

Vision Centre opened at Mandideep

STAFF REPORTER ■ BHOPAL

Kashinath, Chairperson of International programme, India, inaugurated a Vision Centre at Mandideep on Monday. The centre has been setup by Sewa Sadan Eye Hospital, Sant Hirdaram Nagar with the collaboration of International NGO Operation Eye Sight Universal.

Local Social activist, Jagdish Prasad Shankaral Soni, has provided building for this vision center. On the occasion, Medical Director of SSEH, Dr Prerna Upadhyaya, Local representative, Rajendra Agarwal, JP Soni and OEU office bearer Dr Harish Kumar were mainly present.



Social activist, Rajendra Agarwal, said that since Mandideep is an industrial area, it is comparatively polluted. This affects the vision of the local people. With the opening of this center, local people will get the medical facility for Eye care.

Jagdish Prasad Soni who has made building available for opening this vision center. Social activist, JP Soni, said he and his family had been continuously organising Eye camps for the last 30 years in Mandideep with the cooperation of SSEH and thousands of the Eye patients have so far been benefitted.

He assured to continue his social services in the said field in future also. Earlier, the Managing Trustee of SSEH, Shri L C Janiyani, threw light on the activities of the Hospital and welcomed the guests. He felicitated the guests by presenting them shawl and Srfal. Vote of thanks was proposed by Trustee Suresh Awatramani.

Three notorious criminals arrested

STAFF REPORTER ■ BHOPAL

In a major breakthrough, three notorious criminals were nabbed by Chhola Mandir police near Coach Factory area and four pistols and five cartridges were recovered. It was said by SP Bhopal (North) Hemant Chouhan, while speaking with the mediapersons on Monday.

While speaking with the mediapersons, the SP said that on receipt of information, police swung into action and nabbed three dacoits while two managed to escape. A large number of weapons have been seized from their possession.

The nabbed accused revealed that they were planning of dacoity at Ganesh petrol pump in the area. The police have registered a case under sections 399 and 402 of the IPC and section 25/27 of the Arms Act.



Miscrants planning dacoity in police custody in Bhopal on Monday

Pioneer photo

Raja was booked for theft, robbery, burglary and dacoity cases. He has been booked for 10 crimes. Ankit has been booked for Chhola Mandir police for robbery and dacoity. During the police operation, two of the accused managed to escape. The absconded accused persons were identified as Vinay and Balram.

Vinay and Balram have past criminal records. He has been booked for 9 cases by Chhola Mandir, Nishatpura, Aishbagh, Piplani police in assault, theft, arms Act and six cases of robberies.

Arms and ammunicions were also seized during operation

Arms Act. The sources of weapons would be revealed during the further investigation.

BJP wants dalit leaders but those who are deaf and mute: Udit Raj



Congress party Member of Parliament from North-West Delhi Udit Raj talks to mediapersons at PCC headquarters in Bhopal on Monday

STAFF REPORTER ■ BHOPAL

Attacking the BJP Government at the Centre for ignoring the cause of dalits and tribals, former BJP MP, Udit Raj, questioned the silence of President Ram Nath Kovind over the same.

which led to increased sectoral tussle in the society. The Dalit leader also alleged that the BJP instead of talking of an equitable society propagated social harmony (samrasta) which meant they wanted to continue the caste bias.

Dalit votes but not Dalit leaders." Claiming that he wasn't the questioning the institution of President of India, he claimed he was raising questions against President Ram Nath Kovind as a fellow Dalit and sought to know why he was silent on community issues including the remarks from BJP ministers for destroying the constitution, rampant privatisation, no Dalit getting appointment as 38 Vice Chancellors and 500 judges were appointed. "What kind of duty he (president) discharged all this while," he questioned.

Two miscreants booked for duping 60-year-old woman

STAFF REPORTER ■ BHOPAL

Bairagarh police has booked two miscreants for duping a 60-year-old woman to the tune of ₹1 lakh at CTO area on May 1. The police have registered a case after complaint was lodged by the victim on Saturday night.

Police said the victim, identified as Usha Malviya, was duped by two miscreants near CTO area when she was on her way to market on May 1. The victim lives with her nephews after the death of her husband who worked with the Indian Army.

Victim got assured and provided the accused with gold jewelry and when she checked money first and last currency notes were found true while rest was paper.

The victim lodged complaint with Bairagarh police and based on the complaint a case of fraud was registered. A gold chain and finger ring worth over ₹1 lakh were duped from the victim.

Summer camp organised for children of Bhopal slums



STAFF REPORTER ■ BHOPAL

A Summer camp was organised by Uday Social Development Society for the children of Bhopal slums at St. Raphael Co-ed School. The camp started on 2nd may and concluded on 6th. The objectives of summer camp were to enhance the leadership quality in the children, to promote and strengthen the participation of children in prioritising the issues and to instil the lifelong values of teamwork.

Children in the age group of seven to ten years are in the moulding stage. Right skills imparted now can help them to shape their life and future.

five slums i.e. jatkhedi, bagmugaliya, rahul nagar, durga nagar, Dolak Basti were participated in the camp. The core ingredients of the programme are safety and self defence technique, Role plays, Session on good and bad touch, Discussion on child rights and child protection, Craft work, colouring and painting, Session on capacity building on leadership 'Songs based on social issues, and more.

Wakankar archaeologist of work and research trend: ASI DG

STAFF REPORTER ■ BHOPAL

"Vishnu Sridhar Wakankar was the archaeologist of the work and research trend," said Director General of the Archaeological Survey of India PVS Sanger.

ing, analysis and rewriting. In the Bhimbethakka caves, the presence of ancient human beings and their lifestyle, the imagery and memories of the kind of painted relics they saw were awe-inspiring.



Congress candidate for Bhopal Lok Sabha seat Digvijay Singh campaigns for Lok Sabha elections at Bittan market in Bhopal on Monday

Hoshangabad division experiences light rainfall

STAFF REPORTER ■ BHOPAL

Light rainfall was witnessed at several places in Hoshangabad division in the past 24 hours which was induced by abrupt weather conditions.

Temperatures have started rising after a brief period of normal weather conditions induced by cyclonic storm which faded away on Monday.



temperature at 41.3 degree Celsius while night temperature at 26.8 degree Celsius making night hotter. The pattern would prevail for the next 3-4 days.

The weather conditions would remain around the same levels for the next 3-4 days and later temperatures would start upward journey.

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PAPER WITH PASSION

A speech too far

Modi has failed his own self-worth by making uncharitable remarks on the late Rajiv Gandhi. Frankly, he didn't need to



True leadership is tested in the most unfavourable and hostile conditions. And it commands respect when it emerges with grace under pressure. Or when its courage is under fire. No matter who or what the opponent, it is about the certain choices that you make in taking up a challenge than making uncertain moves, hoping they will hit the target, that prove whether you are qualified to be a class apart. On this count, Prime Minister Narendra Modi, who has always positioned himself as a larger than life deliverer — no matter how crafted or earned — should not have disrespected the dead, in this case, an assassinated Prime Minister. Plunging levels of indecency in public discourse may have ceased to surprise us anymore but at least one never expected Modi to take on Congress president Rahul Gandhi with the utterly reprehensible comment of “Your father’s life ended as Bhrashtachari No 1.” That, too, at a public rally where even the backbencher would know that Rajiv Gandhi was killed in a blast set off by a Tamil suicide bomber. People may have rightful reservations about Congress era incompetencies and Bofors but to link that accidental, tragic death to them is entirely uncalled for. Nothing can justify this lowly jibe from somebody who holds a prized Constitutional post and by virtue of its occupancy, is expected to set high standards. Besides, Modi emerged as a reaction to extreme anti-Congressism and, therefore, is expected to not use tropes but set a singular example that is not referenced in comparisons. He should fit the persona he wants to script a repeat history with, not sag from its contours. Agreed Rahul Gandhi’s own jibe of *chowkidaar chor hai* began the downward spiral when no probe or court has pronounced the Prime Minister guilty of wrong-doing but to return that ill-timed belligerence or immaturity with such repugnance is certainly unexpected and unwarranted. Yes, he is under pressure on Rafale to tear down the Congress charge of corruption by pulling out Bofors but wouldn't it have been better to deal with the inconsistent facts of that case? Why get personal? Besides, Rajiv Gandhi himself was absolved of being a direct recipient of the Bofors payoffs by the Delhi High Court and the Supreme Court refused to entertain a petition against him. The new BJP leadership must remember that it is justifying the candidacy of Sadhvi Pragma Thakur on the same logic that the court had not pronounced her guilty. Surely, the party realises the trap of selective interpretations? Or the fact that all parties invoke “the innocent until proven guilty clause” to suit their convenience? Worse, senior BJP leaders amplified Modi’s remark instead of letting it lapse organically.

Nobody is arguing that there should be no critique of previous regimes to justify the alternative policies of one's own. But in hitting below the belt, Modi ended up making Rahul look like the victim and have the entire Opposition rally around him and the Congress by extension. This at a time when the glue was sort of coming off the angularities of the *mahagathbandhan*. He just gave them a reason to stay together. This also comes as a cushion after BSP chief Mayawati’s large-heartedness of the day before when she asked her voters to throw their weight behind the Congress. As for Rahul, it gave him the opportunity to undo the frivolity of his hupplomacy in Parliament, take the moral high ground and emerge convincing in contrast. His tweet on karma, and claiming that he harboured no ill will about such vicious attacks on his bloodline rather than himself endeared him to many. He was expedient enough to take a dig at the new BJP leadership’s hypocrisy on values of the Indian *parivaar*, recalling how the party had sidelined mentors like LK Advani and Muri Manohar Joshi. Frankly, Modi did not need to engage in this vitriol if he is so sure himself of making past the magic number. In fact, in contrast to his 2014 campaign, where he posed himself in a far more statesmanlike manner and, therefore, seemed earnest about progressive development, the gallery-playing and divisive Modi of 2019 is hard to reconcile with. It doesn't behave the expansive confidence he has exuded so far and makes him look pathetically insecure. One would have thought that he would graduate to the next level instead and change the discourse from name-calling to one of real issues, something which is totally missing this time.

