Deputy Commissioner of Police (DCP), South district, Vijay Kumar said, "In order to curb use of arms in crime in south Delhi and other parts of NCR region, a police team of

special staff of South district was tasked to nab the criminals using arms and also the suppliers of these illegal weapons."

"During interrogation Parvez disclosed that he had purchased arms and ammunition from Iqbal. Parvez was planning to sell illegal arms and ammunition in Delhi and

weapons to someone in Chiranjit Park area," said the DCP.

"Acting on the inputs a trap was laid and the accused was apprehended with one country-made pistol, two desi kattas and 10 live cartridges in his possession," said the DCP.

"On June 18, specific inputs were received that one arm supplier identified as Parvez would be coming to supply illegal



The accused in police custody

Pioneer photo

NCR to make some profits," said the DCP.

"On the instance of accused Parvez a raid was conducted at village Hardypur, Hapur and Iqbal was arrested with two more illegal arms with 20 live

cartridges which were kept in his residence," said the DCP adding that further interrogation is going on to explore the source of illegal arms and ammunition.

Kingpin, another member of Bachhan Gang arrested

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

The Delhi Police on Wednesday arrested two members of infamous 'Bachhan Gang', including the kingpin allegedly involved in various incidents of snatching and auto-lifting across national Capital. The gang was active in North West, Rohini, West and Outer districts of Delhi. The accused duo was identified as Rohit (22) alias Bachhan, also the kingpin of the gang and his associate Rahul (22), both residents of Delhi's Sultanpuri area. Police said that the duo during interrogation disclosed involvement in more than 80 incidents of mobile phone and women's handbag snatching in Outer, Rohini, North-West and West Districts of Delhi.

Police have also recovered



10 stolen bikes and three snatched mobile phones from the possession of the accused.

According to Rajiv Ranjan, Additional Commissioner of Police, Crime Branch, on June 18, acting on specific inputs regarding the duo, a trap was

laid and the accused were apprehended near Sultanpuri Bus terminal.

During interrogation the accused disclosed that they admitted to their involvement in a large number of auto-liftin

Contractor held for bid to kill 'lover' of wife, sister-in-law

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

With the arrest of a 34-year-old man, the Delhi Police on Wednesday claimed to have solved an attempt to murder case wherein the accused had fired upon a man, along with his two associates, after he suspected him of having illicit relationship with his wife and sister in law.

The accused, identified as Jitender alias Jitu, a resident of Delhi's Najafgarh area used to work as masonry contractor with the victim Nabodh Kumar for many years. Police

and with two of his associates, Rajbir alias Billy and Santosh, for Rs. 50,000/- to eliminate Nabodh Kumar," said the DCP.

"According to the plan, they lured Nabodh Kumar to an isolated spot alongside drain near Paprawat Village. There while all four were having cold drinks and snacks, Rajbir fired upon Nabodh with country made pistol and Santosh attacked Nabodh Kumar with knife. They fled the spot after injuring the victim," said the DCP.

According to Anto Alphonse, the Deputy Commissioner of Police (DCP), Dwarka District, on June 18, specific information was obtained that one of the assailants who is involved in firing and stabbing a young man, a week ago, will be coming on his blue colour motorcycle near Balli Farm, Paprawat Village to pick his family in pursuant of his plan to flee to Mumbai with family.

"The team swung into action and a trap was setup. The accused was intercepted and overpowered by the team. During interrogation, the accused revealed that the victim was having an illicit affair with his wife due to which his partnership had broken up. He was also the source of competition due to which the accused was incurring financial losses. So he along

NOTICE INVITING E-TENDERS

The Executive Engineer, Civil Division No. VIII, Irrigation & Flood Control Deptt., Govt. of NCT of Delhi, Sector- 15, Rohini, Delhi invites online Item/Percentage Rate E-tenders on behalf of the President of India from approved and eligible contractors of I&FC Deptt. The contractors who are registered with other Departments but granted provisional permission by the Chief Engineer (I&FC) are also eligible for participation of e-tenders for the following works:-

Sr. No.	NIT No.	Name of Work	Head of Account	Estimate Cost (In Rs.)	Earnest Money (In Rs.)	Time Allowed	Tender ID No.	Last date & time for submission of Price Bid
1.	EE/CD-VIII/2019-20/1	Development of pond in Kh. No. 49 at village Bodharpur Majra in Distt. North.	4515 Plan	58,61,229	1,17,225	03 Months	2019_IFC_174174_1	28.06.2019 upto 15.00 Hrs.
2.	EE/CD-VIII/2019-20/2	Development of Kabristan at village Salupur Majra in Distt. North-West.	4515 Plan	33,99,992	68,000	04 Months	2019_IFC_174176_1	28.06.2019 upto 15.00 Hrs.
3.	EE/CD-VIII/2019-20/3	Development of Kabristan at village Kanjhawala in Distt. N.W.	4515 Plan	19,81,034	39,621	02 Months	2019_IFC_174182_1	28.06.2019 upto 15.00 Hrs.
4.	EE/CD-VIII/2019-20/4	Construction of streets and side drain in Kh.No.300, 301/1, 307 and 325 at village Munghipuri. (Percentage)	4515 Plan	39,88,318	79,766	03 Months	2019_IFC_174185_1	28.06.2019 upto 15.00 Hrs.

1. The enlistment of the contractors should be valid on the last date of opening of tenders. In case, the last date of opening of tender is extended, the enlistment of contractor should be valid on the original date of opening of tenders.
2. Earnest money in physical form and self attested copy of Registration of enlistment & other documents (eg. ESI & EPF registration, copy of PAN card, Copy of VAT documents) should be submitted in the Office of Executive Engineer, Civil Division-VIII, I&FC Deptt, Govt. of NCT of Delhi, Sector-15, Rohini, Delhi-110085 before the last date and time of submission of technical bids.
3. The contractors (if any) whose bid is accepted shall be required to submit required documents upto the stipulated time, their tenders shall be rejected summarily at technical bid stage.
4. The agencies who do not fulfill eligibility criteria/ do not submit required documents shall be accepted.

5. Tenderers submitted through e-procurement portal shall only be considered and no manual tender shall be accepted.

6. In-tenders participating in tendering process in EE/CD-VIII, I&FC shall furnish ESI & EPF registration along with other required documents and the same shall be uploaded while bidding. Moreover the ESI & EPF registration documents of all contractors shall be kept on record and ESI & EPF registration documents of lowest tenderer to whom the work awarded shall form the part of the agreement. I&FC department office order No.1417-48 dated 29.01.2018.

Govt. of NCT of Delhi Rohini, Delhi-110085

Sd/-
(J. Narender Sagar)
Executive Engineer: CD-VIII
Executive Engineer: Civil Division-VIII, I&FC Deptt.
Govt. of NCT of Delhi Rohini, Delhi-110085

GOVT. OF NCT OF DELHI, IRRIGATION AND FLOOD CONTROL DEPARTMENT
EXECUTIVE ENGINEER CD-III, L. M BUND OFFICE COMPLEX, SHASTRI NAGAR, DELHI-110031

NOTICE INVITING e-TENDERS

The Executive Engineer, Civil Division No.III, I&FC, Delhi invites on behalf of the President of India, online tender for the following works:-

1. NIT No: EE/CD-III/NIT/04/2019-20

HOA: TYADB

Name of work:- Construction of Additional Hall and other works at existing General Chaupal in Village Patparganj Assembly Constituency Patparganj AC-57. Estimated Cost:- Rs. 89,26,802/-, Earnest Money:- Rs. 17,83,536/- Period of completion:- 180 Days; Last date & time of submission of tender:- upto 3:00 p.m. on 25.06.2019. (Tender I.D. 2019_IFC_174178_1).

2. NIT No: EE/CD-III/NIT/05/2019-20

HOA: MLALAD FUND

Name of work:- Construction of Jatav Chaupal Hospital Raod Bhogal, New Delhi-14 at in Jangpura Constituency AC-41. Estimated Cost:- Rs. 79,32,017/-, Earnest Money:- Rs. 15,58,640/- Period of completion:- 180 Days; Last date & time of submission of tender:- upto 3:00 p.m. on 25.06.2019. (Tender I.D. 2019_IFC_174179_1).

Other details can be seen at website <http://delhigovt.nic.in/tender>

Executive Engineer CD-III Civil Division-III, (I&FC) Govt. of Delhi, Delhi

DIP/Shabdarth/0240/19-20

DIP/Shabdarth/0246/19-20

Although every possible care and caution has been taken to avoid errors or omissions, this publication is being sold on the condition and understanding that information

Govt offers medical help to Bihar

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

ENCEPHALITIS DEATHS



Deputy CM Manish Sisodia, flanked by Health Minister Satyendra Jain, addresses mediapersons on Wednesday

Pioneer photo

Assuring every possible medical assistance to Bihar to cure children afflicted with Acute Encephalitis Syndrome (AES), the Delhi Government on Wednesday offered to send medicines and specialist doctors.

Deputy Chief Minister Manish Sisodia, flanked by Health Minister Satyendra Jain, said the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) Government was ready to send a team of doctors, paramedics, medicines and ambulances to Bihar.

According to reports, around 113 children have died so far due to AES in the state. "I offer all possible assistance to the Bihar government in this crisis. We are ready to provide help such as sending teams of our doctors, para-medical staff, medicines and ambulances to the state government," Sisodia said.

Taking jibe on Central govt

ernment's health scheme Ayushman Bharat and terming it as "White Elephant," Deputy Chief Minister Manish Sisodia and Delhi Health Minister Satyendra Jain said that AAP government is ready to send a team of doctors, paramedics, medicines and ambulances to Bihar.

Delhi has provided a model to the country; enriching insurance companies cannot be the solution" Sisodia added.

Hitting out at the central government, Jain sought to know as to why no child was getting medical treatment under its Ayushman Bharat programme. The Delhi health

minister had recently announced that the AAP dispensation would not implement the central government-sponsored healthcare scheme in the national capital.

Raising question on the 'effective' implementation of Ayushman Bharat, Jain said, "Bihar children should have qualified for treatment under Ayushman Bharat; why has the scheme failed in Bihar?"

"The Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) and their Central government ministers have been advertising the Ayushman Bharat scheme lately. Unfortunately, this crisis has proven that the scheme is a white elephant," Sisodia said.

"During such severe healthcare crises, it becomes clear that what people truly need is a strong network of healthcare infrastructure, not insurance schemes like Ayushman Bharat.

Instead of enriching insurance companies, the government

should have focused on building Mohalla Clinics, Poly Clinics, adding capacity to existing hospitals and building more hospitals.

Delhi has provided a model to the country by setting up Mohalla clinics, Polyclinics, and hospitals. More beds, more ICUs, more modern machinery is the need of the hour. That is the solution for today's health-care problem," added Sisodia.

It may be recalled that Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal had

written to Union Health Minister Harsh Vardhan two weeks back, saying the Delhi government's health scheme is "ten times bigger and comprehensive" than the Centre's flagship Ayushman Bharat programme.

"Hardly any citizen of Delhi goes to Haryana and Uttar Pradesh to get treatment, which indicates that Delhi's health scheme is functioning well," Kejriwal had said in the letter.

L-G reviews problem of faecal disposal in drains

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

AAP demands vision document from Centre on 'one nation, one election'

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI



The Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) has written to the Union Minister of Parliamentary Affairs Pralhad Joshi, seeking a vision document on the issue of 'one nation, one election' so that an informed and wide-ranging discussion can happen on the issue.

AAP national spokesperson Raghav Chadha, in a letter to Joshi, said in absence of a clear basis or vision, it would be futile for any political party to comment on the merits or the demerits of a proposal such as this. "A vision document or detailed proposal or white paper is required to be able to apply their mind to it and provide meaningful, detailed, 'comprehensive, unbiased, accurate and informed view'

expected to be beholden to the Union government for elections to its State?" he said, adding that such a situation goes against the very grain of political autonomy under our federal structure.

"The concept of compelled simultaneous elections has an anti-democratic tint basing its foundation on premature dissolution of any government - something that at any level will lead to political turmoil, uncertainty, and undermining of democracy as mandates at various levels will be cut short, even assuming we were to ignore the unnecessary burden on the exchequer," he stated in the letter.

Recalling the 'harrowing' experience of emergency period, he claimed that some assemblies were extended beyond five years and other assemblies dissolved to "suit Congress's political interest is worth recalling as a caveat against enforcing elections in any manner contrary to the five-year cycle being followed".

Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal skipped the all-party meeting called by Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Wednesday and sent party member Raghav Chadha to represent the party.

Prime Minister had invited heads of all parties who have an MP either in Lok Sabha or Rajya Sabha for a meeting on June 19 to discuss several issues, including the "one nation, one election" idea, celebration of the 75 years of Independence in 2022 and 150 years of Mahatma Gandhi's birth anniversary this year.

DU OK's acknowledgement receipt for EWS, OBC students

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

was implemented in the varsity this year for EWS category.

However, with a short notice, the students coming under the category were seen running from pillar to post as many has not got the EWS certificates. "It is very good news for the students belonging to the economically weaker section as many students were from pillar to post get their certificates done, now the students can fill the application and submit the certificates later once they received," said Heena, a student applying under EWS category.

Another student happily said, "Now I can also apply in DU and will get admission by uploading the Acknowledgement Receipt. Till now, I was daily visiting the Sub District Magistrate (SDM) office to get my certificate done but they said the certificate will be issued only after a month," said Megha Sharma, a DU aspirant.



Besides, EWS category, the

varsity has allowed the OBC (non creamy layer) students to apply for admission to UG courses with uploading Acknowledgement of receipt.

The DU admissions for UG courses were started on May 30 and will continue till June 22. The Cut-off list are expected to out by end of this month.

belonging to EWS category.

As per the data available on the DU website, the varsity has received a total number of 353500 applications of which 245835 are paid application. Category wise, a total of 145950 received under general category, 52093 from OBC, and 32758 under Scheduled caste (SC), 6744-Scheduled Tribes (ST) and 8290 from EWS category.

The DU admissions for

depletion of the Capital's green cover that resulted in the rising levels of atmospheric pollution, which has crossed the danger levels many times in the recent years," she said. Dikshit also exhorted the Congress workers to be an example for others to emulate in protecting and enhancing the green cover in Delhi by planting more and more saplings in their areas.

Many senior Congress leaders and a large number of Congress workers were present on the occasion including party's working presidents Haroon Yusuf, Rajesh Lillithia and Devender Yadav, former Delhi Ministers Mangat Ram Singh, Rakamant Goswami (spokesperson) and Dr Kiran Walia, spokesperson Harman Singh, Rohit Manchanda, District president Madan Khorwal and a large number of Congress workers.

Meanwhile, students and social institutions of dalits and block congress committee members of Sultan Pur Mazra celebrated birthday of the Congress president Rahul Gandhi.

SDMC installs CCTVs in all 581 schools for children safety

JYOTI BAKSHI ■ NEW DELHI



'The aim of installing these cameras is to ensure safety of children and also to monitor the activities of the children'

schools has taken a number of measures, including turning the classroom into a smart one with a smart board, projectors, interactive pad, podium, UPS, speakers and

other hardware and software to make the study interesting.

The official also mentioned that the agency will monitor CCTV cameras to fix the quality of primary education apart from keeping an eye on the security of children.

"A monitoring team will be constituted in every zone and the SDMC officials at the headquarters will supervise it from the control room at the Civic Centre," he said.

In first lot 11 ACPS of Delhi Police transferred

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

(DANIPS) who was posted as ACP with traffic will now be ACP of Delhi Cantt.

Sanjeev Tyagi who was posted as ACP operations in West has been given new charge as ACP, Outer North district. Satish Kumar, ACP of PG Cell has been transferred to Special Branch. Raghu Raj posted at vigilance department has been transferred as ACP, Kamla Market.

Gulam Sabir, who was in Police Control Room (PCR) unit, will also organize 'Yoga Protocol' at Lodhi Garden, Talkatora Garden and at Nehru Park. On the occasion Union Minister of Railways, Commerce & Industry Piyush Goyal, Union Minister of Petroleum, Natural Gas & Steel Dharmendra Pradhan, Minister of State (Independent Charge) of Shipping, Chemicals & Fertilizers, Mansukh L. Mandaviya are invited as chief guests.

The move will ensure averting any untoward incidents. CCTV will be installed at isolated places of schools besides gates and corridor. The step has been taken to fulfill our commitment towards providing foolproof security to the students. It will also help us keep a check on teachers as well," he said.

The civic body in its bid to transform children lives in its

edge, as it will help easy distribution of energy being produced from decentralized waste to energy plant," said Yashas Bhand, CEO & Co-founder, Yasasu EMS Pvt. Ltd., technology provider for Pali Hill and Delhi Project.

Bhand further said that earlier the corporations, gated communities or RWA, had to invest in additional infrastructure for using this power, but with the deployment of net metering at decentralized level,

we have given a New hope for decentralized waste to energy plants and this shall increase the acceptability among people for the technology".

The system is based on the proven bio-methanation and

treating waste as source methodology as promoted under Solid Waste Management (SWM) Rules, 2016 which promotes decentralized SWM plants, he said.

The plant which receives

five tonnes of waste daily and after the process of segregation

five tonnes of waste is left which further goes for further processing into decentralized bio-methanation plant based

on anaerobic digestion tech-

nology. It aims at being

India's leading decentralized waste management solution provider to construct, operate and maintain waste processing plants.

Till now, four such plants

Biogas plant in Punjabi Bagh first to install net metering

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

South Delhi Municipal Corporation's (SDMC) decentralised waste processing biogas plant established at Punjabi Bagh has become the first plant to install net metering. The plant generates approximately 800 units of electricity and around 800 kilograms organic manure per day.

The net metering concept was successfully implemented in rooftop solar till now; this is for the first time wherein a bio gas based decentralized waste to energy project is working on the same concept, the official said, adding that it allows the plant to store the overproduced electricity in a grid and when the plant is under-producing, the stored power can be used to meet the requirement.

The bio-methanation plant called - 'Yasasu Green' was inaugurated by Delhi Lieutenant Governor Anil

Baijal in February this year to manage and process a large quantity of waste produced in the national Capital.

A senior SDMC official said that Delhi generates 10,000-ton waste every day and it has become a daunting challenge to manage and process the entire quantity of waste.

"The process is indigenous developed to suit Indian conditions and effectively process Indian city waste, delivered mixed or segregated to the plant. The biogas produced on digestion which is similar to natural gas quality can be used to produce electricity and the manure generated is of high quality which can be used from urban to rural spaces," he said.

Incorporation of Net-metering with our decentralized waste processing technology 'Yasasu green' deployed at Punjabi Bagh and Pali Hill, Mumbai, projects gives us an

edge, as it will help easy distribution of energy being produced from decentralized waste to energy plant," said Yashas Bhand, CEO & Co-founder, Yasasu EMS Pvt. Ltd., technology provider for Pali Hill and Delhi Project.

Bhand further said that earlier the corporations, gated communities or RWA, had to invest in additional infrastructure for using this power, but with the deployment of net metering at decentralized level,

we have given a New hope for decentralized waste to energy plants and this shall increase the acceptability among people for the technology".

The system is based on the proven bio-methanation and

treating waste as source methodology as promoted under Solid Waste Management (SWM) Rules, 2016 which promotes decentralized SWM plants, he said.

The plant which receives

five tonnes of waste daily and after the process of segregation

five tonnes of waste is left which further goes for further processing into decentralized bio-methanation plant based

on anaerobic digestion tech-

nology. It aims at being

India's leading decentralized waste management solution provider to construct, operate and maintain waste processing plants.

Till now, four such plants

are operational in areas of

Punjab Bagh, Dwarka Sector 14, Roshan Arsh Bagh and GTB Nagar under municipal corporations. Further, six more plants to be operational in Delhi by June 2019.

are operational in areas of

Punjab Bagh, Dwarka Sector 14, Roshan Arsh Bagh and GTB Nagar under municipal corporations. Further, six more plants to be operational in

Delhi by June 2019.

Till now, four such plants

are operational in areas of

Punjab Bagh, Dwarka Sector 14, Roshan Arsh Bagh and GTB Nagar under municipal corporations. Further, six more plants to be operational in

Delhi by June 2019.

Till now, four such plants

are operational in areas of

Punjab Bagh, Dwarka Sector 14, Roshan Arsh Bagh and GTB Nagar under municipal corporations. Further, six more plants to be operational in

Delhi by June 2019.

Till now, four such plants

are operational in areas of

Punjab Bagh, Dwarka Sector 14, Roshan Arsh Bagh and GTB Nagar under municipal corporations. Further, six more plants to be operational in

Delhi by June 2019.

Till now, four such plants

are operational in areas of

Punjab Bagh, Dwarka Sector 14, Roshan Arsh Bagh and GTB Nagar under municipal corporations. Further, six more plants to be operational in

Delhi by June 2019.

Till now, four such plants

are operational in areas of

Punjab Bagh, Dwarka Sector 14, Roshan Arsh Bagh and GTB Nagar under municipal corporations. Further, six more plants to be operational in

Delhi by June 2019.

Till now, four such plants

are operational in areas of

Punjab Bagh, Dwarka Sector 14, Roshan Arsh Bagh and GTB Nagar under municipal corporations. Further, six more plants to be operational in

Delhi by June 2019.

Till now, four such plants

K'taka Cong unit dissolved

State chief, working president retained

PTI ■ NEW DELHI/BENGALURU



leaders to topple the coalition Government.

Two members of the Congress were recently inducted in the Karnataka cabinet.

State Congress chief Dinesh Gundu Rao said dissolution of the KPCC would pave the way for reorganization of the party at all levels and would create an opportunity for new leaders.

The intention is to reorganize the party at the state, district and block levels, which is important, Rao said, adding he along with party's Working President Eshwar Khandre would have to start reorganizing and strengthening the party.

