

WORLD 7

SYRIA FORCE TAKES ISIS BASTION, 'CALIPHATE' WIPED OUT

MONEY 8

JET SUSPENDS SERVICES TO 13 INT'L ROUTES TILL APRIL END

SPORT 10

AUSTRALIA BEAT PAKISTAN IN 1ST ODI

Published From DELHI LUCKNOW BHOPAL BHUBANESWAR RANCHI RAIPUR CHANDIGARH DEHRADUN

NEW DELHI, SUNDAY MARCH 24, 2019; PAGES 12+8 ₹4



sunday pioneer

www.dailypioneer.com



USUAL SUSPECTS
SWAPAN DASGUPTA

Modi biopic fuss non-issue for EC

An unintended consequence of the staggering popularity of social media in the world is the mushrooming of completely useless controversies that have a life-span of a few hours. One such erupted last week over the countrywide release of the film *PM Narendra Modi* starring Vivek Oberoi on April 12.

The announcement of its release got some people very hot under the collar. One person who was particularly agitated was the writer Ramachandra Guha. He tweeted: "That such a film will be shown and promoted during the elections demonstrates the joke and farce that the 'model code of conduct' is; how can the Election Commission allow it?"

Guha's objection seems grounded in his fierce dislike of real Prime Minister Modi, although to be fair he also objected to a lesser-known biopic on Rahul Gandhi that will also be launched this election season. As a political concern of those campaigning on the single plank of Modi hatao, Guha's worry is warranted. However, it will not enhance the democratic credentials of India's liberal community if it seeks an outright ban on a film that dares to hero worship Modi or, for that matter, Rahul Gandhi. Consequently, a temporary restriction, at least people have voted, seems a second best but contrived solution.

Of course, there are ominous implications of this demand for the EC to intervene and put the film in cold storage till counting day. If a film can be put on hold on the ground that it seeks to influence public opinion, then it follows that similar restrictions should accompany other creative projects that also seek to mould voter behaviour. This includes books — both fiction and non-fiction — poetry, theatre, works of art and even opinionated columns (such as this one) in print and online, in fact almost anything that can be construed to have a direct or tangential political dimension.

Of course, there are ominous implications of this demand for the EC to intervene and put the film in cold storage. If a film can be put on hold on the ground that it seeks to influence public opinion, then it follows that similar restrictions should accompany other creative projects that also seek to mould voter behaviour.

The whole idea of sanitising India from political influences seems absolutely preposterous, especially when the avowed objective is to ensure the exercise of political choice. That eminent individuals should be lending their names to such a strange initiative is sad. However, sadder still is the belief the distortion of what the Code of Conduct (CC) is all about.

When it was evolved, the CC wasn't aimed at preventing any articulation of politics. It merely sought to first, negate any unfair advantage accruing to the incumbent Government through the improper and partisan use of official machinery; second, to monitor and often regulate the use of financial resources by parties and candidates; thirdly, to insulate the ordinary citizen from any significant inconvenience to their lives; and, finally, to ensure free and fair polling. In time, often with the benefit of hindsight, the EC has extended the CC to extend to opinion polls and the use of media. Regulating and monitoring "paid news", however, remains work in progress.

Despite its imperfections and lax implementation by individual officers with a bias towards a party or candidate, the CC has made a big difference to the culture of political campaigning. Some of the changes are visible and felt by the ordinary citizen.

Till the 1991 general election at least, the use of loudspeakers was totally unregulated. One of the noisiest campaigns I witnessed was the 'Ayodhya election' of 1991 in Uttar Pradesh when loudspeakers blaring rival political messages and campaign songs drowned each other at market venues and bus stops, and went on all day and night. It was also customary for political meetings to extend late into the night and the early hours of the morning. In fact in the Hindi heartland, the political worth of a leader was often judged from how many hours late he was running from his original schedule.

This pattern of electioneering is now history. The ban on public meetings and use of the public address system after 10 pm is now an accepted facet of life and often gleefully imposed by the administration. Another area where the CC has made a big difference is in the use of Government facilities and public buildings. One of the first campaigns I covered as a journalist was the 1991 general election when the Congress under Rajiv Gandhi was still at the helm. One of the features of that election, in North India at least, was that the Congress candidates routinely requisitioned the Circuit House for the use of the candidate. This doesn't happen today.

These, however, are the easier facets of the CC. The more daunting challenge before the EC is to ensure an environment free from harassment and intimidation of voters. Today, apart from the Maoist belt in Chhattisgarh, West Bengal poses a challenge. EC has staggered voting in the State to include all seven phases and contingents of paramilitary forces have started patrolling sensitive areas, sometimes with the cooperation of the local police and often independently of them.

Another big step is to ensure that the media is in synch with the larger objectives of democratic functioning. But this is a more problematic area where the media's right to be partisan has to be balanced with some do's and don't's, without inviting charges of compromising the rights of expression. The more blatant cases of 'paid news' are easy to handle — by adding a notional charge to a candidate's expenses — but how is the touchy area of a campaign freeze in the 48-hours before polling in a seven-phase election to be achieved? And how will the dissemination through WhatsApp groups be effectively monitored? Today's technology makes a mockery of regulation and control.

These are just some of the issues that will test the EC's effectiveness. Diverting its attention to non-issues is hardly helpful. But then, this is also an election where some groups of people are also fighting to ensure their own future relevance in a changing India.

Diggy vs Pragya likely

Cong picks Digvijay from Bhopal; Sadhvi: 'I'm eager to defeat nation's enemy'

PNS ■ BHOPAL/LUCKNOW

With the candidature of former Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister Digvijay Singh being finalised from Bhopal, the fight in the Madhya Pradesh capital is likely to be interesting as Pragma Thakur, aka Sadhvi Pragya Bharti, may be pitted against him. Digvijay is contesting election after 2003 in the State.

Digvijay's candidature was made public by Chief Minister Kamal Nath during his interaction with mediapersons at a programme here on Saturday.

Meanwhile, the Congress has changed the seat allotted to its Uttar Pradesh unit chief Raj Babbar from Moradabad to Fatehpur Sikri, in an apparent bid to make the Lok Sabha contest easier for the actor-turned-politician. Imran Pratapgarhiya will now be the party's candidate from Moradabad.

Party sources said that Babbar was not keen on contesting from Moradabad, where the BJP has fielded its sitting MP Kunwar Sarvesh Kumar.

After having served as Chief Minister of Madhya Pradesh for 10 years from 1993 to 2003, Digvijay had left the State saying that he would not contest any election. At present, he is a Rajya Sabha member.

Digvijay took active part in MP in the run up to the last Assembly elections.

The way the MP CM announced the candidature of Digvijay was quite dramatic. Generally, the 'CEC of AICC declares the list. Nath said, "I

have a list of party candidates in my pocket but I can't disclose. However, I can make an announcement. (Congress) Election Committee yesterday (Friday) finalised the name of Digvijay Singhji from Bhopal."

When asked whether Digvijay was happy with the decision, Nath said, "I do not know, whether he is happy, but I am happy." To a query, whether he has "dealt" with Digvijay with this decision, Nath parried the question on Digvijay's winnability.

Sadhvi Pragya Bharti, who has been acquitted in the Malegaon blast case, is ready to take on Digvijay. Talking to mediapersons in Bhopal, she said, "Digvijay Singh is a 'desh ka dushman' and I openly challenge country's enemies."

Pragya was discharged from an ayurvedic hospital in the city months ago after being treated for critical illnesses.

Though Pragya did not



confirm whether she has been contacted by the BJP to fight poll, she did say the BJP was a party which matched her ideology. However, Pragya hinted she wasn't much eager to contest election, but said she was contacted by someone to fight election. Pragya, who had taken sanyas at 14, said it was an opportune moment to enter politics. She slammed the



Congress for attacking and Hindutva by calling them terror forces. Pragya was given clean chit in the murder of RSS pracharak Sunil Joshi as well. State BJP spokesman Rajneesh Agrawal told *The Pioneer* that the voters are waiting for Digvijay to contest from Bhopal. They want to teach him a lesson.

Turn to Page 4

Rahul may contest from Wayanad

PTI ■ PATHANAMTHITTA/KOTTAYAM

The Congress in Kerala has proposed AICC president Rahul Gandhi's name for the Wayanad Lok Sabha seat, a party bastion in the State, but he has yet to respond to the request, senior leaders said on Saturday.

Talking to reporters in Pathanamthitta district, AICC general secretary Oommen Chandy said the Kerala Pradesh Congress Committee (KPCC) has requested Rahul to contest from Wayanad.

There is a demand from party leaders that Rahul should contest from any of the South Indian Lok Sabha seat. "We

have requested Gandhi to contest from Wayanad seat. He has not commented on the request so far. But we expect that there would be a positive response," Chandy said.

The party, which is contesting 16 out of 20 Lok Sabha seats in Kerala, has announced the names of 14 candidates but has not declared its candidates from Wayanad and Vadakara.

"I once again request Gandhi to contest from Wayanad. Congress president contesting from Lok Sabha seats in South India and North India will strengthen national unity and integration," Chennithala said.

Turn to Page 4

2nd senior most Vice Admiral to be Navy chief

Karambir Singh jumps queue to pip Vice Admiral Verma to post

RAHUL DATTA ■ NEW DELHI



Setting aside the seniority snorm in appointing a Service chief for the second time, the Government on Saturday selected Vice Admiral Karambir Singh as the new Navy chief after the incumbent Admiral Sunil Lanba retires on May 31 this year. Singh supersedes the senior most aspirant Vice Admiral Bimal Verma. In 2016, the present Army chief Rawat was selected for the top job superseding the then senior most officer Pravin Bakshi.

The incoming chief, who is at present serving as the Flag Officer Commanding in Chief (FOC-in-C) of the Eastern Naval Command in Visakhapatnam, will be the first helicopter pilot to become Chief of Naval Staff. Before the present appointment, Singh also served as Deputy Chief as well as Vice Chief of Naval Staff.

Verma, younger brother of former Navy Chief Nirmal Verma, is at present the Commander-in-chief of the Andaman and Nicobar Command. It is the first tri-service integrated command to look after the country's strategic interests in that region. The command was set up following the recommendations of the K Subrahmanyam committee recommendations on higher defence management.

The panel was set up in the wake of the Kargil war in 1999 to suggest ways to fine tune the fighting capabilities in the modern day warfare.

As regards selecting Singh over Verma, official sources said the Government followed a merit-based approach thereby giving a go by to the tradition of appointing the senior most eligible officer to the post.

They also said Verma had not commanded as chief of operationally important Western and Eastern Commands and these tenures are considered very important for selecting the Navy chief. He was reportedly overlooked for these postings as he was the principal director of naval operations during the 2005 Naval War Room leak in New Delhi. Several critical commercial and some operational documents were leaked. Verma came under scrutiny but was cleared with a "severe displeasure" note. He later served as India's naval attaché in Iran and also commanded a ship.

Turn to Page 4

CAPSULE

PINAKI CHANDRA GHOSE TAKES OATH AS LOKPAL
New Delhi: President Ram Nath Kovind on Saturday administered the oath of office to Justice Pinaki Chandra Ghose as the country's first Lokpal.

RAHUL GANDHI ATTACKS MAMATA IN RALLY
Chanchal (West Bengal): Congress president Rahul Gandhi on Saturday launched a scathing attack on West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee, accusing her of running the entire State according to her whims.

ATTACH VIJAY MALLYA'S PROPERTIES: COURT
New Delhi: A Delhi court has ordered attachment of liquor baron Vijay Mallya's properties in Bengaluru in a case relating to FERA violations.

Prasad replaces Shotgun in Patna Sahib

BJP releases 102 names, Giriraj Singh shifted to Begusarai from Nawada

DEEPAK K UPRETI ■ NEW DELHI

The BJP on Saturday expectedly denied ticket to yesterday's film star and its sitting MP from Patna Sahib Shatrughan Sinha and instead fielded Information and Technology Minister and Rajya Sabha member Ravi Shankar Prasad from its stronghold.

However, Prasad may face Sinha eventually as the latter could be fielded by the Congress in the Kayastha-dominated seat. For sometime now, Sinha had been critical of both the BJP and Prime Minister Narendra Modi on a



number of issues. The BJP-led National Democratic Alliance (NDA) in Bihar announced names for 39 of the 40 seats with Union Minister Giriraj Singh being shifted from Nawada to Begusarai despite his opposi-



tion. The LJP will contest from Nawada this time round. The alliance, however, reposed faith in all other Central Ministers from the State by fielding them from the same seats that they had won in 2014. The BJP also announced

names of its candidates for Odisha fielding its spokesperson Sambit Patra from Puri and its State president Basant Panda from Kalahandi. In Bihar though, it did not field its spokesperson Shah Nawaz Hussain from Bhagalpur, which he had unsuccessfully contested last time, thus putting his future in the party under cloud.

The BJP on Saturday announced the names of its 102 more candidates for the Lok Sabha polls, thus now totalling 286 candidates till now.

The candidates have been picked for UP, Telangana, Andhra Pradesh, Odisha, Maharashtra, Assam, Meghalaya, West Bengal, and Kerala, Goa, Madhya Pradesh, Jharkhand, Gujarat and Himachal Pradesh.

Earlier 17 names for Bihar were announced in Patna. Former Jharkhand Chief Minister Arjun Munda will contest from Khunti, a seat once occupied by BJP veteran Karia Munda.

BJP's three new names from Uttar Pradesh included Pradeep Choudhary, a Gujjar, from Kairana seat (west UP) which was won by the RLD candidate with the backing of the SP and the BSP in a bypoll in 2018. The bypoll had first tested the efficacy of the Opposition alliance against the BJP. The other candidates from two other seats from West UP which would go to poll in the first phase are Dr Yashwant (Nagina) and Bhola Singh (Bulandshahar).

Turn to Page 4

Rain on Mar 25, cloudy sky entire week likely in Capital

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

The national Capital may witness strong surface winds on March 26. In weekly weather forecast, the Indian Meteorological Department (IMD) said that there are chances of rain on March 25 and sky will remain cloudy in entire next week. From March 26 onwards maximum temperature will increase and fluctuate between 32 degrees Celsius and 35 degrees Celsius and minimum temperature will oscillate between 16 degrees Celsius and 19 degrees Celsius.

It was a pleasant Saturday morning in Delhi with the minimum temperature at 16.6 degrees Celsius, a notch below the season's average. "The sky will remain clear with strong surface winds during the day," said an IMD official.

Turn to Page 4



Pirates of Grill chokes 2 staffers to death in kitchen waste tank

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

In a horrific incident, two persons died while two are undergoing treatment at hospital allegedly due to asphyxiation after they entered a kitchen waste treatment unit in West Delhi's Rajouri Garden area. The incident occurred on Saturday afternoon when all four working as housekeeping staff with the restaurant 'Pirates of Grill' were asked by the management to clean the kitchen waste tank.

The deceased have been identified as Rakesh (45) and Ajay (19). The injured, Pankaj and Raju, are undergoing treatment and are said to be critical. The deceased Rakesh and Ajay used to live in a rented accommodation at Tagore Garden. Pankaj and Raju used to stay in the restaurant premises. All four belonged to Uttar Pradesh.

According to Monika



Bhardwaj, the Deputy Commissioner of Police (DCP), West District, the incident occurred between 1.30 and 2 pm on Saturday.

"The victims were rushed to a nearby hospital by Centralised Accident and Trauma Services (CATS) ambulance where Rakesh and Ajay were declared brought dead by the doctors while Pankaj and Raju are still undergoing treatment. Both are unfit to make a statement. Prima

facie, it seems that they went in the kitchen waste treatment unit for cleaning purposes and inhaled the toxic fumes in the tank," the DCP said.

"A case has been registered under Section 304 of the Indian Penal Code (IPC) and the SC/ST Act against the restaurant management at Rajouri Garden police station. Further investigation is going on," said the police official privy to investigation.

SHOW TIME

Period drama arrives with extreme action



KESARI
*ing: Akshay Kumar, Parineeti Chopra
Rated: 7.5/10

Every film ever made on patriotism evokes pride in every Indian — that we get to walk on the land that has produced India's finest. Soldiers who have laid down their lives to protect Mother India — defend her boundaries from the enemy — at the cost of putting not just their lives but their families as well.

We all always talk about the sacrifice a soldier makes when he is at our borders, we forget that the only reason he is able to do so fearlessly is due to a strong family backing. A family that has taught him to take a bullet on the chest.

Therefore, everything is *Kesari* makes you proud — that 21 Sikhs of the 36 Sikh Regiment preferred to fight for their honour and not because they were being paid for it. That they preferred to face the enemy and defend the border when they had the order to run. That they preferred to face death rather than be slaves to the British.

The film directed by Anurag Singh is a taut war drama that has been executed brilliantly and the

reason why it weaves its magic is because it has been so well scripted. The wit, sarcasm, action, humour and tragedy has been beautifully woven into the narrative. Being given a sneak peek into history that one gets to see between the Sikhs and Islam adds value. Or the significance of *kesari rang* — *Kesari rang ka matlab samjhte ho... shaheedi ka rang hai... bahaduri ka.*

Akshay Kumar as Havaldar Ishar Singh is brilliant. Off late, the actor has chosen to be part of films that make the audience sit and think and may be just may be a better human being. One can say that as Singh, this is best performance till day. His acting gives you goosebumps because of the way he has executed his character and carried the role on his shoulders.

Not that the other characters are there for show. Each has played their role to a T. The dialogues, the action and the climax will leave you teary-eyed as will the sheer violence and barbarism that unfolds make you shudder.

This is a must see epic — how 21 Sikhs fought 10,000 Afghans, were martyred and made the enemy run for their lives. — Shalini Sakseena

Dragons come of age delightfully

HOW TO TRAIN YOUR DRAGON: THE HIDDEN WORLD
*ing (voicing): Jay Baruchel, America Ferrera, Cate Blanchett, Craig Ferguson, F Murray Abraham
Rated: 7/10

We have already established that Hollywood makes the best animation films. The latest from DreamWorks reiterates the point. Those who have not been following the franchise since the time it began back in 2010 — *How to Train Your Dragon*, the film was loosely based on a 2003 book by British author Cressida Cowell. It would be somewhat sad to see the series come to an end. Some of the dragons are really cute and not to forget Toothless — and also a dragon with only half a tail.

While the last part may not have the fire that the prequels had, it will thaw even people with a cold heart — it is after all a story about how a species (read dragons) despite being brutally hunted by man still befriends a human knowing that this particular boy means well.

Though the original was the best of the lot, part 3 is all about some brilliant visuals in the hidden world which take away your breath. The burst of colours is amazing. What is more amazing is that it tells a story — that with love comes a great responsibility — that of sacrifice.

The first movie was released on March 26, 2010 and it comes to an end on March 24, 2019 (technically not end but release). It has been a full circle — for Toothless to grow up and be the alpha that he is and for Hiccup who finally grows up to be a man who leads his people and making the ultimate sacrifice that love demands.

A movie that will take the kiddies into a wonder land and melt the hearts of the adults. — Shalini Sakseena



TELLYTALE



LIL' CHAMP GETS A MUSICAL BREAK
Zee TV's *Sa Re Ga Ma Pa Li' Champs* has been entertaining the audience's week-on-week with magical performances and unique musical prowess of the contestants. In the upcoming episode, the viewers will witness ace singer and music sensation Himesh Reshamiya gracing the show as the guest judge this weekend.

After listening to a bunch of sweet and talented voices, Himesh was completely blown away by Anushka Patra's performance on *Parda Parda* from *Once Upon A Time in Mumbai*. The judges applauded and lauded Anushka for exceptional singing but what Himesh said changed her life forever. He decided to offer Anushka her first musical break for his next film *Xpose Returns!* Completely smitten by her performance, Himesh had something sweet to say, "Anushka, you are ready for playback singing. You have the perfect confidence, the perfect voice for a Bollywood playback, the right attitude and you are completely prepared. I would like you to do the playback singing for my next film *Xpose Returns*."

The 12-year-old singing dynamite couldn't contain her happiness and was left speechless after she was offered this golden opportunity. Well, kudos to Anushka for giving such a magical performance and our handsome guest judge Himesh Reshamiya for honouring her talent.

(Vikas Manaktala's) takes a strong decision and announces the death penalty for both. His decision saddens her, and she goes to the Kail temple, where she meets Gangadas (Ankur Nayyar), who is her spiritual guide. He advised her to channel her emotions for her advantage and gives the example of Mahakaali. He tells her to "awaken the *devi* within her" and with his guidance she envisages herself as the powerful Mahakaali. With Ganga Das' guidance she visualises herself as Goddess Mahakali destroying atrocious Ross (Jason Shah), as he is leaving no stone unturned to create destruction in Jhansi. Manikarnika feels further strengthened, when she reckons on the battle of Mahakali and Raktabej. She sees herself winning over the odds and being victorious over Ross. This occurrence instills the faith in herself, and she believes that good will win over all evil. This episode will also re-emphasise Manikarnika's character as she will come



in whatever they do, be it big or small." Also being in a comedy show, how could he forget to add a punch line to his serious answer. At the end, he merrily adds, "Who can speak loudly after he is married. I have a wife who has taught me how to speak softly."



across as an ideal, inspiring and strong human being which personifies the true strength of a woman.

SONU NIGAM ON KAPIL SHOW
This week Sonu Nigam along with his wife Madhurima will be part of the *Kapil Sharma Show*. They will share some really interesting incidents and secrets of each other.

In a chit-chat with Nigam, Kapil asks will ask questions about his calm and soft-spoken nature. He will hilariously tell the audience that how Sonu's even while scolding might scold so softly that nobody would understand if it's his scoldings or his love.

The reason that Sonu has: "People manage to get an attitude when they become famous or settle down but I have always remembered a few things that I do not have to do. I know that I never have to speak bad about anybody in front or behind the back of people. I have also learned that no matter what, one has to find happiness

GUDDAN BATTLES AQUAPHOBIA

Zee TV's *Guddan... Tumse Na Ho Paega* lead protagonist Guddan is always up for challenges and believes in pushing boundaries and trying out new things. She suffers from aquaphobia and fears every time she is near a water body, but she mustered all the courage to dive inside for one of the sequences. Recently, the entire cast of the show visited Goa to shoot for a special Holi special episode wherein Guddan gets caught in the water current and starts drowning when Akshat comes in nick of time and saves her.

Shooting for the water sequence was nothing short of a nightmare for Kanika. She recalls that she had to step inside deep water to make the sequence look more authentic. She said: "When I was told that I have to shoot a water sequence, I got jittery and I was extremely sceptical about



it. But the crew members spoke to me and convinced me to give it a shot. I chanted prayers and jumped into the water. My biggest motivation was my own character-Guddan and I told myself, tumse bhi ho paega. I am glad that I opted to do it as it helped me overcome my fear and of course the appreciation I received from everyone was worth it."

'I don't want to repeat myself'

MUSBA HASHMI chats up actor PARESH GANATRA, famous for his roles in Baa, Bahu and Baby and Chidiya Ghar, about his new show

Tell us about your character.
I play Mahendra Thakkar, a successful businessman (has a shop selling Bhakarwadi). He is a man of values and principles and can't compromise with them. But believes in changing with time. He is not rudiment in his thoughts and is ready to accept changes both in his business and life. He respects his customers a lot and keeps in mind their choices.

Do you share any similarities with your character?
Yes. Just like my character I am also a man of values and can't compromise on them. I can't do anything just for the sake of impressing people and creating a good image for myself. I am very real and a very straight-forward person. The difference in me and my character is that I am not businessman. I can't sit at one place. I want to be in the field and be creative.

How difficult was it for you to explore the genre of comedy?
It is difficult to get into the skin of the character — be it comic or intense or serious. You can't say *ki yeh toh maine aaram se kar liya. Jis din actor yeh bolney lag jayega ki arey ye toh mere liye kafee asaani tha* that shows arrogance and overconfidence. It means you don't want to grow as an actor.

Whenever I am given a character to play I try to understand his situation — mental and emotional. Then I try to get hold on his background, family, body-language, accent, education and understand his struggle story if any. I feel if someone has faced struggles in his life and then rose to name and fame, he will always be grounded and *jinkey paas baap-dada ka paisa hota hai unmei thoda arrogance dikhta hai*. After observing the smallest events of a character's life then I proceed towards the story. I believe in doing my homework and keep experimenting. If you will not research and experiment with your characters then all your performances will become monotonous and I feel that is the end of an actor. I don't want to repeat myself and that is what makes all the difference in one's performance.

Was it difficult for you to make a place for yourself in the industry?
No, it wasn't that difficult. Whatever work and projects I took up worked out well. The struggle of an actor comes in when he does a project which doesn't work or when he doesn't get work. I had my own struggles. I did a film *Mann* which didn't work. But then I did *Aankhein*



and it worked and then there was *No Entry, Welcome, Delhi Belly, Rowdy Rathore, Bol Bachchan* and all of them worked out well. I started getting work and people started recognising me. Fortunately, on TV also whatever work I did turned out to be a success so now I don't feel worried about getting work. I get work. I have faced a lot of struggle in my theatre days and so I understand how to value my work.

Who is the ustaad of comedy?
Kishore Kumar, Mehmood and Johnny Lever. They did and do comedy effortlessly. Nowadays, if you mock someone people will laugh on it but I think this is not the true essence of comedy. I believe in doing situational comedy and these people were masters at it. They never made jokes on people that is why still people enjoy watching their work. They are very expressive. And also the evergreen Charlie Chaplin. If someone can make you cry or laugh without uttering a word then no one can match him ever.

There is a lot of competition in the industry. Does that affect senior artists like you?
The scenario has changed in the comedy genre. There are a lot of formats that have come up. It is a never ending process. An actor or a comedian will never be out of place. Everyone has a USP and they know what they are good at or what they lack in themselves. As far as I am concerned, I know that I am not good at doing mimicry so I will never do it. Not am I comfortable in with under the belt kind of comedy so I won't get into it. I always love doing situational comedy rather and that is my forte.

Was there a moment when you thought of quitting?
Yes, definitely. There were two projects where I thought of leaving them because for me the work environment matters a lot. If I am not comfortable working in the environment I do feel like quitting but I have learnt *ki aap jo bhi kaam lo ussey pura karo, beech mein mat choro kyunki show aap se nahi apney naseeb se chal raha hai*. I always put aside those feelings and remember how much efforts I have put into it and walking away is not the solution.

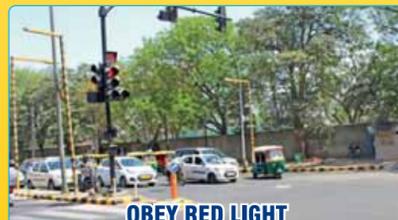
What are your upcoming projects?
I have offers for a few films but for that I have to leave TV and I am not willing to do it. So, right now I am only focusing on *Bhakarwadi* and once it will be done, I will do other projects for sure.



Always In Hurry?

Trying To Save Minutes Can Cost Precious Lives



Observe Lane Discipline **Obeey Red Light**

- ➡ Avoid wrong side driving.
- ➡ Red light jumping can cause serious accident.
- ➡ Zig Zag driving is Dangerous for you and others.

Follow us on: <https://www.facebook.com/dtptraffic> <https://twitter.com/dtptraffic>

E-mail to CP, Delhi at: cp.amulyapatnaik@delhipolice.gov.in

CM blames BJP as police block rally

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) convenor and Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal Saturday claimed that he was denied permission for a rally in Sant Nagar Chowk here by the Delhi Police at the behest of the BJP.

Police, however, said the permission for the proposed public meeting was not given as the site witnesses heavy traffic snarls and huge footfall of people on weekends due to weekly market.

They said they had proposed an alternative venue which was 150 metres away from the site.

"BJP gets my public rally cancelled today thro police. Police denies permission. How many BJP rallies were denied permission by police in Delhi in last 5 yrs? (sic)" Kejriwal said in a tweet.



'BJP gets my public rally cancelled today thro police. Police denies permission. How many BJP rallies were denied permission by police in Delhi in last 5 yrs? (sic)'

He said the people will teach the BJP a lesson for not fulfilling its promise of granting full statehood to Delhi.

Senior AAP leader Sanjay Singh said the BJP has "accepted defeat" ahead of the Lok Sabha polls and does not want that a free and fair election takes place.

"Our campaign was to get started and the Delhi Police cancelled our permission. At the same place, BJP leader

Harsh Vardhan's rally was held. How he got a permission but we were not given a permission," he told reporters.

Singh said the party has sought an appointment with the Election Commission to demand immediate removal of the people responsible for cancellation of the AAP rally.

"We will also demand to probe BJP's role in getting our rallies cancelled," he added.

Inter-state gang of ATM burglars busted, 2 held

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

With the arrest of two persons, Delhi Police on Saturday busted an inter-state gang of Automated Teller Machine (ATM) burglars. The accused have committed ATM burglary in the outskirts of Delhi and Gurugram and Rohtak, Haryana. The accused used to uproot the entire ATM machine loaded with cash and flee from the spot.

The accused have been identified as Narender (30) a resident of Sampla in District Rohtak, Haryana and Deshraj (25) a resident of Rohtak. Both the accused are found involved in six cases ATM burglary in Haryana and Delhi.

According to Dr G Ram Gopal Naik, the Deputy Commissioner of Police (DCP), Crime Branch, on March 23, a tip of was received regarding the duo, involved in the incidents of ATM loots, would be coming to meet their friend near Government

School in Delhi's Nasirpur village following which a trap was laid and they were apprehended.

"During interrogation the accused confessed to their involvement in the recent ATM loot at Nasirpur village. The accused also disclosed that they along with their friends Rohit and Ajay were in need of money to live lavish life style. For this purpose, they started committing crimes. Since, ATM Machines were least guarded and having chances of ample cash inside it, they started targeting them," said the DCP.

"In the month of September and October 2018, the accused persons had targeted these ATM Machines and removed the whole machines with the help of gas cutters and shifted later them to Kharawar in Rohtak and after dismantling the machine, took out whole cash and distributed the booty among themselves," said the DCP.

Final names of BJP candidates for LS poll to be declared on April 5

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

The final name of the BJP candidates for the seven Parliamentary constituencies in the national Capital is likely to be announced on April 5. As per the party sources, the party high command will announce the names of candidates after the final confirmation on AAP - congress alliance in Delhi.

"Congress is yet to respond about the alliance," said Delhi BJP leader.

Attacking on Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) National convenor Arvind Kejriwal for using picture of cow and Swastik symbol, Delhi BJP unit president Manoj Tiwari said that in order to grab power, he is offending the religious sentiments of the Hindus.

"It has become the habit of Kejriwal to demean Hinduism and the Modi Government is going to contest the next Lok Sabha Elections on the



issue of development whereas Kejriwal is hatching a conspiracy to mislead the people," said Tiwari.

Kejriwal is hatching a conspiracy to mislead the people, this is the new India in which the people will give their mandate not on the basis of religion but on the development of the country and nationalism," Tiwari said.

Citing a cricket match con-

trovery, Tiwari said that this is not for the first time that Kejriwal is doing such things to insult the Hindus.

"Even before this by tweeting the cow photo and Swastik symbol he tried to offend our religious sentiments."

"The way in which he has given a communal colour to a fight over cricket match in Gurugram is not expected from the Chief Minister of any State," said the BJP leader.

Residents take out march against waste-to-energy plant in Okhla

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

A number of civil society organisations and city residents on Saturday took out a march to protest the alleged failure of authorities to shut down a waste-to-energy plant in Okhla, saying toxic emissions from it were polluting the area. The protesters said the Okhla plant is situated in a densely-populated part of South Delhi. The incinerator is close to Sukhdev Vihar, Ishwar Nagar, New Friends Colony, Jasola, Sarita Vihar, Haji Colony and Ghaffar Manzil.

They said a joint panel of the Central Pollution Control Board and the Delhi Pollution Control Committee had told the Supreme Court in September 2018 that the plants at Okhla, Ghazipur and Narela-Bawana were not complying with the emission standards.

Sheila appoints observers in all constituencies

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

For the preparation of the Lok Sabha elections, observers have been appointed in all the 25 Assembly constituencies of the North Delhi Municipal Corporation. On the directions of Delhi Pradesh Congress Committee (DPCC) president Sheila Dikshit, DPCC working president Rajesh Lilothia has appointed observers in all the 25 Assembly constituencies in the North Delhi.

He said that at the centre as well as in Delhi, the Governments which are in existence have been gagging democracy and are trying to destroy the Constitution drafted by Dr Bhim Rao Ambedkar.

"In 2014, the Modi Government at the Centre made lofty promises to the country, including Delhi, but none of the promises have been fulfilled in his five-year tenure. He said that the people of the country and Delhiites are now feeling let down and



betrayed," said Lilothia.

Targeting ruling AAP, he said that ruling government in Delhi has been telling lies to the people for the past four years and is making all sorts of excuses to hide their failures.

"The people of Delhi have started remembering the 15-year golden rule of the Congress Government in which unprecedented developments took place in Delhi," adding, Delhi people are now looking upto the Congress Government to provide a sta-

'In the 94 wards of the NMC, effigies will be burned to highlight the failures and non-performance of the elected representatives of both the BJP and AAP, who have not only deceived the people but also betrayed them with hollow promises'

ble and effective Government so that the stalled development works of Delhi could be resumed.

"In the 94 wards of the NMC, effigies will be burned to highlight the failures and non-performance of the elected representatives of both the BJP and AAP, who have not only deceived the people but also betrayed them with hollow promises," Delhi congress leader said.

Under the "Save Constitution Campaign",

BJP to organise Vijay Sankalp Sabhas for LS election

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Delhi BJP will organise Vijay Sankalp Sabhas to kick start the party's Election Campaign for the upcoming Lok Sabha Polls.

Delhi BJP General Secretary Rajesh Bhatia, said that Delhi BJP will organize two Jan Sabhas on March 24, 2019 and five Jan Sabhas on March 26. All over the country BJP will organize Vijay Sankalp Sabhas where senior leaders of the organization will address the party workers.

Union Home Minister of India Rajnath Singh will address the party workers of North East Parliamentary Constituency and Delhi Lok Sabha Election Incharge and Union Defence Minister Nirmala Sitaram will address the party workers of New Delhi Parliamentary Constituency.

Gupta meets CEO to file complaint against CM for misusing twitter handle

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Delhi BJP delegation led by the Leader of Opposition (Lop) in Delhi assembly Vijender Gupta met Chief Electoral officer (CEO) to file a complaint against Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal for allegedly misuse of their twitter handles by Delhi spread religious frenzy and dissent.

"Kejriwal, through his official Twitter handle, has shared a video of an incident of beating in Gurugram District of Haryana and has provoked through his twitter "Ye Video Dekhiye. Hamare Kaun se Granth mein likha hai Musalmano ko maro? Geeta mein ? Ramayan Mein? Hanuman Chalisa mein ? Ye Log Hindu nahi hain, Hinduon ke vesh mein gunde hain." (See this video, in which Granth is written to hit Muslims? In



Geeta or Ramayana? Or in Hnuman Chalisa, these people are not hindu but goons," Gupta said referring to a recent tweet by Cm Kejriwal.

"When Gurugram administration has taken appropriate action then why Kejriwal is using the incident to spread communal violence and giving it a religious color?" Gupta asked.

25-yr-old arms trafficker held, 25 semi-automatic pistols seized

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

The Special Cell of Delhi Police on Saturday claimed to have arrested 25 year-old arms trafficker in national Capital. Police has also recovered 25 country made semi-automatic pistols from the possession of the accused which were brought by the trafficker to supply them to the criminals of Delhi and NCR.

The accused has been identified Kehri, a resident of village Chauki Bangar in district Mathura of Uttar Pradesh (UP).

According to Pramod Singh Kushwaha, the Deputy Commissioner of Police (DCP), special cell, on March 21, specific inputs were received regarding Kehri who would be coming to supply arms to criminals near basement parking entrance gate of Cross River Mall in Delhi's Karkardooma following which a trap was laid and accused was apprehended.



'During interrogation the accused disclosed that he was previously working at Brick Kiln. In the year 2018, he came into the contacts of firearms traffickers of Mewat region and through these criminals came into the contacts with criminals of Delhi-NCR and arms manufacturer of Madhya Pradesh (MP)'

"During checking 25 country made semi-automatic pistols were found in his bag. Subsequently, A First Information Report (FIR) under section 25 of Arms Act was registered at Special Cell police station in this regard," said the DCP.

"During interrogation the accused disclosed that he was previously working at Brick Kiln. In the year 2018, he came into the contacts of firearms traffickers of Mewat region and through these criminals came into the contacts with criminals of Delhi-NCR and arms manufacturer of Madhya

Pradesh (MP)," said the DCP.

"Induced by easy money in illegal firearms trafficking, Kehri got involved in illegal firearms trafficking. He started procuring illegal firearms from Dhulkot in district Khargone (MP) and started supplying the same to the criminals of Delhi and its peripherals," said the DCP.

"Police have identified source and receiver of fire arms. Efforts are afoot to identify all the forward and backward linkages of this arms network. Further investigation is going on," the DCP added.

Woman held captive for 3 yrs rescued

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Delhi Commission of Women (DCW) rescued a 24 year old woman who was held captive by her parents for last three years in national Capital. DCW had received a complaint regarding the woman from her husband.

The husband of Surekha (name changed), had written an email to the chairperson of DCW, Swati Maliwal, requesting for help as the parents of his wife were not allowing her to live with her husband who she had married three years ago.

"In his complaint the man said that Surekha's parents did not consider her marriage to him as proper despite both being of legal age and having papers to prove their marriage.

He and Surekha were in a relationship for the last six years and had got married



three years back. Suspecting the relationship, the parents had imposed a curfew on Surekha.

They refused to allow her to go out of the house alone and virtually kept her as a captive in the house," said a DCW official.

"A team from DCW along with local police station went to the house of Surekha's parents. They found the victim in a bad condition - she was fre-

quently beaten up and kept in a room alone," said the official.

"Crying profusely, the victim said that all she wanted was to be with her husband. The parents and extended family of

ents, Surekha refused to file a case against them for the torture inflicted on her," said the DCW official.

Surekha was rescued on 13 March. A few days after the rescue, Surekha was approached by DCW to check her well-being. She confirmed she was living happily with her husband and her parents had not troubled the couple in any way. DCW has sought protection for the couple from Delhi Police.

"It's a shame that even in today's day and age, parents torture their own children and force their will on them. We have seen several cases where parents resort to cruel means like physical abuse, isolation, starvation and even murder to make their daughter comply with their will and marry elsewhere.

They fail to realise that not only is this illegal but extremely immoral," said Swati Maliwal, Chairperson, DCW.