Digital gets physical

Israel's response to a Hamas cyber attack was real-time. What does this mean for warfare in the future?



One of the unwritten rules of global warfare has always been a ‘reasonable’ response to an attack. Does India’s counter-strike in the aftermath of the Pulwama attacks qualify on that count? That is what most countries felt given that India had hit back at the terrorists who had orchestrated the attack on the convoy of paramilitary forces. But Israel’s response to a suspected Hamas cyber attack on its interests was to bomb into oblivion the house where the online warriors were operating from. The question many warfare theorists are asking now is whether this was a proportionate attack? The United States (US) did not even use low-yield tactical nuclear weapons when it was chasing Osama bin Laden or in any of the wars that it has been involved in after it dropped the “Fat Man” nuclear bomb on Nagasaki. That said, Israel’s responses to Palestinian terrorist attacks has almost always been disproportionate, using far superior weaponry against a State that barely exists.

But there are a couple of things that we should all keep in mind. With increased digitisation in the world, a cyber attack can itself be disproportionately more damaging than a physical version. Paralyzing the banking or electrical system of a nation can cause far more damage economically than a bomb. It might not kill any people, at least not directly, but as demonetisation has taught us, a shock to the financial system can be extremely damaging to the economy. So should the response to such a transgression also be physically proportionate? That is clearly something that will have to be determined on a case-to-case basis but nations are rightly becoming more aware of the risks and the need to respond to such attacks. Primarily because a digital offensive may not allow any State the liberty of time to script an equally potent digital counter-offensive. Sometimes, there may not be enough digital assets to compromise, sometimes the attacking State would have secured its own digital assets. A physical reaction may be the only way to respond in such a complicated scenario. Taking out the nerve-centre of the attack by blowing it up could well be a baseline response and that is what Israel seems to have done. Other countries may have different ways of responding — they may employ sleuths or assassins to go after the perpetrators. This is a brand new world of warfare that we are entering into and the answers to many of these questions will unfortunately only come after the scale of a devastating impact.

Reality check for Chacko

While the Congress leader's assertion that the Nehru-Gandhis are the ‘first family’ goes against our democratic ethos, their transgressions are now precedents followed by others



A SURYA PRAKASH

Although the Congress was in the vanguard of the freedom movement, many of its members are still not comfortable with the core values in our Constitution and the democratic way of life. A case in point is the recent statement of a dyed-in-the-wool Congressman PC Chacko that the Nehru-Gandhi family is “the first family in the country.” In the mid-1970s, the then Congress president, Dev Kant Barooah, had proclaimed that “Indira is India and India is Indira.” What followed was terrible consequences for the country’s citizens. Taken in by such sycophancy, Prime Minister Indira Gandhi displayed fascist tendencies and turned our democracy into a dictatorship. While the assertion of the Congress leader, Mr Chacko, that the Nehru-Gandhi family is the “first family of the country” goes against the very grain of our democracy and Constitutional *dharma*, we must admit that the family has many firsts to its credit.

Here are some of them:
In 1946, when the All-India Congress Committee (AICC) asked its State units to propose the name of the person who, in their view, should become party president and the first Prime Minister of India, not one Pradesh Congress Committee (PCC) voted for Jawaharlal Nehru. A dozen of them wanted Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel to become the party president and Prime Minister. Three other State units proposed no candidate. Yet, though he did not secure a single vote, Jawaharlal Nehru, backed by Mahatma Gandhi, became the first Prime Minister of India. The Congress and historians close to this family have written tomes, describing Nehru as a “great democrat” but have hidden this dreadful truth from the Indian public. Nehru, therefore, has the unique distinction of getting the top job without a single vote in his favour!

Nehru was also the only Prime Minister under whom India suffered a humiliating defeat in a war with China, thanks to his woolly-headed approach to international relations and gross misreading of China’s real intentions. He was also the Prime Minister who preferred to beseech the United Nations on January 1, 1948, and internationalise the Kashmir issue, rather than allow the Indian Army to throw out the infiltrators.

Yet another first for Nehru was the manner in which he initiated dynastic politics in the country. He manipulated the party bosses and ensured the appointment of his daughter Indira Gandhi as the Congress president in 1959.

Indira Gandhi, too, has many firsts to her credit. She was the only Prime Minister to supersede four judges of the Supreme Court (three of them in April 1973, and one in January 1977) and propound the theory of a “committed judiciary” — that is, committed to the Congress. She was the only Indian leader to crush democracy and replace it with



dictatorship during the dreaded Emergency, which she imposed in 1975. She was the first national leader to abolish the need for quorum in Parliament so that a few Congress MPs could make laws for the entire country. She was also the first and only Prime Minister to empower the President to amend the Constitution through an executive order. She was also the first leader of the Congress to give party tickets to two people, who had hijacked an aircraft in 1978. Soon after she returned to power, she ensured the withdrawal of cases against the hijackers, gave them party tickets in the Uttar Pradesh Assembly elections in 1981 and ensured their victories.

Thus, she made sure that the hijackers became honourable members of the Uttar Pradesh legislature. Thereafter, her successors in the family — Rajiv Gandhi and Sonia Gandhi — have repeatedly honoured one of the hijackers with a party ticket to contest the Lok Sabha elections from Uttar Pradesh. Such is the respect that the Nehru-Gandhis accord to this individual that they have given him the party ticket five times and made desperate attempts to ensure the presence of this man in the House of the People.

Rajiv Gandhi is another member of the family to achieve

“ALL THE THREE MEMBERS OF THIS FAMILY, WHO BECAME PMs, HAVE A SPECIAL ATTRIBUTE — COMPLETELY IGNORING NATIONAL LEADERS LIKE SARDAR VALLABHBHAI PATEL AND DR BR AMBEDKAR. IT WAS LEFT TO OTHER PARTY GOVERNMENTS TO CONFER THE BHARAT RATNA ON THEM”

many firsts. He was the only Prime Minister to be directly accused of taking kickbacks in an international arms deal. He was also the second Prime Minister after Indira Gandhi to bring a law to crush press freedom. A united media forced him to eventually back off.

Two members of this family — Jawaharlal Nehru and Indira Gandhi — have the unique distinction of conferring the Bharat Ratna upon themselves. Later, Rajiv Gandhi, too, was awarded the Bharat Ratna posthumously. All the three members of this family, who became Prime Ministers, have a special attribute — completely ignoring national leaders like Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel and Dr BR Ambedkar. It was left to other party Governments to confer the Bharat Ratna on these great national leaders.

Yet another first, which is now etched in stone, is that this is the only political family in the country to name all major Government schemes, national projects and institutions and most of the sports trophies after its own members to the complete exclusion of everybody else.

Sonia Gandhi is probably the only foreigner to get herself included illegally in the voters' list in our country. This hap-

pened in 1980, when she was still a citizen of Italy. Someone lodged a complaint with the Chief Election Officer, Delhi, and he removed her name from the voters' list because she was not a citizen of India.

Sonia Gandhi and Rahul Gandhi are two members of the Nehru-Gandhi family who are members of the Lok Sabha and who consider it infra dig to ask questions in the House. Obviously, they take the Chacko principle seriously. A look at the parliamentary record of the two Gandhis shows that they have never asked a single question in their parliamentary careers. According to a study conducted by PRS India, on an average, MPs asked 300 questions in the 15th Lok Sabha and 293 questions in the 16th Lok Sabha. Compare their record with the highest number of questions asked by an MP in the 16th Lok Sabha — 1,181 — and you get an idea of what an active MP can do during question time. This is the record of the “First family” Mr Chacko, please stop using expressions that militate against our democratic ethos. India is the biggest democracy in the world, not a monarchy.

(The writer is an author specialising in democracy studies. Views expressed are personal)

SOUNDBITE

Modi is a boxer who entered the ring to fight unemployment but ended up punching his coach and veteran leader LK Advani.
Congress chief —Rahul Gandhi

I made a mistake when I gave my older children phones when they were 13. It ended my relationship with them, really.
Pop star —Madonna

The Islamic State chose a country that had recently established peace to make the statement to the world that it still exists.
Sri Lankan President —Maithripala Sirisena

I am keeping the truth of flagship programmes in front of you. The Prime Minister will sink in his own wave of lies. It is a guarantee.
Congress leader —Navjot Singh Sidhu

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Rebuild Odisha

Sir — This refers to the editorial, “Preventive measures” (May 6). The cyclonic storm named Fani, the worst witnessed by India in 20 years, crossed the Odisha coast near Puri with wind speeds of about 200-220 kmph but could not inflict as much damage as was expected. Odisha's management of the natural disaster has become a template for the world to follow given our population. It seemed like the State had learnt lessons from past. All its arms performed to perfection — there were weather alerts, preparedness and informed public participation.

Post the disaster, the Centre as well as the State Government are faced with a hefty task of rebuilding infrastructure. Fani has left a trail of destruction across the State with considerable structural damage being inflicted to private and public properties. To this end, the Union Government has taken timely action. It has released emergency funds and deployed National Disaster Response Force teams. The State Government pressed into action even before the cyclone was about to hit Odisha. More than 12 lakh people were

A role model in disaster management

This refers to the editorial, “Preventive measures” (May 6). Fani, which means the hood of a snake and is pronounced ‘Foni’, was rated as an “extremely severe cyclonic storm.” Fani did what a cyclone does best — wreaking havoc. It damaged infrastructure and buildings and uprooted trees, electric poles and mobile towers. At the same time, it was great consolation that the proactive disaster management kept casualties to the minimum. India has come a long way from the days when the loss of life due to natural calamities ran into thousands. Now, we have the scientific know-how to forecast a natural disaster in the offing and take precautionary measures to save people living in affected areas from its fury and ferocity. Early warning and timely evacuation saved lives.

ISRO's satellites and IMD's new hurricane model played a part in preventing Fani from taking a heavy casualty toll. That climate change may trigger extreme weather-related events in the coming days must raise our level



of preparedness to cope with them. Damage-proof houses in disaster-prone areas and more secure livelihoods have to be given priority to reduce the vulnerability of impoverished people to large-scale natural disasters. Zero loss of life in natural disasters is achievable and we must achieve it considering the fact that each life is precious.