He said discussions will be held with legislature party

leader Siddaramaiah, Deputy Chief Minister G Parameshwara, AICC General Secretary K C Venugopal and others about the way forward.

"We will look for giving opportunity to new leadership in the party. Those loyal to the party and honest workers will be identified and given an opportunity in the organization."

"We have also started working towards appointing members to various boards and corporations and it will be finalized in a month," he said, adding this would instill confidence among workers.

The move comes in the wake of the worst ever Lok Sabha poll performance of the Congress in Karnataka, where

the party won only one of the 21 seats it had contested.

Congress' ruling coalition partner, the JD(S), won one out of the seven parliamentary seats it had contested, while the BJP had swept the polls, bagging 25 out of the 28 seats.

Sources say the move will provide an opportunity to fresh faces towards strengthening the organisation from the grass root level.

Meanwhile, Yeddyurappa refuted Chief Minister H D Kumaraswamy's allegation that the BJP was attempting to bribe JD(S) legislators and asked him to name those involved.

"If the chief minister did not give out the names before levelling such allegations, it will be seen as he is suspecting his own party MLAs," Yeddyurappa said and claimed the chief minister was making allegations against the BJP "out of desperation."

Senior Karnataka legislator R Rosan Baig, who was suspended by the Congress on Tuesday night for "anti-party" activities, said he was a "disciplined soldier of the party" and was being punished for speaking the truth.

Govt to waive registration charges for e-vehicles to promote sales in country

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

In order to give a boost to battery-operated or electric vehicles in the country, the Ministry of Road Transport and Highways has decided to waive registration charges for electric vehicles.

The draft notification of the amendment in Rule 81 of the Central Motor Vehicles Rules 1989, proposes to exempt Battery Operated Vehicles from payment of fees for the purpose of issue or renewal of registration certificate and assignment of new registration mark.

This means that Electric Vehicles would be exempted from such registration charges. The move, aimed at promoting electric vehicles (EVs) in India, comes at a time when the country plans high penetration of such vehicles by 2030.

Issuing the draft notification to amend the Central Motor Vehicles Rules (CMVR), 1989, the ministry said battery-operated vehicles "shall be exempted from the payment of fees for the purpose of issue or renewal of registration certificate and assignment of new registration mark". The exemption will apply to all category of vehicles, including two-wheelers. The amendments will be done in exercise of the powers conferred on the central government under various sections of the Motor Vehicles Act, 1988. "The said draft rules shall be taken into consideration after the expiry of a period of 30 days from the date on which the copies of this notification as published in the Gazette of India, are made available to the public," the draft notification said.

The Maharashtra government had earlier asked the Ministry to consider exemption from registration for the battery operated rickshaws. The government has already exempted battery operated two-wheelers from Wayanad in Kerala, he lost the Gandhi stronghold of Amethi in Uttar Pradesh to Smriti Irani.

"Rahul ji aapko wahan baithne ka maula mila isilye aapko bahadai deta hoon. Jab apki satta thi tab main apake saath tha. Chunav ke pehle mujhe Congress wale bol rahe the idhar aage. Main hawa ka rukh dekha ki woh Modi ji ki

tarafa rahi hai (I congratulate you on getting an opportunity to sit there (in the Opposition benches). I was with the UPA when it was in power. Congress leaders asked me to join them again ahead of elections. But I saw which way the wind was blowing and decided to remain with NDA," he said.

Rahul and Sonia took his remarks sportingly and were seen smiling. When the RPI leader was speaking, Modi was seen laughing on more than two occasions. "Now, our government will run for five years, and for another five years ... Modi sahib will continue to do the good work. We will not let you come this side (treasury benches) so easily," Athawale said, amid thumping of desks by NDA members.

He evoked laughter when he recited a poem and promised to make Birla laugh. Referring to the Congress and Rahul Gandhi, he said when the Congress was in power he was with them and then he shifted to NDA. "You (Birla) do not laugh, but I will make you laugh," he said. PNS

Athawale uses humour to take dig at Rahul

New Delhi: Trust Union Minister and Republican Party of India (RPI) leader Ramdas Athawale for his straight-faced humour. Wednesday was one of those occasions as he left Prime Minister Narendra Modi, UPA chairperson Sonia Gandhi and Rahul Gandhi along with other Lok Sabha members in peels of laughter by his witty remarks, some aimed at the Congress president.

In his congratulatory remarks after the unanimous election of Om Birla as Lok Sabha Speaker, Athawale, who has a knack for spontaneous humour, said he is happy that Rahul got a chance to sit in Lok Sabha though as an opposition member. While Rahul won from Wayanad in Kerala, he lost the Gandhi stronghold of Amethi in Uttar Pradesh to Smriti Irani.

"Rahul ji aapko wahan baithne ka maula mila isilye aapko bahadai deta hoon. Jab apki satta thi tab main apake saath tha. Chunav ke pehle mujhe Congress wale bol rahe the idhar aage. Main hawa ka rukh dekha ki woh Modi ji ki

Trump kicks off 2020 re-election bid rally to 'Keep America Great'

From Page 1

Nearly two dozen Democratic leaders are aspiring to contest against him in the November 2020 presidential elections. The winner of the Democratic primary beginning early next year would get to challenge him.

Vice President Mike Pence and the entire First Family along with First Lady Melania Trump were on the stage during his speech.

Trump also asked his outgoing press secretary Sarah Sanders to address the enthusiastic crowd. Trump is seeking her to run for the Governor of Arizona.

THE PIONEER CLASSIFIEDS

THANKSGIVING

Thank you Holy Spirit for all Blessings Celine.

PD(8529)C

PUBLIC NOTICE

(NOTICE is hereby given that Shri VIRANDER SINGH ATTRI & Shri LATE M.S. ATTRI & SHRI MOHIT ATTRI & Shri VIRANDER SINGH ATTRI has agreed to sell the residential property No. 407, Friends Society, Sector-12, Vasundhra, Ghaziabad Uttar Pradesh (India), free from all encumbrances to my clients Smt. SARASWATI AGRAWAL W/o Shri DILIP KUMAR AGRAWAL & Shri ROHIL AGRAWAL S/o Shri Late Shri RAJENDRA KUMAR AGRAWAL. Any person having any right, title, interest, claim or demand of any nature whatsoever in respect of the said property, is hereby required to make the same known in writing along with the documentary proof thereof, to the undersigned at 304, HARI SADAN, 20, ANSARI ROAD, DARYA GANI, NEW DELHI-110022 within fourteen days from the date of publication hereof, failing which the negotiations shall be completed, without any reference to such claims and the claims if any shall be deemed to have been given up or waived.

Place: New Delhi Dated: 19-06-2019
MANOJ AGRAWAL L.L.M.
ADVOCATE-DELHI HIGH COURT

304, HARI SADAN, 20, ANSARI ROAD,
DARYA GANI, NEW DELHI-110022 PH:
011-47131848 Regn.: D/114/92

Jaishankar meets Russian Dy PM, discusses Modi's Vladivostok visit

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar met Russian Deputy Prime Minister Yury Trutnev on Wednesday and discussed ways to strengthen bilateral ties as well as Prime Minister Narendra Modi's visit to Vladivostok for the Eastern Economic Forum later this year.

Jaishankar's meeting with Trutnev comes days after Prime Minister Modi met Russian President Vladimir Putin on the sidelines of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation Summit in Bishkek, where the two leaders reviewed all aspects of bilateral relations to further strengthen the strategic relationship.

"EAM @DrSJaishankar met with Deputy Prime Minister & Presidential Envoy to the Far Eastern Federal District of Russia Yury Trutnev.

Ex-CEA's GDP claims ignored...

From Page 1

Unlike many indicators, it said tax data is not collected through surveys or by agencies through arcane techniques, these are hard numbers and should be an important indicator of growth.

"Further, there have been no major changes in tax laws until the end period in the author's analysis (March 31, 2017). GST was introduced on July 1, 2017.

"The author's logic of not using tax data appears to be a convenient argument meant to avoid inconvenient conclusions based on hard facts," it said.

The EAC-PM paper also noted that India's GDP estimation is by no means a perfect exercise. "Is it better than before? Yes." Is the process to further improve it in place? Yes," it added.

Panel soon for '1 nation, 1 poll'

From Page 1

opmental projects.

The draft, submitted to the Law Ministry, however, cautioned that "holding simultaneous elections is not possible within the existing framework of the Constitution".

"The Prime Minister called for widespread debate and consultations on simultaneous elections for Lok Sabha and Vidhan Sabhas, keeping in view various aspects such as the resulting financial savings and consequent better utilisation of resources," an official release said last week after Modi addressed a NITI Aayog meeting.

The Government think-tank, NITI Aayog, too had last year suggested synchronised two-phase Lok Sabha and Assembly polls from 2024 to ensure minimum campaign-mode disruption to governance.

The Government think-

tank, NITI Aayog, too had last year suggested synchronised two-phase Lok Sabha and Assembly polls from 2024 to ensure minimum campaign-mode disruption to governance.

"The rapid changes that suburban lizards experience within its lifetime play a substantial role in shaping how quickly it learns about safe refuges. The lizard's increased cognitive ability could be a result of evolutionary differences between the two populations, the individual experiences of a lizard over its lifetime or a combination of both, as per the researchers.

documented how the lizards had to reverse their previously created associations and learn which refuge was now safe. The study found that suburban lizards outperformed their rural counterparts in both experimental setups as they were able to identify safe from unsafe refuges rapidly. They did so in just seven trials, while rural lizards needed roughly 14 attempts. This observation suggests cognitive flexibility as the lizards had to unlearn old associations and relearn new ones. Interestingly, the results of this study were at odds with another one on the garden skinks (Lampropholis deliciosa) that did not find any differences in learning abilities of the urban and rural populations. The researchers of the current study attribute this difference in learning abilities of lizards to the different selection pressures they face in their urban environments.

The rapid changes that suburban lizards experience within its lifetime play a substantial role in shaping how quickly it learns about safe refuges. The lizard's increased cognitive ability could be a result of evolutionary differences between the two populations, the individual experiences of a lizard over its lifetime or a combination of both, as per the researchers.

"It is ridiculous to blame litchi," Singh added.

Shyam Lal, a trader, said sale of litchi juice packets has also declined in the past few days in the national Capital. "On an average, I used to sell 40-50 bottles of litchi juice per day but for the past one week, I sold only half a dozen bottles," he said.

Generally, litchis hit the market prior to the arrival of mangoes. Hence, the markets

Sunny Deol gets EC notice over poll expenses

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

BJP MP from Gudaspur Sunny Deol may be in trouble as the Election Commission (EC) has asked him to explain his overspending on his election campaign during the recent Lok Sabha elections.

Against the statutory limit of Rs 70 lakh, Deol is alleged to have spent Rs 86 lakh for his election campaign.

Earlier, on May 15, the EC had issued directions for adding Rs 1.74 lakh to Deol's poll expenditure after he failed to respond to its query about a Facebook page being run in his support.

In a notice to Deol, the EC asked him to "reconcile" his poll expenditure account. The notice was issued by Gurdaspur District Election Officer-cum-Deputy Commissioner Vipul Ujjwal.

presiding officer is the custodian of the House, which according to Jawaharlal Nehru, represents the nation and freedom of the country. Chowdhury also expressed concern over very few Bills being referred to standing committees by the Lok Sabha and hoped for a reversal of the trend.

The Congress leader said the house has witnessed in the last two days various religious slogans like "Jai Sri Ram" and "Allahu Akbar" in the House adding the social fabric of the country will be strengthened only when people respect all religious faiths.

Pinaki Mishra of the BJD expressed similar concerns and said Birla's unopposed election shows his acceptability. There was no candidate in the fray other than Birla and the motion moved by the Prime Minister to choose the Kota-Bundi MP as the Speaker was adopted by a voice vote.

NK Premchandran of the RSP urged the Speaker to protect the democratic rights of members asserting that active Opposition is good for healthy democracy. He said he raised 500 amendments to different Bills during the 16th Lok Sabha but none of them was accepted by the Government.

SAD's Sukhbir Singh Badal and Apna Dal's leader Anupriya Patel suggested the regional and smaller parties should be given adequate time during discussions. Similar sentiments were expressed by the Lok Sabha and hoped for a reversal of the trend.

The Congress leader said the house has witnessed in the last two days various religious slogans like "Jai Sri Ram" and "Allahu Akbar" in the House adding the social fabric of the country will be strengthened only when people respect all religious faiths.

Shyam Singh Yadav said first-time MPs should also get sufficient time in discussions. AIMIM leader Asaduddin Owaisi said the Speaker should ensure protection of separation of powers and the elected Government should not become a monarch. Sudip Bandyopadhyay of the Trinamool Congress cautioned Birla that "brute majoritarianism" sometimes affects the functioning of the House.

she added further.

Citing ozone gas reading on CPCB index, environmentalist said, "If this trend continues and worsens, the Graded Response Action Plan will also have to initiate action to address the precursor gases that form ozone - NOx, hydrocarbons etc -- and crack down on vehicles and industry." However, there are some areas in Delhi where days of ozone exceeding recorded less. In locations like Aya Nagar, Karni Singh Shooting Range, IGI airport, Lodhi Road, Mandir Marg, Pusa Road, Patparganj, North Campus, ITO and Anand Vihar less than 5 per cent of the days have experienced it.

While areas like ITO, IGI airports, Anand Vihar marked under red zone in terms of pollution though

SC seeks EC's reply on Cong plea against separate RS polls

New Delhi: The Supreme Court on Wednesday sought a response from the EC by June 24 on a plea of the Gujarat Congress, challenging the EC's decision to hold separate bypolls to two Rajya Sabha seats in the State.

A vacation bench of justices Deepak Gupta and Surya Kant listed the matter for hearing on June 25, saying the

Om Birla picked as LS Speaker...

From Page 1

Several leaders from BJP, Congress, DMK, TMC went up the podium to greet the new Speaker. "Kota has become kind of a small country and the transformation of Kota has taken place under your leadership," Modi said.

As the Prime Minister gave a new insight into the life of the new Speaker and lauded his work, he looked around on a benign smile. A total of 13 motions were moved in support of Birla. Since the motion moved by Modi, also the Leader of the House, was adopted, the other motions became infructuous.

"I on behalf of the Government and the Treasury Benches assure you full support in conducting the House. I also assure you that your order will prevail and you must be tough even if anyone from our side crosses the limit," Modi said, congratulating Birla. Birla assured the members that he will run the House in an impartial manner and everyone will be heard.

"I have been a member like you from 2014 to 2019. And here we should raise issues which matter to the last person standing in the row," he said. The 57-year-old, considered to be close to both Modi and BJP president Amit Shah, succeeds eight-term MP Sumitra Mahajan as the Speaker, a post traditionally held by senior MPs. The newly elected Congress' leader of the House Adhir Ranjan Chowdhury, DMK's TR Baalu and TMC's Sudip Bandyopadhyay were among those who backed Birla and urged him to be impartial as presiding officer of the Lower House. Extending his whole-hearted support to Birla, Chowdhury urged him to be impartial and give the Opposition enough time to raise issues of public interest. He said the

symptoms of AES include high fever, vomiting, loss of consciousness and seizures. The deaths have been reported from Sri Krishna Medical College and Hospital and Kejriwal Hospital.

Encephalitis costs litchi ₹100 cr trade

From Page 1

are full of litchis as mango will take another 10 days or so to hit the market. If the sale continues to be low for the next couple of days, traders will suffer huge losses this season. Bihar's famous shahi litchi has got Geographical Indication tag last year. A GI is an indication used on products that have a specific geographical origin and possess qualities or a reputation due to that origin.

The worst-hit district is Muzaffarpur with the viral disease claiming lives of 120 children, followed by Vaishali where 12 children have lost the battle with AES. Another six children have lost their lives in Begusarai district, five in Samastipur, and two each in Motihari and Patna.

The symptoms of AES include high fever, vomiting, loss of consciousness and seizures. The deaths have been reported from Sri Krishna Medical College and Hospital and Kejriwal Hospital.

Integrated Battle Groups on border with Pak soon

After Pak, same Groups will be deployed along Sino-India borders

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Aiming to move swiftly and deliver the knockout punch, the Indian Army plans to set up Integrated Battle Groups by October this year on the border facing Pakistan. These groups would comprise the combined might of the long range guns, tanks and ground troops and would move in tandem to achieve the desired military objective in the shortest possible time.

Once these Integrated Battle Groups are functional, the Army would then move to have similar combined units in the areas facing China. The first four to five such groups will come up in the Western Command which guards the entire Punjab region and some adjoining parts of Jammu and Rajasthan where tanks can move at a fast pace

given the rather flat terrain.

These groups are part of the overall move to make the Army lean and mean. Army Chief General Bipin Rawat is keen to have these groups start functioning as soon as possible, sources said here on Wednesday. In fact, the top commanders met in New Delhi some days back to review the performance of the IBGs which have already conducted exercises to test their efficacy. The results were found to be satisfactory and easily implementable, they added.

The concept of such groups involve artillery, armour involving tanks and infantry or ground troops, moving together in a synchronised manner and bringing effective fire on the enemy to gain victory in the shortest possible time without giving time to the adversary to regroup. It will do away with the artillery, infantry and armour working in silos and make the Indian Army battle-ready to fight modern day warfare where speed is of the essence, they said.

ARCHANA JYOTI ■ NEW DELHI

Muzaffarpur in Bihar may have been hogging headlines for the death of the kids due to Acute Encephalitis Syndrome (AES), but experts point out that the disease has been endemic to the entire State with all the districts reporting the cases that are fatal to kids.

Following the analysis of total 4,400 cases of AES reported between 2009 and 2014, with an average of 733 cases per year, a team of researchers in their study also noted that the AES cases start appearing in April and reach a peak in June and then decline.

"There is another peak of Japanese Encephalitis (JE) cases in October. The confirmed fatal rate (CFR) of AES and JE ranges from 5 per cent to 35 per cent in Bihar," said the researchers in their study 'Status and trend of acute encephalitis syndrome and Japanese encephalitis in Bihar, India' published in National Medical Journal of India in 2018. There were a total 1309 deaths during the period. "The disease peaks were during the start and end of the Indian summer and monsoon

months for AES and JE, respectively. Districts such as Patna, Jehanabad, Nawada, Gaya and East Champaran reported the maximum number of AES and JE cases with annual incidence rates of 4.7-25.0 and 0.546-1.78 per 100,000 population, respectively," said the study.

The experts have stressed on strengthening the reporting and surveillance mechanism in all the districts of the state. They also called for encouraging reluctant private practitioners in surveillance activities especially for cases of AES. Intense information, education and communication (IEC) activities must be started at the village level to increase participation from the community and to improve the long-term passive surveillance.

The team included Praveen Kumar and PP Sarthi from Centre for Environmental Sciences, Central University of South Bihar, Patna, PM Pisudde from ESIC Medical College, Sanat Nagar, Hyderabad; MP Sharma, State Programme Officer (Malaria), Chief Malaria Office, Patna and VR Keshri from Bihar Technical Support Programme, Care India, Patna. Acute encephalitis syn-

drome (AES) is a multifactorial clinical condition, the most common cause being Japanese encephalitis (JE). JE is a vector-borne viral disease caused by the JE virus of group B arbovirus (Flavivirus) and is transmitted to humans by the Culicine mosquito.

JE affects the central nervous system (CNS), and can

cause serious complications and death. The CFR is high and those who survive may suffer from neurological sequel such as convulsions, episodic headache, autonomic disturbance, abnormal behaviour, mood disorder, intellectual deficit, paresis, incoordination of movements, jerky limb movements, speech disorder, cranial nerve palsy, gaze

palsy, Parkinsonian features, impaired hearing, etc.

An estimated 25 per cent of affected children die from the disease, and among those who survive, 30 per cent-40 per cent suffer from physical and mental impairment. Children suffer the highest attack rate due to lack of cumulative immunity from natural infections, said the study.

SC to hear plea seeking formation of team for treatment of kids in Bihar

New Delhi: The Supreme Court on Wednesday agreed to hear a plea seeking a direction to the Centre to urgently constitute a team of medical experts for the treatment of the children in Bihar's

Muzaffarpur, who are suffering from suspected Acute Encephalitis Syndrome (AES), which has claimed more than 100 lives.

A vacation bench of justices Deepak Gupta and Surya Kant agreed to hear the plea next Monday after the petitioner's counsel sought an

urgent listing of the matter.

The plea also sought a direction to the Centre for providing all necessary medical equipment and other supports for the effective treatment of the children suffering from the epidemic disease.

The petition, filed by advocate Manohar Pratap, claimed that he was deeply pained and saddened by the deaths of more than 126 children, mostly in the age group of one to 10 years, in the past week and the figures were rising day by day.

"The deaths of children are a direct result of negligence and inaction on the part of the respective state governments of Bihar, Uttar Pradesh and Union of India in handling the epidemiological situation which arises every year due to outbreak of AES also called Japanese encephalitis," the plea said.

It claimed that thousands of young children were losing their lives yearly from the disease but the governments (state and Centre) had done nothing to prevent its spread. PTI

Simultaneous polls anti-federal, anti-democratic, says CPM

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Told the Prime Minister-chaired all party meet that the idea of 'one nation, one poll' is fundamentally anti-federal and anti-democratic and thus, against the Constitution. Terming the Government's move as "not practical" and "artificial move" CPI(M) general secretary Sitaram Yechury said in his note distributed in the meeting that holding simultaneous polls would tamper with the constitutional scheme of accountability of the Government to the legislature.

Apart from the technical issues involved in holding simultaneous elections to Parliament and State Assemblies, our Opposition to this is based on the fact that it is fundamentally anti-federal, anti-democratic and strikes at the roots of the parliamentary democratic system, as ordained in the Constitution.