Fire breaks out at paper factory, no casualty reported

'The factory, located in 500 square yards, has three floors and a basement. The flames spread from the basement to upper floors'

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

A fire broke out at a paper factory here on Saturday but no casualty was reported, a fire officer said.

A call about the fire at a basement of the factory, in Dilshad Garden area of north Delhi, was received at 1.15 p.m. and 16 fire tenders were rushed to the spot to douse the flames, the officer said. The "cooling operation" is now underway, he said. "The factory, located in 500 square yards, has three floors and a basement. The flames spread from the basement to upper floors," he said, adding that no casualty was reported from the spot.

The cause of the fire was also to be ascertained, the officer said.

Members of Bunty-Bubli gang held in W Delhi

WOMAN THIEF WAS EXPELLED FROM CITY FOR 2 YEARS IN 2016

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

A 33-year-old woman who dressed up like a man was arrested along with her accomplice for allegedly dragging a woman after robbing her purse in west Delhi's Janakpuri area. Police said that the duo is members of alleged Bunty-Babli gang.

The accused have been identified as Ramanjeet Kaur, a resident of Nangloi and Ramneek Singh (24), a resident of Nihal Vihar. Kaur was the bad character of Nihal Vihar Police Station and was expelled from the national Capital for two years in 2016.

According to Monika



Bhardwaj, the Deputy Commissioner of Police (DCP) west district, "On March 8, a woman who was around 53 years old had come to Janakpuri to attend the function on occasion of International Women's Day. While she was standing near A Block and was talking on phone, two unknown persons came on a bike and tried to snatch her purse."

"The lady, who was holding onto her purse, fell down and was dragged as the robbers continued to move ahead, how-

ever, they managed to snatch the purse and fled away," the DCP said.

"During investigation, police collected the CCTV footage from the nearby area. While they were analysing the footage, the physique of pillion rider resembled to a female. Police started focusing on ladies who were previously involved in snatching incidents. Finally, police analysed a lady who was previously involved in snatching incidents," said the DCP.

"Thereafter, police received

information that both the accused would come near Oxford School, Vikas Puri Delhi to meet a person on Wednesday following which a trap was laid and the accused persons were arrested at around 10.20 AM," said the DCP.

"During interrogation, it was revealed that Kaur was married to one Tejender Singh who is in jail on the charges of murder case. She came in contact with one Jagjeet Singh and the duo started to commit snatching in a unique way. She used to dress like a male to dodge and mislead the police team," the DCP said.

"They were arrested in 2014 for the first time. After coming out on bail, she approached Ramneek and they started committing crime," said the DCP.

"Police have recovered one bike, one scooter and the purse of the lady from their possession," the DCP added.



Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal pays tributes to Shaheed Bhagat Singh, Shaheed Rajguru and Shaheed Sukhdev in Delhi Vidhan Sabha

PUBLIC NOTICE

THIS IS FOR NOTICE OF THE GENERAL PUBLIC THAT A POLITICAL PARTY IS PROPOSED TO BE REGISTERED BY THE NAME OF REPUBLICAN PARTY OF INDIA (ATHAWALE).

THE OFFICE OF THE PARTY IS LOCATED AT 3/4 INSA HUTMENT, AZAD MAIDAN, FORT, MUMBAI-400001. (MAHARASHTRA) THIS PARTY HAS SUBMITTED APPLICATION TO THE ELECTION COMMISSION OF INDIA, NEW DELHI FOR ITS REGISTRATION AS POLITICAL PARTY UNDER SECTION 29A OF THE REPRESENTATION OF PEOPLE ACT, 1951. NAMES/ADDRESS OF THE OFFICE BEARERS OF THE PARTY ARE AS FOLLOWS:

PRESIDENT: SHRI RAMDAS ATHAWALE
GENERAL SECRETARY: SHRI AVINASH SHARAD MAHATEKAR
TREASURER: SHRI MADHUKAR DHARMAJI SHEWALE

IF ANY ONE HAS ANY OBJECTION TO THE REGISTRATION OF REPUBLICAN PARTY OF INDIA (ATHAWALE) THEY MAY SEND THEIR OBJECTION WITH REASONS THEREOF, TO THE SECRETARY (POLITICAL PARTY), ELECTION COMMISSION OF INDIA, NIRVANACHAN SADAN, ASHOKA ROAD, NEW DELHI - 110001 WITHIN 30 DAYS OF THE PUBLICATION OF THIS NOTICE.

Court orders attachment of Mallya's assets

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Delhi court has ordered attachment of liquor baron Vijay Mallya's properties in Bengaluru in a case relating to FERA violations.

Chief Metropolitan Magistrate Deepak Sherawat issued fresh directions after the Bengaluru Police, through Enforcement Directorate's special public prosecutor N K Matta and advocate Samvedna Verma, sought more time to execute its earlier order in this regard.

The court directed the state police to attach the properties by July 10, the next date of hearing.

The Bengaluru Police had earlier informed the court that it had identified 159 properties belonging to Mallya, but had not been able to attach any of them.

Mallya was declared a proclaimed offender by the court on January 4 last year for evading its summons in the case.

The court had on May 8 last year directed the attachment of Mallya's properties in the case through the Bengaluru Police commissioner and sought a report on it.

It had declared Mallya a proclaimed offender for evading summons in a Foreign Exchange Management Act (FERA) violation case after noting that he had failed to appear despite repeated summonses.

It had on April 12, 2017 issued an open-ended non-bailable warrant (NBW) against the liquor baron.

Unlike a non-bailable warrant, an 'open-ended NBW' does not carry a time limit for execution.

Cong-NCP leaders have lost people's trust: Tawde

PTI ■ MUMBAI

BJP leader and Maharashtra school education minister Vinod Tawde said on Saturday that Congress and NCP leaders in the state have lost people's trust.

They do not have faith in themselves too, he said.

"Maharashtra Congress chief Ashok Chavan says nobody listens to him and (NCP supremo) Sharad Pawar never does what he says," Tawde said.

The leaders of the BJP and its ally Shiv Sena, on the other hand, practise what they preach, he said.

"Sharad Pawar said that (NCP leader and his nephew Ajit Pawar's son) Parth will not contest Lok Sabha election, but now Parth is contesting," Tawde pointed out, saying this has left people confused.

Chavan was unable to handle his own constituency and his supporters were leaving the party, Tawde claimed.

Bihar Left parties slam Mahagathbandhan for keeping them out

PTI ■ PATNA

Left parties of Bihar on Saturday slammed the Mahagathbandhan (Grand Alliance) for excluding them in the seat-sharing formula saying the decision was not in sync with the ground realities in the state.

The CPI(ML) Liberation, the major Left party in Bihar, said it would now contest in five seats and extend support to the CPI and the CPI(M) which have declared their nominees for two Lok Sabha constituencies.

"Had the Left been taken aboard, it would have added to the credibility of the challenge that the anti-BJP parties seek to pose to the NDA. It seems the Grand Alliance has not learnt its lessons from the betrayal of mandate," CPI(ML) Liberation state secretary Kunal said in a statement.

He was referring to Chief Minister Nitish Kumar, who heads the JD(U), walking out of the Mahagathbandhan in 2017 and returning to the NDA.

The opposition 'Mahagathbandhan' Friday announced its seat-sharing formula for the 40 Lok Sabha seats in Bihar, half of which will be fought by the RJD and nine by the Congress.

New entrants to the Grand Alliance Upendra Kushwaha's Rashtriya Lok Samta Party (RLSP) and Mukesh Sahni's Vikasheel Insaan Party (VIP) will field candidates on five and three seats respectively. Former chief minister Jitan Ram Manjhi's Hindustan Awam Morcha (HAM) has been given three seats.

"The Left had, on its own, decided to contest very few seats this time in order to prevent division of anti-BJP votes. The manner in which the seats have been allocated can be called anything but just," Kunal added. The CPI(ML) has already announced candidature of Raju Yadav, from Ara. The NDA has fielded Union minister R K Singh, the sitting BJP MP, from the seat.

BJP to support independent candidate Sumalatha in Mandya

PTI ■ BENGALURU

Independent candidate and multi lingual actress Sumalatha received a big boost Saturday with the BJP deciding to support her in Mandya to take on Chief Minister H D Kumaraswamy's son Nikhil in the Lok Sabha polls.

Sumalatha, widow of actor-turned-politician M H Ambareesh, decided to contest as an independent after being denied a ticket by the Congress, which is now facing trouble in the district over conceding the seat to its ruling coalition partner JD(S).

BJP's Central Election Committee Secretary Jagat Prakash Nadda announced the party's decision to support Sumalatha, as he read out the list of candidates for various Lok Sabha seats across the country in Delhi.

With Congress ruling out fielding Sumalatha for Mandya, saying it would go to JD(S), clamour had grown within BJP to induct her and field her as the candidate, as a section believed it would help the saffron party, which doesn't have

much presence in the Vokkaliga bastion.

However, BJP's state leadership was one in supporting her as an independent so she could continue to bank on the support of disgruntled Congress leaders in Mandya, who are upset about their party's decision to cede the seat to JD(S).

Congress and JD(S) have been arch rivals in old Mysuru region, especially Mandya.

Both parties forged an alliance to form the government after the 2018 assembly poll results and are fighting the Lok Sabha polls together, according to the coalition arrangement.

Sumalatha's late husband Ambareesh had contested and won from Mandya in the past and enjoys popularity among the masses there.

She had filed her nomination as an independent on Wednesday and enjoys the support of many within the Kannada film industry, with film stars Darshan and Yash among others by her side during campaigning.

Sumalatha had also sought

the support of senior BJP leader and former Karnataka Chief Minister S M Krishna, a prominent Vokkaliga leader from Mandya.

Despite losing Mandya Lok Sabha seat in the bypolls in November 2018, BJP had made significant inroads, with party candidate Siddaramaiah, a political greenhorn and former civil servant securing 2,44,404 votes, its best performance there.

BJP on Saturday also announced that Muniswamy S, a Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike corporator from Kadugudi, would be its candidate for the Kolar Lok Sabha seat.

With the announcement for two seats on Saturday, BJP has so far announced candidates for 23 (including Mandya) out of total of 28 Lok Sabha seats in the state.

The first list of 21 candidates was announced on Thursday.

The five seats for which the party is yet to announce its candidates are Koppal, Raichur, Bangalore South, Bangalore Rural and Chikkodi.

₹800-crore foreign assets detected; prosecution started in 3 cases: IT dept

PTI ■ BENGALURU

The Karnataka-Goa Income Tax region has detected and unearthed about Rs 800 crore worth foreign assets and started prosecution in three cases, a top department official said here Saturday.

"Till date the directorate has detected and unearthed foreign assets worth close to approximately ₹800 crore. Prosecution has been launched in three cases under the Black Money Act. Prosecution notices have already been issued in 10 other cases," principal chief Income Tax Commissioner (Karnataka-Goa), B R Balakrishnan told a news conference here.

He said the searches exposed a complex web of overseas entities floated by the assesseees for laundering money abroad and investments made in foreign assets, having ramifications under the Black Money Act.

While probing many

'Till date the directorate has detected and unearthed foreign assets worth close to approximately ₹800 crore. Prosecution has been launched in three cases under the Black Money Act. Prosecution notices have already been issued in 10 other cases'

and Panama. Searches have been conducted in 26 cases involving foreign assets," Balakrishnan added.

On Benami prohibition, he said the I-T department detected a unique modus operandi in Goa, where foreigners used to acquire properties which were not registered in their names.

"Enquiries have revealed that many foreigners had paid consideration for villas and were occupying the same for more than a decade without getting it registered or transferred in their names in order to circumvent the law of the land," said Balakrishnan.

He said 12 such properties have been provisionally attached under the 'Prohibition of Benami Properties Transaction Act.'

The I-T department was likely to provisionally attach approximately 100 acres of land worth more than Rs 100 crore by the end of March, he added.

52 booked in Rajouri for failing to deposit licensed weapons

PTI ■ JAMMU

The Jammu & Kashmir police Saturday booked 52 persons in Rajouri district for ignoring administrative orders to deposit their licensed weapons in police stations in run-up to the upcoming parliamentary polls.

Rajouri, which falls in Jammu parliamentary segment, is going to polls in the first phase on April 11.

The district magistrates across the state have directed people to deposit their licensed weapons in local police stations as part of the efforts to ensure free and fair polls.

"An order in this regard was issued by Rajouri district magistrate on March 1 and all the licensed weapon holders were asked to deposit their weapons in local police stations in view of the forthcoming parliamentary polls.

"Although majority of licensed weapon holders deposited their weapons in police stations but some people paid no attention to the order even after police served them reminder through notices," a police spokesman said.

Taking note of it, he said various cases under relevant sections of law have been registered against the violators in police stations across Rajouri district.

Rajouri's Senior Superintendent of Police Yougal Manhas said the persons against whom cases have been registered would face cancellation of their licenses and the matter would be taken up with the district magistrate in due course of time.

"More legal actions against more such violations are being worked out by Rajouri Police in days to come," he said.

BJP will give befitting reply to terror attacks: Goyal

PTI ■ HYDERABAD

Slamming Congress leader S Sam Pitroda over his remarks on aggressive action against Pakistan, Union Minister Piyush Goyal Saturday said the BJP would give a befitting reply to terror attacks and not be 'apologetic' as the opposition party leaders.

If the Congress-led UPA government had given a strong response to the Mumbai terror attacks in 2008, the situation would not have been like today, he said at the Main bhi chowkidar (I too am a watchman) event here organised in support of BJP candidates in the Lok Sabha elections.

If any terror forces look at this country with a bad eye, then like Congress leaders, like Sam Pitroda, we will not be apologetic. We will give a befitting reply, Goyal said.

Modi, Shah & Yogi to address rallies in all phases in WB

PTI ■ KOLKATA

The BJP leadership has decided to carpet-bomb West Bengal with rallies of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, BJP national president Amit Shah and Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath during all the seven phases of polling.

Modi will address his first election rally in the city's Brigade Parade ground on April 3, a senior state BJP leader said.

"Modi ji will address at least one rally in each phase in the state. Amit Shah ji will also address one rally per phase and Yogi ji will address eight rallies in all," the leader said.

West Bengal is one of the priority states for the BJP in the country.

The saffron party, which bagged two Lok Sabha seats in

the state in the 2014 elections, is now targeting 23 of the state's 42 constituencies.

The Lok Sabha election in the state is a "semi-final match" for the BJP before it goes out for an all-out battle to oust the Mamata Banerjee-headed Trinamool Congress government in the 2021 Assembly polls, party leaders said.

A senior state BJP leader said apart from Odisha, West Bengal is the focus for the party in eastern India.

The saffron party is hoping to overcome its deficit in the number of seats from states of North India, where it has reached a saturation point, by winning more seats from states like West Bengal and Odisha, the leader said.

Lok Sabha elections will be held in West Bengal in seven phases from April 11 to May 19.

Diggy vs Pragya likely

From Page 1

Bhopal Lok Sabha constituency, which was represented by Shankar Dayal Sharma in 1971-77 and 1980-1984, has been held by BJP since 1989.

Bhopal constituency is represented by BJP's Alok Sanjar, who had won the seat in 2014 by a margin of 3.70 lakh votes.

BJP stalwarts like Sushil Chandra Verma, Uma Bharati and Kailash Joshi had represented the seat in the past.

Former cricketer late Mansoor Ali Khan Pataudi, scion of the erstwhile Bhopal State, had unsuccessfully contested from Bhopal on a Congress' ticket in 1991.

The constituency is spread over eight Assembly segments, namely Berasia, Bhopal Uttar, Narela, Bhopal Dakshin-Paschim, Bhopal Madhya, Govindpura, Huzur and Sehore.

Rain, strong surface...

From Page 1
The maximum temperature settled at 30.3 degrees Celsius. Overall humidity was recorded at 34 per cent.

Friday's maximum temperature was 30.2 degrees Celsius, a notch below the season's average, and the minimum temperature was 15.5 degrees Celsius, two notches below the normal.

The overall Air Quality Index (AQI) was 'moderate' at 113 as per the System of Air Quality and Weather Forecasting.

Rahul may contest from Wayanad

From Page 1

Gandhi's candidature from Wayanad will energise the Congress party in South India and thus the party can win majority of seats from the region, the leaders said.

The Congress had earlier proposed T Siddique, the Kozhikode DCC president, for the Wayanad seat but he has backed out.

Siddique said he also wants Gandhi to contest from the Wayanad seat.

The election convention

of the party-led UDF for Wayanad constituency will unanimously urge Gandhi to contest from the seat, he added.

The Congress state units in Tamil Nadu and Karnataka have also demanded that the party president contest the Lok Sabha elections from the respective states.

The Congress earlier this month had announced that Rahul Gandhi will contest from his bastion Amethi and Sonia Gandhi from Rae Bareilly.

Prasad replaces Shotgun...

From Page 1

The BJP has already released 28 names for UP in its first list when it announced 184 nominees earlier for 20 states. Mafuja Khatun will contest from Jangipur in West Bengal.

The BJP also announced 51 names for Andhra Pradesh Assembly seats, 22 names for Odisha Assembly seats and one Assembly by-election seat in Meghalaya.

The NDA in Bihar, comprising the BJP, Chief Minister

Nitish Kumar's JD(U) and Ram Vilas Paswan's LJP, announced the candidates excepting for Khagaria, currently held by the LJP. But it is not clear whether sitting MP Mehboob Ali Kaiser will be fielded again.

Giriraj Singh's colleagues in the council of Ministers Radha Mohan Singh, RK Singh, Ashwini Kumar Choubey and Ram Kripal Yadav will be fielded from their respective sitting seats of Motihari, Ara, Buxar and Pataliputra respectively. Begusarai, won by the BJP in 2014, fell vacant upon the death of MP Bhola Singh a few months ago.

The Lok Janshakti Party (LJP) has fielded Chandan Kumar from Nawada where he will be taking on Rashtriya Janata Dal's (RJD) Vibha Devi - wife of Raj Vallabh Yadav, who

2nd senior most Vice Admiral...

From Page 1

Besides Verma, the other contenders for the Navy Chief's post included Vice Chief of Naval Staff Vice Admiral G Ashok Kumar, Western Naval Command chief Vice Admiral Ajit Kumar and Southern Naval Command chief Vice Admiral Anil Kumar Chawla, sources said.

Verma retires in November this year while Karambir Singh will retire after three-year tenure or attaining 62 years of age, whichever is earlier.

Born on November 3, 1959, Singh was commissioned into the Indian Navy on July 1, 1980 as a helicopter pilot and has flown extensively on Chetak and Kamov helicopters. He is the son of a former IAF officer.

A graduate of the Defence Services Staff College, Wellington and College of Naval Warfare, Mumbai, hails

from Jalandhar. He is also a recipient of Param Vishist Seva Medal (PVSM) and the Ati Vishisht Seva Medal (AVSM).

In his career spanning over 37 years, Singh has commanded four ships — Indian Coast Guard ship Chandbibbi, missile corvette INS Vijaydurg, guided missile destroyers INS Rana and INS Delhi. He also served as the Fleet Operations Officer of the Western Fleet.

His other important assignments include Chief of Staff of the Tri-Services Unified Command at Andaman and Nicobar Islands and Flag Officer Commanding Maharashtra and Gujarat Naval Area (FOMAG).

In the rank of Vice Admiral, he was also the Director General of Project Seabird, looking after infrastructure development of the Navy's modern base at Karwar.

lost his membership of the Assembly recently upon conviction in a rape case.

State BJP president Nityanand Rai will be seeking re-election from his Ujiyarpur seat while BJP's national spokesperson Rajiv Pratap Rudy will be seeking re-election from Saran, where he had defeated former Chief Minister Rabri Devi five years ago. Speculations were rife that he might be dropped this time.

Another BJP national spokesperson Syed Shah Nawaz Husain was hopeful of a ticket from Bhagalpur, which he had represented in the past but lost the seat to RJD in 2014. The seat has gone to the ruling Janata Dal (United) this time, which fielded Ajay Kumar Mandal as its candidate.

Another surprise inclusion

I-T dept dismisses 'BSY diary' as 'forgery document'

PTI ■ BENGALURU

The Income Tax Department Saturday dismissed as a "forgery document" and a "set of loose papers", the Yeddyurappa diary about alleged bribe payment to top BJP brass that has created a political furor.

The Congress, citing a media report, had Friday demanded a Lokpal probe into the charge that the state BJP chief had paid Rs 1,800 crore as bribe to the party top brass, which Yeddyurappa had dismissed as "atrocious and malicious."

"Our conclusion after studying it was that it is a forgery document. It is a set of loose papers," principal chief Income Tax Commissioner of Karnataka-Goa Region BR Balakrishnan told reporters.

He said "There was an attempt to just make use of the diary to influence some other investigation, which we have not succumbed to. We have done our job in this case as well."

The documents, which were photocopies, were seized from Karnataka water resource minister D K Shivakumar's residence during a raid carried out by the Income Tax department on August 2, 2017, he said.

The papers were sent to the forensic science laboratory in Hyderabad, which returned it saying that they need the original papers, Balakrishnan added.

He said that whatever came out in the magazine (Caravan) which broke the story was not part of the Income Tax department's seized material.

Balakrishnan stated that in view of various Supreme Court decisions on admissible evidence, "this particular diary has no evidentiary value."

Congress chief spokesperson Randeep Singh Surjewala had said at a press conference in New Delhi that Prime Minister Narendra Modi should come forward and clarify on the matter.

Yeddyurappa had said that

"all issues raised by Congress leaders are irrelevant and false."

"The issue is a closed chapter," he had said, adding that he was consulting legal experts on the issue and thinking about filing a defamation case.

Meanwhile, the state BJP demanded that the Congress leaders apologise after Balakrishnan dubbed the alleged diary as loose sheets of papers and a forgery document.

"Congress leaders who levelled false allegations against BJP and its leaders stand exposed in public."

If Congress leaders have left any sensibility in them and respect for public sentiments, they should immediately apologise," the party said.

Regarding the outcome of raids at a Karnataka minister's residence, (apparently referring to Shivakumar), Balakrishnan, without mentioning his name, said the process to confiscate the Benami property worth Rs 75 crore has been initiated.

has been dropped by the LJP this time. All three constituents of the NDA have fielded one woman each.

While BJP's Rama Devi will be seeking re-election from Sheohar, the JD(U) has fielded MLA Kavita Singh from Siwan Lok Sabha seat. The ruling party in Bihar has retained its candidates for its two sitting seats - Kaushalendra Kumar (Nalanda) and Santosh Kumar Kushwaha (Purnea).

Another JD(U) candidate is Vijay Manjhi from Gaya, whose mother Bhagwati Devi - a former stone-cutter - had represented the seat in 1990s. Besides, the party has fielded State Minister for disaster management Dinesh Chandra Yadav from Madhepura, currently represented by controversial MP Pappu Yadav.



CHANGE OF NAME

I Jagdish Singh Negi, S/o Gopal Singh Negi, R/o G-1/26A, Jai Vihar Extn-3, Bapraula, West Delhi - 110043, Decliare that Jagdish Singh Negi and Jagdish Singh are same and One Person, my correct name is Jagdish Singh Negi for all Purposes.

PD(5430)A

Shah accuses Cong of insulting Pulwama martyrdom

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Continuing his attack on Congress president Rahul Gandhi's close aide Sam Pitroda for allegedly taking a dim view of Pulwama terror attack and surgical strike against Pakistan, BJP president Amit Shah on Saturday accused the Congress of "insulting" the martyrdom of soldiers killed in the Pulwama terror attack and claimed that only BJP can ensure the country's security.

In the continuing poll-campaign slugfest with the Congress, Shah asked Rahul to apologise to people and armed forces for the comments of his aide.

Speaking to media, Shah said Pitroda's statement conveyed that the Pulwama terror attack was a "routine" incident carried out by a few people for which Pakistan cannot be blamed, as the BJP chief asked Rahul to make his party's stand clear on the issue.

Pitroda, he said, also questioned surgical strikes and air strikes by the Indian armed forces.

"Does the Congress believe that terror incidents in the country have nothing to do with the Pakistan government or Pakistan Army?" Shah asked, seeking Congress President's response.

Pitroda is Indian Overseas Congress chief and is seen to be one of the key advisers to



BJP president Amit Shah addresses the media in New Delhi on Saturday PTI

Gandhi.

His comments, including that one cannot "jump on entire nation" (Pakistan) just because some people from there "came here and attacked" in reference to Pulwama terror attack, were Friday seized on by Prime Minister Narendra Modi to lead the BJP's all-out attack against the Congress on the issues of terrorism.

Keeping the heat on the opposition party on the issues of terrorism and nationalism in the run-up to the Lok Sabha polls, Shah said the Congress is known for "vote bank" and "appeasement" politics during election and asked if such politics can be above national interest and the "blood of martyrs".

The BJP president then drew a comparison between the Congress-led UPA dispensation's "no strong action" against terrorism and the Modi

Government's "zero tolerance" against it to assert that only the saffron party is capable of securing India.

"I want to reassure people of this country that only the BJP can provide security to the country, can give a befitting response to terrorism and can foil Pakistan's conspiracy," he said. The Modi Government has succeeded in isolating Pakistan internationally and the morale of security forces is sky high, he said.

Shah said the Congress president on March 7 had said that questions raised on air strikes should be answered.

"But whose questions he wants to be answered and who raising questions on Indian Air Force. Who do you support? It is not proper for the national president of a party to raise such questions and doubt the IAF," he said.

"When anti-national slogans were raised in JNU you called it freedom of expression and you also went there in their support. This is an example of your abhorrent vote bank politics".

The BJP president also rejected the Congress distancing itself from Pitroda's comments by terming them as his personal views, as he wondered "what is personal view in politics".

The Congress president should tender an apology without any delay, he demanded.

Shah to launch poll campaign with rally in Agra

New Delhi: BJP president Amit Shah will launch the party's poll campaign after the Lok Sabha election schedule was announced with a rally in Agra in Uttar Pradesh on Sunday, and its top leaders will hold rallies in every constituency across the country till Tuesday. Asserting that national security plank will figure high on the party's "Vijay Sankalp" (Pledge for Victory) rallies planned for Sunday and Tuesday, senior party leader Mulukhtar Abbas Naqvi said the BJP will launch "ground strike" against "abusers of security forces". PNS

PM Modi should stop sending love letters to Islamabad, Cong retaliates

New Delhi: Returning fire on BJP's tirade against Sam Pitroda for allegedly going soft on Pakistan, the Congress on Saturday took potshots at Prime Minister Narendra Modi for sending best wishes to his Pakistani counterpart Imran Khan on the eve of the neighbouring country's national day saying he should stop sending "love letters" to Islamabad.

Modi had sent a letter to Khan, greeting the people of Pakistan on the eve of its National Day and highlighting the importance of a terror-free South Asia. It was Khan who made Modi's gesture public.

Congress chief spokesperson Randeep Surjewala reminded Modi of his own words asking him to stop writing "love letters" to Pakistan and alleged that his "muscular politics" is aimed at only the people and the media.

The attack came after Modi sent his best wishes to Khan on the Pakistan National Day, which is celebrated to mark the Lahore Resolution on March 23 each year.

"Mr 56 of the Sari-Shawl- Impromptu Pak visit for Birthday-ISI invite fame

diplomacy was feeling very shy yesterday.

"Guess? Chowkidar hid the fact that he had wished Pak PM on Pak National Day without a word on Pak terrorism.

"Muscular politics soap opera for people and media only," Surjewala said on Twitter.

The Congress leader also tweeted, "Modi ji, Stop writing this Love Letter to Pakistan".

He posted a video of Modi's interview to a channel where Modi during the UPA time is saying Pakistan needs to be talked to in the language it understands and that writing love letters to it should be stopped. He was referring to then prime minister Manmohan Singh's letter to then Pakistan President.

Senior Congress leader Kapil Sibal too pitched in saying: "Remember Modiji... You embraced (then Pakistani premier) Nawaz Sharif, called him to your inauguration and showed what a change it would be. It was you who shared a birthday bash, gave him gifts. While our PM never visited Pakistan, you gave him gifts and then you are teaching us lessons on Pakistan?"

Ravi Shankar Prasad questions RaGa over rise in income



PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Claiming that Congress President Rahul Gandhi has no ostensible source of income, the BJP on Saturday questioned the substantial rise in his income between 2004 and 2014.

BJP leader and Union Minister Ravi Shankar Prasad told the media that Congress leader's income had risen from over ₹55 lakh in 2004 to ₹9 crore in 2014 as per his election affidavits, and asked how can a mere MP witness such a

jump in income.

"In his election affidavit in 2004, his income was ₹55,38,123 while in 2009 it rose to ₹2 crore and in 2014 it rose to ₹9 crore. We know how much an MP earns. We want to ask what is this Rahul Gandhi model of development without an ostensible source of income," he said.

He also questioned Rahul whether he had bought two properties from Unitech which was linked to the 2G spectrum allocation scam, PTI quoted BJP leader as saying.

BJP seems to be schizophrenic: Akhilesh on PM Modi's blog

Lucknow: Samajwadi Party chief Akhilesh Yadav on Saturday termed the BJP "schizophrenic" and alleged that the party tries to co-opt icons like Mahatma Gandhi, BR Ambedkar and Ram Manohar Lohia but follows people who these leaders disagreed with.

The remarks by the SP chief came in response to Prime Minister Narendra Modi's blog in which he dubbed the efforts of regional parties to form a grand alliance with the Congress as "reprehensible", saying socialist ideologue Ram Manohar Lohia would be "horrorified" as most of these parties claim to be his followers.

Accusing the BJP of practising double standards, Yadav wrote on Twitter, "I wonder which principles are being spoken of. The BJP seems to be

schizophrenic."

"On the one hand they try to co-opt Gandhi Ji, Bhagat Singh, Sardar Patel, Dr Ambedkar and Dr Lohia and on the other hand they follow



people who these leaders opposed and disagreed with."

In a blog to mark the 109th birth anniversary of Lohia, Modi alleged, "Today those parties that falsely claim to be Dr Lohia's followers are desperate to form an opportunistic 'maha-milawat' or adulteration alliances with the same Congress (which Lohia opposed). It is both ironical and reprehensible."

The Samajwadi Party, Janata

Lohiaites' ties with Cong 'reprehensible': PM

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Saturday utilised the 109th birth anniversary of socialist ideologue Ram Manohar Lohia to hit out at socialist parties by dubbing as "reprehensible" their efforts to form a grand alliance with the Congress.

He said Lohia would be "horrorified" as most of these parties claim to be his followers.

In a blog to mark the 109th birth anniversary of Lohia, Modi alleged, "Today those parties that falsely claim to be Dr Lohia's followers are desperate to form an opportunistic 'maha-milawat' or adulteration alliances with the same Congress (which Lohia opposed). It is both ironical and reprehensible."

The Samajwadi Party, Janata

Dal-Secular, Rashtriya Janata Dal and Sharad Yadav's Loktantrik Janata Dal, which will merge with the RJD after the Lok Sabha polls, were some of the parties formed on socialist ideology.

Modi claimed Lohia would be "proud" of the NDA Government led by the BJP for following his ideas.

"Dr Lohia's thoughts inspire us. He wrote about modernising agriculture and empowering farmers, which the NDA Government is effectively doing through efforts such as PM Kisan Samman Nidhi, Krishi Sinchai Yojana, e-Nam, Soil Health Cards and more," he said in the blog shared on Twitter.

Referring to gender inequality, the Prime Minister said nothing pained Lohia more than the caste hierarchy and inequality between women and men.

"But neck deep in vote bank politics, it was parties that dis-

honestly claim to be Dr Lohia's followers that opposed the NDA Government's move to abolish the inhuman practice of triple talaq," he alleged.

Hitting out at the Congress, Modi said whenever Lohia spoke, the Congress "trembled with fear". He said Lohia had once claimed that during the Congress regime neither agriculture and industry nor the Army improved.

"These words can accurately describe even subsequent Congress regimes, where farmers were harassed, industry was discouraged (except if they belonged to friends and relatives of Congress leaders) and national security was ignored," the PM wrote. Noting that anti-Congressism was Lohia's "heart and soul", Modi said, "Unfortunately, today Lohia would be horrified at the political developments taking place."

"Those parties that claim

inspiration from Lohia have completely abandoned his principles. They are leaving no opportunity to insult him... Lohia always believed that dynastic politics was inimical to democracy. He would have been flabbergasted to see his followers' think about their own families first instead of the nation," he wrote.

Modi alleged that these parties are "experts at grabbing power, looting as much as possible and exploiting others. Poor people, tribals, Dalits, OBCs and women are not safe in their rule because these parties give a free run to criminals and anti-social elements." He said people should realise as to how can those who betrayed Lohia be expected to serve the nation.

"Today they are betraying the principles of Dr Lohia, tomorrow they will also betray the people of India," Modi alleged.

Congress, NCP announce seat-sharing pact in Maha

Congress gets 24, NCP 20

TN RAGHUNATHA ■ MUMBAI

After weeks of close-door confabulations, the Congress and NCP on Saturday formalised the seat-sharing arrangement for the "Mahaghatbandhan" constituents in Maharashtra, with the two main parties, deciding to contest 24 and 20 seats respectively and leave the remaining four seats to smaller parties.

Under the seat-sharing arrangement hammered among the constituents of "Mahaghatbandhan", the Congress will contest 24 seats out of the total 48 Lok Sabha seats in the State, while the NCP will field candidates in 20 constituencies. Of the remaining four seats, the smaller parties

Swabhimani Shetkari Sanghatana (SSS) will contest two seats, while Hitendra Thakur-led Bahujan Vikas Aghadi (BVA) and Yuva Swabhimani Paksha (YSP) will fight one seat each.

Addressing a joint news conference with NCP's State president Jayant Patil and former Deputy Chief Minister Ajit Pawar, Maharashtra Pradesh Congress Committee (MPCC) president Ashok Chavan said: "There are in all 56 political parties in Maharashtra's Mahaghatbandhan. Leaders of all political parties are present here."

Apart from the Congress, NCP and three other constituents, the other major constituents in the Opposition's umbrella coalition include: the People's Republic Party (Kavade), RPI (Democratic), Swabhimani Republican Paksha, Bhim Sena, United Republican Paksha, Maharashtra Muslim Sangh, All India Vimukta Bhatkya

Jaati Jamati Party, Ganrajya Sangh, Maharashtra Parivatran Sena, Swabhimani RPI and RPI (Kharat).

Launching a blistering attack against the ruling BJP, Chavan said: "We have formed Mahaghatbandhan by involving political parties representing all sections of the society including farmers, labourers, women, Dalits, minorities, youth and oppressed sections. The NDA Government is indulging in 'Jumle bajji'. There is a lot of unhappiness among common people in the state. The BJP-Sena Government has wreaked havoc in the State. It has failed to deliver on all fronts. Our intention to throw out Governments at the Centre and in the State.

Chavan charged that the Amit Shah-led party was practising "Saam, dham, Dhand, Bhed" politics and said that many smaller parties were suffering because of the questionable politics indulged in by the principal ruling party.

Jaati Jamati Party, Ganrajya Sangh, Maharashtra Parivatran Sena, Swabhimani RPI and RPI (Kharat).

Launching a blistering attack against the ruling BJP, Chavan said: "We have formed Mahaghatbandhan by involving political parties representing all sections of the society including farmers, labourers, women, Dalits, minorities, youth and oppressed sections. The NDA Government is indulging in 'Jumle bajji'. There is a lot of unhappiness among common people in the state. The BJP-Sena Government has wreaked havoc in the State. It has failed to deliver on all fronts. Our intention to throw out Governments at the Centre and in the State.

Chavan charged that the Amit Shah-led party was practising "Saam, dham, Dhand, Bhed" politics and said that many smaller parties were suffering because of the questionable politics indulged in by the principal ruling party.

Chavan charged that the Amit Shah-led party was practising "Saam, dham, Dhand, Bhed" politics and said that many smaller parties were suffering because of the questionable politics indulged in by the principal ruling party.

Chavan junks speculation about his resignation

TN RAGHUNATHA ■ MUMBAI

An embarrassed former Chief Minister Ashok Chavan on Saturday dismissed speculation about his impending resignation as the Maharashtra Pradesh Congress Committee president, after an audio tape in which he is heard telling a party worker that "No one is listening to me. I am planning to resign" went viral in the State.

An audio tape of a conversation between Chavan and a party activist from Chandrapur, who identified himself as one Rajurkar, in which the former expressed desire from his post as the State Congress chief went viral on Saturday.

In the mobile conversation, the caller voiced resentment over the nomination of Vinayak Bangade as a Congress candidate for the Chandrapur Lok Sabha seat and said that the party cadres

were opposed to Bangade's candidature.

Chavan also suggested to the caller that he should speak to Mukul Wasik, who was "calling the shots" in the selection of candidates for the state. "But Mukul Wasnik is no one in front of you," the caller said.

At one stage, Chavan is heard saying: "I have also informed the party. Nobody is listening to me. I am planning to resign".

A former Chief Minister of Maharashtra, Chavan was questioned about the audio tape in circulation at a news conference called to announce the formalisation of the seat-sharing arrangement among the "Mahaghatbandhan" constituents in the State.

Though he indirectly admitted that the tape was genuine one, Chavan said that a private conversation had no relevance in politics. He clarified that he had no plans to quit as the MPCC chief.

PM Modi a liar, Mamata an autocrat, says Rahul

SAUGAR SENGUPTA ■ KOLKATA

In a bid to occupy the anti-BJP, anti-Trinamool Congress space in Bengal, Congress president Rahul Gandhi on Saturday attacked both Narendra Modi and Mamata Banerjee with matching ferocity, calling the former 'a vendor of lies' and the latter 'an autocrat of sorts' who does "whatever she likes".

Incidentally, Gandhi's attack comes weeks after Congress leader in Lok Sabha and his senior party colleague Mallikarjun Kharge joined Banerjee along with 21 other national leaders in a Mahaghatbandhan (grand alliance) rally in Kolkata. The rally was held on February 19 from where all the leaders vouched for a united India and united Opposition to fight down a "communal BJP".

Mendacity is the hallmark of the Prime Minister, Gandhi said in North Malda from where he commenced his electoral campaign in Bengal.

Launching a vitriolic attack on Modi for "peddling lies wherever he goes," he said adding the coming election will see a battle of ideologies. "On two sides of the political spectrum are: Congress which is fighting for the unity of the country and the BJP-RSS which want to drive a wedge between castes and communities."

Piercing the Prime Minister with the Chowkidar spire Gandhi said Modi is a person who not only "tells lies throughout the day," but also "functions as a chowkidar (watchman) of the rich people."

