

NATION 5
VAYU LIKELY TO HIT GUJ COAST ON MONDAY: IMD

SPECIAL 8
"MENTAL STRENGTH IS KEY"

SPORT 12
FOR US NO ONE IS A THREAT: KOHLI

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Sunday Pioneer

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USUALSUSPECTS SWAPAN DASGUPTA

MPs must respect popular mandate to let House run

A election campaign in India is a very long and exacting affair. Although the formal campaign began much later, the past six months of 2019 has been preoccupied with the people's ultimate verdict. Now that the voters have spoken and given Narendra Modi's Government an unambiguous verdict to govern India for the next five years, it may be time to take a step back, stop the slugfest and devote our attention to the more pressing task of governance.

This week, following the casting of the elected members of the Lok Sabha and the President of India's address to the joint session of Parliament, normal business is expected to resume. The previous session of Parliament was exceptionally acrimonious, with the Opposition doing its utmost to stall both Houses. Its success in the Lok Sabha was limited because the Government had a clear majority. However, it succeeded in completely disrupting proceedings in the Rajya Sabha so much so that neither the debate on the President's address nor any discussion on the Interim Budget could be held. As for legislation, apart from a stray Bill on Leprosy, the Opposition did not allow any other Bill to be moved. For all practical purposes, except for Money Bills, Parliament has been dysfunctional since the end of 2018.

The list of Bills passed in the Lok Sabha but failed to be either discussed or voted upon in 2019 in the Rajya Sabha is very long; they total up to 53. They include the largest legislation such as the Triple Talaq Bill and the Citizenship (Amendment) Bill. But they also include relatively non-contentious legislation such as Indian Medical Council Bill, the Extension of Municipalities Bill, the Seeds Bill, the Pesticides Management Bill, the Archaeological Monuments Bill and the Motor Vehicles Bill. At least three of the Bills had even been referred to Select Committees that had submitted their reports. To reintroduce these Bills will call for the entire process to be repeated in the Lok Sabha and then brought to the Rajya Sabha.

At one level, the environment for transcending normal parliamentary business looks encouraging. The BJP is of course quite buoyant after its electoral success. Simultaneously, the Congress, the largest Opposition party — which, however, narrowly missed securing the requisite number of Lok Sabha seats to get its leader formally recognised as leader of Opposition — is dispirited and demoralised after an election it hoped to do much better in. As of now, the BJP has chosen its floor leader and there is strategic uncertainty in its ranks. Likewise, the regional parties in north India suffer from the same uncertainty. The three southern parties — DMK, TRS and YSRCP — are however, quite enthused by the results, although their intervention in national politics has been modest.

This leaves two regional parties from the east — the BJD and the TMC. The electoral groups have been mixed. The BJD regained control over the State Government quite comfortably but lost ground in the Lok Sabha. The TMC, however, suffered electoral reverses, although it is still the largest party in West Bengal. But the TMC is in an extremely combative mood because of the twists and turns in the government's numbers to make a mark in the Lok Sabha. However, in the smaller Rajya Sabha, it has the requisite lung power to disrupt proceedings. It may be recalled that on a number of occasions in the previous session, a small clutch of AIADMK and TDP members had successfully disrupted proceedings for over a week.

Although I would like to be proved wrong, it is my belief that the TMC is unlikely to play the role of a constructive and responsible Opposition in the Upper House. Its leader, Mamata Banerjee is in a belligerent mood and this is likely to impact the behaviour of its MPs in the Rajya Sabha.

Symbolic protests and fiery speeches are a normal feature of parliamentary performance and it would be legitimate for the Opposition to proceed along that route. The more problematic issue is disruption. How should the Chairman or Deputy Chairman respond to the provocations? In the Westminster tradition, the Speaker's command is sacrosanct and unruly behaviour is viewed as a horrifying and unacceptable aberration. Unfortunately, over the years, willfully disobeying the chair has become the norm and led to the breakdown of the consensus that should, ideally, surround the workings of Parliament. The temporary suspension of disruptive MPs, far from injecting good sense, has been seen as additional provocation and has worsened matters.

Docs reject parley offer at CM office

Mamata says ready to fulfil demands, asks them to resume duty, but says no ESMA yet

SAUGAR SENGUPTA ■ KOLKATA

Even as the striking junior doctors defied Mamata Banerjee for the second time on Saturday turning down her offer for talks, the Bengal Chief Minister swore by her "patience" saying like the other State Governments she had all the legal means to invoke the coercive Essential Services Maintenance Act (ESMA) but had their desire in making the extreme step on humanitarian grounds.

"The Government is showing patience, sympathy for the doctors but it is time for them to act and resume duty. We have conceded to all the demands that the doctors had made," she said, wondering why the doctors refused to meet her at the State Secretariat.

In Kolkata, a representative of the striking doctors said, "This is an issue relating to work for now that they will go on an indefinite strike if no action is taken against the attack on the doctor in Kolkata."

Mamata's renewed appeal to doctors to resume duty came close on the heels of a letter from West Bengal Governor KN Tripathi, who directed the Government to take adequate security measures for the doctors and restore normalcy in the health sector.

Referring to the earlier instances of ESMA being invoked, Mamata said, "In 2008/2009 the Narendra Modi Government of Gujarat had enforced ESMA and even arrested 150 doctors while in 2015 the AAP Government of Delhi too invoked the same Act. Again the BJP Governments of Rajasthan and Haryana implemented ESMA and the Government of Jammu & Kashmir too did the same thing. But here our Government is taking a soft approach towards the young doctors who have brought future ahead of them."

She said, "We believe in humanism and expect the doctors to do the same. They are into a noble profession, and reminded, despite they heckled and abused me at the SKKM Hospital where I had gone to see whether the Emergency was functioning or not I did not take any action. Any other person in my place would have taken strong action as they did in the other States earlier."



West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee interacts with the media over the ongoing doctors' strike, in Howrah on Saturday

- The Government is showing patience, sympathy for the doctors, now it is time for them to act and resume duty, Mamata said wondering why the doctors refused to meet her at the Secretariat
- A representative of the striking doctors in Kolkata said, "We are not ready to accept closed-door meeting offer. We want the CM to come here at the NRS Hospital and see for herself the condition we work in and give assurances in public to rectify them"
- AIMS in Delhi said the doctors have resumed work but they will go on an indefinite strike if no action is taken against the attack on the doctor in Kolkata

Junior doctors protest against an attack on an intern doctor, at Nil Ratan Sircar Medical College and Hospital in Kolkata on Saturday

not take any action. Any other person in my place would have taken strong action as they did in the other States earlier." The doctors' campaign earlier spread like wildfire after on-duty junior doctors of NRS Medical College were on Monday night brutally beaten up by hooligans following the death of a patient.

Even as the NRSCH doctors struck work demanding adequate security measures and arrest of all the 200 people who had attacked the hospital, the protest spread and their colleagues from other hospitals and medical colleges struck work.

The Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) said according to reports it received, the number of incidents of political violence and resultant deaths since 2016 in the State.

The Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) said according to reports it received, the number of incidents of political violence in West Bengal increased from 509 in 2016 to 1,035 in 2018. While as many as 773 incidents have already occurred in 2019 till date, correspondingly, the death toll has risen from 36 in 2016 to 96 in 2018. In 2019, 26 deaths have been reported, it stated.

The MHA said the continued trend of political violence from 2016 through 2019 is indicative of the "failure" on the part of the law-enforcement machinery of the State in maintaining the rule of law and inspiring a sense of security among the people.

The "unabated" violence over the years is evidently a matter of deep concern," the Centre said, pointing out the growing number of election-related and political violence.

It is requested that a report may be sent to this Ministry on the steps taken by the State Government and its law enforcement machinery to investigate the incidents of violence to bring the culprits to book as also the measures taken to contain and curb violence," the MHA's advisory to the Trinamool Congress Government said.

While violence marred the recently-concluded Lok Sabha elections in the State, in the post-poll scenario too the TMC and the BJP, which has emerged as the principal challenger to the ruling party, have been at serious loggerheads with both sides accusing each other of unleashing violence against each other's workers.

West Bengal Governor Kesharinarth Tripathy recently met Union Home Minister Amit Shah and Prime Minister Narendra Modi, apparently to brief them about the current situation in the State.



Junior doctors protest against an attack on an intern doctor, at Nil Ratan Sircar Medical College and Hospital in Kolkata on Saturday

'Concerned' Centre seeks Bengal's ATR on political violence

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Centre on Saturday sought a report from the Mamata Banerjee dispensation on the measures it took in light of the "unabated" and "increasing" incidents of political violence and resultant deaths since 2016 in the State.

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Govt asks States to enact law to prevent assault on doctors

Bengal Govt asked to report on strike

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Centre on Saturday sought a report "urgently" from the West Bengal Government on the ongoing strike by the doctors even as it wrote to all State Governments to consider enacting a specific legislation for protecting the medical professionals from any form of violence. The Centre

also asked all the States to take strict action against any person who assaults doctors.

In its advisory to the West Bengal Government, the MHA said it has received a number of representations from doctors, healthcare professionals and medical associations from different parts of the country for their security in view of the ongoing strike by doctors. "It is requested that a detailed report be sent urgently on the representations on ongoing strike by the doctors," it said.

For his part Union Health Minister Harsh Vardhan wrote to all the Chief Ministers regarding the law to protect the medics and the need to take strict action against any person who assaults doctors.

Along with his letter, Harsh Vardhan attached a copy of the Draft Act provided by IMA — the Protection of Medical Service Persons and Medical Service Institutions (Prevention of Violence and Damage or Loss of Property) Act, 2017.

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Help make India \$5tn economy: PM to States

Modi asks States to raise GDP by recognising their core competence

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Against the backdrop of the ongoing debate over India's growth rate in the Rajya Sabha (GDP) growth rate and unemployment besides his Government's aim to make India a five-trillion economy, Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Saturday asked the States to pitch in with their contribution by recognising their respective core competence and working towards raising the GDP targets and per capita incomes.

In his opening remarks at the fifth meeting of the Governing Council of NITI Aayog, the Prime Minister said, "The goal to make India a five-trillion-dollar economy by 2024 is challenging but can surely be achieved. The States should recognise their core competence and work towards raising GDP targets right from the district level." The Modi Government has faced criticism over rising joblessness and slow GDP growth rate.

According to the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation (MoSPI), unemployment in the country is at a four-decade-high while the Government's former Chief Economic Adviser, Arvind Subramanian, recently brought the focus back on the GDP growth rate. The country's 2011-12 and 2016-17 it was over-estimated by 2.5 per cent (should have been about 4.5 per cent instead of the official estimate of close to 7 per cent). The Centre has denied it and said it will come up with a point-by-point rebuttal.



Prime Minister Narendra Modi chairs the fifth meeting of the Governing Council of NITI Aayog in New Delhi on Saturday

Defiant Didi, busy KCR skip NITI meet

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

After skipping Prime Minister Narendra Modi's swearing in ceremony, West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee and her Telangana counterpart K Chandrashekar Rao on Saturday gave a miss to the fifth meeting of the Governing Council of Niti Aayog chaired by the PM.

Punjab Chief Minister Amarinder Singh could not attend the meeting due to health reasons, sources said, adding the State was represented by its Finance Minister, Mamata, KCR, and Amarinder had skipped Modi's swearing-in ceremony on May 23.

In a letter to Modi, the Mamata had expressed her inability to attend the Niti Aayog meeting on June 15, saying it is "fruitless" as the body has no financial powers to support State plans.

Sources said the Telangana CM is busy with preparations for the launch of his ambitious ₹80,000-crore Kaleshwaram lift irrigation project that would end water woes in the State.

CAPSULE

7 DIE WHILE CLEANING HOTEL SEWER IN GUJ

Vadodra: Seven persons, including four sanitation workers, died on Saturday after inhaling toxic fumes while cleaning sewer of a hotel in Vadodra district of Gujarat.

RLY DROPS MESSAGE SERVICES ON TRAINS

New Delhi/Mumbai: Mumbai-headquartered Western Railway on Saturday said it has withdrawn a proposal to provide text and head messages to passengers on board 39 trains originating from Indore in Madhya Pradesh.

EC ANNOUNCES BYPOLLTS TO 6 RS SEATS ON JULY 5

New Delhi: The Election Commission on Saturday announced bypollts to six Rajya Sabha seats on July 5, including the one vacated by BJP chief Amit Shah following his election to the Lok Sabha. Notifications will be issued on June 18 and elections and counting of votes will be held on July 5.

WOMAN HIRES KILLERS TO MURDER HER HUSBY

New Delhi: A woman and her paramour have been arrested for allegedly hiring killers for ₹7,000 to murder her husband at the couple's accommodation in South East area.

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Yogi govt plans to organise global investors' summit early next year

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

After the success of UP Investors' Summit in February 2018 that fetched investment proposals worth ₹4.68 lakh crore, the Yogi Adityanath government is now contemplating organising its maiden 'Global Investors' Summit' early next year.

The 2018 summit resulted in big investment as a fair share of MoUs matured into actual investment in the state. The proposed 'Global Investors' Summit' would be held on a grand scale and position Uttar Pradesh as an ideal investment destination not only in India but globally.

While reviewing the progress of Industrial Development department this week, Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath asked officials to start preparing for the Global Investors' Summit proposed to be held in February 2020.

He also directed the officials to hold the second groundbreaking ceremony for pending industrial and infrastructure projects next month.

During the two-day UP Investors' Summit in Lucknow on 21-22 February 2018, the UP government had signed 1,047 memoranda of understanding (MoUs) worth ₹4.68 lakh crore with private and public sector companies.

The summit was inaugurated by Prime Minister Narendra Modi in the presence of honchos of corporate world, including Mukesh Ambani, Gautam Adani, Kumar Mangalam Birla, N Chandrababu Naidu, Subhash Chandra, GM Rao, Shiv Nadar and many others.

The state also hosted delegates from Mauritius, Japan, the Netherlands, Finland, Czech Republic, Thailand and Slovakia to explore investment opportunities in UP.

Later, on July 29, 2018, the Prime Minister presided over the first groundbreaking ceremony and laid the foundation stones of projects worth ₹60,000 crore in Lucknow.

So far 29 such projects totalling ₹30,000 crore investment have already attained completion. However, the second groundbreaking ceremony for



projects worth almost ₹80,000 crore got delayed several times due to incomplete groundwork, land acquisition woes, pending clearances and lastly the Lok Sabha elections.

Meanwhile, the Chief Minister exhorted officials to further simplify the processes for spurring investment and resolving issues within seven days and warned against harassment of industrialists in the name of inspections.

Yogi ordered action against district magistrates who failed to settle no objection certificate (NOC) issues within the stip-

ulated time frame.

The Chief Minister advised officials to encourage investment in food processing sector, especially potato-based, for maximising farmers' income. Besides, he underlined pharmaceutical, solid waste management and dairy development sectors for leveraging investment potential available in the state.

Yogi has asked the UP Expressway Industrial Development Authority (UIPIA) to develop industrial corridor on both sides of the proposed Gorakhpur link expressway and speed up work on Bundelkhand and Ganga expressways.

Principal Secretary, Infrastructure and Industrial Development, RK Singh, said that the single window system portal had received 45,000 applications out of which NOCs had been issued to nearly 77 per cent or 34,000 applicants and over 6,000 such cases were under consideration. "At the same time, UP Defence Industrial Corridor is projected to attract investment worth ₹500 crore soon," he said.

'Jungle raj' prevailing in UP: Akhilesh

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

Alleging that "jungle raj" was prevailing in Uttar Pradesh, Samajwadi Party chief Akhilesh Yadav met Governor Ram Naik on Saturday to discuss the poor law and order situation in the state and submitted a memorandum.

Akhilesh Yadav along with senior SP leader Ahmad Hassan submitted a memorandum to the Governor and urged him to intervene and "wake up" the state government as he did during the SP regime.

Yadav said, "During SP regime, it was said that there were only Yadav officers. Now there is hardly any district police chief or district magistrate from the Yadav community. We have requested the Governor to wake up the state government and direct it to control the prevailing 'jungle raj'."

The SO chief further said, "Criminals are having a free hand and they are doing what they want in this regime. UP Bar Council president Darvesh Singh Yadav was shot dead inside the chamber of a lawyer in Agra court while criminals were shot dead inside jail. How can people take firmness inside the lawyer's chamber or inside the jail?" Holding the present Yogi



SP chief Akhilesh Yadav (right) and party leader Ahmad Hassan submitting a memorandum to Governor Ram Naik at Raj Bhawan in Lucknow on Saturday

Adityanath government responsible for the deteriorating law and order in the state, the SP president said that the state government had failed to instil confidence among people of the state.

Akhilesh also tweeted: "Incidents of rape, killings and political attacks have been increasing in the state. The CM is busy in meetings but the law

and order is getting worse. The firing at chairperson of Bar Council in Agra has proved that the situation is now out of control."

Akhilesh Yadav also raised the issue of alleged harassment of senior SP leader Mohammad Azam Khan by Rampur district administration and said, "The Governor should look into the matter

immediately as fake criminal cases are being registered against the SP leader by officials to harass him."

Recently, a couple of senior Rampur district officials had sought protection from Azam Khan while cases were lodged against the leader for illegally grabbing government land for Ali Jauhar University owned by Khan.

Minister's visit exposes high-handedness of cops

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

Two warnings in the last three days to top police officials by Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath seem to have failed to cut ice with the former as a visit by Union minister Sadhvi Niranjan Jyoti to a police station in her Fatehpur constituency exposed the high-handedness of UP Police and their devious ways of dealing with female members.

Interestingly, after the expose, top police officers tried to hush up the issue by suspending station house officer of Chandpur, Kailash Nath, and ordering a probe.

The Superintendent of Police of Fatehpur said that further action would be taken after the circle officer submitted his findings. As per reports, Union Minister of State and local MP Sadhvi Niranjan Jyoti reached Chandpur police station in Fatehpur on Friday evening

after learning from her supporters that the police were not listening to the grievances of even female members and were using this degree on them.

The Sadhvi also learnt that personnel at Chandpur police station were not registering report of a rape victim despite repeated complaints.

When the irked Union minister visited the police station, she found a girl sitting there. When she enquired, the MP was told that a building material supplier in Pahadpur Badigawa hamlet was murdered on June 10 and since the girl, Pranshi aka Shivani, happened to be the daughter of prime accused Jaichandra, who was absconding, the cops had brought her to the police station to build up pressure on the accused.

Even as Sadhvi Niranjan Jyoti questioned the cops, some of them sensed trouble and shifted the girl to another room. At this, some Bharatiya Janata Party supporters called

the girl out and on being asked about her presence in the police station, she told the Union minister that the SHO had brought her four days back and brutally assaulted her with belt, asking her to reveal the whereabouts of her father.

On learning about the illegal police conduct, the Sadhvi immediately called local IG Mohit Agarwal and Fatehpur SP Ramesh. After the IG and the SP reached there along with an entourage of senior officials, the detained girl's uncle wrote out a complaint against the SHO and other cops for illegal detention. The IG took the application, got a case registered and suspended the SHO.

Circle Officer of Binkdi was asked to probe the incident and submit a report after which further action would be taken. On the assurance of proper action, the MP left the police station and visited her constituency.

Group clash leaves several injured in Hardoi

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

Several persons were injured, three of them critically, when supporters of Bharatiya Janata Party MLA from Bilgram-Mallawan Assembly constituency in Hardoi, Asheesh Singh 'Ashu', and Mallawan Nagar Palika chairman Ankit Jaiswal exchanged fire and engaged in a violent clash late Friday night.

Senior officers rushed to the spot and were camping there to avert recurrence of violence. Cross-cases have been registered against the MLA and the nagar palika chairman along with their supporters but no arrests were made.

As per reports, Mallawan Nagar Palika chairman Ankit Jaiswal's brother Siddharth Jaiswal aka Siddhu had a dispute with Kallu of Devmanpur area of Hardoi, a close aide of BJP MLA

Asheesh Singh 'Ashu', about (30) of Shahpur Ganga. Ankit was later shifted to the KGMU Trauma Centre in Lucknow after his condition deteriorated.

On learning about the incident, senior officers reached the spot along with local police personnel.

Late Friday night, Ashu's supporter Himanshu Patel lodged a report against Ankit Jaiswal and his brothers Siddharth Jaiswal and Vishal

Jaiswal, Rohit Rana, Rahul Sharma, Jalaluddin, Indrapal and unknown miscreants.

Similarly, Ankit Jaiswal also lodged a report and named the MLA, along with his representative Neeraj Vidhyarthi, Sunil Kumar Kannauya, Rajeev Rishi, Aman, Ankit, Himanshu, Rahul and 200 unknown persons.

While no arrests were made, a heavy police force was patrolling the area to avert any further clash.

QUICK TAKES

SEVEN-YEAR-OLD GIRL RAPED, KILLED BY FATHER'S ACQUAINTANCE

Gorakhpur: A seven-year-old girl was allegedly raped and killed by her father's acquaintance following which he was arrested on Saturday. Senior Superintendent of Police Sunil Gupta said on Friday, Vinod Rai, 55, said the girl and her 12-year-old sister playing in their house and told them that their father was calling them and the older girl sent her sister with him. On Friday night, the rikshaw police were informed via Dial-100 helpline that the girl had been abducted by Rai on a motorcycle. The police arrested him and during interrogation he told the cops that he had dumped the girl's body in a mango orchard in his village. The body was recovered by the police. Rai was booked on charges of kidnapping, rape, murder and under the POCOSA (Protection of Children from Sexual Offences) Act, the SSP said. He has three children, including two daughters who are married and was alone at home on the day of the incident as his wife and 19-year-old son were on a visit to Mumbai.

TEENAGE BOY FOUND DEAD

Azamgarh: The body of a 14-year-old boy, who had come home on summer vacation, was recovered from an orchard near his home at a village here, police said on Saturday. Sudeep Singh Patel was studying in Prayagraj. He had come home for vacations and was missing since Friday evening. When he did not return home, his family started looking for him and found his body in an orchard near their home in Pahadpur village in Raunapur area, police said. The body has been sent for post-mortem and investigation is on. No arrests have so far been made in this connection.

TWO KILLED IN ROAD MISHAP

Muzaffarnagar: Two people were killed and six injured when the tractor-trolley they were travelling in collided with a speeding truck on Dehradun-Delhi highway near Nawla village in the district here on Saturday, officials said.

MEMBERS OF BABLI KOL GANG HELD

Banda: Four members of dacoit Babli Kol gang have been arrested from Chitrakoot after



NOTICE

I, Sanku Prasad, son of Chandra Mohan, holder of Indian Passport No. 23491245, No. C-48, Section-1, Aligarh, Lucknow have changed my name from Sanku Prasad to Sanku Prasad Singh. In future, I would be known as Sanku Prasad.

2 killed in group clash in Shahjahanpur

Shahjahanpur (PTI): Two persons were killed and another was injured when two groups clashed over some dispute in Shahjahanpur district.

Grandey (35) and Rizwan (32) were killed in the clash near Bishmil park here on Friday night, Superintendent of Police (City) Dinesh Tripathi said. The clash was between followers of Grandey and Sonu Gupta. Gupta opened fire killing the two on the spot, the police said.

The injured, identified as Shanu, has been admitted to a hospital, where his condition was stated to be stable. Gupta has been arrested, the police added.

Uddhav to visit Ayodhya with party MPs today



PNS ■ LUCKNOW

Aiming to make a fresh pitch for the construction of Ram temple at the disputed site, Shiv Sena chief Uddhav Thackeray along with 18 newly-elected party MPs will visit Ayodhya on Sunday.

Thackeray will also offer prayers at the makeshift Ram Lalla temple at the site. This will be Thackeray's first visit to Ayodhya after the 2019 Lok Sabha poll results came out last month. He had visited Ayodhya in November last year.

On the eve of the visit of the party's MPs, Shiv Sena leader and Rajya Sabha member Sanjay Raut said in Ayodhya on Saturday, "We are confident that the Ram temple would be constructed during Narendra Modi regime and for us Prime Minister Modi and Union Home Minister Amit Shah are the 'supreme court'."

Talking to media persons at Ayodhya on the eve of the Sena leaders' visit, Raut said that Ram temple was a matter of belief and not politics. "We have never sought vote or done politics on Ram temple issue," he said.

Maharashtra will be going to polls later this year. The visit is being seen as an attempt by the Shiv Sena to put pressure

on ally Bharatiya Janata Party. But Sena has maintained that Thackeray's visit should not be seen through the electoral lens.

On construction of Ram temple in Ayodhya, Raut said, "It has been constructed in Modi and Yogi's leadership. The BJP will decide on it. The majority in 2019 is for construction of Ram temple. In Rajya Sabha too we will get majority by 2020."

"It is up to the Bharatiya Janata Party to decide on Ram temple construction and as Shiv Sena is an ally, hence it has less say on the issue. But I believe that Prime Minister Modi and Amit Shah can do what the people of the country want, hence Ram temple would come up at any cost," he said.

The Shiv Sena MP further said that the BJP would get a majority in Rajya Sabha by 2020, and by that time all obstacles in the way of the temple would be removed.

Thackeray would be reaching Ayodhya from Mumbai by a chartered flight at 9 am on Sunday and will visit Ram Lalla temple for darshan at 10 am along with 18 newly-elected MPs and other leaders of the party. The MPs would be reaching Ayodhya 'by tonight', Raut said.

Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath has asked state gues' status to all Shiv Sena MPs and Thackeray during their Ayodhya visit and has made all preparations for their stay and security in the temple town.

Thackeray, his family members and other leaders had prayed at Ram Lalla temple in Ayodhya on November 25 last to build pressure on the BJP for early construction of Ram temple.

Government of India Ministry of Ayurveda, Yoga & Naturopathy, Unani, Siddha and Homoeopathy (AYUSH) COUNSELLING FOR AYURVEDA, SIDDDHA, UNANI AND HOMOEOPATHY UNDERGRADUATE (UG) SEATS -2019 PUBLIC NOTICE

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Two labourers suffocate to death while cleaning sewer

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ LUCKNOW

Two labourers employed to scoop out silt from a 40 feet deep sewer alongside the Faizabad road died while their minor companion escaped in Chinhat on Saturday afternoon. A huge mob of commuters thronged the site causing traffic to come a standstill for hours. The bodies of both the labourers were retrieved from the sewer and sent for autopsy. The police recorded the statement of the minor survivor and were investigating the case.