"Article 75(3) states that the collective responsibility of the Council of Ministers is to the House of the People. Similarly, Article 164(1) concerning the Council of Ministers states that it is collectively responsible to the

legislative Assembly of a state," said Yechury.

He said under the Constitution, if a government loses the confidence of the legislature either by being voted out on a no-confidence motion or by losing a vote on a Money Bill, it is bound to resign and if no alternative government can be formed, the House is dissolved and a mid-term election held.

There is no fixity of tenure enshrined in the Constitution either for the Lok Sabha or the state legislatures, the Left leader said, adding that both Article 83(2) and Article 172(1) specify that the term of the Lok Sabha and the Legislative Assembly will be for five years, "unless sooner dissolved".

"Any attempt to prolong the life of the Lok Sabha or legislature will not only be unconstitutional, but also, anti-democratic. It is the will of the people through their elected representatives that must prevail," he said.

"We are, therefore, totally opposed to any artificial attempt to bring about simultaneous elections, which can only be done by trampling upon the existing constitutional scheme of parliamentary democracy."

Would've attended if it was about EVMs: Mayawati on PM's meet

PNS ■ NEW DELHI/LUCKNOW

BSP supremo Mayawati skipped the Prime Minister-convened meeting on 'one nation, one poll' saying that conducting simultaneous national and State elections is an "undemocratic and unconstitutional" idea for a vast country like India and that she would have attended meeting had it been called to address the "national concern" over EVMs.

"One nation, one election" is not an issue before the country. Elections through ballot papers are actually the national issue and our party will continue its struggle for it," she said adding elections in any democ-

racy can never be a problem nor they should be weighed from the point of view of expenditure and extravagance.

She said the 'one nation, one election' is in fact an attempt and a new drama to divert the attention from burning national issues such as poverty, inflation, unemployment and increase in violence, and is simply an illusion.

The BSP chief alleged that the people's faith in the EVMs had dwindled to a worrisome level. "The stubbornness of conducting elections through electronic voting machines instead of ballot paper is the real threat to the democracy and Constitution of the country," she said.

DD India to be available in B'desh, South Korea

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

In a boost to India-Bangladesh Land India-South Korea cooperation, the Union Information and Broadcasting Minister Prakash Javadekar on Wednesday announced that Doordarshan (DD) India will now be telecast in Bangladesh and South Korea.

The development came after a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was signed between Prasar Bharati and Bangladesh TV (BTV). In return, BTV World, a channel owned by Bangladesh TV, would now be available on DD Free Dish, the state-owned direct-to-home (DTH) free-to-air platform.

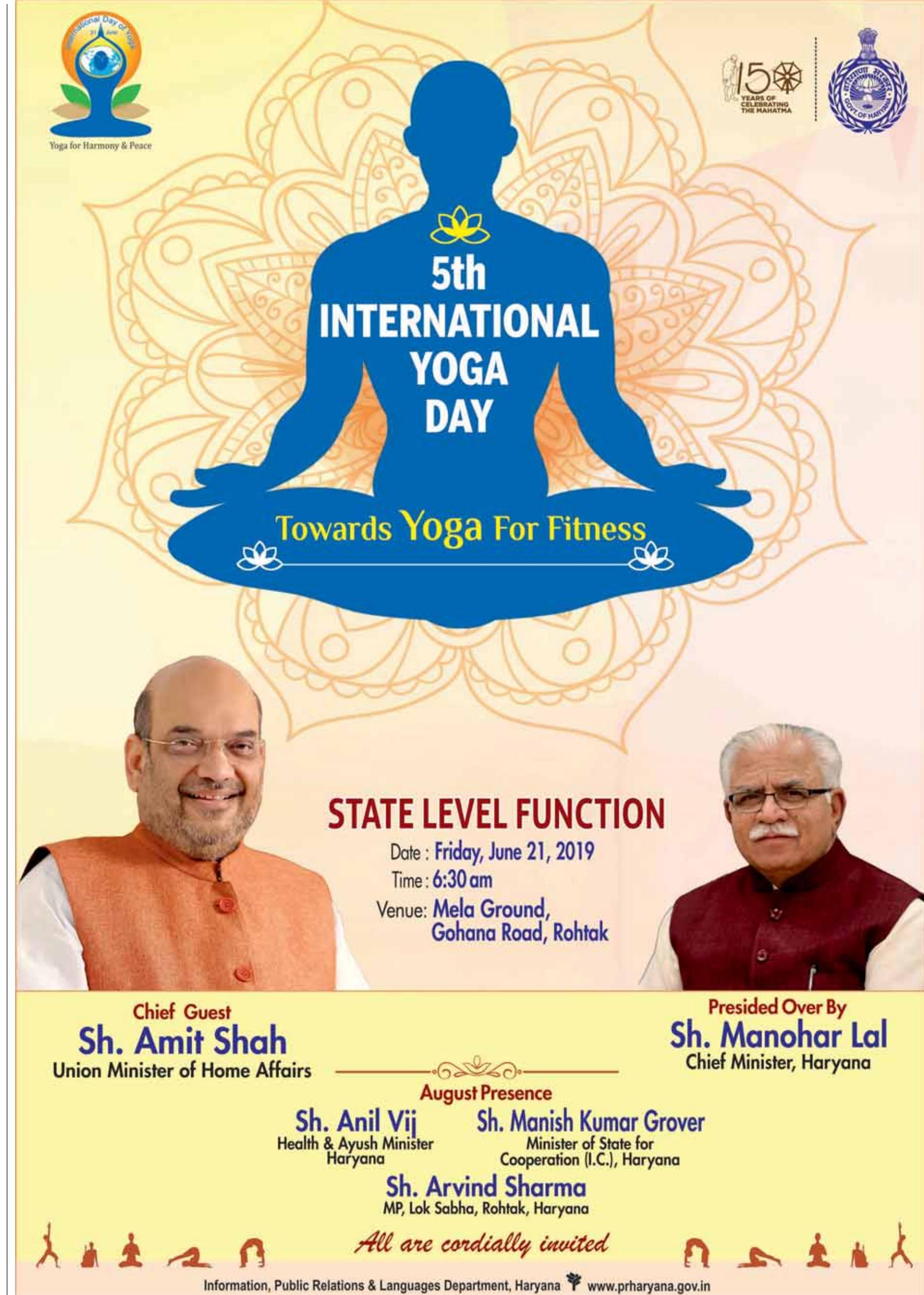
The Minister said India had signed an agreement with Bangladesh to telecast state-run DD India in the neighbouring country. A ministry statement

said BTV World would be of special interest to viewers in eastern India.

"We have decided to show BTV World, a channel owned by Bangladesh TV, on the DD Free Dish which will be available for the viewers of Doordarshan in our country. At the same time, DD India would be made available in Bangladesh," Javadekar said.

The Union Minister further said that KBS World, a 24x7 English channel of the South Korean government, would also be available on DD Free Dish.

"We have entered into an agreement with South Korea also, where South Korea will show DD India and we will also allow South Korean KBS channel, it will be available in India. This mutual cooperation with neighbouring countries is very important," he said.



Chief Guest
Sh. Amit Shah
Union Minister of Home Affairs

Presided Over By
Sh. Manohar Lal
Chief Minister, Haryana

August Presence

Sh. Anil Vij
Health & Ayush Minister
Haryana

Sh. Manish Kumar Grover
Minister of State for
Cooperation (I.C.), Haryana

Sh. Arvind Sharma
MP, Lok Sabha, Rohtak, Haryana

All are cordially invited

Information, Public Relations & Languages Department, Haryana www.prharyana.gov.in

An idea at best

The 'one nation one poll' proposal needs careful deliberation and has to be fully compliant with Constitutional norms



The debate on "one nation, one poll" has been an ongoing one and, on the face of it, the favourable aspects do attract some traction, chief among them being the streamlining of costs and apparatus of conducting the election process itself and stemming the prospect of policy paralysis, with some State or the other due for a mandate every other year. The argument is that with States in India's federal structure going to polls at varied points of time within the Central government's mandated period of governance, no visionary or decisive steps can be taken or implemented as they would be subservient to electoral politics, which in this country tends to be overtly populist in nature. Besides, it would rid the country from being in a continuous poll mode and go in for a performance mode. But it is in the subtext of the Westminster system we have adopted that questions arise about whether a unitary system works best for our federal structure. And in the current political context, whether it threatens the very idea of regionalism itself, considering that in a single election, national issues tend to take centrestage and drown out or at least blur pertinent issues of localised interest, something that regional parties are usually in better command of and base their political relevance and bargaining chips on.

Although many argue that the Indian voter is evolved enough to make a distinction between the larger national interest and his neighbourhood, there is always a possibility that the overarching aura of the former could swamp the judgment call of the voter at the state level, if the prevailing party seeking mandate happens to be of a centrist party. And as the results of the recent Lok Sabha have shown, the centrist surge has helped the ruling NDA regain its footprint in States, where it had been hit badly in the Assembly elections just a few months ago. Besides, with many regional satraps now friendly to it, the NDA thinks it is an idea whose time has come. This is precisely the reason why Prime Minister Narendra Modi has renewed the proposal for "one vote." But the idea is fraught with complexities that need very careful deliberation. This will require a substantive number of Constitutional amendments to the Representation of the People Act 1951, the anti-defection law and others relating to rules of procedure with two-thirds majority in both Houses. Besides, such a move does not factor in mid-term situations where a State government may choose to dissolve itself or fall because of a loss of majority. Would the Governor then not call fresh elections or hold on to a moribund Assembly till the dates of the next round of general elections are announced? What if the Central Government falls before the term of the Assemblies end? Such a move, based on current context, would then go against the grain of democracy and lead to surreptitious absolutist control of federal polity. As it is, though we call ourselves a federal entity, in reality we are a more centralised union of states. The "one nation, one election" formula would further strengthen this idea and, therefore, needs very careful deliberation. Already, the Opposition, primarily the Left and the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP), has rightfully warned about the implicit idea of a monolithic State that such a move might encourage, fuelling such demands as "one nation, one culture, one language." This clamour for a unitary governance structure and discourse may well become a syndrome than reform. The Trinamool Congress has rightly asked for a White Paper on the subject for transparency of views. Besides, as former Election Commissioner TS Krishnamurthy said, several administrative alignments are needed for simultaneous polls, and that readiness had to be first ascertained without pushing through the proposal just for the heck of it. When the idea was placed before the Law Commission, it, too, had recommended that in order to equalise timelines, two conditions had to be met: First, a 'motion for an early general election must be agreed to by at least two-thirds of all members of the House.' Second, 'a no-confidence motion must be passed by the House and with no alternative government being confirmed within 14 days of passing a confidence motion.' Such compliance is still a tough call. The BJP knows it, too, but wants to tell its voter base that it tried to push a key pledge in its manifesto and keep its election momentum going for the next round of Assembly polls.

Water woes

Chennai has gone dry and its citizens are parched. Is this India's dystopian future?



More importantly, it's a warning for more "zero days" and shines a light on the potential problem that several other Indian cities will face in the future.

Undoubtedly, there is rampant development of urban areas and India finds it difficult to strike a balance as people leave villages for cities and chase comforts of modern civilisation. The problem is not their aspiration but the unplanned and uneven development of urban areas where commercial, industrial and residential zones lie beside each other. Our urban planners have to spend more time in making sustainable layouts for cities and reimagine development dramatically to reduce water wastage, conserve water and recharge aquifers. Most major urban centres — Delhi, Mumbai, Bengaluru, Hyderabad, Pune and the list goes on and on — are water-stressed. Borewells are getting deeper and deeper and the water is running out. Besides sewage and water treatment plants are barely able to keep up with the demand. There is no provision for recycling water. Politicians have turned a blind eye to the water tanker mafia, who are unscrupulously draining aquifers everywhere they can find. At the same time, we are growing the wrong crops in the wrong parts of the country thanks to entrenched local politicians, like sugarcane in Latur and the Kaveri catchment area and water-intensive Basmati rice in the plains of Punjab and Haryana. Most of our farming practices are wasteful. So much more careful thought needs to be put into crop management and zoning farms according to the water map. At the same time, while we take so much technology from Israel in the fields of agriculture and water management, we stop short of applying it on a wide scale. There is an argument that the government should not penalise but incentivise but the acute crisis in Chennai is a dark portend of things to come in other cities. There should be penal action taken against those who waste water by using it inefficiently — in cities and in villages, in homes and in factories.

opinion

Laws higher than sutras

While Hong Kongers may escape China's educational scheme to test the monks' and nuns' legal knowledge, it will be difficult for Tibetans, Uyghurs or mainlanders to avoid them



CLAUDE ARPI

Chinese President Xi Jinping is travelling a lot these days; he went to Bishkek (Kyrgyzstan) for the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) meet, then he is visiting North Korea and later Japan. At the same time in Hong Kong, two million people (25 per cent of the population) walked down the streets to reject a law widely believed to have been piloted by Xi.

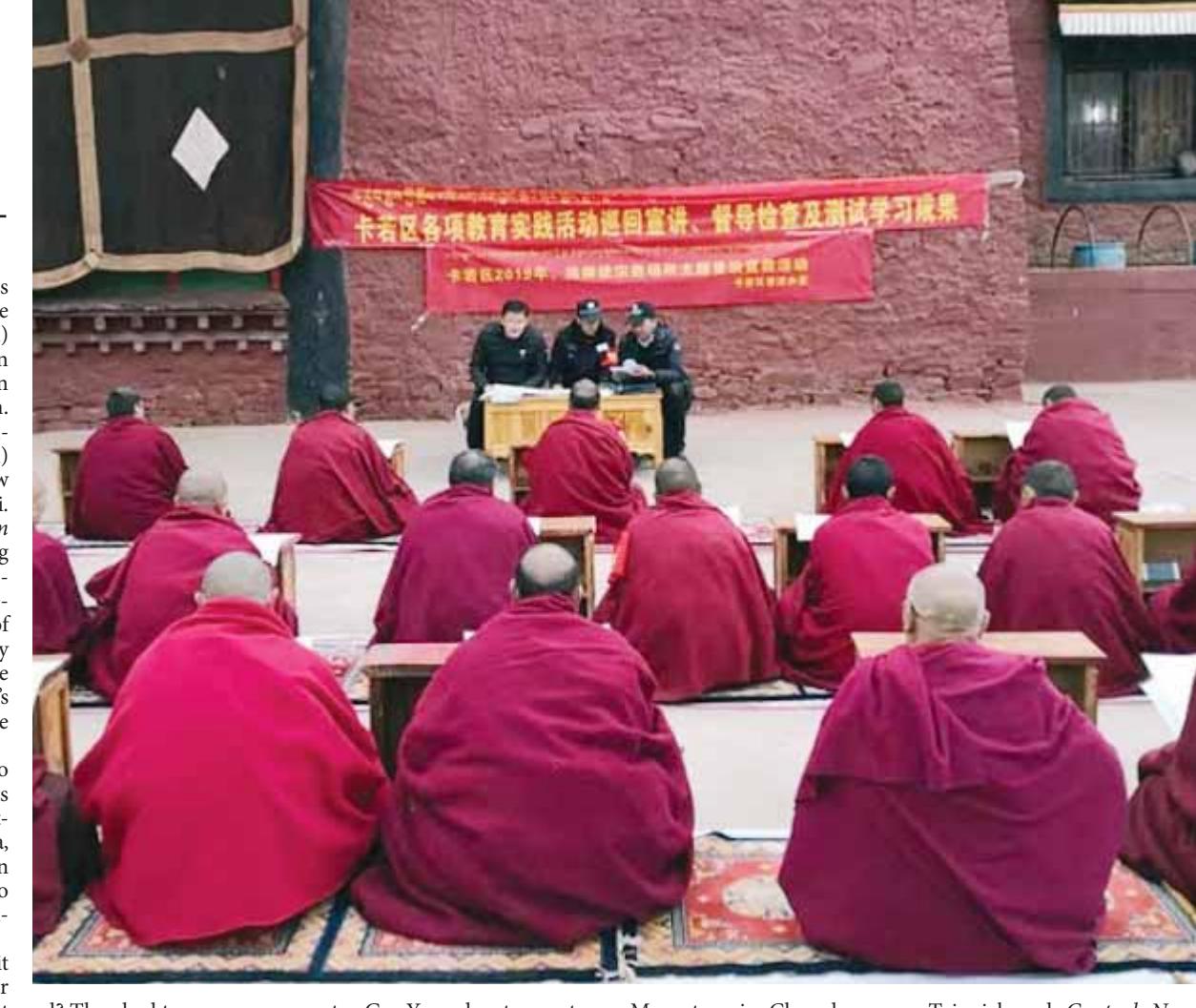
Bill Bishop, author of the *Sinocism Newsletter* analysed: "The Hong Kong protesters succeeded in scuttling the proposed extradition law, at least for the foreseeable future... Regardless, the rebuke of the mainland and its political system by millions of Hong Kongers could not be clearer and the damage to Xi and the party's reunification project that is core to the Great Rejuvenation, is real."

The Chinese leadership is keen not to repeat the Hong Kong fiasco in Tibet. This is one of the reasons why Beijing is promoting Gyaltsen Norbu, its own Panchen Lama, who recently visited Thailand. Back in Beijing, he affirmed "that he was able to deeply appreciate the greatness of the motherland while he was in a foreign country."

The information about his foreign visit came out in the open a month after Norbu's return; he was part of a Buddhist delegation led by Yanjue, the acting president of the Buddhist Association of China. Interestingly, Norbu had attended a Buddhist conference in Hong Kong in 2012 but this was not counted as a foreign visit. In Thailand, he explained that he has the responsibility to adapt Tibetan Buddhism to the socialist society... with Chinese characteristics "to constantly adhere to develop Tibetan Buddhism in the Chinese context, to maximise the positive role of religion and to make due contributions to safeguarding the unification of the motherland and promoting ethnic unity."

But what does "adapting Tibetan Buddhism to the socialist society with Chinese characteristics" mean? An article on a Chinese website run by *Xinhua* gave an answer. All monks in Tibet were recently invited to pass "legal knowledge" examinations "in order to promote the basic and leading role of the rule of law and actively guide the adaptation of religion to the socialist society and enhance the legal knowledge level and the rule of law awareness" among monks and nuns in Tibet.

The website reported that the new programme was jointly organised by the Tibetan Autonomous Region (TAR) justice department, the law office, the communist party's united front work department and the religious bureau. According to the statistics quoted by *Xinhua*, 30,000 members of the Sangha went through the examinations. On which topics were the monks test-



ed? They had to answer questions on the Chinese Constitution, state security laws, anti-terrorism laws, anti-spionage laws, environmental protection laws, internet safety laws and regulations on religious affairs matters.

But that is not all. Apart

from these topics, the monks and nuns had to demonstrate their great knowledge on the communist party's 19th national congress, Xi's new era of socialism with Chinese characteristics, the national flag law, the national anthem law, the national security law, the national regional autonomy law and ethnic and religious policies as well as related regulations. This probably included the rules for the reincarnation of "living Buddhas" (how the Dalai Lama will be selected by the party).

Don't ask me where is the Buddha in all this! TAR's "legal" big shots visited the test centres. *Xinhua* cited Lobsang Gyurmey, vice chairman of the political consultative conference and Danba, the head of the TAR justice department, who inspected the Ganden Monastery's examination cen-

tre. Gao Yang, deputy secretary and vice chairman of the party committee of the political consultative conference, showed up at the Sera Monastery and Xu Xueguang, deputy director of the People's Congress Standing Committee, went to Drepung. Many other party important cadres participated.

According to *Xinhua*, after the launch of these (compulsory) tests, "the legal literacy and the rule of law awareness of religious faculty members in our region have been further improved." The website affirmed that "national laws are higher than religious canons and obeying these should come before adhering to the [Buddhist] precepts." According to *Xinhua*, the purpose was to create a harmonious and stable social situation for Tibet...

In these circumstances, one understands why students in Hong Kong or in Taipei are a nervous lot. Who wants to join the motherland's legal system? Examinations were organised all over TAR, particularly in Lhasa, Shigatse, in Lhoka (Lhunse County), in Nagchu and Shangda

Monastery in Chamdo area. They were conducted in two ways: A Tibetan-Chinese bilingual "open-book" written test and an oral test.

Xinhua reported that in order to ensure a smooth and orderly examination process, "three-level patrol groups for districts, cities and counties" were formed. The patrols checked each test centre under their jurisdiction; they were said to have been "deep into the relevant temples to conduct an in-depth and detailed understanding of the examination arrangements and the order of the examination room."

Moral of the story: You better know Comrade Xi's speeches! And guess what? The attendance of the examination was 100 per cent. It was to be an important initiative by party secretary Wu Yingjie for "strengthening the education on the rule of law," said the official website. Is it the reason why Norbu deeply "appreciated" the greatness of the motherland when he was abroad?

The "new" education is not restricted to Tibet. Xi wants to "educate" all classes of Chinese. According to the

Taipei-based *Central News Agency*, the Chinese communist party, which celebrates its 70th anniversary, launched an education campaign called "Remain true to our original aspirations and keep our mission firmly in mind."

The Central Publicity Department called some 500 journalists to retrace the route of 'Long March' and write about the epic journey of the Red Army. The journalists were told that they need to "make a long journey" and in their writings, "profoundly echo how Red Power came into being; how the new China was built." The aim was to educate the masses about the revolution.

On May 20, Xi had inspected Jiangxi Yudu, the starting point of the Long March. It was like "exploring the source of the party's original heart," affirmed Xi. The Hong Kongers may escape these education schemes for the time being but it will be more difficult for the Tibetans, the Uyghurs or even the mainlanders to avoid them.