The common people like the unemployed, farmer workers do not need chowkidars, he said insisting only "the rich people like Anil Ambani" need them. Attacking Modi for "defending the corrupt and fugitives" like Mehul Chowksi, Nirav Modi and Vijay Mallya who have defrauded the banks of thousands of crores of rupees Gandhi said the Prime Minister had "taken the common man's ₹30,000 crore to fill the pock-

ets of Anil Ambani" in Rafale (fighter craft) case.

Gandhi was campaigning in favour of Congress candidate Isha Khan Chowdhury who is contesting in place of his cousin sister and sitting MP Mausam Benazir Noor who is contesting on a Trinamool Congress ticket.

Attacking Noor for betraying the people as "you elected her on Congress ticket but she switched over to the TMC under pressure from that party," Gandhi said the people will take account of their betrayers. Noor however said she had turned coat inspired by the good works done by Mamata Banerjee.

Taking on Banerjee for giving Bengal an autocratic Government Gandhi said, "it is a one-man show going on in Bengal. The person who runs this Government never takes anyone's suggestions. She does whatever she likes," adding the present Government was "not better than the one run by the previous Left Front".



Major Surendra Poonia joins BJP in the presence of senior BJP leaders JP Nadda and Ram Lal in New Delhi on Saturday PTI

Mehbooba to contest from Anantnag

Faesar's party not to contest polls

MOHIT KANDHARI ■ JAMMU

Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) president Mehbooba Mufti has thrown her hat in the poll arena by deciding to contest Lok Sabha polls from Anantnag parliamentary seat.

She had earlier vacated the seat in June 2016 to become Chief Minister of the State after the demise of her father



Mufti Mohd Sayeed.

She had defeated National Conference candidate Mehboob Beg by a margin of over 65,000 votes in 2014 Lok Sabha polls.

Addressing a press conference in Srinagar on Saturday, Mehbooba also announced her party's decision of not fielding any candidate from two Lok

Sabha seats of Jammu-Poonch and Udhampur-Doda. With this announcement she has come on the same page with the National Conference and the Congress party.

The former Chief Minister said the decision was taken to prevent division of secular votes in the Jammu region.

She also announced that Agha Mohsin would be the party's candidate for Srinagar parliamentary seat.

With the entry of Mehbooba Mufti in the fray the Anantnag Parliamentary seat is set to witness quadangular contest. National Conference has fielded Justice (Retd) Hasnain Masoodi, while BJP has given mandate to Sofi Yousaf while Congress is yet to announce name of its candidate.

Due to security concerns, LS bypolls weren't conducted in Anantnag since April 2017.

In view of the prevailing security situation the Election Commission of India has decided to conduct polls in three

phases to ensure fool proof security arrangements.

Meanwhile, in another significant development former IAS officer Shah Faesar on Saturday said that his party won't contest the upcoming Lok Sabha elections.

Addressing a press conference at Press Club in Srinagar, Faesar said that they will strengthen the party first before taking the poll plunge.

Faesar launched his 'Jammu & Kashmir Peoples Movement' party during a function in Srinagar on last Sunday.

LOK SABHA POLLS

BJP out with 102 more names

DEEPAK K UPRETI ■ NEW DELHI

The BJP on Saturday announced its second list of 102 candidates from Goa, Madhya Pradesh, Jharkhand, Gujarat and Himachal Pradesh. The list also includes two names of independent candidates that the party will support in Karnataka.

The list includes the name of Anurag Thakur, Nishikant Dubey and Narendra Singh Tomar who will contest from Hamirpur (Himachal Pradesh), Godda (Jharkhand) and Morena (Madhya Pradesh) respectively. With the 5th list out, the saffron party has announced a total of 286 candidates for the Lok Sabha election scheduled to be held from April 11 till May 19.

In Goa, while Shripad Yesso Naik will contest from North Goa seat, Narendra Keshav Sawaikar will fight from South Goa. The State of

Goa has this many seats only.

In Gujarat, while BJP president Amit Shah's name was announced in the first list itself, on Saturday, BJP announced candidates on 15 more seats in the 26 parliamentary constituencies of the State. The 15 seats include the one Scheduled Caste seat and three Scheduled Tribe seats. On the 15 seats, 14 candidates are sitting MPs and will seek re-election in the upcoming general elections.

Vinod Chavda — Kutch REPEAT, Sabarkantha — Dipsinh Rathod, Ahmedabad West — Kirit Solanki, Surendranagar — Mahendra Munjpara, Rajkot — Mohan Kundiariya, Jamnagar — Poonamben Madam, Amreli — Naranbhai, Kachhadia Bhavnagar — Bharatiben Shiyal, Kheda — Devsinh Chauhan, Dahod — Jashwantsinh Bhabhor, Vadodara — Ranjanbhai Bhatt, Bharuch — Mansukhbhai Vasava, Bardoli

— Prabhuhai Vasava, Navsari — CR Patil, Valsad — KC Patel.

In Jharkhand, the BJP announced candidates on ten of the 14 parliamentary constituencies. Out of the ten candidates, one has been named on the Scheduled Caste seat of Palamu, while five on Scheduled Tribe seats of Rajmahal, Dumka, Singhbhum, Khunti and Lohardaga. Candidates on the politically crucial seats of Hazaribagh, Jamshepur and Dhanbad have also been announced.

Rajmahal — Hemlal Murmu, Dumka — Sunil Soren, Godda — Nishikant Dubey, Dhanbad — Pashupati Nath Singh, Jamshepur — Vidyut Varan Mahato, Singhbhum — Laxman Giluva, Khunti — Arjun Munda, Lohardaga — Sudarshan Bhagat, Palamu — Vishnu Dayal Ram, Hazaribagh — Jayant Sinha.

In Himachal Pradesh, can-

didates on all the four parliamentary constituencies have been announced.

Kangra — Kishan Kapoor, Mandi — Ramswaroop Sharma, Hamirpur — Anurag Thakur, Shimla — Suresh Kashyap.

In Madhya Pradesh, the BJP announced candidates on the politically crucial seats of Bhind, Morena, Ujjain among 15 seats.

Morena — Narendra Singh Tomar, Bhind — Sandhya Rai, Tikamgarh — Virendra Kumar, Khateek, Damoh — Prahlad Patel, Satna — Ganesh Singh, Rewa — Janardhan Mishra, Sidhi — Riti Pathak, Shahdol — Himadri Singh, Jabalpur — Rakesh Singh, Mandla — Faggan Singh Kulaste, Hoshangabad — Rao Udai Pratap Singh.

The list also includes two names of independent candidates, that the party will support in Karnataka.

Pak Army targets civilian areas along LoC in J&K

PNS ■ JAMMU

The Line of Control (LoC) is once again on the boil across frontier Rajouri and Poonch districts of Jammu division.

For the last couple of days, Pakistan is deliberately targeting civilian areas and targeting Indian soldiers with sniper fire.

Indian Army too remains in a State of high alert.

Late Saturday evening, in heavy exchange of fire, over one dozen villages were affected in Poonch sector.

According to ground reports, a primary school building was also affected in the shelling.

Official sources claimed, Pakistan Army was using artillery fire to target the Indian

villages and forward posts of the Indian Army.

Till the time of filing the report, heavy shelling was going on in the area, official sources claimed.

According to official sources, "Pakistan initiated unprovoked ceasefire violation around 5.30 p.m. by shelling several forward areas of Poonch on Saturday".

Lt Col Devender Anand, Defence PRO in Jammu said, the Indian army retaliated strongly and effectively in response to the ceasefire violation by the Pakistan Army.

Reports from ground zero suggested over one dozen villages in Poonch with a sizeable population of over 10,000 were directly affected as Pakistan army was targeting civilian pockets in the area.

111 TN farmers to contest against PM Modi in Varanasi

Trichirappalli: After taking their protests to the national Capital to highlight their demands, Tamil Nadu farmers are gearing up for an electoral battle and will file 111 nominations from the Varanasi Lok Sabha constituency from where Prime Minister Narendra Modi is contesting.

Tamil Nadu farmers leader P Ayyakannu said on Saturday that 111 farmers from the State will contest against Modi from Varanasi.

Ayyakannu, who is also president of the National South Indian Rivers Inter-Linking Farmers Association, said the decision to contest the polls from Uttar Pradesh was to urge the BJP to include in their manifesto that their demands, including "profitable prices for farm produce," would be fulfilled.

Speaking to PTI, the farmers leader, who spearheaded

agitations in Delhi in 2017 for over 100 days, said the "moment they assure in their manifesto that our demands will be fulfilled, we will drop our decision to contest against Modi."

In the event of that not happening, he said they would go ahead and contest against Modi.

The decision to contest polls has the support of farmers everywhere and the All India Kisan Sangharsh Coordination Committee, Ayyakannu said.

Asked why they were raising the demand with BJP alone and not other parties like the Congress to include it in their manifestos, he said the BJP was still the ruling party and Modi the Prime Minister.

Parties like the DMK and the Amma Makkal Munnetra Kazhagam have assured full loan waiver, which is also one of the farmers' demands, in their manifestos, he said. **PTI**

DEWAN HOUSING FINANCE CORPORATION LIMITED

National Office: DHFL House, 19, Sahar Road, Vile Parle (East), Off Western Express Highway, Mumbai - 400099.

Circle Office: Plot No. A-6, Sector-2 Noida 201301

APPENDIX IV POSSESSION NOTICE (for immovable property)

Whereas, the undersigned being the Authorized Officer of Dewan Housing Finance Corporation Limited (DHFL) under the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act 2002 and in exercise of powers conferred under section 13(12) read with Rule 3 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules 2002, Demand Notice(s) issued by the Authorised Officer of the company to the Borrower(s) / Guarantor(s) mentioned herein below to repay the amount mentioned in the notice within 60 days from the date of receipt of the said notice. The borrower having failed to repay the amount, notice is hereby given to the Borrower(s) / Guarantor(s) and the public in general that the undersigned has taken possession of the property described herein below in exercise of powers conferred on him under Sub-Section (4) of the Section 13 of the said Act read with Rule 8 of the Security Interest Enforcement Rules, 2002. The borrower's attention is invited to provisions of sub-section (8) of section 13 of the Act, in respect of time available, to redeem the secured assets. The borrower in particular and the public in general are hereby cautioned not to deal with the property and any dealings with the property will be subject to the charge of DHFL for an amount as mentioned herein under with interest thereon.

S.N.	Name of the Borrower(s) / Guarantor (s)	Demand Notice Date and Amount	Description of secured asset (immovable property)	Date of Possession
1.	(LC No. 00001610 of our Noida Branch) S & J Beverages Pvt Ltd (Borrower) Sandeep Mani Tripathi (Co-Borrower) Bhaskar Mani Tripathi (Co-Borrower)	26-11-2018 Rs. 1,72,23,678/-	All that part and parcel of the Property Bearing No B-82 Alpha-1 Greater Noida, Greater Noida, Gautambudh Nagar-201301	18-03-2019
2.	(LC No. 00001609 of our Noida Branch) S & J Beverages Pvt Ltd (Borrower) Sandeep Mani Tripathi (Co-Borrower) Bhaskar Mani Tripathi (Co-Borrower)	26-11-2018 Rs. 1,35,11,082/-	All that part and parcel of the Property Bearing No B-62 Alpha-1 Greater Noida, Greater Noida, Gautambudh Nagar-201301	18-03-2019
3.	(LC No. 00000895 of our Noida Branch) Lokes Kumar (Borrower) Naresh Kumar (Co-Borrower) Dhanashand Sharma (Co-Borrower)	28-11-2018 Rs. 49,09,759/-	All that part and parcel of the Property Bearing No Plot No. I I I - A-60 Nehru Nagar Ghaziabad Ghaziabad Uttar Pradesh-201010	19-03-2019
4.	(LC No. 00000002 of our Delhi Janakpuri Branch) Manoj Kumar (Borrower) Mrs Memwati (Co-Borrower) Dhangsh Paints And Minerals (Co-Borrower)	28-11-2018 Rs. 3,32,163/-	All that part and parcel of the Property Bearing No Plot No-129 Sector-65 Faridabad Faridabad Faridabad Haryana-121004	19-03-2019
5.	(LC No. 00000081 of our Noida Branch) Bipin Singh (Borrower) Preeti Chaudhari (Co-Borrower)	26-11-2018 Rs. 14,25,995/-	All that part and parcel of the Property Bearing No Flat No. D-032, 3Rd Floor, D Block, Meadows Vista, Vill- Merta, Ghaziabad, Ghaziabad-201012	19-03-2019
6.	(LC No. 00002760 of our New Delhi Branch) Avnish Kumar Mittal (Borrower) Chitra Mittal (Co-Borrower)	28-11-2018 Rs. 26,16,949/-	All that part and parcel of the Property Bearing No Plot No. A-35, Second Floor Flat Block- A, J. P. Enclave, Vill- Arthala Mohan Nagar Ghaziabad Ghaziabad Uttar Pradesh-201011	19-03-2019
7.	(LC No. 00000731 of our Ghaziabad Branch) Jyoti Prakash Praharaj (Borrower) Sushmita Praharaj (Co-Borrower)	28-11-2018 Rs. 10,44,677/-	All that part and parcel of the Property Bearing No Flat No. A-803, 7th Floor, Tower- A Satya Ville De, Nh-58 Raj Nagar Extn. Ghaziabad Ghaziabad Uttar Pradesh-201011	19-03-2019
8.	(LC No. 00000475 of our Noida 1 Rajendra Place Branch) Debendra Kumar Sahoo (Borrower) Sasmita Sahoo (Co-Borrower)	26-11-2018 Rs. 27,75,424/-	All that part and parcel of the Property Bearing No Flat No. A-403, 4th Floor, Tower- A Casa Grande, Plot No.- 7 A Sector- Chi- V, G. Noida, Greater Noida, Gautambudh Nagar-201308	19-03-2019
9.	(LC No. 00000488 of our Noida 1 Rajendra Place Branch) Anuj Sharma (Borrower) Rekha (Co-Borrower)	26-11-2018 Rs. 12,10,970/-	All that part and parcel of the Property Bearing No Flat No. 404, Tower-B Kdp Mgi Gharunda Raj Nagar Extn, Ghaziabad, Ghaziabad-201012	19-03-2019
10.	(LC No. 00041392 of our Gurgaon-Sohna Road Branch) Omvir Singh (Borrower) Manju Chauhan (Co-Borrower)	26-11-2018 Rs. 41,58,178/-	All that part and parcel of the Property Bearing No Flat No. 1507 Tower A Ace Platinum Plot No.12/1 Sector Zeta 1, Greater Noida, Gautambudh Nagar-201308	19-03-2019
11.	(LC No. 00000563 of our Gurgaon Branch) Umesh Verma (Borrower) Jyoti Verma (Co-Borrower)	26-11-2018 Rs. 15,93,561/-	All that part and parcel of the Property Bearing No Plot No. 384 Third Floor Pocket 5 Sec-22 Rohini, New Delhi, New Delhi-110085	18-03-2019
12.	(LC No. 00000265 of our Netaji Subhash Place Branch) Nafees Ahmed (Borrower) Rehana Bano (Co-Borrower)	26-11-2018 Rs. 6,36,217/-	All that part and parcel of the Property Bearing No Flat No 709 Ground Floor Block C Pocket 11 Dda Janta Flat Jasola, New Delhi, New Delhi-110025	19-03-2019
13.	(LC No. 00001768 of our Ghaziabad Branch) Surinder Singh (Borrower) Shweta (Co-Borrower)	26-11-2018 Rs. 70,63,581/-	All that part and parcel of the Property Bearing No House No 32 Sector 5 Urdwan Estate, Gurgaon, Gurgaon-122001	19-03-2019
14.	(LC No. 00001314 of our Raj Nagar Branch) Lal Babu Sahu (Borrower) Rita Sahu (Co-Borrower)	26-11-2018 Rs. 21,14,726/-	All that part and parcel of the Property Bearing No Flat No. 20, Second Floor, Block C-6, Sector 71 Noida, Gautambudh Nagar, Noida, Gautambudh Nagar-201301	18-03-2019
15.	(LC No. 00000465 of our Karkarduma Noida Branch) Parimal Pankaj (Borrower) Rashmi (Co-Borrower) Ravi Shekhar (Guarantor)	26-11-2018 Rs. 18,18,745/-	All that part and parcel of the Property Bearing No Flat No. S-8 F10 Front Lhs Block-A Plot No. A-84 Sif Vihar Ghaziabad, Up, Loni, Ghaziabad, Ghaziabad-201102	20-03-2019
16.	(LC No. 00000273 of our Azadpur N S P Branch) Vinod Kumar (Borrower) Reena (Co-Borrower)	26-11-2018 Rs. 27,73,990/-	All that part and parcel of the Property Bearing No Janta Flat No-127-C 2Nd Floor Block-Vp Pitam Pura, Delhi, New Delhi-110034	18-03-2019
17.	(LC No. 00043456 of our Delhi - Safdurjung Branch) Umesh Verma (Borrower) Jyoti Verma (Co-Borrower)	26-11-2018 Rs. 5,57,772/-	All that part and parcel of the Property Bearing No Plot No. 384 Third Floor Pocket 5 Sec-22 Rohini, New Delhi, New Delhi-110085	18-03-2019
18.	(LC No. CPL32814 of our Delhi - Cp Branch) Arun Gulati (Borrower)	28-11-2018 Rs. 59,09,484/-	All that part and parcel of the Property Bearing No Plot No V-5/3 Phase III Dlf City Gurgaon, Haryana-122002	19-03-2019
19.	(LC No. NDD36495 of our Noida -sector 2 Branch) Prem Chand (Borrower)	28-11-2018 Rs. 22,62,927/-	All that part and parcel of the Property Bearing No Floor No. Ground Floor, Plot No. 795, Sector. 3, Vasundhara, Ghaziabad, Ghaziabad, Uttar Pradesh-201010	19-03-2019
20.	(LC No. GUR34487 of our Gurgaon - Sohna Road Branch) Ranjan Singha (Borrower)	26-11-2018 Rs. 9,77,988/-	All that part and parcel of the Property Bearing No H/Flat No.D 203, Floor No. Yuro Apartment , Plot No. Rajender Nagar, Sector. 5, Village . Ghazia Bad, Ghaziabad-201001	19-03-2019
21.	(LC No. 00000578 of our Noida Branch) Satish Kumar Chandok (Borrower) Sudesh Chandok (Co-Borrower) Sunny Chandok (Co-Borrower)	28-11-2018 Rs. 71,39,687/-	All that part and parcel of the Property Bearing No House No-09 Road No- L -26 Dlf Phase-2 Gurgaon Haryana-122002	21.03.2019
22.	(LC No. 00001319 of our Raj Nagar Branch) Sanjeev Kumar Maheshwari (Borrower) Shalini Maheshwari (Co-Borrower)	26-11-2018 Rs. 14,14,116/-	All that part and parcel of the Property Bearing No Second Floor Flat SF-2 Front Lhs Plot No D-416 Block-D Dhraparastha Colony Loni, Ghaziabad, Ghaziabad-201102	21.03.2019
23.	(LC No. 00002091 of our New Delhi-west Branch) Rohit Kumar (Borrower) Kusum Lata (Co-Borrower)	26-11-2018 Rs. 18,74,512/-	All that part and parcel of the Property Bearing No Ugf Rhs Prtn Without Roof Ryt Prop No 1199/C/10 Kh No 93 Govindpuri Kalkaji New Delhi-110019	20.03.2019
24.	(LC No. 00000340 of our Noida 1 Rajendra Place Branch) Satendra Pal Singh (Borrower) Rajni (Co-Borrower)	28-11-2018 Rs. 55,42,999/-	All that part and parcel of the Property Bearing No Gf & F, J-74, sec-12 Pratap Vihar Ghaziabad, Ghaziabad, Ghaziabad, Uttar Pradesh-201012	23.03.2019

If the said Borrowers shall fail to make payment to DHFL as aforesaid, DHFL shall proceed against the above secured assets under Section 13(4) of the Act and the applicable Rules, entirely at the risks of the said Borrowers as to the costs and consequences. The said Borrowers are prohibited under the Act from transferring the aforesaid assets, whether by way of sale, lease or otherwise without the prior written consent of DHFL. Any person who contravenes or abets contravention of the provisions of the said Act or Rules made there under, shall be liable for imprisonment and/or penalty as provided under the Act. Place: Delhi / NCR Date : 24/03/2019 For Dewan Housing Finance Corporation Limited



Members of Unity Forum Jammu West pay tribute to Bhagat Singh on the occasion of his 88th martyrdom anniversary in Jammu on Saturday **PTI**

Guv Malik pays tribute to Bhagat Singh, Rajguru, Sukhdev in J&K

Jammu: Jammu & Kashmir Governor Satya Pal Malik on Saturday paid tributes to Bhagat Singh, Rajguru and Sukhdev on their 88th martyrdom anniversary.

Saluting the revolutionaries, the Governor observed that the sacrifices made by them in India's freedom struggle will always inspire the youth to serve selflessly towards the better interest of the nation.

Their sacrifice and courage will forever be remembered by generations to come, he added.

The trio were hanged to death in Lahore Jail (Pakistan) on March 23, 1931. **PTI**

Won't tolerate dissent, says Dilip Ghosh

Kolkata: The BJP leadership on Saturday sent out a strong message to dissidents who have been protesting over selection of candidates in West Bengal saying that those who do not agree with the party's decision are free to leave it.

"There is some resentment over candidate selection. Everything can be sorted out through discussions. But if some people think that by staging protests the party would be influenced to change its decision then they are wrong. They are free to leave the party," Ghosh told reporters.

Protests erupted in various parts of West Bengal after BJP in its first list of 28 candidates for West Bengal nominated several defectors from the ruling Trinamool Congress and even the CPI-M to take on Mamata Banerjee's party in the State.

Another candidate Mafuja Khatun was announced by the party on Saturday. She will contest from Jangipur, where the Congress has fielded former president Pranab Mukherjee's son Abhijit Mukherjee.

With old-timers being overlooked in favour of turn-coats and newcomers, protestors gathered outside BJP offices in various parts of the state to vent their feelings. In some places they put up posters of rejected ticket aspirants outside the party's offices. **PTI**

This is not the first time that the BJP has faced such protests. During the Kolkata Municipal Corporation polls in 2015 several ticket aspirants had staged protests outside the party office here.

The BJP Bengal leadership Saturday held a closed door meeting with state leaders and discussed various aspects of the upcoming polls.

During the meeting BJP national general secretary and Bengal minder, Kailash Vijayvargiya is reported to have said that if some aspirant did not get a ticket this time it did not mean that he would not the next time.

"You (an aspirant) have to wait and keep working for the party. There is still a long way to go," a state BJP leader quoted him as saying in the meeting.

The saffron party, which bagged two Lok Sabha seats in the state in the 2014 elections, is now targeting 23 of the state's 42 constituencies.

BJP state vice-president Raj Kamal Pathak submitted his resignation from the post after he was denied a party ticket.

"If after serving the party for three decades and holding the post of vice-president do not make me qualified to get a party ticket, it is better to resign from the post," Pathak had said while tendering his resignation. **PTI**

Assembly polls: Buddhist monk to fight against Arunachal CM

Itanagar: The Mukto Assembly seat in Tawang district of Arunachal Pradesh, currently held by Chief Minister Pema Khandu, is set to witness a triangular fight after a gap of 20 years.

Since 1999, the MLAs in the constituency, along the India-China border, has been elected without a contest.

The Congress has fielded Thupten Kunphen from the seat this time, while the Janata Dal (Secular) nominated 39-

year-old Buddhist monk Lama Lobsang Gyatso.

Elections to the 60 Assembly constituencies and two Lok Sabha seats in Arunachal Pradesh will be held concurrently on April 11.

Gyatso, who has been leading movements against mega dam projects in Tawang, will be taking on Khandu, who won unopposed from the seat in 2014 Assembly polls as well 2011 by-election, necessitated by his father and former CM

Dorjee Khandu's death in a helicopter crash.

Dorjee Khandu, who had contested and won Mukto seat since 1990, had loked horns with Janata Dal candidate Rimchen Dorjee in 1995.

Barring the 1995 elections, the seat, dominated by the Monpa community, had been loyal to the Khandu family, which had set the ball rolling for hydroelectric power projects in the district over the years. **PTI**

EC allots broadcast, telecast time for political parties

RAJESH KUMAR ■ NEW DELHI

The Election Commission (EC) has allotted broadcast and telecast time to national parties for the upcoming 2019 Lok Sabha elections. It said the facilities of use of broadcast time and telecast time will be available for national parties as well as recognised regional parties. The EC made it clear that political parties or politicians will not criticise other countries, or make any verbal

attack on any community or religion, use defamatory or obscene remarks or incite violence during broadcast and telecast.

The EC has fixed 10 hours of telecasting time on the Doordarshan for national parties. Nearly, 15 hours of telecasting time on the regional Doordarshan Kendras has been allotted for national parties. For State parties, it has fixed 30 hours of telecasting time on the regional Doordarshan Kendras.

Ban on JKLF undemocratic: Separatist group

Srinagar: Separatists on Saturday said the Centre's decision to ban Jammu & Kashmir Liberation Front headed by Yasin Malik was "undemocratic" and "political vendetta".

Joint Resistance Leadership (JRL), an amalgam of separatist groups, called for a general strike on Sunday to protest against the ban imposed by the Government on the JKLF.

"The GOI's decision of banning the JKLF for five years is highly authoritarian, autocratic and pure political vendetta," the JRL said in a statement. The JRL urged people of Kashmir to observe a complete shutdown on March 24. **PTI**

NORTH CENTRAL RAILWAY, ALLAHABAD

Notice For Removal From Railway Service

Shri Nitin Kumar S/O Vishambhar Singh Resident/ Permanent address Village & Post- Bahadur pur Sakurdee, Police Station- Kiratpur Dist.- Bijour (Uttar Pradesh). Who was working as a Trackman under SSE/P.Way/Agra Area North Central Railway has been removed from railway service with immediate effect without pensioner benefit. Vide ADEN (HQ) AGC letter No. AGC/308/2/DAR/ Nitin Kumar, date 18.02.2019.

You can appeal to Divisional Engineer (HQ) NCR, AGRA, against above order with in 45 days of publication of this Notice in Newspapers under DAR rule 1968 section 16.

Asstt. Divl. Engg. (HQ) North Central Railway, Agra Cantt
f North central railway @CPRONCR 408/19(K)

PUBLIC NOTICE

Be it known to all that my client is intending to purchase the Land measuring 1 Bigha & 4 Biswas, out of Khasra No. 1916, situated at Village Malikpur Kohi alias Rangpur, Tehsil Vasant Vihar, New Delhi from Maj. Dalbir Singh. The original Sale Deed, regd. No. 8820, dated 13.11.1987, executed by Mr. Rajeev Khetrappa, regarding the above said land in favour of Mr. Amarjeet Singh, s/o Late Nand Singh, r/o A-13, Niti Bagh, New Delhi (deceased father of Maj. Dalbir Singh) Any person(s), institution, association or organization, having any sort of right, title or interest in the said property under or on the basis of the previous title documents (lost sale deed, dated 11.02.2019) regarding the aforesaid land/farm house or otherwise may put forth his/her claim with the undersigned within Ten (10) days of publication of this notice.

ISHWAR SINGH GULIA (Advocate) Ch. No. 183, Patiala House Courts, New Delhi-110001, EN D/14/78 Mobile: 9871200666

Petition filed in Muzaffarpur court against Andhra CM's 'Bihari dacoit' remark

Muzaffarpur (Bihar): A petition was filed before a court here on Saturday against Andhra Pradesh CM N Chandrababu Naidu for calling Janata Dal (United) vice president Prashant Kishor a "Bihari dacoit".

The petition was filed before the court of Chief Judicial Magistrate S K Tiwari by local advocate Sudhir Kumar Ojha and the matter has been posted for hearing on March 28.

Ojha has said in his complaint that he felt "insulted" upon reading in newspapers the remark made by Naidu which smacked of "regional

bias". Naidu made the controversial remark while addressing a rally in Andhra Pradesh's Ongole on Monday.

He also accused Kishor, a poll strategist-turned-politician, of deleting lakhs of voters in the state, besides giving "criminal advice" to his rival in Andhra Pradesh, the YSR Congress Party. Kishor took to Twitter to hit back at Naidu. "An imminent defeat can rattle even the most seasoned politicians. So I am not surprised with the baseless allegations," the JD(U) leader tweeted on Tuesday. **PTI**

Syria force takes ISIS bastion, 'caliphate' wiped out

AFP ■ BAGHOUZ

Kurdish-led forces pronounced the death of the Islamic State group's nearly five-year-old "caliphate" Saturday after flushing out diehard jihadists from their very last bastion in eastern Syria.

Fighters of the US-backed Syrian Democratic Forces raised their yellow flag in Baghouz, the remote riverside village where diehard jihadists of a variety of nationalities made a desperate, dramatic last stand. The SDF's victory capped a deadly six-month operation against the final remnants of the caliphate which once stretched across a vast swathe of Iraq and Syria, and held seven million people in its sway.

Saturday's announcement will go down as a symbolic date in a war that changed the face of the region and spurred a spate of global terror attacks. "Syrian Democratic Forces declare total elimination of so-called caliphate and 100 percent territorial defeat of ISIS," spokesman Mustafa Bali said in a statement, using another acronym for IS.

In Al-Omar, an oil field used as the main SDF staging base for the final phase of the

assault, fighters in their best fatigues laid down their weapons and broke into song and dance.

A military band played anthems, including the Star Spangled Banner, as a ceremony attended by Kurdish top brass and officials got under way. The state proclaimed in mid-2014 by fugitive IS supreme Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi started collapsing in 2017 when parallel offensives in Iraq and Syria wrested back its main hubs Mosul and Raqa.

The nearly five years of fighting against the most brutal jihadist group in modern history has left thousand-year-old cities in ruins and populations homeless. Early US estimates put the numbers of IS fighters at around 40,000, many of them foreigners.

But the territory administered by the remnants of IS continued to shrink month after month and in September 2018 the SDF launched a final offensive on the last dregs of the "caliphate" in its Euphrates Valley strongholds.

US President Donald Trump, whose country has led an international military coalition against IS since September 2014, jumped the gun on announcing the end of jihadist territorial rule on multiple



An Islamic State militant flag, foreground, lies in a tent encampment after US-backed Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF) fighters took control of Baghouz, Syria on Saturday

occasions.

SDF fighters last week expelled the last IS fighters who refused to surrender from an encampment on the edge of Baghouz and have since been hunting down a few survivors hiding on the reedy banks of the Euphrates. "Those who lasted the longest were mostly foreigners... Tunisians, Moroccans, Egyptians,"

Hisham Harun, a 21-year-old Kurdish fighter, told AFP shortly after the SDF's yellow flag was raised. Around him, the former jihadist encampment was littered with bullet-riddled truck carcasses, discarded suicide belts and the torn tents where the caliphate's last families sheltered for weeks. The bodies of suspected IS

fighters could be seen but it was unclear what happened to the few jihadists who were still putting up a fight as late as Friday afternoon.

According to the Syrian Observatory for Human Rights, more than 750 SDF fighters and around twice as many jihadists were killed in the last few months of the Euphrates offensive. Among them are thou-

sands of foreigners from France, Russia, Belgium and 40-plus countries that are in most cases unwilling to take them back. "The needs are huge and the camp is overwhelmed," Peter Maurer, president of the International Committee of the Red Cross said Friday upon returning from a five-day visit to Syria.

French President Emmanuel Macron hailed the fall of Baghouz saying "a significant threat to our country" has been "eliminated." But while the SDF taking Baghouz marks the end of the IS "caliphate", the jihadists still retain a presence in eastern Syria's vast Badia desert. They also have hideouts in parts of Iraq as well as sleeper cells capable of carrying out the kind of deadly guerrilla insurgency that accompanied the rise of the Islamic State group.

IS fighters who escaped the shrinking rump of the "caliphate" in time and reorganised their group are already re-establishing their former sanctuaries in Iraq.

Even the Pentagon has warned in a recent report that the absence of sustained counterterrorism pressure on IS would allow the jihadists to reclaim some territorial control within months.

AS SDF forces pummeled IS positions and US warplanes dropped huge payloads on the riverside village, tens of thousands of people fled over a rocky hill and trudged through the plains in biblical scenes. For weeks, the ghostly figures of the caliphate's last denizens hobbled out of the besieged village, famished, often wounded but sometimes still defiantly proclaiming their support for IS.

The Kurdish-led force and foreign intelligence have screened more than 60,000 people since January, around 10 percent of them jihadists turning themselves in.

Most of the people evacuated from the smouldering ruins of Baghouz in recent days were relatives of IS members who now fill overcrowded camps further north in Syria's Kurdish-controlled region. The biggest of them, Al-Hol, is struggling to host 74,000 people, including at least 25,000 school-aged children.

Among them are thou-

sands of foreigners from France, Russia, Belgium and 40-plus countries that are in most cases unwilling to take them back. "The needs are huge and the camp is overwhelmed," Peter Maurer, president of the International Committee of the Red Cross said Friday upon returning from a five-day visit to Syria.

French President Emmanuel Macron hailed the fall of Baghouz saying "a significant threat to our country" has been "eliminated."

But while the SDF taking Baghouz marks the end of the IS "caliphate", the jihadists still retain a presence in eastern Syria's vast Badia desert. They also have hideouts in parts of Iraq as well as sleeper cells capable of carrying out the kind of deadly guerrilla insurgency that accompanied the rise of the Islamic State group.

IS fighters who escaped the shrinking rump of the "caliphate" in time and reorganised their group are already re-establishing their former sanctuaries in Iraq.

Even the Pentagon has warned in a recent report that the absence of sustained counterterrorism pressure on IS would allow the jihadists to reclaim some territorial control within months.

US SLAPS SANCTIONS ON VENEZUELAN BANK

Washington: The United States on Friday slapped sanctions on a key Venezuelan bank, BANDES and four affiliates over their support for President Nicolas Maduro.

2 MEN ARRESTED OVER MOSQUE ATTACKS IN UK

London: Two men were arrested Friday on suspicion of "racially aggravated criminal damage" after a series of attacks on mosques in the British city of Birmingham this week.

6 CHILDREN AMONG SEVEN KILLED IN PAK

Lahore: At least six children and a teacher were killed on Saturday after the roof of a school building collapsed during a Pakistan Day function in Gujranwala city of Punjab province.

ITALY, CHINA SIGN MOU TO BOOST ECONOMIC TIES

Rome: Italy has signed a memorandum of understanding with China in support of Beijing's "Belt and Road" initiative, which aims to weave a network of ports, bridges and power plants linking China with Africa, Europe and beyond.

ISIS defeat on the ground is 'critical milestone': US envoy

Omar Oil Field (Syria): An American envoy to the US-led coalition fighting the Islamic State group hailed the demise of the extremist group's self-declared "caliphate" in eastern Syria on Saturday as a "critical milestone."

"This critical milestone in the fight against ISIS delivers a crushing strategic blow and underscores the unwavering commitment of our local partners and the global coalition to defeat ISIS," William Roebuck said, using an alternative acronym for IS. But the coalition envoy warned that the fight against the jihadists was not yet over.

"While we have completed the territorial defeat of ISIS in Syria and Iraq, we still have much work to do to achieve an enduring defeat of ISIS," he said

at a main staging base for the US-backed Syrian Democratic Forces whose Kurdish-led fighters defeated IS.

"The campaign is not over. ISIS... Remains a significant threat," Roebuck said at the Omar oil field in eastern Syria.

IS's loss on Saturday of its last redoubt in the village of Baghouz signalled the demise of the "caliphate" that the extremist group declared over a large swathe of Syria and neighbouring Iraq in 2014.

But the jihadists still retain a presence in eastern Syria's vast desert and have claimed deadly attacks in areas controlled by US-backed forces. "We will continue to support the coalition's operations in Syria to ensure... This enduring defeat," Roebuck said.

British PM says ISIS territorial defeat 'historic milestone'

AFP ■ LONDON

Prime Minister Theresa May said Saturday the fall of the last bastion held by Islamic State (IS) jihadists in Syria marked "a historic milestone", paying tribute to British and coalition forces.

"The liberation of the last Daesh-held territory is a historic milestone that would not have been possible without their commitment, professionalism and courage," she said in a statement, using an Arabic acronym for IS.

"I commend the tireless work and extraordinary courage of the British forces and our global coalition partners that have fought Daesh in Syria and Iraq,"

the 79 international partners pronounced the death of the nearly five-year-old "caliphate" Saturday after flushing out IS jihadists from their last redoubt in Baghouz, eastern Syria.

Britain, which has suffered from multiple terrorist attacks in recent years by perpetrators said to have been inspired by IS, has vowed to remain focused on fighting the group and securing the region.

"We must not lose sight of the threat Daesh poses and the government remains committed to eradicating their poisonous ideology," May added.

"We will continue to do what is necessary to protect the British people and our allies." Britain has committed nearly 1,400 military personnel to the region to support local

forces, while the Royal Air Force has conducted more than 1,600 air strikes in Iraq and Syria, according to government figures.

Western allies in the US-led coalition are negotiating with Washington on the residual force that will remain after most of the American soldiers are brought home.

"We cannot be complacent," British Foreign Secretary Jeremy Hunt warned Saturday.

"Even without territory, Daesh and its poisonous ideology will continue to pose a threat to the people of Iraq and Syria, as well as to the wider world. "The international community must remain firm in its determination to counter and defeat it."

26 charred to death in China as tour bus catches fire

PTI ■ BEIJING

A tour bus with 56 people on board caught fire in China's central Hunan province, killing 26 people and injuring 28 others, officials said Saturday.

The accident occurred on Friday when the 59-seater bus from the neighbouring Henan province suddenly caught fire on a highway in Hanshou county in Changde city.

The 28 injured were rushed to three local hospitals.

Five of the injured are in a critical condition, state-run Xinhua news agency quoted local officials as saying.

Syria Kurds urge Damascus to choose dialogue: Commander

AFP ■ OMAR OIL FIELD (SYRIA)

The top military commander in Syria's autonomous Kurdish region urged Damascus on Saturday to choose the path of dialogue after his forces sealed a key victory over the Islamic State group.

"We call on the central government in Damascus to prefer the process of dialogue," Mazloum Kobane, the overall commander of the Syrian Democratic Forces, said in a statement.

He read part of the statement at a ceremony to pay homage to his fallen comrades and celebrate the capture of Baghouz, the very last pocket

of territory held by IS, which SDF forces took after weeks of fighting.