The deceased were identified as Shahabuddin (24) and Raisul (20), both of Assam and were living in Chinhat. The survivor was identified as Maidul (17) is also of Assam and stays in Chinhat.

As per reports, five labourers climbed down the sewer near Bora petrol filling station around noon and fainted as they inhaled some poisonous



gas which emanated from the sewer. Maidul, whose job was to take out the bucket filled with silt and throw it outside, was standing at the brink of the manhole and so was saved. He found that his colleagues were not responding and so he raised an alarm hearing which reached the scene to help out the victims but in vain. Meanwhile, people assembled the scene and they called the police.

A team reached the place and later firemen also were sent to the site to rescue the victims. By the time, the rescue operation started, Shahabuddin and Raisul had fallen unconscious. The victims were taken out from the sewer and were taken to Ram Manohar Lohia Hospital where they were declared "brought dead".

Maidul told newsmen that he, along with five labourers, were hired for the job. "I was

standing near the rim of the manhole while other four entered the sewer. Two of the labourers hurriedly came out saying some poisonous gas was emanating and they were feeling uneasy. They later fled the scene. I do not know their names. I also do not know the name of the contractor. Shahabuddin had engaged me for the work," he told police.

Giving details, the police spokesman said three labourers, including Maidul, were engaged in the job. "Raisul and Shahabuddin died in the mishap while Maidul was saved," he said. He added that the police were trying to find out the contractor.

A huge mob of commuters, shop owners and local residents flocked the scene. Some of them also filmed the rescue operation being carried out at the scene. In a video, one of the labourers was seen in a naked state when the police pulled the body tying a rope around the victim's chest.

Maximum temp soars to 44.9°C

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ LUCKNOW

It felt like a furnace in the state capital with the maximum temperature (44.9 degree Celsius) soaring to seven notches above normal on Saturday. In the last ten years, the maximum temperature recorded in the month of June has been 45.3 degree Celsius in 2017, 41.8 degree Celsius in 2016, 45.7 degree Celsius in 2015, 46.3 degree Celsius in 2014, 38.7 degree Celsius in 2013, 45.4 degree Celsius in 2012, 42 degree Celsius in 2011, 43.8 degree Celsius in 2010, 44.8 degree Celsius in 2009, and 40 degree Celsius in 2008. However, the all-time high was 47.7 degree Celsius on June 9, 1966.



There seems to be no let-up in the heatwave conditions prevailing in the state capital

Pioneer

In the state, Allahabad was the hottest at 47.4 degree Celsius. The forecast for Lucknow is partly cloudy sky while rain and thunderstorms are likely in some areas. The maximum and minimum temperatures are expected to be around 43 degree Celsius and 25 degree Celsius respectively. As for state, rain and thunderstorm are likely at isolated places where there is

warning for heatwave to start. Dust storm and thunderstorm accompanied by severe heatwave conditions at isolated places over the state. Dust storm and thunderstorm accompanied by gusty winds (30-40 kmph) and lightning are likely at isolated places over the state.



Prasad being distributed at a bhandara organised in city on Saturday

Pioneer

Many hurt in group clash

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ LUCKNOW

Several persons were injured in a group clash which erupted on a petty issue in a village under Jankipuram police station. Both the warring group lobbed crude bombs and even fired in the air on Friday night.

As per reports, Abul Kalam of Sheikhhan Tola locality was passing near the house of his rival Kalim on Friday night. Seeing him all alone, Kalim started abusing him and in the end, he abused him too. While the exchange of epithets was going on, Kalim and his family members attacked Salam and his family members. A little later Salam's supporters also assembled there and both the group came face to face. Soon it was free for all with both the parties indulging into brick bating. They also ransacked the furniture and other items at each other's house.

The police said a cross FIR was registered and further investigation are under way. "We are identifying those involved in the group clash," the police said.

LOOT

Unidentified miscreants snatched a gold chain from a professor's wife in Jankipuram on Saturday morning when the victim was on a morning walk. Victim's husband Manoj Dixit is a professor in Faizabad University. Reports said the woman, identified as Arti Dixit (50) of sector F of Jankipuram, was struck soon after she reached the main road near her house around 6 am. "The miscreants were on a bike and pillion rider snatched my gold chain. I suffered rashes around my neck in the attack and fell down. Some morning walkers came for my rescue when I cried for help and comforted me. The miscreants had disappeared from the scene by then," she said. Police are scanning the CCTV's footages. Police said image of the suspects had been captured in the footage and a team was on the hunt job.

Jeweller shoots self dead

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ LUCKNOW

A newly-married jeweller shot himself dead at around 3.19 am on Saturday at his house in Kakori. Before committing suicide, he rang up his wife and expressed his love for her. Police said a suicide note was recovered from the scene. As per reports, Shubham Rastogi (27) of Sitapur was currently staying along with his wife Sonam, also of Sitapur, and his parents Kanchar and Sanjay Rastogi at a house on rent in Saitha Kheda locality of Kakori. He had a talk with his mother-in-law the previous night and thereafter he talked to his wife Sonam.

"Sonam told police over phone that Shubham had talked to her around 3.19 am and said he would end his life. Thereafter, the call was snapped and she called up her mother who informed the incident to the deceased's father," the SHO said. He said Sanjay, a landlord Kamlesh Yadav to see Shubham and he found him in a pool of blood. Kamlesh Yadav called police control room and, subsequently, a police team reached the scene for investigation. It surfaced that Shubham was married to Sonam only a month back. His parents Kanchar Rastogi and Sanjay Rastogi had gone to

the reason behind the suicide," he said. The kin of the deceased said Shubham had gone to bring back Sonam from her house in Sitapur but returned alone probably because Sonam refused to accompany him. "Thereafter Shubham's parents went to Sitapur to bring Sonam back and in the meantime he shot himself," they said.

Unidentified miscreants snatched a gold chain from a professor's wife in Jankipuram on Saturday morning when the victim was on a morning walk. Victim's husband Manoj Dixit is a professor in Faizabad University. Reports said the woman, identified as Arti Dixit (50) of sector F of Jankipuram, was struck soon after she reached the main road near her house around 6 am. "The miscreants were on a bike and pillion rider snatched my gold chain. I suffered rashes around my neck in the attack and fell down. Some morning walkers came for my rescue when I cried for help and comforted me. The miscreants had disappeared from the scene by then," she said. Police are scanning the CCTV's footages. Police said image of the suspects had been captured in the footage and a team was on the hunt job.

To Nigerians booked for fraud

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ LUCKNOW

Two Nigerians were arrested for defrauding a Lucknow woman doctor and a social worker of rupees to the tune of crore. They were arrested from Charbagh railway station on Friday. The woman had lodged a case with the Cyber police station in Lucknow. The operation was carried out by a joint team of Cyber police station, Special Task Force (STF) and a field unit of STF, Gautam Budh Nagar.

Those arrested were identified as Amra Chukbu Rana and Horviki, both staying in New Delhi at present. The team recovered a laptop, 7 mobile sets, Rs 1.41 lakh and a passbook and a cheque book. Both owned up their role.

The duo defrauded several innocent including the complainant of over Rs 70 crore.

The police said the woman got acquainted with Dr Steve George of England and a Cardiologist, a fake profile that the fraudsters had made on their Facebook account.

The fraudsters trapped the woman offering help in social work field. After having befriended, they demanded from the woman Rs 2.5 lakh saying their goods had been seized by custom officials at the airport and they had to pay the fine. "The woman was unmindful of their trick and she kept helping them financially and this way she paid rupees to the tune of crore in different bank accounts of the miscreants during the last four months," the police said.

The police said they got a tip-off about the miscreants' arrival in the city by train and

so they laid a trap at the railway station and nabbed them later. The miscreants said they had duped several persons. Explaining their modus operandi, the miscreants said they used to befriend the gullible and later used to tell

them that they had sent some gifts to them. They said they used to pretend that their goods had been caught by custom officials at airport in New Delhi and used to persuade them to help them out.

ON 16TH DEATH ANNIVERSARY OF SHRI ONKAR BAN



In loving memory of Shri ONKAR BAN. We miss you every day and you are in our hearts. Your presence is left around us and your thoughts are our source of inspiration. Loved and deeply missed by all family members Mrs Bina Ban (wife), Arupam, Pramod, Varsha (Children).

इंडियन बैंक
Indian Bank

Zonal Office, Legal Department, 2-B, Habibullah Estate, 11 Mahatma Gandhi Road, Hazratganj, Lucknow-226001
Tel. No. 0522-2622777, 2614020
Fax No.: 0522-2230804, E-mail id: zolucknow@indianbank.co.in

NOTICE OF INTENDED SALE
(Including for e-auction mode)

Notice of intended sale under Rule 6(2) & 8(6) of The Security Interest (Enforcement Rules) 2002 under The Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act 2002

SCHEDULE
The specific details of the assets, which are intended to be brought to sale, are enumerated hereunder:

Sl. No.	Name & Address of Account/Borrower / Guarantor / Mortgagee	Description of Immovable Property (All part & parcel of the property consisting of)	Date of Demand	Reserve Price	EMD	Date/Time of E-Auction	Prior Interest
1	Borrower/Mortgagee: (1) Mr. Bharat Kalra S/o Mr. Hemesh Kumar, H. No. B-175, Vivek Vihar, Delhi-110095. (2) Mrs. Nidhi Kalra W/o Mr. Bharat Kalra, H. No. B-175, Vivek Vihar, Delhi-110095. Mortgagee: Mr. Karunesh Kumar Shukla S/o Mr. Radha Krishna Shukla, M-57, Sanjay Gandhi Puram Faizabad, Lucknow-226016. Infrastructure Pvt. Ltd. Registered under the companies Act, 1956, having its registered office at M-57, Sanjay Gandhi Puram Faizabad, Lucknow-226016. Loan A/c No.: 644589804	All the part and parcel of Flat No. 109, Faizabad Road, (Area: 2125 Sq. Ft.) in ALLAHABAD AFTEK RESIDENCY Municipal No. 498/212 situated at Kharsa No. 83, 84, 85, 88 and part of 89 (Total area of land = 429.08 Sq. Mtr.) near railway crossing, 10/ Faizabad Road, Mahanagar, Lucknow. Boundaries of Flat: East: Flat No. 108, West: Open to Sky, North: Flat No. 110, South: Open to Sky. Boundaries of total Land: East: Anand Mohi parokh, West: Arzaji Ram Prasad Singh, North: Railway Line, South: House of Kashi Prasad and others.	31.08.2018 12.06.2019	₹ 81.13 Lacs	₹ 8.12 Lacs	19.07.2019 11.00 am. to 01.00 pm. (With unlimited extension of 5 minutes till sale is concluded in E-auction mode) https://indianbank.auctiontignr.net	NIL

Sub: Loan accounts of above Borrowers with Indian Bank, Lucknow Branch. Above mentioned Accounts/Borrowers availed facilities from Indian Bank, Lucknow Branch the repayment of which are secured by mortgage/hypothecation of schedule mentioned properties hereinafter referred to as "The Properties". Above mentioned Accounts/Borrowers failed to pay the outstanding dues, therefore a Demand Notice mentioned above dated under Sec 13 (2) of the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act 2002 (for short called as "The Act"), was issued by the Authorised Officer calling upon Above mentioned Accounts/Borrowers and others liable to the Bank to pay the amount due to the tune mentioned below with further interest, costs, other charges and expenses thereon. Above mentioned Accounts/Borrowers failed to make payment despite Demand Notice mentioned above. Above mentioned Accounts/Borrowers failed to make payment despite Demand Notice, the Authorised Officer took possession of the schedule mentioned properties under the Act on dated mentioned above after complying with all legal formalities. As per Sec. 13 (4) of the Act, Secured Creditor is entitled to effect sale of the assets taken possession of and realise the proceeds towards outstanding balance. In accordance with the same, the undersigned/Authorised Officer intend selling the schedule mentioned securities in the following mode: The sale proposed to be held by way of public tender/ auction adopting the e-auction mode. As per Rule 6(2) & 8(6) of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules 2002 framed under the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act 2002, notice of intended sale is required to be given and hence we are issuing this notice. The amount due as on mentioned above with further interest, costs, other charges and expenses thereon. Please take note that this is resale notice of 30 days and the schedule mentioned property shall be sold under the Act by the undersigned/Authorised Officer any time after 30 days.

The date of sale is fixed as 19.07.2019 which would be by e-auction mode.

The inspection of the Schedule mentioned property and related documents and upto date EC may be had by the intending purchasers/bidders at his expense on 10.07.2019 between 10.00 am to 05.00 pm.

The Reserve price and Earnest Money Deposit (EMD) for the sale of the secured assets is fixed as mentioned in the schedule.

The Tender/Bid Form with the terms and conditions can be had on-line from the website <https://indianbank.auctiontignr.net> and using the provision in the schedule mentioned above to accept or reject the bid /tender without assigning any reason whatsoever. The activities could be done online. The tender form and the terms and conditions would be available in the website from 13.06.2019 to 18.07.2019, from 10.00 am to 04.00 pm.

The last date for submitting tenders/bids complying with all necessary terms along with EMD in the stipulated manner is 18.07.2019 by 04.00 pm. The tenders/bids submitted after the stipulated time in DD / BPC/ RTGS / NEFT / Auction Transfer and / or any other acceptable mode of money transfer without time lag, failing which the tender becomes disqualified.

The Nodal Bank Account No./IFSC Code etc. for online money transfer is as under:

S.No.	Nodal Bank A/c No.	IFSC CODE
1	AC No. 612783725 in the name of E -AUCTION EMD ACCOUNT, LUCKNOW - ZONE	IDIB000L002

The sale shall be confirmed on the person making highest offer / tender / bid subject to confirmation by Secured Creditor. The undersigned/ Authorised Officer reserves the right to accept or reject the bid /tender without assigning any reason whatsoever. Once the e-auction is completed and sale is confirmed on the person making the highest offer / tender / bid, the successful bidder will be intimated in person / by email, as the case may be, who has to remit 25% of the amount of the sale price (which is inclusive of earnest money deposited) immediately (i.e. on the same or not later than next working day as the case may be) DD / BPC/ RTGS / NEFT / Auction Transfer and / or any other acceptable mode of money transfer, failing which the EMD amount remitted will stand to be forfeited. The balance sale price shall be paid within 15 days of confirmation of sale or extended time in writing. If the balance amount is not remitted within stipulated time, the amount of 25% remitted will be stand to be forfeited. The sale is subject to confirmation by the Secured Creditor. The sale is made on "As is where is and As is What is" basis and no representations and warranties are given by the Bank relating to encumbrances and other liabilities.

This Notice is without prejudice to any other remedy available to the Secured Creditor.

Bidders are advised to visit the website <https://indianbank.auctiontignr.net> for our e-auction service provider M/s. E-Procurement Technologies (India) Pvt. Ltd. for the details of the e-auction process. The details of the e-auction process are as follows: <https://indianbank.auctiontignr.net> to get assistance during the entire process, Land Line: 079-4023 0211/826/827/800/816 to 824, e-Mail id: up@auctiontignr.net, and support@auctiontignr.net (Branch No. 0522-2230998)

Date: 15.06.2019, Place: Lucknow

Authorised Officer, India Bank

A day dedicated to fathers!

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ LUCKNOW

Children mostly find their fathers adorable because a majority of them are indulgent and pamper their daughters and sons. Talking to *The Pioneer* on the eve of Father's Day, most of the youngsters as well as adults said they had made plans of celebrations with their fathers.

Kajal, who is preparing for civil services exam, said she had brought a card and gift for her father. "I understand that Father's Day is symbolic but interestingly, my father's birthday also falls on the same day. I would say that we share a sugar and salt relationship and we fight a lot but then I reach out to him in difficult times," she said.

Eight-year-old Swati is planning with her mother to share photographs on social media. Her mother Devyani said that Swati was very excited and insisted that they eat out in her father's favourite restaurant. Girls have a special bond with their father and fathers also like to pamper

A boy having a bike ride with his father on the eve of Father's Day

them," she added.

Forty-year-old Mamta, who is school teacher, said she missed her late father everyday but more on Father's Day. "Celebration of these days has just started but I remember my father who was my role model. A university teacher, he was always my guide and mentor. Today when I get caught in some problem, I miss him immensely," she said.

For Milind, who is studying medicine, his father was very particular about discipline. "We do not share the buddies kind of relationship but there are so many qualities of him which I appreciate. Though I detested so much discipline when I was in school, I now realise that it is essential for life and career," he said. Vikas Bansal, an engineer working with a private company, said he was friends with his father. "He discusses everything with me, included my girlfriends. There is a special treat which I have planned for him on Father's Day. We will go for a long drive and then I will cook for him," he added.

'35% caregivers never feel happy looking after elderly'

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE | LUCKNOW

That the elderly become a burden in most households is not new, but a recent survey revealed that 35 per cent of the caregivers — be it sons or daughters-in-law — "never" felt happy looking after the elderly. According to the report, "Elder Abuse in India: Role of Family in Caregiving: Challenges & Responses" by charitable organisation HelpAge India, released on the eve of World Elder Abuse Awareness Day on Friday, 29 per cent respondents admitted they would prefer that senior citizens in the family be put in old age homes. A quarter of the respondents also blamed fatigue and frustration for their aggression towards elders.

While 35 per cent of the caregivers never felt happy looking after the elderly, 25 per cent caregivers felt fatigue and frustration that resulted in aggressive behaviour towards the older members of the family. With a sample size of 2090 caregivers, mainly involving son, daughter-in-law, daughter, and son-in-law, the 20 city report identifies the top forms of abuse as disrespect, neglect and verbal abuse.

The report focuses on the generation aged 30 to 59 years, covering Tier 1 and 2 cities. What is amazing is that despite the abuse elders might face at home, at the hands of their adult children, they choose to remain within the family ambit. Their solution is always sensitive their children, their primary caregivers, and not move away from the family. AK Singh, director and head of HelpAge India (UP) said.

A total of 29 per cent caregivers in the family felt the 'burden of caregiving of an elder was Moderate to Severe', while 15 per cent said "Severe burden of caregiving".

Abuse in India: Role of Family in Caregiving: Challenges & Responses" by charitable organisation HelpAge India, released on the eve of World Elder Abuse Awareness Day on Friday, 29 per cent respondents admitted they would prefer that senior citizens in the family be put in old age homes. A quarter of the respondents also blamed fatigue and frustration for their aggression towards elders.

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Grandkids of great help

Lucknow (PNS): Over three-fourths of the caregivers reported that children assist their grandparents in performing daily activities such as overseeing correct dosage and timeliness of medication and it does not vary across genders. They also reported that the grandchildren keep the elderly abreast about world politics reading on newspapers, books — grandsons (24%) and granddaughters (19%).

The study covered 114 elderly dependents who are taken care of by one or more than one family member. More than half of the elderly dependents are females. Majority of the elderly dependents (63 per cent) were aged 61-70 years while 27 per cent 71-80 years and 10 per cent above 80 years. The elderly experience physical or functional limitations and consequently become dependent on others for performing tasks of daily living.

"We have examined different types of care extended by the caregivers in terms of activities of daily living, instrumental activities of daily living, other day-to-day activities and hospital visits," AK Singh said. "In these families, the children caregivers, as well as the grandchildren cater to their varied needs, thereby assisting the primary caregivers in sharing the responsibility. The study collected information on the list of day-to-day activities performed by the children for their grandparents, elderly dependents. Grandchildren do share responsibilities with the primary caregivers and irrespective of the gender, they perform these activities for the benefit of the elderly," he added.

Looking after the elderly as 78.1 per cent caregivers felt that no policy or measures were adopted by their employers to help them ease the burden of caregiving regarding elderly at home, it noted.

"It is therefore important to look into space of the caregiver. To understand the burden of elder care and the challenges faced by them. For only if we are able to understand the issues, we can also empower and encourage them to look after their elderly parents," Singh said.

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CITY BRIEFS



Divisional Commissioner Anil Kumar Garg presiding over a meeting on Saturday

MEETING Divisional Commissioner Anil Kumar Garg presided over a meeting of Road Safety Divisional Committee on Saturday. The meeting was attended by senior officials from various government departments. He said the spots where maximum accidents occur need to be identified and remedial measures taken. He said help should also be extended to families in case of hit-and-run cases. The Divisional Commissioner said Lucknow Municipal Corporation, police, Transport department and autorickshaw associations identifying the points should submit the report in 15 days. He also directed the officials to find out the spots where traffic snails are maximum and come up with a strategy to resolve the problem. Garg said that Road Safety Week would be organised from June 17 to 22 and would be supported by all the departments associated with road safety. A workshop will also be organised which will witness the participation of all stakeholders. He said health camps would also be organised for drivers of heavy vehicles with the help of PHCs and CHCs.

SEMINAR Shri PG College, along with Guide Kalyan Samiti, organised a seminar on International Elderly Abuse Awareness Day on Saturday. The agony and troubles faced by senior citizens in their own families was the core topic of discussion. Governor Ram Naik was the chief guest who shared his life experience and motivated the youth to keep going ahead, irrespective of the odds faced by them. He spoke on the present condition of elderly people in their own families and encouraged the youngsters to fulfill their duties.

PHOTOGRAPHY CONTEST India Post is inviting entries for a photography competition as a part of Independence Day celebrations on Gandhian Heritage in Modern India. Director of Postal Services Krishna Kumar Yadav said deadline for the entries was June 30. Yadav said that Rs 50,000, Rs 25,000 and 10,000 would be given away to the winner, first runner-up and second runner-up respectively. Five consolation prizes of Rs 5,000 will also be awarded on August 15.

CISV YOUTH MEETING City Montessori School is hosting 8-day international CISV youth meeting called 'Let's Work it Out' from June 24 to July 1. Student delegations from Brazil, Czech Republic, Indonesia, Spain and India, along with their leaders, are arriving at Lucknow to participate in the meeting. A total of 30 students from India and abroad will be participating in the meeting.



Governor Ram Naik at a programme at Shri PG College

Dudhwa National Park closes for tourists

Lakhimpur Kheri: The Dudhwa National Park (DNP), which is famous for tigers and swamp deer, closed for tourists on Saturday evening. Tourists are allowed inside the Dudhwa Tiger Reserve (DTR) from November 15 to June 15 every year. The 1,000-hectare DNP, which includes Dudhwa National Park, Kishanpur wildlife sanctuary and

Katarniaghat sanctuary, is closed in view of the monsoon season and tourism activities are suspended. Field Director Ramesh Kumar Pandey said. During monsoon, most parts of the reserve are inundated. According to official figures, 29,661 Indian and 287 foreign tourists had visited park by March end.

Pandey said this year in January, the first-ever winter bird count was held in Dudhwa, during which five new species were reported in the park. It was followed by a summer bird count during which the black-breasted bulbul was spotted after decades.

He said that in this season phase two of a rhino rehabilitation programme at Bhadi Tal was introduced, but tourists were not allowed to visit the area. Ten more elephants must be introduced in the park's domestic fleet of tuskers, the official added. "After the close of tourist season on June 15, Operation Monsoon would be launched in DTR during which special arrangements would be made for patrolling even in sensitive areas," Pandey said.

Underground fire in UP forest triggers panic

Lakhimpur Kheri: An underground fire in Mohammad range forests of Uttar Pradesh led scores of neighbouring villagers panicked and puzzled. Smoke was seen gushing out through the cracks in the ground and at some places land had turned into embers, said residents of Bela Pahara and Mudda Galib villages in South Kheri forest division. 72-year-old Hukum Singh of Mudda Galib said he has never been witness to such a scene. He feared that the fire may damage his crops.

Another villager, Bhaji Lal (75), termed the scene as a natural miracle, which he had never heard of or seen earlier. Some villagers also mistook it as a volcanic incident. Soon after the incident was reported, officials rushed to the spot. "The incident is a natural phenomenon in which fire broke out in underground humus layer," Vikas Dubey, Tehsildar of Mohammad, told PTL. "The land where the underground fire incident took place has been lying barren for several decades and dry leaves, twigs and branches from nearby jungles accumulated there and formed the underground humus layer," he said. He also spoke to local villagers who said that a few days back, they had burnt fire on the land. He said "the

overground fire was put out but it unknowingly caught the humus layer which resulted in smoke emission from the cracks".

Divisional Forest Officer of South Kheri, Sameer Kumar, said, "Forest officials were rushed to dig up trenches around the affected land to prevent its spread of the fire to the nearby forest." Turning it 'swamp pit fire', field director Dudhwa Ramesh Kumar Pandey said, "Swampy lands often develop underground holes in which organic matters accumulated and scorching heat sometimes result in such underground fire."

Woman kills daughter, self in Muzaffarnagar

Muzaffarnagar: A 35-year-old woman alleged to have killed her daughter to death before committing suicide at Nara village under Manspur Police Station in the district on Saturday, police said. Minu, wife of Sushil Kumar, poisoned her seven-year-old daughter and later consumed poison herself over a family dispute, officials said. The police said that the bodies were sent for the post-mortem.

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

HELP MAKE INDIA \$5TN ECONOMY. He said that the newly created Jal Shakti Ministry will help provide an integrated approach to water and States can also integrate various efforts towards water conservation and management. Modi has written a personal letter to Gram Pradhans (village chiefs) requesting them to conserve rainwater during the forthcoming monsoon to handle water crisis in rural areas. The letters, signed by the PM, have been delivered to the pradhans through respective District Magistrates and Collectors in the districts.

At present, 42 per cent areas in the country are facing drought situation. The PM has also suggested construction of check dams and ponds where proper harvesting of rainwater can be done. Water crisis is one of the main agendas of the meeting. He also came on the back of NITI Aayog's warning that 21 cities of India, including Bangalore and national capital Delhi, will run out of ground water by 2020.

Modi has urged the States to focus on collective responsibility for achieving short-term and long-term goals. **GOVT ASKS STATES...** Modi also cited a letter dated July 7, 2017 sent by the Union Health Ministry to all Chief Secretaries of States which contains the decision taken by an inter-Ministerial Committee constituted by the Ministry to review the issues raised by IMA. The move comes after the Indian Medical Association (IMA) launched a four-day nationwide protest from Friday and wrote to Union Home Minister Amit Shah demanding enactment of a Central law to check violence against healthcare workers in hospitals. The apex doctors' body has called for a nationwide strike on June 17 with withdrawal of non-essential health services. Representatives from the IMA and the Delhi Medical Association (DMA) conferred on Vardhan on Saturday.