(The writer is an expert on India-China relations)

SOUND BITE

I called him (Prime Minister Modi) the most fascist ruler of the country. It was on record and I stand by it.

Telangana Chief Minister
—K Chandrasekhar Rao



If there is anything that I've learnt in the journey of recovery is that you need to be patient, and that there is hope.

Actor
—Deepika Padukone

When the legislative and executive wings get swept away from their duties, it is the duty of the judiciary to rise and stand up to protect the Constitutional ethos.

Chief Justice of India
—Ranjan Gogoi

The Congress had asked me to cross over before the elections. But I knew which way the wind was blowing.

Union Minister
—Ramdas Athawale



LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Play constructive role

Sir — The Prime Minister's plea to the Opposition to forget about *paksh* and *vipaksh* and have only *nishpaksh* spirit and work actively in the larger interest of the nation is welcome. His tone was that of reconciliation and warmth and is an assertion that in unity lies the betterment of the nation and its people. The Opposition should take the Prime Minister's statement in the right spirit. That the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) and its allies were able to form a majority Government should not make them arrogant or lead them to ignore crucial issues that need to be raised in Parliament.

At the same time, the Opposition should not obstruct or stall proceedings of the House to put the Government on the mat. Good actions and motions must be supported. The growth, development and progress of the country should be of prime importance. Let us hope that the ruling party and the Opposition maintain decorum of the house by upholding the good values of integrity, propriety and sobriety.

M Pradyu
Kannur

Crack the whip on errant officials

Prime Minister Narendra Modi had promised a corruption-free and accountable administration after he took over for a second term. The Modi Government 2.0 cracked the whip on Income Tax officers last week by retiring as many as 12 Indian Revenue Service (IRS) officers for corruption and misconduct. Now, it has sent several Customs officers packing on a host of charges. All are top-ranking officials. They have been compulsorily sent home under Fundamental Rule 56(j) of Central Civil Services (Pension) Rules. The pension rule largely caters to bribery charges against officers. One particular official was a vocal critic of the Government's Goods and Service Tax (GST), which amounted to insubordination and misconduct. Apparently, one of the officers was abrasive of any possible action that could have been taken against him and was totally prepared for the consequences. All rules and regulations governing the compulsory retirement exist in our book but have been seldom acted upon.

The NDA government does not appear to suffer from either the 'influence phenomenon' or the 'kickback syndrome'. Principally, it looks like kicking the back of tainted officials, especially in departments which pro-

vide ample opportunities for incumbent officers to become rich overnight. Evidently, IAS and IPS officers are better insulated than IRS officers in terms of disciplinary action because the role of the State Government is as important as the Centre in governing them. Plenty of officers cosy up to State rulers, thereby using the respective Governments as shields against the Centre. The NDA Government should continue with its zero-tolerance towards corruption and nepotism. NDA 2.0 has taken a step forward from where it should have no reason to backtrack.

Ganapathi Bhat
Akola

the country will get rid of remaining in poll mode almost throughout the year. If a Government falls midway, a mid-term poll should be held for the rest of the term. The next Lok Sabha election will be held in May 2024. Of course, this time is still not enough to synchronise terms of all Assemblies. At least an idea has been floated. It is time to apply our minds to it.

MC Joshi
Lucknow

Sir — This refers to the editorial, "Children of a lesser God" (June 20). While researchers examine the exact cause behind the encephalitis syndrome, it is a sorry state of affairs in Bihar where over 100 children have died due to this disease. It is reflective of the fact that the State's healthcare system is in shambles. The State must take radical measures to improve the health infrastructure.

Somya
Via email

Workable solution

Sir — The idea of simultaneous polls is not new. In 1951-52, the first general election to the Lok Sabha was held simultaneously

with elections of all State Assemblies. This practice continued till the general election of 1967, after which it got disrupted due to premature dissolution of some State Assemblies in 1968 and that of the Lok Sabha in

1970. Besides saving huge amount of taxpayers' money spent on holding separate Centre and State elections, simultaneous polls will spare considerable time of security and administrative set-up to do their normal job and

Send your feedback to:
letterstopeople@gmail.com

FIRST COLUMN

Bracing up for uncertain times

As a developing economy, India holds a lot of potential but it needs to take structural steps to make itself more resilient to shocks



NITHIN AUGUSTINE

Ever since the great depression hit the world in 1929, a slew of economic crises such as the 1973 oil embargo, the Asian crisis of 1997 and the great recession of 2007-08 followed, challenging the well-established economic theories of respective times. These crises mostly unfolded against the backdrop of a strong belief in free market capitalism, globalisation and increasing deregulation of trade. This, along with the much-hyped 'new economy', was widely, at times mistakenly, believed to be the promoter of growth and prosperity. However, contrary to popular belief, economies across the globe have started showing signs of slowdown due to rising debt burden, high interest rates and trade protectionism.

Recently, the International Monetary Fund (IMF), while cutting the global economic forecast for the year 2019-20, said that the global economy is slowing more than expected and a sharp downturn could require world leaders to coordinate stimulus measures. A recent article in the *Washington Post* titled, 'Economic growth is slowing all around the world' said that builders in the US are erecting fewer single-family homes. German factories are sputtering and in China, retail sales are growing at their slowest pace in 15 years. This, though, aptly captures the current state of the global economy and could in the near term precipitate another economic crisis. Furthermore, the World Bank in its recent report titled, 'Global Economic Prospects — Darkening Skies' indicated that global economic growth is expected to soften from a downwardly revised three per cent in 2018 to 2.9 per cent in 2019.

However, despite the slowdown in global economies, India's growth continued to remain strong and bullish with a rate of 8.2 per cent in the first quarter of the fiscal year 2018-19. Until recently, India retained the tag of the fastest-growing largest economy in the world and briefly overtook France to be the sixth largest economy in the world with a Gross Domestic Product of \$2.61 trillion. This does not imply that India is immune from fluctuations in the global economy. Growth issues faced by our country currently can topple growth ambitions. Global economic headwinds, trade war and the growing number of non-performing assets could wreak havoc in the India market. Hence, it is important for any economy, including India, to adopt a sustainable economic model that is resilient and can withstand occasional hiccups in the economy.

India's unique geographic advantage and demographic positioning allow it to compete with the developed economies. Further, it has abundant natural resources, intellectual capital, cheap labour and an enabling policy environment. Joseph Stiglitz, in his 2010 book titled, *Freefall: America, Free Markets, and the Sinking of the World Economy*, says that the great depression coincided with the decline of the US agriculture. Indeed, agricultural prices were falling even before the stock market crash in 1929. Increase in agricultural productivity was so great that a small percentage of the population could produce all the food that the country could consume. The transition from an economy based on agriculture to one where manufacturing predominated was not easy.

The IT revolution earned India a respectable place among the developing economies in the world. But today, 25 years after the IT boom and the liberalisation of the economy, India stands at a historical crossroad wherein it has to choose between building economic resilience or continuing its reliance on the traditional IT services to boost its growth prospects. Paul Krugman, a Nobel Prize-winning economist, during one of his recent India visits remarked that investments in the rural economy and scaling up manufacturing are essential for India to meet the demand for jobs from a dramatic surge in the working age population. The manufacturing sector has been long neglected with much of the activities happening in the small and medium space. With the apparent slowdown in the IT industry and rise in protectionism, the focus must shift to manufacturing and agriculture that can boost growth. Further, reforms in the banking sector, bridging trade deficits and developing the rural economy could script a resounding growth story in the coming years.

The World Bank, in its India biannual publication, 'India Development Update', said that to sustain its growth path, India will need to keep a close eye on several factors to make the country more resilient to shocks: The changing landscape of open trade, reforms in the banking sector, strengthening financial institutions and regulatory supervision of the financial sector. Deepening its structural reforms in areas of health, education and service delivery will be critical for development of human capital required to sustain growth. As a developing economy, India still holds a lot of promise and will continue grow at a steady pace despite many challenges.

(The writer is a Communications Professional and an Economics graduate)

analysis

07

POINT COUNTER POINT

I CAN'T EXPRESS THE PAIN I AM GOING THROUGH. I WANT TO EXPRESS IT WITH YOU, BUT CANNOT, BUT I NEED TO SOLVE PAIN OF PEOPLE OF STATE.

—KARNATAKA CHIEF MINISTER HD KUMARASWAMY



THERE IS NO THREAT TO THE KARNATAKA GOVERNMENT. THEY (THE BJP) ARE TRYING DESPERATELY BUT THEY WILL NOT SUCCEED.

—SENIOR CONGRESS LEADER SIDDARAMIAH

New way of doing politics

The deft use of political communication — verbal and non-verbal — played a key role in positioning the BJP in the minds of the electorate and contributed in elevating its fortunes to a historic high



VV SUNDAR

It is the scale of the Indian elections that baffles the world. Most countries view our democratic electoral exercise with utter disbelief and astonishment. The 2019 Lok Sabha elections were interesting for the fact that political communication in our country seemed to have finally come of age. Among the parties, the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) stood out to be the savviest in mastering the image-building and perception management exercise and also gained a decisive edge over its rivals.

Agenda-setting: Take for instance verbal communications. The BJP's colourful and earthy slogans were an instant hit. They were at their simplistic and comprehensible best. The party managed to pull the rug under the feet of the Opposition with short and punchy coinages like *mahamillawat*, which was used to brand the Opposition parties. This conjoined word summed up the unprincipled and ragtag coalitions formed by various political parties just before the elections and instantly robbed them of political relevance.

Similarly, *majboor sarkar vs majboot sarkar* was a lethal jibe as compared to the Congress' weary slogan of *ab hogna nyay*. Roughly translated, the Congress slogan meant that justice would be delivered if it came back to power.

Oddly enough, the party's strategists did not realise it would automatically trigger a counter question in the minds of the voters: If justice was still pending to be delivered, what did the party do all these years when it was in power for the longest time and capable of changing the system? The Congress campaign appeared to be centred around superficial populist sloganising coined in splendid isolation devoid of any social connect. On the other hand, the Congress' somewhat catchy *chowkidar chor hai* jibe misfired and it faced national embarrassment for being flippant and more personal than issue-oriented. Slogans formed by other Opposition parties were limp. Regional party leaders, followed the old-style book of political communication. So they found themselves out of breath with the BJP's national campaign blitzkrieg.

Yet another slogan coined by the BJP *kaam ruke na, desh jhuke na* advanced the party's developmental agenda that remained to be achieved and contextualised the national pride as a rallying point.

Instead of offering progressive ideas and providing a constructive alternate developmental framework, the Opposition mounted a bitter and shriller negative campaign with personal level attacks, some of which were unbending of their stature and the public office they occupied. Many parties even reduced the electoral campaigns to ugly street-level brawls. Negative campaigns can work when left-handed compliments are delivered to opponents, dripping with sarcasm and humour. Perhaps none in the Opposition had the showmanship to pull it off. Resorting to personal attacks made them appear as a fringe mob pelting stones.

Such messaging and slogans itself achieved half the electoral success for the BJP. So much so that even when its own senior leaders hit their opponents below the belt, it was seen as



avenging barbs and a victim's right to defend himself.

Bespoke framing: Besides, verbal communication, the BJP's near total obsession with non-verbal communication was equally fascinating. Public appearances suggest a well thought-out, meticulously crafted, immaculate and bespoke visual styling of its leader. Camera lenses were trained to capture and curate radiating energy and dynamism in the shots. Low angle camera shots and measured distance maintained in the foreground and background around the leader decluttered the frame and provided for just one single focal point.

The penchant was to clear the hoi-poloi from the frame to get singular visuals. Though amusing, such optics manage to build and reinforce a pattern of power and perception. The primacy given to staging, planning and visual framing is both formal, ceremonial, professional and unparalleled. It successfully transmits and conveys non-verbal cues to the masses besides giving sleek and larger-than-life persona, always in command, at ease and in control. The new-age and savvy political parties are not leaving anything to chance in this hyper-saturated 24X7 media environment which is dictated by the power of visuals and imagery. The Opposition is yet to comprehend this to its fullest. Remarkably, even bitter critics of the BJP were floored with rousing and statesman-like speeches one heard from its leaders. There were eloquent, unscripted words laced with a higher purpose, conveying the big picture to the entire nation in a lucid, uplifting and scintillating manner. Sadly, the Opposition speeches appeared merely transactional and *tutu-mai mai*.

Media snobbery: Another humbling feature of this election was the media. The BJP's disdain for the "Lutyens' Delhi" and the "Khan market gang" is well-known. In spite of the relentless and stinging attacks mounted by

INSTEAD OF OFFERING PROGRESSIVE IDEAS AND PROVIDING A CONSTRUCTIVE ALTERNATE DEVELOPMENTAL FRAMEWORK, THE OPPOSITION MOUNTED A BITTER AND SHRILLER NEGATIVE CAMPAIGN WITH PERSONAL LEVEL ATTACKS. NEGATIVE CAMPAIGNS WORK WHEN LEFT-HANDED COMPLIMENTS ARE DELIVERED TO OPPONENTS, DRIPPING WITH SARCASM AND HUMOUR

a large section of the media, the BJP pulled off the perception battle on its own terms by highlighting its "common man's spokesperson" image.

The election results neutralised and busted egos of self-styled opinion-makers in the national capital, who once bragged to make or break the fortunes of the ruling party by the sheer force of their publishing ink. They have been clearly bypassed and they need to deal with this hard reality. On election results day, the meltdown on the faces of television news anchors and newly-minted YouTube activists was relished by millions of Modi's voters. The loss of credibility, neutrality and fairness of the 'erudite' mainstream media calls for examining if the fourth estate indeed has its ear to the ground. As if the ongoing electoral circus was not enough, the international Press jumped into the ring to lecture the Indian electorate on whom to vote. Notwithstanding the unsolicited advice and unwarranted trespassing into the ongoing sovereign democratic electoral process, 'influential' publications earned another round of egg on their faces after the results for this needless and meddlesome adventurism.

Overall, the BJP's political communication stood out for its highly organised, targeted communication and one-to-one grassroots connect with the voters. Social media lost its novelty but it kept the electorate engaged and entertained till the end. The deft use of political communication — both verbal and non-verbal — played a key role in positioning the BJP in the minds of the electorate and contributed in elevating its fortunes to a historic high. It is never too late for the Opposition to take a leaf or two from this exercise and reset its communications tools to achieve both reach and relevance among the masses.

(The writer is a seasoned communications professional and management consultant based in New Delhi)

Closer to a future without water

The unprecedented scarcity in Chennai is a result of poor urban planning and the lack of political will in finding radical solutions. Unless we devise sustainable solutions, this precarious crisis can well hold all our metropolises to ransom



KOTA SRIRAJ

Chennai is an apt example of all that is wrong with environment in India. The year 2015 saw the city reel under the worst floods experienced by the region. This year, the city is a witness to the worst ever drought in the recent times, prompting the Central Government to take notice and put in emergency measures to tackle the problem. The crisis is quite severe as the city is left with just two per cent of water in local reservoirs. Some rains would have gone a long way towards lifting its collective spirit but they are still elusive.

The rapid fluctuation of water resources for this city is evident as the city has oscillated between plenty to scarcity within a gap of four years.



measures can prevent Chennai and other Indian cities from continuing their inexorable march towards 'day zero' scenarios for natural resources when the price to be paid will be more than we can afford.

The water shortage has also been compounded due to less rainfall,

which has been half its normal quota. The northeast or 'retreating' monsoon, which occurs in November and December, usually accounts for more than 60 per cent of Chennai's annual rainfall on which the city now pins its earnest hopes. But right now the situation is quite grim as the city has received zero rainfall since March and the recent rise in temperatures has left the city high and dry. Add to this consecutive drought years, which have dried the city lakes and led to drastic drops in water tables.

The four major city reservoirs,

with a total capacity of 11.5 thousand million cubic feet (TMC ft), have only 0.3 TMC ft of water in them. To put things in perspective, even in 2017, when Tamil Nadu experienced the worst drought in 140 years due to the failure of the monsoon, the city reservoirs had 0.7 TMC ft during the beginning of May. Cyclone Fani, which formed over the Bay of Bengal at the end of April, gave some hope to the city. However, the storm changed its course and curved towards Odisha, leaving Chennai high and dry again.

Chennai's state of affairs must not be seen as one-off. This plight can affect any city of India which has not been careful with its resources. The Government plays a pivotal role in ensuring that this chaos does not prevail across the country. The National Green Tribunal must take cognisance of environmental factors that contribute to such circumstances. It must ensure strict action against errant parties who stress and tax the environment and even impose punitive measures. Unless strict measures are taken, results cannot be expected.

In order to arrest the crisis, the Central Government, in tandem with

the State Government, must first focus on alleviating water shortage. Then it must strictly monitor the construction industry to ensure that all new projects are in compliance with water harvesting systems. This must be combined with lake and reservoir conservation mechanisms that help in maintaining critical levels of water throughout the year. The Central Government must also ensure that the citizens have an alternate option to log their protests regarding their woes.

Chennai's state of affairs must not be seen as one-off. This plight can affect any city of India which has not been careful with its resources. The Government plays a pivotal role in ensuring that this chaos does not prevail across the country. The National Green Tribunal must take cognisance of environmental factors that contribute to such circumstances. It must ensure strict action against errant parties who stress and tax the environment and even impose punitive measures. Unless strict measures are taken, results cannot be expected.

(The writer is an environmental journalist)



FOREIGN EYE



SHOCKING DEATH

Real-life events can bear a remarkable symbolic power. The advent of Egypt's first and only democratically elected president in 2012 was one of them. His collapse, in a courtroom "cage" after years of inadequate medical care is another. Morsi played his part in wrecking Egypt's hopes. Nonetheless, his suffering and death stand for the ordeal of tens of thousands of political prisoners, and for the regime's determination to crush opposition. (The *Guardian* editorial)

FinMin to prepare fresh proposal for AI sale

The Govt has already asked Air India to finalise its accounts for 2018-19 by June 30

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The Finance Ministry is preparing a fresh proposal for sale of Air India, incorporating issues like crude oil prices and exchange rate volatility, flagged by EY last year on possible reasons of the Government failing to attract bidders for the national carrier.

The Ministry's proposal, to be placed before Air India Specific Alternative Mechanism (AISAM), will also include option of selling either 100 per cent or 76 per cent government stake in Air India.

The AISAM, which is basically a Group of Ministers, have to be reconstituted as Arun Jaitley and Suresh Prabhu are no longer ministers in the new government. They will be replaced by Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman and Civil Aviation Minister Hardeep Singh Puri. Transport Minister Nitin Gadkari is likely to continue in the panel when it is reconstituted.

The Government last year invited bids to sell 76 per cent

stake in Air India, along with transfer of management control. However, it did not attract any bidder. Following that transaction advisor EY prepared a report citing probable reasons that led to failure of the sale process.

The reasons cited include 24 per cent government stake and corresponding rights, high debt, volatile crude oil prices, fluctuations in exchange rate, changes in macro environment, profitability track record of bidders and restriction on bidding by individuals.

An official said that the EY report was discussed at the AISAM meeting in June last year following which it was decided that the Air India sale should be deferred.

During the meeting, which was presided over by the then Finance Minister Jaitley, it was also decided to infuse more funds into the carrier and take steps to lower debt of Air India by selling its subsidiaries and non-core assets.

"We will present a fresh proposal for Air India sale to AISAM. It would include updates on the issues raised when Air India disinvestment failed last year. It would be left to the AISAM to decide whether the Government should go in for 100 per cent or 76 per cent stake sale," an official told PTI.

The Government has already asked Air India to finalise its accounts for 2018-

19 by June 30. Once the updated accounts are available and AISAM gives a go-ahead for Air India sale, the Department of Investment and Public Asset Management (DIPAM) and Ministry of Civil Aviation will draft the Preliminary Information Memorandum (PIM) giving details of about the company and stipulating conditions for eligibility of bidders.

In 2018, AISAM had earlier decided to sell 76 per cent in Air India and the buyer was required to take over ₹24,000 crore debt of the carrier along with over ₹8,000 crore of liabilities. However, the stake sale failed to attract any bidder when the auction process completed on May 31, 2018. At that time, Air India's total debt burden stood at ₹55,000 crore.

As precursor to the strategic disinvestment of Air India, the Cabinet in February approved setting up of a special purpose vehicle (SPV) — Air India Assets Holding Company — to transfer ₹29,464 crore worth loans of the national carrier and its four subsidiaries.

The official said that the process of transfer of ₹29,464 crore to the SPV is not yet complete.

"The Department of Economic Affairs, Civil Aviation Ministry and the banks are still working out the modalities of debt transfer. The process is likely to take some time," the official added.

Jet Airways shares dwindle further; tank 18.5%



PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Shares of Jet Airways further plummeted 18.5 per cent Wednesday after the consortium of bankers took the grounded airline to the NCLT.

The scrip tanked 18.17 per cent to close at ₹33.10 on the BSE. During the day, it dropped 28.18 per cent to hit an all-time low of ₹29.05.

On the NSE, shares of the airline plunged 18.51 per cent to close at ₹33.

This is the 13th consecutive trading day fall for Jet Airways, which has tumbled 78 per cent during this period.

The consortium of 26 bankers led by the State Bank

of India Tuesday took the airline to the National Company Law Tribunal (NCLT) to recover their dues of over ₹8,500 crore.

Jet Airways, started over 25 years ago, stopped flying on April 17 after it ran out of cash and the unpaid lessors took away most of its 100-odd operational airplanes.

The scrip has also been on back foot following announcement that stock exchanges will impose restrictions on trading in Jet Airways' shares from June 28 as part of preventive surveillance measures to curb excessive volatility, according to a circular issued last week.

"The Fed is widely expect-

₹ up 2 paise to 69.68 vs USD ahead of Fed policy decision

PTI ■ MUMBAI

The rupee inched up 2 paise to end at 69.68 against the US dollar Wednesday ahead of the US Fed's interest rate decision.