The statement urged the government of Syrian President Bashar al-Assad to "start practical steps to reach a political solution based on the recognition" of autonomous institutions and of the SDF's special status.

Syria's eight-year conflict has seen the country's Kurds carve out a large de facto autonomous region in the oil-rich northeast. The Kurdish-dominated SDF has acted as the ground force of the US-led military coalition that intervened in Syria and Iraq in September 2014 to counter the expansion of IS.

UK Prime Minister may not seek vote on Brexit deal this week

AP ■ LONDON

British Prime Minister Theresa May has told lawmakers she may not seek passage of her troubled Brexit withdrawal plan in Parliament next week.

The embattled leader, who faces a major protest march in central London on Saturday, wrote to lawmakers Friday night saying she would bring the European Union withdrawal back to Parliament if there seems to be enough backing for it to pass.

"If it appears that there is not sufficient support to bring the deal back next week, or the House rejects it again, we can ask for another extension before 12 April, but that will

involve holding European Parliament elections," she said. May's changing stance reflects the plan's dismal chances in the House of Commons after two prior defeats.

She also says she would need the approval of House Speaker John Bercow to bring the plan back for a third time despite his objections. Bercow has said a third vote would violate parliamentary rules unless the plan is altered.

May said in her letter to lawmakers that if the deal is approved, Britain will leave the EU on May 22, a date agreed with EU officials.

Lawmakers have twice rejected the deal and haven't shown any clear swing toward

endorsing it in recent days. Britain is scheduled to leave the European Union on April 12 if no deal is approved.

Pro-Brexit forces are also gearing for the possible political impact of a planned march in central London in support of holding a second referendum that would give British voters the option of remaining in the EU despite the 2016 vote in favor of leaving.

The organisers of the "People's Vote March" predict that one of Britain's largest-ever protest marches will grip central London. More than 4 million people endorsed an electronic petition this week in favor of revoking Article 50, the act that formally triggered the Brexit process.

French police out in force to prevent 'yellow vest' violence

AFP ■ PARIS

Thousands of police fanned out across central Paris and other French cities Saturday for the 19th consecutive week of "yellow vest" protests, with officials vowing to prevent a repeat of the rioting and looting that marred last week's rally in the capital.

Several hundreds of demonstrators began marching shortly after midday from a square in the south of Paris towards the Sacre-Coeur basilica at Montmartre in the north, with banners calling for President Emmanuel Macron to "Get Lost!"

Authorities banned demonstrations in a large area

in the west of the city, including the Champs-Elysees, the scene of last Saturday's rampage by hundreds of black-clad agitators.

Dozens of police vehicles, including armoured trucks and water cannons, encircled the Arc de Triomphe at the top of the iconic avenue, with officers searching people's bags and patrolling in front of boarded-up storefronts.

At the opposite end of the avenue access was completely blocked to the Place de la Concorde, near the presidential palace and the National Assembly, and two drones were flying over the capital to track any protesters' movements.

Twin bombing at Afghan ceremony kills four, including official

AP ■ KABUL

A twin bombing at a public ceremony in southern Afghanistan on Saturday killed at least four people, including a provincial official, and wounded more than 30, officials said.

Omar Zwak, spokesman for the governor of Helmand province, said the bombings targeted a celebration of Farmer's Day in a sports stadium in the provincial capital, Lashkar Gah. Mohammad Khan Nasrat, the economic director of Helmand, was among those killed in the attack, the government said in a statement.

Zwak said 31 other people were wounded in the blasts, including provincial council members and provincial secu-

rity officials, but he said none were in critical condition.

The Taliban, who effectively control half the country, including large parts of Helmand province, claimed the attack. The insurgents have kept up their daily attacks on Afghan security forces and government targets even as they have held several rounds of talks with the United States in recent months aimed at ending the 17-year war.

Elsewhere in Afghanistan, dozens of people protested against a military operation in the northern Kunduz province while carrying the remains of their loved ones. Photos from the protest showed what appeared to be the bodies of 12 people, including five or six small children.

Shabaab raid kills 11 in Somalia, including Deputy Minister

AFP ■ MOGADISHU

An attack involving gunmen and bomb blasts on a complex housing government ministries in Somalia's capital killed at least 11 people on Saturday, including the deputy labour minister, officials said.

Claimed by the Al-Shabaab Islamist group, the assault was a sign of the insurgency's continued ability to strike at the heart of Somalia's government, despite years of foreign military support for Mogadishu.

The fighting began with two blasts at the gates of the complex housing the labour and works ministries.

Police say at least four gunmen then stormed the buildings, leading to a shootout as officers rushed to confront the attackers.

Fifty killed in Mali hunter-farmer conflict

AFP ■ BAMAKO

Traditional Dogon hunters killed at least 50 people in an attack on a Fulani community village in central Mali on Saturday, security, military and local officials said.

"At least 50 Fulani civilians have been killed Saturday in the village of Ogossagou by traditional hunters," a security source told AFP.

"They were killed with guns, machetes," he added.

Cheick Harouna Sankare, mayor of neighbouring Ouenkoro, confirmed the toll.

"There are for the moment about fifty dead in the village. "It is a massacre of Fulani civilians by traditional Dogon hunters".

The toll was in danger of rising because they had no news of other civilians and the army was not yet on site to help them, he added.

A Malian military source also reported the attack.

The attack happened at Bankass, near the border with Burkina Faso, where there has been frequent inter-communal violence.

Two witnesses questioned separately by AFP said traditional hunters had burned down nearly all the huts in the village.

A statement by a local community defence association for the Fulani also reported the attack.

Neighbouring villages had been attacked too said the statement, from the Kisal association, which did not give a toll.

The conflict was just the latest in a series of clashes between the Dogon and the Fulani — the English term for Peul — communities that have left dozens dead in recent months.

PARTIAL CANCELLATION / DIVERSION OF TRAINS DUE TO RAILWAY ELECTRIFICATION WORK

As a part of Electrification works on Indian Railways, Ahmedabad & Rajkot Divisions of Western Railway will undertake the electrification related work on its Rajkot-Hapa & Chandlodhiya-Sanand Sections. To execute this work Traffic Blocks of different suitable durations will be taken by Western Railway up to 31.03.2019. As a result a number of trains will be cancelled/partially Cancelled/ Short Terminated/ Short Originated/ Diverted & Regulated for smooth working on their sites. Out of total affected trains, some of the following trains passing/terminating/originating its journey over Northern Railway's system will also be affected. List of the same is as under :-

PARTIAL CANCELLATION OF TRAINS		
Train No. & Train Name	Train Partially Cancelled Between Stations	Date from Originating Station
12478 Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Katra - Jamnagar Express	Ahmedabad Jn - Jamnagar	24.03.2019
12476 Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Katra - Hapa Express	Ahmedabad Jn - Hapa	25.03.2019
12477 Jamnagar-Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Katra Express	Jamnagar - Ahmedabad Jn	26.03.2019
12475 Hapa-Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Katra Express	Hapa - Ahmedabad Jn	27.03.2019

DIVERSION OF TRAINS ON RAJKOT - HAPA SECTION

Train No. & Name	Diverted Route	Date(s) (from originating stn.)
19566 Dehradun - Okha Uttaranchal Exp	via Rajkot Jn - Bhakti Nagar - Jetalsar Jn - Wansjaliya - Kanalus South Cabin	24.03.2019
19264 Delhi Sarai Rohilla - Porbandar Express	via Rajkot Jn - Bhakti Nagar - Jetalsar Jn - Wansjaliya	25.03.2019 & 28.03.2019
19263 Porbandar -Delhi Sarai Rohilla Express	via Wansjaliya - Jetalsar Jn - Bhakti Nagar - Rajkot	26.03.2019 & 30.03.2019
19565 Okha - Dehradun Uttaranchal Exp	via Kanalus South Cabin - Wansjaliya - Jetalsar Jn - Bhakti Nagar - Rajkot Jn	29.03.2019

DIVERSION OF TRAINS ON CHANDLODIYA - SANAND SECTION

Train No. & Name	Diverted Route	Date(s) (from originating stn.)
19264 Delhi Sarai Rohilla - Porbandar Express	via Mahesana - Viramgam	25.03.2019 & 28.03.2019
19263 Porbandar -Delhi Sarai Rohilla Express	via Viramgam - Mahesana	26.03.2019 & 30.03.2019
14311 Bareilly - Bhuj Ala Hazrat Express	via Mahesana - Viramgam	26.03.2019 & 28.03.2019
14312 Bhuj - Bareilly Ala Hazrat Express	via Viramgam - Mahesana	25.03.2019, 26.03.2019 & 28.03.2019

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

Please join us on **NORTHERN RAILWAY** visit us at: www.nr.indianrailways.gov.in

908/2019 **SERVING CUSTOMERS WITH A SMILE**

Jet suspends services to 13 int'l routes till April end

PTI ■ MUMBAI
Jet Airways, on the verge of going belly-up, has suspended operations on as many as 13 more international routes till end-April even as it grounded seven more planes due to non-payment of rentals, taking the number of such aircraft to 54. Besides, the airline has also reduced frequencies on seven other overseas routes, mostly from Delhi and Mumbai, according to airline sources. "An additional seven aircraft including two planes of JetLite, have been grounded due to non-payment of amounts outstanding to lessors under their respective lease agreements," the airline said in a filing to the stock exchanges late evening Friday. The company said that as mentioned earlier, it is actively engaged with all its aircraft

lessors and is regularly providing them with updates on the efforts taken to improve the liquidity. Earlier, sources said routes where services have been temporarily withdrawn include Pune-Singapore (seven a week), which was launched with much fanfare late last December, and Pune-Abu Dhabi (seven flights a week). Jet Airways has already suspended services on the Mumbai-Manchester route. Gaps for funds and no bailout on the horizon, the Naresh Goyal-controlled airline has now reduced its operations to one-fourth from over 600 daily flights earlier, with just one-third of its 119 fleet being operational. The airline has discontinued services from Delhi to Abu Dhabi (nine a week), Dammam (14 weekly), Dhaka (11), Hong Kong and Riyadh (seven each a week) up to

April 30, said the airline source. Besides, the airline has also suspended services on the Bangalore-Singapore route, where it flies twice daily, till April 30. The flights which have been suspended from Mumbai for this period include services to Abu Dhabi (12 weekly), Bahrain (4-7 weekly), and Dammam (14 weekly). These services will remain suspended till April 30, as per the source. Similarly, flights on the Mumbai-Hong Kong (7 weekly) route will also not be operated between March 23 and April 30, while the Kolkata-Dhaka services have also been suspended till April 30. In addition to this, services from Delhi and Mumbai to Kathmandu, Bangkok, Doha, Kuwait and Singapore have been also reduced significantly.

PM-KISAN SCHEME

About 4.74 crore farmers to get 2nd installment from next month

PTI ■ NEW DELHI
About 4.74 crore small and marginal farmers registered under the PM-Kisan scheme before the Model Code of Conduct (MCC) for general election came into effect on March 10 will get the second installment of ₹2,000 each in their bank accounts, a senior government official said Saturday. Of these 4.74 crore beneficiaries, 2.74 crore farmers have so far received the first installment and the rest will be covered by month-end, he said. The Election Commission of India (ECI) has allowed the Union Agriculture Ministry to transfer the first and second tranche of the payment to all those beneficiaries registered under the scheme before March 10, the official added. Ahead of the Lok Sabha polls, the Centre announced the ₹75,000-crore Pradhan Mantri Kisan Samman Nidhi (PM-Kisan) scheme under which ₹6,000 per year would be disbursed in three instalments to around 12 crore farmers who hold cultivable land up to 2 hectares. In the budget, the NDA government

'We were hoping to have the data of 12 crore farmers from across the country. But the data of 4.74 crore farmers has come before the MCC was enforced'
allocated a sum of ₹20,000 crore, to transfer ₹2,000 each to farmers in the first installment by March-end, for the ongoing fiscal under the scheme. The scheme was formally launched at national level by Prime Minister Narendra Modi on February 24 at Gorakhpur in Uttar Pradesh by transferring the first instalment to 1.01 crore farmers, amounting ₹2,021 crore. "We were hoping to have the data of 12 crore farmers from across the country. But the data of 4.74 crore farmers has come before the MCC was enforced," the official told PTI. The government has already released the first installment of ₹2,000 each to 2.74 crore beneficiaries and the remaining will be covered before this month-end, he

said. With regard to the payment of second tranche to begin from April 1, the official said the ECI has allowed to make the payment to all those beneficiaries registered before the MCC kicked in. "We can go ahead and make the payment of first installment to the rest of the people whose names are on the portal. We can go ahead and make the payment for the second instalment as well," the official said. In Uttar Pradesh, the first installment has been released to around one crore farmers so far and the Centre has received data of additional 66 lakh farmers. The official further said that Punjab and Haryana are amongst the top beneficiary states as more than 80 per cent of the farmers registered under the scheme have received the first installment. While, some states including West Bengal, Delhi and Sikkim have yet not submitted the farmers' data and therefore no money has been transferred. The official also mentioned that no fresh data has come from states after the MCC came into effect.

On Trump jibe, GM announces new jobs, \$1.8 bn investment

AFP ■ NEW YORK
Facing a barrage of attacks from President Donald Trump over plant closures, General Motors announced Friday a USD 1.8 billion investment and the creation of 700 new jobs in the United States. About USD 300 million will be geared towards production of electric vehicles at the auto giant's Orion plant in Michigan, creating 400 jobs, the company said in a statement. Those vehicles had been slated for production outside of the United States. In November, GM shuttered five US plants, including auto assembly plants in Michigan and Ohio as part of a 15 per cent cut in its workforce worldwide -- cutting around 14,000 employees -- which drew Trump's Twitter wrath. This week he urged the company to reopen the Lordstown, Ohio auto plant or sell it to someone who would. "We are excited to bring these jobs and this investment to the US," GM chief Mary Barra said in announcing the plans to employees in Orion. "This new Chevrolet electric vehicle is another positive step toward our commitment to an all-electric future. GM will continue to invest in our US operations where we see opportunities for growth." The new investment will help the company comply with new rules agreed to under the revised North American free trade deal, the statement said. Among other changes, the United States-Mexico-Canada Agreement, or USMCA, requires that manufacturers produce a share of their vehicles in higher-wage factories in order to gain duty-free access to the region -- a requirement aimed at favoring US and Canadian facilities over those in Mexico. The treaty has yet to be ratified, however. The Orion plant already builds the Chevy Bolt EV, and the new model "will be based off an advanced version of the same vehicle architecture," the statement said. However, this is separate from the previously announced plan to produce a Cadillac EV. In addition to the investment, GM said it is in the process of adding 1,000 jobs to its truck assembly plant in Flint, Michigan.

UJVN Limited
(An Uttarakhand Govt. Enterprise)
CIN No. U40101UR2005SG025866, website: www.uttarakhandjvnlidvud.com
H.O. "UJJWAL" Maharani Bagh, GMS Road, Dehradun, -248006
Telephone: 0135-276309, 276308, 276309 Fax: 0135-2763557

Date Extension Notice No. 1
Due to unavoidable reasons, The Date of Submission & opening of the NIT No 32/EE/PCM/Dhalipur/ 2018-19 and 33/EE/PCM/Dhalipur/ 2018-19 invited by the office of the Executive Engineer PCM Dhalipur, Dehradun is being extended as below:
Last date/time for receipt of bid : 24.05.2019 at 15:00 Hrs
Date of opening of bid on the website : 27.05.2019 at 11:00 Hrs
All other terms & conditions of the tender shall remain unchanged. Details of subsequent addendum / cancellation etc. may be obtained from the website. Further details can be seen from the website i.e. www.uttarakhandjvnlidvud.com
Executive Engineer PCM-Dhalipur, Dehradun
चक्र सं 204 दिनांक 23.03.2019
"Avoid wasteful use of Electricity"

AXIS BANK
Retail Assets Centre, Noida: Axis Bank Ltd. K-10, 2nd Floor, Sector-18, Noida. Retail Assets Centre, Delhi: Axis Bank Ltd. 46B, Asaf Ali Road, Near Deltia Cinema, New Delhi-110002. Retail Assets Centre, Gurgaon: Axis Bank Ltd. SCO 12, Sector 14, Urban Estate, Opp HUDA Office, Gurgaon 122001 Haryana. Retail Assets Centre, Faridabad: Axis Bank Ltd. SCO-8, Huda Shopping Centre, Sector 16, Faridabad, Haryana. Office - Axis Bank Ltd., Axis House, Tower T-2, 2nd Floor, I-14, Sector-128, Noida Expressway, Jaypee Greens, Ghaziabad, U.P. Corporate Office: Block-B, Bombay Dyeing Mills Compound, Perungudi/Bhubaneswar, Work, Mumbai-400 025, Registered Office: Trishul, 3rd floor, opposite Samartha's Temple, Laxmi Garden, Ellisbridge, Ahmedabad-380006

DEMAND NOTICE
Whereas the borrowers/co-borrowers/guarantors/mortgagors mentioned hereunder had availed the financial assistance from Axis Bank Ltd. We state that despite having availed the financial assistance, the borrowers/guarantors/mortgagors have committed various defaults in repayment of interest and principal amounts as per due dates. The account has been classified as Non Performing Asset on the respective dates mentioned hereunder in accordance with the directives/guidelines issued by Reserve Bank of India, consequent to the Authorized Officer of Axis Bank Ltd. under Securitization and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 & in exercise of powers conferred under Section 13(1)(f) read with Rule 3 of Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002 issued Demand Notices on respective dates mentioned herein below under Section 13(f) of SARFAESI Act, 2002 calling upon the following borrowers/guarantors/mortgagors to repay the amount mentioned in the notices together with further interest at the contractual rate on the amount mentioned in the notices and incidental expenses, cost, charges etc until the date of payment within 60 days from the date of receipt of notices. The notices issued to them on their last known addresses have returned un-served and as such they are hereby informed by way of public notice about the same.

Name of the Borrower / Address/ Co-Borrower and Guarantor Name	Property Address of Secured Assets	1. NPA Date 2. Date of Demand Notice 3. Outstanding Amt (Rs.) as on Date of Notice 4. Loan Amount (Rs.)
1. Sanjeev Suri S/o Krishan Pal Suri, R/o - M-36, Rajouri Garden, Near Pind Balluchi Delhi - 110026 Also at: Sanjeev Suri S/o Krishan Pal Suri, at - Vinsol 0/4, Co. J-2/2, G/F, Rajouri Garden Delhi - 110027 Also at: Sanjeev Suri S/o Krishan Pal Suri, R/o- J-7/108, Rajouri Garden, New Delhi - 110027	Immovable Assets: One Half undivided share of 11/2 storied building property bearing Municipal No - M-36 built on free hold land total measuring 190 Sq Yds situated in colony Rajouri Garden Area village BasaDarapur Delhi alongwith electric, water, connections and all its fitting and fixtures in running condition. And which is bounded as under: Boundaries-East - Property No - M-37, West - Property No - M-36, North-Road 30 ft wide, South-Property No - 7-8	1. 29-Dec-18 2. 13-Mar-19 3. Rs. 12468972/- 4. Rs. 15000000/-
2. Mrs. Neeru Suri W/o - Sanjeev Suri, R/o - M-36, Rajouri Garden, Delhi - 110026		
1. Mr. Devender Kumar Mittal S/o Sh. On Indira R/o - K-12, 1st Floor, Kalish Hills Colony New Delhi - 110048 2. Mr. Varun Mittal S/o Sh. Devender Kumar Mittal R/o K-12, 1st Floor, Kalish Hills Colony New Delhi - 110048 Also at: Mr. Varun Mittal S/o Sh. Devender Kumar Mittal Tripathi Jewels, 2704/60, 1st Floor, Shop No - 6&7, Sarafa Bazar, Bank Street, Karol Bagh, New Delhi - 110065 3. Mrs. Indra Rani, R/o K-12, 1st Floor, Kalish Hills Colony New Delhi - 110048 4. Mrs. Megha Mittal, R/o K-12, 1st Floor, Kalish Hills Colony New Delhi - 110048	Immovable Assets: Property bearing Plot No. 12 Block -K-12, measuring 329 Sq. Yards in the residential colony known as Kalish Colony, situated at Village Zamrudpur, New Delhi. East : Plot No. K /12 -A, West : Road, North : Road, South : Plot No.K/11.	1. 11-Mar-19 2. 18-Mar-19 3. Rs. 7,414,482/- 4. Rs. 7,529,861/-
1. Mr. Mohit Gupta S/o Sh. Sant Kumar Gupta R/O D-286, First Floor Sarvodaya Enclave, Delhi-110017 Also At: Mr. Mohit Gupta S/o Sh. Sant Kumar Gupta 11, Jain Mandir Compound, New Delhi-110001 Also At: Mr. Mohit Gupta S/O Sh. Sant Kumar Gupta 2941 First Floor Gal No 3, Mullani Dhandha Nda, Paharganj, Banke Bihari Mandir, Delhi-110055 2. Mrs. Asha Rani Gupta W/o Mr. Sant Kumar Gupta R/o FN 7, First Floor Jor Bagh Market, Delhi-110029 3. Mr. Manish Kumar Gupta S/o Mr. Sant Kumar Gupta 7/172, Market Cum Flats Jor Bagh, Delhi-110003	Immovable Assets: Entire First Floor comprising of Three Bedrooms With Attached Bathrooms, Drawing/ Dining, Kitchen, Front and Rear Balconies, With Space for one Servant Quarter Having Space for Common W.C on the top Terrace, Along with Proportionate Undivided, Indivisible and Impartible Ownership Rights in the Freehold Land Underneath Measuring 200 sq.yards, Bearing No.D-286, Situated at Sarvodaya Enclave, New Delhi With all Rights, Title and Interest, Easements, Privileges and Appurtenances Thereto With All Fittings, Fixtures, Electricity and Water Connections, Structure Standing Thereon With All Rights in Common, Entrances, Passages, Staircase, Lift and Other Common Facilities and Amenities Provided Therein.	1. 12-Mar-19 2. 18-Jan-19 3. Rs. 3,859,582/- 4. Rs. 17,170,757/- 5. Rs. 4,100,000/- 6. Rs. 18,400,000/-

In the circumstances as aforesaid, the notice is hereby given to the above borrowers, co-borrowers and/or their guarantors (where ever applicable) to pay the outstanding dues as mentioned above along with future interest and applicable charges within 60 days from the date of the publication of this notice failing which further steps will be taken after the expiry of 60 days of the date of this notice against the secured assets including taking possession of the secured assets of the borrowers and the mortgagors under Section 13(4) of Securitization and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 and the applicable rules thereunder. Kind attention is invited to provisions of sub-Section (8) of Section 13 of the SARFAESI Act where under you may tender the entire amount of outstanding dues together with all costs, charges and expenses incurred by the Bank only till the date of publication of the notice for sale of the secured asset(s) by public auction, by inviting quotations, tender from public or by private treaty. Please also note that if the entire amount of outstanding dues together with the costs, charges and expenses incurred by the Bank is not tendered before publication of notice for sale of the secured assets by public auction, by inviting quotations, tender from public or by private treaty, you may not be entitled to redeem the secured asset(s). Please note that under Section 13(13) of the said Act, No Borrower shall, transfer by way of sale, lease or otherwise any of his secured assets referred to in the notice, without prior written consent of the Bank and the secured creditor.

Date: 24-03-2019, Place : Delhi
Sd/-, Authorized Officer, Axis Bank Ltd.,

Higher taxes for foreign investors from April 1

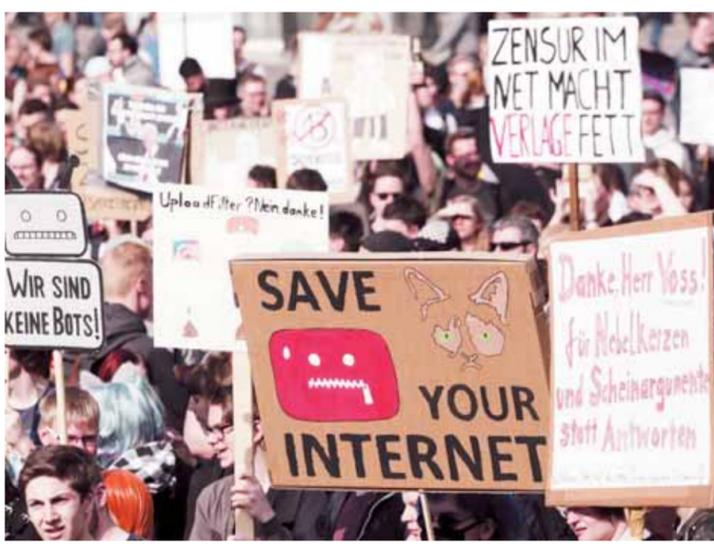
FIANS ■ MUMBAI
Changes in the SEBI listing and prevention of insider-trading regulations, revisions in the double-taxation avoidance agreements (DTAAs) with Mauritius and Singapore are set to come into effect from April 1. The changes in DTAAs give India the right to tax capital gains arising on Indian equity shares sold by a Singapore or Mauritian resident. All this may also help improve corporate governance standards for the listed companies in India. Indian financial markets recently saw several cases of high volatility in companies, like Sun Pharma, DHFL and IL&FS, which created panic

ALL THIS MAY ALSO HELP IMPROVE CORPORATE GOVERNANCE STANDARDS FOR THE LISTED COMPANIES IN INDIA
among retail investors. In all these, the role of the board came under lens. The modifications in the listing agreement will improve corporate governance by making relevant changes in the organisation of the board. Among the key regulations, which will come into effect, are that the top 1,000 listed companies will be required to have at least six directors on their board against three, pre-

The Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) has also amended insider-trading regulations. As per the amendment, the definition of unpublished price sensitive information (UPSI) has been narrowed, allowing listed companies to share such information for board-determined legitimate purposes, but only if the disclosure is in the best interest of the company. While UPSI will help check insider-trading, the SEBI regulations have permitted flexibility by allowing block trade between insiders or between related parties within a company sharing same UPSI. The changes will also keep transactions undertaken due to a regulatory obligation and exercise of stock option at a pre-determined price out of the ambit of insider-trading. The new regulations with relation to SEBI regulations will also apply to intermediaries like auditors, accountancy firms, law firms, analysts and consultants. They'll have to put in place internal controls to check insider-trading. Additionally, the concessional tax regime for investors under the earlier DTAAs for making investments into India via Singapore and Mauritius will cease to exist from April 1. India amended DTAAs with Singapore and Mauritius in 2016. It gave India the right to collect tax on capital gains arising on Indian equity shares sold by a Singapore or Mauritian resident.

Tata Motors to hike car prices by up to ₹25K

FIANS ■ MUMBAI
Automobile major Tata Motors will increase prices of its passenger vehicles range by up to Rs 25,000 starting April 2019. The company said in a statement on Saturday that the prices will be hiked due to rising input costs and external economic conditions. According to Mayank Pareek, President, Passenger Vehicle Business Unit, Tata Motors: "The changing market conditions, rising input costs and various external economic factors have compelled us to consider this price increase." "We are confident of maintaining our growth trajectory in the coming months on the back of our robust portfolio consisting of segment-leading products like Tiago, Hexa, Tigor, Nexon and Harrier."



People protest against the Directive on Copyright in the Digital Single Market by the European Union in Leipzig, Germany on Saturday. People fear for the freedom of the internet when users content has to pass upload filters to protect copyrights. AP

Federal Reserve signals for Indian investments

The second and the biggest takeaway from the signals provided by the Federal Reserve is that the trends such as the availability of large amounts of capital for investment and the move from institutional investors towards more direct investments are here to stay
The signalling at the Federal Reserve of the US meeting last week that no more interest rate hikes should be expected during 2019 has ramifications across the globe given the scale of the US economy and the importance of Federal Reserve policy to global investments. From the perspective of the Indian investment community, there are some crucial take-aways and the reiteration of a few existing trends. First, given that global G-10 bond markets have seen a structural bull trend over the last three decades with interest rates moving lower, from a portfolio allocation perspective, the low long-term bond yields in the developed economies will create significant pressure on investment portfolios for investment return generation. Hence, the need to look for alternative mechanisms to boost returns will be even greater post the Federal Reserve meeting last week. This search for higher yield from developed market portfolios provides an avenue for emerging markets such as India to attract some of the capital that sits with developed market investors. Relatively dovish central bank policy like the one suggested by the Federal Reserve last week further adds impetus to the trend. The second and the biggest takeaway from the signals provided by the Federal Reserve is that the trends such as the availability of large amounts of capital for investment and the move from institutional investors towards more direct investments are here to stay. The structural nature of portfolio allocations implies that if attractive investment opportunities are found in India, then the capital being invested does not necessarily face the risk of "capital-flight" even if interest rates were to move significantly higher in the developed economies in the years to come. Essentially, greater focus towards attracting investment inflows into India which flow into the Indian economy due to structural low-interest rate regimes allows India the leeway to attract "higher-quality" capital that is focused on long-term returns. The single most significant focus for long-term capital in India must be on the unlisted market and unlisted assets. The greatest challenge for both investors and the government, for obvious reasons, has been directing capital into the unlisted space. In the past, lack of transparency, an opaque pricing mechanisms and regulatory hurdles have all been issues. However, with market instruments such as Infrastructure Investment Trust (InvIT) type of vehicles that help bridge the gap between unlisted assets and a liquidity provision platform, we are taking steps in the right direction. Structural changes sweeping across the asset management industry globally such as the recent decision by the California Public Employees' Retirement System (CalPERS) to approve two internal private equity organisations is vital for India. CalPERS decision has two significant ramifications. Firstly, fee structures across

the alternative asset management industry are being questioned as investment returns have experienced downward pressure. The pressure to generate higher yields in the face of higher asset management fees also implies a search for greater-yield. A growing market such as India is an obvious investment destination for such funds. Secondly, an institution such as CalPERS with \$354 billion under management will need large economies with a relatively high threshold of minimum deal size to operate in. As mentioned earlier, India, given the size of the economy, provides the right opportunities in the right quantities. In summary, structural changes sweeping through the world in terms of demographic trends, under-funded pensions funds and lower-interest-rate regimes are an opportunity for economies such as India to partner with capital providers to help boost growth. Signalling by central banks, such as the Federal Reserve, are a timely reminder that the opportunities still exist, and a renewed focus is the need of the hour.

POLICE HEADQUARTERS J&K JAMMU
Phone/Fax No: 0194-244331/244332 (Sg), 0191-245922/245925 (JMU)
Website: www.jkpolice.gov.in, Email: jkpol@nic.in

Extension Notice
Due to administrative reasons, the last date for submission of on-line bids & opening of Technical bids against NIT No: 10 of 2019 dated 07.02.2019 floated by this Hqs for installation of IP Based Video Surveillance System are re-scheduled as under:-
1. Last date of receipt of tenders = 30.03.2019 up to 1800 hours.
2. Date of opening of technical bids = 01.04.2019 at 1100 hours. The other terms and conditions of the NIT shall remain the same.

Sd/- (Mukul Singh), J&K S&A (Provisional Transport)
No. DDUJ- 9208-P19
Date: 22.03.2019

SCHEDULE I FORM A PUBLIC ANNOUNCEMENT (Regulation 14 of the Insolvency and Bankruptcy Board of India (Voluntary Liquidation Process) Regulations, 2017) FOR THE ATTENTION OF THE STAKEHOLDERS OF HIPSONIC TECHNOLOGIES PRIVATE LIMITED

1. NAME OF CORPORATE PERSON : HIPSONIC TECHNOLOGIES PRIVATE LIMITED
2. DATE OF INCORPORATION OF CORPORATE PERSON: 8th October 2007
3. AUTHORITY UNDER WHICH CORPORATE PERSON IS INCORPORATED / REGISTERED : Registrar of Companies - Delhi
4. CORPORATE IDENTITY NUMBER / LIMITED LIABILITY IDENTITY NUMBER OF CORPORATE PERSON : U72300DL2007PTC169108
5. ADDRESS OF THE REGISTERED OFFICE AND PRINCIPAL OFFICE (IF ANY) OF CORPORATE PERSON : B-136 B-BLOCK, KALKAJI NEW DELHI South Delhi DL 110019
6. LIQUIDATION COMMENCEMENT DATE OF CORPORATE PERSON: 20th March 2019
7. NAME, ADDRESS, EMAIL, TELEPHONE NUMBER AND THE REGISTRATION NUMBER OF THE LIQUIDATOR : Mr. Aishwarya Mohan Gahranaisriwaryam, gahrana@yahoo.com - 74-76, 2nd Floor, BK Dutt Colony New Delhi-110013/03-91 96503 381033IB/PA-002/PF-1100135/2017-18/10351
8. LAST DATE FOR SUBMISSION OF CLAIMS : 19th April 2019

Notice is hereby given that the HIPSONIC TECHNOLOGIES PRIVATE LIMITED has commenced voluntary liquidation on 20th March 2019. The stakeholders of HIPSONIC TECHNOLOGIES PRIVATE LIMITED are hereby called upon to submit a proof of their claims, on or before 19th April 2019, to the liquidator at the address mentioned against item 7. Submission of false or misleading proofs of claim shall attract penalties. Name and Signature of the Liquidator: Aishwarya Mohan Gahrana Date and Place: 23rd March 2019.

PLAY LIFE THEIR WAY

They have brought accolades to the country by breaking barriers in life and overcoming obstacles as they push themselves beyond human capacity. SHALINI SAKSENA catches up with these high performers to bring you their inspiring stories of mental, physical and emotional endurance to defeat defeat in its rawest form

Nothing is going to stop him

Born in a small village in Jalandhar district of Punjab, Rajinder Singh Rahelu is a polio victim since when he was just 8 months old. A boy who would use his hands to crawl from place to place, went on to win a Bronze medal in the 2004 Summer Paralympics in the 56 kg category of power weight lifting. He represented India in the 2008 and 2012 Summer Paralympic Championships. He has a Commonwealth Silver medal in the Men's Heavyweight category. In all, he has 12-14 international medals and 20 Gold medals at the national level. Not only this, he has five records to his credit.

To begin with, he got a job with the Punjab Sports Department as an Arjun Awardee. He coached power lifters. A new Sports Authority of India initiative brought in Grade A coaching jobs for Paralympic winners for which he applied in 2015.

Today, Rajinder Singh Rahelu is a weightlifting coach at the National Sports Academy, Gandhinagar, Gujarat. Talking about his journey where his mother would carry him every where till he was 10, to winning medals for India, the 45-year-old coach tells you that it all began for him with power lifting options in the disabled category.

"After completing my Class XII, I couldn't study further due to distance issues. This was in 1992-93. I was wheelchair bound and couldn't go to college. But I decided to go for distance education. After that I tried to look for means to earn a living. I tried my hand at several jobs. I tried to train with a local doctor after I learnt typing. I thought I would open a clinic. But nothing worked. I come from an economically weak family. My father was a bandmaster and my grandfather a weight lifter," Rahelu recounts.

"He was a champion from Punjab. I knew he was into power weightlifting but didn't know that one needed to train on a regular basis. I was intrigued. He was leaving for training but he sat down and explained all about power weightlifting. He said there were three events — bench press, deadlift and squat.

"The way he explained each event, I realised I could do bench press. But he told me that this was not possible as before one could lift weight on the chest, one had to put the feet firmly on the ground. This would lead to an imbalance. As he was leaving, he looked at me and asked me to

THE POWERMAN: Rajinder Singh Rahelu has defeated polio with a host of big ticket medals



come for training. I was 22 back then. I reached before he did. On day one, I lifted 70kg. "My grandfather told me if I could lift this weight with no training, I could do much better with it. He said if I worked hard, I could go places. That changed my life," says Rahelu. He continues to work hard and is eligible for the 2020 Tokyo Paralympic Games.

While he managed to lift 70kg that day, training was tough. As he operated a hand-operated tricycle, his upper body and hands were powerful.

"The problem was that my village was small. The nearest gym was four-five km away. I would go there everyday. Sometimes, it would be closed. We had a youth welfare centre. When the local youth saw me training for bench press, they got the required equipment for me. I won my first two medals while training at that gym. The third time, I was already associated with Punjab Sport," Rahelu recalls.

Though his parents didn't have the means, they always encouraged him to study as much as he wanted. His mother took him to all the doctors — be it Ayurveda or allopathy.

"It's my parents efforts that have brought me where I am today. They were

illiterate but they pushed me to study. When I won my first Paralympic medal they were thrilled.

"I was greeted with *band-baja* when I reached my village. My father was with me when I was conferred with the Arjun Award. My mother passed away just a few months back. Initially, I was posted in Jalandhar. But after I associated with the Sports Authority of India, I decided to move to Gandhinagar," Rahelu tells you. He is married and has two daughters. His 10-year-old has already won the State-level swimming championship.

Since the time Rahelu started in 1992 to the time he won his first medal at the Paralympic Greece Games in 2004, a lot changed. "Since then, it has become organised. Athletes now go as a team. There is prize money, certificates and great training facilities.

In 2004, there were only two medals. Back then, we would spend our own money to participate. Today, there are hundreds of athletes who have the ability to win so many more medals for India. The recognition has given confidence to the differently-abled. They know they are no less. People don't give us that *bechara nazar* anymore," Rahelu says.

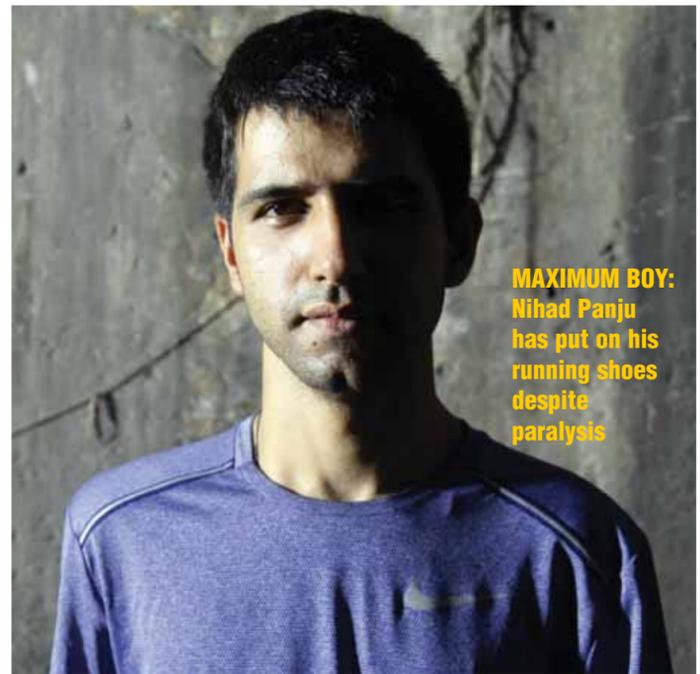
Not fragile despite the most impossible odds

This 28-year-old, with his left side paralysed, is a marathon runner and pushed himself to the edge and back with the support of his trainer Rustom and his family. Nihad Panju, from Mumbai, spent a major part of his life doing physiotherapy. But he managed to live a normal life, complete his schooling and went to college and graduated in Interactive Multimedia Design.