G David Milton
Maruthancode

shifted to safe places and 26 lakh were alerted through SMS. The State has shown commendable performance and was rightly applauded by the UN as well. Going further, the rehabilitation exercise is not just the responsibility of the Union or the State Government. It must become a national mission.

MC Joshi
Lucknow

Genuine success

Sir — This refers to the editorial, “Genuine scores?” (May 4). The high percentage of marks secured by students in the Central Board of Secondary Education class XII examination is a clear revelation that our academic system places too much emphasis on marks. The result is that our stu-

dents are negatively impacted and miss the rank by a whisker. Objective questions neither correctly reflect a student's intelligence nor should they be a yardstick for assessing their capability. Students who come from smaller towns and rural areas are at a great disadvantage as they are unable to get admission in reputed colleges. Time has come for a revamp of our education system.

Greater emphasis must be laid on creative education by focussing on greater flexibility and changing patterns of examination because marks are not everything to test a student's capability.

KR Srinivasan
Secunderabad

Perfect handling

Sir — This refers to the editorial, “Preventive measures” (May 6). The lower number of human casualties reported from Odisha when a gigantic storm, Fani, crossed its landmass is in itself proof that the State has learnt from the 1999 experience. Certainly, advancements in weather forecasting aided the authorities in minimising the loss. But the focus now should be on creating infrastructure that is resilient enough to withstand the onslaught of nature's fury. This is all the more important as climate change-induced extreme weather has become the norm rather than the exception.

Srikant
Via email

Send your feedback to:
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FIRST COLUMN

Balance the cost of progress

It is essential that steps to assess and combat the depletion of our natural resources be taken. Environmental accounting can help detect that



SHASHANK AGARWAL

While more focus is being laid on scarce natural resources globally, a new concept in world economy, in addition to Gross Domestic Product (GDP) and Net Domestic Product (NDP), has emerged recently. This is termed as the Environmental Domestic Product (EDP) or Green Net Domestic Product (Green NDP). While GDP stands for total market value of the goods produced and services rendered by a country within a specific period of time, NDP is calculated by deducting depreciation on the nation's capital goods. Both GDP and NDP have very well been accepted as the economic health indicator of countries globally. With the advent of EDP, it seems that the world has pocketed another economic health indicator, which emphasises including the economic costs of degrading natural resources that may or may not have occurred due to the production of goods and rendering of services within an economy.

While progress has been achieved in almost all sectors of development, we have completely ignored or rather caused damage to the environment. Green accounting, also termed as Environmental Accounting, Resource Accounting or Integrated Accounting, helps firms in recording the environmental costs incurred by way of damages and depletion of natural resources as a result of their operations. Over a period of time, natural threats like global warming, earthquakes and tsunami among others have become too frequent across the globe. No country has remained unaffected from these natural calamities. It is, therefore, essential that we take stringent steps to fight climate change and build responsibilities in our systems.

As far as India is concerned, former Environment Minister Jairam Ramesh had first stressed upon the need to merge green accounting practices with traditional ones. The Ministry of Environment & Forest (MoEF) in 1991 had made the first announcement on environmental disclosure in annual accounts. Further, the Companies Act, 2013, has made it mandatory for certain companies to follow green accounting practices and contribute at least two per cent of their annual net profits towards CSR activities. Hence, business organisations are being made accountable for the damages they cause to nature and are also being compelled to pay back for it through CSR activities and simultaneously making a disclosure in their board reports. If it is established that the environmental resources are depleted during production process, then the inclusion of such damage cost in arriving at the net profit or loss shall adhere to the fair valuation principles of business.

It is as true as the existence of humans on earth that the environment has badly and adversely been affected due to emissions from industries. Another important factor is that industries are completely ignorant about the natural resources and the benefits they could have attained had they factored in various unutilised and easily available natural resources. This is why the concept of environmental accounting has emerged. This is a field of study that will go hand in hand with traditional accounting practices, which provide a uniform methodology to incorporate to account for the past, present and future natural costs in its financials.

The implementation of green economy will show the real picture of economic growth and development. More than an accounting practice, it is a standard that is being followed by all nations.

As an initiative to implement environmental accounting practices, India became part of the Paris Agreement, whereby each member country has to plan and report the steps taken to mitigate global warming and reduce emission of Green House Gases. This apart, for every business to start a unit, environmental clearance from various Government departments has been made mandatory. Environmental accounting is an emerging concept that helps promote CSR activities and also calculates the true GDP. If we can implement it at the national level and make it mandatory for firms to calculate the associated environmental costs, then the very purpose of computation of net national income can be achieved. Also, the level of CSR activity, which each such firm has to undertake in order to compensate the damages caused to environment, can be fixed.

(The writer is director, finance and accounts, OP Jindal Global University)



SHE (MAMATA) IS PURSUING CHEAP POLITICS OVER FANI. SHE DID NOT SPEAK TO ME WHEN I TRIED CONTACTING HER TO TALK ABOUT THE CALAMITY.
—PRIME MINISTER
NARENDRA MODI

POINT COUNTERPOINT



ARE WE HIS SERVANT THAT WE WILL GO WHEREVER HE BECKONS? WHY SHOULD I SHARE DAIS WITH AN EXPIRY PRIME MINISTER DURING ELECTION TIME?
—WEST BENGAL CHIEF MINISTER
MAMATA BANERJEE

New front in war on terror

The local militant Islamist group involved in the attacks neither had the sophistication nor the ability to carry out such attacks. It was clearly steered more by the ISI than IS



DEEPAK SINHA

Despite all the confusion, carnage and horror of the Sri Lankan suicide bomb attacks, that killed at least 359 people and left hundreds more injured, one thing that is abundantly clear is the utter futility of such attempts by religious bigots to change the world to their likeness. Of course, there is also a stark reality that Governments around the world are forced to confront and for which politicians pay a heavy price: That despite the strictest of controls imposed, little can actually be done to control the turn of such events. In the case of Sri Lanka, the security and intelligence establishment appeared to have become complacent if not comatose after it defeated the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) in 2009.

Politicians try and make a living by trying to convince the citizens that they have the necessary expertise and required abilities if given a free hand to make their lives safe, secure and comfortable. Nothing can be further from the truth as at the end of the day, howsoever sophisticated and technology-dependent the data collection, analysis and dissemination process may be, they are all finally subject to the frailties and follies of human beings.

It has emerged that in the case of Sri Lanka, actionable intelligence provided by Indian agencies was not acted upon because of the ongoing factional fight between President Maithripala Sirisena and Prime Minister Ranil Wickremesinghe. This apart, there's also the perception that these agencies were keen on creating a rift between Sri Lanka and Pakistan over the issue. Also, there may well have been a sense of complacency, not least given the common perception that Indian agencies rarely get it right — the Pulwama tragedy being the latest one in a long line of such disasters.

Fortunately, the Sri Lankan Government did move rapidly after the attacks. Once it had overcome the initial shock, it was able to identify the perpetrators and put in place a series of measures that have till now prevented a repeat of such attacks from being executed. Also, except for a couple of minor incidents, they have been able to prevent reprisals against the Muslim community, the overwhelming majority of whose members are upright and loyal citizens, who were equally shocked and incensed by the senseless atrocities perpetrated in the name of their religion. This ensured that much of the subsequent intelligence that enabled the police and security forces to stop further attacks was provided from within the community.

Finally, one could not help but appreciate Prime Minister Wickremesinghe's prompt action to publicly apologise for the inability of his Government to forestall the tragedy. He further ensured accountability by sacking the defence secretary and police chief for inaction on their part and for deliberately withholding intelligence about possible terrorist attacks. Our political leadership will do well to learn from this. They must keep their egos under control and focus on accountability every time they come short instead of clinging on to their chairs as they all do.

Interestingly, while the Islamic State (IS) lost no time in claiming responsibility for the attacks,

“ ONE COULD NOT HELP BUT APPRECIATE SRI LANKAN PRIME MINISTER'S PROMPT ACTION TO PUBLICLY APOLOGISE FOR THE INABILITY OF HIS GOVERNMENT TO FORESTALL THE TRAGEDY. THUS, IT ENSURED ACCOUNTABILITY BY SACKING THE DEFENCE SECRETARY AND POLICE CHIEF. OUR POLITICAL LEADERSHIP WILL DO WELL TO LEARN FROM THIS ”



its ability to actually coordinate and execute such a sophisticated and complex attack, involving seven suicide bombers, seems quite doubtful. The fact that it is on the run obviously makes organising such an attack extremely challenging, though it may well have been able to radicalise the perpetrators online.

On the other hand, dismissing their involvement as out of hand would also be quite foolish, given that its ideology has attracted a large number of followers in recent years. We have already seen some pointers towards this in our neighbourhood as well as in Jammu & Kashmir. Moreover, we must also remember that a vast number of our population emigrates to the Middle East in search of jobs and it is not inconceivable that some among these workers may well have fallen prey to this radical ideology and returned to South Asia to carry forward the Islamic State's war against non-believers. It will indeed be interesting to learn what interrogations of suspects — captured before they were able to act — brings out.

Then there is, of course, the alternative narrative that suggests the involvement of Pakistan's Inter Service Intelligence (ISI) along with Chinese intelligence to create an environment within the country that can enable former President Mahendra Rajapaksa to once again win the presidential hustings due in the near future. That he was rabidly anti-Indian in his past two tenures as President is not under doubt as also his wholehearted support for Pakistan and China. This perception is supported by

the belief that Indian agencies were able to provide such detailed actionable intelligence only because they had caught and interrogated some members of a module, connected to the perpetrators at Coimbatore.

It has been a long-standing belief within our security and intelligence community that after the withdrawal of the Indian Peace Keeping Force from Sri Lanka and the subsequent refusal of the Indian Government to supply the Sri Lankan armed forces with weapons, the Sri Lankan Government turned to Pakistan for assistance. It is at this time that Pakistan's ISI established a foothold in that island nation, which was used to radicalise, train, arm and employ Islamists for operations in South India.