Hopes of a breakthrough in US-China trade talks and softening crude oil prices supported the local unit, forex traders said.

At the interbank foreign exchange (forex) market, the domestic currency opened at 69.57 to a dollar and gained further strength to touch a high of 69.49 during the day.

However, it could not hold on to the gains and finally ended at 69.68, up 2 paise over its previous close.

The rupee had settled at 69.70 against the US dollar Tuesday.

"Global markets would also await the outcome of the ongoing FOMC policy meeting which will conclude on June 19. The central bank is highly expected to come out in dovish note and markets would be highly anticipating any kind of hints on future rate cuts by the central bank," Angel Broking Research Associate Vaqar Khan said.

Khan further said the rupee is likely to remain range-bound in the coming days despite marginal increase in global risk appetite.

"The Fed is widely expect-



ed to stand pat on monetary policy this time but open the door for an interest rate cut at the next meeting in July," said V K Sharma, Head PCG and Capital Markets Strategy, HDFC Securities.

Meanwhile, the 10-year government bond yield rose to 6.84 per cent Wednesday.

"The benchmark 10-year sovereign bond yield rose 3 bps to 6.84 per cent after slumping 12 bps on Tuesday to its lowest level since October 2017, amid reports that a panel may recommend transferring one-third of the RBI's surplus reserves to the Government," Sharma added.

Foreign institutional investors (FIIs) were net buyers in the capital markets, purchasing shares worth ₹31.73 crore on Tuesday, according to exchange data.

The dollar index, which gauges the greenback's strength against a basket of six currencies, fell 0.09 per cent to 97.55.

The BSE Sensex ended modestly higher Wednesday after a highly volatile session.

After rallying nearly 400 points during the day, the BSE gauge settled 66.40 points, or 0.17 per cent, higher at 39,112.74. The broader NSE Nifty closed almost flat at 11,691.45.

Brent crude futures, the global oil benchmark, eased 0.77 per cent to trade at \$61.66 per barrel.

The Financial Benchmark

India Private Ltd (FBIL) set the reference rate for the rupee/dollar at 69.8010 and for rupee/euro at 78.4233. The reference rate for rupee/British pound was fixed at 87.4602 and for rupee/100 Japanese yen at 64.47.

FM reviews state of economy, FSDC discusses budget

PTI ■ NEW DELHI



Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman Wednesday reviewed the state of economy at the meeting of the Financial Stability and Development Council (FSDC) attended by sectoral regulators, including RBI Governor Shaktikanta Das, here.

The meeting also discussed proposals relating to the Budget to be presented by Sitharaman on July 5 in the Lok Sabha, Das told reporters after the meeting.

The RBI Governor further said that the Bimal Jalan com-

Anti-dumping duty imposed on jute sacking cloths from B'desh

This will help jute farmers, jute mills of West Bengal

PTI ■ KOLKATA

India has imposed anti-dumping duty on the import of jute sacking cloths from Bangladesh which will have a positive impact on West Bengal's ailing jute sector.

"Anti-dumping duty on sacking cloth from Bangladesh was our long standing demand to save the Indian jute sector. With active efforts of Union Textile Minister Smriti Irani, this has been achieved," jute industry veteran Sanjay Kajaria said in his reaction.

"It will be applicable for 5 years effective from June 18, 2019," he said.

This will help jute farmers

and the jute mills of West Bengal which are ailing or running in a very low capacity, Kajaria said.

The IJMA had filed an application for initiation of anti-circumvention investigation concerning import of the product exported from Bangladesh. It has requested for extension of the existing anti-dumping duties on the imports, alleging circumvention of the duty.

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

Jute sacking accounts for the lion share of the total jute goods. The notification showed anti-dumping duty imposed between \$125.21 and 138.97 per tonne.

Currently, the duty exists on jute yarn, sacking bags and hessian fabric (made from skin of jute plant) and imposed in the range of \$6.3-351.7 per tonne.

It will be applicable for 5 years effective from June 18, 2019," he said.

This will help jute farmers

Reforms, transparency must for Belt and Road success: WB

AFP ■ WASHINGTON

China's global Belt and Road Initiative could boost economies and reduce poverty rates in dozens of developing countries, but risks environmental damage, debt and corruption if improvements aren't made, the World Bank said Wednesday.

President Xi Jinping's signature foreign policy aims to reinvent the ancient Silk Road to connect Asia to Europe and Africa through massive investments in maritime, road and rail projects -- with hundreds of billions of dollars in financing from Chinese banks.

Critics, however, say the six-year-old BRI is a plan to boost Beijing's global influence, riddled with opaque deals favouring Chinese com-

panies, and will saddle nations with debt and environmental damage.

The World Bank's "Belt and Road Economics" report said the project has "the potential to substantially improve trade, foreign investment, and living conditions", but only if China and corridor countries make policy reforms to improve transparency, expand trade and mitigate against environmental and corruption risks.

While trade will "increase sharply, if unevenly" for economies along the routes, the "potential gains come with considerable risks", according to Ceyla Pazarbasioglu, a World Bank vice president.

The report estimated that the BRI would boost trade by 2.8 to 9.7 per cent for participating countries and between

1.7 and 6.2 per cent for the world.

However, the study found that around a quarter of those economies already have high debt levels and for some them, "medium-term vulnerabilities could increase".

The report said large infrastructure projects are "inherently risky," as they can create corruption and failures in public procurement.

This has caused the US, India and some European nations to look at the project with suspicion.

The World Bank study found Chinese firms account for the majority of BRI contracts, although "limited data" was available. According to one estimate, it said more than 60 percent of Chinese-funded BRI projects are allocated to Chinese companies.

"Greater transparency is essential to encourage community involvement and build public trust in investment decisions," the report said.

Thomas Cook India releases summer report 2019

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Thomas Cook (India) Ltd, an integrated travel and travel related financial services company, has observed a vibrant 22% growth this summer with emergence of significant trends.

Thomas Cook India has witnessed a definitive growth of over 25% with today's cash rich, but time poor generation opting for travel to bond with their families. Parent-Child bonding tours are in high demand resulting in a surge of Thomas Cook India's Theme Park Holidays, outdoors-adventure, music and culture tourism; sports tourism being a significant driver.

Govt proposes no registration charges for electric vehicles

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The Government Wednesday proposed to waive registration charges for electric vehicles to boost adoption of environment-friendly vehicles.

The proposal comes at a time when the country plans high penetration of such vehicles by 2030.

Issuing the draft notification to amend the Central Motor Vehicles Rules (CMVR), 1989, the road transport and highways ministry said battery-operated vehicles "shall be exempted from the payment of fees for the purpose of issue or renewal of registration certificate and assignment of new registration mark".

The exemption will apply

to all category of vehicles, including two-wheelers.

The ministry has issued the draft notification for amendments in CMVR where the amendments in Rule 81 are proposed for such waiver.

The amendments will be done in exercise of the powers conferred on the central government under various sections of the Motor Vehicles Act, 1988. Comments from stakeholders have been sought in a month.

"The said draft rules shall be taken into consideration after the expiry of a period of 30 days from the date on which the copies of this notification as published in the Gazette of India, are made available to the public," the draft notification said.

The objections or suggestions that may be received from any person with respect to the said draft rules before the expiry of the aforesaid period will be considered by the central government, it said.

Last year, Road Transport and Highways Minister Nitin Gadkari said a blueprint has been drawn to boost production of electric vehicles in the country and take their share to 15 per cent of total automobiles in the next five years.

It is time India should think to promote green vehicles and curb pollution, Gadkari said.

Earlier to promote electric vehicles in India, the government had approved green licence plates bearing numbers in white fonts for private e-vehicles and yellow for taxis.

APPEAL FOR IDENTIFICATION

General public is hereby informed that an unidentified dead body of male Age : Approx. 25-30 years, Height : About 5'6", Identification : a tattoo of "Rahul" written on right hand, wearing blue colour jeans, was found dead on 17.06.2019 in Haiderpur Water Treatment

Plant, Sector-13, Rohini, Delhi. In this regard DD No. 16-A dated 17.06.2019 has been lodged at P.S. K.N. Katju Marg, Delhi.

Any person having any information or clue about the deceased may kindly inform to the undersigned on the following address or telephone numbers.

SHO - P.S. K.N. Katju Marg, Delhi
Tel. No. 011-27571162, 27571171
DP/2988/RD/19

NORTHERN RAILWAY QUOTATION NOTICE

File No. 23AC/393/Cycle-Scooter/MUT/2016
The Sr. Divisional Commercial Manager / Chg., Northern Railway, New Delhi invites Quotations for the allotment of Cycle-Scooter-Car-Bus-Truck-Tempos parking at Meerut Cantt Railway Station (MUT) as per New Parking Policy issued by HQ office letter no. 120-MC-Parking-Policy-2015 dated 18.11.2016 for the period of 3 (three) months, detail is as under:-

S No. Railway Station Station Ctg Type of pkg. Pkg. area (in Sq mtrs) *Reserve Price for three months (In Rs.) EMD@2% of Total Contract Value (In Rs.)
1 Meerut Cantt (MUT) "A" Cycle-Scooter-Car-Bus-Truck-Tempo 1187.39 3,92,837 7,900

*Applicable Taxes will be extra.
In addition to above Reserve price, GST as applicable on date (presently @ 18% and TCS @ 2% or as applicable over the license fees has to be paid by parking contractor.

Date and Time for submission of Quotation:- Up to 15:00 Hrs. on 26.06.2019 to

For more information and obtaining Quotations forms, interested bidders may contact to the office of Sr. Divisional Commercial Manager/Coaching, DRM Office, State Entry Road New Delhi From 19.06.2019 to 25.06.2019 in any working days between 10:00 hrs to 17:00 hrs and on 26.06.2019 Up to 13:00 hrs. The draft submitted for Ernest Money deposit should be in favour of "Senior Divisional Finance Manager New Delhi" and have been prepared from the bidders own bank account and in case found otherwise/ false, Railway Administration shall be at liberty to initiate any action, including termination as deemed fit at later date also.

Overground workers of Hizbul Mujahideen arrested in Shopian



Representational image

Srinagar: Security forces have arrested five overground workers of proscribed terror outfit Hizbul Mujahideen in Jammu & Kashmir's Shopian district, police said on Wednesday.

"Based on specific input, police arrested five associates of terrorists from Shopian district," an official spokesman said.

He said on IED, which the militants were planning to use against security forces, was recovered at the instance of arrested persons.

The arrested individuals have been identified as Aqib Nazir Rathar, Amir Majeed Wani, Sameer Ahmed Bhat, Faisal Farooq Ahanger and Rayees Ahmed Ganai, the official said.

"During questioning of the arrested persons, it was revealed that terrorists of proscribed outfit HM, along with above stated associates, were planning to target police and security forces by planting an IED in the area," he said. **PTI**

"My criticism of state leaders is true. Is speaking the truth a crime?" said Baig, who was suspended on Tuesday night with immediate effect, citing

Being punished for speaking truth: Suspended K'taka Congress MLA

Bengaluru: Senior Karnataka legislator R Roshan Baig, who was suspended by the Congress on Tuesday for attacking its State leadership, Wednesday said he was a "disciplined soldier of the party" and was being punished for speaking the truth.

Asserting that his comments against state Congress leaders were the opinion of the party workers, he said he was in the Indian National Congress headed by Rahul Gandhi and "not in the Siddaramaiah Congress".

"Last night, I got the information that I have been suspended from the party... Is it a crime to speak the truth? What I have said is the truth," Baig said.

Speaking to reporters here, he said he had not criticised Gandhi and that he continued to be a "disciplined soldier of the party".

"My criticism of state leaders is true. Is speaking the truth a crime?" said Baig, who was suspended on Tuesday night with immediate effect, citing

"anti-party" activities.

Hitting out at Karnataka Congress leaders for the party's dismal show in the Lok Sabha polls, Baig had recently held Congress Legislative Party (CLP) leader Siddaramaiah's "arrogance" and KPCC president Dinesh Gundu Rao's "immaturity" responsible for the "flop show".

He had also called Congress general secretary KC Venugopal a "buffoon".

Baig had dropped hints of quitting the party and appealed to Muslims to "compromise" with the situation on the BJP-led NDA returning to power at the Centre.

The Karnataka Pradesh Congress Committee (KPCC) had issued a show-cause notice to the MLA for his conduct, to which he had not responded.

Noting that Gandhi had offered to resign as the All India Congress Committee (AICC) president, taking responsibility for the poll defeat, Baig said, "When we criticise her in the state for the party

winning only one seat in the Lok Sabha polls, action is being taken."

"What I have said about a few of our state leaders is the opinion of thousands of our karyakartas," he said.

Baig, a two-time MLA and a former Karnataka Minister, has been unhappy with the State Congress leadership over not being included in the coalition cabinet headed by Chief Minister HD Kumaraswamy.

The senior leader said he felt "sorry" for Gandhi and alleged that the Lok Sabha poll campaign in Karnataka was run in such a way that "we were not involved and there was no political management".

"...I have not criticised Rahul Gandhi. He is the Indian National Congress president. I am in the Indian National Congress, not in the Siddaramaiah Congress.

"I am a disciplined soldier of the Indian National Congress and was upset about the state of the party in Karnataka," he said. **PTI**

Centre should bring legislation to protect faith of Sabarimala devotees, says Kerala Govt



the Centre to bring in a legislation and ensure legal protection, he said.

The BJP government has a "huge majority" in the House and hence should bring in a legislation on the matter, he added.

Kerala had witnessed massive protests by right-wing outfit and the BJP after the LDF government decided to implement the apex court's September 28 verdict last year, lifting the restriction on entry of women of menstruating age into the hill shrine to offer prayers.

Earlier, the temple's customs did not allow girls and women in the menstrual age of 10-50 years to enter the shrine as the presiding deity, Lord Ayyappa. **PTI**

After decades, citizenship for 19 Pak migrants in Rajasthan

Barmer: Nineteen Pakistani migrants living in Rajasthan's Barmer for the past several decades were granted Indian citizenship on Wednesday, an official said.

Certificates of Indian citizenship were handed out to them at an event held at the district collectorate.

The state government has granted Indian citizenship to 19 Pak migrants who have been living in Barmer district for more than a decade, District Collector Himanshu Gupta said.

He, along with Additional District Collector Rakesh Kumar Sharma, handed out the certificates to the migrants.

Expressing their happiness, the migrants said getting Indian citizenship after years of wait is a dream come true.

The decision to grant citizenship to these 19 migrants living in Pali and five in Jalore was announced by the Rajasthan government on Tuesday. **PTI**



People stand in queues to fill vessels with drinking water from a tanker in Chennai on Wednesday

Highest number of malnutrition deaths in last 5 years: Khadse

Mumbai: In a rebuke for the Government led by his own party, senior BJP leader Eknath Khadse claimed on Wednesday that Maharashtra has witnessed the highest number of malnutrition deaths in the last five years.

He was speaking during a discussion in the Legislative Assembly on ashram-shalas (residential schools for tribal children) run or aided by the Tribal Development Department.

A code prescribing mandatory facilities at these schools was prepared eight months ago but its copies were yet to be made available and therefore it could not be implemented, the BJP leader alleged.

The code also prescribes how much salary the security guard employed at ashram schools should get. Guards get ₹5,000 per month for round-the-clock duty at present, and their duty hours should be curtailed, he said.

Tribal Development Minister Ashok Uike said the decision on pay scale of security guards would be taken soon.

Khadse said decisions taken by the Government are not implemented immediately. **PTI**

15 dead, 36 injured in 2 road accidents in UP



The injured were hospitalised and the bodies sent for postmortem, the SP added.

Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath expressed grief over the loss of lives and conveyed his condolence to the family members of the bereaved, a statement issued by the UP Government in Lucknow said.

The Chief Minister has directed officials to ensure that the injured persons get adequate treatment, it added. **PTI**

Local who spotted Sheena's skeleton deposes in court

Mumbai: A local who first spotted the remains of Sheena Bora in a Raigad jungle in 2012 deposed before the trial court here on Wednesday.

Sheena (24) was allegedly killed by her mother and media executive Indrani Mukerjea with the help of others in April 2012 and the body was burnt in a jungle in neighbouring Raigad district.

As per the complaint, Himanshu Rathore and Rahul Rajput were returning home after attending a marriage ceremony when they were allegedly intercepted and abused by Prabal Patel and his associates.

They were taken to Monu Patel's office and beaten up, the complainants alleged.

Later, the accused took the duo to the residence of one Shivam Rai, where they beat up Shivam, his father Ishwar Rai and his friend Mayank.

Gunshots were also fired and one of the bullets hit Rathore, injuring him in the hand, the complaint said.

Police are yet to find out what led to the attacks, the officials said.

The accused were booked under IPC sections 307 (attempt to murder) and 365 (kidnapping with intent to wrongfully confine a person), they added. **PTI**

Maharashtra refinery project to be 'revived' in Raigad

TN RAGHUNATHA ■ MUMBAI

Five months after the BJP-led

Shiv Sena has been opposing the location of Nanar oil refinery project in Ratnagiri district right from day one. So much so that Shiv Sena chief Uddhav Thackeray had on June 27, 2018 refused to Petroleum Minister Dharmendra Pradhan over the loss of lives and conveyed his condolence to the family members of the bereaved, a statement issued by the UP Government in Lucknow said.

The Chief Minister has directed officials to ensure that the injured persons get adequate treatment, it added.

In a written reply to a query raised in the Assembly during the ongoing monsoon session of the State Legislature, Fadnavis said that his government would locate the Nanar Refinery project in Raigad district instead of Ratnagiri district, following Opposition to the project from the local villagers and various political parties.

"There is no Opposition to the refinery project from the people in Raigad district. The people from 40 villages have not shown any resistance to the acquisition of the land for the project," the Chief Minister said.

During his testimony before CBI judge J C Jagdale, Dhene said he was collecting mangoes when he spotted a burnt skeleton. **PTI**

Payal Tadvi case: Bail hearing of accused to proceed without video recording

only during the main trial.

Advocate Gunaratna Sadavarte, appearing for the victim's family, claimed that the State Government and the police were "not serious" when it came to atrocities against scheduled castes and scheduled tribes.

Judge PB Jadhav noted in his order that though the SC/ST Act was amended and video recording of all the proceedings was made mandatory two years ago, infrastructure was yet to be made available.

It was the State Government's responsibility, he said. The court had directed the police to make the arrangements but "police

machinery has its own difficulties", Jadhav said.

"Bail proceedings are required to be decided expeditiously. Therefore this court has no option but to proceed without video recording," he said.

The bail pleas will be heard on Friday.

Tadvi, 26, a second-year postgraduate medical student attached to BYL Nair Hospital, allegedly committed suicide in her hostel room on May 22.

Her family alleged that three of her seniors — Hema Ahuja, Bhakti Meher and Ankita Khandelwal — ragged her and hurled casteist abuses at her, forcing Tadvi to take her life. **PTI**

It may be recalled that as part of the seat-sharing agreement for the Lok Sabha polls arrived between the ruling BJP and its alliance partner Shiv Sena on February 18 this year, the Devendra Fadnavis government had accepted the Sena's demand to shift the Nanar project out of Ratnagiri project. The shifting of Nanar project was one of the Sena's demands for entering into seat-sharing

pact with the ruling BJP for the LS polls.

The Shiv Sena has been opposing the location of Nanar oil refinery project in Ratnagiri district right from day one. So much so that Shiv Sena chief Uddhav Thackeray had on June 27, 2018 refused to Petroleum Minister Dharmendra Pradhan over the loss of lives and conveyed his condolence to the family members of the bereaved, a statement issued by the UP Government in Lucknow said.

In his written reply to a query raised in the Assembly during the ongoing monsoon session of the State Legislature, Fadnavis said that his government would locate the Nanar Refinery project in Raigad district instead of Ratnagiri district, following Opposition to the project from the local villagers and various political parties.

"There is no Opposition to the refinery project from the people in Raigad district. The people from 40 villages have not shown any resistance to the acquisition of the land for the project," the Chief Minister said.

During his testimony before CBI judge J C Jagdale, Dhene said he was collecting mangoes when he spotted a burnt skeleton. **PTI**

It may be recalled that as part of the seat-sharing agreement for the Lok Sabha polls arrived between the ruling BJP and its alliance partner Shiv Sena on February 18 this year, the Devendra Fadnavis government had accepted the Sena's demand to shift the Nanar project out of Ratnagiri project. The shifting of Nanar project was one of the Sena's demands for entering into seat-sharing

pact with the ruling BJP for the LS polls.

The Shiv Sena has been opposing the location of Nanar oil refinery project in Ratnagiri district right from day one. So much so that Shiv Sena chief Uddhav Thackeray had on June 27, 2018 refused to Petroleum Minister Dharmendra Pradhan over the loss of lives and conveyed his condolence to the family members of the bereaved, a statement issued by the UP Government in Lucknow said.

In his written reply to a query raised in the Assembly during the ongoing monsoon session of the State Legislature, Fadnavis said that his government would locate the Nanar Refinery project in Raigad district instead of Ratnagiri district, following Opposition to the project from the local villagers and various political parties.

"There is no Opposition to the refinery project from the people in Raigad district. The people from 40 villages have not shown any resistance to the acquisition of the land for the project," the Chief Minister said.

During his testimony before CBI judge J C Jagdale, Dhene said he was collecting mangoes when he spotted a burnt skeleton. **PTI**

It may be recalled that as part of the seat-sharing agreement for the Lok Sabha polls arrived between the ruling BJP and its alliance partner Shiv Sena on February 18 this year, the Devendra Fadnavis government had accepted the Sena's demand to shift the Nanar project out of Ratnagiri project. The shifting of Nanar project was one of the Sena's demands for entering into seat-sharing

pact with the ruling BJP for the LS polls.