उत्तर प्रदेश चार... इति-अप्रकालीन निवारा संस्था... निवारा संस्था इ.डी. 59/वि.प्र. 2019-20... इति-अप्रकालीन निवारा संस्था इ.डी. 60/वि.प्र. 2019-20... इति-अप्रकालीन निवारा संस्था इ.डी. 61/वि.प्र. 2019-20... इति-अप्रकालीन निवारा संस्था इ.डी. 62/वि.प्र. 2019-20... इति-अप्रकालीन निवारा संस्था इ.डी. 63/वि.प्र. 2019-20... इति-अप्रकालीन निवारा संस्था इ.डी. 64/वि.प्र. 2019-20... इति-अप्रकालीन निवारा संस्था इ.डी. 65/वि.प्र. 2019-20... इति-अप्रकालीन निवारा संस्था इ.डी. 66/वि.प्र. 2019-20... इति-अप्रकालीन निवारा संस्था इ.डी. 67/वि.प्र. 2019-20... इति-अप्रकालीन निवारा संस्था इ.डी. 68/वि.प्र. 2019-20... इति-अप्रकालीन निवारा संस्था इ.डी. 69/वि.प्र. 2019-20... इति-अप्रकालीन निवारा संस्था इ.डी. 70/वि.प्र. 2019-20... इति-अप्रकालीन निवारा संस्था इ.डी. 71/वि.प्र. 2019-20... इति-अप्रकालीन निवारा संस्था इ.डी. 72/वि.प्र. 2019-20... इति-अप्रकालीन निवारा संस्था इ.डी. 73/वि.प्र. 2019-20... इति-अप्रकालीन निवारा संस्था इ.डी. 74/वि.प्र. 2019-20... इति-अप्रकालीन निवारा संस्था इ.डी. 75/वि.प्र. 2019-20... 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Mammoth briefs Cong CMs ahead of Niti Aayog meeting

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Former Prime Minister Manmohan Singh on Saturday held a meeting with the Chief Ministers of States ruled by the Congress and allied parties ahead of the crucial Niti Aayog meeting. They discussed the proposed agenda of the Niti Aayog and issues of the Congress and its allies governed States.

Congress leaders — Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister Kamal Nath, Rajasthan Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot, Karnataka Chief Minister HD Kumaraswamy and Puducherry Chief Minister V. Narayansamy and Chhattisgarh CM Bhupesh Baghel — attended the meeting at the All India Congress Committee (AICC) headquarters.

Among the issues discussed were injecting life back in water bodies, fresh efforts needed from the Centre in the agricultural sector and amendment in the Forest Act to bring about change and prosperity in the lives of the tribals.

Kamal Nath said at the AICC that all the Chief Ministers were briefed by Manmohan Singh. He said that the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) figures are out and the Government should suggest



Former PM Manmohan Singh with Madhya Pradesh CM Kamal Nath, Rajasthan CM Ashok Gehlot, Karnataka CM HD Kumaraswamy and Puducherry CM V Narayansamy during a meeting at AICC on Saturday

measures in view of the grave economic situation. Kamal Nath also said that the severe drought conditions are prevailing in large parts of the country, rivers have dried up and so contingency measures are needed. The CM said agricultural distress also needs to be addressed urgently, adding that all these issues will be taken up during the Governing Council meeting.

The fifth meeting of the Niti Aayog's Governing Council focused on issues like the drought situation, farm distress, rain water harvesting and preparedness for kharif crops. It was the first meeting of the governing council of Niti Aayog since the formation of the Modi 2.0 Government.

Earlier in the day, Baghel, Kumaraswamy and Narayansamy also separately called on the Prime Minister Narendra Modi. On Friday, Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister Nath had hosted a dinner at his residence where Gehlot, Baghel and Narayansamy were present.

The five-point agenda for the meeting also includes aspirational districts programme, transforming agriculture, drought and security related issues with special focus on left wing extremism (LWE) districts, an official statement said.

CM Rupani meets Union Agriculture Minister, discusses farmers' issues

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Gujarat Chief Minister Vijay Rupani on Saturday called on Union Agriculture Minister Narendra Singh Tomar to discuss issues relating to farmers' welfare such as the Kisan Kalyan Nidhi Yojana and Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana.

A delegation led by Rupani, Gujarat Agriculture Minister R C Faldut, Chief Secretary P Singh, Chief Secretary to CM K Kaishashnath, Additional Chief Secretary (Agri) Sanjay Prasad and officers of the agriculture department met Tomar.

The discussion also focused on measures being jointly undertaken by the Union and State Governments to increase agriculture productivity to improve farmer income as well as on strengthening measures for farmer welfare.



Gujarat Chief Minister Vijay Rupani with Union Agriculture Minister Narendra Singh Tomar

Thiruvananthapuram airport's privatisation: Pinarayi meets PM

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Kerala Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan on Saturday called on Prime Minister Narendra Modi and cited the State's reservation on the privatisation of Thiruvananthapuram international airport.

During the brief meeting, attended by State PWD Minister G Sudhakaran and Chief Secretary Tom Jose, Vijayan submitted a memorandum citing various demands including further aid for rebuilding the flood-hit State.

Official sources said the Chief Minister requested the Centre to retain the airport in the public sector and not to hand over its management to any private company.

Kerala's concern over its reported exclusion from the priority list of the national highway development and the need to get more central assistance



Prime Minister Narendra Modi with Chief Minister of Kerala Pinarayi Vijayan during a meeting in New Delhi on Saturday

for various projects also figured in the discussion, which lasted for around 15 minutes, they added.

The Adani group had, in February, won the bid to operate five out of six airports, including the one at Thiruvananthapuram, proposed for privatisation by the Central Government.

The State Government had earlier appealed to the Centre to reconsider its decision to lease out Thiruvananthapuram aerodrome for operation, management and development under the public-private partnership (PPP).

Without the co-operation of the State Government, no private company can develop

the airport properly," Vijayan told the state Assembly earlier this week.

In a letter to the prime minister in March, Vijayan had demanded that the airport's operation be handed over to the Thiruvananthapuram International Airport Ltd (TIAL) floated by the government-run Kerala

State Industrial Development Corporation (KSIDC).

The airport was established in 1922 on 258.06 acres of land owned by the princely state of Travancore, of which the state is the successor. The 258.06 acres of land had been entered into the revenue records as Government land.

Impasse over RaGa resignation holding Cong back

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The deadlock over the resignation of Rahul Gandhi as the Congress president following the Lok Sabha debacle is affecting the day-to-day functioning of the grand old party.

In the last few days, all the important notifications, which were earlier issued by the approval of the Congress president, are being released stating "by the approval of AICC".

On Friday, the notification regarding the appointment of MLAs and MLCs to the Maharashtra Legislative Assembly was approved by the AICC and marked to party General Secretary in-charge of State

Secretary Kharge and State Unit Chief Ashok Chauhan.

All the orders which were issued within the jurisdiction of the party chief are now being



Rahul Gandhi

Antony, a trusted man for the Gandhi family, has cited health issues as a reason for not taking up the job

Senior party leaders Ahmed Patel and Ghulam Nabi Azad, who have been tasked to look for a face outside the Gandhi family to lead the party, had asked Antony to take up the job.

Antony informed Patel and Azad that he has full respect for the Gandhi family but could not accept the post.

AICC sources said that in the given circumstances, AICC General Secretary K C Venugopal too has declined to

accept the post of Working President offered to him citing his other role of strengthening the party.

Senior leaders are in tizzy as UPA Chairperson Sonia Gandhi and daughter and General Secretary AICC Priyanka Gandhi have spoken their minds at a rally in Rae Bareilly recently against the party's system which led to the crumbling in the last two General Elections.

The search for the new leader was initiated after Rahul Gandhi decided to resign from the party's top post, following the dismal performance in the recently-held general elections. Although the Congress Working Committee, the party's highest decision-making body, had rejected Rahul's resignation, he has remained steadfast on giving up the post.

Govt needs to draft new Naxal policy: Cong

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Congress on Saturday sought the Government to draft a new Naxal policy to deal with left-wing extremism (LWE) in the backdrop of the recent attack on a police team in Jharkhand.

Dr Manmohan Singh as Prime Minister of the Congress-led government at the Centre had time and again described the LWE as one of the biggest threats to the National Security even though incidents linked to Maoist violence did not see a let-up in 10 years of UPA regime.

Condemning the attack in the Seraikela-Kharsawan area near the Jharkhand-Bengal border on Friday in which five police personnel were killed in an ambush by Maoists, Congress spokesperson

Randeep Surjewala Surjewala said the act was highly condemnable.

"The cowardly face of Naxalism has been spreading in Jharkhand. The government of this country needs to draft fresh its policy to deal with naxalism," he tweeted.

Two assistant sub-inspectors and three constables came under attack while patrolling the Tirulidhi police station area of the district.

The LWE in several states including Chhattisgarh, Telangana, Andhra Pradesh, Odisha and Maharashtra had kept the police and para-military forces on their toes and even though many top Naxal leaders have been eliminated in the past and several others surrendered themselves before the authorities, the strikes from the underground groups

have continued to take many a lives of police and para-military personnel.

From 2005 to 2011, Congress had experimented with 'Salwa Judum' (peace march or purification hunt) which involved countering Maoists by providing armed training to tribals. The so-called experiment carried out by Congress leader Mahendra Karma later turned highly controversial with alleged forcible evacuation of tribals from the land and their shift to armed camps.

Human rights group criticized the 'Salwa Judum' has turned poor tribals more vulnerable to Maoist attacks rather securing them. Subsequently, the 'Salwa Judum' was declared illegal by the Supreme Court. Karma himself got killed in a Maoist

attack in 2013.

There has not been a marked change in Modi-government's policy towards LWE with the former also seeing LWE as one of the biggest challenges to the National Security and insisting on 'zero tolerance' against it.

Development work across the LWE-infested lands has not made speedy progress as Maoist repeatedly thwart it by perpetuating violence and try foiling the government attempts to bring tribals into the 'mainstream'. The corruption in developmental projects initiated by the central and state governments and alleged 'extortion racket' by LWE groups have further complicated the scenario which gets time and again alive with the burst of gun from both sides.

By-elections to six vacant Rajya Sabha seats on July 5

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The by-elections to six vacant Rajya Sabha seats from Bihar, Odisha and Gujarat will be held on July 5, the Election Commission said on Saturday.

Six senior leaders from the Rajya Sabha, including Amit Shah, Ravi Shankar Prasad and Smriti Irani have moved to the Lok Sabha with their recent election to the lower house, thus necessitating election for the said seats for the Upper house.

Irani's seat is the second from Gujarat apart from Amit Shah's which needs to be filled. Irani had defeated Congress president Rahul Gandhi from Amethi.

Of the six seats, two are from Gujarat, one from Bihar (Prasad) and three from Odisha - Achyutananda Samanta, Pratap Keshari Deb and Soumya Ranjan Patnaik (all from Biju Janta Dal). Congress had demanded

that election to the two seats of RS from Gujarat be conducted on the same time as resignations of the two BJP leaders from the Upper House on different dates sought to create conditions that election to the two seats are conducted on different dates thereby giving an advantage to the ruling BJP there.

Congress spokesperson Abhishek Manu Singhvi, at a press conference on June 13, said they came to know that there could be a bid to hold elections for the two seats separately. The party will approach the Election Commission EC with its demand of holding elections for the two Rajya Sabha seats in Gujarat together, he said. Singhvi pointed out that simultaneous voting can bring one of the two Rajya Sabha seats to Congress. He alluded without naming the party that election to the two seats on different dates could help BJP pocket both the seats.

J&K Bank now under RTI, CVC

Srinagar: The Jammu & Kashmir Bank will now come under the purview of Right to Information Act and Central Vigilance Commission (CVC) guidelines as an official spokesman said on Saturday.

He said the decision was taken by the Board of Directors of the Jammu & Kashmir Bank. The move will ensure greater transparency and accountability, the spokesman said.

J&K Bank Board of Directors today (Saturday) decided to bring the bank under the purview of CVC guidelines & J&K RTI Act-2009 to ensure greater transparency & accountability," he said.

On June 11, Chief Secretary B V R Subrahmanyam had said the bank has no choice but to be under RTI as it is a government-owned bank.

"It is registered under the companies act as a government company. By the end of June, the bank will be brought under the RTI and CVC guidelines," he said.

The decision comes days after Parvez Ahmed was removed as the Chairman of the J&K Bank for alleged corruption, nepotism and favouritism.

Wayu likely to hit Gujarat coast on Monday: IMD

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The India Meteorological Department (IMD) on Saturday said that cyclonic storm 'Wayu', which has weakened, is likely to reach coastal Saurashtra and Kutch in Gujarat as a depression by Monday evening. In its latest update, the IMD said that 'Wayu' was spotted at 355 kms west-southwest of Porbandar coast, 380 kms west Veraval and 470 kms west of Diu.

The Met said that the cyclone is likely to be accompanied by strong winds speed of the order of 40 to 50 kmph gusting to 60 kmph off Gujarat coast. "The system is very likely to move westwards during next 24 to 36 hours with gradual weakening and recurve northwards thereafter and reach coastal Saurashtra and Kutch as a depression by the



Evening of June 17," it further said. The sea conditions are likely to remain rough till June 17.

In a fresh warning, the IMD said that a fresh warning to fishermen not to venture into the Arabian sea and along the coast of Gujarat as Cyclone Wayu storms over the northeast and adjoining east-central Arabian Sea. The IMD said that the impact of Wayu had led to heavy to very heavy rainfall in isolated places in Saurashtra,

make landfall on Thursday near the Gujarat coast, changed course on the intervening night of Wednesday and Thursday. It skirted the Gujarat coast affecting Gir, Somnath, Diu, Junagarh and Porbandar. On Friday, the Ministry of Earth Sciences has stated that Wayu is likely to recurve and come close to Gujarat coast.

Earlier, the cyclone, while not making landfall in Gujarat, brought moderate-to-heavy rains to 114 tehsils, the highest rainfall of 6.5 inches (160mm) being recorded in Talala tehsil of Gir-Somnath district since Thursday, a Met department release said.

The development comes a day after Gujarat Chief Minister Vijay Rupani declared that the "danger over the state has ended." However, the cyclone recurved coming close to the Indian coast.

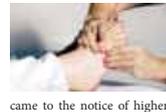


Indian Air Force cadets march during their graduation parade at the Air Force Academy in Dundi on the outskirts of Hyderabad on Saturday

Western Railway withdraws proposal for head, foot massages on trains

New Delhi/Mumbai: Mumbai-headquartered Western Railway on Saturday said it had withdrawn a proposal to provide foot and head massages to passengers on board 39 trains originating from Indore in Madhya Pradesh.

Indore is part of Ratlam division of Western Railway. In a press release issued here, WR Chief Spokesperson Ravinder Bhakar said, "The proposal for introduction of head and/or foot massage services to be provided in the trains originating from Indore station was initiated by Ratlam Division of Western Railway." "As soon as this proposal



the proposal. "What arrangements will be made to provide this facility given that the service would throw up some questions regarding the safety and comfort of passengers, especially that of women passengers," Mahajan had asked.

On June 10, Lalwani had written a letter to the Railway Ministry on the issue, saying it would not be appropriate to provide massage to passengers on board, especially in the presence of women.

"Is providing these kind of services in front of women in accordance with the principles of Indian culture? Providing

passengers medical aid, doctors are important for the railways not these standardised services in my opinion," Lalwani had written.

After Lalwani's letter, Ratlam Railway Divisional Manager R N Sunkar had clarified that the service would not include a 'full body massage' but only head and foot massages.

The railways will ensure that the facility will not make passengers feel uncomfortable, he had claimed. According to railway officials, the proposal was part of an initiative to garner revenue from non-fare segments. PTI

Fadnavis Cabinet expansion today

• To induct 8-10 new Ministers • Erstwhile Cong leader, LoP Vikhe-Patil, Ex-NCP leader Kshirsagar set to join Cabinet • CM may drop tainted HSG Min Prakash Mehta from Cabinet

By TN RAGHUNATHA ■ MUMBAI

At the head of the Monsoon Session of the Maharashtra Legislature beginning on Monday, Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis will expand his Ministry on Sunday by inducting "eight to ten" new Ministers, including most probably the erstwhile senior Congress leader and leader of the Opposition Radhakrishna Vikhe-Patil and erstwhile NCP leader and now a Shiv Sena leader Jaydutta Kshirsagar, into his Cabinet.

Among other things, Fadnavis may drop from his Cabinet State Housing Minister Prakash Mehta of the BJP who is facing allegations of irregularities in the permissions given by a slum rehabilitation authority (SRA) project at MP Mills compound at Tardeo in south Mumbai. Lokayukta M L

Tahalyani, who looked into the allegations against the minister, has reportedly passed strictures against Mehta.

Sunday's expansion, which has been scheduled at 11 am at Raj Bhavan on Sunday, will be the last Cabinet restructuring that Fadnavis will undertake ahead of the State Assembly polls to be held in October this year.

Following the exit of State Food, Civil Supplies and Legislative affairs minister who resigned last week from the State Cabinet in the wake of his election to the Lok Sabha, the number of vacancies in the State Cabinet has gone up to seven.

The current strength of the Maharashtra Cabinet is 36, seven short of the stipulated 43 Ministers — a number that accounts for 15 per cent of 288 members in the State Assembly. Fadnavis may drop from his Cabinet at least three ministers,



including Mehta, taking the number of vacancies to be filled to 10. Fadnavis, who is expanding the State Cabinet after a gap of three years, may accommodate in his Cabinet "two or three" MLAs from the Shiv Sena, which is a constituent of the BJP-led saffron alliance Government.

Informed sources in the BJP said that Radhakrishna Vikhe-Patil, whose son Sujay quit the Congress in March this year and won the Lok Sabha polls by a margin of 2.81 lakh votes from Ahmednagar constituency on a BJP ticket, would join the Devendra Fadnavis Cabinet in Sunday's Cabinet expansion.

Similarly, influential leader from Marathwada region Jaydutta Kshirsagar who quit the NCP and joined the ruling Shiv Sena on May 22, will be

inducted into the State Cabinet.

Three other names as contenders for ministerial berths are BJP's Mumbai unit president Ashish Shelar, Atul Save and Anil Bonde, both from the BJP, and Avinash Mahatekar of the NPI (Akhilave).

Fadnavis has met BJP's national president and Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Thursday to seek clearance for his Cabinet expansion scheduled for Sunday.

Fadnavis had earlier expanded his Cabinet on July 8, 2016, by inducting 10 more ministers and promoting one existing Minister to Cabinet rank.

FIR registered against Srinagar Dy Mayor

PNS ■ JAMMU

Cracking its whip Anti-Corruption Bureau (ACB) on Saturday registered a case against deputy Mayor Srinagar Municipal Corporation, senior officers of J&K Bank and few Government officials for illegal appropriation of subsidy with inflated project cost for establishment of CA storage at Lassipora, Pulwama.

According to the statement issued by the spokesman of Anti Corruption Bureau, "a case FIR No. 3/2019 under section 5(1)(d) PC Act Samvat 2006, punishable u/S 2) of the Act r/w 420 & 120-B RPC has been registered in Police Station Anti Corruption Bureau, South Kashmir (Anantnag) against Shiekh Imran Director M/S Kehwa Square Pvt. Ltd, BohriKadal Srinagar, officers of J&K Bank and other govt officials, for illegal appropriation of subsidy with inflated project cost for establishment of CA storage at Lassipora, Pulwama".

Earlier, IT raids were conducted on the premises of Sheikh Imran on June 11 and several files pertaining to investments were seized.

Trade unions seek ₹6K minimum pension, ₹20K minimum wages

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Representatives of trade union on Saturday pressed the government to raise the minimum wage to ₹20,000, provide 200 days of assured work under the rural employment guarantee scheme and ensure minimum monthly pension of ₹6,000. The unions during a pre-budget meeting also demanded hiking slabs for exemption of income tax for salaried persons and pensioners to ₹10 lakh per year. They asked for ₹8 lakh income tax slab for senior citizens and exemption of all perks and fringe benefits like housing, medical and education facilities and running allowances from income tax.

Besides, the representatives of around a dozen central trade unions expressed their reservation

against the privatisation and divestment in profit-making public sector undertakings and stressed on increasing investment for job creation in the pre-budget meeting with Minister of State for Finance & Corporate Affairs Anurag Thakur.

After the meeting, some of trade union leaders also expressed their unhappiness over the absence of Finance Minister Nirmla Sitharaman in the meeting. Thakur chaired the meeting as Sitharaman had to attend the NITI Aayog's Governing Council meeting held around the same time. She stressed that the government needs to make investments for creating jobs and stop divesting and privatising public sector undertakings as well as the implementation of fixed-term employment announced in the last budget.

Inclement weather hampers op to retrieve bodies of IAF aircraft crash victims

PTI ■ ITANAGAR

Inclement weather on Saturday hampered rescue efforts to retrieve the mortal remains of 13 air-warriors who were on board the Indian Air Force aircraft that crashed in the mountains of Arunachal Pradesh, an IAF spokesman said.

Shillong-based IAF spokesman Ratanakar Singh said the rescue operation, which commenced early Saturday morning, could not progress further due to inclement weather at the crash site.

Cheetah and ALH helicopters are on standby and are waiting to commence operations once the weather improves. At present there are low clouds accompanied with rain in the area, the spokesman said in a statement.

The IAF is making all efforts to retrieve the mortal remains of the deceased air-warriors. IAF personnel are in constant contact with the families of these air-warriors and they are being updated regularly about the ongoing rescue operations. They are also being explained the challenges being faced by the rescue team, he added.

The rescue team on Friday recovered the cockpit voice recorder (CVR) and flight data recorder (FDR) of the Russian-origin AN-32 aircraft.

The aircraft was going from Jorhat in Assam to Mechuka advanced landing ground in Shi-Yomi district in Arunachal Pradesh, near the border with China, on June 3 when it lost contact around half-an-hour after taking off. The wreckage of the plane was spotted by an IAF chopper on Tuesday at a height of 12,000 ft near Gatte village on the border of Siang and Shi-Yomi districts, after eight days of a massive search operation involving a fleet of aircraft and choppers as well as ground



In this photo released by IAF, is seen the crash site of IAF AN-32 carrier aircraft. A 15-member team of forces. A rescue team of 15-member team of rescuers were sent to look for survivors in the accident site on Wednesday and eight of them reached the place on Thursday morning.

BJP demands CBI probe into financial fraud

PTI ■ BENGALURU

The Karnataka BJP on Friday demanded a CBI probe into the alleged financial fraud perpetrated by an investment firm here, leaving thousands of investors in the lurch. The owner of city-based IMA Jewels, Mohammed Mansoor Khan, had disappeared few days ago after allegedly threatening to commit suicide while police have formed teams to trace him.

State BJP chief BS Yeddyurappa put forth the demand for a probe by the central agency after a group of people belonging to the minority community, most of them investors in IMA Jewels, met him and submitted a petition. Yeddyurappa assured them that BJP MPs from Karnataka would ensure the central government's intervention and steps to ensure the Enforcement Directorate probe into the case.

"We (BJP) feel that it is our responsibility to ensure that innocents who have lost their money get it back," Yeddyurappa was quoted as saying by BJP in a release. Only a CBI inquiry can ensure justice to the affected investors, he said, as he held the state government responsible for the "injustice" to the IMA investors. The BJP leader also promised those who met him that the Centre would take all steps to find out the whereabouts of IMA Jewels owner Mohammed Mansoor Khan. Earlier, speaking to reporters, Yeddyurappa raised questions about minority welfare minister BZ Zameer Ahmed Khan's alleged links with Mohammed Mansoor Khan. "While asking him (Mansoor) to come back, Zameer, who is a Minister, has said that government is with you (Mansoor), don't fear - what does this mean? Chief Minister has to answer this," he said.



A car set ablaze reportedly by Kashi Hindu University students on the premises in Varanasi on Saturday.

4 youths who wanted to cross LoC to join militancy arrested

Srinagar: Four youths, who wanted to cross the Line of Control (LoC) to join militant ranks, were taken into custody in Uri sector of Jammu & Kashmir and later handed over to their families, the Army said on Saturday.

Addressing a Press conference in north Kashmir's Baramulla district, Commander 79 Mount Brigade

Girish Kalra said the youths were taken into custody by the Army near the LoC on Friday and were handed over to their respective families on Saturday.

He said the Army had received information that they were going to join the path of violence after being "misguided" by local militants and their accomplices. "We acted swiftly to pre-

vent them from choosing the wrong path and apprehended them along the LoC in Limber area of Boniyar on Friday," he said.

The Army officer said the youths were handed over to their respective families after proper counselling. He appealed to the youths to not get misguided by the propaganda of militants. PTI

Will go into AN-32 crash, ensure such incidents don't reoccur: IAF chief

Hyderabad: The Indian Air Force would ascertain the cause of the recent crash of an AN-32 aircraft in Arunachal Pradesh and take steps to ensure that such incidents do not recur, IAF chief BS Dhanoa said on Saturday.

His comments came days after the wreckage of the aircraft was found in a remote area in Arunachal Pradesh, more than a week after it went missing with 13 people on board.

"We have recovered the flight data recorder and the cockpit voice recorder... We will go into the detail (to ascertain) as to what happened and how do we make sure that it does not happen again," he told reporters on the sidelines of the Combined Graduation Parade at the Air Force Academy in Dundigal near here.

"In Arunachal Pradesh, the way we fly, the terrain is very treacherous and most of the time, it is cloudy... When you are flying in that terrain, in that cloudy weather, there have been many, many, not only Air Force, even otherwise, Pawan Hans and all, lot of accidents, because of controlled flight into terrain," he claimed.

Noting that there were procedures to make sure such accidents do not recur, he said, "Need to review what happened and we don't have such an accident again." PTI

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BALGANGA IRRIGATION PROJECT

Maha to move tribunal to stop ₹287-crore loss to exchequer

By TN RAGHUNATHA ■ MUMBAI

Facing the prospect of paying a sum of ₹ 287 crore to a private contractor and getting quashed its crucial resolution of terminating the Balganga construction contract, the Maharashtra Government will belatedly file an appeal before Raigad district court on Monday, challenging the ruling given by a Bombay High court-appointed Arbitration Tribunal in favour of a private firm.