He was also a part of a programme — Holistic Neurological Reorganisation And Simulation — for four years. This is when the real changes started taking place. "The four years on the programme taught me the importance of being physically fit. I was so tired doing normal therapy. My trainer was encouraging a group of people to run the marathon back in 2012. I told him I, too, wanted to run. Since then, I have run seven half marathons," says Panju, who had a brain injury due to TB meningitis when he was five months old, leading to his disability.

However, he hates to be treated differently and likes to be pushed when it comes to his training. He tells you that may be there is five to 10 minutes of awkwardness when he meets people but it soon disappears.

"I have always lived a normal life. My entire family and friends have played an integral role in pushing and motivating me. I would not be here if it wasn't for them," Panju says. He has a younger sister, a businessman father



MAXIMUM BOY: Nihad Panju has put on his running shoes despite paralysis

I have always lived a normal life. My entire family and friends have played an integral role in pushing and motivating me

and a mother who is a homemaker. His association with The Titan Games on Zee Cafe happened due to a film by Sachin Pillai— *Not Fragile* (a Homegrown original film).

He says he pushed himself so relentlessly because people said he couldn't run a marathon and that motivated him to prove to himself that he could. He had also gotten tired of the physiotherapy. His trainer has now become more of a friend rather than an instructor.

But this doesn't mean that when they are training, Rustom treats him any differently.

"There are a lot of positive vibes around me and that spill over when I am training. I suppose my trainer takes my positive disposition to encourage me further," Panju says.

This special performer is now trying his hand at different things since he is still young and can experiment with an active life.

Giles D'Souza is a name familiar with those who know anything and everything that is related to Parkour. He is as most people call him, the ninja turtle from Mumbai. His mission is to teach how one can overcome any obstacles that come in the way. He believes that one needs to push one's body and that the philosophy to life by climbing the city walls thorough mind and body coordination. Giles is not only a certified Parkour trainer but also a cross-trainer who gives coaching classes.

He tells you that he was a chubby kid and used to play video games. But then one day he saw a documentary on TV — *Jump London*. "I was 16 when I saw this documentary. I was amazed at what these people were doing. It literally changed my life. It was based on the yamakazi, the first people who started doing parkour in France. These people were doing what my characters in the games or on TV were doing. I decided then and there that I wanted to do this. I took my fat body and started training. But there was not a single thing that I could do — no push-ups and no pull-ups," Giles recalls.

This took him to training with a few people. But after two years of training the group broke up. So he started training on his own. He tells you that he is self-taught. But he decided to do a certification in Parkour. That took him to Singapore. "I was 24 where I started trying myself in different aspects like cross-functional training, animal movements and Parkour training. Fitness is just one aspect of training. Our body is capable of so much more. People go to the gym to do just one thing. But to push ourselves we need to go back to crawling once again. To convince adults to crawl again is tough. So I tell them that they need to go back to the basics before they can learn to walk when it comes to training," Giles says.

He tells you that people do have unrealistic expectations when it comes to their bodies. More so in the tinsel town where everyone wants to loom like a model. This is due to how body building has impacted the fitness industry.

"If you go to a gym or fitness expo, they will have body builders who will be at the helm. People have to understand that body building and fitness are two different things. Fitness is what everybody needs. Earlier, we were fit, because we used to do a lot physical activities. Body building is about a

Mumbai's ninja turtle

MOTION BOY: Giles D'Souza is a committed endurance buff



certain kind of look. If you are a model body building works. But if you want to be fit, one has to first learn how to move," Giles explains.

When people come to him to train, he asks a few basic questions — check their health history and any injuries. But he tells you that he pushes his clients. "I put them through very gruelling first session. My friends have a joke for me — that people who want to end up in their own sweat and puke they need to come to me for training. However, this is not true. I push them the first time because I want to show them what their body is capable of. I train with them. I tell them that if I, a fat person, can go from there to where I am today, they too can do so," Giles tells you.

He says that most people are unaware of what they want. "Just the other day a person had come to me who wanted to learn how to do a back flip and be fit. I asked him what a back flip had to do with fitness. I told him that

he wanted to learn how to do a back flip, he needed to get in touch with a gymnast. People need to be educated how fitness," Giles says and insists that people don't need a personal trainer but education.

His own personal journey involves a lot of conditioning which involves climbing walls, jumping from one tree to another. In general being a ninja. "I have done all that. I have basic Parkour foundation. Climbing, crawling and jumping comes naturally. One can learn the techniques. What is needed is to continue to keep moving the body while doing the techniques safely. A lot of people can climb a 10 feet wall and jump off it but can the body take that

I was 24 when I started training myself in different aspects like cross-functional training, animal movements and Parkour. Fitness is just one aspect of training. Our body is capable of so much more

impact? What is required is to condition the body and make it strong. I do more conditioning" the 29-year-old tells you and says that mental training is just as important.

In order to ensure that the body keeps moving, he pushes his trainers and reminds them why they began training to being with. He tells you that one needs to keep at it. "The minute you leave training, you go back to where you began. One needs to make training a habit," Giles says whose association with The Titan Games, inspired and produced by Dwayne Johnson happened when he learnt that there were people who were looking for persons with extraordinary endurance and make a programme for Zee Cafe.

Strongman woman

She is the first woman to represent India at the World Powerlifting Competition, in the under the 90-plus category, in Russia. In May 2018, she was declared the 'Strongest Woman in India' as part of the Strongman India League competition, held in Goa. Meet 32-year-old Suhani Gandhi from Bengaluru.

She started weightlifting four-five years back at the State level and went on to win for Karnataka. After winning a few medals, she had the opportunity to go for a competition for power lifting. "Her strength was appreciated. But she decided to approach this event through a different federation — Russian — World Powerlifting Congress.

"I didn't approach the Indian federation. I was 27 when I started weightlifting. Power lifting came only last year," Gandhi tells you and says that she was very young when she started going to the gym.

"I was always a heavy baby. When I was 16 I decided to keep fit and loose weight as well. I did weights and cardio training. I played tennis and played at the national level but never won any matches. I had lost weight but was still heavy. I gave up this game because I didn't want to push myself to the extent where I would injure myself. I pondered and decided to use my weight to my advantage. I was at home for six months and started to push myself and see how much I could push myself. Then the next two years were tough, I was under stress, my weight weighed heavily on my mind. I started weightlifting. This was a turning point for me the minute I started winning medals" Gandhi recalls who has studied Bachelor of Business Management.

Last May, when she got the chance to be part of Strongman India League in Goa. "There



MISS MUSCLE: Suhani Gandhi is proud to be heavy with wins on her CV

were all kinds of open categories and so many women. I won and got my world ranking in top 100. I know stand at 56 and am a world qualifier. Since then I have been part of all competitions, whether in Delhi, Bengaluru or even Ghaziabad. I work hard everyday," Gandhi tells you and says that there is no stopping her.

Though she has won so many competitions, it doesn't stop people from taking a dig at her weight. The sad part, she tells you is that these come from people within the industry. "Comments like you are not fit since I weight over 100 kg. It is not as if I am lazying at home. I work and train hard. But now that I have won, people's perception has changed. They better not make any comments about my weight since I have wins behind me," Gandhi tells you. She says that she had to train long hours to switch from weightlifting to powerlifting.

"Powerlifting has different technique. I am proud to say that I am not on steroids.

Hence I have to train hard. I will be competing for Strongman Woman outside of India too," Gandhi says. She is concentrating on positivity.

She tells you that Strongman India League is a sport where men and women compete. "Last year, women were not allowed to represent India and go to Finland. Hence I decided to approach another federation. The fact that I have been chosen has given me confidence. If I win, it will be great. My goal is to bring me closer to getting an Arnold Pro Card — a professional card for being in top 10 — as a strong woman," Gandhi says and tells you that the league has different games.

"These are all about endurance. You have deadlift and stone throwing where one has to throw 40 kg, 50 kg and 100 kg. There are other events as well," Gandhi tells you, adding that to improve her world ranking she has to push to lift over 250 kg.

Suhani proves that women can be stronger than men.

Sterling sweeps Czechs aside

Raheem scores hat-trick in England's five goal triumph; France beat Moldova 4-1; Ukraine hold Portugal for goalless draw

AFP ■ PARIS

Raheem Sterling showed that he is coming of age on the international stage as his hat-trick saw England start their Euro 2020 qualifying campaign by hammering the Czech Republic 5-0, while Antoine Griezmann inspired France to a battering of Moldova.

Manchester City attacker Sterling had scored just two goals in his first 45 caps, but he now has five in his last three international appearances following Friday's treble, which helped England storm to the top of Group A ahead of Monday's trip to Montenegro, who drew 1-1 at Bulgaria.

Sterling opened the scoring in the 24th minute when he tapped home Jadon Sancho's cross, and struck twice more in the second half to put the result beyond doubt after Harry Kane fired home his 21st England goal from the penalty spot.

"It was a beautiful team performance and I was happy to help the team get the win," Sterling said.

Sterling has 24 goals for club and country this term and his impressive form is a fry cry from the dark days when he was vilified as England crashed out of Euro 2016.

"I'm just being confident in myself, I'm trying to get in areas and take shots, not to worry about anything," he added.

England carried the momentum from a run to the World Cup semi-finals and qualification for the last four of the Nations League into the Euro qualifiers and blooded young hopeful Sancho, who impressed on his full England



Antoine Griezmann celebrates after scoring; Cristiano Ronaldo returns after goalless draw



Raheem Sterling celebrates after completing his hat-trick against Czech Republic during England's first Euro 2020 qualifier match at Wembley Stadium in London on Friday

has looked like that all week in training. I'm pleased for him, it is a special night for him," coach Gareth Southgate said.

"I think he's really matured as a person and a footballer. He's hungry for goals and hitting things instinctively without thinking too much."

GRIEZMANN SHINES

France also got off to a perfect start after an older head in Antoine Griezmann spurred the world champions on to a comfortable 4-1 victory at Moldova.

Griezmann opened the scoring with his 27th France goal in the 24th minute of their Group H encounter before crossing for Raphael Varane to double the score three minutes later. Olivier Giroud equalled David Trezeguet as Les Bleus' third highest scorer of all time with his 34th international goal nine minutes before the

break and Kylian Mbappe completed the rout with three minutes left, before Vladimir Ambros claimed a late consolation for Moldova.

Griezmann would have had two more assists had Giroud and Paul Pogba been more clinical in front of goal, but France's display was easily enough for the three points and top spot in the group ahead of Iceland and Turkey, 2-0 winners against Albania and Andorra respectively.

"We played a very consummate first half in terms of control and attacking organisation. The second half was less fulfilling due to substitutions," said coach Didier Deschamps.

"We've opened our campaign well and the second game comes around quickly. In three days we have to do it again."

Cristiano Ronaldo drew a blank on his return to international football after nine months away, as Ukraine battled to

a goalless draw in Lisbon.

The draw was the first time Santos' side have failed to score at home in 19 matches and leaves them second in the group behind Luxembourg, who beat Lithuania 2-1.

William Carvalho had a fine header ruled out for offside in the 16th minute and Ronaldo, Pepe and Andre Silva all went close to opening the scoring, but Ukraine stopper Andriy Pyatov was on fine form to deny them.

In the end the away side could have snatched the three points through Junior Moraes, only for the debutant to fluff a golden chance to grab a shock win.

"We didn't play as we wanted to. We started slowly, not pressing the way we wanted," said Manchester City midfielder Bernardo Silva.

"The second half we tried to create chances to go after the game but unfortunately we didn't score."

Venezuela spoil Messi's return

AP ■ MADRID

Lionel Messi's international return didn't do much to help Argentina regain top form.

Messi was back on Friday for the first time since the 2018 World Cup but couldn't stop his team losing 3-1 to Venezuela in a friendly.

Salomon Rondon, John Murillo and Josef Martinez scored for Venezuela at the Wanda Metropolitano Stadium, while Lautaro Martinez replied for Argentina.

Messi hadn't played an international since the 4-3 loss to France in the round of 16 at the World Cup in Russia.

"He played a good game" Argentina coach Lionel Scaloni said. "The chances we created were thanks to him."

Messi showed his usual deft skills and his long-range shot in the 38th minute was headed for the top corner until Venezuela goalkeeper Wuilker Farinez Aray tipped the ball over the crossbar.

Messi helped set up Argentina's 58th-minute goal with a pass to Giovanni Lo Celso, who eventually fed Martinez inside the area.

Venezuela had opened the scoring in the fifth minute when Rondon ran on to a long pass into the penalty area and sent a right-footed shot beyond goalkeeper Franco Armani.

Murillo made it 2-0 just before halftime by curling the ball away from Armani just inside the far post.

Venezuela's fast counterattacks were a nightmare for Argentina throughout and Martinez sealed victory by converting a 75th-minute penalty.

"It's satisfying to earn a victory against a team like Argentina," Venezuela coach Rafael Dudamel said.

Dudamel surprisingly offered his resignation after the match. He told a news conference he was not happy about the political use of a visit by a government official before Friday's game in Madrid, and said his future would be decided in talks with federation officials in the coming days.

The last time Argentina played at the Metropolitano it lost 6-1 to Spain in a World Cup warmup in 2018.

Argentina will play another friendly on Tuesday against Morocco in Tangier. Scaloni said he hadn't decided whether Messi would play in that game.

Argentina has not won a trophy since the 1993 Copa America. It lost the last two finals of the tournament to Chile, in 2015 and 2016. It also lost the 2014 World Cup final to Germany.

The Copa America will be held in Brazil in June. Venezuela on Monday plays a Catalunya team that is expected to include former Spain players Gerard Pique and Xavi Hernandez.

Messi to miss Morocco friendly

AFP ■ MADRID

Lionel Messi will miss Argentina's friendly against Morocco next week after picking up a groin injury in the shock 3-1 defeat to Venezuela.

Barcelona star Messi started the fixture following a self-imposed eight-month exile in which he missed six friendlies since the tournament in Russia, which they exited in the last 16 at the hands of eventual champions France.

The Argentine Football Federation tweeted the injury update following the loss at Atletico Madrid's Wanda Metropolitano stadium.

Gonzalo Martinez has also been ruled out of the fixture in Tangier with a thigh problem.

Proteas seal series despite Udana heroics



AFP ■ CENTURION

I suru Udana's astonishing 84 for Sri Lanka wasn't enough to stop South Africa from clinching their Twenty20 international series with a 16-run win in the second match at SuperSport Park on Friday.

Udana thrashed his not out score off 48 balls to take Sri Lanka from a seemingly hopeless position to one where they had an outside

chance of winning.

It initially looked easy for South Africa, who scored 180 for three after being sent in, with Reeza Hendricks hitting a fluent 65 and Rassie van der Dussen a powerfully-struck 64.

Sri Lanka lost their first four wickets in the first four overs and were floundering at 62 for six when Udana walked in to bat in the 10th over.

But, as he did in the fourth one-day international, Udana overshadowed the recognised batsmen with a superb display of clean hitting, although he had a let-off when he was caught on the long-on boundary off JP Duminy when on 31, only for Duminy to be no-balled for overstepping. Udana hit eight fours and six sixes.

"He's the kind of player we need. He showed his character," said Sri Lanka captain Lasith Malinga, who was disappointed with yet another top-order batting failure.

Duminy praised a "really good team performance" and the way Dale Steyn and Chris Morris had struck twice each with the new ball.

"There are a few things we can improve in the middle and end overs. Udana played a fantastic innings but we gave him a few lifelines," he said.

Hendricks and Van der Dussen put on 116 off 78 balls for South Africa's second wicket.

While man of the match Van der

MALINGA TO RETIRE AFTER T20 WC

CENTURION: Sri Lankan limited overs captain Lasith Malinga will retire from international cricket after next year's Twenty20 World Cup, he has revealed.

Malinga said that he would quit one-day internationals after the World Cup in England and Wales this summer before calling time on his career following the Twenty20 tournament, being played in Australia over October-November 2020.

"After the World Cup, my cricketing career is ending," the 35-year-old said on Friday after his side were beaten by 16 runs by South Africa in the second Twenty20 international at SuperSport Park.

"I want to play in the T20 World Cup and then end my career." Malinga dismissed South African top-scorer Reeza Hendricks for 65 on Friday, his 97th T20 international wicket. He is one short of the world record of 98 held by Pakistan's Shahid Afridi. AFP

Dussen's innings was marked by power hitting, which brought him four fours and three sixes. Hendricks oozed class as he struck nine fours in a 46-ball innings marked by fluent off-side drives.

Finch fires Aus to 8 wicket win

AFP ■ SHARJAH

Aaron Finch's fine century drove Australia to a convincing eight-wicket win over a new-look Pakistan in the first one-day international on Friday.

The Australian skipper scored 116 off 135 balls for his 12th one-day international century that helped his team overhaul the 281-run target in 49 overs on a flat Sharjah stadium pitch.

The win gives Australia the lead in the five-match series and comes on the back of their 3-2 series win in India earlier this month.

"To be able to chase down the target for the loss of two wickets is nice. It's nice to keep the momentum with a fourth win in a row," Finch said.

Finch's match-winning knock overshadowed Haris Sohail's maiden one-day hundred (101 not out) which helped Pakistan to 280-5 in their 50 overs.

"We needed wickets at the top which did not come our way because Finch and Marsh handled the chase very well," stand-in captain Shoaib Malik said.

"Congrats to Haris for getting a hundred but we did not push Australia hard," he added.

The 32-year-old Australia smashed Malik for a huge six towards deep mid-wicket to complete his century — his first since June last year against England at Chester-Le-Street — off 120 balls.

Finch, who knocked four sixes and eight boundaries, added an innings-building 172 runs for the second wicket with Shaun Marsh who scored an unbeaten 91 off 102 balls with four boundaries and two sixes.



With 46 needed Finch became Mohammad Abbas's maiden wicket but Peter Handscomb hit 30 not out to help Marsh cross the line.

Finch and Marsh came together after opener Usman Khawaja fell for 24.

Earlier, the young and inexperienced Pakistan led by Malik proved no match for Australia, who are on a roll after their win in India earlier this month.

Left-hander Sohail, who reached 1,000 runs in his 27th one-day international when on 40, anchored Pakistan's innings, adding 98 for the third wicket with Umar Akmal who made a 50-ball 48 in his first international match for two years.

Sohail took a single to complete his hundred in the last over, finishing with six boundaries and a six.

DJOKOVIC, OSAKA WIN MIAMI OPENERS AS THIEM TUMBLES



AFP ■ MIAMI

Novak Djokovic put his Indian Wells disappointment behind him on Friday at the ATP and WTA Miami Open with a ruthless 7-6 (7/2) 6-2 destruction of Australian Bernard Tomic to move into the third round.

The Serbian world number one endured a meek exit at the hands of German Philipp Kohlschreiber in the

California desert but arrived desperate to land what would be a record seventh title in South Florida.

Tomic, the current world No 81, gave the 31-year-old a few problems yet the Australian struggles to consistently challenge the best players and this was evident once again as Djokovic eased through the gears at Hard Rock Stadium with just one hour and 13 minutes on the



clock.

On a day that saw Djokovic, top-ranked woman Naomi Osaka and 23-time Grand Slam champion Serena Williams advance, the shock of the day was the departure of Indian Wells Masters winner Dominic Thiem, who was beaten 6-4, 6-4 by highly rated Polish 22-year-old Hubert Hurkacz.

Elsewhere, there was disappointment for Kei Nishikori. The fifth seed lost to Serbian Dusan Lajovic 2-6, 6-2, 6-3 but reigning champ-

on John Isner outlasted Italian qualifier Lorenzo Sonego 7-6 (7/2), 7-6, (9/7).

Japanese star Osaka had to keep her emotions in check as she opened her campaign by outlasting Yanina Wickmayer 6-0, 6-7 (3/7), 6-1.

Since winning her second consecutive Grand Slam title in January at the Australian Open, Osaka has failed to go deep in Dubai or Indian Wells.

Next up in the third round is Taiwan's Hsieh Su-Wei, who defeated American Alison Riske 6-2, 7-5.

The pair had a rollercoaster

clash in the Australian Open at the start of 2019 with Hsieh a set and 4-1 up in Melbourne only to lose a dramatic third-round encounter.

Serena Williams survived a second-set lull to beat Sweden's Rebecca Peterson 6-3, 1-6, 6-1, and elder sister Venus also advanced with a 7-6 (7/4), 6-1 win over Spain's Carla Suarez Navarro.

There will be a repeat of last week's WTA final in Indian Wells between Bianca Andreescu and Angelique Kerber.

Canadian 18-year-old Andreescu, who brilliantly won her maiden WTA title in California, beat American Sofia Kenin 6-3, 6-3 to book a third-round meeting with three-time Grand Slam winner Kerber, who saw off Russia's Karolina Muchova 3-6, 6-3, 6-3.

India off to winning start

PTI ■ IPOH

India defeated Asian Games champion Japan 2-0 to start its campaign at the Sultan Azlan Shah Cup hockey tournament on a positive note on Saturday.

Varun Kumar converted a penalty corner in the 24th minute to hand India the lead before Simranjeet Singh (55th) scored a diving field goal from skipper Manpreet Singh's brilliant pass to secure full three points for the five-time champions.

After a goalless first quarter, India slowly took control of the proceedings. Eight minutes into the second quarter, India won a penalty corner and Varun made no mistake in finding the back of the Japanese goal with a powerful dragkick.

The Indian midfield manned by skipper Manpreet and Kothajit Singh stole the limelight by creating numerous scoring chances but the forward line was guilty of wasting opportunities.

With four minutes remaining for the second hooter, Mandeep Singh missed the target by a



whisker after being set up by a good pass from Sumit Kumar (Junior).

In the third quarter, Japan secured their first penalty corner in the 33rd minute but India custodian PR Sreejesh did well to thwart the danger.

The following minutes saw both India and Japan create scoring opportunities but in vain.

With two minutes remaining for the third hooter, Japanese strik-

er Kenji Kitazato took a brave shot on goal but missed the post by a big margin.

Playing in overcast conditions with temperature hovering around 28 degrees, India continued its hunt for a second goal and earned a penalty corner within minutes of the fourth quarter.

But this time Varun missed the mark, allowing Japan to launch a quick counter attack, which was kept at bay by Birendra Lakra's alertness.

Japan tried different ways to dislodge India, used full-press to gain ball-possession but did not succeed.

Japan removed their goalkeeper to add an extra man in the 55th minute but the tactic backfired with India making use of the opportunity to double their lead. It was a diving effort by Simranjeet that put India ahead.

With just two minutes remaining, Japan secured another penalty corner but the attempt was well-defended by Suresh Kumar, backed by goalkeeper Krishan Pathak, who replaced Sreejesh after half-time.

LEADERBOARD

RUNS	29	Parthiv Patel (RCB)
WICKETS	3	Imran Tahir (CSK)
6S	2	WE SHOULD HAVE BATTED BETTER, 110-120 WOULD HAVE BEEN A FIGHTING SCORE.
4S	9	—VIRAT KOHLI



SPINNERS SKITTLE OUT RCB IN OPENER

Harbhajan and Tahir pick three wickets each as CSK win by 7 wickets

PTI ■ CHENNAI

Harbhajan Singh rolled back years to show the relevance of a finger spinner in shorter format as defending champions Chennai Super Kings beat Royal Challengers Bangalore by 7 wickets in the opening encounter of Indian Premier League on Saturday.

On a tricky pitch that assisted slow bowlers, RCB were shot out for 70 in 17.1 overs, a target that CSK achieved in 17.4 overs.

RCB in defeat maintained their inglorious record against CSK and also had the ignominy of ending with the sixth lowest total in the league.

Skipper Mahendra Singh Dhoni's move to open with Harbhajan (3/20 in 4 overs) paid rich dividends as he removed rival skipper Virat Kohli (6) in the fourth over and RCB never recovered from that early blow.

Dhoni's reading of pitch was immaculate as a top score of 29 from Parthiv Patel was a testimony to that and the time that CSK needed to score the runs.

Once Harbhajan's finger spinners had inflicted a telling damage on the psyche of the RCB line-up, Tahir tormented the visitors even more with his

googlies that killed the contest in the first half.

With so much assistance for spinners, Ravindra Jadeja wasn't going to be left behind, finishing with 2/15 in 4 overs.

Having gauged the pace of the pitch, Harbhajan altered the length of his deliveries effectively and also reduced the pace at times to trouble the batsmen. There are times Harbhajan dropped his length but the slowness of the track made batsmen indecisive.

While he was lucky as his off-break dropped short but Kohli's mistimed pull-shot was taken by Jadeja at mid-wicket boundary.

Moeen Ali slog swept Harbhajan for a six but that was all that he could manage with a length delivery stopping on him as he tried to check his drive and loopy return catch was gleefully accepted.

AB de Villiers (9) wanted to hit out of trouble and was first dropped by Imran Tahir and off the very next ball was caught by Jadeja at mid-wicket boundary. With Shimron Hetmyer (0) getting run-out needlessly, RCB were in the dumps even before halfway stage.

It was the perfect platform for Tahir and Jadeja, who were

MOST RUNS IN IPL

Player	Mat	Runs	HS	Avg	SR	100	50
Suresh Raina	177	5004	100*	34.27	138.15	1	35
Virat Kohli	164	4954	113	38.10	130.50	4	34
Rohit Sharma	173	4493	109*	31.86	131.02	1	34
Gautam Gambhir	154	4217	93	31.00	123.88	0	36
Robin Uthappa	165	4129	87	28.67	131.70	0	23

unplayable with the pitch offering reasonable turn and it only helped that the lower-order's confidence was shot to pieces.

The way each batsman reacted to Tahir's googlies was different. Left-hander Shivam Dube (2) didn't read the googly and edged to slips. Navdeep Saini padded one in his intent to defend while Yuzvendra Chahal was holed out at deep square leg trying to hit out of trouble.

Pathiv Patel (29) was the top-scorer and the last man dismissed but hardly looked convincing.

The pitch wasn't an easy one to bat on but 70 was too small a total to defend for RCB even though they stretched CSK for nearly 18 overs.

Suresh Raina (19) didn't score much but he did complete 5000 runs in IPL when he reached an individual score of 14. An IPL 'legend', Raina is the first player in tournament's history to achieve the feat.



Dhoni, Virat express unhappiness over Chepauk track

CHENNAI: Rival captains Mahendra Singh Dhoni and Virat Kohli expressed their dissatisfaction over the slowness of the Chepauk track as the opening IPL encounter turned out to be damp squib.

While RCB were out for 70 in 17.1 overs, CSK scored the runs in 17.4 overs and Dhoni made it clear that he would expect better wickets in the coming games.

"We were really surprised by how slow the wicket was. It reminded me of a Champions League wicket in 2011 after we won the IPL. The wicket definitely needs to be much better, even with dew it was spinning big," Dhoni said at the post-match presentation.

Kohli, who is also the Indian captain, on his part said: "The wicket looked much better than it played. We thought 140-150 would be an ideal score. A scrappy sort of start but either team would have struggled batting first." **PTI**

BCCI donates opening ceremony funds to CRPF and Armed Forces

PTI ■ CHENNAI

The BCCI on Saturday contributed ₹ 20 crore, the budget earmarked for the IPL opening ceremony, to the funds of the Armed Forces and CRPF.

The Committee of Administrators (CoA), running the BCCI, had decided to cancel the glitzy opening ceremony in the wake of the Pulwama terror attack in which 40 CRPF personnel were killed.

"It was unanimously decided that a sum of ₹ 11 crore be contributed to the Indian Army, ₹ 7 crore to the CRPF and ₹ 1 crore each to the Navy and Air Force respectively," a BCCI release said.

The 12th edition of the popular T20 league began Saturday with a clash between defending champions Chennai Super Kings (CSK) and Royals Challengers Bangalore (RCB) in Chennai.

The toss for the opening match was advanced by 10 minutes to allow performance by military bands.

CSK skipper Mahendra Singh Dhoni, along with a team official, presented a cheque of ₹ 2 crore to the representatives of the CRPF. The franchise had announced on Wednesday that the proceeds from the ticket sales (₹ 2 crore) for the opening match would be donated to the CRPF.

Committee of Administrators (CoA) members Diana Edulji and Lt General Ravi Thodde, BCCI acting president C K Khanna and treasurer Anirudh Chaudhry, were present at the ceremony.

Lt Gen Thodde handed over ₹ 11 crore to the Army Lt General Sanjeev Kanal, while Khanna gave away ₹ 1 crore to Rear Admiral Alok Bhatnagar.

Chaudhry handed over a cheque for ₹ 1 crore to Group Captain Deepak Ahluwalia and Edulji presented a cheque for ₹ 7 crore to CRPF DIG S Elango.

"As a federation, we felt it was best not to hold a regular IPL opening ceremony. Instead, we decided to contribute the amount towards a cause that is so important and close to everyone's heart," CoA Chairman Vinod Rai said in the BCCI release.

Edulji said, "This comes as a welcome move and as a mark of respect to the ones who lost their lives in the terror attack. The BCCI has always been sensitive towards issues of national interest and will continue to make contributions whenever the need arises."



Warner on spotlight against KKR



David Warner trains ahead of Sunrisers opening game against KKR at Eden Gardens **PTI**

HARSHIT BISHT ■ NEW DELHI

After missing out last year's edition due to infamous ball-tampering scandal against South Africa, Australian explosive opening batsman and 2016 IPL winning skipper David Warner will look to make an immediate effect for Sunrisers Hyderabad on his first game of the 2019 edition against two-time champion Kolkata Knight Riders at Eden Gardens in Kolkata on Sunday.

The all-time leading runscorer for Sunrisers and two-time Orange cap holder, Warner is back into the Sunrisers squad and would be keen to get his name back into the leader board after his teammate Kane Williamson keep the tradition alive of preserving the Orange cap by

Up Next

Live on Star Sports 1 & 2

KKR vs SRH

KOLKATA

SUNDAY | 4:00 PM

HEAD TO HEAD

M 15

KKR 9

SRH 6

main strength lies in their bowling unit where two times Purple cap holder Bhuvneshwar Kumar will once again be the key man for the side to get early breakthroughs and he will get able support from Siddharth Kaul, Sandeep Sharma and Khaleel Ahmed as far as pace is concerned while number one T20 bowler Rashid Khan will be the one responsible for restricting opposition batsman in the middle overs by breaking partnerships and getting wickets.

On the other hand, the hosts Kolkata Knight Riders will look to go a step forward this time and win record-equaling third IPL trophy after finishing third in the last edition.

For the cricket-mad city of Kolkata, skipper Dinesh Karthik will look to make his presence felt with some impactful performance that will not only help his side to be in a strong position but also on personal front will ignite his chances of making into the India's World Cup squad for the cricket's showpiece event starting from May 30, where

India will look to repeat 1983 and 2011 heroics.

This time around, Kolkata's main strength lies in the West Indian triplet of Andre Russell, Sunil Narine and new recruit Carlos Brathwaite. For the Bollywood actor, Shah Rukh Khan-owned franchise a lot will depend on the performance of these three Caribbean all-rounders that possess the capability to turn things around at any point of time.

Apart this talented triplet, Shubman Gill, Robin Uthappa, Nitish Rana and Aussie powerhouse Chris Lynn will lead the batting unit while Indian front line spinner Kuldeep Yadav will be the main weapon in Dinesh Karthik's bowling armory for the opposition batsmen.

Capitals face MI test

HARSHIT BISHT ■ NEW DELHI

With a new name and some exciting young Indian talent in its bank, new look Delhi side — formerly Daredevils and now Capitals, will look to break the jinx of poor performances of past eleven editions and is eager to make a memorable outing against Indian Premier League powerhouse and three-time champion Mumbai Indians led by Indian limited over deputy Rohit Sharma in their opening game of the 12th edition at Wankhede stadium in Mumbai on Sunday.

With Mumbai's two most promising domestic prodigies Shreyas Iyer and Prithvi Shaw along with local Delhites Rishabh Pant, Shikhar Dhawan and Ishant Sharma in its line-up, the Capitals are capable of pulling out exceptional performance and possess every element that could make it a champion team this time.

And with pacers like Trent Boult and Kagiso Rabada in the bowling front, Delhi has a bunch of match winners in its line-up. However, the challenge for Shreyas will be to motivate his players to perform as a unit and help the franchise to start off the campaign with the win.

The side's batting looks destructive with the fab four Indian batsmen (Shaw, Iyer, Pant, and Dhawan) who will get able support from Colin Munro up the order while destructive Colin Ingram and Hanuma Vihari will add strength to the middle order.

In addition South African all-rounder Chris Morris and Axar Patel's performance will also be the key for Delhi's long run in the tournament.

On the other hand, Rohit and Mumbai would like to overcome the forgetful performance of 2018 and lift the trophy once again. And consid-



Shikhar Dhawan & Hardik Pandya chats during nets session ahead of IPL tie between MI and DC

ering the tradition of winning the trophy in odd years (2013, 2015 and 2017) Mumbai will be one of the favorites to land trophy home.

Mumbai has a number of match winners in its line-up, which starts with skipper Rohit himself, who this time will open the innings along with Quinton de Kock, who will play for Mumbai after being traded from Bangalore. His addition can turn out to be a blessing for Mumbai as the South African is in stupendous form.

Also, the presence of Yuvraj Singh in the setup adds strength to the middle order which has a balanced mix of young Ishan Kishan and Suryakumar Yadav along with Pandya siblings (Hardik and Kunal) who will look to continue their dominance in the shorter format.

LAST YEAR'S MATCHES

- Delhi Capitals beat Mumbai Indians by 7 wickets at Mumbai
- Delhi Capitals beat Mumbai Indians by 11 runs at Delhi

FOR THE RECORD

- Rohit Sharma will become the third Indian after Mahendra Singh Dhoni and Suresh Raina and 16th player overall to appear in 300 matches in IPL.
- Rishabh Pant is the highest run-getter for Delhi Capitals in the current squad. The left hand batsman made 1248 runs at 35.65 in 38 innings of as many matches since 2016.

Live on Star Sports 1 & 2

MI vs DC

MUMBAI

SUNDAY | 8:00 PM

HEAD TO HEAD

M 22

MI 11

DC 11

I'm scared of Kohli's anger: Pant

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Known for his swashbuckling batting style, wicket-keeper-batsman Rishabh Pant says the one thing that scares him is the anger of India skipper Virat Kohli.

"I am not scared of anyone but Virat bhैया ke gusse se dar lagta hai (I'm scared of Virat Kohli's anger)," Pant said in a video posted by his IPL team, Delhi Capitals in their official website.

"But if you are doing everything correctly, then why he (Kohli) should get angry.

"But if you make a mistake and someone gets angry with you...It's good because you only learn from your mistakes," he added.

Pant has played some dashing knocks in all three formats



of the game and is set to replace Mahendra Singh Dhoni once he retires.

However, his wicket keeping skills have sometimes left skipper Kohli disappointed.

Recently, Kohli was left fuming when Pant conceded a single while attempting a Dhoni-like stumping during the fourth ODI against Australia.

Smith, Warner's IPL form won't affect WC selection: Hayden

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Former Australia opener Matthew Hayden firmly reckons that Steve Smith and David Warner's Indian Premier League form will not be a factor for their World Cup selection as they will certainly "walk into the side".

Having all but completed their one-year ban (set to end on March 28) from international cricket on ball tampering charges, Smith and Warner's IPL performance is expected to be closely monitored by Cricket Australia.

"It's an opportunity for Warner and Smith to play some cricket. Otherwise, they were not playing any cricket," Hayden said.

Irrespective of Australia's impressive show in India, Hayden believes that the duo is certain to make the World Cup-bound Australia squad.



"They are going to walk into the side. Even if they have a bad IPL, they are not going to be dropped from that World Cup side. They are in the WC squad," said Hayden, a member of the 2003 & 07 World Cup team.

Since this is the only game time the duo will be getting ahead of the World Cup, Hayden expects them to use it to the fullest.

"I think it (IPL) will make a huge difference. For bowlers, the workload matters. For batters, there is no such thing called workload. You just keep batting, batting and batting and that helps your game," said the legend, who had scored 6133 runs.

Milne likely to miss IPL, uncertainty over Malinga

MUMBAI: Mumbai Indians will most certainly miss the services of injured New Zealand pacer Adam Milne in the 12th edition of the IPL and a cloud doubt is also hanging over Lasith Malinga's participation, said head coach Mahela Jayawardene.

The former Sri Lanka batsman, ahead of their season-opener against Delhi Capitals, said that Milne has not yet recovered from an ankle injury. "We were waiting for his (Milne's) fitness report. He had an injury four weeks back while playing a game, so we needed to wait for his recovery and his progress," said Jayawardene.

"We had a report two days back saying that he is not 100 per cent (fit) and he might not be able to be part of the extended IPL, so we have realised that we need a replacement. We are considering that. But we have got enough resources (for now)," added the former Sri Lanka captain.

Malinga too, due to his commitment with the Sri Lankan team which is currently engaged in a bilateral Twenty20 series in South Africa, is unlikely to join the team for the first few IPL games.

Jayawardene hinted that during the time of IPL auction, the MI management was not aware of a scheduled domestic T20 tournament (April 4-11) which has been made mandatory for all Lanka players to figure in to be eligible for selection for World Cup.

Meanwhile, the head coach said that India all-rounder Hardik Pandya, who had missed the limited over series against Australia, was fit and raring to go. **PTI**



'Unfair to compete with young generation'



Talktime
SHAAN
Known for songs like Chand Sifarish and Jab Se Tere Naina, the singer talks to Musba Hashmi about his musical journey and the story behind him becoming Shaan from Shantanu Mukherjee

■ We don't see you singing playback numbers. What is keeping you busy these days?
My playback singing has declined when it comes to bigger films. But I have my studio at home and I am busy creating and composing music for my YouTube videos. I am also doing corporate and social songs and now I am focusing more on composing and singing rather than just singing.

■ There is a lot of competition for singers. Does that affect senior artists like you?
The competition has increased and everyone is desperate to add at least one big song to his name. I feel lucky that I was in the phase where I got to sing a lot of popular songs. Now, when I am doing two-hour shows, I don't need to sing anyone else's songs and peo-

ple still remember my songs. I don't see that the competition has affected the senior singers because I am already very thankful that I have had such a good run and I can't try to compete with the young generation singers that will be very unfair to them.