The Shiv Sena has been opposing the location of Nanar oil refinery project in Ratnagiri district right from day one. So much so that Shiv Sena chief Uddhav Thackeray had on June 27, 2018 refused to Petroleum Minister Dharmendra Pradhan over the loss of lives and conveyed his condolence to the family members of the bereaved, a statement issued by the UP Government in Lucknow said.

In his written reply to a query raised in the Assembly during the ongoing monsoon session of the State Legislature, Fadnavis said that his government would locate the Nanar Refinery project in Raigad district instead of Ratnagiri district, following Opposition to the project from the local villagers and various political parties.

"There is no Opposition to the refinery project from the people in Raigad district. The people from 40 villages have not shown any resistance to the acquisition of the land for the project," the Chief Minister said.

During his testimony before CBI judge J C Jagdale, Dhene said he was collecting mangoes when he spotted a burnt skeleton. **PTI**

It may be recalled that as part of the seat-sharing agreement for the Lok Sabha polls arrived between the ruling BJP and its alliance partner Shiv Sena on February 18 this year, the Devendra Fadnavis government had accepted the Sena's demand to shift the Nanar project out of Ratnagiri project. The shifting of Nanar project was one of the Sena's demands for entering into seat-sharing

pact with the ruling BJP for the LS polls.

The Shiv Sena has been opposing the location of Nanar oil refinery project in Ratnagiri district right from day one. So much so that Shiv Sena chief Uddhav Thackeray had on June 27, 2018 refused to Petroleum Minister Dharmendra Pradhan over the loss of lives and conveyed his condolence to the family members of the bereaved, a statement issued by the UP Government in Lucknow said.

In his written reply to a query raised in the Assembly during the ongoing monsoon session of the State Legislature, Fadnavis said that his government would locate the Nanar Refinery project in Raigad district instead of Ratnagiri district, following Opposition to the project from the local villagers and various political parties.

"There is no Opposition to the refinery project from the people in Raigad district. The people from 40 villages have not shown any resistance to the acquisition of the land for the project," the Chief Minister said.

During his testimony before CBI judge J C Jagdale, Dhene said he was collecting mangoes when he spotted a burnt skeleton. **PTI**

It may be recalled that as part of the seat-sharing agreement for the Lok Sabha polls arrived between the ruling BJP and its alliance partner Shiv Sena on February 18 this year, the Devendra Fadnavis government had accepted the Sena's demand to shift the Nanar project out of Ratnagiri project. The shifting of Nanar project was one of the Sena's demands for entering into seat-sharing

pact with the ruling BJP for the LS polls.

The Shiv Sena has been opposing the location of Nanar oil refinery project in Ratnagiri district right from day one. So much so that Shiv Sena chief Uddhav Thackeray had on June 27, 2018 refused to Petroleum Minister Dharmendra Pradhan over the loss of lives and conveyed his condolence to the family members of the bereaved, a statement issued by the UP Government in Lucknow said.

In his written reply to a query raised in the Assembly during the ongoing monsoon session of the State Legislature, Fadnavis said that his government would locate the Nanar Refinery project in Raig



The blue mantra

Experts explain why denim-making processes need a sustainable approach and a revamp.

By TEAM VIVA

While the denim industry is growing with a billion jeans being sold around the world every year, it is also costing us environmentally as its manufacturing methods and processes are stressing our water availability in resource-scarce times. Your seemingly harmless pair of new jeans might have contributed towards an irreparable damage to a river somewhere in the world.

Did you know that the main concern for denim is that it uses a repetitive dip-and-dry method to transfer indigo onto yarn, and around 20,000 litres of water can be consumed to produce a single pair of jeans, which involves growing cotton, washing it and dyeing it? Also, looking at its manufacturing processes, they majorly impact the health of workers, who are at a constant risk of tuberculosis and silicosis while giving the jeans a perfect "worn out" look during sandblasting.

As per global data, the total investment in the denim sector has surpassed \$900 million worldwide since 2015, wherein a huge volume of 1.3 trillion gallons of water is used only for dyeing the fabric. The dyes are washed out and the untreated waste water is uninhabitable for aquatic life and undrinkable for humans. However, even though the multi-million dollar brands could afford to treat the water which enters the rivers, not all brands can.

So is there a way out? Can denim be sustainable? Well, organic and eco-friendly is increasingly becoming the new rage among designers as well as customers, who prefer them over chemically-treated ones.

Mumbai-based designer Artivijay Gupta tells us how the carbon footprint can be reduced significantly. She says, "This entire process in manufacturing the denim products should be done using less than a cup of water and eliminating toxic chemicals in the washing process. This method also increases the lifespan of the denim as there is less damage to the cotton fibres, hence preserving the natural state of the fabric."

While brands are experimenting with ethical ways of producing jeans which create less waste and reduce water usage and pollution, researchers and designers have come up with other alternatives. These include Laserblast and Iceblast techniques, which use laser-based and dry-ice technology respectively, to create various washed out effects in denims. Manju Sharma, business head, REPLAY (which uses the same techniques), says, "As a brand, we try to reduce the usage of water and chemicals in washes to avoid wastage. During fabric creation, we make sure we use as much recycled polyester and upcycled material. Wherever possible, we use organic cotton."

Talking about what has triggered this change of methods and processes, Manjula Gandhi, chief product officer at Numero Uno, says that a lot of factors, besides the ethical reasons, are forcing denim manufacturers to go green. "Denim brands have recently realised the value of investing in sustainable and more responsible products. This realisation came as a result of different factors coming into play, one of them being changing values of society. It is necessary for fashion companies to talk about their green ambitions. They have to prove that they are taking actual steps in making their products sustainable and ethical," says Gandhi.

Charu Vij, a fashion designer who runs a store in New Delhi named Aekatri, is still researching an alternative to denim. "In terms of the yarns, we are yet to create something that is sustainable. A lot of designers are working towards sustainability because we need to maintain that ecological balance. Denim has its own uses as it is immune to rapid wear and tear. If we are able to crack through a sustainable denim fibre which is 100 per cent natural, that will be it."

'The entire process in manufacturing denims should be done using less than a cup of water and eliminating toxic chemicals in the washing process. This increases denim's lifespan as there is less damage to the cotton fibres'

Artivijay Gupta

India preps to combat desertification

PRAKASH JAVADEKAR has launched a flagship project on enhancing capacity on forest landscape restoration and the Bonn Challenge in the country

Union environment minister, Prakash Javadekar speaking at an event in the capital on the occasion of world day to combat desertification and drought, said that we as a country make targets not under any global pressure but for our own country's real sustainable development. India will lead by example in combating desertification.

He further announced that India will be hosting the fourteenth session of Conference of Parties (COP-14) from August 29 to September 14 at the India Expo Mart Limited, Greater Noida.

The union minister further highlighted that with about 30 per cent of country's total geographical area being affected by land degradation; India has high stakes strongly committed to the convention. He said that various schemes have been launched by the government of India such as: Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana (PMFBY), soil health card scheme, soil health management scheme, Pradhan Mantri Krishi Inayee Yojna (PKSY), etc, which are helping to reduce land degradation. The union minister also unveiled the logo of COP-14 on the occasion.



Amitabh Kant, NITI Aayog CEO said that the world day to combat desertification is a unique occasion to remind global community that desertification can be effectively tackled, that solutions are possible, and that key tools to this aim lay in strengthened community participation and cooperation at all levels. Secretary, ministry of environment, forest and climate change, CK Mishra said that the world day to combat desertification in 2019 will retrospect and celebrate the past years of progress made by India on sustainable land management.

The union minister also launched a flagship project on enhancing capacity on forest landscape restoration (FLR) and Bonn Challenge in India, through a pilot phase of 3.5 years implemented in Haryana, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Nagaland and Karnataka. The project will aim to develop and adopt best practices and monitoring protocols for the states and build capacity within the five pilot states on FLR and the Bonn Challenge. This will be eventually scaled up across the country through subsequent phases of the project. The challenge is

a global effort to bring 150 million hectares of the world's deforested and degraded land into restoration by 2020 and 350 million hectares by 2030. At the UNFCCC conference of the parties (COP) 2015 in Paris, India also joined the voluntary Bonn Challenge pledge to bring into restoration 13 million hectares of degraded and deforested land by the year 2020 and additional eight million hectares by 2030.

United Nations has three Rio conventions namely — United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC),

Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) and United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD). Established in 1994, UNCCD is the only legally binding international agreement linking environment and development issues to the land agenda. In 1994, the United Nations general assembly declared 17 June the "world day to combat desertification and drought" to promote public awareness and the implementation of the UNCCD in the desertification affected countries.

One of the primary functions of the COP is to review reports submitted by the country parties detailing how they are carrying out their commitments. India will take over the COP presidency from China for two years until the next COP is hosted in 2021.

Over 5,000 representatives from over 197 countries drawn from national, regional and local governments, science and research communities, the private sector, international and non-governmental organisations and all forms of media will address the issue of combating desertification, land degradation and drought during the two-week event.

Preserve the heritage

There are several heritage sites in districts of Bijnor, which are unprotected and as a result their condition has deteriorated. The land mafia has taken advantage of this lacuna and destroyed them for the sake of money.

District collector Sujit Kumar has taken an initiative towards protection of these deserted and isolated heritages. Taking help from social workers and historians, these heritage structures will be identified and protected so that future generations can be sensitised and benefit from them. Monuments that



need to be preserved are Nagina Bai Bagh where the freedom fighters of 1857 sacrificed their lives. There is also Purani Munsafi of Nagina, Beguma Maqbara, Patharghar fort of Sultan Naibabad, Shiv mandir of Kotkadar built during the period of Aalha Udal, palace of Munshi Hashmat Ali in Mandawar, fort Parshanhat in Badapur.

Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) will also be informed about these heritage monuments and severe action would be taken against the land mafia.



The Facebook page of Raasta, an NGO started by 16-year-old Parth Sarthi, a class 11 student at Sanskriti School aims to reunite children with parents with the help of Aadhaar. Not only this, it also taught them mathematics and music. The group is organising a two-day camp in Noida where anyone interested who is interested can participate by sending in their photos and details to Raasta Foundation. They also held an interactive two-day session with the children of construction workers with the aim to motivate children about their careers. They were also made aware of the different career options. The session was conducted by Parth Sarthi and Kartik Gupta, a 21-year-old graduate in Mechanical Engineering from IIT Delhi was a part of social club called Enactus which worked for vulnerable children.

BHEL ACHIEVES ANOTHER MILESTONE

Bharat Heavy Electricals Limited (BHEL) has achieved yet another milestone in Bhutan with the successful commissioning of unit 1 of the 4x84 MW Chhukha hydro electric project (HEP), following complete renovation and modernisation (R&M) of the generator. Unit 3 of the same project was earlier commissioned by BHEL and has been running efficiently. With the commissioning of unit 1, the organisation has executed the R&M contract for two units (1 and 3), thereby consolidating its position further and rising up to the expectations of the customer, Druk Green Power Corporation (DGPC).

DGPC in their commendation letter wrote, "We appreciate the efforts made by the experts from the organisation towards the R&M work, which has led to result-oriented performance."

DGPC had placed the R&M order for replacement of generator stator and rotor coils of unit 1 and 3. These machines were

originally supplied and commissioned by BHEL in the 1980s. The organisation's units at Bhopal and Bengaluru have provided the equipment and technical supports for the R&M job.

BHEL has executed major projects like Chhukha, Kurichu and Tala in Bhutan and is presently executing export orders for 6x200 MW Punatsangchhu-I, 6x170 MW Punatsangchhu-II and 4x180 MW Mangdechhu Projects, which once commissioned, would take BHEL's share to 93 per cent of the total power generating capacity of Bhutan.

The organisation is executing hydro-electric projects of around 3,000 MW across the country, in addition to 3,904 MW abroad which includes 2,940 MW in Bhutan and 900 MW in Nepal. Significantly, more than 500 hydro-electric generating sets of various ratings have been ordered on BHEL with a cumulative capacity of more than 30,000 MW, including 6,680 MW for overseas projects.

Kashmiris have faith in BJP: Dr Hina Shafi Bhat



in Jammu and Kashmir.

"All these years, elections exploited the aspirations of the common people. Mainstream political parties in connivance with separatists habitually fooled people but we want clean elections to keep democracy alive," she said and added that under BJP all the three regions of the state have received equitable treatment.

While deliberating on presence of BJP in Kashmir, she said the way things are changing at ground level

shows that the party is preferred by the right minded and progressive people.

"BJP is now a recognised party in Kashmir valley, with more than two lakh members. People are showing faith in the policies of incumbent Prime Minister and they have huge expectations," said Dr Hina and added that opposition parties have now resorted to creating apprehensions about abrogation of Article 370 and 35 A, as they do not find any substantial grounds to criticise the BJP.

GOD IS THE PREACHER OF YOGA

Saints and other people from our country have been trying to spread the knowledge about yog education in India as well as abroad for the last several years. In fact, India has been a land of rishi-muni, yogis and Rajrishi, who respected the eternal Vedic knowledge and thereby the Ashtang yog philosophy. They practised the same in their daily lives. But it is sad that today the eternal tradition has been changed by human beings mostly because the so-called saints don't study or teach first the Vedic knowledge anymore.

The question that arises here is why did ancient Rishis gave so much respect to yog education? In this connection, the study of eternal Vedas, our ancient religious texts like the Mahabharata, Ramayana, Shastras, and more reveal that they followed the yog philosophy traditionally, and attended gurukuls. But today, only asana, pranayama and meditation, which are just three parts of the Ashtang yog philosophy, are being taught.

Rigveda, right from first mantra, starts giving the knowledge of worshipping God by performing Yajyen with veda mantras and not the yog philosophy. Our ancestors obeyed and so must we. The said tradition enables us to know the knowledge, unlimited power, divine deeds, form of God, worship and thereafter Ashtang yog philosophy, which is also a part of worship of god and not just a way to improve health.

Before we start learning yog philosophy, the knowledge of four Vedas has to be gained traditionally.

Yagyavalkya states: Hiranyagarbhabha Yogasya Vakta, that is Almighty is himself the preacher of Ashtang yog. Keeping in view that Vedas and Ashtang yog philosophy has been preached by god himself, we must learn and follow the same respectfully. It is also clear that practice of Ashtang yog is a part of worship, which helps to attain Samadhi to realise salvation.

Moreover, there is not even a single ancient or present saint who followed or follows yog education alone, keeping aside the Vedas. So, we must learn that when they followed all them, there was no scope of corruption, vices or making the yog education as a source of income. It was being preached free because it was followed complete Vedic education which enabled or enables the aspirant to control his senses whereas due to lack of knowledge of Vedas, the practice of only yog has mostly become a source of several shortcomings. Many people do not even know what Atharvaveda states.

"If you steal away only a small portion of Vedas education like yog education and leave the rest of the Vedic education then you are punished by god. Had yog education been learnt along

with Vedas philosophy, as was done in previous yugas, then no vices or malpractices would have crept in but now learning yog alone has given way to number of vices and people are using it as means of earning money, making it professional.

While it is a matter of great joy that June 21 is celebrated as International Yoga day, there, it is also a matter of great concern that due to lack of knowledge of Vedas, mostly a distorted and false image of yoga, asana and pranayama has been portrayed to the world because our eternal and ancient Vedic culture has been very well-preached.

Although it is true that on Yoga Day, the entire world has been familiarised to the word yoga, yet the presentation of a distorted and untrue shape of the eternal, everlasting and unchangeable Ashtang yog philosophy mentioned in the Vedas amounts to causing its insult.

Therefore, nobody can even think about adopting any alternative to Vedas or Ashtang yog philosophy. We must also remember that according to Vedas the main aim of practising the Vedic Ashtang yog philosophy is to realise god.

However, its practice incidentally provides the devotee with healthy body and mind. The ostentatious and glamourous way of performing asana and pranayama does not come under the tradition because Vedas preach that Vedic path is the subject matter of deep, serious thoughts.

In view of the above, if we have failed to produce the eternal, unchallengeable and unchangeable form of yog philosophy which was adopted by our ancient and present saints, who practised the same in secluded places, caves and more in calm and peaceful atmosphere on the banks of river and got the best result thereof then at least some of the fundamentals should have been maintained in the present scenario to avoid a distorted form. The said dignitaries have mentioned the yog philosophy with full respect and utmost faith.

Yogi Aurobindo Ghosh and Rishi Dayanand Saraswati Ji have given the eternal, immortal explanation of Vedic Ashtang yog, worship and popularised its concept amongst the public and while carrying forward the tradition of ancient, great dignitaries like Guru Vasishtha, Patanjali Rishi, Kapil Muni, Yagyavalkya Rishi, Shring Rishi, Vishwamitraji, Narad and so on dedicated their entire lives in yog.

So while celebrating the International Yoga Day, where the divine Vedic word 'yog' echoes, is a praise-worthy step but the true form of yog philosophy is usually not being produced before the public and hence, the ingratitude.

(The author is the chief editor of Ved Ishvareya Vani, a bi-annual magazine.)

Win a heart, not an argument



The young girls enrolled under 'Super 30 girls' Programme, a CSR initiative by NTPC have cracked the IIT JEE advanced. Five among the group of 18 who earlier qualified for the IIT JEE advanced have cleared the final round.

As part of this initiative, rolled out in association with the centre for social responsibility and Leadership, NTPC bears the cost of boarding and coaching for the students of underprivileged families. NTPC & CSRL jointly initiated ₹77.03 lakh programme for 30 girls. During the project, the students were provided with free stay, food and coaching for entrance examinations. (IIT/JEE/NIT)



The admissions to the programmes of Guru Gobind Singh Indraprastha University (GGSIPU) are through common entrance tests (CET) conducted by the university on merit of the qualifying degrees. The programmes of studies are grouped together, for the purpose of conduct of CET. The programme(s) groups, wherever CET is to be conducted, are assigned a CET code. National level tests based admissions GGSIP University in the academic session 2019-20 is going to admit students on the merit /score of the national level test for admissions as approved by the government of NCT of Delhi.

NALCO continues to soar



of production, productivity and profitability with the net profit of ₹1,732 crore in 2018-19. Along with significant achievements on the production front, NALCO achieved the distinction of becoming the lowest cost producer of alumina in the world for three consecutive years, as per the Wood Mackenzie report. The company has also been ranked as the lowest cost producer of bauxite in the world for the year 2018-19. NALCO is way ahead of its private sector peers by registering EBIDTA Margin of 28 per cent.

The results of National Aluminium Company's (NALCO) performance over the last four years have come in for praise from all quarters, with CMD Dr Tapan Kumar Chand being awarded the 'global Indian business leader' for his professional achievements and inspiring social contributions. On behalf of Dr Chand, the award was received by Asutosh Rath, DGM corporate communication, NALCO.

Organised by Indian Achievers' Forum, this award

comes on the back of Dalal Street Journal, rating NALCO as the fastest growing high growth PSU and Dr Chand receiving the roll of honour for leading the company towards growth. Under his leadership, NALCO has been consistently delivering across all parameters



growth in the years ahead.

Srinivasan said, "Our focus on increasing distribution network and business alliances has been a key driver for the company's overall growth in both retail and corporate business. We continue to build on a steady path ahead of industry growth with superior risk selection and cost management to boost growth in the years ahead."



INJURIES ARE PART AND PARCEL. NOBODY HAS CONTROL ON IT. THIS IS A GOOD INDIAN TEAM AND THEY WILL MAKE IT TO THE SEMIS AND WE WILL SEE WHAT HAPPENS
— SOURAV GANGULY

ICC CRICKET WORLD CUP ENGLAND & WALES 2019

nacastle ENGLAND

CRICKET CRADLE

TODAY LIVE

STAR SPORTS

Australia vs Bangladesh

3:00 pm IST

VENUE: Trent Bridge, Nottingham

Virushka outing



Anushka Sharma and Virat Kohli was spotted spending some quality time together in London

ViratKohliFanClub/Instagram

Bollywood actress Anushka Sharma has joined her husband and Indian cricket team captain Virat Kohli ahead of India's clash against Afghanistan on Saturday in the ongoing World Cup in England and Wales. The couple was spotted in London earlier this week with a Kohli fan page posting about the outing on social media. "Virat Kohli and Anushka Sharma on the Old Bond Street in London today. I love Anushka's new haircut," the image was posted on Tuesday on Instagram. Anushka has been accompanying Virat in earlier tours and was seen cheering and supporting her husband and the team. She was also there with the team when India toured Australia and England last year. Earlier, the BCCI had not allowed the wives and family members to travel with the cricketers for the first 20 days of ongoing World Cup, which included India's much-anticipated clash against Pakistan. However, it seems the board has now changed its stance and is allowing the family members of the players to travel with the team.

Role of Inzy now?

Following Pakistan's dismal performance in the ongoing World Cup so far, the country's former skipper Intikhab Alam has questioned the presence of chief selector Inzamam-ul-Haq in England and said it was the Pakistan Cricket Board's (PCB) mistake to allow him to stay in England at its expense. "Once the selection committee has selected the team, the captain and coach take over to select the playing 11 and decide on the tour matters," Intikhab told the Dawn. "So what is the role of Inzamam-ul-Haq there and why has the PCB allowed him to go on official visit and interfere," he questioned. Meanwhile, the Pakistan Cricket Board will carry out a "robust review and analysis" of the performances of the national team and its support staff, including head coach Mickey Arthur, in the past three years after the World Cup. The PCB Board of Governors which met in Lahore on Wednesday also agreed the team's performance in the ICC Cricket World Cup 2019 to date has been below expectation. Pakistan has won just one match in its five games in the World Cup so far. The PCB said in a statement that the Board of Governors had a discussion on the Pakistan team's recent performance across all formats.