Let us not forget that Sri Lankan Muslims have sided with Pakistan since the Partition. And have been united by the "big" presence of India in the neighbourhood to coalesce their mutual interests. Let us also not forget that during the 1971 Liberation War of Bangladesh, when India withdrew landing and overflight rights to Pakistan, Sri Lanka extended landing and refuelling facilities to Pakistan International Airlines. As the Pakistan Army launched operations against the Mukti Bahini, Pakistani military aircraft landed and took off from the Katunayake international airport. While Sri Lanka insisted these aircraft were civilian, there were reports that they actually carried armed troops. And as the Tamil separatists also kept the island Muslims at bay, Pakistan's ISI got actively involved in the local gov-

ernment's counter-offensive strategies.

In this particular case, while there is the possibility that these elements may well have acted independently, it could just as well have been a "false flag" operation to push the blame on cadres of the Islamic State, who in their present condition, would have been more than happy to accept responsibility for obvious reasons.

One way or the other, the National Thowheeth Jama'ath, the local militant Islamist group involved in the attacks, neither had the sophistication nor the ability to carry out such attacks and clearly unknown foreign organisations provided them with the necessary technical and logistic support.

Finally, in our context, there have been credible reports that Islamists have been successful in establishing a fairly strong presence in States such as West Bengal and Kerala, where they now seem to be becoming increasingly assertive. They have got away with this primarily because local Governments have been reluctant to act against them in the foolish hope that by doing so, they would gain the support of the Muslim community to consolidate power. This bodes ill for the country in the long run and requires the Union Government to undertake necessary measures, some of which may well make them unpopular, if we are to avoid a turbulent and extremely violent future.

(The writer, a military veteran, a consultant with the Observer Research Foundation and a Senior Visiting Fellow with The Peninsula Foundation, Chennai)

How to solidify the building blocks

If the quality of pre-primary education determines the 'success' of the child, then, should not all children have the right to access a uniform pre-school education?



CB SHARMA

Access, retention and success, which mean bringing children to school, retaining them for at least eight years (up to 14 years of age) till they pass grade VIII or ideally for 12 years till they pass the senior secondary level, have been the mantra of the education sector since the Jomtien Conference was held in 1990.

Ever since, our educational planners as well as the Government have done a stupendous job in improving the quality of education in schools. Today, India can boast of great achievements for having expanded school access to children in outlying areas. Several policies and initiative have been launched and they have only grown sharper and

tighter in details with the passage of time. But a closer look will reveal that at the grassroot level, little has changed. Students from low-income families and first generation school-goers continue to face complex challenges. While for the first time India was able to bring the school dropout rate to less than three per cent, a large majority of the children still remains out of school. We can claim advancements in school infrastructure and the provision of mid-day meals to our students but why is it that learning levels among the severely disadvantaged and first generation children have not changed? Why is it that a majority of drop-outs continue to belong to the poor and less-privileged families?

A major reason for children dropping out of school is unpreparedness. Children who do not live with their immediate families find it difficult to adjust to the school environment. They also do not understand the importance of schooling and there is no one back home to convince the child why he/she must attend classes. It is not that our edu-

cationists or policy-makers are not aware of this fact. It was, perhaps, this realisation that prompted them to launch programmes like the Integrated Child Development Scheme (ICDS) and Anganwadi centres. But clearly they have not been able to reap desired results. The schemes were expected to support the mother by way of providing crucial information and medicine during pregnancy and prepare her child for school. Instead, centres providing such services have remained low-quality child minding centres.

The need of the hour is to bifurcate the lower primary from the elementary school and conjoin it with the pre-school so as to provide quality language and life skills training to all children aged between three and eight. Many children, who suffer from various types of disabilities, do not receive the attention of Anganwadi teachers as also primary teachers as they lack the required training to detect disabilities. Detection should be an essential component of the teachers' training process so that they know how to

deal with such situations and refer them to the appropriate agencies.

Further, it is often said that children have the capacity to learn many languages between ages three and eight. So, it is essential that teachers are proficient in at least three languages.

The absence of a professional agency for the design, development and implementation of a well-conceptualised scheme is also a major reason why programmes are arbitrary in nature. Pre-school to lower primary education ie, institutions for children aged between three and eight years, should be seen as a continuum. Life skills training as well as literacy and numeracy skills should be provided in the mother tongue and within the institutions. Any national body, ideally the National Council for Educational Research and Training (NCERT), should be designated as the nodal agency for designing a plan for complete development of the child.

Adequately, for the teachers, the National Council for Teacher Education (NCTE) must design and develop training norms and decide on the standards required to be

appointed a *shikshak* at these centres. And this, without much formal intervention.

It goes without saying that the Right to Education Act, 2009, did not do much good to this age group of students. In fact, it worked against their interest. By giving scant attention to early childhood education, the nation has deprived the poor and the less-privileged children of their right to education. The non-formal schools, which were run by voluntary organisations like the Ekal Vidyalaya, and who have been doing great service to children in far-flung areas, have been declared illegal/unlawful. Perhaps, we need to re-examine if this sector can be covered under the RTE or be made free for NGOs, the philanthropists and others to contribute.

Traditionally, education of this age group has always been seen as a *dharm* and the society contributed towards making it possible. We should rely more on the local community for running these schools. Mothers of children studying in these centres and other volunteers

should be roped in to run them smoothly and ensure a check and balance system born of participation, not of imposition. They should not be seen as a Government establishment but as a community centre of the society.

So where did we go wrong and what needs to change? We have to emphasise that mother and child care centres are not just about health but also about literacy/education of both. The major reason behind the poor performance of these centres and schemes is the involvement of inappropriately trained personnel to manage them. The nodal Ministry for these centres should be the Ministry of Human Resources Development alone with experts from areas of medicine, nutrition, psychiatry and so on. If the quality of pre-primary education determines the "success" of the child, then, should not all children have the right to access a uniform pre-school education?

(The writer is professor of education at the Indira Gandhi Open University. Views expressed are personal)



FOREIGN EYE



WHO WILL GUARD THE WATCHDOGS?

Holding social media firms to some standard of social responsibility is not without problems. The most obvious is that they need to all be held to the same standard. Little is accomplished if content deemed dangerous and obnoxious is not banned everywhere but only on one or two networks. Even when content is swept away from all of the easily accessible parts of the internet, it will thrive in fetid crannies.

(The Guardian editorial)

INDIA VOTES



Shopian, Pulwama votes

MOHIT KANDHARI ■ JAMMU

Air, a little over 14,000 'brave' voters stepped out of their houses in 'disturbed' districts of Shopian and Pulwama in the third and final phase of polling in the Anantnag Lok Sabha constituency, sealing the fate of PDP Chief Mehbooba Mufti, on Monday.

However, in the cold desert region of Ladakh, an estimated 64 per cent electorate exercised their right to vote in a multi cornered contest.

According to Chief Electoral Officer, J&K Shailendra Kumar, "the fifth and final phase of polling in the State passed off peacefully on Monday".

He said, the twin districts of Shopian and Pulwama recorded around 2.81 per cent voting while Ladakh Parliamentary constituency recorded 64 per cent during the day. He said, Kargil district recorded little over 73

14,000 brave voters step out to vote



Security personnel stand guard outside a polling station in Pulwama on Monday



Poll officials at a polling station in Pulwama on Monday

per cent polling while Leh district recorded around 55 per cent polling.

Overall poll percentage in all five phases touched 44.15 per cent in the State, he added. Since morning majority of

segments of Anantnag. To scare away voters, unidentified militants lobbed a grenade at a polling station in Pulwama while a petrol bomb was hurled at another polling station in Shopian. No loss of

life was reported in both the incidents.

Reports of clashes between protesters and the security forces were received from various areas of both Pulwama and Shopian. Separatists have also

given a separate election boycott and a shutdown call in Shopian and Pulwama districts.

In Ladakh, the contest was four-cornered between Janyang Tsering Namgyal of the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), Rigzin Spalbar of the Congress and two independents, Haji Asgar Ali Karbalai and Sajjad Hussain.

In Anantnag, the main contest is between Mehbooba Mufti of the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP), Ghulam Ahmad Mir of Congress and Justice (retired) Hasnain Masoodi of the National Conference.

Till late evening, all the polling parties returned safely from Shopian and Pulwama district. Barring few reports of clashes the deindustrial process was completed peacefully.

Local reports claimed at least four locals received injuries when security forces used tear smoke shells to disperse them.

Zero vote cast from Burhan Wani's village, only 15 from Pulwama suicide bomber's

PTI ■ SRINAGAR

Nobody from the village of Burhan Wani, the poster boy of terror group Hizbul Mujahideen, voted on Monday, while just 15 from the native place of Pulwama suicide bomber, who nearly brought India and Pakistan to a war, cast the ballots, officials said.

Also, zero polling was witnessed from the villages of other top militant commanders in south Kashmir, the hotbed of militancy in the Valley, officials added.

Wani's Shareefabad village in the Tral area decided to give a miss to the elections as no one from the village went to exercise their franchise.

Just 15 votes (of the total 350) were polled in Gundlbad, a village that hit the international headlines on February 14

after one of its residents Adil Dar became a suicide bomber for Jaish-e-Mohammed terror group and triggered a blast in an explosive-laden car near a CRPF convoy killing 44 personnel, the officials said.

Also, zero voting was recorded from Noorabad, the village of Zakir Musa, the so-called chief of Ansar-Gazawat-ul-Hind terror group; Beighpora, the village of the incumbent Hizbul Mujahideen commander Riyaz Naikoo; and Sheikhpora, the village of Mudassar Khan, the mastermind of February 14 terror strike, said the officials.

Wani's killing in an encounter with security forces in 2016 had triggered a massive unrest in the valley that left nearly 100 people dead and thousand others, including security forces, injured.



Subrata Roy, Managing Worker and Chairman of Sahara India Pariwar, shows his identity card and his finger marked with indelible ink after casting his vote during the fifth phase of Lok Sabha elections, at Lucknow, on Monday

Centenarians beat the heat

PTI ■ JAIPUR

Notwithstanding the soaring mercury, several centenarians cast their vote in Rajasthan during polling for 12 Lok Sabha constituencies in the desert state on Monday, setting an example for the younger generation.