■ You are the leading voice of Bollywood, what all did it take to reach here?
It took lots of dedication and destiny also because sometime you put your best in your work, but things just don't go your way. Also to be able to reinvent yourself and to adapt to the styles and changes that music industry is going through and also to have that fire in your belly to keep going and never let the thought of giving up hinder your ability. The other thing is to always compete with the best and keep improving.

■ Some best moments from your journey.
The years 2006 and 2007 when I won two back to back awards for *Chand Sifarish* and *Sawariya*. That's the time I will cherish for the rest of my life. It was a wonderful phase for me in terms of success and popularity. Ashaji has been very complimentary and kind with her

words for me, especially when I sang *Jab Se Tere Naina* from *Sawariya*. I count that as one of the best moments of my life.

■ How have you evolved as an artist?
I try to continuously evolve and stay updated with the present style of singing. Everytime I sing, I try to be different. You can hear my songs from 2002 to 2017 and you will not be able to make out that it has been sung by the same artist.

■ How did you become Shaan from Shantanu Mukherjee?
We were doing an album where people's names were Shantanu, Sagarika and Naujawan. Composer Biddu got irritated with such long names and decided to cut my name short to Shaan. It was done even without my consent. It was not that I disapproved of it but they did not even ask me *ki naam change kar dein kya*. They just did it on their own saying it's nice. (laughs)

■ How can newcomers benefit from the digital platform?
In today's time, YouTube has become the biggest platform and is like an independent music company where you can put up your

music and if you are able to connect with the audience, you become popular. It is serving as a good platform for newcomers to explore and make the best of.

■ You are judging Sa Re Ga Ma Pa Lil Champs for the second time. What are you looking forward to?
Judging a music reality show, especially a children's show, comes with a responsibility and a lot of focus. You have to be sure of what you are looking for. It has not changed much down the years, but when you know you are judging children you can't judge them for expressions and emotional quotient because they are too young to understand these things, but when it comes to *sur, taal*, voice quality and whether their singing is reaching out to you, you judge them on these. I was judging this show five years ago too, but most of the children are still singing yesteryear songs. They are singing classics. In that sense, there is no evolution. But they are singing these in their own style without copying original artists. Bringing in originality to old numbers has changed as compared to a decade back.

Now, water ATMs

SHALINI SAKSENA tells you how a social initiative is providing access to over 6 lakh households in the Capital access to safe and clean drinking water via vending machines

We all know how ATMs works. You put the debit card into the machine, follow the instructions and lo and behold cash. But did you know that now you have access to clean and safe drinking water through ATMs? A water services company — Janajal — is revolutionising the way clean and safe water is being delivered through ATMs.

It has till date benefitted more than 90 million people in India with an approximate consumption of eight-10 litres per capita per day as has been prescribed by the Ministry of Drinking Water & Sanitation in India. It adopts different technology tools to solve different problems. In other words, it adopts new water treatment technologies to solve different water-related issues. Given that water changes every 5-10 km in India, every water ATM is custom built to suit the environment in which it is intended to operate in. Besides accepting coins, all water ATMs are enabled with cashless transacting capability.

Parag Agarwal, Founder-CMD, Janajal tells you that their mission is to make safe drinking water available to every person at very a nominal cost. "Safe drinking water is a basic human requirement, which is essential for good health and subsequent education of the people and can boost the GDP by up to 6 per cent as stated in a recent article issued by Niti Aayog. Clean drinking water is a medium to deliver health and wellness to communities besides providing gainful employment to individuals, self-help groups, widows and the unemployed. We work closely with NGOs and charitable foundations to provide vocational training and upskill individuals by expanding their capabilities. With the Government's emphasis on CSR spending, corporates have developed a renewed focus on safe drinking water as its significance in terms of meeting basic needs of people is clearly understood along with the fact that the social impact being delivered is unparalleled," Agarwal says.

There is a wide gap in the demand and supply of safe drinking water in the country. Nearly 680 million people have no access to safe water. Women and children walk several miles to fetch water, which prevents them from going to schools or having a job. This has a severe negative impact on the economic growth of the country.

According to a new study titled *The Water Gap-State of the World's Water 2018* by WaterAid, states that the global population without access to clean



water has gone up to 844 million, which is almost 200 million more than previously counted. The Economic Survey of Delhi 2017-18 states that around 6.25,000 households do not have access to piped water supply.

The service follows a triple A philosophy of making safe water — Available, Accessible and Affordable — to all while keeping technological advancement and implementation at its core. The ATMs also maximise efficiency by utilising solar energy and regular electricity minimising downtime due to power outages. This serves as an asset for the smooth expansion to other rural and semi-urban areas.

Water ATM is a kiosk that is an independent water treatment plant with a chiller that has the option to dispense water in bulk. This means water in an unpackaged format to people in a quantity that they desire — 250 ml, 500 ml, 1 litre, 2 litres, 5 litres and 20

A GLASS OF 250 ML ON A REFILL BASIS COSTS ₹1. IF THE PERSON WANTS THE SAME QUANTITY IN A PAPER CUP THE COST IS ₹2. A LITRE OF CHILLED WATER IS ₹5 BUT FOR 20 LITRES IT IS ₹20. THE AIM IS TO TAKE WATER RIGHT UP THE HOUSEHOLDS

litres. It is a decentralised water distribution plant that enables people to have greater access to safe and clean drinking water at an affordable cost, taking away the fixed cost involved with packaged water.

"A glass of 250 ml on a refill basis costs ₹1. If however, a person wants the same quantity in a paper cup the cost is ₹2. A litre of chilled water is ₹5 but for 20 litres it is ₹20. The aim is to take water right up the households. While a litre of water is chilled, the bulk water is at room temperature," Agarwal says and tells you that the cost of the ATM depends on the capacity of the plant — anywhere between ₹3 lakh to ₹10 lakh.

At present over 100 such ATMs have already operations in Mumbai for a year-and-a-half. In Delhi, these ATMs are operational in NDMC area and some are operational in Ghaziabad and Gujarat as well. There are plans to move to Karnataka for 1,000 ATMs.

"Since water is still a Government managed utility, we need an authorised legitimate connection to access raw water. This water is then processed before it is made available to the people. We have to approach the Government for connection and the electricity department. Sometimes, we have to approach the local administrative body to get access to a place. For each ATM we have to deal with multiple stakeholders," Agarwal explains and tells you that the biggest challenge to safe drinking water has become the product for a select few since packaged water is expensive.

Despite, the penetration of packaged water, it caters to only 5 per cent, leaving 95 per cent behind. The motivation was to bring safe drinking water through an operational model that took care of the unnecessary cost.

He tells you that sometimes the potable water that we drink is worse than bad water since it has micro particles of plastic. "There are people who get rashes or food poisoning, it could be due to bad water. Bad water is the reason for the deteriorating quality of potable water," Agarwal tells you and says that the reason why water in these ATMs is safe is that nothing additional is being added to it.

"All we doing is to bring the total dissolved solids (TDS) below 500. According to the WHO, this level should not be more than 500 for it to be labelled as potable water. But due to packaged water, this level has come down to 30-40. People have got used to this taste. The only difference in the water in the ATMs is the taste. We bring the TDS down and remove all microbe contamination that causes water-borne diseases and epidemic," Agarwal says and tells you that in the next one year they are looking at 2000 ATMs across India.

Depending on the condition of the raw water is a particular area, the water treatment plant may have an RO system or ultra-filtration system or even a combination of various systems.

In order to clean the ATMs, three manual routine procedures are followed. One is a daily back flush system to get rid of impurities. "Every ATM has an operator who does this. There is a fortnightly wash. Depending on the membrane and the quality of raw water, there are quarterly checks. Each ATM is also connected to the Internet and it is possible to control and study the quality and the quantity of water in real time through cloud to monitor the system," Agarwal says.



'I am an artist & love being creative'

Singer, composer, entrepreneur and actor ARJUN KANUNGO loves to don many hats. He tells SHALINI SAKSENA why he loves pop and how he became a musician

■ How did your musical journey begin?

It was not as if I wanted to pursue music. But I was 18, in the US and discovered music. Back then it was a bit turbulent. I had started my course. But when I came back to India, I told my mother that I wanted to do music. But I didn't know what to do. But I knew that if I put my mind to it I would be able to make music. I started a recording studio. I learnt a lot from the artists who came and understood the business. I learnt to play the guitar. I did a lot of work for the ad world. I also had a rehearsal room. Then one day Asha Bhonsle's band came to rehearse. They wanted a guitarist. I tried out and auditioned and started singing. She loved my voice. I toured with her. That is how Bollywood wanted. But I was not happy with the kind of work I was getting so took a break. Then pop music happened. It took off.

■ Would you say you are an entrepreneur then?

Yes. But since I do a lot of live performances, I love that. I am most comfortable there. I love being there. I think my personality is suited for it. I am not an extrovert but while on stage I become a different person. It amazes me how I can be these two different persons.

■ You studied acting. Was it a dream to be an actor?

I am not distracted but am a creative person. All my life I have been doing different things. I am still exploring things as I go along. I like making music, I love to perform, I love making videos. Basically, I love the effort that goes into learning. When you learn something and are able to apply in real-time, it gives a high. When I learnt acting, it was so that I could perform better on stage.

■ What is the latest track about?

It is a pop song titled *Tu Na Mila*. It is a love ballad in modern times. We wanted to show love in a different way. We wanted to give it a different setting. We researched a lot and couldn't find a reference point. We have shown action, bullets flying and fire everywhere. It was a challenge to come up with something like this. But we didn't want to go overboard also.

■ How does one manage to get so many hits?

It is a combination of many things. The audience has grown. The popularity of pop helps. Then there is content. If the content is good, people will watch it. The Internet is a strange place. It is based on choice. There are many influencing factors. If you get a lot of hits in the first few hours on YouTube, it goes to the trending page from where it takes off. Music labels help too. There are so many music platforms where the song can be pushed. A lot of things happen.

■ You are into sustainable development. How did that happen?

I am a practical person. People think that environment doesn't effect them and is far out and not going to impact them. I do what I am doing for personal survival. People are unaware that the problem is real and unfolding as we live it. I understand that life is going to get complicated. I am young and have a long way to go. My home is solar powered. If one calculates, they would realise how much carbon foot printing I am saving. It is like planting a 100 trees.

■ Do you have a favourite genre that you love to work with?
It has to be pop. I am most comfortable here. It offers a lot of freedom. It has a bit of rock, a bit of jazz, a bit of classical and bit of R&B. One can do anything with pop. There are no rules. One can do a lot here.

■ What next?

After the immediate release of the song for *Ek Ladki Ko Dekha...* I am part of MTV Unplugged. I am part of web series which is action based and look forward to the series.

WEEKLY NATTER

KANGANA TO PLAY JAYALALITHAA IN A BIOPIC

Kangana Ranaut, last seen in *Manikarnika*, will be playing late Tamil Nadu Chief Minister J Jayalalithaa in the upcoming multilingual biopic *Thalaivi*, its makers have announced through an official statement that she has been roped in to play Jayalalithaa. The film, announced on the occasion of 71st birthday anniversary of Jayalalithaa in February, will be directed by Vijay. To be produced by Vishnu Induri, *Thalaivi* will start rolling from April.

"When producer Vishnu Induri approached me with an offer to direct this biopic, I felt a sense of responsibility more than excitement. This was a story of an achiever, a story of one woman who fought for her place in a male-dominated world. It was meant to be told with honesty. The stature of this tall leader and her courage inspired me to say yes as soon as I was offered this opportunity," Vijay said.

The film has music by GV Prakash Kumar while Nirav Shah will crank the camera. *Bahubali* and *Bajrangi Bhaijaan* writer has been brought on board to supervise the writing process. "It took us around nine months of research and over 20 drafts to finally lock the script. We are delighted to have Vijayendra Prasad sir helping us through the process of writing. His contribution will be of great value. This will be a very honest biopic of our beloved leader," he said.

Interestingly, another Jayalalithaa biopic titled *The Iron Lady* is currently in the offing. This project is gearing up for a 2020 release.



'NOT WRITTEN SONGS FOR PM NARENDRA MODI'

Lyricist Javed Akhtar has denied writing songs for Omung Kumar's directorial film *PM Narendra Modi*. Akhtar took to Twitter and expressed shock to see his name in the credits of the film's trailer.

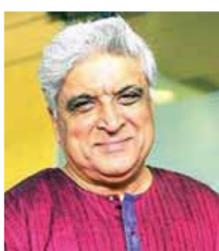
"I am shocked to find my name on the poster of this film. Have not written any songs for it," Akhtar tweeted along with the snapshot of the trailer's video in which his name was mentioned among several other artists in the lyrics category.

The trailer of *PM Narendra Modi* — was launched last week.

The film will showcase the journey of Modi from his humble beginnings to his years as the Gujarat Chief Minister, to the landmark win in the 2014 general elections, and finally becoming the PM.

Actor Vivek Anand Oberoi is essaying the role of Modi in the biopic, which is scheduled to release on April 5, 2019. Produced by Suresh Oberoi, Anand Pandit and Sandip Ssingh, *PM Narendra Modi* also features Darshan Kumar, Boman Irani, Zarina Wahab and Barkha Bisht Sengupta in pivotal roles.

— IANS



PUT ON 17 KG FOR KESARI: SANDEEP NAHAR

Actor Sandeep Nahar who plays the character of Buta Singh in *Kesari*, one of the 21 fearless Sardars, who fought in the battle of Saragarhi is a happy man. The actor had to gain a lot of weight for this role. He says: "When I was selected for this role I was 84 kg. I was asked to gain more weight to look like a mighty Sardar. So I ended up gaining 17 kg. The weight gaining process was tough as I had stopped going to the gym completely and used to eat a lot of fatty food. The problem started when I was having trouble breathing. After that, I also developed problems in walking as my knees started paining. I used to face problem while climbing up the steps. As an actor I was insecure because I could not go for any other auditions because of my extra weight."

His experience in *Kesari* was an unforgettable one. "Working with a superstar like Akshay Kumar was a dream come true. His dedication and hard work are amazing. One can learn so many things from him. We used to have a lot of game sessions post our shooting in Wai. He used to call me Motu off-screen," Nahar said. At present, he is on a weight loss process. He adds: "As an actor, my struggle is still on for good roles and first I need to shed off my extra weight."



the pioneer agenda

Ah...romance to me is spontaneity. It's not diamond earrings; it is a bunch of daffodils that's freshly picked from the field
— Kate Winslet



3 **The idea of a nation**
Harsh Mander's *Partitions of the Heart* is a worthy intervention at a time when most public protests are being deemed anti-national



6 **Visibility of disability**
Only a few designers, such as the late Alexander McQueen, recognised fashion's immense potential to challenge perception of disability



7 **Data, data everywhere**
Bombarded with data, all kinds of data on all types of subjects, the human mind is gradually slipping into an oblivion of its own making

FROM THE INSIDE



WINTER VICISSITUDES

REMINISCENCES ON THE WANING OF A SEASON

The lure of white extends far beyond hills, and subconsciously, we hope that the picturesqueness of snow-clad highlands somehow permeates the surfaces of flatlands as well — as witnessed in Delhi after a recent hailstorm

Iss baar sardi lambi pad gayi... *Mausam ka kuchh pata hi nahi chal raha hai...* ("Winter this time has lengthened... The weather has been behaving so indecisively"). For someone who has just shifted from the hills of Shimla to the plains of Delhi, the inherent perplexity of this and similar statements being uttered by the Capital's residents comes with a charm of its own, for winteriness remains in the blood and the mind. In fact, if there is something that has quietly yet most efficaciously helped me and my family during the settling-in process over the last few months, it is the continuation of winter in the plains, for what has allegedly been "a long time, this time". While the mountains have now been replaced by high-rises and the fresh, silvery mists have made way for (sadly) the haze of smoke and the coughs of smog, the chill of winter has nonetheless retained, injecting a cool that is otherwise desperately sought in the harsh of Indian summers.



SIDDHARTH PANDEY

In the middle and upper highlands of the country, it isn't uncommon to witness a spell of snow well into March, a period that otherwise coincides with the youthful 'warmth' of spring and Holi. Just as seasons behave differently in different places, directions and directionality also assume distinctive currencies in dissimilar settings. There was a time when weather reports at the end of television news invariably began with a nod towards the four metropolises — Delhi, Mumbai, Chennai and Calcutta — with Delhi automatically becoming a synonym for the 'North'. And yet for me, with a childhood spent entirely in the foothills, valleys and ridges of the Himalayas, 'North' was uncontestedly something much higher and distant from the country's Capital. And if the curious relationship between directions and seasons is anything to go by, then season-wise, Himachal directly relates to winters first and summers

second, and Delhi, vice-versa. Of course, Delhi winters, too, get celebrated just as the Himalayan spring and summer, but essentialism about a particular ambience of a place continues to hold its sway in the popular consciousness: "Delhi heat" (*Dilli ki garmi*), "Shimla chill" (*Shimla ki thand*). Consequently, temporality itself assumes a different tenor for people habituated to varying vistas and weathers, the lengthiness of summer holidays in plains finding an equivalent counterpart in the protracted winter breaks of hills and mountains for school children.

One key reason for the 'automatic' link that people draw between Shimla (and many other hill stations) and winters is the shape that the season takes as a result of natural topography and architecture. Some months ago, I had reflected in this space on how a typical hill house exerts a strong claim to intimacy and coziness because of its picturesque shapeliness: Gabled and pitched roofs, symmetrical and stylised facades. Add to this and the surroundings a cover of snow, and the already romanticised setting gets further intensified in charm and appeal. It is remarkable that a number of features that we tend to associate with a typically generalised understanding of a scenery — rivers, clouds, mists, sunsets, and snow — depend on the penchant of water for various forms, because water by itself is transparent and shapeless. Snow bears testimony to countless visual profiles as evinced by the intricate lure of geometrical snowflakes (for the keen eyed), and more pervasively, by the layering it congeals into over buildings and natural terrains (for the common eyed). Shape further evinces prolonged tactility, and it never ceases to amuse me how visitors from plains regularly exult in the discovery of the thinnest layer of white on hill-sides during their travels, instantly stopping their cars to touch and hold a bit in animated, expansive gestures, to be further immortalised by photography. If in the plains, it is the moon atop the Taj Mahal that must be customarily palmed or fingerpicked for a photograph, then in the hills, it is the pristine snow that has to be handled to experience and

demonstrate the feeling of being alive in a *thandi jagah* (cold place). Snow embodies the quality of being faraway just like the distant moon, and once you touch it, you bring yourself closer to a fantasy world. No wonder then, that across the country, temporary amusement parks under the rubric of "Winter Wonderlands" routinely spring during the season, and snow — even if artificially created — gets excitedly sought after by one and all.

Snow is the silent cousin of sonorous rain. Extravagantly celebrated in culture, from rituals to poetry and cinema, rains in India dictate a season of their own (the monsoon), the land after all bearing an overwhelmingly hot, tropical topography. Unlike many European nations whose de rigueur damp atmospheres generate around persistent but diffident precipitation, Indian rains are ever confident in their might and music. But whereas rains occasion song and dance, snow primarily harbinger meditation and contemplation, because its entry indexes a wholesome silence, a quintessential quietness. In the hills, it is often the case that only after a prolonged, resounding spell of rain will snow gather the dignity and gravity to chart a way for itself. Once the drama begins, all differences begin to recede, the unity of a colourless colour resiliently seeping surfaces and sensibilities. It is not always easy to make sense of this inherently contradictory hue, and I still remember my childhood classes where drawing snow invariably posed a difficulty, so that we usually left patches of white sheet uncoloured whenever we had to depict frozen mountain peaks.

But the lure of white extends far beyond the hills, and subconsciously, we fervently hope that the picturesqueness of snow-clad highlands somehow permeates the surfaces of flatlands as well. When some weeks ago, a strong hailstorm took over Delhi and left it soaked in a sheet of white, the question that immediately propped up alongside the images was: "Is this Delhi or Shimla?" Another such speculative query also mentioned "Switzerland", the dream of inhabiting a distinguished destination in a distant land once again infiltrating human desire via the bait of white.

If snow naturally embodies an ambience of otherness through the magic of movement, texture, and transformation, then one of the ways of relating to that otherness (in addition to posing and photographing) is by wearing something warm and woolen. There is a joke amongst Himalayan folks that people from the plains, even while visiting the hills in the thick of summer, automatically don layers of woollens, because for them, it is enough that they are in the hills. But there is another joke to do with the woollens amongst the Himalayan folk regarding themselves. Once, when someone from the upper reaches of the Kullu valley (other versions say Lahaul-Spiti) was visiting Delhi during a hot summer, a perplexed local enquired: "Don't you feel hot in this dress?", referring to the layers of woven cloth traditionally worn by Himachalis of the higher areas. To which the visitor promptly replied: "*Jab garmi andar jaayegi hi nahi toh lagegi kaise?*" ("When the heat won't pass through the thick layers of my clothing, how would it affect me?"). In the first joke, wool becomes the way of relating to the hills by staying off the cold (existing or not) when you don't originally belong to the landscape; in the second, wool strangely transforms into a ruse for staving off heat by making one feel entirely at home. On similar lines, I too have occasionally wondered why do we drape a snowman in a woolen cap and a woolen scarf when he himself is made of snow? Shouldn't their warmth be considered a threat to his snowy, frozen identity?

Recently, the ever-versatile social commentator Santosh Desai observed that "the idea of warmth as a defining human condition gets re-affirmed only when it is cold. It is then that the idea of being alive becomes synonymous with the idea of being warm". This remarkable insight is perhaps most potently illustrated by the persistent cultural image of a working fireplace, with people huddled around together and snow falling outside.



AS THE DELHI WINTER SLIPS INTO SPRING ONLY TO QUICKLY FADE INTO SUMMER, I KNOW THAT MY EYES AND EARS WILL AUTOMATICALLY BE LOOKING FORWARD TO ALL ADVERTISEMENTS PROMOTING *THANDAI*, FROM DERM COOL TALCUM POWDER TO ASSORTED SQUASHES AND DRINKS, THAT HABITUALLY WORK WITH CLOSE-UPS OF ICE AND SNOW



OF THE KIDS ENTERING PRIMARY SCHOOL TODAY, 65 PER CENT WILL END UP WORKING IN JOB CATEGORIES THAT DO NOT YET EXIST, SAYS RESEARCH

PREPARING DIGITAL WORKFORCES

Educational institutions need to combine frontier technologies with skill-based teaching and learning in the new-age classrooms, writes ATUL TEMURNIKAR



The concepts of 'digital skills' and 'digital competencies' have broken through the confines of the information technology (IT) industry in recent years. They have become highly relevant yardsticks against which organisations across industries measure the most-valued resource: Their human capital. All eyes are on the upcoming generation of workers — known as the most digitally adept generation yet — to see how they can apply critical thinking skills and technology knowledge to achieve new levels of human progress in the highly technologically advanced workplace of tomorrow.

The new workplace expectations poses an important challenge to India's education sector to prioritise skills building as the nation (ranked 80th) continues to trail behind other economies in the latest Global Talent Competitive Index. As a result, being prepared for the future workforce weighs heavily on the minds of parents and students. There is then no choice but for educational institutes to combine frontier technologies with skill-based teaching and learning in the classrooms, to equip upcoming generations of workers with the necessary proficiencies for tomorrow's digital economy.

DIGITAL SKILLS SHORTAGE AFFECTS ORGANISATIONS WORLDWIDE

Business leaders are turning to the education sector for digital talents who have innovative thinking as they find themselves caught in an increasingly technology-driven and disruptive economic. Unfortunately, traditionally the education system was designed to produce academic excellence rather than to answer the question "how can we equip students with

the necessary skills to accelerate innovation and drive economic growth?" This creates a gap between what is needed and what is available. The sharp rise in demand for data-driven capabilities, such as analytics and digital marketing, is creating a severe skill gap in the labour market. It is estimated that over half of the businesses worldwide are being affected by digital talent shortage, according to a report by Capgemini and LinkedIn. The threat of labour shortage is becoming very real for local Indian organisations.

Whilst the Government is placing an urgent focus on implementing training programmes and skills-building initiatives — notably with the launch of Skills India — these measures only alleviate but do not address the root of the problem: The lack of continuous exposure to technology and digital through the education journey.

Digital literacy should instead be developed from an early age, through the introduction of innovative ways of thinking and digital learning tools in classrooms, with the aim to foster young digital-first mindsets and develop the critical skills needed for the process of lifelong learning and constant reinvention. In this aspect, the education system holds the key to nurturing competent future workforces.

DIGITAL EDUCATION HOLDS THE KEY TO FUTURE DIGITAL WORKFORCES

Digital is quickly becoming the foundation to everything we do in today's information age. This includes educating young minds, who will in a few short years determine India's economic growth and place on the global stage. It is then crucial to enrich every level of education with 21st century knowledge and its applications — through skill-based learning —

OUR CHILDREN ARE OFF TO A PROMISING START AS THEY CONTINUE TO BENEFIT FROM AN INCREASINGLY DIGITAL UPBRINGING THAT HELPS SHAPE THEIR TECHNOLOGY EXPERIENCES AND EXPECTATIONS

to ensure that students today who will be tomorrow's workforce can navigate and thrive in a fast-moving economic climate.

Our children are off to a promising start as they continue to benefit from an increasingly digital upbringing that helps shape their technology experiences and expectations from an early age. Schools and educators need to rise to the technology-driven characteristics of students to provide them with the right digital tools and channels to develop the necessary skills for the 21st century workplace.

We recognise the necessity of such skills and all our teachers as well as campuses are equipped with training, facilities and systems to inculcate these skills to our students. These skills include:

Collaboration: Mimicking the rising trend of workforce mobility, schools can explore the use of virtual technology and high-speed connectivity to promote

knowledge-exchange and collaboration amongst students in different locations.

Digital competency: With automation and artificial intelligence poised to replace resource-heavy and repetitive tasks within organisations, schools can help their students improve future employability by preparing them for the human-machine partnership from today. The provision of student access to digital learning tools and robotics/AI labs can have far-reaching impacts in terms of shaping the next generation of digital workforce.

Innovation: It is important to help young curious minds understand that technology is not only a means to better productivity — it also holds the key to creating new values and breaking down boundaries of what is possible. Entrepreneur bootcamps and innovation competitions are an excellent way to encourage out-of-the-box thinking and applications of technology amongst students. Amidst calls for urgent actions to develop a future-ready workforce capable of powering new levels of innovation, the words of the renowned developmental psychologist Jean Piaget are more relevant than ever: "The principal goal of education is to create individuals who are capable of doing new things, not simply of repeating what other generations have done". By having a clear grasp of new workplace requirements and applying a digital-first approach to its skills-based education, India can take strong steps in the right direction to equipping our children with the necessary skills to thrive in tomorrow.

The writer is Co-Founder and Chairman at Global Schools Foundation



Lifestyle disorders find a solution in stem cell therapy

Urban lifestyle can be a bane as much as a boon. The diseases and health disorders that one becomes prone to in cities appear to become more widespread due to the rapid industrialisation of the country. Human health is a result of the contact of genetic, nutritional, socio-cultural, economic factors and physical infrastructure. All these factors are influenced by the environment they are embedded in and by changes in this environment.

Around the country, lifestyle disorders like diabetes, obesity and cardiovascular diseases are already affecting the health and well-being of thousands of people everyday. Stem cell therapies carry an immense potential in treating the incurable and irreversible lifestyle diseases like diabetes, heart disease, Parkinson's and Alzheimer's, bringing this therapy at the centre stage of medical evolution. However, there are certain other lifestyle disorders that are taking a toll on the human health like hair fall, ageing, blindness and infertility (vitiligo is also quite prominent these days). Here again, Stem Cell Therapy acts as a regenerative medicine to promote the reparative reaction of dysfunctional or injured tissue. Let's scan through the battle between stem cells and the following lifestyle disorders and problems:

HAIR LOSS

Hair loss is a frustrating and embarrassing experience for every man and woman with increasing age. Voluminous hair is associated with vitality and youth. No wonder, people are always on the lookout for some solution that truly works and doesn't simply belt out false promises that numerous advertisements offer. Finally, there is good news for them! The key to bringing back those lost strands lies in stem cells wherein they are turned into hair follicle cells and transplanted onto denuded parts of the scalp or body. Compared to the invasive method of hair replacement surgery, researchers have genetically modified adult human skin cells to form an epithelial stem cell. This cell is one of the building blocks for functioning hair follicles and produces structurally recognisable hair shafts.

FERTILITY TREATMENT

Infertility problems have been a major source of concern for Indian couples lately due to changes in lifestyle, stress and the recent trend of late marriages contributing to this occurrence. While poor sperm count plays a major role in male infertility, female infertility is an outcome of health disorders like polycystic ovarian disorder or PCOD. Stem cells are being considered as potential new therapeutic agents

for the treatment of infertility by the doctors wherein the cells could be stimulated in vitro to develop various numbers of specialised cells including male and female gametes, given their potential use in reproductive medicine. Primordial germ cells (PGCs) are some of the first cells to be developed when an egg cell is fertilised by a sperm. While some cells remain inside eventually developing into the fetus, other cells on the outside become the placenta. Most of the inner cells become stem cells, capable of turning into any kind of specialised cell, and a small number of them become PGCs, carrying the genetic information that will one day be passed down as sperm or egg. Researchers have been able to create these PGCs. However, they are yet to determine whether a PGC can be turned into a sperm or egg cell.

ANTI-AGING TREATMENT

As people grow old, a large number of cells in their bodies get replaced and with age, their body's ability to reproduce new cells decreases immensely. Body fat is the richest source of adult stem cells in the human body. They carry the incredible capacity to not only divide to form more stem cells, but also to differentiate into specialised cells to regenerate dying or damaged tissues. Stem cell treatments help in reloading the supply of stem cells, allowing the body to repair and rejuvenate with younger looking skin. By inserting these stem cells combined with some fat tissue into the areas of the face with wrinkles, the face is softly altered without letting it lose its distinctiveness.

BLINDNESS

For people who are blind, the thought of retaining their eyesight seems like an impossible dream. The tables have finally turned, made possible by a few scientists. Macular degeneration is a leading cause of vision loss in older adults and when it strikes, it affects the area of the eye that is important to see fine details. Through stem cell therapy, stem cells are injected into the rear of the eye in order to replace the damaged photoreceptors, which are small but crucial cells found in the retina. These photoreceptors are sensitive to light and are vital to a person's ability to see things.

Lifestyle disorders are witnessing a steady increase day by day and they can have debilitating effects on the human body, its functions and appearance. However, the advent of clinical researches on stem cell therapies with one's own stem cells has raised a ray of hope in the constant effort to reverse the effects of these disorders. This is good news as it can open the gateway to treating life-threatening disorders in the long run.

FROM PAGE 1

Winter vicissitudes: Reminiscences on the waning of a season

For, to follow Desai, fire makes special sense when it is cold outside. Warmth is a crucial human emotion and affect that takes root in our desire to connect and continue the art of living. AR Rahman and Gulzar's gorgeously composed title song for Shaad Ali's 2002 romance-drama *Saathiyaa* evocatively brings out this desire by sewing the presence of snow with the intimacy of wool: "Baraf giri ho waadi mein/ aur hansee teri goonjey/oon mein lipi simti hui/baat karey dhuaan nikley" ("The valley be clad in snow/and your laughter echoes/cuddled within the weave of wool/your voice condenses into fog"). While the film is set in Mumbai, the song itself is shot in Kullu and Manali. But there are a number of films based in the plains that do not have to rely on hill stations to conjure the idea of winteriness. One can think of *Aankhon Dekhi* (2013) and *Delhi 6* (2009) among others, both set in Delhi, that seek to construct the visual aesthetic of warmth by choosing the season of winter, as visualised by the accoutrements of shawls and sweaters.

And yet for all their charm, wool, winter and their various wonders need to be contextualised, not generalised, because cold places themselves differ in patterns and persistence. My younger brother, a social anthropologist who working in the Trans-Himalayas for the past few years, tells me of the extraordinarily tough life that the people of Lahaul-Spiti (which form the cold deserts of Himachal Pradesh) lead when winter arrives. The old saying that holds spring nearer when winter comes needs tweaking here, because spring is certainly far behind in such areas. Here, societies wage a back-breaking battle of arduous labour to remove the massively thick layers of snow from their houses and establishments, day in and day out (for months in and months out), in addition to finding means to survive within temperatures of minus 10 to minus 35 degrees. Snow isn't benign here, and even its pervasive whiteness becomes a source of blindness under the sun, such that people must necessarily wear goggles to protect their vision. In



the months that have gone by, such extremes have also been reported from Western cities and metropolises, but their technologically advanced materiality of daily life still makes it easier to

alleviate the inhuman conditions as compared to the traditional and rudimentary methods involved in the Trans-Himalayas. Simultaneously, however, the evil of snow and ice incessantly

springs up in Western fantasy literature, whether it is the reign of the White Witch in the CS Lewis' *Narnia* books, or the regime of icy 'darkness' in Susan Cooper's *The Dark is Rising* series, or, most

popularly, the White Walkers of George RR Martin's *A Game of Thrones* books, whose fear lends an incomparable negative chill to the words "Winter is coming".

Perhaps, it is futile to reconcile the two sides of the season. Nature destroys, but as George Eliot put it at the end of her masterpiece, *The Mill on the Floss*, it also "repairs its ravages". I am biased in using the phrase since the full quotation actually stands as: "Nature repairs her ravages, but not all." As climate change swells in its reach and impact, the truth of Eliot's prescient words becomes even more loud, more threatening than ever before. And again, the most recognisable symbol of its destruction is to do with snow and ice, their melting and disappearance. It appears that to keep the earth stable, ice in the upper regions of the planet must retain its iciness. As a human quality, however, 'iciness' rings with an undesirable undertone, as does the word 'coldness' ("He gave me a cold shoulder"). And yet in Hindi, we routinely use the phrase "thand rakho" ("Keep your cool") to assuage someone

seething with anger that is aligned with *garmaahat* (aggressiveness that is invariably 'heated'). Nature continuously provides us a palette of objects and occurrences that can be used to entirely different effects in different situations. With a major part of my life spent in the Himalayas, I remain more attuned towards cold places (not cold dispositions!) that constantly sing with a warmth and intimacy of their own, notwithstanding the hardships involved.

As the Delhi winter slips into spring only to quickly fade into summer, I know that my eyes and ears will automatically be looking forward to all the advertisements promoting *thandai*, from Dermi Cool talcum powder (with its alliterative "thanda thanda cool cool" jingle) to assorted squashes and drinks, that habitually work with close-ups of ice and snow. For winteriness firmly remains in the blood and the mind.

The writer recently completed his PhD in English and Materiality Studies at the University of Cambridge, and will soon join the Ludwig Maximilian University in Munich, Germany, as a Research Fellow in Global History

THE IDEA OF INDIA

Harsh Mander's *Partitions of the Heart* is a worthy intervention at a time when most public protests are being deemed anti-national, writes HIMANSHI SHARMA



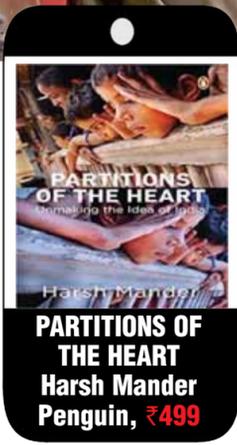
of all faiths co-existed in peace. The truth is more complex than that. While the role of certain political forces cannot be ignored in stoking communal tensions over the past few years, it is historically inaccurate to claim that the subliminal anti-Muslim rhetoric isn't deeply coded in the very fabric of the social and cultural idea of India. The battle for a secular Constitution was hard fought and hard won; to ignore that is to ignore the tremendous courage that Nehru and Ambedkar displayed when they persisted in countering the Hindutva forces that wanted India to be a Hindu nation in opposition to our newly divided Islamic neighbour. One dangerous consequence of this is that it completely frees 'us', who are tolerant, from all responsibility for the actions of 'them' who engage in bigotry. This inability to make ourselves accountable for perpetuating the very structures we claim to be fighting against cannot but be a band-aid solution. The book shies away from engaging in a nuanced understanding of the legacy of Partition on the citizenry of India despite mentioning it in its title. I also felt that Mander could have spent a little more time in exploring the economic conditions that may have led to the radicalisation of so many people in Hindutva ideology. Finally, the book takes for granted the reader's knowledge of the workings of the RSS, and its ideological influence in BJP. This limits its readership to people who already agree with Mander in their perception of the organisation. Perhaps that was intended by the author, but I do believe that this book could have made a case for newer converts to Hindutva ideology to reconsider their affiliations in light of the information presented here.

The above critique notwithstanding, this book serves as a poignant archive of the times we live in. In the tradition of faithful truth-keeping of writers before him, Mander bears witness to the systemic erosion of inter-community ties through this book. It should be recommended to everyone who wishes to understand contemporary India.

failed to do the absolute minimum to maintain refugee camps, or ensure communal reconciliation or social integration.

Divided into 12 chapters, the book takes care to focus on various interrelated issues like increased public lynching of minorities, cow vigilantism, love-jihad politics, religious conversions, and profiling of young Muslim men as terrorists. He also dedicates an entire chapter to the 'betrayal' of 'secular' political parties which led to the rise of such a tendency. The culpability of the Left parties, Congress, Samajwadi Party et al

in deepening religious divide for their own short-term political gains is discussed and thoroughly criticised in the text. He proposes that these circumstances have reduced minority groups to second class citizenship within their own country. He terms this perpetual feeling insecurity and their manufactured outsider-status as a "bloodless phase of genocide". "They make a desolation and call it peace", Agha Shahid Ali had written in *A Country Without a Post Office*, a slight rephrasing of Tacitus' "solitudinem faciunt, pacem appellat". In *Partitions of the*



Heart we are made to confront a jarring reality where this desolation of Kashmir has come to haunt the minorities of the rest of the country too. It lifts the curtain on the ugly side of aggressive, masculinist Hindutva fascism that has taken large parts of the country in its grip. Mander's book is part journalistic, part academic and meticulously researched in keeping with the requirements of both these fields. The author tries to include as many examples of news-reports, eye witness accounts, and documentary evidences as part of his argument

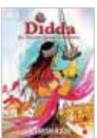
in true journalistic style. His academic rigour ensures that these individual events and issues don't sit in vacuum but are linked to larger social patterns of social and political complacency.