Faith in team: PCB

Even as fans, critics and former players continue to lash out at the national team's performances in the ongoing World Cup, the Chairman of the Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) Ehsan Mani has assured captain Sarfraz Ahmed of the board's full support. A PCB spokesman confirmed that Mani had called up Sarfraz on Tuesday and spoken to him about the team and remaining matches of the World Cup. "The Chairman assured Sarfraz that the board and nation is behind the team and they should try to focus on the matches ahead and give their best," said the spokesperson. Mani apparently told Sarfraz that the nation has faith in the team despite the defeats and wanted the players to bounce back strongly in remaining matches. A reliable source from the Government said that PM Imran Khan is unhappy that despite his advice the team chose to field first against India.

AGENCIES

PRELIMINARY STAGE

Pos	Team	P	W	L	N/R	Net RR	Pts
1	NZ	5	4	0	1	+1.591	9
2	ENG	5	4	1	0	+1.862	8
3	AUS	5	4	1	0	+0.812	8
4	IND	4	3	1	0	+1.029	7
5	B'DESH	5	1	2	2	-0.270	5
6	SL	5	1	2	2	-1.778	4
7	WI	5	1	3	1	+0.272	3
8	RSA	6	1	4	1	-0.193	3
9	PAK	5	1	3	1	-1.933	3
10	AFG	5	0	5	0	-2.089	0

Dhawan out of World Cup

Bhuvi hopes alive even as Shami trains consistently

PNS ■ HAMPSHIRE BOWL
(SOUTHAMPTON)

The big bad news is that opener Shikhar Dhawan has been ruled out of the entire tournament due to a metacarpal fracture in the left hand.

"Several" specialist opinions have revealed that Shikhar Dhawan has sustained a fracture at the base of his first metacarpal of the left hand. His hand will remain in a cast till mid-July which rules him out of the rest of the ICC World Cup 2019, team manager Sunil Subramaniam announced at a Press conference at Hampshire Bowl on Wednesday.

He said the Team India management has "written to the ICC's technical committee seeking a replacement and Rishabh Pant will be the person covering Dhawan".

After being left out of the 15, Pant had been flown in last week and had joined the team to train in Manchester where India played against Pakistan and won by 89 runs.

In the late evening proceedings, ICC approved Pant's inclusion into the Indian squad.

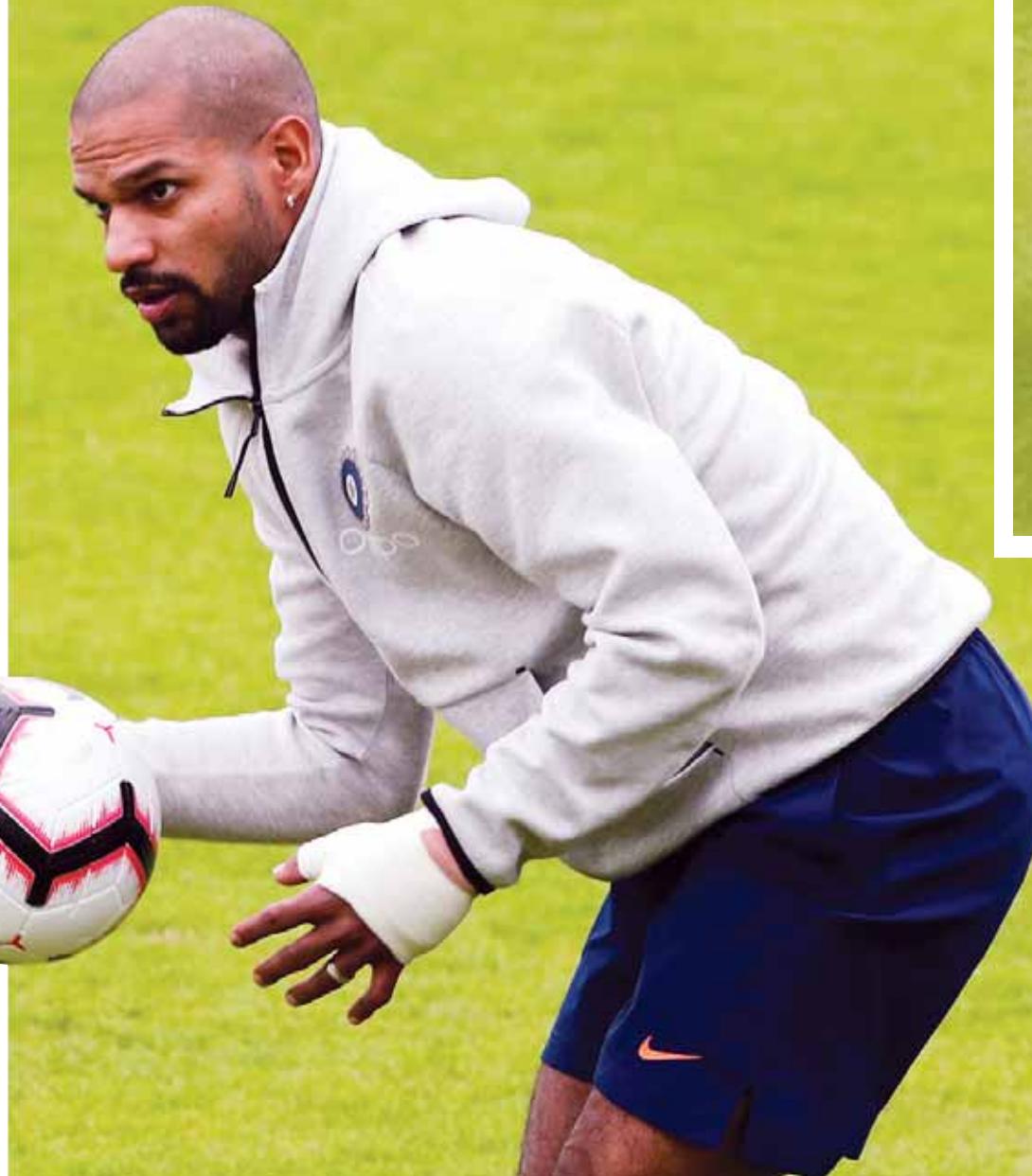
Dhawan, however, was

seen playing football with the team at nets just before the announcement was made and seemed to be relaxed and reconciled to his fate. He had just made a return to form after a wishy-washy inaugural against South Africa in the opening game. He scored a scintillating 127 runs in the second game against Australia at The Oval where a Pat Cummins rising delivery hit his hand and did him in. The player, known to have a high pain tolerance level, continued to play 20 more overs after his fracture and mid-field first aid.

After the match, assistant coach Sanjay Bangar had said the team would not like to lose a fiery opener like Dhawan and had decided to wait for two weeks before taking a final decision with follow-up scans. Dhawan attended all practice sessions, taking jogs of the stadium and playing football with the boys on most occasions.

India's mega opening worries were,

however, settled down by KL Rahul who



Shikhar Dhawan holds a football during India's training session at Hampshire Bowl in Southampton on Wednesday



Hamstring stress has Bhuvneshwar Kumar on a walk around the Hampshire Bowl as his team mates practice on Wednesday Pioneer Photo

ing in the wings for now and give Kohli a little less angst about Shikhar's absence.

Though Team India's strength and conditioning coach Shanker Basu said later in the day that fitness was the newest and most potent tool of the current Indian squad, and that the Indian team has the becoming record of the lowest injury rate despite playing double the amount of cricket that other teams, Kohli and the management have their concern caps on for Bhuvneshwar Kumar who sustained a "hamstring stiffness" during the match against Pakistan. He had to leave the field without completing his over and the ball was given to Vijay Shankar who took Imam Ul Haq's wicket in his very first delivery of the World Cup.

Bhuvneshwar has been ruled out for at least two matches, maybe three, which means against Afghanistan, West Indies and England. At nets on Wednesday, the pace bowler took three rounds of the field along with the support staff, not jogging but walking.

Mohammed Shami, meanwhile, bowled consistently during training to Rohit Sharma, KL Rahul and Virat Kohli. "Bhuvi is a huge concern but Shami is fit and raring to go," Kohli had said at Manchester after packing off Pakistan.

I feel emotional to announce that I will no longer be a part of CWC19. Unfortunately, the thumb won't recover on time. But the show must go on. I'm grateful for all the love & support from my team mates, cricket lovers & our entire nation. Jai Hind!

— Dhawan's video tweet to fans

Fitness, new tool for Team India

PNS ■ SOUTHAMPTON

Fitness, training and nutrition are the three tools with which Team India has turned into an athletic unit with minimal injuries despite playing constant cricket through the year. The bowlers are bowling quicker, they are all fit and the fielding has been optimal, not to mention the players carrying their blades for long innings without much fatigue.

"Fitness has become a lifestyle with this new Indian team. Training, sleep-wake cycle and nutrition are the three hallmarks of a professional athlete and everybody is down and running in that direction. It is not an Army drill type of thing. They do their own personal stuff, they know their bodies very well. We all function very differently from the inside. So one man's food can be another man's poison," said the team's strength and conditioning coach Shanker Basu.

He, however, said that is was a major challenge to get the boys back into working condition after the IPL.

"Jokingly we would talk about IPL as the Mount Everest. Then we come to base camp and then we hit Kilimanjaro. During IPL, the boys start sleeping very late, 2 am, sometimes 3. To get them back to sleeping early, back to a training regime was a challenge. We had only eight days for that. But, in the past four years, the boys have started quickly understanding the value of sleep-wake cycle, good nutrition programme, supplement, training, strength work and conditioning. We try to educate them about the human body has a particular sleep-wake cycle. During IPL, whether you like it or not, the boys take a beating. This World Cup preparation was very critical," Basu explained.

The biggest achievement, however, was that the Indian team having the lowest number of injuries even though it plays double the amount of cricket than other any other team in the world. The boys are keen on eating the right stuff. "To cut a long story short, we have cut on junk big time and this has made this team as good as an athletic team. We don't need to tell them to do that. All we did was a dexta scan and subsequently a DNA test that gives you what sort of a person are you whether you are gluten intolerant or you are lactose intolerant etc. So they are all aware and making informed decisions based on their report cards," Basu added.

So the team took to technology and introduced several gadgets to monitor the players' fitness quotient. First came the dexta scan which generally measures bone density but the team doctor used it to ascertain each player's fat percentage. "The moment you have a number in your hand, it brings a healthy co-operation in the team. Healthy eating habits is



Virat Kohli, right, and Rohit Sharma bat in the nets during a training session ahead of their match against Afghanistan at the Hampshire Bowl AP

Fitness has become a lifestyle with this new Indian team. Training, sleep-wake cycle and nutrition are the three hallmarks of a professional athlete and everybody is down and running in that direction

seeing today is the culmination of efforts in the last few years. The brand of training and the culture is fantastic

Talking about the makeover in the camp where fast bowlers are concerned, Basu was all praise for their self-applied brakes. "The management wanted a fast bowling unit

which was good and could go on and on. In the last year, the proof of the pudding has been seen in the results. Bumrah, Bhuvni, Umesh Yadav — all of them have started bowling much quicker. The reason for that is consistent work with a few lifestyle modifications with regards to nutrition and the way we train. We got the GPS last year. It gives you data of immense value. Based on that we started understanding our training methodology a lot more and based on that we started preparing a schedule. All this has helped us in our fast bowlers bowling 145 clicks consistently, even in Test matches. This did not happen overnight," Basu pointed out.

The team made it a point in 2015 that they would train consistently. Just like batting, bowling and fielding, they planned to work on fitness seriously. "The captain and the coach wanted to use fitness as a vehicle and I was there to augment that," Basu said.



Mohammed Shami bowls during nets AP

Here comes Shami 2.0

PNS ■ SOUTHAMPTON

Boost is the secret of pacer Mohammed Shami's energy. Not the drink, but the boost that came from his personal problems and a series of failed fitness tests. So much so that his strength and conditioning coach Shanker Basu calls it a blessing in disguise.

"Shami failing the fitness test was a blessing in disguise. After that, we was a changed man, so determined. He is blessed with some amazing gene. We all know about intermittent fasting. He

doesn't even know what it is, but he does it on his own. His fat percentage in three years has remained exactly the same. He is a piece of work," he said.

Shami has long been struggling with marital discord and divorce issues but his main failing had been his aversion to fitness training. "He used to be the last one to get into the bus," Basu said. Which makes the bowler's present makeover a big achievement.

"The best part is he has changed his entire training regime. Now training is part of his lifestyle which never used to be so. But after his personal setback and failing the fitness test he is a changed man. This is the 2.0 version of Mohammed Shami," a proud Basu said.

Indeed, one look at the way he was bowling at nets on Wednesday, and you would know that this right-arm-fast-medium quick has changed since 2015 when he took 77 of the 80 wickets at hand. The intervening years brought in fat, a failed marriage, a public spat, hovering ban and a lazy fitness drive. But bowling to Rohit Sharma and then Virat Kohli, in the absence of hamstrung Bhuvneshwar Kumar, he did not look one bit rusted.



Australian speedstar Mitchell Starc is the only pacer to claim four four-wicket haul in World Cup tournament

NEW DELHI
THURSDAY | JUNE 20, 2019

na~~o~~ast~~e~~ ENGLAND

T'S A REALLY GOOD SIGN FOR THE GROUP HAVING THE CAPTAIN IN THAT SORT OF FORM, PLAYING AS WELL AS THAT. IT GIVES THE DRESSING ROOM A HUGE AMOUNT OF CONFIDENCE — JOE ROOT

Eoinic sixathon



England's captain Eoin Morgan bats during the World Cup match between England and Afghanistan at Old Trafford in Manchester AP

PTI ■ MANCHESTER

Enough Eoin Morgan was shocked by his record-breaking innings against Afghanistan but claims his England teammates still won't be impressed.

Morgan blasted an incredible 17 sixes — the most in ODI history — as part of a game-changing knock of 148 at Old Trafford, breaking the previous record of 16 jointly-held by master-blasters AB de Villiers, Chris Gayle and Rohit Sharma.

It paced England to a score of 397/6 — their highest at an ICC Men's World Cup — and they eventually recorded a 150-run triumph to return to the top of the table.

Morgan brought up his century off 57 balls, although that was 11 slower than Jos Buttler's England record of 46 deliveries against Pakistan in 2015 — meaning the skipper doesn't have complete ownership of bragging rights.

"I think I'm probably just becoming a target for the guys in the changing room to take down," joked Morgan. "The hundred I scored is considered a slow one in our changing room — guys talk about it all the time. So it's a tough school!"

"Never have I ever thought I could play a knock like that but I'm delighted that I have."

"It's weird. It's very strange to have that sixes record. It's something, along with the innings, I never thought I'd do. It's a nice place to be."

"The last four years, I've probably played the best in my career but that hasn't involved a 50 or 60-ball hundred."

"I thought I would have it in the locker somewhere but it's never happened, so I sort of gave up on it a little bit."

"When I came to the crease, it was a 50/50 shout whether myself or Jos [Buttler] went in and that probably helped because after I faced a few balls, I had no choice."

"I had to start taking risks because of him coming in next and then after I got dropped [on 28], it was a matter of just keep going. It was one of those days."

"They were very good on a wicket that didn't offer a great deal," added Morgan. "It had good bounce and turned a bit for the spinners but seam movement or swing — it had none."

"So when guys execute hitting a good length and using their bounce well, it is satisfying because it's very hard to do."

"When the ball doesn't move around, it obviously means your pace is important and all three guys [Wood, Archer and Chris Woakes] pace looked good."

NEVER HAVE I EVER THOUGHT I COULD PLAY A KNOCK LIKE THAT BUT I'M DELIGHTED THAT I HAVE. IT'S WEIRD. IT'S VERY STRANGE TO HAVE THAT SIXES RECORD. IT'S SOMETHING, ALONG WITH THE INNINGS, I NEVER THOUGHT I'D DO. IT'S A NICE PLACE TO BE



Jos Buttler checks Hashmatullah Shahidi after he was hit on head by Mark Wood's bouncer ICC/Twitter

'No regrets'

AFP ■ MANCHESTER

England fast bowler Mark Wood said he had no regrets about persisting with short-pitched deliveries after hitting Afghanistan batsman Hashmatullah Shahidi with a bouncer.

Shahidi had made 24 when he took his eye off a 90 mile-per-hour (145 kilometres-per-hour) delivery from the Durham quick that thudded into the side of his helmet at Old Trafford on Tuesday and saw him hit the turf immediately after the impact.

But instead of retiring hurt, the 24-year-old donned a new helmet and carried on to top-score for Afghanistan, with 76 in a lopsided 150-run loss.

Wood, while concerned enough to check on Shahidi's condition, had no regrets about testing him and the other Afghanistan batsmen with more short-pitched deliveries.

"Well, I was concerned when I first hit him, obviously," said Wood.

"It was a bit of a bad blow and then it's out of my hands really. You have to let the medical staff do their thing. I checked he was all right himself, said 'are you OK?' Then I was back in the game mode."

"Morgy (England skipper Eoin Morgan) wanted me to fire another few down. If that's what the captain wants, you listen to orders," the 29-year-old Durham quick added.

"Once you know he (the batsman) is all right, it's game time again."

Told he had split Hashmatullah's helmet, Wood grinned: "I'm bowling them quite fast... For a change!"

Wood and fellow England fast

bowler Jofra Archer shared five wickets against Afghanistan as they continued an effective partnership that has helped take the hosts to the top of the 10-team World Cup table.

"I thought, collectively, we bowled really well," said Wood.

"It was difficult at times because I didn't feel the Afghanistan batsmen were coming at us and we had to try to mix it up, get them to play a few shots.

"It was nice to try something different and get a few wickets." England's victory over basement side Afghanistan was set up by an extraordinary innings from Morgan who, defying a back problem, hit a one-day international record 17 sixes in his blistering 148.

"It was amazing, amazing," said Wood.

"I was delighted for him. Coming off his back injury scare and stuff, and not knowing how he would play or feel, I was just astounded by how well he played out there."

"A lot of the bowlers tend to sit in the back of the dressing room and try and relax but even I came out and watched that because it was great to see on such a big occasion."

Under Morgan's captaincy, England have risen to the top of the ODI rankings since their woeful first-round exit at the 2015 World Cup.

"I know we've played like this for four years now, and there's been some remarkable things," said Wood.

"But to do it in a World Cup game speaks volumes about how Eoin wants the team to play and the values we've kept going throughout those four years."

it's not a big deal. Inshallah he will become stronger from this.

"But you have to give credit to England and Morgan especially for his batting. He showed his class and I have never seen this kind of batting before."

While England climbed back to the top of the table, Afghanistan are still bottom of the pile with five defeats from five games.

However, for the first time in this tournament they completed 50 overs with the bat — making 247/8 as Hashmatullah Shahidi led the way with an impressive 76 from 100 balls.

It was a battling performance and Gulbadin claims his side showed enough fight in defeat to leave him feeling good about the upcoming matches.

"We take a lot of positives from this — I thought we did well in every department," he added. "We missed one catch off Morgan and we lost from there."

"After 30 overs, the score wasn't too bad, so we take a lot of things from here — we are improving day by day in each department."

"It was definitely a good thing for the team that we batted 50 overs as well — that is a positive sign."

Dropped catch & match



Gulbadin Naib, left, and teammate Najibullah Zadran, center, attempt to run-out Eoin Morgan AP

FROM THE START OF THE GAME, BOYS DID WELL FOR 30 OVERS BUT AFTER THAT, ENG SMASHED EVERY BALL. WE DROPPED MORGAN ON 28, SO IF WE DIDN'T THEN MAYBE THEY DON'T GET THAT SCORE. MAYBE WE LOST FROM THERE

PTI ■ MANCHESTER

Afghanistan captain Gulbadin Naib admitted Eoin Morgan's destructive innings was the best he has ever seen after his side slipped to defeat against England at Old Trafford.

England skipper Morgan blasted a mesmerising 148 off 71 balls, including 17 sixes — a world record number of maximums for an ODI.

Afghanistan's star spinner Rashid Khan struggled with final figures of 0/110 but Gulbadin was keen to absolve Rashid of any blame and conceded that a drop of Morgan in the deep on 28 was the pivotal moment in the match.

"From the start of the game, the boys did well for 30 overs but after that, England smashed every ball," said Gulbadin.

"We dropped Morgan on 28, so if we didn't then maybe they don't get that score. Maybe we lost from there."

"I'm not disappointed by Rashid — he's one of the best spinners, a star player in the world. This happens to any player, not just Rashid."

"It wasn't his day but that's cricket — sometimes you do well, sometimes it's like this. I'm happy with him,"

tweeted.

Simmons was reacting to a tweet by an Afghanistan journalist where he wrote that Ahmadzai believes the poor show of the national team was because of lack of preparation on the part of the coaching staff.

In a surprising move, Afghanistan Cricket Board (ACB) named Gulbadin Naib as the limited-overs captain, replacing experienced Asghar Afghan.

But the decision didn't go down well with the team members with senior players like Mohammad Nabi and Rashid Khan openly questioning the move.

Afghanistan has so far suffered defeats against Australia, South Africa, Sri Lanka, New Zealand and Sri Lanka.

Afghanistan is set to play India in their next game on Saturday.

Simmons was reacting to a

tweet by an Afghanistan journalist where he wrote that Ahmadzai believes the poor show of the national team was because of lack of preparation on the part of the coaching staff.

In a surprising move, Afghanistan Cricket Board (ACB) named Gulbadin Naib as the limited-overs captain, replacing experienced Asghar Afghan.

But the decision didn't go down well with the team members with senior players like Mohammad Nabi and Rashid Khan openly questioning the move.

Afghanistan has so far suffered defeats against Australia, South Africa, Sri Lanka, New Zealand and Sri Lanka.

Afghanistan is set to play

India in their next game on

Saturday.