Veera Singh, a 114-year-old resident of Raisinagar in Sriganganagar district, reached the polling station to vote this morning. 104-year-old Gangaram and 102-year-old Gurdayal Kaur exercised their franchise in Jaipur and Suratgarh town of Sriganganagar district respectively.

"It shows their dedication towards fulfilling their responsibility towards democracy and they are an inspiration for young generation," chief electoral officer Anand Kumar said.

Apart from the centenarians, a



couple of grooms in Jaipur and Nagaur too reached the polling booths to exercise their franchise as the national duty took precedence over their marriage.

In Lalana village of Parbatsar in Nagaur, a groom riding a mare reached the polling station to cast his vote whereas in Malviya Nagar of Jaipur, another groom chose to get his finger inked before exchanging his wedding vows.

Deputy Chief Minister Sachin Pilot voted at a polling station in Jalupura area here whereas Rajasthan Chief Electoral Officer Anand Kumar and his deputy Dr Jogaram and state chief secretary D B Gupta and his wife also voted.

In the second phase, Election Commission has set up 133 polling stations where women are handling election process and security.

A total of 2.30 crore people, including seven lakh first-timers, are eligible to vote in 12 Lok Sabha seats. The State has 13.82 lakh voters in 18-19 years of age group. As many as 134 candidates are in fray in the second phase of election.

Kashmiri Pandits vote in special booths, hope for end of terrorism and return to homeland

PTI ■ JAGTI CAMP (JAMMU)

Living miles away from their native place for the past three decades, displaced Kashmiri Pandits on Monday voted with the hope for an end to terrorism and peaceful return to their homeland.

"We want that South Kashmir should be freed from the twin grave threats (terrorism and radicalisation) to the composite culture of Kashmiriyat", 65-year-old Pyara Lal Pandita, who hailed from Pulwama district of the Anantnag Lok Sabha constituency, said after casting vote at a special polling station here.

Kashmiri Pandits, who have been voting in exile for the past three decades in Jammu,

Delhi and Udhampur for their native Assembly and parliamentary constituencies, say the situation in Kashmir is getting worse due to rampant radicalisation and terrorism, weakening the possibility of their return to and rehabilitation in Kashmir Valley.

Arvind Koul, who hails from Shopian, says his community members cannot return to their homeland unless and until there is restoration of "composite culture (Kashmiriyat) and humanity (insaniyat) as existed before the emergence of terrorism in the valley" in 1989-1990.

For 21-year-old Sunita Bhat from Tral of south Kashmir, "Peace and security are first and foremost condi-

tions for settlement of a minority community." "The Government should consider these before formulating a rehabilitation policy," she said.

Meanwhile, some Kashmiri Pandits staged demonstrations outside a special polling station here on Monday after they found their names missing from the voter list.

Anantnag district went to polls on 23 April, while voting in Kulgam district took place on 29 April, while Shopian and Pulwama districts voted on Monday. The Election Commission set up 21 special polling stations for Kashmiri Pandits in Jammu, one in Udhampur and four in Delhi to ensure their participation in the democratic process.

Earlier, people got electricity on Eid, but not on Diwali: Adityanath

PTI ■ GORAKHPUR

Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath alleged on Monday that during earlier governments in Uttar Pradesh, people got electricity on Muharram and Eid, but not on Holi and Diwali.

Addressing a public meeting in Domariaganj constituency in Siddharth Nagar district, Adityanath said the situation was different now, saying Prime Minister Narendra Modi believed in 'sabka saath, sabka vikas' (support for all, development for all).

"Earlier, power connections were given on caste lines and people didn't get electricity on Holi and Diwali, but on Muharram and Eid," the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) leader said.

Adityanath's remarks are reminiscent of Modi's comments at a rally before the 2017 assembly election in the state.



The PM had said if people get electricity on Ramzan, they should also get electricity during Diwali.

Adityanath also mocked at the SP-BSP-RJD alliance. "Shivpal Yadav (Akhilesh's uncle) says that he has no sister. So, where did the 'bua' (aunt) come from?" he asked, referring to Bahujan Samaj Party chief Mayawati.

"Everyone knows that the new relationship is built to hide each other's sins and the relationship will eventually break

on May 23," the CM said.

He said the people would give a befitting reply to Congress general secretary Priyanka Gandhi Vadra for her remarks that wherever her party was weak in the state, it has fielded such candidates who would cut into the BJP vote share.

"People will give a befitting reply like a 'muhnochwa' to the vote-cutter remarks of the 'shehzadi' (princess)," Adityanath said, in an apparent reference to Vadra. In 2002, villagers insisted that a light-emitting flying object, or the 'muhnochwa' (face scratcher), came towards them in the dead of the night and scratched their face, and even gave them mild electric shocks.

The 'muhnochwa' was reportedly seen in about 30 districts and hundreds of people were said to have suffered serious scratches and bruises on the face and arms.

Vote for Modi as he has made nation secure: Shah

PTI ■ PATNA

Launching an electoral blitzkrieg in Bihar, BJP president Amit Shah on Monday urged the people to vote for Prime Minister Narendra Modi "for only one reason, he has made the country secure."

Addressing five rallies in the State, Shah said "here are the names of more than 100 welfare schemes launched by the Modi Government. You need not, however, vote for your NDA candidate because of the improvement in your lives these measures might have brought. Simply vote for one reason, Modi has made the country secure."

Shah, who arrived here late Sunday night, addressed during the course of the day five back-to-back rallies in as many Lok Sabha constituencies — Sheohar, Pashchim Champaran, Purvi Champaran, Siwan and Maharajganj. At present, the BJP holds all the five constituencies and except for



BJP president Amit Shah during an election rally for the Lok Sabha polls, in Siwan district of Bihar, on Monday

Siwan, which has been given up in favour of Chief Minister Nitish Kumar's JD(U), its MPs are seeking re-election from their respective seats.

"Recall the 10 years of UPA rule when Aliyas, Maliyas and Jamaliyas from Pakistan used to attack our armed forces at will and the government headed by Mauni Baba (former PM Manmohan Singh) and leaders like Rahul Baba could not utter

the terror hideout in Balakot was bombed and the militants were blown to smithereens (aatankwadiyon ke purze purze uda diye)," said Shah evoking wild applause from the crowds.

Lambasting the Congress for promising abrogation of Article 370 and its ally Omar Abdullah of the National Conference for demanding restoration of the post of Prime Minister in Jammu & Kashmir, the BJP chief asserted "at present we are in power. But in future even if we cease to be in power we will fight tendencies which are sympathetic to Kashmir's secession, till our last breath".

In Siwan, Shah came down heavily on Lalu Prasad's RJD which has fielded Hina Shahab, the wife of jailed mafia don-turned-politician Mohd Shahabuddin, and said "the name of this land of first president Dr Rajendra Prasad by the reign of terror unleashed by Shahabuddin. The RJD, with the help of the Congress, is working towards bringing back the bad old days".

Political earthquake after election results, says Tejashwi

IAN S ■ PATNA

Bihar Opposition leader Tejashwi Yadav on Monday predicted a political earthquake when the results of the ongoing Lok Sabha polls are declared on May 23.

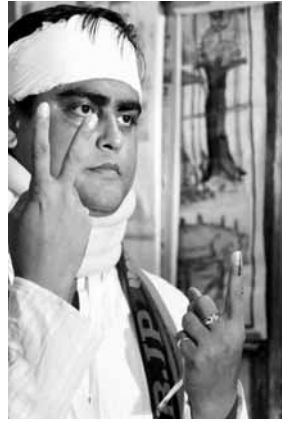
"Wait for May 23, there will be a political earthquake," Tejashwi Yadav told the media here.

The Rashtriya Janata Dal (RJD) leader claimed that Chief Minister Nitish Kumar will resign either on May 23 or shortly after that.

Tejashwi Yadav also said that differences between the ruling Janata Dal-United and the Bharatiya Janata Party were growing and will soon lead to a conflict.

He made the remarks as voting for Bihar's five parliamentary seats of Sitamarhi, Madhubani, Muzaffarpur, Hajipur and Saran was on.

POLITICIAN'S CORNER



Bombs hurled, booths 'looted' in West Bengal

SAUGAR SENGUPTA ■ BONGAON/BARRACKPORE/HOOGHLY

A helpless Election Commission of India watched Bengal's poll percentage drop by notches even as sporadic violence, bombing and booth-capturing marred the fifth phase of elections...



A paramilitary jawan pushes away a miscreant at a polling station at Gayeshpur in Bongaon parliamentary constituency of Nadia district, on Monday

Reports of violence and booth jamming came in from Barrackpore where the turncoat TMC strongman and former MLA Arjun Singh was fighting against former Union Minister Dinesh Trivedi...

mentary constituency where one TMC supporter received head injuries. Later the CAPF resorted to massive lathi-charge. At Howrah outgoing TMC MP and former India footballer Prasun Banerjee was physically assaulted allegedly by the BJP supporters...

Drought relief work: EC relaxes model poll code in Maha

TN RAGHUNATHA ■ MUMBAI

The Election Commission of India has relaxed the Model Code of Conduct to facilitate effective implementation of relief works in 151 drought-affected villages in Maharashtra in view of public interest.

Responding to a letter written by Maharashtra chief minister Devendra Fadnis after the completion of the four-phased Lok Sabha polls on April 30, the ECI — in a letter written to the State Chief Electoral Officer (CEO) — said that it had no objection to the state government undertaking drought relief works in the affected areas...

The ECA — in its letter to the CEO — stated that the staffers involved in the counting would not accompany the ministers on any tour during the period. In its April 30 letter, Fadnis had urged the Chief Election Commissioner to relax the Model Code of Conduct as the elections for all 48 Lok Sabha seats in the state were over on April 29.

"Maharashtra is reeling from severe drought and heat-wave. The code of conduct, which was enforced during elections, should be relaxed. The elections for all 48 Lok Sabha seats have been concluded in the four phases," Fadnis said in his letter.

The CM said the Government needed to take a re-look at drought relief measures and expedite projects. The CM said the Government needed to fast-track projects such as digging of wells, repairs in water supply projects, repairs of water canals for distribution of water from dams and other reservoirs to villages.