The BJP-led Maharashtra government, which has come under severe flak for its failure to appear before the high court-appointed Arbitration Tribunal hearing a payment-related dispute, has delayed inordinately in moving the Tribunal in appeal against the tribunal's order passed in April awarding ₹ 287 crore for the State Water Resources department's "deliberate" failure to appear at the hearing before the tribunal.

The tribunal had set a 90-day deadline for the state government to file an appeal against its order. "It is shocking that the Maharashtra government has not bothered to move the Arbitration tribunal even 70 days after the tribunal passed an order against it. It is only after I obtained the tribunal's order through an RTI query and shot off a letter to State Chief Secretary Ajoy Mehta that the State Water Resources department has woken up and is moving the tribunal in appeal on Monday," RTI activist Pravin Wategaonkar said.

"My information is that the State Principal Secretary, Water Resources Department, deliberately absented himself from



The tribunal's hearing in the payment related matter. This prompted the tribunal to pass an order against the State government," Wategaonkar said. While awarding ₹ 287 crore to private firm M/s FA Construction for the state water department's failure before it during the hearing, the Arbitration Tribunal - headed by retired high court judge V G Palshikar - had on April 6 quashed the State government resolution dated September 23, 2016 terminating the construction awarded to M/S FA Construction for the construction of Balganga dam in Raigad district.

"Despite service of notice, the State government has chosen not to appear in the present proceedings. In the circumstances, we have no hesitation in holding that both, the CR dt. 23.06.2016, and the Notice dt. 28.10.2016 (by KIDC), suffer from the vice of non-applica-

'In dock' water resources dept to contest quashing of GR terminating construction contract

large-scale irregularities surfaced in them. On August 24, 2016, the State Anti Corruption Bureau had registered the first FIR in the irrigation scam, booking 11 people in connection with alleged irregularities in awarding the contract for Balganga dam to FA Enterprises.

The names of former deputy chief minister and NCP leader Ajit Pawar and former Water Resources Minister Sunil Tatkar - also of the NCP - are being investigated for alleged irregularities in 12 major irrigation projects undertaken during the previous Congress-NCP regime.

The multi-thousand irrigation scam, it may be recalled, had come to light in September 2012. Ajitdada had resigned from the deputy chief minister's post on September 25, 2012, attributing his decision to the media reports on the alleged irregularities in the awarding of 38 irrigation contracts worth Rs 20,000 crore in Vidarbha region during 2009, without seeking the mandatory clearance from the governing council of the Vidarbha Irrigation Development Corporation (VIDC).

Ajitdada was the State Irrigation Minister between 1999 and 2010, before he was elevated as the deputy chief minister and handed the portfolios of Finance and Energy. The irrigation scam had allegedly taken place during his tenure as the State Irrigation Minister. After Ajitdada took over as the deputy chief minister, Tatkar assumed charge as the Irrigation (Water Resources) Minister.

No water to fall back on for farmers in Ujani's backwater area

PTI ■ PUNE

Narayan Lawand, a 45-year-old farmer in Pune district, died of electrocution while using a submersible water pump to irrigate his fields last month. His death has brought into focus the plight of people living in the western Ujani dam in area around Ujani dam in western Maharashtra which was overflowing last monsoon.

Rui, Lawand's village in Pune's Indapur tehsil, falls in the backwater region of Ujani dam across the Bhima river. As the backwater spreads through hundreds of small inlets and streams in the area, it is common for farmers to draw water from them using submersible pumps. But the water level in the reservoir has depleted to such a precariously low level this year that small rivers and streams which flow off the main waterbody have gone dry.

Submersible pumps and pipes which draw water from them, lies exposed. In many places, farmers, who mainly grow sugarcane, have pooled money to dig



trenches or shallow wells alongside the parched streams. The water that percolates into these trenches is then pumped out. "Rivers and streams have dried up. Our crops are withering," said Lawand's brother Tukaram. It forced his brother to lift water from a trench dug near a river. "He suffered electric shock while using a submersible pump and died," he said.

"The water level in the dam has gone down to an unprecedented level. But last monsoon the dam was full," said Sharad Kale, a farmer from nearby Palaseo village. "Mismanagement" of the reservoir is responsible for the situation, he claimed. Water for drinking purposes was released to Solapur and parts of

Marathwada through rivers instead of pipelines, and a lot of water was wasted in the process, he said. The wall of Ujani dam is in Solapur district. The backwater is spread across Daund and Indapur tehsils of Pune district, Karmala and Madha of Solapur and Karjat in Ahmednagar district.

"Water level is going down day by day. Electric pumps of farmers are out of action for last three months," Kale said. An irrigation department official denied that flawed distribution of water of mismanagement was the reason. The total capacity of the dam is 123.28 TMCft (thousand million cubic feet) and last year the dam received 119

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TMCFt water, he said. "There are many reasons why the water level went down so much. Water was released for drinking purpose to Solapur and parts of Marathwada. Water was also released for crops. Evaporation is another factor. But an important reason is uncontrolled water lifting in the backwater region," he said. The dam was built to provide irrigation only for eight months, but unauthorised lifting, mainly for sugarcane fields, goes on all-year-round, he said. With the water level falling, the thousand-year-old Palaseo village is now clearly visible. Built in the 'Hemadpanthi' architectural style, most of it was submerged when the dam was built. "Now the entire temple is visible. Tourists are flocking here to see it," said a local farmer.

Trump blames Iran for tanker attacks but calls for talks

Washington: President Donald Trump has blamed Iran for attacks on oil tankers near the strategic Strait of Hormuz, but he also held out hope that implicit US threats to use force will yield talks with the Islamic Republic as the Pentagon considers beefing up defenses in the Persian Gulf area.



President Donald Trump speaks in the Rose Garden of the White House on Friday. AP

A day after explosions blew holes in two oil tankers just outside Iran's territorial waters, rattling international oil markets, the administration seemed caught between pressure to punish Iran and reassure Washington's Gulf Arab allies without drawing the US closer to war.

"Iran did it," Trump said Friday on Fox News Channel's "Fox & Friends."

He didn't offer evidence, but the US military released video it said showed Iran's Revolutionary Guard removing an unexploded mine from one of the oil tankers targeted near the Strait of Hormuz, suggesting Tehran wanted to cover its tracks.

Iran denied any involvement in the attacks and accused Washington of waging an "Iranophobic campaign" of economic warfare.

A US Navy team on Friday was aboard one of the tankers, the Japanese-owned Koko Courageous, collecting forensic evidence, according to a US official who spoke on condition of anonymity to discuss a sensitive operation.

Apparently alluding to the US video, Trump said Iran's culpability had been "exposed."

He did not say what he intended to do about it but suggested "very tough" US sanctions, including efforts to strangle Iranian oil revenues, would have the desired effect.

"They've been told in very strong terms we want to get them back to the table," Trump said.

Just a day earlier, the president took the opposite view, tweeting that it was "too soon to even think about making a deal" with Iran's leaders.

"They are not ready, and neither are we!" Trump last year withdrew the United States from an international agreement to limit Iran's nuclear program that was signed in 2015 under his predecessor, President Barack Obama.

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Hong Kong Govt suspends divisive extradition bill

Hong Kong: Hong Kong's embattled leader on Saturday said a divisive bill that would allow extraditions to China would be "suspended" in a major climbdown from her government after a week of unprecedented protests.

The city's pro-Beijing leader Carrie Lam has come under huge pressure to abandon the controversial legislation, including from her own political allies and advisers.

"The Government has decided to suspend the legislative amendment exercise, restart our communication with all sectors of society, do more... Work and listen to different views of society," Lam told reporters on Saturday.

"We have no intention to set a deadline for this work and promise to report to and consult members of the legislative council on security before we decide on the next step forward."

The international finance hub was rocked by the worst political violence since its 1997 handover to China on Wednesday as tens of thousands of protesters were dispersed by riot police firing tear gas and rubber bullets.

As criticism mounted, signs also emerged of a growing discomfort among Communist Party leaders in Beijing, and Lam held her press conference on Saturday at the same Government complex that was besieged by protesters earlier in the week.

The South China Morning Post said Lam held an emergency meeting on Friday night with her advisers while Chinese officials were also meeting in the nearby city of Shenzhen to map a way out of the impasse.

"I feel deep sorrow and regret that the deficiencies in our work and various other factors have stirred up substantial controversies and disputes in society following the relatively calm periods of the past two years," Lam said.

On Friday she found herself facing growing calls from within her own political camp to reverse course and tamp down sprawling public anger — including from headline pro-Beijing lawmakers. "Shouldn't (we) cool the citizens down? I think to postpone it for a little bit is not a bad thing. At this moment, the Government should self-examine," Ann Chiang, a hardcore pro-Beijing lawmaker, told i-Cable News.

But others have warned against Lam bending to the protesters. "If the Government caves in to violence and external influences, in the long run that would also make Hong Kong ungovernable," pro-Beijing lawmaker Regina Ip told reporters. **AFP**

Special Administrative Region (SAR) government decided to suspend work on the Fugitive Offenders and Mutual Legal Assistance in Criminal Matters Legislation (Amendment) Bill 19.

Chinese Foreign Minister spokesman Geng Shuang said in statement.

China also expressed Beijing's backing for the beleaguered Lam who faced heavy criticism from local people, especially students, for attempting to push the bill disregarding massive protests.

"The Chinese Central Government expresses its support, respect and understanding for the SAR government's decision and will continue its staunch support for Chief Executive Carrie Lam and the SAR government in governing Hong Kong in accordance with law and upholding the SAR's prosperity and stability with people from all sectors," Geng said.

He said China continued to respect and faithfully implementing the "one country, two systems" policy under which Hong Kong will return from British rule to China in 1997.

The former British colony is being governed a high degree of autonomy and the rights and freedoms of Hong Kong residents have been fully guaranteed according to law, he said. **PTI**

China supports suspension of Hong Kong's controversial bill

Beijing: China on Saturday said it supports the Hong Kong leader's decision to suspend a controversial bill that would allow extraditions to China, following massive protests.

About an hour after Hong Kong Chief Executive Carrie Lam announced the suspension of the Fugitive Offenders and Mutual Legal Assistance in Criminal Matters Legislation (Amendment) Bill between US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo and Iraqi Prime Minister Adel Abdul-Mahdi.

Another official confirmed the waiver, saying it will start June 19.

Both officials spoke on condition of anonymity as they were not authorized to speak to the media.

Iraq's power sector is in dire straits and doesn't generate enough electricity to meet domestic demand, especially during the scorching summer months. **AP**

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Nepal's ethnic Newaris protest against Guthi bill

Kathmandu: Thousands of people belonging to the Newar community staged anti-government protests on Saturday, demanding withdrawal of a controversial bill, which they say has provisions in favour of land mafias and could jeopardise Sanatan Hindu culture and tradition.

Around 10,000 people from Newar community rallied in the major parts of the city Saturday morning raising slogans against the Oli Government demanding that the Government withdraw the Guthi bill from the Parliament.

The K P Sharma Oli-led Communist Party Government has tabled the bill in Parliament to amend the Guthi Act and nationalise both public and private guthis and regulate all religious sites under a powerful commission.

Guthis are socio-economic institutions (trusts), both public and private, that fund their obligations from incomes from cultivated or leased land assets. Depending on their obligations, guthis fulfill religious, public service or social roles and could either involve members from a common lineage, or several.

"Don't destroy heritage," "scrap Guthi Bill," "Our culture our identity," "down with KP Oli government," "stop invasion of Sanatan Dharma," read the placards the protesters carried during the rally.

"Our Sanatan Dharma and culture could be jeopardised if the Bill, tabled by the Communist Party led government in Parliament, gets endorsed," said Pavitra Bajracharya a Newar activist and central member of Federal Socialist Party Nepal, which is also part of the ruling coalition.

The aim of the bill is to snatch the public and private land allocated for cultural trusts and distribute to others encroaching our age cultural heritages, he said.

Thousands of people also organised torch lit rallies in neighbouring Lalitpur and Bhaktapur districts on Friday night to oppose the Government's move to endorse the Bill that would destroy centuries old Sanatan culture. **PTI**

Syria flare-up kills 35 fighters

Beirut: At least 35 combatants including 26 pro-regime forces were killed on Saturday in clashes and air strikes that erupted at dawn in northwestern Syria, a war monitor said.

The flare-up came as Russian-backed regime forces tried to retake two villages seized by jihadists and allied rebels earlier this month, the Britain-based Syrian Observatory for Human Rights said.

"Since this morning, the Syrian regime and allied fighters have launched five failed attempts to regain control of Jibine and Tal Maleh in northwestern Hama province," said Observatory head Rami Abdel Rahman.

Syrian regime and Russian air strikes killed nine jihadists and rebel fighters, the war monitor said.

Ensuing clashes in the north of Hama province left 26 pro-regime forces dead, including eight who were killed in a mine explosion, the Observatory said.

The Idlib region of some three million people is supposed to be protected from a massive regime offensive by a buffer zone deal that Russia and Turkey signed in September.

But it was never fully implemented, as jihadists refused to withdraw from a planned demilitarised zone.

In January, the Hayat Tahrir al-Sham alliance led by Syria's former Al-Qaeda affiliate extended its administrative control over the region, which includes most of Idlib province as well as adjacent villages of Latakia, Hama and Aleppo provinces.

The Syrian Government and Russia have upped their bombardment of the region since late April, killing more than 360 civilians, according to the Observatory.

Turkey said Friday that it did not accept Russia's "excuse" that it had no ability to stop the Syrian regime's continued bombardment in the last rebel bastion of Idlib.

"In Syria, who are the regime's guarantors? Russia and Iran," Foreign Minister Mevlut Cavusoglu told state news agency Anadolu in a televised interview.

"Thus we do not accept the excuse that 'We cannot make the regime listen to us'," he said.

His comments came as Turkey disagreed with Russia earlier this week after Moscow claimed a new ceasefire had been secured in the province following weeks of regime bombardments — a claim that was denied by Ankara. **AFP**

Iraq vows new extension for Iran energy sanctions waiver

Baghdad: Two Iraqi officials say the United States has given Iraq a 90-day extension for an Iran sanctions waiver allowing it to import electricity and natural gas from Tehran.

An Iraqi official told The Associated Press on Saturday that Baghdad was informed about the waiver during a call the previous day between US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo and Iraqi Prime Minister Adel Abdul-Mahdi.

Another official confirmed the waiver, saying it will start June 19.

Both officials spoke on condition of anonymity as they were not authorized to speak to the media.

10 Kenyan police officers killed in blast near Somalia

Nairobi: Kenyan officials say at least 10 police officers are dead after their vehicle struck an improvised explosive device near the Somali border in a suspected extremist attack.

The officials who spoke on condition of anonymity because they were not authorised to share the information, said those killed on Saturday in Wajir County were among 13 officers who were pursuing extremists who had kidnapped police reservists.

Police on Friday said an unknown number of gunmen stormed Konton center in Wajir East and kidnapped three reservists.

There was no claim of responsibility for the latest attack. The Somalia-based al-Shabab extremist group often targets Kenyan security forces, withdrawing troops to Somalia in 2011 to combat the extremists. **AP**



Women in traditional dress perform in a parade of the Bali Arts Festival in Bali, Indonesia on Saturday. AP

Journalists resign after pro-Russia MP buys Ukraine TV channel

Kiev: A Ukrainian MP with ties to Russia has bought a national Ukrainian news channel, prompting a round of resignations from journalists who fear his ownership will mean coverage influenced by Moscow.

Taras Kozak of the pro-Moscow party "Opposition Platform" already owned two national TV stations before he took over the channel ZIK this week. Kozak is a close ally of politician Viktor Medvedchuk, a controversial figure in Ukraine because of his close ties to Russian President Vladimir Putin while Kiev is fighting a Moscow-backed separatist war.

Journalist Roman Nedzelskiy, one of five journalists to resign from the channel along with its CEO, said Medvedchuk now essentially controls ZIK. "Tomorrow I will be on the air with the last broadcast of the weekly show 'Details' and then I will start looking for a job," he said on Facebook late Friday.

"Medvedchuk is an enemy of my country, a murderer of the past and the future," his colleague Vakhtang Kipiani wrote as he announced his resignation. Mustafa Nayem, a Ukrainian MP, wrote on social media that the takeover would be a challenge for new President Volodymyr Zelensky. **AFP**

Husband says British woman held in Iran begins hunger strike

London: A British-Iranian woman jailed in Tehran for more than three years has begun a hunger strike to protest her detention, her husband said on Saturday.

Richard Ratcliffe said Nazarin Zaghari-Ratcliffe had refused judicial officials she will refuse food but will drink water until she is granted "unconditional release."

Ratcliffe said he would hold a vigil outside his London embassy and would fast in support of his wife.

Ratcliffe said his wife "had vowed that if we passed (daughter) Gabriella's fifth birthday with her still inside, then she would do something — to mark to both Governments that enough is enough. This really has gone on too long."

Zaghari-Ratcliffe, who worked for the charity arm of news agency Thomson Reuters, was detained at Tehran airport in April 2016 on charges of plotting against Iranian Govt. Her family denies the allegations. High-level diplomatic attempts to secure her release have so far failed. Foreign Secretary Jeremy Hunt granted 40-year-old Zaghari-Ratcliffe diplomatic protection in March, but Iranian officials refuse to recognize her dual nationality. The hunger strike comes amid heightened tensions between the West and Iran, which the U.S. and U.K. Blame for attacks on two oil tankers in the Gulf of Oman this week. Iran denies involvement. **AP**

'We are trapped': Zimbabwe's economic crunch hits passports

Harare: With Zimbabwe's economy in shambles and political tensions rising, leaving the country seems the best option for many who are desperate for jobs. But those dreams often end at the passport office, which doesn't have enough foreign currency to import proper paper and ink.

A passport now takes no less than a year to be issued. An emergency passport can take months amid a backlog of 280,000 applications, never mind recent ones.

Zimbabweans at the main office in the capital, Harare, have taken to sleeping in line for any chance at being served the following day — and that's just to submit an application.

Several million Zimbabweans already left for neighboring South Africa and other countries during years of economic turmoil under former leader Robert Mugabe. The hardships have only deepened under current President Emmerson Mnangagwa, who took over after Mugabe's forced resignation in late 2017.

Another teen, 19-year-old Brian Ndlovu, said coming to the office makes him "feel like there is really no way out of this country. We are trapped." The teens' plot to jump the queue failed, in large part because those at the front had camped there for days and knew each other by name. Emma Chirwa said she only reached the front of the line because she had been sleeping outside the office since June 5. "I was No. 34 on Friday. They served no one. On Thursday, they served 12 people," she said, huddled in a blanket on Sunday night.

In the biting cold of the Southern Hemisphere's winter, dozens of people, including women with toddlers, slept on cardboard boxes or in the dust holding their places. Around midnight, one man parked his motorbike and joined his wife in blankets on the line. People laughed.

Some huddled around a fire of scrap wood taken from the grounds of an adjacent school. A small enterprise has emerged, with some young men holding places in the line for a fee. Others sell pens, food items and foreign currency while a generator powered a photocopy machine. By daylight, the line snaked for more than a kilometre and included school children in uniform. A preacher holding a Bible took advantage of the crowd to deliver sermons about resilience and hope. But for many, the spirit is slipping.



People wait in a queue to submit an application for a passport at the main office in Harare on Friday. AP

For those seeking an emergency passport, the task requires multiple lines and a week of sleeping outside the office. One applies for an ordinary passport, then waits for a chance to upgrade the application to an emergency passport. Those who are booked for a date in 2020 have to join another line to plead for an earlier date.

In Harare, cramped corridors, people clutching envelopes waited in yet another line outside what they mockingly called the "mercy office." It is where they plead with senior officials that their situations are dire enough for their emergency passport applications to be processed in days, not months.

One woman said the date she can upgrade her passport application to an emergency one is May 2020. "My mother needs an urgent medical operation in India," she said. "She will be dead by then." **AP**

It's mushrooming

MUSBA HASHMI catches up with 28-year-old Hotel Management graduate, PRANAV BAHL who left his job and took over his father's business to grow an exotic variety of mushroom in an indoor vertical farm

Out of the box is the new norms today. From pearl farming to mushroom farming, the agriculture industry is now attracting the youth like never before. There are many reasons why Gen Z is getting hands dirty. The most important — it gives room to different cost-effective farming ideas.

Pranav Bahl, a 28-year-old Delhi-based, Hotel Management graduate, who left his job to take forward his father's legacy of mushroom farming says that he was always interested in exploring different varieties of mushroom.

"In 2014, I decided to leave my hotel industry job and explore variety of mushrooms and how to grow them. My father, Arun Bahl, came up with this idea in 1987 and his first project was to grow button mushrooms. He named it Swadeshi Mushroom Spawn. Swadeshi because he had read an autobiography of Mahatma Gandhi — *My Experiments With Truth*. He was influenced by the Swadeshi Movement that happened in the early 90s. Spawn means mushroom seeds. We also harvest spawns and sell them. Hence the name," he explains.

Though Bahl didn't face many challenges to set up his business, back in 1987, it did not come easy to his father. "Back then, not many knew about mushrooms. Coming up with the idea of mushroom farming was challenging for him. With every business venture there are some risks," he tells you.

But young Bahl who has tasted different mushrooms from around the world felt



Pranav Bahl in his indoor vertical farm, (below) Meter for room temperature and humidity for mushroom growth

Photos: Ranjan Dimri

there was something missing in them. That is when he came up with the idea of organic farming and decided to take his father's business ahead by growing King Oyster (a variety which is high in protein and other nutrients).

The process consists of several steps. A piece of wood is taken and wrapped into a polythene bag. A fungi — mycelium (*Pleurotus eryngii*) is then put into the wood and left for 20 to 25 days under cold temperature, certain amount of pressure and humidity. The fungi then starts spreading and later develops into a bulb like structure. After five to 10 days these bulb like structures develop into a fully grown mushroom.

He tells you that King



Oyster is an exotic variety and cost ranges between ₹1,200 to ₹1,500 per kg. The texture and shape of this variety differs from the common button mushroom. The upper half of it is slightly brown in colour while its stem or the lower half is usual white.

When Bahl started his venture, he was only supplying to big hotels but his aim is to enter the niche market now. "Our aim is to sweep into this market and reach the consumers directly. Though, these mushrooms are a bit expensive, but once people will try it there is no reason they will not like it. This mushroom is an alternative for non-vegetarians who are now vegetarians," he tells you.

Bahl wants to challenge the age-old perception that farming can only be done in large fields. "I want to let people know that if you want to do something unique, there can be many reasons which will restrain you from doing it but there is an adage: Where there is a will, there is a way. I have started this project in a small room. The best part of this type of farming is that it can be done in vertical space. This way more space can be utilised. I do it on vertical shelves. Each column is divided into five shelves and each shelf can occupy up to 20 to 22 pieces of wood (in which the mushroom grow)," he tells you.

Everyone who want to try their hands at mushroom farming must be willing to go a step ahead. "It requires a lot of patience and hardwork. It is not rocket science but it requires knowledge and expertise. Once you have this, you are good to go," he says.

Fishing for diseases

Another improvisation in the farming industry is FarmMojo, a tool that uses Artificial Intelligence (AI) to detect diseases in shrimps and fish. The organisation Aquaconnect, run by a 38-year-old IT alumnaus Rajamanohar Somasundaram, aims to help farmers in increasing productivity and employment by promoting sustainable shrimp and fish farming.

The idea came when Rajamanohar met a shrimp farmer. "I met Sanjai (cofounder of Aquaconnect), the shrimp farmer during a train journey. He told me everything about the shrimp farming industry and the challenges like high production cost and diseases. This got me interested and I came with an idea that could help the farmers," he tells you.

This was not the only idea that has struck Rajamanohar due to his IT background. "I started three technology ventures in the past. When I met Sanjai, I sensed an opportunity to use AI to help these farmers. My research pointed to the fact that lack of data driven farming is one of the biggest challenges that was yet to be addressed by this industry to achieve sustainability. That is when we started Aquaconnect — to encourage data-driven farming in Indian shrimp farming ecosystem," he explains.

But coming up with FarmMojo came with its share of challenges. "To begin with, we did on-ground research to understand the challenges. Our team found implementing data-driven approach in culture operations will help farmers to achieve sustainability and solve the problems. However, launching a tech-based product is not easy. Lack of awareness on technology and data-driven farming among farmers was an issue. It requires continuous workshops and awareness programmes. There is a steep learning curve that exists in farmers and other ecosystem players to adopt new technology. Initial adoption requires hand holding. To overcome this, we deployed field assistants to help the farmers," he tells you.

Rajamanohar has a piece of advice for the tech-aspirers. "I learnt many things while building tech businesses. The most important — it isn't difficult to come up with something unique. What is difficult is to stick to the idea you choose and provide the time and effort it needs to make it work. Some days you're smiling. Then the next day a pipe breaks and you think of quitting. Success is a matter of holding on tightly on your ideas, not losing confidence and keeping your focus right," he says.



ENTERTAINMENT

SHOWTIME

MEN IN BLACK: INTERNATIONAL
*ing: Chris Hemsworth, Tessa Thompson, Rebecca Ferguson, Kumail Nanjani, Rafe Spall, Laurent Bourgeois, Larry Bourgeois, Emma Thompson, Liam Neeson
Rated: 6.5/10

While the latest *Men in Black (MIB)* may not be a patch on the earlier movies in the series and definitely not on Tommy Lee Jones and Will Smith, it doesn't mean that everything is lost here.

The film has several moments which will make you

Fun element in parts

laugh as also melt your heart with cute aliens and shudder at the ugly aliens.

Then there is Chris Hemsworth as Agent H (replacing Will Smith). To see him step out of his Thor character is strange. One keeps hoping to see him beat the badasses to pulp rather being beaten up.

A scene where he is trying to reach out for a small hamster to beat the alien who has him by the scruff, he funny. As



is the reference to him wearing pink pants.

Second, the gadgets are cool. The car and the bike that takes off at the press of a button will take you on a roller coaster ride. The CGI used to create the cute and ugly aliens is great too.