One of the primary weaknesses of the book, in my opinion, is Mander's 'all was well' syndrome. Time and again, he describes each post-riot affected area as an erstwhile model of communal harmony. India of pre-2002 years might have had problems, but in Mander's worldview it was a tolerant, harmonious country where people

NEW ARRIVALS

DIDDA

Ashish Kaul
Rupa, ₹295



A girl abandoned by her parents. A disabled princess who fights all odds to become the most feared warrior queen. A woman almost forced into Sati by her trusted prime Minister. A mother whose son brands her as a witch. This is the story of Rani Didda, the forgotten Hindu queen of undivided Kashmir. History is often unkind and cruel to women, especially women who wield power. Trampled by Wars and religious crusades, lies hidden the story of a glorious woman.

THE SECRETS TO RAISING A SMARTER CHILD

Inderbir Sandhu
Rupa, ₹350



Do you have a small child? Or are you planning to have the full potential of the child? Do you think you have an Einstein, Mozart, Ramanujan, Hawking or Marilyn vos Savant in the making? Do you want to understand your child better to make him or her smarter and happier? If you answered yes to any of these questions, then this book is definitely for you! It will give you with the tools to make the best of your child's natural abilities.

EMPTY PLANET

Darrell Bricker and John Ibbitson, ₹599

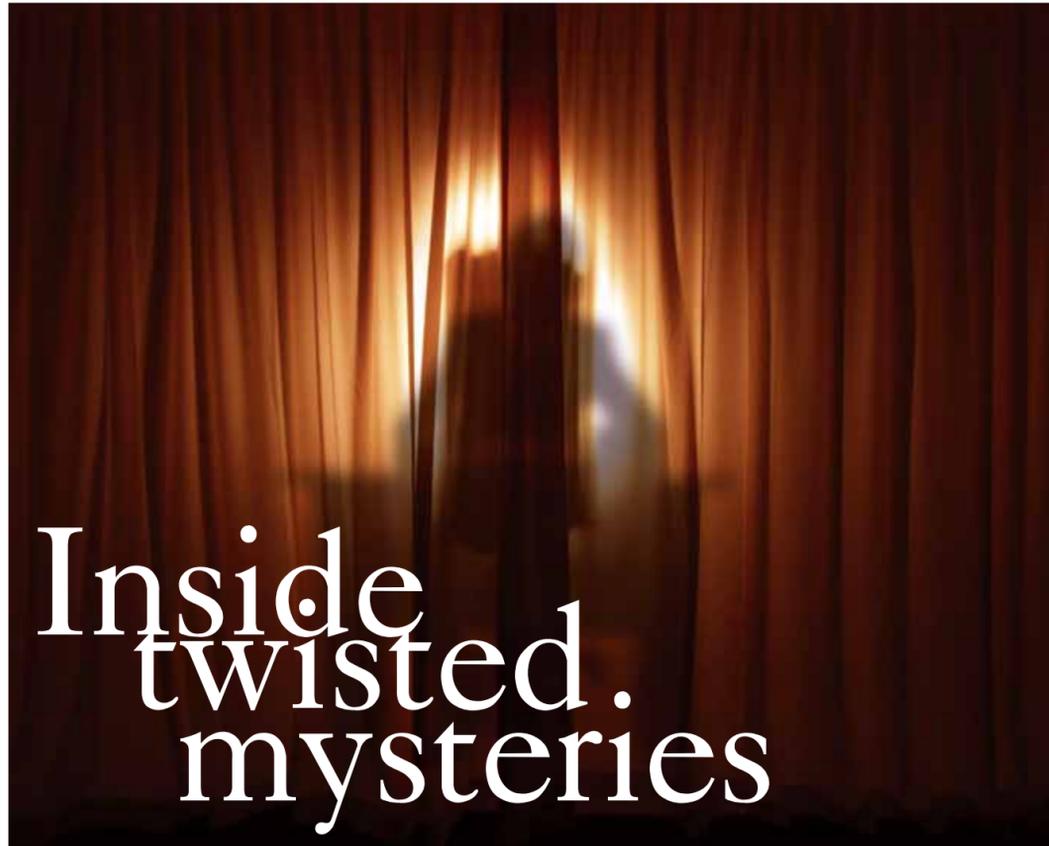


For half a century, statisticians, pundits and politicians have warned that a burgeoning planetary population will soon overwhelm the earth's resources. But a growing number of experts are sounding a different kind of alarm. Rather than growing exponentially, they argue, the global population is headed for a steep decline. Throughout history, depopulation was the product of catastrophe: Ice ages, plagues, the collapse of civilisations. This time, however, we're thinning ourselves deliberately, by choosing to have fewer babies than we need to replace ourselves.

Murder in the Monastery is a traditional, gripping whodunit, which makes for a breezy read that is perfect for a long journey, says KALYANEE RAJAN

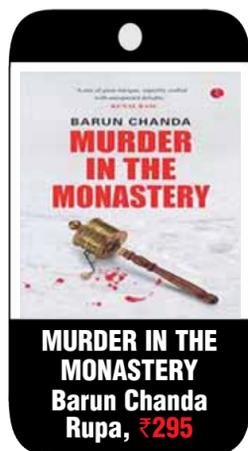
A sleepy hill station, a quiet, faraway monastery surrounded by mountains and nestled in breath-taking scenic beauty, a decent-looking couple trying to reawaken their passion away from the bustle of a hectic city, surrounded by several people with intriguing lives and obscure motives, and a sensitive document with an acute incendiary potential — if knit together seamlessly, these would make a perfect recipe for a Bollywood pot-boiler. An urbane, new-age reader is denied precisely that feeling of fulfilment or a fitting denouement in this extremely good looking novel that aspires in vain to be a pacy adult thriller. The second book by actor Barun Chanda who dons the hats of an advertising guru, acting and writing by turns, *Murder in the Monastery* offers a well-executed narrative.

Placing Kolkata old hound Avinash Roy at the centre of story, Chanda seems to have drawn upon one inspiration too many: A detective who wants some moments of peace and solitude à la a Sherlock Holmes, who is surrounded by a motley group of tourists with hidden past put together by circumstances like Agatha Christie's ten little soldiers, a document pertaining to the mysteries of Jesus Christ's life which is dished out in a man-



Inside twisted mysteries

ner not entirely unlike Dan Brown, to name a few. Roy holidays with his beautiful but oft-neglected wife Sharmila, romping in the wilderness and recovering his lost libido, puts up at the out-of-the-way Dengziang Monastery and is rudely interrupted when he is about to make out with his wife once more, summoned by the head Lama, Lama Phunsok to help recover the missing Issah document. What follows is the sulking wife, neglected once more as duty beckons, packed off to home through her angry outbursts in chaste Bangla: "Let it ruin him...Taetetomarki?", "Dhurrrhah! You are impossible" to never reappear in the plot, having spiced up the story in the beginning with



some legitimate lovemaking sequences to justify the adult tag. The ace detective Roy of course stays back in the Sikkim monastery to clean up the matter. In a poor imitation of James Bond-esque manner, Roy proceeds to make friends with the "rather attractive" Coorgi girl staying at the monastery, Miriam de Gonzales, who seems to know everything that Roy thought to be a private conversation between him and the head Lama. Miriam's disturbing know-it-all chatter and obviously flirtatious attentions put Roy on alert, and together they narrowly escape being crushed to death by a stray boulder rolling down the hill. The episode reminds one of

Sherlock missing a similar attempt on his life after Moriarty's death, retold in the first story of "The Return of Sherlock Holmes". The reader is given samples of Roy's clinical observation skills throughout, as he goes about making deductions about random happenings and individuals. What plunges Roy finally into action in proper, however, are the twin murders of Miriam and Tenzing, her secret lover, within the monastery. Aided by his colleague and Assistant Pradyot, Roy and Inspector Thapa launch on a wild goose chase for the mysterious nun who slept with Miriam on her last night.

That our hero is an ageing detective, at times utterly unimaginative and clumsy,

becomes difficult to get to grips with, especially in the light of Pradyot's swashbuckling, more hands-on approach towards his work. He is not only adept at physically impressing himself upon the people he seeks to question, reminding one of CID's theatrical and burly officer Daya, but also displays a keener sense of observation as compared to his boss. Roy's rounding up and sizing up of the suspects is also Poirot-like: He analyses the characters and motives of all the significant characters, yoked together by fluke or by design, talking in first person, "Let us take William 'Billy' Ford first..." The character of the French documentary film maker Pierre Duval is somewhat lazily sketched, with lingering loose ends. Thrown into this jumble carelessly are Billy's nymphomaniac wife who pursues him literally across the seven seas; the mousy, secretive but ultimately harmless couple; a Lama seeking revenge having been a victim of sexual abuse as a child, a Christian organisation which operates in dubious ways, and the tale of Miriam's failed suicide attempt. The sparsely injected humour feels deliberate and lame by turns, failing to lighten up the tenor of the narrative. The character of Inspector Thapa however, offers some respite by his sheer ingenuity and typical police hound doggedness. The last quarter of the novel is the weakest link, with rough jumps and farfetched solutions cooked up rather like instant noodles, sadly, sans the magic masala. The logical what's and wherefore's are made frustratingly redundant as the reader is pushed into a hastily put together chase for unravelling mistaken identities, hazy motives, and the mystery of the missing document tests all the 'incredible' powers of deduction of the ace detective Avinash Roy. *Murder in the Monastery* should be read on a long journey, putting a traditional, gripping whodunit aside, befitting only a straight, breezy read.



In this file photo released on April 25, 2015, by a militant website, which has been verified and is consistent with other AP reporting, young boys known as the "caliphate cubs" hold their rifles as they parade after graduating from a religious school, in Tal Afar, near Mosul city, north Iraq

AP

Endgame in Syria

Syria resonates in the regional and global fulcrum as another conflict centre and a twilight zone. The fact has been that terrorism is the spectacular attention gathering device of a resource and fund challenged non-state actor.

In West Asia regionally and in the Syrian quagmire particularly, the issue of insurgency and the spectacularity of the ministrations of the Kurdish forces aligned with United States against the ISIS are present, which are somewhere pitted against the Bashar-Al-Assad regime of Damascus.

Once upon a time Syria used to be a progressive and modernist population centre, but, with the internecine entry of Iran into Lebanon through Syria and Hezbollah, the regional scenario has become tricky going beyond the pale of the quintessential BOP (balance of power) system in the larger international system and the West Asian region. Now, the Syrian nation has turned into a region, facing one of the worst humanitarian disasters whose sinews now reach out to Europe as part of a larger migration across the European mountains and icy lands.

The US, too, gets embroiled in this regional fracas. The December 2018 decision of President Trump to withdraw the last contingent of 2,000 soldiers has been a part of his larger "sequestration and isolationist streak" in the context of the US foreign policy. The US we perceive today is much different from the times of President Bush where-in the superpower nowadays intends to withdraw from global responsibilities, including that of conflict resolution and related reconstruction efforts in destroyed principalities.

The power vacuum left by the American withdrawal from a post-Saddam Iraq led to the spawning of a Phoenix like Islamic State (ISIS). In a way, if the Bashar-Al-Assad regime does not survive, which appears highly unlikely then a strong and capacities-laden nation-state actor such as the US will be required to set the unstable stables in order in Syria.

The American interventionist streak has been on view in places which have faced humanitarian catastrophes. Syria is one such instance, wherein, the NATO ally, Turkey too has reservations about the Washington's policy of taking the help of the Syrian Kurd groups and the attendant militia, in order to counter the ISIS, as the flock of

YPG and others are categorically Turkey's insurgents and law breakers. Still, akin to other places and in the context of American homeland security, the White House has to adequately pre-empt the incurable and destabilising insurgents in the Syrian context and the larger West Asian region. This leads us on to the American R2P as the Americans need to stay much longer in Syria to oversee the establishment of peace and stability in the conflict ravaged nation. According to the 2012 Global Leadership Report, 29 per cent of the Syrians approve of the American leadership, with 41 per cent disapproving and 31 per cent people expressing indecision about the American leadership in Syria.

The scenario of diplomatic exchanges was never so bad between the doughty Damascus and Washington as in the first Persian Gulf War of 1990-91, President Bush Sr was part of the American-led coalition to counteract the dictatorial act of Saddam Hussein, and later in the decade of the nineties, the Americans successes in bringing Hafiz Al Assad of Syria to mediate with the state of Israel with the larger objective of peace in West Asia. By the time in the aftermath of the September 11 attacks, Syria participated in the US-led Global War on Terror (GWOT) in order to support the American striving in West Asia.

In fact, the Syrians were the first state to intimate the Americans about a terror attack on the US Fifth fleet in line with the USS Cole bombing in 1998. Despite, the Syrian-American cooperation in the context of the GWOT, Syria has always remained on the American list of terror sponsoring safe havens, since the US enumeration of the same in 1979. The US is of the opinion that the Damascus regime supports State Terror and separatist actors in Israel and the Palestinian territories, which place the West Asian peace and stodgy stolidity at a grave risk.

As an adjunct, the US Embassy was attacked in 2006 for which the Syrian Government placed the blame on the American policy in Iraq. These little flies in the ointment tended to sour the relations between the twin nations which were partially at different footings, since the last 30-40 odd years. So no supine surprises here over the growing of thaws between Damascus and Washington!

The Americans clearly parted

ways when President Obama sponsored the UNSC resolution laying the blame for all violence on Bashar-Al-Assad and demanded that he steps down from the perilous pedestal of power. The American Ambassador, Robert Stephen Ford, was too withdrawn from Syria under duress at threats to his personal safety and well-being paving the way for the branding of state of Syria as a recalcitrant nation state. Still, in the Trump Administration, the US Secretary of State, Rex Tillerson, opined that the longer term pedestal of Bashar-Al-Assad would be decided by the local Syrian populace and on several occasions the US President has supported idea of "safe zones" in Syria which Syria finds unacceptable and beyond the pallor of realism.

Also, in the aftermath of the Douma chemical attacks, the Trump regime with Paris initiated missile attacks on the Syrian denomination, thus, paving the way for a confrontation between the US and its allies on side of the fencing ring and Iran and Russia being on the antagonist side of the fighting ring.

Very accurate Tom Hawk missiles have been deftly utilised from USS Philippine Sea and USS Ariegh Burke at the ISIS targets in Raqqa. Thus, Syria is akin to a rogue nation state tumbling on with Iraq and others, in the contemporary US understanding of the conflict, thus, ushering in a twilight zone scenario. As a result in 2014, the nations of the order of Bahrain, Qatar, United Arab Emirates along with the American F-22 Raptor Stealth Fighters were unleashed on the Syrian air space.

Harking back to American history, the American intervention in Cuban war and the incidents in Philippines have served as initiator elements in the rise of American power according to Howard K Beale in 1956 work titled as, "Theodore Roosevelt and the Rise of America to World Power."

President Theodore Roosevelt at the turn of the century had gone on to contend that the United States ought to have warships equal in number to the aspirations and the popular will of the great American people. The niceties of riding a horse, dining with the elites and deliberating on world politics and literature happen to be the enumerated characteristics of a true blue American gentleman, paving the way for the larger over-

ISIS challenge is not over. US President Theodore Roosevelt at the turn of the century had gone on to contend that the United States ought to have warships equal in number to the aspirations and the popular will of the great American people



MANAN DWIVEDI

arch of the American nation.

Thus, America has always been on a kind of Oregon trail which includes incursions of the military genre inside states hobbled with humanitarian disasters as a consequence of political violence, terrorism and attendant mayhem. Regulating the international system has somehow been a lynchpin of the US foreign policy to rescue the challenged and turmoiled nations their populations.

(The writer teaches International Relations at Indian Institute of Public Administration, Delhi)

Can ISIS' caliphate resurrect?

The announcement of victory over the Islamic State (ISIS) group in Syria marks the end of the extremists' self-styled caliphate, a proto-state in which they held millions hostage to their dark and brutal vision. But ISIS, which traces its roots back to the bloody emergence of al-Qaida in Iraq after the 2003 US-led invasion, has survived past defeats and is already waging a low-level insurgency in areas it was driven from months or even years ago.

The grueling four-and-a-half-year campaign to drive ISIS from the territories it once held has left entire towns and neighborhoods in ruins, in both war-torn Syria and Iraq. If the long-standing grievances of Sunni Muslims in both countries continue to fester, the extremists could rise again.

What has ended exactly?

What is over is the ISIS' physical "caliphate," after the Syrian Democratic Forces, a Kurdish-led group supported by the United States, declared on March 23 the capture of the last tiny patch of territory controlled by the militants, in the eastern Syrian village of Baghouz.

That domain once stretched over large parts of Syria and Iraq, which the group conquered in a blitz in the summer of 2014, capturing towns and cities, including Mosul, Iraq's second-largest.

The fighters bulldozed berms along the border and proclaimed a contiguous caliphate stretching across a third of both countries. At its height, the territory was the size of Britain, stretching from near the northern Syrian town of Aleppo to the outskirts of the Iraqi capital, Baghdad, and home to 8 million people.

The extremists governed under a harsh and violent interpretation of Islam. They massacred those who resisted their rule and beheaded hostages, including Western journalists and foreign aid workers, in gruesome videos circulated online. Alleged adulterers were stoned to death, those believed to be gay were thrown from the tops of buildings, and children were made to watch the atrocities as part of their brainwashing. The group captured thousands of women from Iraq's Yazidi minority, forcing them into sexual slavery.

ISIS also carried out the more mundane actions of a state — collecting taxes, printing school textbooks, minting its own currency and restoring public infrastructure. It was an experiment in statehood that not even al-Qaida ever tried on a significant scale.

From its de facto capital of Raqqa, in northern Syria, its leaders plotted spectacular attacks abroad, including the 2015 Paris attacks that killed 130 people. As ISIS began to hemorrhage

territory, it began opportunistically claiming attacks without any evidence of its involvement.

The self-proclaimed caliphate attracted tens of thousands of people from around the world, lured by the group's online activism and slickly produced propaganda videos. Young, troubled men were eager to wage war against those branded enemies of Islam, while others were drawn to the promise of life in an Islamic state governed by God's law.

That physical "caliphate" was declared dead, for now.

What is the cost of liberation?

The grueling four-year air and ground campaign against ISIS has killed or wounded tens of thousands of people, driven hundreds of thousands from their homes and left a swath of destruction stretching from the suburbs of Damascus to central Iraq.

The major cities ISIS once held — Mosul, Raqqa, Fallujah and Ramadi — have all seen major devastation.

The group put up fierce resistance nearly everywhere, using civilians as human shields and launching waves of car bomb and suicide attacks. As it slowly retreated, it left behind booby traps and explosives that in many areas have yet to be cleared.

The US-led coalition dropped tens of thousands of bombs over Syria and Iraq to help its allies on the ground advance, sometimes pulverizing entire city blocks. Syrian Government forces backed by Russian air power battled ISIS in some areas, as did Iraq's state-sanctioned militias, with help from Iran.

The death toll from the campaign remains uncounted. In a report released last year, the coalition confirmed the deaths of 1,139 civilians in airstrikes conducted between August 2014 and November 2018. Rights groups say the number is much higher.

An Associated Press investigation found at least 9,000 civilians died in the assault to retake Mosul alone. In Raqqa, the US-backed campaign killed hundreds of civilians and caused destruction on a massive scale. Syria is still mired in civil war, and Iraq estimates it will need \$100 billion to rebuild. Local leaders in Mosul say they need that much for their city alone. No one has offered to foot the bill, and hard-hit areas remain empty, even years later.

What's next

The official declaration of victory is of mostly symbolic value. Thousands of ISIS militants have dispersed and gone to ground, and US defense officials have warned that IS could stage a comeback in Syria within a year if military and counterterrorism pressure is eased.

"They've cut the trunk of this

malignant tree, but they haven't pulled up its roots, which are still capable of growing and spreading," Hisham al-Hashemi, a researcher in extremism and expert on ISIS, wrote in a Twitter post.

Activists who closely follow the conflict in Syria already point to signs of a growing insurgency and sleeper cells carrying out assassinations, setting up flying checkpoints and claiming roadside bombs in liberated areas across Syria and Iraq.

That insurgency could gain strength as President Donald Trump presses ahead with his planned US withdrawal from Syria. The American commander overseeing the fight against ISIS, General Joseph Votel, has warned that the group is far from being defeated, saying its leaders have dispersed and gone underground.

"What we are seeing now is not the surrender of ISIS as an organisation but a calculated decision to preserve the safety of their families and preservation of their capabilities," he said earlier this month, adding that the insurgents are "waiting for the right time to resurge."

The withdrawal of American forces from eastern Syria would open the door for major turmoil as various actors — including the Syrian government, allied with Russia and Iran — race to fill the vacuum.

ISIS was all but defeated once before, when US forces withdrew from Iraq in 2011; experts warn it could stage another devastating comeback.

And ISIS has established affiliates across Asia and Africa, and continues to be active in places like Afghanistan, Libya, Egypt's Sinai Peninsula, Yemen and the Philippines.

Future of detained fighters and their families

Another major concern is jihadis finding their way back to Europe. Around 1,000 foreign fighters are currently being held in Kurdish-run prisons in northern Syria. Their wives — many of them from Western countries — and their children are in camps in northern Syria.

Syrian Kurdish authorities are calling on countries to take back their nationals, saying they cannot afford to keep shouldering the burden. Trump has weighed in, calling on Britain, France, Germany and other European allies to repatriate their nationals and put them on trial.

"The US does not want to watch as these ISIS fighters permeate Europe, which is where they are expected to go," he tweeted in February.

But few countries are willing to bring back people they view as a security threat, posing a dilemma for the Kurdish-led forces as the US prepares to withdraw.

AP



SOCIAL MEDIA IS REDUCING SOCIAL BARRIERS. IT CONNECTS PEOPLE ON THE STRENGTH OF HUMAN VALUES, NOT IDENTITIES — NARENDRA MODI

Analysing elections in India

Jaishri Jethwaney and Dr Samir Kapur's book looks at the theoretical underpinnings of the relationship between democracy, mass media, and election campaigning in India. An excerpt:

I understand democracy as something that gives the weak the same chance as the strong," said Mahatma Gandhi. "Vox populi vox dei," an oft-quoted axiom in democracies, was coined by the Greeks and conveyed that the voice of the people was indeed the voice of God. Democracy is the manifestation of people's will to be governed by those they elect. It is a different matter that the very same people as voters may not necessarily be happy with the elected representatives they choose to govern them. Democracy, also, is not necessarily the voice of the majority. Many people do not vote, and those who do may not see their candidates win.

Society has a history spanning millions of years, and the media, especially the mass media, is a little over a century old. Yet it is ironic that the media, over the years, has accumulated immense power to influence society in more ways than one. The media's power comes from its capacity to influence public opinion. Media critics believe that it is not a knowledge-based profession, but depends on events and happenings interpreted from both the supply side of information — through press releases, backgrounders, press conferences, events, etc — and the demand side of information, from the perspective of reporters who interpret events and information according to their understanding and mental capability. The media, therefore, can be seen as a social institution, which is not and cannot be very different from the nature of the society it exists in.

The relationship between the media and society is symbiotic. In fact, any debate on the mass media and society oscillates between two extremes, depending on who is saying it. Some swear by the media's unbridled power, while others feel that the media does not affect lives at all. Whatever may be the cliché in these views, there is no gainsaying the fact that the media has become part of the everyday life of an average person, who makes sense of the world around him/her through media stimuli.

In this chapter, an effort has been made to provide a theoretical construct to the interrelation of democracy, the media and its impact on elections. The last century or so has seen the development of many theories and models around the subject, which have also been tested in many elections in the West, especially in the United States (US). Over the years, elections in other democracies, especially in the developing world, have copied campaign styles and media usage from their Western counterparts, again the US in particu-



lar. Critics have often called this the 'Americanisation' of elections. There may not have been many scholarly research studies on the Indian elections with a theoretical construct in the past, but the current crop of scholars — from not only India but also the West — has evinced great interest in the Indian elections, and one does find references in contemporary literature on the subject. The later chapters have cited a number of such studies. British communication theorist Denis McQuail ascribes four important attributes to the mass media that lend it significance.

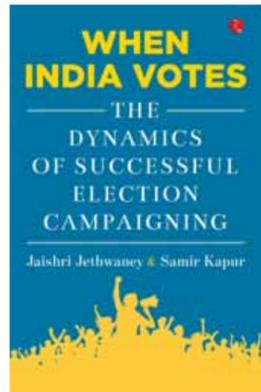
A power source: The media is the primary means of transmission and source of information in society. The media is in the area of public affairs: Government organisations and the corporate sector, because of various regulations, are often in the media glare.

A definition of social reality: The media is a forum where the changing

culture and values of society and groups are 'constructed, stored and visibly expressed'.

A primary key to fame and celebrity status: First, it was people from the entertainment industry, then sportspersons, and now even corporate honchos, who have acquired celebrity status in the media. The power of the media, however, is not intrinsic but acquired. This power comes from the people, as consumers and audiences of news and various other programmes. The political institutions that are accountable to the people in a democracy through periodic elections obviously face the worst of a vocal and negative media, and that is what lends power to the media.

Harwood L Childs, author of *An Introduction to Public Opinion*, in his thesis on the subject, strongly advocates the preserving of public opinion, because many forces in his view seem



to be at work, curtailing and undermining its role. These, according to Childs, include the tremendous growth in executive power, the growing complexity and speed of social change, the emergence of pressure groups and higher stakes among political parties, the mass media and other channels.

Representative bodies are becoming less representative, and elections, though they indicate the preferred candidates, often give only a slight indication of public attitude. A section of analysts feels that the decision of the voters is more often shaped by the mass media stimuli around election time. Excessive visibility of certain candidates in comparison to others, cunning campaigns by parties and the 'public face' as presented have the capability to swing public opinion in favour of or against a candidate, which may have nothing to do with the 'real' choice of the electorate, as it should have been. To what

extent an average person depends on media messages or to what extent the media shapes our minds, attitudes and opinions is, however, a moot point.

MEDIA AND POLITICS

There have been numerous debates leading to concern and anxiety about the increasing role and influence of the media, which, it is alleged, has changed the very fabric of politics. A fascinating, and at times intriguing, interplay of the mass media and politics has been the subject matter of much empirical research.

Politics as an institution has a long history. Many things have influenced politics over the years. Similarly, the media has undergone changes and entered various phases. Political institutions have taken centuries to be what they are today. The media as an institution has progressed in a much shorter period, as said earlier. Thanks to the ingenuity of the human mind, coupled with science and technology, the media has acquired such a formidable position and influence from being a watchdog that it questions institutions and practices that are as old as the human civilisation itself. While the news media has historically been viewed as aggressive and overenthusiastic for the latest and hottest information, its watchdog function in a democratic society posits that people know what their Governments and public-funded institutions are doing. The media has the power to hold the Government and public-funded institutions accountable, forcing them to explain actions and decisions, all of which affect the people they represent.

The assumption is that the press speaks for the people, thus the freedom of speech and freedom of the press Acts are widely prevalent in some democracies. The need for freedom of the media is to ensure that it articulates the voice of the people and their concerns by bringing them in the public domain. The argument supports that the news media must question the Government, thereby contributing in making democracy function. Therefore, it is important to understand that the freedom of speech and expression is in the interest of the public, and such legislation does not only protect the functions of the press, but also lets it function without fear or favour. Today, in the era of globalisation, this role has undergone a sea change. It is often alleged that the media today has become a commodity. There is also growing criticism against the media for projecting unabashed violence.

Excerpted with permission from *When India Votes: The Dynamics of Successful Election Campaigning*, Jaishri Jethwaney and Samir Kapur, Rupa, ₹295

'Hate to see Brexit being ripped apart'

While discussing Brexit in the Oval Office recently, US President Donald Trump said he was 'very sad' about the state of trade negotiations with the UK, writes NICK ALLEN

Donald Trump said he "hates" seeing Brexit being "ripped apart," indicated he believes there should be no second referendum, and said that Theresa May "didn't listen" to his advice. Trump's intervention came as he also promised that a "large scale" trade deal with "unlimited potential" was waiting to be done between the UK and US after Brexit.

Speaking in the Oval Office, while meeting Leo Varadkar, the Irish Taoiseach, the US president said he had been watching the "very sad" developments in the UK, and his approach to negotiations would have worked better. He said: "I will tell you, I'm surprised at how badly it's all gone from the standpoint of a negotiation. But I gave the prime minister my ideas on how to negotiate it, and I think you would have been successful. She didn't listen to that, and that's fine."

"I mean, she's gotta do what she's gotta do, but I think it could have been negotiated in a different manner, frankly. I hate to see it, everything being ripped apart right now." Trump has previously said his advice on how to secure Brexit may have been "too brutal" for May.

Addressing the question of a second referendum the president indicated it should not happen because it was "very unfair". He said: "I don't think another vote would be possible because it would be very unfair to the people that won, that say 'What do

you mean you're going to take another vote?'. So that'd be tough.

"I thought it [the 2016 referendum result] would happen, it did happen, but both sides are very, very, you know, they're cemented in. It's a tough situation. It's a shame. Frankly, it's a shame. There was no reason for that to happen. They could have had the vote and it should have gone smoothly. Unfortunately, it didn't. It's a very complicated issue, and actually the issue on the border of Ireland is one of the most complex points."

Trump said an extension seemed inevitable but he would like to see Brexit "work out". He said: "I think they're going to have to do something because right now they're in the midst of a short period of time, and they're not going to be able to do that. "I would like to see that whole situation with Brexit work out. You know, we're talking to them about trade, and we can do a very big trade deal with the UK. But it's very sad to see what's happening there, and there was no reason."

Trump recalled how he had predicted the 2016 referendum result. He said: "It wasn't that I was a supporter. I predicted that it was going to happen. I was right and people laughed when I predicted it. "I can tell you it's a

"I WOULD LIKE TO SEE THAT WHOLE SITUATION WITH BREXIT WORK OUT. YOU KNOW, WE'RE TALKING TO THEM ABOUT TRADE, AND WE CAN DO A VERY BIG TRADE DEAL WITH THE UK. BUT IT'S VERY SAD TO SEE WHAT'S HAPPENING THERE, AND THERE WAS NO REASON"
— DONALD TRUMP



very complex thing that's going on right now. It's tearing a lot of countries apart. And it's a shame it has to be that way." He added: "We're also renegotiating our trade deal with the European groups. We're talking to the EU about trade, they're willing to talk to us. "And if they don't talk to us we're going to do something that's going to be pretty severe economically, tariff a lot of their products coming in, because the EU treats us very, very unfairly. It'll probably work out. Otherwise, we're going to do something that's good for the United States."

Varadkar told Trump: "I think it'll be a few years until the UK sorts itself out, but in the meantime the EU is available to talk trade with the US..." The president said he would be going to Ireland this year. He said: "I'll be coming at some point during the year. It's just a great place." He tweeted, "My Administration looks forward to negotiating a large scale Trade Deal with the UK. The potential is unlimited!"

Earlier, Trump had warned that Britain "may not be able to trade with the US" because of Theresa May's Brexit deal in comments that could torpedo her hopes of winning Parliament's backing. He said the agreement

May reached with Brussels "sounds like a great deal for the EU" as he urged the Prime Minister to think again. The President's intervention seemed to fly in the face of May's claims that Britain would be able to strike free trade deals around the world after Brexit despite her concessions to the EU.

Also, Trump and Nigel Farage discussed the merits of a no deal Brexit during a face-to-face meeting earlier this month. The US president was urged to support walking away from the table if a bad agreement is on offer — just like he had done during North Korea talks in Vietnam. The conversation took place at the Conservative Political Action Conference [Cpac] in Washington DC, a gathering of right-leaning politicians where both men gave speeches. Moreover, the US President's former chief strategist had said that Margaret Thatcher is the inspiration for Donald Trump's policies in the White House. Steve Bannon also said now is the "the moment" for Boris Johnson, who quit as Foreign secretary over Theresa May's proposed Brexit deal, to challenge the Prime Minister to lead the country. Bannon, who ran Trump's successful campaign to become President in 2016, said that "Trump's policies were based on 'pure Thatcherism'". Bannon had also said: "What we are trying to do is get a piece of action for the little guy."



A FOOTBALL-MAD COUPLE IN FRANCE HAS BEEN BARRED FROM NAMING THEIR SON 'GRIEZMANN MBAPPE' AFTER TWO SOCCER STARS

WHY ISN'T DISABILITY MORE VISIBLE IN FASHION?



Only a handful of designers, such as late Alexander McQueen, recognised fashion's huge potential to challenge our perception of disability, writes LOTTIE JACKSON

My earliest recollection of my personal style was far from complimentary; instead, it started with retorts of "Well, you're going to look very silly!" And indeed I did: Utterly silly. But still I threw aside the pristine twin-set neatly laid out for my sister's party in favour of a garish pyjama top, Dalmatian-print leggings, stuck-on earrings and a conservative flourish of patent Mary Janes, an outfit I thought was the height of sophistication. The whole ensemble was set off by a pink beaded purse puckered with jelly tots, an ill-tempered Tamagotchi and other five-year-old-child essentials. Let's just say it was hard to distinguish me from the clown booked for post-lunch entertainment.

In this moment, fashion became about more than clothes for me. It was an act of defiance, self-assertion and a declaration of who I was — which certainly wasn't going to be imposed by anyone but myself. In the years following, this sense that style is intimately connected to our identity has strengthened. Although I've had a muscle weakness disability since birth, in recent years, additional illness, such as severe pneumonia, has significantly impacted my mobility, stamina and the physical strength of my voice. As a fashion journalist with a disability, I recognise how style can empower people to express themselves regardless of ability, race, age, gender or size.

In recent years, the concept of "diversity" has come into focus in the fashion industry, catapulted from the abyss to assume centre stage in fashion campaigns, glossy magazine covers and post-catwalk commentary. In fact, we've just witnessed a record year in terms of inclusion in fashion. Diversity has become not only a buzzword but also a measure of a brand's relevance in an intensely competitive digital marketplace. The fashion we

see today is an optimistic celebration of a spectrum of identities.

This may be true with regard to the models we're seeing in front of the camera. Take for instance Halima Aden, Charli Howard, or Adut Akech, who are all redefining traditional supermodel stereotypes. But these faces are the harbingers of change that conceal the endemic lack of representation in the wider fashion industry. Diversity doesn't begin and end with who we see in front of the camera, we need more minority voices leading from behind the lens. Recent accusations of racism facing establishment brands — such as Prada, Gucci, and Burberry, which were recently called out for their racially offensive imagery — are a testament to this fact. The solution is simple, and urgent: We must address this disconnect between the diversity of the models on the catwalk and those packed into the front row — the editors, buyers, and ultimately, the voices of power.

However, one minority group is severely under-represented. Although 20 per cent of people have disabilities, this demographic is largely non-existent in the fashion sphere, with only a handful of designers, such as Teatum Jones and the late Alexander McQueen, recognising fashion's potential to challenge our perception of disability. McQueen's legacy is defined by his ability to subvert prescriptive ideas of beauty; his spring/summer 1999 show featuring the Paralympian Aimee Mullins in a pair of handcrafted prosthetic legs is a defining example of how McQueen's work deconstructed social taboos regarding disabled bodies. Historical prejudices have made disability synonymous with victimhood or failure, and consequently it is often hidden from public view.

Actress Selma Blair's first appearance on the red carpet following her multiple sclerosis diagnosis last year saw her pose defiantly with a mono-

MCQUEEN'S LEGACY IS DEFINED BY HIS ABILITY TO SUBVERT PRESCRIPTIVE IDEAS OF BEAUTY; HIS SPRING/SUMMER 1999 SHOW FEATURING THE PARALYMPIAN AIMEE MULLINS IN A PAIR OF HANDCRAFTED PROSTHETIC LEGS IS A DEFINING EXAMPLE OF HOW MCQUEEN'S WORK DECONSTRUCTED SOCIAL TABOOS REGARDING DISABLED BODIES

grammed walking cane. As a former muse for luxury brands like Stella McCartney and Chanel, this image was a powerful symbol of how fashion enables disability to transcend the stigma that surrounds it. Her presence was also a glaring reminder that people with disabilities are often unseen on platforms like the red carpet, the epitome of spectacle and visibility. So although it represented a victory for disability representation, primarily it was an intimation of how far there is to go before it's accepted as the norm. In a later interview with *Vanity Fair*, Blair laments the lack of stylish clothing available to disabled individuals. She wants designers to focus on improving adaptive fashion, which is designed to meet the needs of those with disabilities and chronic conditions: "It can still be chic. You shouldn't have to sacrifice style."

At last designers are beginning to acknowledge the disabled consumer

market, which represents £249 billion of untapped spending power. Recently, the Cornish-lifestyle brand Seasalt (as worn by the Duchess of Sussex) launched its first adaptive clothing line, Easy On. The collection, only available online, includes discreet additions to existing signature styles such as magnetic fastenings on their popular Beachcombing Coat, loops on sleeve cuffs to make pulling them on and off hassle-free, and soft elasticated waistbands which are pinch-free when seated. "We wanted to help women who can find dressing difficult," explains Seasalt's design director Sue Simpson. The collection was inspired by customer focus groups, so it's designed to "fit into their lives and make [them] feel confident".

However, when I point out their designs are exclusively shown on able-bodied models, they state the photography is "a blank canvas" but would take in my feedback. But this exposes the long-standing myth that disability isn't marketable. More than ever, consumers want to align themselves with brands that have a positive, inclusive ethos.

Seasalt follows in the footsteps of other forward-thinking brands, such as Marks & Spencer and Tommy Hilfinger, which have already released adaptive clothing lines. Their designs featured everything from adjustable hem-lengths to accommodate prosthetic limbs and soft Velcro fastenings, to sleep-suits specifically tailored for babies with hip dysplasia. With a new report revealing the adaptive clothing market could reach \$288.7 billion globally this year, they are right to be expanding their offerings.

The fashion industry's fascination with diversity not only fulfils an ethical responsibility, but it's incredibly lucrative. While I've always believed fashion can foster an inclusive spirit, finally the industry is poised to reflect this.

The Daily Telegraph

CULTURE LANE

James Bond to drive an electric car

Long-haul flights, tons of guns and a bagpipe flamethrower: Such are the special demands of his career that James Bond has never been considered a poster boy for an eco-friendly lifestyle. But next year's 25th Bond film looks set to have Ian Fleming's hero make his first concession to climate change, by driving an electric Aston Martin — albeit one which retails at £250,000. According to reports, the film — whose working title of *Shatterhand* was recently debunked — will see Daniel Craig's 007 behind the wheel of an Aston Martin Rapide E, one of only 155 electric cars being built by the British manufacturer.