Ahead of Ramzan, Pak Army scales up tensions along LoC

MOHIT KANDHARI ■ JAMMU

Ahead of the beginning of a holy month of Ramzan, the Pakistan Army has deliberately scaled up tensions along the Line of Control in frontier Poonch district.

On Monday, the Pakistan Army violated ceasefire agreement for the fifth time in a row since Thursday.

Local villagers living in the direct line of fire also pressed panic buttons on Monday as several shells landed in the civilian areas.

Following intense shelling in the forward areas some of the thickly forested areas also caught fire.

According to preliminary reports, a BSF officer along with two civilians received splinter injuries during 'unprovoked' ceasefire violation along the line of control in Krishna Ghati sector of Poonch on Monday.

The civilians, injured in the shelling, were identified as Ashiq Hussain and Masood Ahmad, both residents of Mankote area in Poonch.

BSF spokesman in Jammu said, "Ceasefire violation was reported along LoC in Mendhar, during retaliatory fire a Sub Inspector Gokul Anand Ojha of 168 BN received splinter injuries on his left thigh. BSF spokesman said, "injured officer was evacuated to a near by hospital and his condition is stated to be normal".

Ministry of Defence PRO in Jammu, Lt-Col Devender Anand said, the unprovoked



ceasefire violation was reported in KG sector around 2.45 p.m. He said, Pakistan army initiated ceasefire violation by shelling with mortars and firing of small arms. The firing was going on till 6.30 p.m in the forward areas of KG sector, local reports said.

In response to heavy artillery firing from across the line of control, Indian army jawans too retaliated 'effectively' and 'strongly' using similar calibre of weapons.

Ground reports suggested Pakistan army has been constantly using artillery guns to target civilian areas. At present, the Indian army authorities are closely studying the pattern of cross LoC firing as they fear Pakistan army may have been providing cover fire to a large group of infiltrators to sneak inside the Indian territory. However, the Indian army has not confirmed any reports of infiltration bid in the area from across the line of control.

poll-snippets

VARUN TRIGGERS YET ANOTHER CONTROVERSY

BJP MP Varun Gandhi has mastered the art of creating controversy after controversy. The young Gandhi is currently campaigning for his mother Maneka Gandhi in Sultanpur that goes to the polls in the sixth phase on May 12.

Nearly 77 per cent of the over 58 lakh people exercised their franchise in the first phase of elections to mandal parishad territorial constituencies (MPTCs) and zilla parishad territorial constituencies (ZPTCs), official figures said on Monday.

Will form a strong government: Akhilesh Samajwadi Party chief Akhilesh Yadav warned on Monday that if the Congress or the BJP come to power, the two parties would deprive the common people of basic necessities.

Yadav said at rally in Uttar Pradesh's Maharajanagar district. "Let's join hands and construct a new India."

SEARCH FOR MISSING MALE

General Public is hereby informed that one man (depicted in the photo) namely Rahul S/o Sh. Virlesh Kumar R/o H. No. 32, Street No. 3, A-2 Block, West Sant Nagar, Burari, Delhi Aged - 27 Years has been reported missing since 17.04.2019 vide DD No. 48-A Dated 23.04.2019 lodged at Police Station Burari, Delhi.



Complexion: Shallow, Height: 5', Face: Round, Built: Strong, Clothing: Black coloured t-shirt, black coloured lower and slipper in his feet. Any person having any information/Clue about this missing man, may inform SHO, Burari, Delhi at E-mail : cbc@cbi.gov.in or website : http://cbi.nic.in

DEBT RECOVERY TRIBUNAL II, DELHI

PROCLAMATION OF SALE NOTICE. The under mentioned Property will be sold through auction on "AS IS WHERE IS BASIS" and "AS IS WHAT IS BASIS" for recovery of dues, in the matter of CICCI BANK LTD v/s HANSHERA O.A No. 58/2014 & RC No: 225/2018.

Navy's submarine 'Vela' launched

TN RAGHUNATHA ■ MUMBAI

THE FOURTH OF THE INDIAN NAVY'S STEALTH SCORPENE CLASS SUBMARINES UNDER PROJECT 75 WAS LAUNCHED AT THE KANHOJI ANGRE WET BASIN OF THE MAZAGAON DOCKS LTD (MDL) ON MAY 6.

In a move that will further boost the Indian Navy's capabilities, Vela — the fourth Scorpene class submarine constructed by Mazagon Dock Shipbuilders Limited (MDSL) for the Navy — was launched at the Kanhoji Angre Wet Basin of the MDSL here on Monday.

Like the previous Scorpene class submarines - Kalvary, Khandeeri and Karanj - the new submarine 'Vela' has been built by the MDL in collaboration with the Naval Group of France.



Vela specifications: Length: 67.50 metres, Height: 12.30 metres, Beam: 6.20-metre, Submerged speed: 27 kmp/h, 20 kmp/h on surface, Carrying capacity: 35 soldiers plus 8 officers, Submarine can remain at sea: Up to 50 days.

They are designed to operate in all theatres including the Tropics. All means and communications are provided to ensure interoperability with other components of a Naval Task Force. Cmde Rakesh Anand, Chairman and Managing Director, MDSL said on the occasion that the launch of the P15 B Destroyer 'Impah' on April 20, and the subsequent launch of 'Vela' were indeed some of the major events his organisation so far this year.

Monday's event reaffirmed the steps taken by MDSL in the ongoing 'Make In India' programme, which is being actively implemented by the Department of Defence Production (MoD). Currently, eight warships and five submarines are under construction at MDSL which was one of the India's leading shipyards with a capacity to meet requirements of the Indian Navy.

The Scorpene class of submarines can undertake multifarious tasks typically undertaken by any modern submarine which include anti-surface as well as anti-submarine warfare. The transfer of technology involves appropriate technical support by Naval Group to MDSL in the field of construction, integration and tests of the submarines in India which is achieved through transfer of technical data package to MDSL through information system as well as on job training to MDSL's personnel on critical technologies.

Ex-AIADMK Min lambastes Dhinakaran's greed for power

KUMAR CHELLAPPAN ■ CHENNAI

Even as the Supreme Court stayed the Tamil Nadu Speaker's move to initiate steps to disqualify the three AIADMK legislators owing allegiance to TTV Dhinakaran, one of the former MLAs who was disqualified earlier blamed the AMMK leader for his greed to become the CM of the State.

V Senthil Balaji, former minister and one of the 18 former MLAs who were disqualified under the provision of the anti-defection law by the Speaker, said at Aravakurichi that it was Dhinakaran's greed to become the chief minister which resulted in the political impasse in the AIADMK.

Balaji was in the AIADMK and had won the 2016 assembly election from Aravakurichi only to switch over to the Sasikala-Dhinakaran camp after the demise of the then chief minister J Jayalalithaa in December 2016.

After his disqualification, Balaji crossed over to the DMK and is the party candidate for the by-election to be held on May 19. This is the first time a former associate of Dhinakaran is blaming the latter for his ambition to become the Chief Minister.

The trouble in the AUADMK began in early 2017 with Dhinakaran declaring his plan to contest the RK Nagar assembly by-election caused by the death of Jayalalithaa, who was representing the constituency. Chief Minister Edappadi Palaniswamy was quick the writing on the wall about the danger posed by Dhinakaran's election as MLA.

Dhinakaran who was eased out of the AIADMK along with Sasikala launched Amma Makkal Munnetra Kazhagam and has been claiming that he was the rightful heir of Jayalalithaa.

Though he had declared that he would seize the party and the government with the help of his sleeper cells, nothing has happened since then. Dhinakaran failed to get the party symbol of Two Leaves allocated to the AMMK by the EC.

BORDER ROADS ORGANISATION 59th ANNIVERSARY

ON THE OCCASION OF THE 59th ANNIVERSARY OF BRO, ALL SERVING AND RETIRED GREF & ARMY OFFICERS WHO HAVE SERVED IN THE BORDER ROADS ORGANISATION ARE INVITED TO A SOCIAL EVENING ALONGWITH THEIR SPOUSE AT 7:40 PM (1940 HOURS) ON 17 MAY 2019 (FRIDAY). VENUE - MANEKSHAW CENTRE, KHYBER LINE, DELHI CANTONMENT, NEW DELHI -10. DRESS - OPEN COLLAR.

PROCLAMATION REQUIRING THE APPEARANCE OF ACCUSED PERSON

(See Section 82 Cr.Pc) Whereas complaint has been made before me that Akhtar S/o Habibul Rehman R/o H. No.41, Salim ka Makan, Village-Kureni, Narela, Delhi has committed (or is suspected to have committed) the offence in case FIR No. 315/17 u/s 308/34 IPC, P.S. Narela, Delhi and it has been returned to a warrant of arrest thereupon issued that the said accused Akhtar cannot be found and whereas it has been shown to my satisfaction that the said accused Akhtar has absconded (or is concealing himself to avoid the service of the said warrant).

Proclamation is hereby made that the said accused Akhtar of FIR No. 315/17 u/s 308/34 IPC, P.S. Narela, Delhi is required to appear before this Court to answer the said complaint on or before 26.06.2019.

By Order, Ms. Divya Malhotra, Metropolitan Magistrate-1 (North), Room No. 118, DP/243/ON/19(Cr.Matter) 1st Floor, Rohini Courts, Delhi

KONKAN RAILWAY CORPORATION LTD. (A Government of India Undertaking)

NOTICE INVITING E-TENDER. General Manager / Project / IV, Konkan Railway Corporation Ltd., invites Open Tender in Single bid system through E-Tendering on IREPS Portal from eligible contractors for the following work. Tender Notice No: KR-CO-SW-T-EW-1-19-04 dtd. 25/04/2019. Name of Work: 'Earthwork in cutting for flattening of slopes, provision of berms, lining of side drain/catch water drains and protective work at Agave cutting at Km 148/200 to 149/078 in Ratnagiri Region'.