Finally, the NYC head of ops who is a woman (Emma Thompson) not only looks natty in black but has wit makes this one watchable.

— Shalini Saksena

The kiddies will love this one

THE SECRET LIFE OF PETS 2
*ing: Patton Oswalt, Eric Stonestreet, Kevin Hart, Jenny Slate, Tiffany Haddish, Lake Bell, Nick Kroll, Dana Carvey, Ellie Kemper, Chris Renaud, Bobby Moynihan, Harrison Ford
Rated: 7/10

Usually movies that involves animals are cute and sweet even though Hollywood is known to make gruesome films with them. *Anaconda*, *Lake Placid* and *Croc* are only some of the horror films that have been made over



the years.

But when it comes to animation — the 'awful' factor can't be ignored and *The Secret Life of Pets 2* is no different, a sequel. Not that one has to see or remember the prequel but it helps if you are

familiar with the characters and the relationship they share.

There are three independent tracks running at the same time — that can be a tad confusing for the young minds, but the good is that they all converge and tie up in the end. All's well that ends well.

There are enough moments of furry cuteness, laughs and energy that will keep even the adults happy. More so if you love cats and dogs.

Over all, the film is perfect for kids' day out!

— Shalini Saksena

'Mental strength is key'

SHANTANU MAHESHWARI speaks with MUSKAN BAKSHI about his journey thus far



■ **What is Medically Yours about?**
It is a web-series based on a group of students studying medicine. There is a perception that they are fine but they have problems. The show also highlights the relationship between students and teachers. We have tried to keep it as real as possible.

■ **What is your character.**
I play Abir Basu who is fun loving and cheerful. He loves music as well. But he is from a medical family and believes in solving problems.

■ **What made you step into the digital space?**
I used to do youth-centric shows. But nobody makes these shows any more. Therefore, I decided to step into the digital space. I am happy to be a part of the digital space because it is giving me the space to play characters that I love. I can relate to youth content. There is more to explore in this space.

■ **You are a dancer. What does it mean to you?**
I am very passionate about it. Though, I started my career as an actor with *Dil Dost Dance*, the reason I signed the show was because my character — Swamy Shekhawat — was an avid dancer. Dancing is my first love.

■ **What inspires you?**
Many things — people I have met and those I see on the streets. I try to learn from them.

■ **How was your experience being a part of Khatron Ke Khiladi 8?**
It was wonderful. It was different from any show that I have done in the past. I realised that mental strength and stability is the key. If your will power is strong then you can do anything. You have to stop restraining yourself from doing things because you are scared.

■ **What made you say yes?**
I was a fan of *Fear Factor* since childhood. I have always acted and danced. This transition was much needed. I always wanted to be a part of the show. Fortunately, I got to do it. There was no reason I would say 'no' to it. I was excited to go on an adventurous journey and explore more. Moreover, I got a chance to go alone abroad which otherwise I wouldn't have. (laughs)

■ **Was there a moment when you felt out of place?**
No. The environment was good and all the contestants were supportive. I bonded well with them. They always motivated me. I loved doing all the tasks and stunts. I had a great time.

■ **How has your journey been thus far?**
I have learnt a lot. I have grown up — both mentally and physically. I have got to do a lot of varied characters. This is the best part of my journey. I have evolved as an actor.

From *Crime Patrol to Savdhaan India*, there is no stopping when it comes to crime shows on TV. While these two are the longest running there were others too which came and went. The success of these shows suggests that the audience is in love with the concept. The sense of realism, storyline and the connectivity of the hosts with the audience is what makes these shows a success.

However making crime shows isn't easy. "Brought up with the morality of three wise monkeys, embodying the proverbial principle 'See no evil, hear no evil, speak no evil', the audience need a social justification to see a crime show. Tales of crimes need to have a moral lesson attached to them. In a paradoxical way the crime show has to make the viewer secure, while he watches the violent stories", Umesh Bist, show runner and creative director, Big Synergy says.

According to a study conducted, the majority of viewers watching crime shows are women, who feel secure in their home space, watching a crime show, as they feel it forewarns them of the bad things happening to others and prepares them with the knowledge to protect themselves in case of any unforeseen eventuality.

"Here in lies the challenge and the secret of designing a crime show. The stories selected have to be from their relatable world. The characters in the story have to be familiar. The social, economical issues the characters deal with in the story have to be their very own. But there is a catch. With few exceptions, in the real world the stories of crime are dry and boring. We have to face the challenge of narrating them in an entertaining way. It requires craft, experience and talent to come out with a package of entertaining crime stories with a moral lesson which seem to be real", Bist tells you.

The USP of *Savdhaan India* is that

Be alert, always

Crime shows have now become an option for the makers to experiment with due to wide acceptance from the viewers. MUSBA HASHMI tells you more



Whatever shows we make — we always show the story of how the criminal is brought to justice. Crime never pays — in reel or real life
— Rabindra Choubey

it not only highlights the crime but also put light on how the survivor/victim fights back the crime.

Rabindra Choubey, Director and Producer, *Crime Patrol*, Gaonwala Creation says that creating a show from the scratch is a challenging task.

"Creating a show from the scratch is challenging and with crime shows, the difficulties of the makers doubles," he says.

First, the niche and loyal audience for crime shows on TV and those who binge on similar crime series on web are

mostly the same. Our priority is to make concepts at par with those n number of series available on web. But on the hindside, we also have to abide by the rules and regulations of TV as all TV shows, even crime, are served for family viewing. Second big challenge for any crime show concept is relevance. Crime doesn't touch all normal peoples' lives, while romance and drama touches everyone. As crime show makers live in an extra pressure to make our concept relevant to the audience.

There has been a visible and obvi-

ous change that is still ongoing in the history of crime shows. From the kind of shows that were available five years back — if you look at the plethora of options available today, the change is nothing but drastic.

Choubey has a say on the controversy around whether the crime shows inspires the criminals to commit crime.

"Whatever shows we make — we always show the story of how the criminal is brought to justice. Crime never pays — in reel or real life. Does watching a 'rags to riches' movie make every viewer a millionaire? The answer is no. The seed of crime is in the individual's mentality. The intent of any crime is a personal motive — developed by an individual himself. No maker ever intends to inspire criminals. We try and bring reality to our viewer's screen and show them the ugly side of humanity, in hope that these crimes are not repeated." Choubey says and tells you that through a PRQ of Gurugram police said that the culprits they apprehended accepted that they took inspiration from crime shows.

But blaming the shows for inspiring criminals to commit a crime is never a good idea. The one who wants to commit a crime, he will, regardless of the medium of his inspiration. If not TV shows, he will take inspiration from news channels, newspapers or just from his surroundings.

Professional, clinical & ruthless win

KNIGHTWRITER



By **HEATHER KNIGHT**
England women's captain

Joe Root is one of the best one-day players in the world and he proved it again in England's eight-wicket win over the West Indies with another brilliant century.

His recent record is outstanding and having him as that rock in the batting line-up helps the more attack-minded guys because they know Joe is there to steady the ship.

It just seems a formality at the moment he's going to score 50-plus and quite often turn that into a century.

He had to open the batting at short notice due to Jason Roy's injury but he took it all in his stride. Joe went about his innings brilliantly and scored as quickly as

Jonny Bairstow at other end — he looked great and it was a very low-maintenance knock. He kept it simple and played proper cricket shots.

Eoin Morgan might've thought about potentially opening with Jos Buttler and it wouldn't have been the worst shout because he's a player who can score at a strike-rate of above 200 even when there are five fielders on the boundary.

But Morgs probably wanted to make the most of having Jos at back-end of the chase if needed, that's a key spot.

And you want to keep your batters in the position where they will be playing for most of the tournament.

It was an awesome England

In an ideal world, England will want to play their best team and get as close to qualifying for the semis as they can. But it's a long tournament and if there's any risk involved with playing them, they won't take it

performance — very professional, clinical and ruthless. It was a really good display with the ball to restrict West Indies to 212 and that set the tone.

Pre-game, it was being billed as a battle of the pacemen, so to see the English bowlers hitting consistently good lengths was great.

Jofra (Archer) and Chris (Mark Wood) got going together, while Ben Stokes can hit 145 kph as well which is so exciting to watch.

You always feel like something will happen with that trio's pace and a wicket is just round the corner.

There will be a bit of a nervous wait for news on Eoin Morgan and Jason Roy's injuries ahead of the Afghanistan game on Tuesday.

In an ideal world, England will want to play their best team and get as close to qualifying for the semi-finals as they can.

But it's a long tournament and if there's any risk involved with playing them, they won't take it.

It doesn't matter that England will be considered heavy favourites for the Afghanistan contest — you prepare in the same way as any game, make sure you're ready for their bowlers and keep your eyes on your toes.

Morgs and the coaches will make sure there are no signs of complacency and it's about trying not to think of opposition as a lesser nation because then you get in trouble — just play it like any other

match.

We've already seen some great catches in this ICC Men's Cricket World Cup from the likes of Ben Stokes and Sheldon Cottrell but in our match against West Indies Women on Thursday, Fran Wilson took the best live catch I've ever seen.

I couldn't stop watching it the morning after — I saw someone had superimposed a cape on Fran on Twitter, which was fitting.

It was absolutely outstanding and everyone has been asking me about it, which is an amazing sign — moments like that go viral and it's a great advert for women's cricket.

Courtesy: © ICC Business Corporation
FZ LLC 2019



Left to right: Joe Root plays a shot during his unbeaten 100 run innings; Root attempts to take a catch off his own bowling; Joe celebrates after dismissing Windies skipper Jason Holder

Cricket World Cup/Twitter

PTI ■ SOUTHAMPTON

England skipper Eoin Morgan has heaped praise on Joe Root, describing the star batsman as the 'glue' that holds the team together.

Root hit his second century of the World Cup on Friday to steer the injury-depleted England to a convincing eight-wicket win over the West Indies and captain Morgan could not have been more impressed.

"I am exceptionally pleased," Morgan said after the match.

"He's such an important player for us, he is the glue that holds everything together and probably a side of his batting that's got better over the last two or three years that people haven't seen a lot of in his expansive game.

"He never seems to be scoring at less

Be Rooted

than a run a ball. You look up and he's going at more than a run a ball. It's exceptional to see him come out and be in this form," he said.

Morgan further added that Root was the man with a golden arm as his part-time off-spin helped England pick up two key West Indian wickets — Shimon Hetmyer and captain Jason Holder — before his 94-ball unbeaten 100 made the hosts' run chase look like a stroll in the park despite the absence of two key players in Morgan himself and Jason Roy due to

injuries.

"Adil (Rashid) had got it to turn so much, Jos said 'it's turning more than you think here' so we discussed it and then went with it for one, possibly two overs but Joe started brilliantly; he's got a golden arm," said Morgan.

Having also scored a century against Pakistan, Root has now amassed 279 runs in four matches, becoming the first England player to score two hundreds in a single edition of the World Cup since Kevin Pietersen 12 years ago.

He has also become the first in history to complete three in total, as the points moved to second position in the still room for improvement.

"It's not about the number of runs you score, and being the one that stands out in terms of individual accolades," said Root.

"It's about building those substantial partnerships that win you games and collectively getting the job done. I feel like I'm playing all right. I don't feel like I'm playing exceptionally well at the moment but

I feel like I'm playing some good stuff and there's still loads of things that I want to keep working on and keep improving," said a modest Root.

"It was important we didn't panic and kept it together. We managed to get across the line and did it really convincingly in the end so it's a really good sign and will fill the dressing room with a lot of confidence in knowing that we don't have to go about things in just one way to be successful," he added.

Root, who ended up taking 2/27 off five overs, was surprise with his all-rounder status. "I didn't really expect (to get so many overs). I got the opportunity and it was nice to pick up a few wickets. I probably bargled them rather than out-skilled them. I'm not the most skilful off-spinner, so I was just trying to be as unpredictable as possible," Root said.

Take a chill pill



Eoin Morgan, second right, hobbles off the field of play with an injury, next to Joe Root.

PTI ■ SOUTHAMPTON

By his own admission, England captain Eoin Morgan is doubtful for the next World Cup game having suffered a back spasm while Jason Roy undergoes a scan for hamstring strain but the skipper insisted it is not a 'panic station' yet.

During their World Cup match against the West Indies here on Friday, Morgan left the field in the 41st over of West Indian innings, joining Roy on the treatment table, who had earlier hobbled off with a hamstring strain.

"It is sore. I have had back spasms before and it normally takes a few days to settle down. It is unclear, we will know more in the next 24 hours. You normally get a good indication the following day. If it settles down then the improvement is there straight away.

"Jason had a tight hamstring and will go for a scan, it will be 48 hours until we know more. I think when any two players go down it is a bit of a worry but it is not panic stations yet," Morgan said while addressing the post-match media interaction standing because of discomfort due to back spasm.

Chasing 213 for victory against the West Indies, England did not require the services of either Morgan or Roy as Joe Root stepped into Roy's shoes at the top of the order, scoring an unbeaten 100 of 94 balls to help the hosts post a comfortable eight-wicket win.

"Like everybody, we have to see how it pulls up. We will see how risky it is and do a risk assessment going into that game, bearing in mind we will have two games in a few days," said Morgan.

OTHER SPORTS

AFP ■ SAO PAULO

Flying start

Coutinho's 2nd half brace powers Brazil to 3-0 win against Bolivia in Copa opener



Philippe Coutinho celebrates after scoring from spot

CBF/Twitter

A brace from Philippe Coutinho handed hosts Brazil a winning start to the Copa America in a 3-0 victory over Bolivia as the absence of superstar Neymar was quickly forgotten.

Barcelona's Coutinho scored from the penalty spot early in the second half and added a close-range header three minutes later.

Substitute Everton netted a sensational third five minutes from time to clinch a Group A victory for coach Tite's tournament favorites in Sao Paulo.

The build-up to the competition had been dominated by Neymar's woes, firstly when he was accused of rape by a Brazilian model, and then when he damaged ankle ligaments in a friendly last week, forcing him out of the Copa.

If Brazil's first half performance was anything to go by, the Paris Saint-Germain star was sorely missed, but Coutinho's brace at least silenced the jeers that met the team at half-time.

"Whistles are part of the game, the fans want us to win and play well, so that's why they jeer," said the match-winner.

"We always want their support but we're focused on the objective, which is the match," Coutinho told Brazil's Sport TV.

"Whistles or cheers, the important thing is to stay focused and get the win."

Brazil made a bright start and predictably dominated the early possession and chances.

But surprisingly their greatest threat came from set-pieces with Coutinho's corner delivery causing panic in the Bolivian backline.

Bolivia's goalkeeper Carlos Lampe made an instinctive block from a Roberto Firmino flick that came straight at him.

And a few minutes later, towering center-half Thiago Silva was left unmarked eight yards out to meet another Coutinho delivery, but

he inexplicably headed well wide.

Brazil, wearing white shirts and blue shorts, weaved almost geometric patterns around their unambitious visitors but struggled to test Lampe.

Their best chances came from Bolivian mistakes and Richarlison should have scored into an open goal when a woeeful Lampe clearance went straight to him, but the

Everton forward failed to lift the ball over defender Adrian Jusino, who headed clear from the edge of the 18-yard box.

BARRAGE OF JEERS

Tite's team were treated to a barrage of jeers from the 67,000 crowd when the half-time whistle went.

Bolivia's best moment had perhaps been a cheeky nutmeg of Casemiro by Raul Castro on the edge of his own 18-yard box. It had been slim pickings. Fans' spirits were quickly lifted after the restart, though, as Coutinho fired home from the spot on 50 minutes after a contentious penalty award.

Bolivia were stunned and just three minutes later their defence went missing as Firmino reached the by-line and chipped the ball to the back post for Coutinho to head home from barely two yards out.

Reluctant to push men forward, Bolivia never looked like getting back into the match.

"If you want to qualify (for the knock-out stages) you have to attack a little more," admitted Villegas.

And Coutinho's corners continued to present Brazil with their best chances, as Marquinhos headed straight at Lampe from seven yards with 15 minutes left.

The game had slowed to almost walking pace when substitute Everton scored a sensational third, cutting in from the left wing before firing an unstoppable shot into the far corner with Lampe rooted to the spot.

India win FIH Series Finals

PTI ■ BHUBANESWAR

India lived up to their billing and thrashed South Africa 5-1 in the summit clash to win the FIH Series Finals hockey tournament here on Saturday.

Coming into the tournament as overwhelming favourites, world No 5 India played like champions and remained unbeaten throughout the tournament.

Dragflickers Varun Kumar (2nd and 49th minutes) and Harmanpreet Singh (11th and 25th) scored a brace each, while Vivek Sagar Prasad (35th) was the other goal scorer for India.

South Africa's lone goal was scored by Richard Pantz in the 53rd minute.

India and South Africa have already qualified for the final round of the Olympic qualifiers before Saturday's summit clash.

Earlier in the day, Asian Games champion Japan defeated USA 4-2 to finish third in the competition.

The top two finishers of this tournament make it to the final round of the Olympic qualifiers to be held later this year.

Going by world rankings, the Indians were expected to control the proceedings and they exactly did that from the word go.

India secured their first penalty corner as early as in the second minute and Varun made no mistake in converting the opportunity into goal.

In the 11th minute, India got another penalty corner and this time Harmanpreet slammed home to make



Indian players pose with the winners trophy after beating South Africa in the FIH Series Finals

the scoreline 2-0 in favour of the hosts.

Seconds before the end of the first quarter, South Africa got a rare opportunity but Nqobile Ntuli's reverse hit was kept away by Krishan Bahadur Pathak in front of the Indian goal.

Five minutes from half time, India were awarded a penalty stroke when Birendra Lakra was struck-checked inside South Africa's 'D' by Iethro Eustice and Harmanpreet made no mistake to make the scoreline 3-0.

The flow of the match continued in the same vein after the change of ends with India dominating the proceedings.

Five minutes into the third quarter, India extended their lead when Vivek Sagar Prasad scored from close range after being set up by Simranjeet Singh.

India secured their third penalty corner in the 41st minute but this time Amit Rohidas' try was saved by the South African goalkeeper.

India kept up the pressure and earned their fourth penalty corner in the 49th minute and Varun scored from a variation to make the scoreline 5-0 in the home team's favour.

South Africa finally had something to cheer about when they secured back-to-back penalty corners in the 53rd minute and from the second chance, Pantz deflected in Eustice's flick to reduce the margin to 5-1.

Four minutes from the final hour, India secured two more penalty corners but failed to utilize the opportunities.

South Africa too got a last chance to pull another goal back in the form of their third penalty corner but to no effect.

CRICKETCRADLE



Rishabh Pant joins team India on Saturday during practice session ahead of India-Pakistan game at Old Trafford in Manchester. BCCI/Twitter

REGALING TALES

India skipper Virat Kohli might call it just another game to calm the nerves of his players ahead of Sunday's blockbuster meeting between India and Pakistan at the World Cup, but everyone knows that a clash between the arch-rivals on the cricket field is nothing short of a carnival. Emotions run high, players look to seize the moment and make a statement and even the fans want boasting rights till the two teams face-off next time. And who better to speak on what it means to take on Pakistan in a World Cup game than Sachin Tendulkar. The legend has been a part of five India-Pakistan games in the showpiece event and his scores read 54 in 1992, 31 in 1996, 45 in 1999, 98 in 2003 and 85 in 2011. In fact, apart from winning the coveted trophy in 2011, the little master rates the 2003 game against Pakistan in Centurion as one of his favourite memories from playing in six World Cups for India. This in itself speaks volumes of what an India-Pakistan encounter means, not just to the fans, but also for the 22 bravehearts fighting it out in the middle. "The best memory apart from lifting the World Cup has to be the 2003 match against Pakistan in Centurion. The kind of build-up that was there for that match and the way we played and the way we won. Also, the way we celebrated after the game and the way we progressed in the tournament after that was spectacular. Without any doubt, that has to be a special memory," he told IANS.

RAP FOR CARLOS

West Indies all-rounder Carlos Brathwaite has received an official reprimand and received one demerit point for breaching the Level 1 of the ICC Code of Conduct during the England-West Indies game in the ongoing World Cup at the Hampshire Bowl on Friday. He was found to have breached Article 2.6 of the code of conduct for players and player support personnel, which relates to showing dissent to an umpire's decision. The incident occurred in the 43rd over of the West Indies innings when Brathwaite made his displeasure at being given out clear to the umpires. Brathwaite admitted to the offence and accepted the sanction proposed by match referee David Boon. There was no need for a formal hearing.

NUMBERS SPEAK

A Kerala-based numerologist who predicted India's victory at the 2011 World Cup, on Saturday said India would do it again this time. MK Damodaran, a retired government official based in the Kannur district, has correctly predicted several events in the sporting and political arena through numerology. Damodaran had told IANS in 2011, numbers 2, 6 and 7 played a prominent role in the scheme of things of MS Dhoni, whose "fate number is 33." "Indian captain Virat Kohli's birth number is 5 and occult number also 5. Interestingly, Dhoni and Kohli are numerological birds of the same feather. The fate number of Kohli also is 33. Dhoni and Kohli have an amazing chemistry," said Damodaran. He said Kohli's date of birth is 5/11/1988 and Sun sign Scorpio, which is related to number 9. Hence, numbers 3, 6 & 9 are lucky for him. Kohli's fate number is 33 and the age the luckiest 30 (3+0=3). "These factors indicate Kohli and Dhoni will lift the 3rd World Cup for India," said Damodaran. Drawing a parallel to Kapil Dev, he said, numbers 3, 6 & 9 were lucky for him, whose birth number is 6 and occult number 30 (3+0=3). IANS

PRELIMINARY STAGE							
Pos	Team	P	W	L	NR	Net RR	Pts
1	AUS	5	4	1	0	+0.812	8
2	NZ	4	3	0	1	+2.163	7
3	ENG	4	3	1	0	+1.557	6
4	IND	3	2	0	1	+0.539	5
5	SL	4	1	1	2	-1.517	4
6	WI	4	1	2	1	+0.666	3
7	RSA	6	1	3	1	-0.208	3
8	B'DESH	4	1	2	1	-0.714	3
9	PAK	3	1	1	1	-1.796	3
10	AFG	4	0	4	0	-1.638	0

'Cash in on India's middle-order vulnerability'

PTI ■ MANCHESTER

Pakistan bowlers should go after a vulnerable Indian middle order when the two teams clash in the marquee World Cup game on Sunday, says former Pakistan captain Wasim Akram. Akram, hero of many Indo-Pak cricketing battles, is hopeful that Mohammed Amir led attack would do well to find the chinks in the Indian middle-order. "India have a solid top order. Not only there is Virat (Kohli) but there's also Rohit (Sharma). But I have a feeling that middle order isn't that settled. Pakistan bowlers should try to cash in on that aspect," Akram said. Amir's presence in the side is a big positive feels Akram. The left arm pacer took 5 for 30



Imad Wasim, Shaheen Afridi and Wahab Riaz attend an indoor training session. AP

against Australia albeit in his best is important. He is a senior bowler now and I believe he has a duty to guide the youngsters," Akram said. He has confidence in Babar Azam but wouldn't like comparisons with Virat Kohli. "Babar Azam is a very talented batsman and it's good to see his consistency. He shouldn't be compared to Virat and let him play freely." The 'Sultan of Swing' is however disappointed that young fast bowlers these days don't know the use of wrists. "Aajkal ke ladke wrists kahaan maarte hain. (Bowlers nowadays don't use their wrists). How do you even expect bowlers to get swing?" he questioned. Two new balls from both ends have been quite a deterrent for bowlers but the legendary Wasim Akram is of the opinion that the white Dukes used during the 1999 edition was better for seamers. Akram, Shoab Akhtar, Abdul Razaq and Azhar

Mahmood made life difficult for the opposition during that World Cup in England where Pakistan reached the finals. "The seam of the kookaburra ball is not pronounced and I have always found Dukes to be the best ball. I don't know why the ICC had done away with the Duke Whites. Those balls would have certainly swung more," Akram said. India must not entertain thoughts that they would start taking Pakistan lightly in the 2017 Champions Trophy final and had to bite the dust. "India needs to be very careful, don't go into this game thinking they are the favourites.

I think they did that the last time in 2017 in the ICC Champions Trophy finals and Pakistan beat them hands down. It's going to be a great game of cricket," commented Ganguly as an expert for Star Sports ahead of the game. Tendulkar also said that India cannot afford to take the traditional rivals lightly. "Pakistan has always been unpredictable, and they are a dangerous side - so there is no way the Indian team is going to take them lightly. Every step that the Indian team takes forward, we would want to be 100% sure of what we are doing, and it is well thought and well planned," he said. The hype and interest an India-Pakistan cricket match generates is surreal and both Tendulkar and Ganguly agreed that "it is more than just a cricket match".

CARIBSE



By CLIVE LLOYD Former West Indies captain

If the West Indies want to win this World Cup then now is the time for them to come out fighting and show what they are made of. Defeats and bad days are always going to happen in a tournament like this, and now we just have to hope that the West Indies have got all of theirs out of the way. I still think they have got the firepower in both their batting and bowling to go all the way but the pressure is building. They need to win nearly every group game from here on in if they are to have a chance of making the semi-finals. Eleven points will probably be enough to get a Team into the top four, and considering they still have the likes of New Zealand and India to play, it is now or never. The defeat to England will have disappointed them because that was a huge game. They picked a bad time to have their worst batting display of the tournament so far. Once you have got past the best of the England bowling attack, you really shouldn't be giving your wickets away to a part-timer like Joe Root. He is someone you should be looking to milk all day long. The two youngsters Shimron Hetmyer and Nicholas Pooran had to try and rebuild the innings and gave it a pretty good effort. Pooran in particular has really impressed me so far this tournament, but we shouldn't be asking two young guys to do it all. The rest of the batsmen left them high and dry, and there was ample opportunity there on a Southampton pitch that didn't have too much devil in it. There is a lot of power in that batting line-up but maybe we are missing someone who can stick around. In my day we had Larry Gomes who could play that role. Maybe they missed a trick by not choosing someone in the squad with the all-round skills who can play the role like Moeen Ali plays for England and filling that extra batting place which West Indies sorely need. Royston Chase would fill that role for West Indies because he can also offer a bit of spin as well and can anchor an innings with the bat.