Simmons was reacting to a

tweet by an Afghanistan journalis

t where he wrote that Ahmadzai

believes the poor show of the na

tional team was because of lack o

preparation on the part of the coac

hing staff.

In a surprising move, Afghani

stan Cricket Board (ACB) named

Gulbadin Naib as the limited-ov

ers captain, replacing experienced

Asghar Afghan.

But the decision didn't go

down well with the team membe

s with senior players like Mo

hammad Nabi and Rashid Khan

openly questioning the move.

Afghanistan has so far suffered

defeats against Australia, Sou

rth Africa, Sri Lanka, New Zeal

and Sri Lanka.

Afghanistan is set to play

India in their next game on

Saturday.

Simmons was reacting to a

tweet by an Afghanistan journalis

t where he wrote that Ahmadzai

believes the poor show of the na

tional team was because of lack o

preparation on the part of the coac

hing staff.

In a surprising move, Afghani

stan Cricket Board (ACB) named

Gulbadin Naib as the limited-ov

ers captain, replacing experienced

Asghar Afghan.

But the decision didn't go

down well with the team membe

s with senior players like Mo

hammad Nabi and Rashid Khan

openly questioning the move.

Afghanistan has so far suffered

defeats against Australia, Sou

rth Africa, Sri Lanka, New Zeal

and Sri Lanka.

Afghanistan is set to play

India in their next game on

Saturday.

Simmons was reacting to a

tweet by an Afghanistan journalis

t where he wrote that Ahmadzai

believes the poor show of the na

tional team was because of lack o

preparation on the part of the coac

hing staff.

In a surprising move, Afghani

stan Cricket Board (ACB) named

Gulbadin Naib as the limited-ov

ers captain, replacing experienced

Asghar Afghan.

But the decision didn't go



ICC CRICKET WORLD CUP NASCARTE ENGLAND

OVER THE LAST FEW YEARS,
SPIN HAS DOMINATED ODI'S.
BUT IT'S BEEN PACE THAT'S
RULING THE TOURNAMENT.
THAT'S BEEN THE TREND SO FAR
AND IT'S WORKED REALLY WELL
— JUSTIN LANGER

Oz step into Tiger territory

Confident B'desh take on defending champions Aus who are not on top of their game

UPNEXT



LIVE ON
STAR SPORTS
3:00 pm IST

IANS ■ NOTTINGHAM

It has been a smooth if not dominant ride for Australia thus far but the defending champions run into a tricky Bangladesh when they strive to get closer to World Cup semifinals, here today.

The Aaron Finch-led side is at number two behind table-toppers England, though it also has eight points from five matches. Australia (0.812) are marginally behind the hosts (1.862) when Net Run Rate is taken into account.

Australia will start favourites in today's clash but a passionate Bangladesh are expected to make life tough for the holders. The Tigers have shown what they are capable of when they comprehensively beat the West Indies, riding on a magnificent 124 not out from all-rounder Shakib Al Hasan.

In the form of his life, Shakib has already hit back-to-back centuries and Australia would still remember that it was he, who had plotted their downfall in Bangladesh's historic Test victory against them two years ago with a 10-wicket match haul.

The format is different but coach Justin Langer admitted that his side will have to deal with Shakib. "He (Shakib) probably is the world's best all-rounder and a left-arm spinner," said Langer.

The good news for Australia is that all-round Marcus Stoinis is fit after missing two matches due to a side strain though he is not a definite starter against Bangladesh. Langer also hinted that a specialist spinner may come in his eleven in view of the 'dry' strip at the Trent Bridge.

"That (playing four fast bowlers) might change. That was more brought upon us because Stoinis got injured. It's been wet, it's been overcast, the wickets get a bit drier. This one (Trent Bridge) looks dry," he said.

Australia played leg-spinner Adam Zampa in their first three matches, winning two of those, but in the last two matches they have not fielded any specialist spinner. They have used part-timer Glenn Maxwell as their main spinner in the



Australian batsman Steve Smith smiles during team's training session cricket.com.au/Twitter



Bangladesh players play football during warm up session Bangladesh Cricket/Twitter

HEAD TO HEAD

	Played	Aus	Bdesh	N/R
Matches	20	18	1	1
Day matches	18	17	1	1
In World Cup	2	2	—	—
Last 5 matches	5	4	—	1

HIGHEST TOTALS

Australia	361-8 in 50 overs at Dhaka	13-04-2011
Bangladesh	295-6 in 50 overs at Dhaka	13-04-2011

PERFORMANCE IN WC

Team	P	W	L	T	N/R	Success%
Australia	89	66	21	1	1	75.28
Bangladesh	36	13	22	-	1	37.50

FASSEL FEATURES

SQUADS

Australia: Aaron Finch (c), David Warner, Usman Khawaja, Steve Smith, Shaun Marsh, Alex Carey (wk), Marcus Stoinis, Glenn Maxwell, Mitchell Starc, Kane Richardson, Pat Cummins, Jason Behrendorff, Nathan Coulter-Nile, Adam Zampa, Nathan Lyon.

Bangladesh: Mashrafe Mortaza (c), Abu Jayed, Liton Das (wk), Mahmudullah, Mehidy Hasan, Mohammad Mithun (wk), Mohammad Saifuddin, Mosaddek Hossain, Mashfiqur Rahim (wk), Mustafizur Rahman, Rubel Hossain, Sabbir Rahman, Shakib Al Hasan, Soumya Sarkar, Tamim Iqbal.

XFACTOR

- Australian pace attack
- Shakib Al Hasan's golden run with the bat
- David Warner-Steve Smith return of form
- Aaron Finch, Mashrafe Mortaza's leadership
- Mustafizur Rahman's spell
- Will Bangladesh be able to find first Wc win against Aus?

UNDER THE WEATHER

There could be some scattered showers in Nottingham, but they will be accompanied by a gentle breeze, which could help in keeping interruptions to a minimum. Chances of rain gradually go down as the day progresses.

MEN WHO MATTER

MITCHELL STARC (AUS)



Among bowlers to have taken 20 or more wickets in WCs, Starc's average of 13.51 and strike-rate of 18.8 are the best ever. Starc takes just over two-and-a-half wickets a game and concedes runs at 4.30 an over. To put things in perspective, if teams faced only Starc when they batted, they would manage about 135 runs per innings before being bowled out.

SHAKIB AL HASAN (B'DESH)

Shakib is really showing why he is the world's top-ranked all-rounder in ODIs. With five wickets in four matches, and two centuries and two fifties in four innings, Shakib has made it simply impossible to look past him anymore. In his current form, Shakib against Starc and Cummins could be a one-on-one battle made in cricketing heaven.

Stoinis recovers from injury

PTI ■ NOTTINGHAM

All-rounder Marcus Stoinis is now fit to make a comeback for the remainder of Australia's World Cup campaign having recovered from a side strain but coach Justin Langer is not sure of his immediate return.

Langer said there is no guarantee Stoinis, who missed the last two World Cup games due to injury, being a part of playing XI in today's clash against Bangladesh. Stoinis suffered the injury while bowling in the match against India on June 9 which Australia lost by 36 runs.

"We've been monitoring him. He's an elite athlete, he's an elite professional. He's done everything possible to get himself fit. He wouldn't give up the opportunity for anything, would he?" Langer was quoted as saying by Cricket Australia official website cricket.com.au.

"He (Stoinis) is determined, so it doesn't surprise me with where he's at now. It's a credit to him, it's a credit to the medical staff that are getting him up. So hopefully he can have a real impact on the tournament," added Langer.

While Langer said Stoinis will remain in Australia's 15-man squad, he gave a guarded response when asked if the all-rounder could come straight back into the XI (against Bangladesh), saying: "He's a chance."

Maxwell though played a key role in pegging back Sri Lanka with the ball on Saturday after their openers got off to a good start, and Langer insisted his side's versatility is their trump card.

"We've played really well with another (team) balance. We played in India and Dubai with two spinners. I'm really con-

fident with whatever balance we go in. It's actually really exciting," said Langer.

"We said at the start of the tour that we've got lots of options, (we are) very adaptable and that's our strength not our weakness.

"I get the sense some people think that's our weakness. I actually think it's our strength that we can play according to our opposition, we can play accordingly to grounds, we can play accordingly to managing players," the coach insisted.

Langer also confirmed Nathan Coulter-Nile, who was not a part of the team against Sri Lanka due to soreness, is available for selection against Bangladesh. "He is getting a bit tight in his back. He played three games (in seven days) and I don't think he has done that for a long time. He's fit and he's certainly fit to play the next game," said Langer.



Bangladesh Cricket Board

"It won't be easy. But, as I said, these boys can believe, especially if you had a good start, you never know. So let's see. We'll fight and you never know."

"It won't be easy like other match, it's the same with any match, but the confidence is the main thing, which bowlers have right at the moment."

"I think if we took that con-

fidence into the ground and deliver to our best and we can assess the wicket very well. You never know."

"West Indies was a must-win game for us. Losing points against New Zealand and England, and the wash-out against Sri Lanka, this was much needed and the boys are pretty much confident."

"We really appreciate what Shakib is doing, and some of the other bowlers with what they've done, and we hope it will be carried on from here. It will be great to see."



Marcus Stoinis, right, chats with teammate during training session cricket.com.au

an hour on Tuesday, first on an empty training wicket in close consultation with team medical staff and bowling coach Adam Griffith, and then joined the main nets session. He also showed no signs of pain while batting and fielding.

Australia skipper Aaron Finch had earlier admitted that the loss of Stoinis had thrown out the balance of his side, as he had to scramble to eke out 10 overs between his own part-time spin and Glenn Maxwell's off-breaks against Pakistan.

Maxwell though played a key role in pegging back Sri Lanka with the ball on Saturday after their openers got off to a good start, and Langer insisted his side's versatility is their trump card.

"We've played really well with another (team) balance. We played in India and Dubai with two spinners. I'm really con-

FIT TO HIT

Courtesy — © ICC Business Corporation FZ LLC 2018



● Hashim Amla became the fourth South African and 32nd batsman overall to complete 8000 runs in one day internationals

NEW DELHI
THURSDAY | JUNE 20, 2019

ICC CRICKET WORLD CUP NASCOTLE ENGLAND

SHAMI IS CAPABLE ENOUGH
TO WIN GAMES ON HIS
OWN. HE IS ONE OF THOSE
GUYS WHO HAS BEEN A
MATCHWINNER ON HIS OWN
— HARBHAJAN SINGH



New Zealand skipper Kane Williamson raises his bat after completing his hundred

Kiwis Kane & able

Williamson ton adds to SA dropped catches to send Proteas all but out of tournament

PTI ■ BIRMINGHAM

Skipper Kane Williamson struck a composed unbeaten century as New Zealand virtually knocked South Africa out of the World Cup with a four-wicket victory in a last over finish here on Wednesday.

Chasing a target of 242 in 49 overs in rain-truncated match, New Zealand recovered from a mini slump at 137 for five riding on a 91-run stand between Williamson (103 not out off 138 balls) and Collin de Grandhomme (60 off 47 balls) to reach home with three balls to spare.

Needing 12 off last seven balls, Williamson steered a Lungi Ngidi slower delivery to third man boundary to bring down the equation to 8 off the last over.

With Ngidi (1/47), Kagiso Rabada (1/42) and Chris Morris (3/49) all bowling their full quota, Faf du Plessis had no option but to use their weakest link Andile Phelphykwayo.

Williamson promptly hit the second delivery for his first six of the match to close the encounter.

With this win, New Zealand for a day went on top of points table with nine points from five games while South Africa after their fourth defeat in six games have little chance of making it to the last four.

Williamson's innings had eight fours and a six, while De Grandhomme was the aggressor during the stand with five fours and two sixes.

Earlier, New Zealand's

FASTEST 8000 RUNS IN ODIs

Batsman	M	I	Time
Virat Kohli (India)	183	175	8 years & 301 days
Hashim Amla (South Africa)	179	176	11 years & 102 days
Abraham de Villiers (South Africa)	190	182	10 years & 205 days
Sourav Ganguly (India)	208	200	10 years & 302 days
Rohit Sharma (India)	206	200	11 years & 263 days

Faisel Features



Proteas skipper Faf du Plessis, left, looks on as New Zealand's bowler Lockie Ferguson reacts after bowling him out for 23 runs AP

they restricted South Africa to 241 for six in the rain-truncat-

ed encounter.

The match was reduced to 49-a-side affair after wet ground outfiel delayed the

start. Despite half centuries from Hashim Amla (55 off 83 balls, 4x4s) and Rassie van der Dussen (67 not out off 64 balls, 2x4s, 34x6s), the Black Caps managed to keep the South African batsmen under tight leash.

Lockie Ferguson (3 for 59 in 10 overs) was the most successful bowler for New Zealand, while Colin de Grandhomme (1/33 in 10 overs) turned out to be the most economical.

De Grandhomme and left-arm spinner Mitchell Santner (1/45 in 9 overs) maintained tight discipline during the middle overs and did not allow any opposition batsmen to get away.

Van der Dussen hit two fours and three sixes while Miller hit two boundaries and a six.

The last nine overs produced 72 runs after Faf du Plessis (23) added 50 with Amla, who completed 8000 ODI runs and became second fastest to complete the feat.

Trent Boult castled Quinton de Kock early in the innings and Matt Henry (0/34 in 10 overs) bowled tight lines from the other end after New Zealand won the toss and elected to bowl first.

Du Plessis was yorked by Ferguson and Amla was bowled by a classical left-arm spinners delivery that hit the top of off stump.

OTHER SPORTS

AFP ■ VALENCIENNES

Marta secured her place among the legends of football after the Brazilian become the World Cup's all-time leading scorer in the 1-0 win against Italy in Valenciennes.

"This record doesn't belong to me, it belongs to all of us," said the 33-year-old after crashing home a penalty with 16 minutes left to score her 17th World Cup goal on Tuesday.

"I share it with anyone fighting for more equality."

Brazil set up a knockout stage clash with either hosts France or Germany after the 74th-minute strike moved Marta one goal ahead of the German Miroslav Klose in the record books.

"Do you think he'll change his mind about retiring and play at the next World Cup?" Marta joked.

Brazil finished third on goal difference in Group C behind Italy and Australia — who beat Jamaica 4-1 — after all three ended level on six points.

Marta wasn't fazed by the possibility of facing France, who topped Group A with a perfect nine points after scrapping past Nigeria on Monday.

"To play against the host nation would be a privilege. The stadium would be full of fans singing," she said.

"I love playing in front of a big



crowd whether it's supporting me or is against me. I just want there to be fans who are watching us."

Marta is widely considered the greatest player in the history of the women's game and was hailed by her teammates as an inspiration for others wanting to take up the male-dominant sport.

"She is like an icon for us and I think every year she is breaking records and that's no just important for us but for all of women's football. I'm so happy she is Brazilian," said centre-back Monica.

Fellow defender Tamires added: "We have a lot of young players coming up and I hope they look to her and how she plays, what makes her so special and so incredible and follow her."

The Matildas will play Norway in Nice in the last 16 on Saturday.

England need a point against Japan on Wednesday to ensure they top Group D and avoid a potential last-16 clash with European champions the Netherlands.

Topping the group would, however, also put them on the same side of the draw as both France and potentially the World Cup holders USA.



Yeferson Soteldo, 18, embraces Dani Alves after Copa America Group A match at the Arena Fonte Nova in Salvador AP

VAR denies Samba party

AFP ■ SALVADOR

Brazil were held to a 0-0 draw against Venezuela in the Copa America as a late strike from Philippe Coutinho was disallowed after a controversial VAR decision.

Coutinho thought he had fired Brazil into the quarter-finals in the 87th minute when he bundled home a finish from Everton Soares' driving run down the left wing at Salvador's Arena Fonte Nova on Tuesday.

But for the second time in the match, Chilean referee Julio Bascunan ruled out the Brazilian goal after being alerted to an infringement by the video assistant referee.

The goal appeared to have been disallowed due to a touch by Liverpool striker Roberto Firmino, although it was not clear that Firmino had been offside as the ball dragged him on the way into the net.

Brazil left the field to boos but remain top of Group A with four points from two games, and one game to play.

Venezuela have two points from two games and will fancy their chances of advancing with their final game coming against Bolivia, who suffered their second straight defeat earlier on Tuesday in a 3-1 loss to Peru.

Brazil, who had made

hard work of beating Bolivia in their opener, once again struggled to find a creative spark against well-organized opponents.

Firmino was kept quiet by Venezuela's defense with Yordan Osorio and Mikel Villanueva neutralizing the Liverpool striker.

The tale of the first half lay in the statistics from the opening 45 minutes, with Brazil recording only one shot on target despite enjoying 75 percent possession.

In fact, the best chance of the half fell to Venezuela, when Salomon Rondon headed Yangel Herrera's cross just inches wide with Alison beaten.

The striker took a touch and buried his finish as the home fans erupted. But the festive atmosphere fell flat as the goal was referred to VAR, who promptly chalked the score off after ruling Firmino had been offside when he collected the ricochet.

A deflated Brazil took several minutes to regroup but grew increasingly desperate as valuable minutes ticked away and Venezuela held firm.

Jesus went close again in the 76th minute when Dani Alves whipped a cross into the six-yard box.

But again Venezuela's defense was rock-solid, with Jesus bundled off the ball and unable to get a shot away.

Coutinho looked to have broken the deadlock three minutes from time, but VAR's intervention rescued a precious point for Venezuela.

Fernandinho almost snatched victory with a header in the 10th minute of time added on, but his effort rolled just wide of the post on 57 minutes.

Moments later Jesus

looked to have fired Brazil into the lead.

Once again the striker advanced menacingly on the Venezuela penalty area and unleashed a fierce low shot.

The ball deflected off Villanueva into the path of Firmino, who then squared for Jesus who continued his run.

The striker took a touch and buried his finish as the home fans erupted. But the festive atmosphere fell flat as the goal was referred to VAR, who promptly chalked the score off after ruling Firmino had been offside when he collected the ricochet.

A deflated Brazil took several minutes to regroup but grew increasingly desperate as valuable minutes ticked away and Venezuela held firm.

Jesus went close again in the 76th minute when Dani Alves whipped a cross into the six-yard box.

But again Venezuela's defense was rock-solid, with Jesus bundled off the ball and unable to get a shot away.

Coutinho looked to have broken the deadlock three minutes from time, but VAR's intervention rescued a precious point for Venezuela.

Fernandinho almost snatched victory with a header in the 10th minute of time added on, but his effort rolled just wide of the post on 57 minutes.

"I am looking forward to working with Ole (Gunnar

Solskjaer) and his fantastic coaching staff; the vision that they have for the club is truly exciting and I am so happy that I will be a part of that."

In his five years at United, Mata has scored 45 goals in 218 appearances and won the Europa League, FA Cup and League Cup.

Solskjaer has a major rebuild on his hands after United finished sixth in the Premier League last season to miss out on Champions League qualification.

"Juan is the ultimate professional and one of the most intelligent players I have worked with," said Solskjaer.

"He is a great example to our younger players in his approach. He understands what it means to be a Manchester United player and has embraced everything about this great club."

United have only made one signing so far this window in securing the services of Wales winger Daniel James from Swansea.

"I think it was probably as smooth as it could have gone," said Barty.

"I felt really good with my feet on the grass. We haven't had a hell of a lot of grass court time because of the weather but in a sense that made it even better because it was fresh, it was new."

"I could really just play by feel and try and work my way into the match."

The Australian shot to

number two in the world rankings by winning in Paris earlier this month and could even end the week as number one if she outperforms Naomi Osaka in England's Midlands.

However, Barty insists she is not yet feeling any strain of being a Grand Slam champion.

"I don't feel any different myself," she added. "I'm still the same Ash Barty that I was three weeks ago. I'm the same Ash Barty I was two years ago."

Konta also made the last four at the French Open, but her return to the grass was cut short in the second round by Jelena Ostapenko 6-3, 6-4.

A former French Open winner herself, Ostapenko has struggled with injuries this season but has now posted back-to-back wins for just the second time this year.

Venus Williams pro-

Record breaker Marta

AFP ■ FRANCE

Marta, right, celebrates with Thaisa after scoring her side's first goal

AP

crowd whether it's supporting me or is against me. I just want there to be fans who are watching us."

Marta is widely considered the greatest player in the history of the women's game and was hailed by her teammates as an inspiration for others wanting to take up the male-dominant sport.

"She is like an icon for us and I think every year she is breaking records and that's no just important for us but for all of women's football. I'm so happy she is Brazilian," said centre-back Monica.

Fellow defender Tamires added: "We have a lot of young players coming up and I hope they look to her and how she plays, what makes her so special and so incredible and follow her."

The Matildas will play Norway in Nice in the last 16 on Saturday.

England need a point against Japan on Wednesday to ensure they top Group D and avoid a potential last-16 clash with European champions the Netherlands.

Topping the group would, however, also put them on the same side of the draw as both France and potentially the World Cup holders USA.

Mata extends Man Utd stay to 2021

AFP ■ MADRID

Manchester United tied down midfielder Juan Mata to a new two-year contract on Wednesday with an option to extend the deal a further season.

Mata, 31, had been free to talk to other clubs with his previous contract expiring this month after protracted negotiations between the two parties.

However, having already seen Ander Herrera and club captain Antonio Valencia leave Old Trafford on free transfers this summer, United were keen stop Mata from following suit.

"It is a real honour to continue to represent this amazing club and our incredible fans. I have been at Manchester United for five years and I am proud to call Old Trafford my home," said Mata, who joined from Chelsea in 2014 for a fee of £37 million (\$46 million).

"I am looking forward to working with Ole (Gunnar

Barty makes winning start

AFP ■ BRIMINGHAM

French Open champion Ashleigh Barty got her grass court season