MOUNTAIN TO CLIMB

Liverpool face huge task of overturning 3 goal deficit against Barca in UCL semis



Liverpool vs Barcelona
Live from 12:30am IST
SONY TEN 2 NETWORK

AFP ■ LIVERPOOL

Liverpool emerged victorious from a bruising battle against Newcastle to remain in the hunt for the Premier League title, but may have sustained too many wounds to summon a Champions League semi-final comeback against Barcelona on Tuesday.

A late double from Lionel Messi in the Camp Nou on Wednesday has left Jurgen Klopp's men with a mountain to climb to overturn a 3-0 first leg defeat if they are to reach a second consecutive Champions League final.

Liverpool have overcome such deficits before in the Champions League, most famously in the 2005 final against AC Milan.

But hopes of another famous European comeback at fortress Anfield were dealt a blow when Mohamed Salah was stretched off with a head knock as Liverpool edged out Newcastle 3-2 on Saturday to move two points ahead of Manchester City at the top of the Premier League.

Salah watched a thrilling end to the match at St James' Park in the dressing room as his replacement Divock Origi headed home fellow substitute Xherdan Shaqiri's free-kick four minutes from time.

Origi, who also scored a 96th-minute winner to beat Everton in the Merseyside derby in December, Shaqiri and Daniel Sturridge have made impor-

tant contributions in a supporting role to a club record points tally for Liverpool this season.

However, with Roberto Firmino already ruled out due to a groin injury, few would give Liverpool any hope of overhauling a three-goal deficit without two of their prolific front three.

Klopp therefore has a difficult balancing act deciding whether it is worth emptying the tank of his injury-hit squad once more on Tuesday or to save their legs for Wolves' visit to Anfield on the final day of the Premier League season.

Despite a sensational season, Liverpool's chances of winning either trophy are fading.

To have any hope of a first league title in 29 years, Klopp's men must hope that Manchester City's relentless run of 12 straight league wins comes to an end either at home to Leicester in their game in hand on Monday, or at Brighton come Sunday.

Barcelona will also not be complacent heading to Anfield a year on from letting a 4-1 first leg lead against Roma slip away in the quarter-finals.

Messi made it clear from before the season began that the Champions League was his and Barca's primary target in his first campaign as club captain.

Moreover, while Liverpool toiled on Tyneside, Barca coach Ernesto Valverde had the luxury of making 11 changes for an inconsequential 2-0 defeat to Celta Vigo having already wrapped up

the Spanish title. Yet, Origi's winner at Newcastle personified Liverpool's persistence and refusal to give up.

Four times in their last seven league outings Liverpool have won the game in the final 10 minutes.

Now they must harness the same belief if Barca are to be given a fright at Anfield.

"LIVERPOOL ARE A TEAM THAT CAN MAKE ANY OPPONENT SUFFER. WE HAVE NO REASON TO BE COMPLACENT."
—ERNESTO VALVERDE (BARCELONA MANAGER)

"YOU HAVE TO CONCENTRATE FOR THE WHOLE 90 AGAINST MESSI. IT'S IMPORTANT TO SHOW RESPECT BUT NOT TOO MUCH RESPECT. WE CAN'T BE SCARED TO LOOK SILLY AGAINST HIM."
—TRENT ALEXANDER-ARNOLD

"THIS TEAM (LIVERPOOL) IS SO WONDERFUL WE WILL TRY 100 PERCENT, BUT THAT DOESN'T MEAN IT WILL ALL WORK OUT."
—JURGEN KLOPP (ON PROSPECT OF ADVANCING INTO FINAL)

"WE HAVE BIG PLAYERS AND BIG PLAYERS SHOULD SHOW IN BIG GAMES AND I THINK THIS IS ONE OF THOSE GAMES ON TUESDAY, SO I EXPECT ONE OF THE BIGGEST GAMES AT ANFIELD."
—DEJAN LOVREN

Salah out of Barca clash

LIVERPOOL: Liverpool will be without top scorer Mohamed Salah for Tuesday's semi-final, second leg after manager Jurgen Klopp revealed he was concussed in a 3-2 win at Newcastle.

The Egyptian was stretchered off at St James' Park on Saturday due to a head knock sustained as he challenged Newcastle goalkeeper Martin Dubravka for a high ball.

"It's a concussion so that means he would not even be allowed to play. So that's it," said Klopp at his pre-match press conference on Monday.

"He feels OK but it is not good enough from a medical point of view that is all. He's desperate (to play) everything but we cannot do it."

Klopp will also be without Brazilian striker Roberto Firmino due to a groin injury.

"Two of the world's best strikers are not available tomorrow night and we have to score four goals against Barcelona to go through after 90 minutes," added Klopp.

"It doesn't make life easier, but as long as we have 11 players on the pitch, we will try it." AFP



Sergio Aguero celebrates with his Manchester City teammates after scoring against Fulham ManCity/Twitter

City title bid ranks alongside greatest achievements: Pep

AFP ■ MANCHESTER

Pep Guardiola has suggested remaining in control of this season's relentless Premier League title race is his most satisfying achievement as a manager.

The Manchester City boss says the English top division is the toughest domestic competition he has faced during a 10-season coaching career that has brought him 25 trophies.

City have won 12 Premier League matches in a row, and are on course to finish just two short of matching last season's competition record of 100 points, yet they are being pushed all the way by Liverpool, who have set extraordinary standards of their own.

Jurgen Klopp's side have lost just once in the league all season, against City in January, and recorded their eighth successive top-flight victory on Saturday, beating Newcastle 3-2 to return to the top of the table.

City have a game in hand, at home to Leicester on Monday, but are likely to have to win both that and their final league match at Brighton on Sunday to retain their title.

"Yeah, it's the toughest league I've ever played as a manager, because of the quality of the rivals," said Guardiola, a former manager of both Barcelona and Bayern Munich.

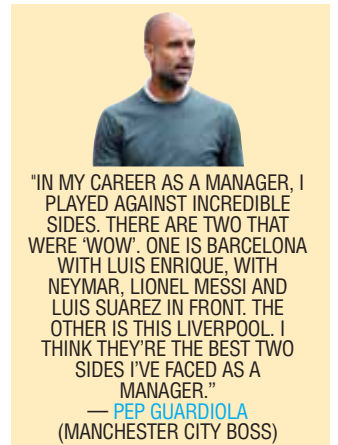
"No doubts. That's why being there is incredible. But, of course, only one will take the prize and the other one will be at home sad."

LIVERPOOL 'WOW'

Guardiola is thrilled his City players have maintained their standards following last season's record-breaking points total, with the club three wins away from completing an unprecedented domestic treble of Premier League, FA Cup and League Cup.

"Arriving at this stage, two games left with 92 points, after 100 points last season, being there, that is the most satisfaction I've had as a manager," the Catalan manager said.

"It's not easy, honestly. And they did it again. Now, we try to win against Leicester and then go to the final league game at Brighton with it in our hands, with a chance to be cham-



"IN MY CAREER AS A MANAGER, I PLAYED AGAINST INCREDIBLE SIDES. THERE ARE TWO THAT WERE 'WOW'. ONE IS BARCELONA WITH LUIS ENRIQUE, WITH NEYMAR, LIONEL MESSI AND LUIS SUAREZ IN FRONT. THE OTHER IS THIS LIVERPOOL. I THINK THEY'RE THE BEST TWO SIDES I'VE FACED AS A MANAGER."

—PEP GUARDIOLA (MANCHESTER CITY BOSS)

ions." The standard of this season's title race has rarely been equalled at the highest level of English football.

Since the rules were changed in 1981 to make a win worth three points, only once has a top-flight team finished with more than 95 points, and that was City last season.

Yet both City and Liverpool are on course to pass that total this time around; Klopp's team have 94 points with one match left, at home to Wolves on Sunday.

Guardiola suggested Liverpool are one of the two best sides he has ever faced as a manager, with the other being the Barcelona team that thrashed City 4-0 in a 2016 Champions League meeting.

"The difference is Liverpool. We did the same job (as last season), he said. "In my career as a manager, I played against incredible sides. There are two that were 'wow'. One is Barcelona with Luis Enrique, with Neymar, Lionel Messi and Luis Suarez in front. The other is this Liverpool. I think they're the best two sides I've faced as a manager."



Mertens overtakes Maradona's record

AFP ■ NAPLES

Dries Mertens on Sunday overtook club legend Diego Maradona in Napoli's all-time Serie A scorers list after bagging his 82nd goal in a 2-1 win over Cagliari which sealed second place in this season.

The Belgian striker headed in the equaliser after 85 minutes in 2013 from PSV Eindhoven. "We must be proud of the our second place."

"The future? If I want to score goals in Italy I have to stay. I have always said that I feel good here, I have a contract for next year and I am very happy to stay here."

Hamsik has scored the most goals in all competitions for Napoli with 121, followed by Maradona on 115 with Mertens now joint third on 107 with Attila Sallustro.

Mertens said he is enjoying playing under Carlo Ancelotti who took over from Maurizio Sarri this season.

"With Ancelotti my role has changed. The place behind the striker is mine. I have more freedom and it shows."

Mertens has scored 14 goals this season including the last three games.

Both of Napoli's Serie A titles were won under Maradona in 1987 and 1990.

The club are 16 points behind champions Juventus but 10 ahead of third-placed Inter Milan with three games to play.

20 time Grand Slam champion says he would stop playing tennis if he felt he couldn't be among the best

AGENCIES ■ MADRID

The topic of when Federer will finally hang up his racket has followed the Swiss for several years.

But the 37-year-old has been able to put off 'Father Time' by continuing to win major trophies and remain in the top 10 in the world.

And in a further show that he's not ready to quit, Federer has decided to play during the clay court season for the first time since 2016.

Speaking in an interview with Spanish publication *Marca* ahead of the tournament, Federer was asked if he was surprised that he's still able to compete at such a high level at 37.

And the 20-time Grand Slam revealed the major factor in his decision to carry on playing.

"A little, yes," Federer admitted. "If you told me ten years ago that this would be happening, I wouldn't have believed it. I could

Federer makes retirement claim ahead of Madrid return



Playing Aus will boost confidence: Manpreet

PTI ■ BENGALURU

Playing against a world class team like Australia will provide good exposure to youngsters and will boost the confidence of the team ahead of next month's FIH men's Hockey Series Final, feels India captain Manpreet Singh.