Stand up and be counted

The bowlers need to have a bit of a re-think as well. They can't go into every game thinking they are just going to blast them out like they did Pakistan. They need to be able to read the conditions, adapt to their opponents and the pitches put in front of them. It's all very well bowling short all the time, but the key to short bowling is the line as well as the length - you need to be asking questions of the batsmen and yesterday they weren't able to do that. But all is not lost just yet. Jason Holder has got to try and rally the troops and get them back on track. They started well in this tournament and are still in there fighting. Bangladesh are up next on Monday and they are no pushovers - they beat the West Indies twice in a Tri-Series very recently, have beaten South Africa in this tournament already and made a very good fist of chasing down a huge total against England. It's a must-win clash for both sides - Bangladesh will be feeling very good about their game and it's up to the West Indies to stand up and be counted. Courtesy: © ICC Business Corporation FZ LLC 2019

“ I STILL THINK WINDIES HAVE GOT THE FIREPOWER IN BOTH THEIR BATTING AND BOWLING TO GO ALL THE WAY BUT THE PRESSURE IS BUILDING. THEY NEED TO WIN NEARLY EVERY GROUP GAME FROM HERE ON IN IF THEY ARE TO HAVE A CHANCE OF MAKING THE SEMI-FINALS ”

One for the future

■ SOUTHAMPTON

Shimron Hetmyer insists his fledgling partnership with Nicholas Pooran could bear fruit for years to come after the West Indies duo dug deep against an England onslaught. The pair put on 89 for the fourth wicket in the West Indies' eight-wicket defeat, batting maturely and patiently while under the coss. Hetmyer, 22, has four ODI centuries already and guided the West Indies through a difficult 16 overs alongside Pooran - with the pair coming together at 55-3. He undid all his hard work by playing a loose shot to Joe Root on 39, while Pooran went on to make 63 in the Windies' overall 212. But the signs were still encouraging and Hetmyer believes the pair can score plenty together again. "Batting with Nicholas is very comfortable for me because we played in the under-19s together and then in the CPL [Caribbean Premier League] we played together too, so I have got to know him a little better at the crease," he said. "I think I was trying to hit the ball at one stage and he just came up to me and said let's just try to time it, not muscle it and from there it came out a bit better. "For me, my role does not change. I have to go out and whatever role I need to play, it is there for me. I will try to execute as much as possible. "Today did not come off like I would have liked or the team would have liked but we had some positives, we had a partnership and went from strength to strength in the middle overs. "We did come out on the wrong end of today's game but I just tried to play my role



Shimron Hetmyer, left, and Nicholas Pooran runs between the wickets during West Indies innings. AP

and pick up the slack if we had a good start and build a partnership." The West Indies have now lost two of their four matches, while Monday's game with South Africa was washed out, leaving their win against Pakistan as their sole success so far. The semi-finals are not yet out of reach but Monday's clash with Bangladesh in Taunton is pivotal to their chances and Hetmyer insists they will deliver. "I am very confident. It happens in these types of competitions, you go down and it is all about how you pick yourself up for the next game," he said. "The best way to do in good spirits and we are looking ahead and looking forward to the next game." Courtesy: © ICC Business Corporation FZ LLC 2019

Change of fate

■ TAUNTON

Bangladesh fast bowling coach B Courtney Walsh expects his team to come back strongly as they take on West Indies in their fifth game of the ICC Men's World Cup in Taunton on Monday. Bangladesh had a promising start in the tournament, beating South Africa first and then nearly pulling off a close finish against New Zealand at The Oval. However, the Mashrafe Mortaza led side went down by 106 runs against England, before their next game against Sri Lanka got washed out. Walsh seemed confident of his team putting up a collective effort against West Indies - a side they defeated thrice in the recently concluded tri-series in Ireland. "We were very consistent in every department right throughout that tri-nation [series]," Walsh told reporters in Taunton. "We have been hampered a little bit by the weather here. It is out of our control. If we can get the consistency in the next couple of games, who knows what can happen?" Walsh viewed Chris Gayle and Andre Russell as potential threats for the Monday's clash. "We are coming up with some ideas and plans looking at their current game. "They are two dangerous players. We have to try to restrict, and get them out at the same time to



Bangladesh players train during team's practice session. ICC/Twitter

have more control of the game. We will be focused on their team itself, because they have very good players in their team as well. I am sure we can perform as a team against West Indies." Bangladesh had the better of West Indies in recent times, winning seven of the last ten games including a bilateral series triumph last July. "We have to do it all over again. We will be looking in the context of the game itself. We will be seeing players who didn't come to Bangladesh or play against us in the West Indies. They are probably full strength. We have been playing consistently well against West Indies." The former West Indian fast

For us, no one is a threat: Kohli

Unless someone creates a match-winning magical performance all by himself. Familiar oppositions, unfamiliar oppositions don't matter because you understand that if you don't play well, you don't win, and if you play well, you win against anyone. If we do our strengths well it will be good enough for anyone in the world. We need to have that belief. "When it is a game against Pakistan what do you tell your young camp? We have discussed nothing different from the time we came to England. The mood in the dressing room hasn't changed. We understand that any game you play for your coun-

try can be emotional, adrenaline filled, so no one game is more important or more special for us than the other. We are a top side in the world because of the cricket we play and we always need to remember that. "You have had outstanding success under pressure. But how difficult is it as a captain to keep the youngsters away from the hustle-bustle of an Indo-Pak meet? The best way to approach something like this is to understand that the game starts tomorrow at a certain time and it finishes at a certain time, it's not going to last a lifetime, whether you do well or don't. The

tournament goes on. As a unit, 11 guys share responsibility. That's been our message from day one. "If it rains, then what? It's in no one's hands. We've been in these situations many times. We'll just have to wait and see how the weather pans out. Whatever amount of game we get - a full game would be outstanding - we have to be mentally ready to go in there and do what we need to do. "Fast bowlers haven't had an ideal preparation for this big game.... They are in a good head space and have bowled well in the first two

games. If physically they can stay fresh and their bodies are feeling good, mentally they're just fine. They should take care of their bodies, recovery and energy levels. Bumrah and Bhuvni are bowling well. It is important for them to stay in prime condition and the mental side of things will take care of itself, more so where conditions are like this, they'll get a lot more help than the first two games. "Can you take us through some tense and funny moments against Pakistan on field? Tense was Champions Trophy 2009 where Yuvi fractured a finger

and I was literally flown in and in two days' time I was playing against Pakistan at Centurion. I hadn't experienced anything like that before and I played a very bad shot. I couldn't sleep until 6 am. I was looking at the ceiling and thinking, that's it. I've flown in and now I'm finished. There have been many funny moments over the years. The incident happened during the World Cup in Mohali. I can't really elaborate here. That was quite funny. It was involving Shahid Afridi and Wahab. I was standing with the strikers, and I heard a conversation, which as I say, I can't elaborate here, but in a high-pressure game, that made me laugh.

bowling great who took 746 international wickets in a career spanning nearly two decades, said that consistency and discipline are the keys to success, after Bangladesh conceded 386 runs against England. "You have to have pace sometimes but for me, consistency, control and execution is more important. If you don't have the 140-150kph [pace], then you have to compensate [for] that. We have certainly been consistent, hitting the right areas and getting good variation. The guys have been working hard but you will have bad games here and there. Consistency is the key for us, and try to get good variation," he concluded. Courtesy: © ICC Business Corporation FZ LLC 2019



Australia's captain Aaron Finch celebrates scoring a century

Starc Oz & Big Finch clinch

Skipper Finch's 153, Starc's 4/55 lead Aussies fightback to beat SL by 87 runs

PTI ■ LONDON

Skipper Aaron Finch stroked his way to a majestic century as defending champions Australia inched closer to the semifinal berth with a crushing 87-run win over Sri Lanka in their World Cup fixture here Saturday.

Finch forged two crucial partnerships -- 80 with his opening partner David Warner (26) and 173 with Steve Smith (73 off 59) for the third wicket -- in his 132-ball 153 knock. It was his 14th ODI hundred which was laced with 15 fours and five sixes, two of them gigantic.

Glenn Maxwell then provided the late charge with an unbeaten 25-ball 46 as Australia posted a challenging 334 for 7.

Chasing the total, Sri Lanka were 115 for no loss at one stage but they squandered the superb start to be eventually dismissed for 247 in 45.5 overs.

Skipper Dimuth Karunaratne (97) was the top-scorer for Sri Lanka, while his opening partner Kusal Perera (52) also scored a fifty.

Mitchell Starc took four wickets, while Kane Richardson claimed three and Pat Cummins scalped two.

This is Australia's fourth win in five matches, having beaten Afghanistan, the West Indies and Pakistan while losing to India in the 10-team tournament.

Sri Lanka, who came into the match with one win from four games after their previous two matches were washed out, are however running out of time after suffering their second defeat.

Sri Lanka were off to a flying start to their run chase with Karunaratne and Kusal Perera helping the team to 87 for zero in 10 overs, the highest total in the powerplay in the tournament so far.

The Island nation scored 100 in 12.4 overs before Mitchell Starc produced a breakthrough, cleaning up Perera in the 16th over.

Lahiru Thirimanne (16), who survived a couple of run-out chances, brought up the team 150 with a square drive but he was caught behind in the next ball by Jason Behrendorff as Sri Lanka slipped to 153 for 2.

Runs dried up after that as Australia tightened the screws. With pressure mounting, Karunaratne ended up giving a straight catch to Maxwell at gully, just three runs short of his hundred.

Two quick wickets next saw Sri Lanka further slump to 209 for five and they never recovered after that.



Jason Behrendorff, second left, celebrates after taking the wicket of Sri Lanka's Lahiru Thirimanne

HIGHEST 3RD WICKET STAND FOR AUS				
Runs	Partners	Opp	Venue	Date
234*	Damien Martyn/Ricky Ponting	IND	Jo'burg	23-03-2003
207	Mark Waugh/Steve Waugh	KEN	Vizag	23-02-1996
173	Aaron Finch/Steven Smith	SL	The Oval	15-06-2019
161	Michael Clarke/Ricky Ponting	SA	Basseterre	24-03-2007
134	Michael Clarke/Steve Smith	SL	Sydney	08-03-2015

FAISEL FEATURES

CHASING THE TOTAL, SRI LANKA WERE 115 FOR NO LOSS AT ONE STAGE BUT THEY SQUANDERED THE SUPERB START TO BE EVENTUALLY DISMISSED FOR 247 IN 45.5 OVERS

Earlier, Finch played some exquisite shots to keep the runs flowing even as his opening partner Warner found the going tough.

Nuwan Pradeep was first in the firing line as he was hit for two fours by Finch.

The Australia skipper then blasted Lasith Malinga for a couple of fours in the seventh over before welcoming Thisara Perera with successive boundaries as Australia scored 53 in the first powerplay.

In the 17th over, Dhananjaya de Silva cleaned up Warner when he tried to make room for himself to play a cut shot.

Finch and Usman Khawaja (10) took Australia to hundred in 23rd over but the left-handed batsman perished soon after his

sweep shot was caught by Isuru Udana at deep mid-wicket.

Smith then joined hands with Finch, who exploded in the 29th over, smashing de Silva out of the park twice besides a boundary to amass 20 runs off the over.

Smith too dealt in boundaries as the duo brought up the 200 in 35.5 overs.

The former skipper completed his fifty in 46 balls, while Finch smashed Perera over deep square for his fifth six of the innings.

Finch and Smith carted Perera for 18 runs in the 41st over with each smashing a couple of fours. Smith then deposited Malinga over deep mid-wicket in the next over.

Udana finally broke the partnership when he had Finch caught at cover by Karunaratne off a slower delivery as Australia slipped to 273 for 3 in 42.4 overs.

Malinga then dismissed Smith with a cracking yorker in the next over, while Udana showed great athleticism to run out Alex Carey and Pat Cummins to stem the run flow.

FIGURATIVELY

Australia	
David Warner	c Dhananjaya de Silva 26
Aaron Finch	c Karunaratne b Udana 153
Usman Khawaja	c Udana 10
b Dhananjaya	
Steven Smith	b Malinga 73
Glenn Maxwell	not out 46
Shaun Marsh	c Shirwardena b Udana 3
Alex Carey	run out (Udana) 4
Pat Cummins	run out (Udana) 0
Mitchell Starc	not out 5
Edes	(b 0, lb 4, w 3, nb 1, p 0) 14
Total	(7 wks; 50 overs) 334
Fall of wickets: 80-1 (David Warner, 16.4), 100-2 (Usman Khawaja, 22.6), 273-3 (Aaron Finch, 42.4), 278-4 (Steven Smith, 43.3), 310-5 (Shaun Marsh, 46.6), 317-6 (Alex Carey, 48.1), 320-7 (Pat Cummins, 48.3)	

Bowling	
Lasith Malinga	10-1-61-1
Nuwan Pradeep	10-0-88-0
Isuru Udana	10-0-57-2
Thisara Perera	10-0-67-0
Dhananjaya de Silva	8-0-40-2
Milinda Siriwardena	2-0-17-0
Sri Lanka (Target: 335)	
D Karunaratne	c Maxwell b 97
b Richardson	
Kusal Perera	b Starc 52
Lahiru Thirimanne	b 16
b Behrendorff	
Caray	c Maxwell b 97
Kusal Mendis	c Alex Carey b Starc 30
Angelo Mathews	c Carey 9
b Pat Cummins	

Milinda Siriwardena	b Starc 3
Thisara Perera	c Warner b Starc 7
Isuru Udana	b Finch 16
Dhananjaya de Silva	not out 16
Isuru Udana	c Finch b Kane Richardson 8
Lasith Malinga	c Khawaja b Richardson 1
Nuwan Pradeep	c Carey 0
b Pat Cummins	
Edes	(b 0, lb 2, w 6, nb 0, p 0) 8
Total	(10 wks; 45.5 overs) 247
Fall of wickets: 115-1 (Kusal Perera, 15.3), 153-2 (Lahiru Thirimanne, 23.5), 186-3 (Dimuth Karunaratne, 32.1), 205-4 (Angelo Mathews, 35.4), 209-5 (Milinda Siriwardena, 36.2), 217-6 (Thisara Perera, 36.6), 222-7 (Kusal Mendis, 38.1), 236-8 (Isuru Udana, 39.6), 237-9 (Lasith Malinga, 41.4), 247-10 (Nuwan Pradeep, 45.5)	

Bowling	
Mitchell Starc	10-0-55-4
Pat Cummins	7-5-38-2
Jason Behrendorff	9-0-59-1
Kane Richardson	9-1-47-3
Glenn Maxwell	10-0-46-0

Australia win by 87 runs

FIGURATIVELY

Afghanistan	
Hazaratullah Zai	c Dussen b Rabada 22
Noor Ali Zadran	b Tahir 32
Rahmat Shah	lbw b Chris Morris 6
H Shahidi	c du Plessis b Phehlukwayo 8
Asghar Afghan	c & b Tahir 0
Mohammad Nabi	b Phehlukwayo 1
Ikram Ali Hill	c Armla b Chris Morris 9
Gulbadin Naib	c Markram b Tahir 5
Rashid Khan	c van der Dussen b Tahir 36
Hamid Hassan	c du Plessis b Morris 0
Atab Alam	not out 0
Edes	(b 0, lb 4, w 3, nb 0, p 9) 7
Total	(10 wks; 34.1 overs) 125
Fall of wickets: 39-1 (Hazaratullah Zai, 8.2), 55-2 (Rahmat Shah, 15.1), 69-3 (Hashmatullah Shahidi, 20.4), 69-4 (Noor Ali Zadran, 21.1), 70-5 (Asghar Afghan, 21.5), 70-6 (Mohammad Nabi, 22.1), 77-7 (Gulbadin Naib, 25.2), 111-8 (Ikram Ali Hill, 32.4), 125-9 (Rashid Khan, 33.5), 125-10 (Hamid Hassan, 34.1)	

Bowling	
Kagiso Rabada	8-1-36-1
Baunat Hendricks	5-1-25-0
Andile Phehlukwayo	8-1-18-2
Chris Morris	6-1-2-13-3
Innan Tahir	7-0-29-4
South Africa (Target: 127)	
Hashim Amla	not out 41
Quinton de Kock	b Nabi b Tahir 68
Andile Phehlukwayo	not out 17
Did not bat	Morkoran, Faf du Plessis, Dussen, Miller, Morris, Rabada, Tahir, Baunat Hendricks
Edes	(b 0, lb 1, w 4, nb 0, p 9) 5
Total	(1 wks; 28.4 overs) 131
Fall of wickets: 104-1 (Quinton de Kock, 22.5)	

South Africa win by 9 wickets

Afghans collapse

PTI ■ CARDIFF

South Africa finally arrived to the party as they picked up their first victory of the 2019 World Cup, beating Afghanistan by nine wickets (DLS) in a rain-affected match at the Sophia Gardens in Cardiff on Saturday.

Leg-spinner Innan Tahir snared four wickets to trigger Afghanistan's dramatic batting collapse as South Africa bundled them out for 125 in yet another rain-affected World Cup match here Saturday.

Sent into bat, Afghanistan were slow and steady to reach 69 for 2 at the end of the 20th over when rain came for the second time and when play resumed after a break of one hour, they lost four quick wickets for the addition of just eight runs.

They were reduced to 77 for 7 in the 26th over, losing five wickets in the space of 4.4 overs.

Earlier, the Afghanistan innings was also halted for 25 minutes in the sixth over due to rains. After the second rain interruption, the match was reduced to a 48-over side.

The Afghans did not even last the full 48 overs as they were shot out in 34.1 overs.

South Africa will now chase 127 from 48 overs to get their first win in the tournament after the target was revised under Duckworth/Lewis method.

Chris Morris chipped in with three wickets while his pace colleagues Andile Phehlukwayo and Kagiso Rabada took two and one wicket respectively as the Afghans gave little fight against the Proteas.

Phehlukwayo removed a struggling Hashmatullah Shahidi (8 off 22 balls) in the fourth ball after the long rain interruption before Tahir took two wickets in the next over, dismissing well-set Noor Ali Zadran (32 off 58 balls) and Asghar Afghan (0) in the space of five deliveries.

Phehlukwayo then had Mohammad Nabi (1) in the next over -- 23rd -- before Tahir got his third wicket of the day in the 26th over in the form of captain Gulbadin Naib (5) to leave Afghanistan innings in disarray.

After a competition among Afghan batsmen to return to the dressing room, it was number 9 and top-scorer Rashid Khan, who delayed the end of Afghan innings and take them past 100-mark with a 25-ball 35 but his late fight was too little too late.

He stitched a 34-run stand with wicketkeeper Ikram Alihill (9 off 33 balls) for the eighth wicket before he was out in the 34th over.



Hashmatullah Shahidi leaves the field due to a rain delay during the match against South Africa



David Warner presents autographed Australian jersey to net bowler Jaykishan Plaha who was hit by Warner's shot during practice session

One for you mate!

PTI ■ LONDON

David Warner on Saturday presented a signed team shirt to the Indian origin net bowler Jaykishan Plaha who was struck on the head by a powerful drive from the Australian opener.

Warner met Plaha ahead of Australia's game against Sri Lanka and presented him with an autographed team shirt.

"Last week, Jaykishan Plaha was hit on the head by a David Warner drive during an Australia training session," said a post on the official World Cup Twitter handle.

"Today, Warner met both Jaykishan and his mum before play, presented Jaykishan with an Australia shirt and wished him a speedy recovery."

"Hope you recover well. I appreciate your understanding," Warner said in the video.

The incident took place ahead of Australia's clash with India on Sunday. Australia had immediately stopped their training session as the team's medical staff and paramedics rushed to attend an injured Plaha. The 22-year-old spent four nights in a London hospital.

Plaha, who was seen happily chatting with Warner in the video, thanked the explosive opener for his gesture.

"Warner gave me his match shirt from the World Cup. Really appreciate it. What happened was that I got hit on the head by David Warner on the front drive. Plaha said in a video posted on Twitter.

"Glad to be standing here actually. Hope to be back on the field soon. My dream is to be a professional cricketer as well," he added.

Combustion Point

Only rain can douse the flying fireworks at India-Pak clash

TODAY LIVE

India vs Pakistan

3:00 pm IST

VENUE: Old Trafford, Manchester

PNS ■ OLD TRAFFORD (MANCHESTER)

Yeah... no pressure at all, only 1.5 billion people waiting for you to win," said Hardik Pandya the other day in his usual laconic manner. But that quite well summarises the traditional frenzy around any high voltage India-Pakistan clash, more so in the World Cup, even if emerging statesman Virat Kohli refuses to rise to the bait and add some of his own banter to the occasion.

With the match rated as big as Football World Cup Final with a 1.5 billion viewership count, it is quite unusual - and unfortunate - that all the mid-field contest, combination, chirping, strategizing and what not kind of exciting talk has taken a backseat to the more mundane and entirely unrequired chance of rain cutting short the proceedings today when a well sorted India high on self-belief, performance and wins, meet a relatively new, cornered and edgy Pakistan facing near ouster from the tournament.

Kohli says that a 50-over both sides match would be outstanding for combination and strategy, but flexibility would be required if the rain cuts it short, of which chances are high. As per the latest on the weather chart - which has been changing stance since morning - there is now a 20 per cent rain chance at 10 am and 80 per cent in the afternoon around 2, for at least an hour-and-a-half. The match is slated to begin at 10.30 am local time.

How much of a truncated contest it will become remains to be discussed in emergent morning huddles in both the dressing rooms, but with the kind of conditions in the air, a three-man pace battery with the inclusion of Mohammed Sami is a distinct possibility. "Bumrah and Bhuvni are bowling well. It is important for them to stay in prime condition and the



Indian players attend a training session ahead of their World Cup match against Pakistan at Old Trafford in Manchester

mental side of things will take care of itself, more so where conditions are like this, they'll get a lot more help than the first two games," skipper Virat Kohli said at his pre-match Press conference.

Statistics tell you, and the entire world quotes them with joy and concern depending on which side of the border the chirp is coming from, Pakistan is yet to record a victory against India in a World Cup. They broke this traditional ICC event barrier in the Champions Trophy Final which they won, but as their coach Mickey Arthur says, "that was a long time ago."

More than anything in a game of this proportion, where emotions get overly stoked, especially in young dressing rooms on either side, the need is to draw from focus more than precedent, calm more than passion and self-belief over all else.



Groundsman cover the field with plastic sheets as it rains ahead of the India-Pakistan at Old Trafford

HEAD TO HEAD				
	Played	IND	PAK	N/R
Matches	131	54	73	4
Day matches	89	34	51	4
In World Cup	6	6	—	—
Last 5 matches	5	4	1	—

HIGHEST TOTALS		
India	356-9 in 50 overs at Visakhapatnam	05-04-2005
Pakistan	344-8 in 50 overs at Karachi	13-03-2004

PERFORMANCE IN WC						
Team	P	W	L	T	N/R	Success%
India	77	48	27	1	1	63.63
Pakistan	74	41	31	-	2	56.75

FAISAL FEATURES

Kohli knows that Aamir is in top gear having torn through the Australians with his fiercer and Wahab comes with his own brand of pace and risk. But he, like Arthur, has also seen that the three disciplines of batting, bowling and fielding are yet to come together for the green brigade. While Arthur is looking at creating havoc upfront to unsettle the famed Indian batting order, Kohli is confident that the shock of a seasoned Shikhar Dhawan being unavailable would be duly dealt with by KL Rahul who is in keen nick.

The regimen is the same as always: See through the first 10 overs, build up a score that the bowlers can defend and then wait for the excellence of the arm department to play through the opponents. On a brown top, there are brownie points for the likes of Rohit Sharma and Kohli himself who scored a scintillating ton the last time the two met in the World Cup at Adelaide. Neither has picked up niggles or rust in the contravening four years. Add to that the fast and furious Hardik Pandya, who fired away in the nets on match eve, and master finisher in M S Dhoni,

and all one needs is a plan that works, a belief that propels it and conditions that give India the wings to fly to another two points.

Hype or not, in the end, it is just about two points, like from any other game, isn't it? The tournament will go on and tomorrow will be yet another day for Kohli. For Pakistan skipper Sarfaraz Ahmed though, a defeat would mean, well, Gone With The Wind, without the Scarlet O Hara kind of optimism in defeat and misery.

SQUADS

India: Virat Kohli (captain), KL Rahul, Rohit Sharma, Vijay Shankar, MS Dhoni (wk), Hardik Pandya, Kedar Jadhav, Kuldeep Yadav, Yuzvendra Chahal, Bhuvneshwar Kumar, Jasprit Bumrah, Mohammed Shami, Dinesh Karthik, Ravindra Jadeja, Shikhar Dhawan.
Pakistan: Sarfaraz Ahmed (captain), Fakhar Zaman, Imam ul Haq, Babar Azam, Harris Sohail, Hasan Ali, Shadab Khan, Mohammed Hafeez, Mohammed Hasnain, Shaheen Shah Afridi, Wahab Riaz, Mohammed Aamir, Shoab Malik, Imad Wasim, Asif Ali.

For us, no one is a threat: Kohli

Despite more than a dozen questions thrown at him about the high tension around an India-Pakistan clash, skipper Virat Kohli refused to rise to the bait and said he would not say anything at all to push the TRPs. He insisted that the team would be treating it as any other game in World Cup cricket, giving their 100 per cent because that's the only thing that wins matches. Excerpts from the Press conference:

PNS ■ OLD TRAFFORD (MANCHESTER)

How tough is it for India to prepare and plan for an unpredictable side like Pakistan?

We know they have talent, but we play well as a team. In the first two games we gave clinical performances and focused on what we need to do. We're not focusing too much on what the opposition has to do or what it will bring to the table. We need to believe in our strengths. If we play well as a team we can beat any side in the world. That's the type of confidence we have carried in the first two games and we want to continue in the same manner in the next whatever coming games we have.

Considering Pakistan's proficiency against spinners and the wicket, any strategic changes needed?

The conditions and the length of the game will make us think about a few combinations. The kind of spinners and the kind of bowlers we have, it's difficult for any team to just come out and attack these guys. There's a certain level of risk involved when we have world class bowlers bowling at you.

We need to focus on the combination we're comfortable with because we bat all the players in our team and expect them to put in performances and execute what they are best known for. The length of the game and looking at the conditions, we can definitely think of a few combinations.