The *Sun* reports that director Cary Joji Fukunaga has spearheaded the change, with their source describing him as "a total tree-hugger". "This is something Cary pushed for and Daniel and the producers are going along with. Everybody is afraid of Bond getting labelled 'too PC' but they all felt the time was right to put him in a zero-emission vehicle."

Aston Martin's relationship with



the spy franchise began in 1964, when Sean Connery drove a DB5 sports car in *Goldfinger*. Shooting on the new film is expected to start in April, after a series of delays involving the replacement of Danny Boyle as director following reported "creative differences" between he and producers Barbara Broccoli and Michael G Wilson.

Many suggested Boyle and his co-writer John Hodge were eager to bring Bond up to date with a plot including nods to the #MeToo movement — and, potentially, 007's own death.

MJ fan groups to sue his accusers

Three Michael Jackson fan groups are suing his alleged victims in France for "sully[ing] his memory" by taking part in the *Leaving Neverland* documentary, the fans' lawyer told Agence France-Presse. The Michael Jackson Community — which claims to be the "official fan club forum" — and the MJ Street and On The Line groups accuse Wade Robson and James Safechuck of "lynching" Jackson. The case, which will be heard by a court in Orleans in northern France in July, follows reports that Jackson's children were also considering taking legal action against the men, who say that Jackson sexually abused them when they were children.

Lawyer Emmanuel Ludot, who has previously successfully sued Jackson's doctor for causing distress to his fans by giving him the drugs that killed him, said the groups "want to discredit the accusations of paedophilia" against Jackson.

Ludot said the "indignity of the extremely grave accusations" made by



Robson and Safechuck in *Leaving Neverland* had sullied the memory of the singer, who died in 2009.

Jackson's image had been affected by the allegations as well as "the whole community of his fans", the lawyer said. *Leaving Neverland* was first broadcast in the US on HBO earlier this month and has since broken streaming records in Britain.

The film has outraged some of Jackson's fans, who have waged an often vicious social media campaign against his accusers.

Real disaster scene out of Bird Box



Four months after it first appeared on Netflix, footage of a real-life rail disaster will be removed from the movie *Bird Box*, the post-apocalyptic thriller starring Sandra Bullock. The stock footage used concerns a 2013 tragedy in the Québec town of Lac-Mégantic when an unattended train carrying crude oil rolled down an incline, came off the tracks and exploded, killing 47 people.

Earlier this year, the streaming giant said it would not remove the clip, which in *Bird Box* is used to illustrate mass deaths in the wake of an

invasion of spectral beasts who cause a person's worst fears to materialise, leading them to kill themselves.

But in a statement to *The Wrap* recently, Netflix confirmed that both it and the makers of *Bird Box* have decided to replace the clip. They also apologised, saying: "We're sorry for any pain caused to the Lac-Mégantic community." In response, Quebec's Minister of Culture and Communications, Nathalie Roy, praised the decision, saying it shows that "by uniting and pooling our efforts, everything is possible".

ODDLY ENOUGH

PERSON IN UNICORN COSTUME TRIES TO ROB A STORE

Apparently not all unicorns are the embodiment of purity and grace. Baltimore County Police say a person dressed in a unicorn costume and wielding a crowbar tried to rob a convenience store Saturday morning in the Baldwin community. Officers arrived just after the High's store opening time of 5 am to respond to the robbery call.

Police say the suspect had fled in a silver car. They located what appeared to be the same car after it had wrecked. No other cars were involved in the wreck.

Police say two people involved in the crash were taken to a hospital, and detectives are working to determine what their involvement was in the robbery. No charges were immediately filed. Police didn't say if money or merchandise was taken in the robbery.

(AP)

DRUNK PASSENGER DEMANDS HIGH-SPEED TRAIN SLOW DOWN

German police say a drunken man with a fire extinguisher smashed his way into the driver's cab of a high-speed train running from Frankfurt to Paris and demanded that the driver slow down. Federal police said the ICE train operated by Germany's Deutsche Bahn stopped near Frankfurt after the incident Sunday morning. The 30-year-old man from Heideberg, who wasn't identified, was arrested and faces an investigation into dangerous interference in rail traffic, among other things.

Police say passengers said the man took a fire extinguisher off the wall, smashed a glass door separating the cab from the passenger compartment, and told the shocked driver the train was going much too fast and he had to save the passengers. No passengers were hurt but the train was taken out of service.

(AP)

MAN FINDS IGUANA IN TOILET, CALLS 911

A Florida man called 911 after going to the bathroom and finding a bright green iguana swimming in his toilet. Fort Lauderdale Battalion Chief Stephan Gollan tells the Miami Herald the man "freaked out and didn't know what to do." He says firefighter Jeff Kurus put on a sterile glove, reached in and grabbed the iguana. He took it outside and released it into the wild. Gollan says the department "is the end-all-be-all" when it comes to unique calls. The department tweeted pictures of the iguana, adding "can you imagine lifting the toilet lid and finding this?"

(AP)

HIP HOP BEST BET FOR A CHEESE THAT WILL PLEASE: SWISS STUDY

Exposing cheese to round-the-clock music could give it more flavor and hip hop might be better than Mozart, Swiss researchers said on Thursday. Nine wheels of Emmentaler cheese weighing 10 kilos each were placed in separate wooden crates last September to test the impact of music on flavor and aroma. The cheese was exposed 24



hours a day to A Tribe Called Quest's hip hop track "We Got It From Here"; Mozart's 'Magic Flute' opera or Led Zeppelin's rock classic "Stairway to Heaven". One wheel was played the throbbing techno of Vril's "UV" and another Yello's dark ambient piece "Monolith".

Soundwaves at low, medium and high frequencies were played for three others while one wheel was left in peace. "The most obvious differences were observed in strength of flavor, smell and taste," Bern University of Arts researchers said in reporting the findings of a culinary jury which did blind tasting. "The hip hop sample topped the list of all cheese exposed to music in terms of fruitiness... (it) was the strongest of these in terms of smell and taste."

Benjamin Luzuy, a Swiss TV chef and jury member, told Reuters TV: "The differences were very clear, in terms of texture, taste, the appearance, there was really something very different." The experiment, instead of using loudspeakers, used mini transmitters to conduct the energy of the music into the cheese. "All the energy is directly

resonating inside of the cheese," Michael Harenberg of Bern University of Arts told Reuters. Beat Wampfler, the cheesemaker behind the project, said the cheeses were tested twice by the jury and both times the results were more or less the same. He said the experiment would now focus on hip hop. "The idea is now to take 5 or 10 cheeses and put hip hop on them and then compare."

(Reuters)

NOW, 'ZOMBIE LIGHTS' FOR MOBILE-OBSSESSED WALKERS

Tel Aviv has taken a small step toward protecting the lives of "smartphone zombies." The municipality has installed special LED sidewalk lights at a busy crosswalk to alert distracted pedestrians staring at their phones when they can walk and when they should stop. Tomer Dror, head of the traffic management division at the Tel Aviv-Yafo Municipality, said the "zombie traffic lights" aim to minimize accidents between vehicles and inattentive pedestrians at crosswalks. "We can-

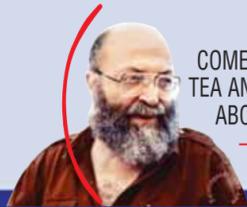
not force them to take their eyes out of the smartphone and into the road. We need to find ways to put the road into their eyes," he said. The striped lights turn green when it is safe to walk, and red when pedestrians should halt. For now, the pilot program is limited to a single intersection in central Tel Aviv, but the municipality says it will expand the zombie lights if they prove effective.

Similar systems have already been used in Australia, Singapore and the Netherlands. So far, smartphone-addicted residents seem to be welcoming the lights.

"It's something amazing," said Tel Aviv resident Shai Levi. "As someone who is addicted to his phone and is all day long with his head glued on the screen, I think that it can without any hesitation, reduce the number of accidents."

(AP)





COME, LET US HAVE SOME
TEA AND CONTINUE TO TALK
ABOUT HAPPY THINGS
— CHAIM POTOK

BRIEFLY
speaking



**EGG INTAKE
AND HEART DISEASE RISK**

Here's a sombre news for all the egg lovers out there. A recent study found that egg yolk contains higher level of cholesterol, which ultimately increases the chances of heart disease and early death. Egg yolks are one of the richest source of dietary cholesterol among all commonly consumed foods. One large egg has 186 milligrams of dietary cholesterol in the yolk. The researchers pooled data of 29,615 US racially and ethnically diverse people to understand if eating dietary cholesterol or eggs were linked to cardiovascular disease and death, which has been a point of debate for decades. The study was published in the journal *JAMA*. The message is about cholesterol, which happens to be high in eggs and especially yolks, and as a part of healthy diet, people need to reduce their daily intake of cholesterol. The reduced intake of cholesterol will result in decreased risk of heart diseases.

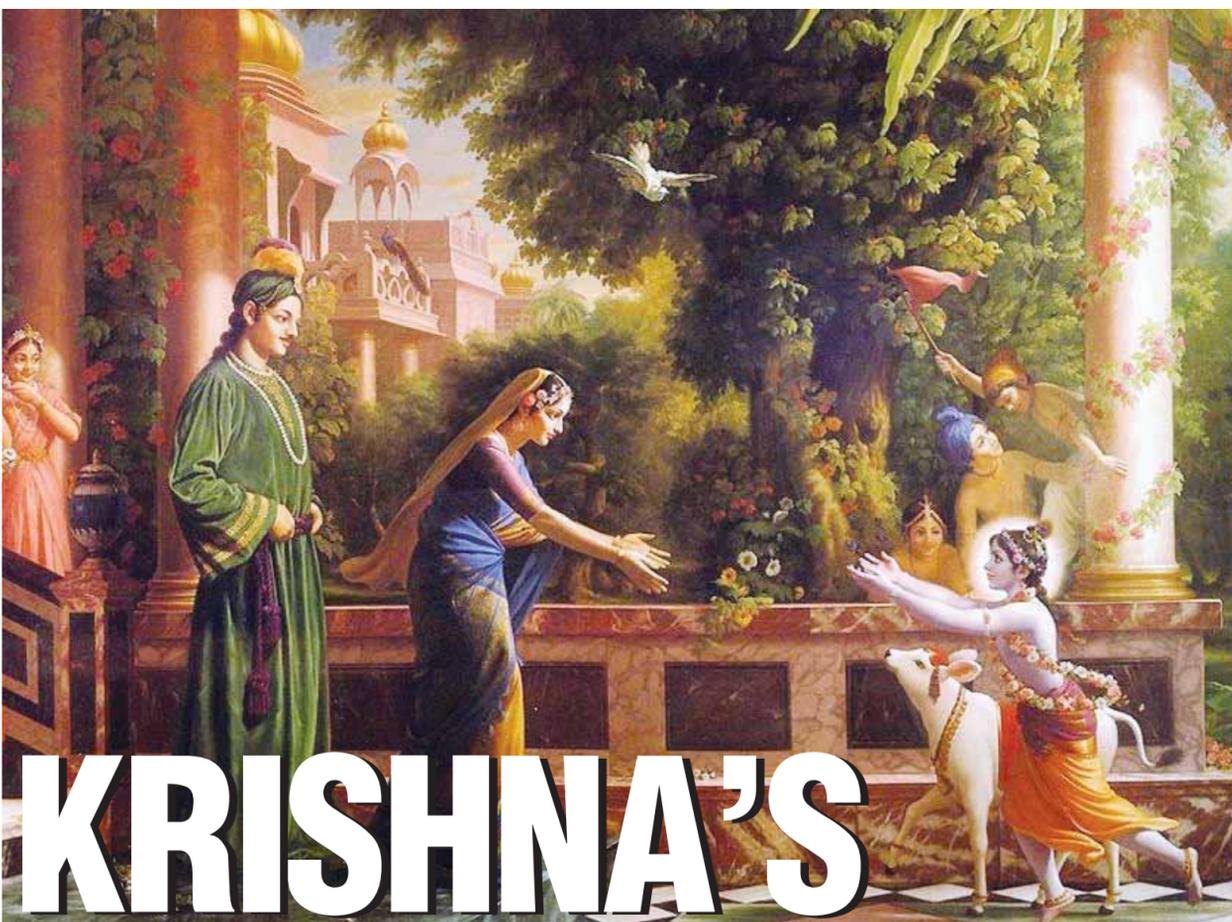
**HEALTHY LIVER
WITH STRENGTH TRAINING**

Besides being beneficial for heart, strength training can also reduce accumulation of fat in liver and improve blood glucose regulation, says a study on mice. The study, led by a team from the University of Campinas in Brazil, showed strength training can reduce fat stored in liver and improve blood glucose control in obese mice, even without overall loss of body weight. The findings suggest strength training may be a fast and effective strategy for reducing the risk of fatty liver disease and diabetes in obese people. "That these improvements in metabolism occurred over a short time even though the overall amount of body fat was unchanged, it suggests strength training can directly affect liver's function and metabolism," said Pereira de Moura from the varsity.

**IMPROVE GUT
HEALTH WITH GREEN TEA**



Green tea has once again been found as the Hall Mary for not just obesity, but various other inflammatory biomarkers linked with poor health, finds a recent study. The study was done on mice to find out what other benefits can green tea provide. Researchers found that the mice who were fed a diet of 2 per cent green tea extract fared far better than those that ate a diet without it, a finding that has prompted an upcoming study of green tea's potential benefits in people at high risk of diabetes and heart disease. The benefits appear to stem from improved gut health, including more beneficial microbes in the intestines of the mice and less permeability in the intestinal wall which is commonly called as the leaky gut. "The results of studies looking at obesity management so far had been a real mixed bag. Our goal was to figure out how it prevents weight gain," said Richard Bruno, the study's lead author.



**KRISHNA'S
PASTORAL ASSOCIATES**

Krishna's foster parents, Nanda and Yashoda, symbolically represent eternal bliss and the ultimate knowledge respectively, explains Dr ASHA GOSWAMI

With the set of mystical and spiritual concepts having synthesised with Krishna during the later phase of the saga, the same built an aura of dreamland with spiritual overtones around Krishna's personae by providing him with pastoral associates and scenario in the form of his foster parents Nanda-Yashoda; elder brother and sister Balarama-Ekanamsha or Subhadra Gopas and Gopis, including Radha, and Vrindavana. Mostly, the narratives of the *Puranas*, which refer to Shri Krishna's activities with these pastoral associates, are held to have been framed and construed and specifically designed to teach symbolic and spiritual ideals through those *lilas* which Krishna enacted in the company with his pastoral associates on earth. Besides, Krishna's all Vrindavana *lilas*, which he enacts in their company wherein he mostly plays the role of love and friendship, are similarly held to be happenings on the non-physical plane and in non-physical bodies, as Vrindavana is also looked upon as representing the inner consciousness of every individual.

Hence, the whole Vrindavana *lila* of Krishna is held symbolic along with his partners, who are also assigned with spiritual overtones. Since, his Vrindavana *lila* on the whole represents Krishna's playful activities during which he behaves the way he likes. For, at Vrindavana, his encounters with Putana, cart, Trina varta, Aghasura, Bakasura, Dhenuk, Keshi and Kaliya, fighting with whom, Krishna had not to exert his strength but in place he just toys with them for achieving his victory. This very well

explains why Krishna's such easygoing encounters at Vrindavana or Gokula are termed *lilas* signifying that these were mere sports and diversions on the part of Krishna at Vrindavana. In the same context, Hariyamsha seems to add "that all the associates of Krishna during his Vrindavana *lilas* were the parts of the Gods themselves, and hence spiritual". Similarly, Krishna's enemies at Vrindavana are held by some representing all types of vices such as lust, pride, hatred, egotism, pride, envy, greed etc. According to others, Vrindavana metaphorically stands for the garden like holy and pure heart of every devotee of Krishna where he teaches the love of devotion to all alike who lend their hearts to him. Krishna's activities at Vrindavana also are held to delineate him as a symbol of a spiritual *saadhak* with ultimate realisation of his true individual state. In the same strain, Krishna's foster parents Nanda and Yashoda are held symbolically representing the super most eternal bliss and the ultimate knowledge respectively.

While their resort Vrindavana itself represents the region of highest spiritual delight and the field of spiritual growth and devotional love as its lord Nanda himself is spiritual bliss incarnate. The *Puranas*, in the same regard, also dictate us that we must not treat Krishna's Vrindavana *lilas* with his pastoral associates as having occurred at one place or time but rather treat them as recurrent modality with the purpose of conveying inspiration and guidance to devotees of every type having either of these feelings towards Krishna such as affection of parents; of friends; or of loved and beloved etc. Krishna at

Vrindavana denotes the universal self and his foster father Nanda implying bliss guides all these in their relations to the universe and themselves. Nanda as supreme joy is located in Vrindavana like the brain of every enlightened person. Krishna in Vrindavana as Nanda's son represents a devotee who is set on his devotional path with various distractions like personal desires which are termed as demons like Putana, cart and others. Next, among pastoral associates of Krishna, his elder brother Balarama is dealt with. He was also known as Baldeva and Samkarshana. According to *Mahabharata*, he was an incarnation of God Vishnu's white hair as Krishna was incarnation of God Vishnu's black hair. That is why they are stated to have fair and dark complexion respectively. It is also stated that God Vishnu divided Himself into two parts who are later known as Krishna and Balarama. He is also stated to be the incarnation of primeval serpent Ananta-Naga.

According to Kautilya, Balarama had his special devotees with shaven head independent of Krishna. According to Kautilya, Krishna's brother Balarama was later identified with such a deity whose worship was in vogue during Kautilya's times on the analogy of Krishna's later identification with God Vishnu. Similarly, as an incarnation of Sheeshnaga, Krishna's elder brother Balarama might have been identified with some tribal god of the Nagas and because of which the Kaliya-Naga's episode was introduced in the Krishna saga to propagate the ideal that Shri Krishna had also won over the prevailing tribal cult of the Nagas who are held to rule over the

Mathura region for a long time. Likewise, in the later stage of Krishna cult, if Krishna's elder brother is treated as symbol of the individual soul and is named Nara, he is forever proclaimed the eternal accomplice of Krishna, Narayana, performing the role of his elder brother. The other pastoral associates of Krishna include his sister called Subhadra or Ekanamsha who is stated to be Yashoda's daughter who was exchanged with Krishna, but did not die at the hands of Kamsa, and was saved and secretly reared by a Gopa at Vrindavana and later worshipped by the cowherds as mother Goddess Katyayani, since she was the one who had saved Krishna's life. The *Puranas* also state that it was on her advice that Krishna succeeded in killing Kamsa. It is also known that those days, the worship of Katyayani was prevalent among the Gopis, for they along with Radha are stated to worship Goddess Katyayani to beget Shri Krishna as their husband. Thus, it be ascertained that she was introduced as Krishna's pastoral associate and sister to meet the requirement of the devotional aspirations of the people who looked forward to the impress of Shakti in the Krishna Cult. Next, the chief of pastoral associates associated with Krishna seems to be the cowherdess Radha. These two types of Gopis, associated with Krishna in later stage of his saga, represent two variant distinct traditions of Krishnabhakti with main focus on the *Rasa*-dance. Radha and other Gopis are also considered to be the outcome of the prevalent poetic tradition of love sentiment during the 16th century.

The writer is a noted Indologist and authority on Krishnaitic Studies



HIDDEN SOULS
PRAMOD PATHAK

Data, data everywhere



These are the times of information revolution, more fashionably called information age. When was information nor crucial is still not clear. But let us not debate that. So the new jargon is 'big data', 'cloud computing' and many more fancy coinages. So there are companies into the manufacture of so-called intelligent machines, claiming that these provide insights without limits. Well, for a student of Abnormal Psychology, that is more of a problem than a solution. Yes, insights without limits are reasons for fantasising and causing delusions, of both persecution as well as grandeur. And, of course, they also convert bounded rationality into unfounded assumptions. Anyway, we are in an era where people use stylish phrases like 'data is the next oil' for this world. Whatever that means may not be easily inferred but the fact remains that mankind can survive without data or oil but not without water, which is the real impending threat lurking round the corner. As city after city go waterless, clues are hardly discernable. Nevertheless, as this craze for data grows to maddening levels, there is a need to exercise some caution. While we are slowly but surely getting submerged in the ocean of information, may data, an old poetry comes to mind. It was Samuel Taylor Coleridge who wrote this sometime around the end of the 18th Century in his *Lyrical Ballads*. It was the 'Rime of the Ancient Mariner', a sailor's plight on board a ship surrounded by water all over in a vast ocean, forcing him to recite the famous rhyme: "Water, water, everywhere, nor any drop to drink." The modern-day human's plight can be summed up with just a little modification: "Data, data everywhere, not a byte to think." Yes, that is what is happening, and rather fast. Bombarded with data, all kinds of data on all types of subjects, the human mind is gradually slipping into an oblivion of its own making. It is losing its ability to think and analyse, thus increasingly developing a dependence on gadgets to aid the mind to think. What is worse is that these gadgets are systematically being made a substitute for the mind. Look what is happening: Machine is learning and human mind is losing the ability to learn. That it may lead to disastrous consequences is still a subject matter of huge global debate, but the fact is that our thinking is being outsourced to the so-called intelligent machines. Resultantly, human beings are likely to become what O'Henry, had he been around, would have termed as the Banana Public drawing an analogy from his famous expression "Banana Republic". Overdependence on these thinking devices is subjecting the brain muscles to a kind of disuse atrophy, which may lead to the same fate that strikes the other bodily muscles making them flaccid. This in all likelihood is going to affect the human mind and its thinking ability in the long run. Some glimpses can already be found with amnesia and ability to retain and recall information declining. There are people who do not even remember their mobile numbers. Even simple calculations need to be carried out with the help of mechanical devices. Such a data-induced dependence syndrome is not far off that will render the mind dysfunctional and blunt the thinking process. But it seems that in the cacophony of differing noises, no one is ready to believe that minds, if not used, can well become a vestige like the appendix.

Pathak is a professor of management, writer, and an acclaimed public speaker. He can be reached at ppathak.ism@gmail.com

Why am I making such a statement? Because as souls this is our number one duty. Souls are *sat, chit, and ananda*. These are intrinsic to them. Souls are eternal. This is common knowledge. Souls are also conscious. This is also well known, because all souls are naturally so. However, there is a problem with the *ananda* part. Once in material bodies, we, souls, are no longer in the state of *ananda*. Rather most of us, except some very advanced devotees of God, are in more or less opposite state, ie disturbed, fearful, anxious, etc. Yes, people try to enjoy life but they do so in whimsical ways. This fact requires further explanation.

We, embodied souls, are governed by the three modes of the material nature. These are goodness, passion, and darkness. Unfortunately, the majority are under the influence of the lower two modes of passion and darkness. Their pleasures are mostly under the influence of these two modes. For example, a person under the influence of the mode of passion will eat rich food in excessive quantities. Such eating, though appealing to the palate and the stomach, will hurt his or her health in the long run. A person under the influence of the mode of darkness will be obstinate, crooked, badly behaved, lazy, etc. (The *Gita*

WE MUST ENJOY

There are different types of enjoyments, but if we stick to the ones in the mode of goodness, we will reap all kinds of benefits, writes AJIT KUMAR BISHNOI

18.28) and his enjoyment will be governed by these emotions. People in goodness are wise in their choice of pleasures. These are stepping stones to the goal of getting to the *ananda* state, which requires a few lives to fully attain. As everyone is different and have different circumstances, there will be many different types of enjoyments, but if one sticks to enjoyments mostly in the mode of goodness and, most importantly, which are according to *dharma*, not *dharma-aviruddhah*, he will gain all kinds of benefits and will not be harmed. As I am familiar with my own self, I will detail how I am going about enjoying my life. I have drawn a detailed list of all the activities which are enjoyable to me and are available to me. Eating is the first and the most regular enjoyment for me. I eat what is good for me healthwise. I take sufficient time to eat and eat in



small morsels. I eat mostly alone with no other activity like watching TV. In short, I enjoy my eating and hope to continue to do so for the rest of my life. My other premier enjoyment is writ-

ing. In this, I must thank my Lord for helping me. He gives me realisations, which I jot down. I meditate a lot on spiritual truths revealed to me. I make notes and then sit down to give them shape of

an article. The same is true of all the books I have written. This is my very important enjoyment, which I hope to continue to get, God willing. Of course I watch my favourite programmes on television, which are mostly musical programmes. I am very particular about watching news on television. This must be balanced, fact-based. The last and the foremost enjoyment for me is spending time with my Lord in His photo forms. I feel sheltered and this is when I get most of my realisations. I do not think that I will ever be deprived of this enjoyment. One of the reasons most people are mortally scared of diseases and major setbacks is that they have this impression that their enjoyments will dry up. This is not true. God has not made a creation where one is condemned to miseries only. Remember, we have many faculties which can and do give us enjoyment. We have senses — the most common means, then, we have minds. Intelligence is not far behind and, ultimately, we have ourselves, ie our own selves, souls. In conclusion, I must reiterate that enjoyments should never be given up. If not, we will be cheating ourselves; we must enjoy to make our lives meaningful. Life will go on but we must find ways to enjoy. Bishnoi is a spiritual writer and can be reached at spirital@ajitbishnoi.com



I'M ACTUALLY PRETTY SHY IN REAL LIFE. BUT I GUESS IN FRONT OF THE CAMERA, I FOCUS —RANBIR KAPOOR



YOUR WEEK AHEAD

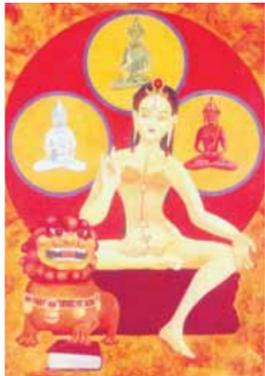
MADHU KOTIYA



ARIES March 21-April 19

This week you need to be attentive on the health front. Think on how to continue with good health. It will be a time of peace and prosperity for you. You are likely to deepen your spiritual growth. Celebrate these good feelings and share them with your near and dear ones in whatever way you can. You may find peace in charity. On the career front, you will have a new job/business opportunity and this will help your career to grow. Those looking for a job need to stay optimistic. Things are about to get even better at work for you than you would have hoped. There are promotion and recognition in whichever field you are working on. You might face opposition in your love life. Secret affairs or extramarital relations might put you in trouble.

Lucky number 11
Lucky colour Pink
Lucky day Monday



LEO July 23-Aug 22

This week you will enjoy an increase in physical energy, vitality and general positivity. You will be full of enthusiasm, feeling revitalised and enjoy a wonderful sense of good health. In case you have been facing some health challenges, then take a deep breath as things will get a lot better. On the professional front, new opportunities will come knocking your door. At your current job, things are going extremely well. You are moving into a positive state of mind about what you are capable of achieving. Those seeking employment will find a job. In love, you need to become more reliable persons and take up responsibilities that come with any relationship. You need to convey your emotions to your partner. With your patience and maturity, you can strengthen those relations.

Lucky number 14
Lucky colour Brown
Lucky day Wednesday



SAGITTARIUS Nov 22-Dec 21

You should listen to your body with care and compassion. Those who are having health issues, it is advisable not to stress about them. You need to focus on a healthy outlet to your emotions. Avoid work overload. Indulge in some kind of youth sports activities that will help you to stay active as well as connect you with your inner child. On the career front, some of you have achieved goals and attained materialistic gain. Even though you are financially sound, do not give too much of importance to wealth. Some of you may have a hard time at workplace due to your inflexible approach towards change. Those who are in a committed relationship may witness a positive change in your relationship. Single females may get attracted to the older male. Don't rule him out, he may help you.

Lucky number 12
Lucky colour White
Lucky day Monday



TAURUS April 20-May 20

You need to be very cautious about being overworked, over-tired, and over-stressed. Bad addictions and obsession might harm you. So, stay away from all these. This week you are likely to lose your self-control. Avoid bad company as this is not favourable for you. Balance is the key to keeping good health. At the workplace, some negative forces are at play. Give your best and be organised and productive. Your honesty and integrity will pay you well. Those who want to invest, put your money in conservative stocks/bonds. In love life, a trip outside country is on the cards. Some quick happenings in your relationship will astonish you. You should distract yourself and your beloved may be back to you.

Lucky number 10
Lucky colour Silver
Lucky day Saturday



VIRGO Aug 23-Sep 22

This week you will have good health, but you have to be careful while exercising as you might be prone to some injuries. If you are in a process of healing from an injury, then take care and do not stress yourself. Have a focused mind and follow your health regime religiously. At your workplace, you will be feeling content and will cultivate smooth interpersonal dynamics and harmonious communication patterns. Your words will carry more weight with others now; use that wisely to further your prospects. Those seeking jobs are likely to get one. On the relationship front, this is not a good week. You will find yourself indifferent and disengaged with your partner. You need to re-evaluate the situation and seek your inner voice for peace and tranquillity. Singles, have patience as you will take time to find your partner.

Lucky number 28
Lucky colour Orange
Lucky day Tuesday



CAPRICORN Dec 22-Jan 19

This week you if you feel something wrong with your body. You need to pay attention to your concerns. Do not panic and don't feel that you can't do anything about it. Trust your intuition and look for other ways to sort out the issues. Be patient while awaiting results. Ensure proper diet, rest and exercise. Career-wise, things will be as per your expectation. It is recommended that you take some time off from work and don't take any important decisions this week. You need to maintain your calm amidst the chaos around you. If you can't stay calm, then seek another position. Those who are committed need to focus on their relationship towards the future. Change your old perspective towards an ongoing issue. Try to talk to your partner openly about your dreams.

Lucky number 22
Lucky colour Grey
Lucky day Friday



GEMINI May 21-June 20

This week your health will enjoy an upswing. You will feel relieved by finding a healer who works with something besides traditional medication. The new method is not to replace medical therapy but to work in concert with it. Listen to your inner voice to decide what is best for your health. Taking advice from experts in meditation and yoga will work in favor of you. On the career front, you may face heady boss/superior and feel irritated this week. Avoid workplace gossip and certainly don't get involved in it. This is not a time to rely on your intuition and your inner knowledge, rather stick to your conscious mind or intellect. Pay attention to your dreams and pleasant surprise will come your way soon. You are likely to face a tough time in your relationship.

Lucky number 20
Lucky colour Sky blue
Lucky day Friday



LIBRA Sep 23-Oct 22

This week your health looks good, still, you need to be careful. If you are suffering from health issues, then it is likely that you will find a way to your recovery. Keep a positive attitude and things will surely turn in your favour. You might be prone to accident, so, don't take any chance and be safe. Taking tension for your job will keep you busy this week. But this is not going to help matters, rather focus on what you can control and leave behind your anxiety. If you are looking for new opportunities, then confidently make a move and do not hesitate to ask others for help. A positive approach will make all the difference. Those in a relationship should now consider the future. Open up to your partner and talk about your future goals.

Lucky number 21
Lucky colour Peach
Lucky day Tuesday



AQUARIUS Jan 20-Feb 18

It is time to get up and take action to improve your health condition. Your laid back attitude will have a bad impact on your health. Evaluate your health scenario and decide what steps and efforts are required, it could be a physical exercise or a nutritional diet. You need to revive your positive energy. You have to tighten up your belt and get ready to do some hard work at the workplace. Some of you may experience a new beginning. Those seeking employment will be hired into a position that will test your skills. For those of you who are already working will be burdened with responsibilities. This is a great time for love. Committed couples will experience a deep sense of bonding. Some of you may enter the next stage of your relationship.

Lucky number 31
Lucky colour Red
Lucky day Wednesday



CANCER June 21-July 22

Your personal charm and aura will be impressive this week. You will be stronger to give up bad habits in the interest of your health. You are already well on your way with regard to health. You are energetic, full of stamina and vitality. But avoid aggression in your behaviour. Share happy moments with loved ones by looking after their needs. On the career front, you will find a new job opportunity coming your way. Your intelligence and hard-working nature will pay you rich dividends. You are likely to get busy in planning your life ahead and all your emotions and sentiments will take back seat. Those related to arts, music, fashion and media, will be benefitted. In personal relationships, you may feel contented. You may make a plan for an exotic dinner. Married couples will have good bonding.

Lucky number 30
Lucky colour Green
Lucky day Thursday



SCORPIO Oct 23-Nov 21

This week your health will suffer. You are likely to become a victim of a health condition may be due to genetic or environmental reasons. During this phase, you will be full of anxiety and negative thinking, but you need to connect your mind and body and meditate for positive vibes. Seek help from others as you have the power to rise above such negative emotions. Work wise, things will flow smoothly. You are planning and progressing to get your idea implemented. All your efforts will prove promising and will assert a place at work. You will find yourself in conflict and disengaging with others which will lead to tension and hostility. Take time out to think of what you can do to stabilize your relations with others. Be careful as someone you trust might betray you.

Lucky number 10
Lucky colour Camel shade
Lucky day Sunday



PISCES Feb 19-March 20

News related to your health will be positive and your efforts are likely to bear fruit. You have full control of the situations around you, thus, you must take advantage of this and look for alternative ways to deal with health challenge issues. How you speak your mind and conduct yourself will matter the most at your workplace. Conflict and disagreement with peers are indicated. This will create tension. Unfairness at play in your workplace are likely to happen. But ensure that you are not the creator of problems. You need to choose your battles wisely rather than picking upon disagreement. This week, you will feel that your relationship has come full circle. As a result, it may culminate into a marriage and for some, there will be a sense of closure. Singles, have bright chances to meet someone special.

Lucky number 13
Lucky colour Turquoise
Lucky day Friday

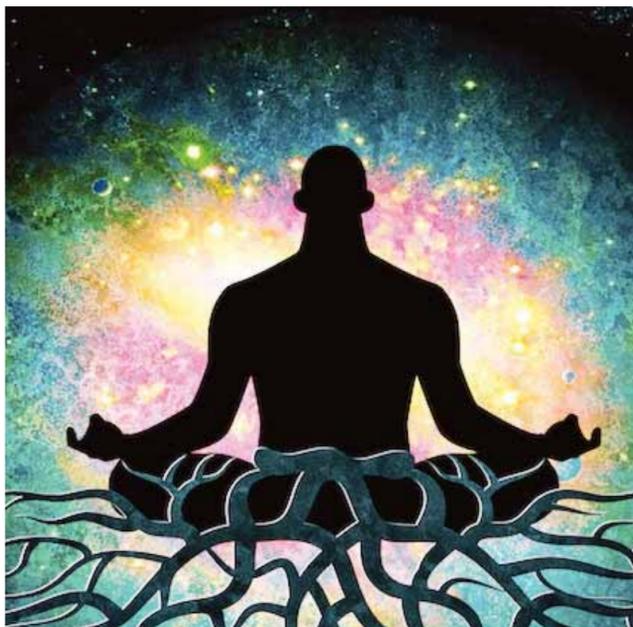
Madhu Kotiya is a tarot card reader, spiritual healer, and Founder, MShezaim Institute of Tarot & Divination. Contact details: madhu@indiatarot.com, www.indiatarot.com, M: 9873283331



Meditation and mind genesis

"Having understood, what you explained in the last issue, I have been trying to self-reflect upon myself, but in vain. I am not able to remain focused. My mind gets bombarded with uncontrolled volume of random thoughts, something like a monkey continuously hopping from one branch of the tree to the other. I keep flirting with those thoughts. There doesn't appear to be any scope to figure out my true nature, not to say anything about correcting the thought process. Tell me, how do I go about?" Asked a reader. "How do you expect to contain a fragile mind so fast, which is habituated to move unrestrained. Have patience, sustained practice may bear fruit." I responded. Better look for a Guru and pursue the process regularly under his guidance. As you proceed, many such questions may keep arising. Guru will lead you through. Meanwhile, for the convenience of our valued readers, I am suggesting a tried and tested simple process. Just lie down on your back on a flat surface. Close your eyes and let loose your mind. Let thoughts naturally flow in and flow out. You will be flooded with thoughts. Don't worry, it is all happening as a part of the process. But don't pay any atten-

tion to them. Pursue the process for at least 20 minutes every day. Having regularly pursued the process for a while, mind will settle down as all such thoughts as would be unnerving you from within will go out of reckoning. You may feel relaxed. Following which, unlike earlier, you may now be able to see a pattern in the thoughts flowing through the mind. Watch them closely, they will reveal your true nature. Following which you could take corrective initiatives through fresh educative inputs. The paradox, however, is that often practitioner's ego plays spoil sport in the process. It doesn't let you dispassionately identify and acknowledge your fault-lines. In that case, you may seek the guidance of a Guru. He may be able to intuitively figure out your true nature and show you its mirror image. Alternately, you could seek astrological guidance for your personality reading. Astrology looks at energy map of the heaven at the time of one's birth, which reflects upon personality frame up of a being with a fair amount of precision, as energy knows no bias. A case in point is that of a highly religious person, who has been offering



his prayers at least for an hour every morning and evening. Yet, his habit tendencies won't spare him. And his family life is in a mess. Let us look at his astrological pointers. Personality indicator, the Sun is locked in adverse formation with Mars, Uranus, and Saturn. That, in the first place, makes out an impulsive, argumentative and quarrelsome person. Second, he is eccentric and erratic. Third, he carries seeds of fear and insecurity because of which he has a negative mindset. He is self-pitying and pessimist. He is a cynic who is in the habit of finding fault with others. He is jealous and over critical of others. Put to an adverse situation, instead of facing it head on, he may try to somehow find an escape route. A sense of inertia deeply ingrained in his psyche, his initiatives will be delayed. Habitually, he shuns taking challenges. So, he may miss opportunities. And when left behind in the run of time, he may fall into depression. What further compounds his problems is that even the mind-signifying Moon is clouded by Saturn's negative aspect. Fiery Mars is ill-disposed off its dire enemy Saturn as well as Uranus. That makes him temperamental, intolerant, impatient, habitually suspicious of

everybody and anybody, and even revengeful by nature. Uranus and mischievous Neptune play spoil sport with intelligence signifying Mercury. That makes him unconventional, eccentric and opinionated. He remains stuck to his self-delusory perceptions, distanced from ground realities. He won't acknowledge truth on its first appearance. Driven by sense of hope against hope, he will continue blindly pursuing his perception till pushed to the wall. It also accounts for his impaired reasoning and judgment. For the above stated reasons, his inter-personal relationship stands compromised and so he is not able to relate to those around with ease and comfort. And the result is there to see. Just academic awareness of his fault lines would not help him get over his habit tendencies. For, they are deeply embedded in the inner realms of his mind in seed form. To get over, continued reflection over fresh educative inputs is required. 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: 91-11-49848475/9818037273. Email: pioneerqueries@bharatastro.com. Website: www.bharatastro.com