Do you have to plan something different for Pakistan?

We have to be flexible. We can't be rigid in our approach because if the conditions are different from what we played in the last game then we'll have to think of different combinations, areas to strengthen in the bowling attack. If pace becomes a more important option, we'll look to explore that. If not, if the length of the game is going to be full and we expect the game to be 50 overs both sides, then we'll probably think of another combination. We'll have to see how today pans out, how tomorrow the conditions are. All players are in a zone to be ready to play, so that helps in selecting the combination you need, depending on the conditions.

Who's the real threat in the Pakistan team for you considering the weather?

We're not focusing on the opposition, so for us no one's a threat. No one player matters more than the other. It's about going into the park as the Indian cricket team and taking on whichever team is in front of you. If we play well, we can beat any side in the world. If you don't, teams are going to beat you. That's how simple the game of cricket is, and should be.

In our minds, nothing changes according to the opposition. We're only focused on playing the type of cricket we're known for, not singling out any player from the opposition.

Any message for the fans?

For us, a professional approach is most important. We can't get too emotional or excited. But for the fans, looking at the atmosphere and



Virat Kohli bats in the nets during a training session at Old Trafford on Saturday

frenzy around the game, I wouldn't say it's easy to think like a player. The fans should enjoy the atmosphere, the occasion the way they want to and the way it's been enjoyed for years, but the players obviously have to maintain the mindset which we have for years approaching any game, whether it's against Pakistan, Australia, England or South Africa. We need to go out, be professional and execute what

we're expected to.

Have not played this team very often. How much of a challenge that is?

I don't see it as a massive challenge because even the teams that you know well, you have to play good cricket against. If you play good cricket, if you do the basics better than the opponent, then invariably you win, unless someone

MY MOST TENSE MOMENT AGAINST PAKISTAN WAS CHAMPIONS TROPHY 2009. YUVI FRACTURED A FINGER AND I WAS LITERALLY FLOWN IN.

IN TWO DAYS' TIME I WAS PLAYING AGAINST PAKISTAN AT CENTURION. I PLAYED A VERY BAD SHOT AND COULDN'T SLEEP UNTIL 6 AM.

I WAS LOOKING AT THE CEILING AND THINKING, THAT'S IT, I'VE FLOWN IN AND NOW I'M FINISHED. THERE HAS BEEN FUNNY INCIDENT HAPPENED DURING THE WORLD CUP IN MOHALI. I CAN'T ELABORATE BUT IT WAS QUITE FUNNY. IT WAS INVOLVING SHAHID AFRIDI AND WAHAB. I WAS STANDING WITH THE STRIKERS, AND I HEARD A CONVERSATION WHICH, MADE ME LAUGH

creates a match-winning magical performance all by himself. Familiar oppositions, unfamiliar oppositions don't matter because you understand that if you don't play well, you don't win, and if you play well, you win against anyone. If we do our strengths well it will be good enough for anyone in the world. We need to have that belief.

When it is a game against Pakistan what do you tell your young camp?

We have discussed nothing different from the time we came to England. The mood in the dressing room hasn't changed. We understand that any game you play for your country can be emotional, adrenaline filled, so no one game is more important or more special for us than the other. We are a top side in the world because of the cricket we play and we always need to remember that.

You have had outstanding success under pressure. But how difficult is it as a captain to keep the youngsters away from the hustle-bustle of an Indo-Pak meet?

The best way to approach something like this is to understand that the game starts tomorrow at a certain time and it finishes at a certain time, it's not going to last a lifetime, whether you do well or don't. The tournament goes on. As a unit, 11 guys share responsibility. That's been our message from day one.

It rains, then what?

It's in no one's hands. We've been in these situations many times. We'll just have to wait and see how the weather pans out. Whatever amount of game we get

a full game would be outstanding for us. We have to be mentally ready to go in there and do what we need to do.

Fast bowlers haven't had an ideal preparation for this big game...

They are in a good head space and have bowled well in the first two games. If physically they can stay fresh and their bodies are feeling good, mentally they're just fine. They should take care of their bodies, recovery and energy levels. Bumrah and Bhuvni are bowling well. It is important for them to stay in prime condition and the mental side of things will take care of itself, more so where conditions are like this, they'll get a lot more help than the first two games.

Can you take us through some tense and funny moments against Pakistan on field?

Tense was Champions Trophy 2009 where Yuvi fractured a finger and I was literally flown in and in two days' time I was playing against Pakistan at Centurion. I hadn't experienced anything like that before and I played a very bad shot. I couldn't sleep until 6 am. I was looking at the ceiling and thinking, that's it, I've flown in and now I'm finished.

There have been many funny moments over the years. The incident happened during the World Cup in Mohali. I can't really elaborate here. That was quite funny. It was involving Shahid Afridi and Wahab. I was standing with the strikers, and I heard a conversation, which as I say, I can't elaborate here, but in a high-pressure game, that made me laugh.

the pioneer agenda

People are always searching for that high, and they don't realise that they can get that same high with that same person again
Christina Applegate



FROM THE INSIDE

An all-too-possible future
In Yudhanjaya Wijeratne's new book, *Numbercaste*, people's importance is distilled into an all-powerful number

2



4

The paradox called life
We are all aware of the concept of death, but it is still difficult to bear with the loss of a loved one



MANY A SLIP BETWEEN THE CUP AND THE LIP

With an impressive squad comprising maverick ex-captain Dhoni, the phenomenon called Captain Kohli, all-rounders like Pandya and Jadhav, and destroyer-in-chief bowler Bumrah, Team India's chances in the 12th edition of the ICC Cricket World Cup 2019 look bright. Could this be the third time the Men in Blue will lift the Cup? Only time will tell

This is it. We've come full circle. We're back to where our journey as a cricket crazy nation began: England. Lord's. Here we go again. From complete underdogs then to absolute world dominators and financial powerhouses now. We've come a long way since that fine day in 1983 when Kapil Dev — an all-rounder from Punjab with an erstwhile ordinary individual record — lifted that trophy and ushered in an era of frantic following to the point of raising the status of the sport to that of a religion and its most revered son, Sachin Tendulkar, to that of a God.



SIDHARTH DANG

A lot has happened between that iconic moment in the balcony of Lord's to the iconic six hit by Mahendra Singh Dhoni to win India's second World Cup in 2011. But all of that later. First, let's celebrate the fact that our Sharma ji ka ladda, Rohit Sharma, is living up to expectations, and that *Koffee With Karan* came way before the World Cup and IPL, and is a thing of the past. If only it will serve to ignite the fuel to perform better for Hardik Pandya and KL Rahul. And we still have our maverick ex-captain, Dhoni, albeit for most likely the last tournament of his stellar trophy-laden career.

So let's get down to business and examine with utmost scrutiny our beloved Team India's chances in the 12th edition of the ICC Cricket World Cup 2019. Starting with our very own captain furious, Virat Kohli. He has come a long way since leading India to the U19 Cricket World Cup in 2008, and being a part, but not a key man, of the 2011 World Cup winning squad. He was handed over the ODI captaincy in 2017 and has only taken India to newer heights since. His personal accolades are a statistician's dream. In ODIs, he holds the world record for the fastest batsman to 10,000 runs in 205 innings. He has the highest number of centuries in run chases in the world and is only nine centuries away from breaking Tendulkar's record (49) in style, which I'm sure all us thought would never be broken.

But as the adage and some commentator's favourite line goes: "Records are made to be broken." We should, in fact, consider ourselves fortunate that we are seeing the cricket version of Messi and Ronaldo — albeit not in the same era — and both of them are Indians. And they are broken and keep getting broken in every department, which makes you wonder what the reason for that could be. The reasons are plenty, namely smaller cricket boundaries, never improved thicker bats, different balls (Dukes v

Kookaburra), changed power play rules, and pitches generally favouring batsmen etc.

So it's only natural that India would feature heavily amongst those records being a batting heavy team predominantly. But recently, trends have changed and for the better. India has become a force to reckon with when it comes to the ball. The destroyer-in-chief being Jasprit Bumrah, who is atop the ICC world rankings for bowlers. He is supported by Kuldeep Yadav (7), Yuzvendra Chahal (8), Bhuvnesh Kumar (17) — who are all amongst the top 20. While amongst the top 20 batsmen, only three Indians feature, namely Kohli (1), Rohit Sharma (2), and Shikhar Dhawan (14). The next best batsman is Dhoni at number 24.

Talking of the all-rounders, they are what many believe to be the X factor in India's chances for progressing to the last four. Pandya is fresh off a *Koffee* controversy and fresher off an IPL showing he should be proud of — he ended the tournament with 402 runs at a strike rate of over 190, smashing 38 boundaries and 29 sixes in 15 matches. He also claimed 14 wickets in 16 games. He has so far played 45 ODIs and has taken 44 wickets with an economy of 5.53 and batting lower down the order, he has scored 731 runs in 29 innings. He can field well too and can bowl six to seven crucial overs, picking up wickets. His role is akin to that of Yuvraj Singh in the 2011 World Cup. And if he can channelise that embarrassing, unnecessary media scrutiny and a wonderful IPL showing, he can very much be the most important player of the team and a potential Man of the Tournament just like Yuvraj Singh.

The other player who could be as effective is Kedar Jadhav. He might not be as exuberant and controversial but he has proved himself many a time not just with the bat but also with the ball. A solid middle order batsman and good finisher, he is also the man with the "golden arm". His side arm action and the angle at which he delivers makes it difficult for batsmen to pick the ball.

KL Rahul has also shown his mettle and not let controversies affect him. It's good to see that both Pandya and Rahul took the negative media attention in a positive way and came out of it stronger and more determined. Rahul looks confident and reliable to call upon in any situation. He has made the crucial number 4 position his own. And being an opener originally, it's an advantage when the ball is moving around and causing problems. Talking of how the controversy affected him, he said: "In life, in cricket, you make mistakes. You have bad days, you learn from them and try to be a better person. I never doubted myself, my personality, never doubted who I am. I was strong in my head, I got through it and am happy to be back and enjoying my cricket." I think we all have something to learn from him in the sense that it's not the blow

that gets you down, it's the mettle to get back up and fight for what you believe in.

This is the fifth time that cricket's most prestigious tournament is being held in England and Wales. The previous winners of those editions have been West Indies (1975, 1979), India (1983), and Australia (1999). The format for the tournament is quite different from the previous editions we are used to seeing. It's played in a round-robin manner in a single group of 10 teams, with each team playing the other nine once, and the top four at the end of the group phase progressing to the semi-finals. The 1992 World Cup in Australia and New Zealand was also played in a round-robin format, with nine teams participating. The 10-team tournament this time has gained criticism due to the lack of Associate teams in the tournament. Given the increase of the Test-playing nations from 10 to 12, with the admission of Ireland and Afghanistan in June 2017, it is the first World Cup to be contested without all of the Test playing nations being present. After the elimination of all Associate teams at the qualifying tournament, this is also the first World Cup to feature no Associate members.

There's no tournament without a bit of controversy. A few days ago, Dhoni was asked by the ICC to remove the dagger insignia from his wicket-keeping gloves despite the Indian cricket board's assertion that it was not a military symbol. The BCCI had sought permission for the star wicketkeeper batsman from the world governing body (ICC), but it was denied citing regulations that no individual message or logo can be displayed on any item of clothing or equipment. In addition, the logo also breaches the rule that allows only one sponsor's logo on the wicket-keeping gloves. In Dhoni's case, he already sports an SG logo on his gloves.

Another talking point is the big match for all Indians — cricket fans or not — at Old Trafford, Manchester, on June 16. It's the one game that brings every Indian together (if cricket didn't do a good enough job of it already). It's India v Pakistan. With the same old rivalry and passion, but with renewed verve and political context. Following the 2019 Pulwama attack, several former Indian players and the BCCI called for the boycott of this group match fixture, wanting to ban the Pakistan team from playing in the tournament. However, after conducting a board meeting in Dubai, the ICC rejected the BCCI's proposal and confirmed that the scheduled match would go ahead as planned, despite the ongoing stand-off between the two nations. The match being held today will most likely be viewed the world over by a record audience as is usually expected for an India-Pakistan encounter, but made extra tense by the recent political relationship of the two nations.



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VIRAT KOHLI HAS COME A LONG WAY SINCE LEADING INDIA TO THE U19 CRICKET WORLD CUP IN 2008, AND BEING A PART, BUT NOT A KEY MAN, OF THE 2011 WORLD CUP WINNING SQUAD. HE WAS HANDED OVER THE ODI CAPTAINCY IN 2017 AND HAS ONLY TAKEN INDIA TO NEWER HEIGHTS SINCE

Talking of India, Pakistan and the many reasons this cannot be viewed as just a sport. It's an extension of everything we stand for and believe in — personally, politically, morally. Ever wondered why Team India's jersey colour is blue and not the usual suspected patriotic colours, saffron or green? It had to be taken from the Indian Flag as a symbolic gesture for patriotism. While saffron stands for courage and selflessness, green signifies faith, fertility, and prosperity. The blue in the Ashoka Chakra stands for the colour of the sky and ocean. The selection of saffron or green colours for the jerseys would have created controversies of religious or political favoritism as saffron is heavily associated with Hinduism, Jainism, and Buddhism as well as the political parties we all know by now, while green is affiliated with Islam. Thus, it wouldn't have been a wise decision to choose those to represent a nation which prides itself to be secular. The blue colour then automatically became the first choice to represent the nation and its warriors on the field with its symbolic meaning of the "most truth of the universe". And "Bleed Blue" has recently become an anthem of the youth, again symbolically signifying the passion and dedication of battling till you bleed and staying true to your talents and virtues. And nobody embodies that never-say-die attitude and fighter mentality than our current and former captains, Kohli and Dhoni.

In the 2011 World Cup hosted by India, we were one of the favourites and definitely one with the most pressure to perform on our home ground with the final being in Mumbai. This time, that mantle is taken by England with the final being at the Mecca of cricket — Lord's. And unlike India, they're not that adept at handling the undue pressure of expectations, with the 2013 Champions Trophy final being a case in point. India sure has good memories of playing finals at the Mecca of cricket (cue Sourav Ganguly's shirt waving at Lord's balcony), the NatWest Series Final in 2002, and, of course, the 1983 World Cup win. But for that to happen again, India will have to beat the best of the best to first come in the top four and then it's all down to the semi-finals and the finale at Lord's.

England, meanwhile, will be looking to win their first ever World Cup, which is ironic since they're the inventors of the game. They have been losing finalists in 1979, 1987, and 1992. In the 2015 World Cup, Bangladesh knocked out England from the group stage, which raised questions on the latter's relevance as an ODI team. Since then, they have completely turned over a new leaf and have become the number 1 ranked team in the world in ODIs. They have defeated several top teams, including India and Australia, this year and their batsmen also broke the record for the highest total in an ODI innings. With a plethora of match winners in their squad, they are certainly not the team they were in the previous World Cups and are viewed by most as 'the team to watch out for. But whether or not they have shed their choker status and weak mentality remains to be seen. Lord's save the Queen!

The writer is a doctor by profession and an amateur cricketer

A MANIFESTO FOR CHANGE

In *India Positive*, CHETAN BHAGAT reflects on what we can do right to move forward and become a truly modern and progressive country. He believes that if we want to see reform, we — as citizens — need to be the solution. An excerpt:

For India to truly change, there needs to be a change in our society and culture. The internet is playing a big part in it. The rise of internet penetration also means that things are now more equal, since people who didn't have a voice before now do. 'The Great Opinion Wars' talks about how social media has allowed aspirational Indians to voice their opinions on topics that have always been the domain of the privileged class.

However, social media has also birthed a strange new phenomenon in India — the *bhakt*s, and there is advice for both the *bhakt*s and those at the receiving end of their abuse in 'Anatomy of an Internet Troll'. Another phenomenon on social media has caused it 'virtue signallers' — those people who have to show that they are so virtuous, so noble and so good that they sense communal intolerance in a statement even when others don't. 'Look, I'm so secular!': The Rise of Virtue Signallers on Social Media' talks about this and how it distorts national public debate on a range of important issues.

But do these phenomena indicate that India is getting more intolerant? There are endless debates about this, but I think that we are a mixed society, tolerant and intolerant at the same time, as explained in 'Fifty Shades of Intolerance'. I don't believe that intolerance has anything to do with the request from Hindus that a temple be built in Ayodhya, and 'Why We Need a Ram Temple in Ayodhya' talks about why restoring the temple on its original site and building an even grander mosque nearby will be a great act of religious cooperation.

A crucial aspect of what makes India the country it is, is the fact that we are a democracy, and any attempt to undermine that is dangerous. The essay on blind *bhakt*s talks about how unquestioning support of a leader, rather than the country, can actually harm that leader. The essay on the Supreme Court's order regarding the playing

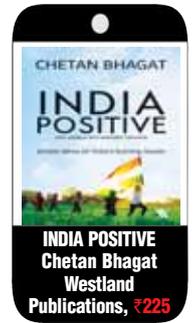


of the National Anthem before a movie screening (Anthem Order: The Intention's Good but Imposition Isn't) argues that authoritarianism can never create patriotism. The Government ban on pornography is a similar curtailment of basic freedoms, as explained in 'Hypocritical and Impractical: With the Porn Ban, the Government Has Flaunted Its Control Freak Instincts'. I think that the key to becoming a modern nation is to defend individual lib-

THE REASON FOR MODI'S APPEAL IS OBVIOUS. AFTER ALL, HE IS A LEADER WHO HAS CREATED SOME HOPE. HE SPEAKS A LANGUAGE THAT CONNECTS US

erties. Related to this is the need to stop mixing religion and law, and 'Too Many Holy Cows' talks about how it is time to discuss what it means to be a secular republic, and revise the Constitution to reflect it. Social change means that we need to look at the infrastructures in our cities, and the essay on Mumbai rains talks about this and what needs to be done so that the country's financial capital does not come to a grinding halt every monsoon. This overriding indiffer-

ence that seems to inflict Indians is also reflected in our views on corruption, and our don't-care attitude to corruption is addressed in the essay on the 2G 'non-scam'. It's important for one to be proud of the country we live in, and 'Will You Spend ₹80 to See India Win a Dozen Olympic Golds?' suggests ways that we can improve our gold medal tally at the Olympics at the micro and macro level. Finally, 'Creaming the People' suggests a move from caste-based reserva-



INDIA POSITIVE
Chetan Bhagat
Westland Publications, ₹225

HOW BLIND BHAKTS CAN ACTUALLY HARM INDIA'S DEMOCRACY
If you are a true nationalist, put the nation before individuals, even if that individual happens to be your favourite leader.

I recently conducted a Twitter poll to test the hypothesis that Narendra Modi enjoys an insane amount of support among his fans. The poll asked this question: If Modi wanted to declare a national emergency to eliminate corruption, would you support it? Of nearly 10,000 participants, 57 per cent said they would support such a decision.

The usual Twitter poll disclaimers apply: It's a highly skewed sample, polls aren't scientific, etc. Also, the poll does not indicate my own views in any way, nor does it claim that such a proposal is on the Government's agenda. However, the results do give us a sense of what some of Modi's hardcore fans (the *bhakt*s) feel. It is worth noting that the participants were almost all young, educated, digitally savvy

people who understand English. Yes, a significant number of progressive young Indians are apparently happy to give up democracy, and vote themselves voteless.

Stunned? Well, I admit that the question was a tad unfair. After all, there is nothing in the air that suggests an emergency is in the offing. Nor does one need to make such harsh choices in order to proclaim their support, or lack of it, for a leader. Still, the numbers do show (a) the enormous popularity of Modi in his core fan base and/or (b) a possible ignorance of what a national emergency and giving up democracy could mean. They also indicate a huge lack of confidence in the current political system and the kind of leadership it offers.

The reason for Modi's appeal is obvious. After all, he is a leader who has created some hope. He speaks a language that connects us. Modi takes steps — big, bold ones — to fix India. Whether or not they solve problems is a separate story. Making the effort and having good intentions counts for a lot. Demonetisation is a case in point. Many experts have questioned the benefits of the move. They diligently quote numbers and facts to show that the actual advantages of demonetisation could be marginal. Of course, these are wasted efforts. All this economic mumbo-jumbo is irrelevant to the Modi fan. If fans are ready to support an emergency in their leader's name, do you really think they give a damn about falling GDP or actual data about black money being back in circulation?

No, we are talking about love here. Love doesn't, and is not meant to, see reason. And speaking of demonetisation, the experts, though not wrong, miss a key point: A huge intangible benefit of the note ban has been its unifying effect on an otherwise divided country. Imagine a bickering joint family.

Excerpted with permission from Chetan Bhagat's *India Positive: New Ideas and Selected Columns* published by Westland Publications, ₹225

NEW ARRIVALS

SEIGE: TRUMP UNDER FIRE
Michael Wolff
Hachette, ₹699

Michael Wolff, author of *Fire and Fury*, once again takes us inside Trump presidency to reveal a White House under siege. In *Seige*, he has written an equally essential and explosive book about a presidency that is under fire from almost every side. A stunningly fresh narrative that begins just as Trump's second year as President is getting underway and ends with the delivery of the Mueller report, *Seige* reveals an administration that is beleaguered by investigations and a President who is increasingly volatile, erratic, and exposed.

THE DEATH OF HITLER
Jean-Christophe Brisard and Lana Parshina
Hodder, ₹399

On April 30, 1945, Hitler committed suicide in his bunker as the Red Army closed in on Berlin. Within four days, the Soviets had recovered his body. But the truth about what the Russian secret services found was hidden from history, when, three months later, Stalin officially declared to Truman and Churchill that Hitler was still alive and had escaped abroad. Reckless rumours about what really happened to Hitler began to spread like wildfire and, even today, they have not been put to rest. Until now.

RAIN DROPS AND CATERPILLARS
Anuradha Prasad
Leadstar, ₹199

This book is dedicated to all those who have created a paradigm shift for others. To those too, who are standing at the helm ready to jump to make bigger changes possible. A pet is lost? Was it stolen or has it just wandered? Her owner is searching. Is it in the wilderness or dead? What life throws at a 13-year-old girl during her search: he is tall, dark, handsome a proverbial 'bachelor'. But he has a dark secret. What is it? His life was charted and planned. Till he found something about his love that turned it all upside down. The stories run on sublimity, acceptance, courage, compassion, devotion, and deceit.

The James Bond movies of the 1960s genre were our first exposure to science fiction. At a time when television or satellite television channels were unheard of and even telephones and cars were rare items (at least in Kanjirakkadu in Ernakulam district where I grew up), the scenes which portrayed Sean Connery — who immortalised Bond — speaking to his sources at far away places through the contraption attached to his wrist watch and driving around in that Aston Martin still linger in the mind. Sridhar, a theatre at Ernakulam, was the window to this world of sci-fi to my generation. Sridhar then has given way to a shopping mall and the interest in James Bond movies, too, came to an end with Connery leaving the field and making way for the new generation actors.

But interest in science fiction continued because of television series like *Cosmos: A Personal Voyage* anchored by Carl Sagan and the works penned by Arthur C. Clarke whose *2001: A Space Odyssey* remains fresh in the mind. Through his science writings, Clarke told us that the world would use space science and satellites from the geostationary and technology sector. Scientific devices. He had written in one of his science papers in 1945 about the 'extra-terrestrial relays' that would revolutionise the world of communication. Conventional science teachers had scoffed at such ideas and told us not to be carried away by such prophecies! See what has happened to the telecommunication sector, which has transformed the world into a global village.

In *Ramayana*, the great Indian epic which is portrayed by progressive elements as a work of fiction, the war between Lord Rama and the demon king Ravana is described by author Sage Valmiki as a spot report from the theatre of war. Valmiki gave an account of the myriad arrows deployed by the Lord and his enemy. Aagnyana, Varuna, Kaubera, Indrastraam, Nairyathastram, Yaanyastram, Gandharvnastram, Gaubhyakamastram, Aasuramastram, Vaishnavastram are some of the arrows used by the Lord and his rival in the war, which lasted many days. It was Brahmastra, provided by Lord Indra through Matsya, the charioteer, which came to the rescue of Lord Rama in finishing off Ravana once and for ever.

Rationalists may laugh at the names of arrows deployed in the great *Ramayana* war. But the truth is that modern missiles developed by Indian scientists and which could be categorised based on their properties (surface to air or SAM, Agni, Prithvi, Aakash etc) were all inspired by the arrows mentioned in the great epic. This underlines the role played by science-fiction in

Looking into the future

Numbercaste talks of a world where how much a man means depends on not just his money, but his worth as a member of the species, writes KUMAR CHELLAPPAN



developing the technological know-how. Science fiction is what strengthens the foundation for strong and robust science and technology sector. Scientific temper should not be to demean and ridicule the facts mentioned in India specific epics and great literary works. The dreams espoused by the great science fiction authors are slowly but steadily becoming a reality. Recent news coming out of China is that scientists in that country have succeeded in developing the Invisible Coat, a subject that has inspired many books and films.

Numbercaste, authored by Sri Lanka-born Yudhanjaya Wijerane, is an exciting piece of work. We are mute witnesses to the role played by Artificial Intelligence and Information Technology in moulding the new world. These technological marvels are like double-edged swords, similar to the

internet as well as mobile phones. How the internet and cellphones cause disasters and development in human lives is a part of modern folklore.

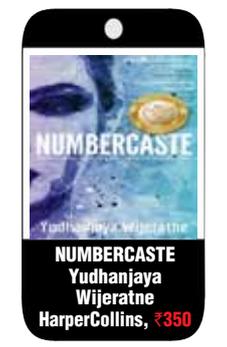
We live in an era where human beings have lost their relevance and identity and have been compressed into 10 or 12 digit numbers. The Aadhaar number controversy is raging all over India, with people debating heatedly about personal privacy being violated with the help of Aadhaar numbers, making the humans 'niraadhaar'.

What Wijerane portrays in this work of fiction is how a technology developed by *Numbercaste*, a digital startup launched in Silicon Valley by Julius Common, an entrepreneur with strange habits, takes on IT giants like Facebook, Google, and other social media outlets and emerges as the global monopoly. The events unfold in our

immediate future, say in 2030 or so.

The Twitter is dead and gone. *Numbercaste* starts from where Twitter ends. 'People used hashtags, 140 characters, and you send a message out and the people who follow you could read it. We are building something like that. The plan is you are in the area and people are talking about it, then you know it. It could be anything from a revolution to armed robbery to a party happening two lanes away. It doesn't matter. If it's something you can benefit from, we'll point you that way. *Numbercaste*'s got you covered,' Common, owner of *Numbercaste*, tells Patrick Udo, the main protagonist who has been hired by Common for the job.

Common explains to Patrick his idea of the perfect world. 'A world where you can name a man and I can tell you exactly how much he means to us... Not



NUMBERCASTE
Yudhanjaya Wijerane
HarperCollins, ₹350

just the money in his bank, but his actual worth, as a member of this species. You can drive your expensive cars and roll out your stupid make-up, but in 10 years' time, none of that will matter. I am going to take this world and I am going to goddamn grind it into something more real,' declares Common. He lives up to his word. It is a thrilling mission. If the reviewer reveals more, the suspense associated with the book would vanish. Since this book is a must-read for all who are interested in the future of the world, it is not advisable to disclose more than this.

The *Numbercaste* brought back memories of 1984, the dystopian novel authored by George Orwell in 1949. Though 1984 has come and gone, possibilities of the chances of the scenario portrayed by Orwell continue to haunt us. If there are some similarities between 1984 and *Numbercaste*, it could be coincidental. Time to go for a re-read of 1984 too. Sir Arthur Clarke spent a big part of his life in Sri Lanka and crafted some of the best sci-fi works while staying in the island. Who knows, Wijerane may have a lot to offer the readers in the coming days. The climate and ambience of the island nation could be ideal for such literary pursuits.

DU a guinea pig for UG curriculum reforms

Higher education in general and Delhi University in particular have witnessed a lot of changes in undergraduate study pattern during the last eight years. Starting with a shift from annual mode to semester mode in 2010, semester mode to four-year undergraduate programme (better known as FYUP) in 2013, FYUP to again semester mode in 2014, and semester mode to "choice based credit system" (CBCS) in 2015. Latest in the loop is ongoing revision of all undergraduate courses in Delhi University based on UGC's learning outcome-based curriculum framework (LOCF) for the 2019-20 academic session. All the departments concerned have been given three months to complete this process. Interestingly, all these "reforms" have been announced all of a sudden and implemented in the very next year of the announcement.

However, the purpose of this article is to draw the attention of Delhi University's undergraduate curriculum revision committee (2019) towards some issues related to ongoing CBCS pattern that requires immediate attention.

As per the University Grants Commission (UGC), CBCS provides "a cafeteria" type approach in which the students can take courses of their choice, learn at their own

pace, undertake additional courses and acquire more than the required credits and adopt an interdisciplinary approach to learning.

As CBCS enters its fourth year, a critical evaluation of the programme is in order, especially when the first batch of the CBCS passed out last year. Delhi University can be the best institution for the purpose of evaluation since it has been treated as guinea pig for all experiments related to "reforms" in higher education.

CBCS and implications of interdisciplinary approach

Unlike all previous pattern of the undergraduate programme, CBCS is different due to its infusion of compulsory interdisciplinary approach in papers apart from compulsory language courses. The generic elective (GE, hereafter) is a course that needs to be compulsorily chosen from an unrelated discipline/subject. Every discipline is entitled to offer some papers as generic elective for honours students for the first four semesters and for non-honours students in the last two semesters.

CBCS necessitates all honours students to choose one generic paper from discipline other than their own in each of first four (1 to 4) semesters. Similarly students of non-honours courses are supposed to

choose one generic paper from discipline other than their own in each of last two semesters i.e. 5th semester and 6th semester. For instance every student of B.Com (Hons.) is required to opt a generic paper each for first four semesters out of a pool of disciplines other than commerce i.e. maths, economics, business economics, history, political science, psychology, Hindi, English, etc.

In order to understand the problem, let us take an example of generic paper offered by department of commerce at undergraduate level in Delhi University. According to CBCS syllabus, department of commerce of Delhi University offered following papers for generic elective: microeconomics in the first semester, macroeconomics in the second semester, business statistics in the third semester and Indian economy in the fourth semester. These papers can be taken by students enrolled in any honours course other than B.Com (honours).

The experience of last three years of CBCS indicates that commerce generic was mostly opted by the students of Bachelor in Business Economics (BBE). There is an astonishing co-incidence that all those BBE students who opted for commerce discipline as generic paper were studying same papers as their core papers in

same semester for first three semesters, and one in the fifth semester. Similarly, the students of BA(Hons.) Economics, BBA(Hons.) and BMS were studying almost similar compulsory core paper(s) as they were studying (or studied) in their commerce generic.

In this way opting commerce as generic paper by the students of BBE and many other courses will not add anything to their knowledge but the repetition of same papers in the same semesters. Interestingly, students of BBE opt commerce generic mainly to lessen their burden. While preparing for one paper, other automatically gets prepared. However the question still remains: Will lessening burden at the cost of the other paper be helpful in long run?

Teaching a group of heterogeneous students

Other significant problem lies in the fact that when students of different disciplines opt generic elective of a particular discipline, it brings together students of highly heterogeneous nature in terms of attitude, knowledge, aptitude and exposure. This makes teaching and learning even more challenging. For instance teaching generic of commerce discipline to the students of economics and BBE requires different skills than teaching

the same to the students of Hindi journalism, English, History, Sanskrit, etc. Unfortunately, these students of different disciplines are taught commerce generic together in the same class, where it is easier for some to grasp and very difficult for others.

It is not the case that concerns raised here are being faced only by commerce discipline, while offering its generic paper to the students of different disciplines or when students of commerce discipline are opting generic elective offered by other disciplines. But more or less similar problems are being faced by many disciplines since inception of CBCS pattern in 2015-16.

CBCS and synchronization of papers

The provision of introduction of a generic paper may have been with a noble cause but the lack of synchronization between various disciplines during syllabus formulation is going to have a far-reaching impact on teaching learning process. For instance, prior to the introduction of CBCS, four compulsory papers of economics were being taught to the students pursuing B.Com(Hons), but post CBCS, there is no compulsory paper of economics to be studied by them. However, students can opt economics as their gener-

ic paper if they wish so, and they can also drop it anytime in the upcoming semester if they wish so.

Problem might arise when a student doesn't opt for economics as his generic elective, as in that particular case he will be graduating without gaining any knowledge in the field of economics. In the absence of basic knowledge of economics, how fruitful that degree in commerce would be for the student is all together another matter of concern.

However, problems do not get over by avoiding economics by commerce students as they are required to study a compulsory core paper, Business Mathematics in their fourth semester. Interestingly this paper covers various mathematical tools related to maximisation and minimisation i.e. differentiation, integration, linear programming, simplex, input-output, etc. The application of differential calculus is used to find out maxima of revenue, output and profit functions, utility maximisation, minimisation of costs, marginal propensity to consume (MPC), marginal propensity to save (MPS), etc. Similarly integral calculus is used to obtain consumer's surplus, producer's surplus, etc. All these concepts are related to either microeconomics or macroeconomics, which were earlier compulso-

riety being taught to students of commerce before they were introduced the paper of Business Mathematics and Statistics. Since studying economics has been left on the choice of student in CBCS, they are being exposed to mathematical applications on various concepts related to economics without being acquainted with related basic concepts of economics. This has resulted in mechanical way studying business mathematics without knowing the reason for using a particular application.

However, irrespective of the people responsible for poor formulation of syllabus while ignoring harmonisation of the syllabus offered by various departments, the ultimate loser are the students who lost the opportunity to study one additional paper by studying two same papers for four semesters or study some papers mechanically or the teachers who are required to teach a paper which is simultaneously being taught in other classroom to the same students.

This is the high time any new change in the CBCS format carried out homework with due consultation with all stakeholders rather than doing another exercise in haste.

(The writer is Assistant Professor of economics in Delhi University)

The provision of introduction of a generic paper may have been with a noble cause but the lack of synchronization between various disciplines during syllabus formulation is going to have a far-reaching impact on teaching learning process



ANISH GUPTA

PERSPECTIVE

Erasing Tiananmen memories

China justifies its brutal Tiananmen actions in the name of maintaining stability. The Communist Party has used both algorithm and human editors to erase every sign of the massacre from China's history. Even posting a photo of the 1989 to commemorate the anniversary can land a person behind bars in China



MAHAN SARKA

Just before the 30th anniversary of the Tiananmen Square protests on June 4 this year, the Chinese State — considered by many as world's biggest censorship authority — removed all references of the historic event from the web pages in the country.

The moot point is whether the Communist leadership is wary of the revival of such democratic uprisings in the mainland. Many political experts opine that deep inside Communist China, the fear of the explosion of the myth of the Socialist State remains high.

What led to the bloody Tiananmen Square crackdown? How the Communist bosses in Beijing responded? And how the international community wanted them to deal with this democratic awakening? The immediate cause of this uprising was no other than the demise of isolated Communist Party leader Hu Yaobang in April 1989. The main reason for his isolation was his strong views about economic and political liberalisation in China.

In fact, Yaobang was the one who helped navigate China away from orthodox Marxism and led the world's largest Communist Party for six years. His death triggered a spontaneous outpouring of public grief, with millions of youth coming out in protests seeking to restore his reputation and legacy for wide ranging reforms in areas such as free press, freedom of assembly and an end to official corruption across China.

However in a remarkable twist, this simple demand of the youngsters and ordinary people gradually transformed into a massive protest movement not only in the heart of capital city Beijing but across China. As many as one million people occupied the Tiananmen Square on June 4, 1989, making it one of the

largest protests in the history of modern China. The demonstrators refused to leave the Square for nearly seven weeks, until their demands for democratic reform were met by the authority. Throughout the day i.e. on June 3, the Government warned the protesters that it would do whatever is required to quell, what it described, the "social chaos".

The Communist bosses reacted by rolling Army tanks over these unarmed young protesters in the Tiananmen Square. According to a secret diplomatic cable, as many as 10,000 were killed on that fateful day. Many of the leading young leaders of the movement are now living in the US, according to information compiled by human rights in China, an NGO based in Hong Kong and New York that promotes fundamental rights and freedoms in China.

No event like the Tiananmen Square protests has stirred such emotional outpouring from all walks of life around China and no event like it has brought so vehement condemnation upon China from the international community then and even now.

The Tiananmen Square protests remain a permanent taint on China. Then US President George Bush had said he deplored the use of force. And then UK Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher said she was shocked and appalled by the shootings.

While the entire world commemorated the 30th anniversary of this horrible clampdown on non-violent human rights activists in Beijing, China keeps online mentions of the historic incident within the country virtually non-existent.

The US President, Donald Trump, has described the violence in Beijing 30 years ago as a "strong powerful movement", quelling a "riot", albeit with



In this June 1, 2019, file photo, a Taiwanese man takes a selfie with an inflatable tank man at the Liberty Square of Chiang Kai-shek Memorial Hall in Taipei, Taiwan. An artist erected the inflatable display in Taiwan's capital to mark an iconic moment in the Tiananmen Square pro-democracy protests in China

"horrible force". Kevin McCarthy, the current House Minority leader in the US House of Representatives, expressed his deep concern which truly symbolises what took place in China on June 4, 1989: "Thirty years later, the horrors of the Tiananmen Square Massacre continue to symbolise the Chinese Communist Party's inhumane grip on power. Today, the citizens of China have less freedom and their leadership remains opposed to the most basic of human rights. China suppresses the truth by attempting to sanitise its dark history. It runs concentration camps for religious minorities

and political dissidents. And it boasts of its imperial designs for global trade and disputed territory. That is what the generations of Chinese leadership is continuously doing to make the party precisely the only affair in every citizen's life.

However, unfortunately, it is not happening and many are not responding to its machinations today.

The secrecy and grand censorship machine of the Communist State makes it difficult to know even how many actually died in the Tiananmen Square movement. The party has used both algorithm and human editors to erase every sign of the massacre from

China's history. Commemorating the anniversary, even by reposting a photo can land a person in detention across China. One of those memorable photos is that of "Tank Man" who played a game of chicken with an Army tank on June 5, just one day after the dreaded massacre in Tiananmen Square. But his fate is unknown as of today. The most recent imprisonment related to the Tiananmen movement occurred on April 4 this year. A court in the South Western city of Chengdu sentenced activist Chen Bing to three and half years in prison for picking quarrels and provoking trouble. His main

offense was that he labeled bottles of "baijiu" alcohol with the iconic image of the lone protester who stared down tanks near the Tiananmen Square.

Much more than this, what the Chinese State does to the relatives and families of activists of this movement is really surprising and terrible. Each year, when the Tiananmen anniversary approaches, these families and their dear ones are placed under strict surveillance or taken on enforced tours outside the town.

Besides killing thousands in the Tiananmen Square protests, many thousands were put behind bars across China.

However, the authorities never acknowledged that the arrests were part of the "counter revolutionary" drive.

Ironically, this month also, China defended the crackdown on the 1989 Tiananmen protesters in a rare public acknowledgement of events. Defence Minister Wei Fenghe told in a regional forum in Singapore that the "incident was a political turbulence and the Central Government took measures to stop the turbulence, which is a correct policy". He further said, "The past thirty years have proved that China has undergone major changes because of the Government's action at that

time. China has enjoyed stability and development".

The statement from the Government functionary epitomises the brutal face of China that can do any anything in the name of maintaining "stability" and "development". How far this madness of urbanisation and inhuman development would take China to is nobody guess. Development bereft of basic freedoms may not boost the Communist regime. Even iron curtains fall when its time comes.

The historic Tiananmen Square protests tarnished the image of the Communist Party like never before. Equally it undermined the legitimacy of its rule both within and outside China. Beijing needs to undertake democratic reforms at the earliest. And it should embrace a new system based purely on "rule of law".

After decades of economic reform, Chinese people could realise their dream of national rejuvenation only when basic political freedoms are guaranteed to them.

The problem with China today is that they do not want to change as the liberal West wanted it to be. The successive Chinese leaders want the West to believe that they rule China with willful acceptance by the majority of people.

The nationalist Chinese autocracy, currently consolidated under Xi Jinping, would be a real terror both for its populace and for the rest of the world. When their revered leaders boast about China preaching and practicing "peaceful rise", why they are not allowing its own people to speak up against the party in non-violent manner? Crushing innocent and unarmed civilians do not qualify China to a dignified seat in the comity of global leadership.

(The writer is an expert on international affairs)



YOUR WEEK AHEAD

MADHU KOTIYA



 <p>ARIES March 21-April 19 You will have an inflexible approach towards health. View your method of dealing with health issues because chances are you are resistant to changing your ways for the better. All is well on the work front. Opportunities will be coming your way. Throughout the week, you will be full of inspiration, but you need to work as well to get the result. Forget the failures in the past, look ahead for a promising and bright future. Those looking for employment are likely to get the desired position. On the relationship front, those who are committed will find a deeper spiritual meaning with their partner. Those single should first consider where you are going before starting a new relationship. You should be careful as you have the tendency to become careless; this will put you in an adverse situation. Lucky number 5 Lucky colour Green Lucky day Friday</p>	 <p>LEO July 23-Aug 22 You will enjoy good health this week. If you are facing any health issues, be caring and loving towards your body. Women with strong feminine energy — could be your wife, mother, or a friend — will help you heal in this situation. Maintain a positive attitude and trust the universe's healing energy. Even if you are healthy, continue to take care of yourself. This is a crucial period on the career front. You will be excited about taking up a new project. This is a promising opportunity and will maximise your potential in the long term. Those looking for a new position, be assured it will be yours. Your romantic life is likely to go well. It is time to embrace change and take a long-term view of your future. It is recommended that you have a conversation with your partner. Singles should take some time out for their personal life. Lucky number 10 Lucky colour Yellow Lucky day Sunday</p>	 <p>SAGITTARIUS Nov 22-Dec 21 Being in control of your emotions will be beneficial. It is crucial to treat your body with care and compassion. If you face any health issues, consult a doctor and trust him completely. An older male — your doctor, father, or a relative — will help you deal with health matters or motivate you to follow a fitness plan. You should have the determination to achieve your goals. Others may try to limit your capabilities, but you have to be confident to overcome any opposition. A few of you will undertake a new project. Those looking for jobs may face competition. Those in a relationship, do not hesitate to speak your mind to your partner as this will help strengthen your relationship. Those who are having issues must stand firm on their ground as there can be no compromise at this time. Singles might meet someone special. Lucky number 10 Lucky colour White Lucky day Monday</p>
 <p>TAURUS April 20-May 20 This week, you need to pay close attention to your emotions. Better not to avoid any decision related to your health like getting a test done or surgery. Get key information that you need in moving ahead with decision-making. Make sure you have positive thinking and balanced behaviour. Work wise, things will go well. Chances of promotion are indicated. Don't hesitate to negotiate for what you are worth; you might be surprised at the positive response. Use your abilities to harness your thoughts and conquer your fears for everyone's good. Those looking for a new job may find one. In your love life, you are aware of the existing issues. And the best part is you are not letting it disturb your relation, but in case it does, make changes to sort out the differences. It is a good time to start a new relationship. Lucky number 21 Lucky colour Purple Lucky day Thursday</p>	 <p>VIRGO Aug 23-Sep 22 You will have all the positive energy to take good care of yourself and elevate your health. You should be open to new ideas for growth and development. Try to get a fresh perspective on life and be open to any kind of healing. At work, a situation may arise where you are about to complete a project/task, but at the end moment, you face a setback. Use your inner resources to overcome difficulties. Your hidden enemies will oppose you, so be strong. If you are thinking about whether you will be removed from a project or your job, expect the worst. It is an apt time to renew your love life. Express yourself to your partner and see how it strengthens your relationship. You are likely to explore other aspects of your relationship, which you haven't done earlier. Singles, before you enter a new relationship, be sure of what you want and then proceed. Lucky number 28 Lucky colour Red Lucky day Wednesday</p>	 <p>CAPRICORN Dec 22-Jan 19 This week, you are likely to neglect your physical as well as emotional health. Change this pattern and think about healthy lifestyle options. It is important to take rest and regain your physical, mental, and spiritual energies. You tend to become negative, which you need to get over to deal with health challenges. This week, your work-related goals or a certain project will be accomplished. With this, you will be weighed down by the responsibilities that come with it. You can delegate the work and apply some time management ideas and take time out for some relaxation. This week is an excellent time for love. You are about to enter a loving phase in your life, filled with calm energy and deeper understanding. Those who are committed will find their relationship going to higher levels. Singles, this is the time to go out and mingle. Lucky number 25 Lucky colour Indigo Lucky day Tuesday</p>
 <p>GEMINI May 21-June 20 Healthwise, your biggest payoff lies in the routine. Make slow and steady progress. You have to take up responsibility and take charge of a situation. You have it in you to be thorough and deal with issues successfully. You may face a dilemma at your workplace, which demands action or decision. Before you go ahead with your decision, analyse all the available information as it is of great importance. Your own value system may be challenged, if that is the case, then stay true to yourself. You may need to choose right looking upon long-term benefits. With regard to your love life, this is a very good time. Those who are committed will move to the next level. You are likely to have a peaceful and happy love life. Overall, you will be content and so will be others around you. Lucky number 20 Lucky colour Brown Lucky day Saturday</p>	 <p>LIBRA Sep 23-Oct 22 This week, you will experience an upswing in terms of your health. With positive health comes happiness. You will realise that you have come a full circle, whether it is in career or relationships. Your health will be good, so be grateful for what you have. To continue this feeling, contribute to the world with what you have now. Things are not that perfect to your workplace. Practise active listening to ensure that you and your co-workers know each other perfectly. Some of you may feel disconnected to the world which you are unsure of your destination. You need to let go of your mental blocks or negativity. Be calm and let your inner voice guide you. You are at that point in your relationship where you need to decide whether or not to stay with your beloved or move on. The decision will surely affect your future. Lucky number 8 Lucky colour Black Lucky day Saturday</p>	 <p>AQUARIUS Jan 20-Feb 18 You will have strong vitality this week. Advancing the level of your fitness regime will fetch you great results. You will be able to tackle any health issue that arises at this time and mental energies are in control. Your determination will help you lead a healthy life. Career-wise, you will be able to achieve a lot in a short time. Even in the time of difficulties, you will be active and sustain your creative vision. It is indicated that you will be focused on your goals while being friendly to those around you. Ensure that you don't burn yourself out with your over-ambitious attitude. A woman will be helpful in your current situation at work. Pay attention to your ideas and your partner's as well. This approach will put you in harmony with your partner. Singles may find someone really special. Lucky number 10 Lucky colour Off-white Lucky day Wednesday</p>
 <p>CANCER June 21-July 22 This week, your health will be overshadowed by worry. Even a minor health challenge will make you feel low. Your psychological state will be bothering you, therefore, you need to stop worrying about the future and think what needs to be done now. Draw upon your inner strength to maintain your flexibility. On the career front, things will be going good for you. This is the time when issues related to your interaction with others will come to an end. A certain compromise will create a harmonious environment. Those who are experiencing stress need to take some time off and spend quality time with close ones. With regard to your love life, this week you will be inspired and motivated about your relationship with your partner. Those who are single, the start of a new love relationship is indicated. Make yourself available for love, whichever way possible. Lucky number 7 Lucky colour Peach Lucky day Thursday</p>	 <p>SCORPIO Oct 23-Nov 21 You will be disciplined when it comes to health. Those who are suffering from an ailment, plan a health regime which suits your body. You are going to have full control over your emotional energies, so enjoy this time. On the career front, you will trust yourself and your abilities. Those who are unhappy with their current position can expect a bright future as new opportunities are likely to come your way. Your strong desire to make changes will open up a path to success. Those seeking jobs may find one. In romance, you are likely to face some challenges. You should convey your feelings to your partner and spend some time apart. When difficult times are over, you can make the important decision of whether or not to continue your relationship. This decision will affect your future as well. Singles should not rush into a relationship. Lucky number 23 Lucky colour Magenta Lucky day Tuesday</p>	 <p>PISCES Feb 19-March 20 You will receive good news related to your health and will feel extremely well at this time. You should be thankful for good health and stay positive. You will be feeling optimistic about your future. Don't be laidback and continue working towards your good health. On the career front, things are not that great. At this time, you need to stay calm and reassess your situation and what you are expecting from your job. Chances are that you might achieve your goal. Still, you should consult a trusted friend or a career counsellor as it will help you have a new perspective on your current situation. Love life seems to be confusing as you are questioning whether or not to stay in a relationship. The decision will affect your present and your future. Singles, this may not be a good time to get into a relationship. Lucky number 24 Lucky colour Parrot green Lucky day Saturday</p>

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Life is nothing but paradoxical

Life in its usual run is subject to twists and turns — sometimes pleasant and at other times full of pains. It is ever on its run, continuously undergoing change, as the conditions within and beyond keep varying. There is no scope for having a perfect situation in life. There comes a time when the gross body loses its dynamism and turns into a dead matter. It is true about every finite existence. The duration of stay may, though, vary from person to person. There is no standard of measure worth the name to account for one's life span in finite terms. We all are aware of this existential truth. Yet, it is difficult to bear with when a near and dear one departs from the world. It is still more shocking if it comes about at a young age. Life, therefore, is paradoxical. The other day, a grieving father sent a heart touching message: "Big brother, my dear son left us today. Feeling totally lifeless. Prayer and everything failed to keep him alive." The message left me shivering for a few moments. If this news could knock me down so badly, one can only imagine the plight of the grieving father who lost his only son at the young age of 23. I knew that no pep talk

could assuage the feelings of someone faced with such a devastating happening. So, I thought of trying to refresh him with existential truth. Even that may not so easily calm down his emotional volatility. It may, however, offer him grounds that may help him come out of this sooner than later. Remember my friend, going by ancient India's philosophic perception, the run of life doesn't end with gross body becoming a dead matter. In fact, death is an opportunity to shed the incapacitated body and reincarnate with a fresh encasement in all strength. Your son had to bear with excruciating pain during the last one year of his chronic ailment. You need to appreciate that with his death, having discharged his Karmic debt of being faced with such a harrowing ordeal, he has moved beyond, and so stands relieved. Bear in mind: A *jeevatma* (a live being) with form and name is structured in three layers — gross, subtle, and causal bodies, the three driven by soul (the element of consciousness). On death, it is just the gross body, which is nothing but agglomeration of matter, disintegrates. Its five con-



stituents — space, air, fire, water, and earthly matter — merge with their primal source. The subtle and causal bodies that are pure energy platforms do not wither away, as would the laws of conservation of energy mean. The soul carries along the causal and subtle bodies, having in store all the memory imprints picked up during live existence, to reincarnate with a fresh gross body encasement. So, life needs to be seen in succession. Should you grieve, the *jeevatma's* attention is drawn, which may disturb its onward journey. Better pray for his smooth transition. "I appreciate your point and shall try to follow your advisory. But don't you think that this unforeseen happening puts a question mark on the very relevance of Astrology? For, with whatever knowledge of Astrology I have, Jupiter being the 6th lord was just indicative of health issues but not death as it doesn't happen to be a *maraka*. I am just curious to know, not questioning you, could you see in his chart the possibility of departure from the world so early?" the man asked. Well, going by the traditional norms of Astrology, his death didn't seem likely. But the death-inflicting 8th cusp's sub-lord Saturn (as per Krishnamurti system) did indicate the possibility of death during Jupiter's period. For, Jupiter occupying the *nakshatra* owned by Saturn, would act as latter's agent, potent enough to make it happen. Even the progressed Sun having become square (adverse 90 degrees placement) to natal Moon, carries the probability of losing life. Even transit Saturn conjunct unpredictable Neptune, and also square to its dire enemy Mars did not augur well for his survival either. Here again, Jupiter simultaneously signified recovery from ailment in strong terms. For, Jupiter's *nakshatra* lord Saturn happens to be the 5th lord, which being 12th from the 6th, will serve as latter's antidote. With such contrasting indicators in place, what would one be tempted to lay importance to — raise the hope of survival so that one tries to combat the situation in all strength, or indicate death and make the person lose the battle much before it even happens? The writer is an astrologer, vastu consultant and spiritual counsellor. Write to him at G-102, Bharat Nagar, New Friends Colony, New Delhi-110 025. Tel: 91-11-49648475/9818032723 Email: bharatbhushanpadmadeo@gmail.com Website: www.bharatastro.com