The India team travel Down Under for five matches starting on Wednesday. The tour, marked as a preparation for next month's Hockey Series Final in Bhubaneswar, will be newly-appointed chief coach Graham Reid's maiden assignment with the team.

The men's side will play two matches each against the Australian national team and Australia A and a lone game against the Western Australia Thundersticks club.

"Playing a world class team like Australia ahead of the important Series in June will only help build our confidence. We had a good tournament in Malaysia in March and some of the youngsters did well there," Manpreet said.

"While Jaskaran Singh will make his international debut, it will be Gursahibjit's second tournament with the Indian team and Armaan Qureshi is also returning to the team after



a long gap. I am confident these players will live up to the expectations. It will be good exposure for them against the world No 2 side," he added.

The team boasts of an interesting mix of experienced players and newcomers. And Reid will look to test all combinations ahead of the Hockey Series Final, where India needs to finish on top to ensure a place in the final round of the Olympic qualifier scheduled in October this year.

India began its season with a Silver medal at the 28th Sultan Azlan Shah Cup in Ipoh, Malaysia and will hope

to keep up the good show.

Talking about the ideology of the new coach, Manpreet said Reid emphasises on having team players rather than relying on individual performances.

"The new coach constantly reminds us why a team player holds more value to him than an individual player with excellent skill set."

"He also instills winning mentality in every player and confident body language has also been an area of focus apart from game-specific tactics over the past three weeks of training under Graham Reid," Manpreet said.

vivacity

VARUN
EXCITED FOR
COOLIE NO. 1
-P 14



YOU MUST KNOW RULES OF PEDESTRIAN SAFETY

Unless you are on a sidewalk separated from the road or you are in a wide bike/pedestrian lane, you should walk in single file. This is, especially, important on a road with lots of curves and where traffic has only a split second chance of seeing you before hitting you. While it can be enjoyable to walk down the road, two to three abreast chatting merrily, drivers don't expect it and you may lose your best walking buddies, **writes TEAM VIVA**

Walking is a healthy activity, but you need to know the rules of pedestrian safety. This is especially true if you are walking in an area where there aren't sidewalks or paths separate from the road. To stay safe walking, few rules could help in reaching destination safely and securely.

Walking outside is a great way to enjoy the fresh air and get a workout at the same time! Before you lace up those sneakers, here are some important safety tips you'll want to consider if you head outdoors to walk.

If there is no sidewalk, you must walk on the side of the road, choose the side where you are facing oncoming traffic. Your mother was right—you should look both ways before crossing any street. At controlled intersections, it is wise to cross only when you have the pedestrian crossing light. Even then, drivers and bikers may have a green light to turn and won't be expecting you to be in the crosswalk. Make eye contact with any drivers who may be turning. Give them a wave. Make sure they see you. In an interaction between a vehicle and a walker, the walker can only lose. It can be tempting to simply jay-walk, but that is not only a safety hazard, it can result in getting a ticket. Especially, if there are no sidewalks or pathways on your route, the rules of the road say you should walk against the traffic. This way, you can see the traffic coming and be aware of any potential danger coming towards you.

Unless you are on a sidewalk separated from the road or you are in a wide bike/pedestrian lane, you should walk in single file. This is, especially, important on a road with lots of curves and where traffic has only a split second chance of seeing you before hitting you. While it can be enjoyable to walk down the road, two to three abreast chatting merrily, drivers don't expect it and you may lose your best walking buddies.

There is a disparaging cliché about people who are supposedly unable to walk and chew gum at the same time. However, multi-tasking while walking isn't as simple as that saying might have you believe. If a walker's attention is overly focused elsewhere, it can be possible to walk themselves into a dangerous situation or an injury. In fact, a recent study that examined pedestrians near busy streets suggests that texting while walking may be as dangerous as texting while driving.

In addition to surrounding streets and cars, walkers also need to be aware of any obstacles in the path ahead, uneven ground, and others around them on foot or bicycle. If they need to make a phone call or send a text message, they should stop for a moment and step aside before doing so. Also, walkers must beware of anything that might decrease their chance of hearing warnings or important sounds around them. It's recommended to either leave the headphones at home or keep them at a low volume, and only in one ear if possible.

Wear bright colours when walking

WALKING OUTSIDE IS A GREAT WAY TO ENJOY THE FRESH AIR AND GET A WORKOUT AT THE SAME TIME! BEFORE YOU LACE UP THOSE SNEAKERS, HERE ARE SOME IMPORTANT SAFETY TIPS YOU'LL WANT TO CONSIDER IF YOU HEAD OUTDOORS TO WALK



in the daytime. When walking at night, wear light-colored clothing and reflective clothing or a reflective vest to be visible. Drivers are often not expecting walkers to be out after dark, and you need to give them every chance to see you, even at street crossings that have crossing signals. Be just as cautious at dawn or twilight, as drivers still have limited visibility or may even have the setting or rising sun directly in their eyes.

Vary your route. This is for safety as well as enjoyment. It is much more interesting to experience different surroundings from time to time. This also prevents anyone else from memorising your whereabouts or routine.

Beware of drivers. Do not assume that drivers know when pedestrians have

the right of way. Walk with awareness and caution, assuming that no drivers see you. Be especially cautious of drive-ways—most drivers are watching for oncoming cars, not walkers.

Be aware of your surroundings. Watch for ice, water, bike riders, cracks in the pavement, or any other hazards in your path. It can be very easy to trip and fall without warning, which can be especially dangerous if you are alone.

Some individuals carry hand-held spray devices that contain mace or something similar. These are designed to fit comfortably in your hand, are very light and easy to use. Just make sure that if you do need to use it, the wind is not blowing into your face at the time.

Don't drown out your environ-

ment when listening to music with your earbuds or headphones. Keep the volume at a level where you can still hear bike bells and warnings from other walkers and runners. Your audiologist will also thank you.

Distracted walking due to chatting, texting, or playing games like Pokemon Go on a mobile device while you walk is as dangerous as doing those things while driving. You are distracted and not as aware of your environment. You are less likely to recognise traffic danger, tripping hazards, or passing joggers and bikers. Potential criminals see you as an easy target. Adopt habits that can keep your phone in your pocket, or at least make it a practice to stop in a safe place to complete your phone tasks before moving on.

It is terrifying and tragic to witness dogs running out into traffic or getting into a fatal dog fight, whether on leash or off leash. But when walking your dog on a long leash there is also a danger that you will trip other walkers or bikers. You will keep your dog safer as well as those who pass by you if you use proper leash walking etiquette.

Street safety is a concern for many walkers. Choose your walking route for paths frequented by other walkers, joggers, and bikers. If you see someone suspicious, be prepared to alter your course or go into a store or public building to avoid them. Acting alert and aware can convince bad guys you are not an easy target.

Use these rules to enjoy safer walking workouts and avoid injuries and accidents

Trend
Blazer

Varun excited for Coolie No. 1

Actor VARUN DHAWAN is "uncontrollably excited" about the remake of *Coolie No. 1*, and says it is his new challenge. Varun will be stepping into the shoes of veteran Govinda, who featured in the 1995 film, which was directed by Varun's father David Dhawan. David is on board to helm the remake as well. "I feel honoured, grateful and uncontrollably excited to be a part of the remake! That's the next challenge that I'm ready to take up," Varun said. Actress Sara Ali Khan will be filling in for Karishma Kapoor from the original.



'Aladdin has been one of my favourite films since childhood. Being a musician my fascination with the movie began with its songs, A whole new world being my favourite among all of them. I am really honoured to be given the opportunity to be the voice of Aladdin. Along with voicing for the movie, I'm even singing the songs and I just can't wait for all my fans to see my work in the Hindi version.'



Television actor KARAN OBEROI was arrested by Mumbai Police for the alleged rape and blackmail of a woman in 2017, official sources said.



A complaint was lodged with the Oshiwara Police and charges under the Indian Penal Code Sections 376 (rape) and 384 (extortion) were slapped against him. He has been remanded to police custody till May 9. As per the First Information Report lodged by the victim, the accused raped her on the promise of marriage, filmed the act and tried to extort money from her under the threat of making the video public.

PeeCee has a story for her kids

Actress PRIYANKA CHOPRA JONAS already has an epic love story lined up for her future children with husband and singer NICK JONAS. With the annual Met Gala happening, Priyanka expressed some nostalgia when she shared a set of photographs of her and Nick from the 2017 ball on her Instagram. Priyanka says she will definitely tell her and Nick's future children about their Met Gala love story. It was in 2017 at the Met Gala that Priyanka and Nick walked a red carpet together for the first time. "The story I'll definitely tell our future kids... *How I Met your father*, she wrote, adding several red heart emojis.



The *SOTY 2* actor tells CHAHAK MITTAL that while nepotism might get one a role, the audience is looking for a performer in the theatre

THE EYE OF THE TIGER

Utter the word nepotism and pictures of star children immediately float in front of your eyes. Tiger Shroff, of course, can't deny his genes but the talk about options drying out quickly for outsiders and insiders being given unlimited chances is not a new one. Tiger does believe that having a background makes it easier to bag big roles and get noticed. However, "when the lights go off at the theatre and the film starts, the audience only sees the actor. Nepotism exists, especially because there are sons and daughters of established and renowned names in the industry, but it also has its own pros and cons. Getting easily noticed doesn't always mean that you are accepted by the audience. Moreover the level of expectations is immediately upped as the audience looks at our family backgrounds and we have the burden of living up to our fathers and mothers. If we don't we won't get a second chance."

It was not his family background that swung it for him in his latest outing. It was on the sets of *Baaghi 2* that Tiger Shroff bumped into Karan Johar and bagged the role of Rohan in *Student of the Year 2*, opposite newcomers Ananya Panday and Tara Sutaria. Talking about how different the film looks as compared to its previous edition, he says, "Except for the school, that is Saint Teresa's, nothing is same. It is an all new take on the protagonists, friendship and love between them as well as their battle to win the 'student of the year' trophy. Here, more emphasis is on extra-curriculars and sports rather than just studies (laughs)."

The glitz and glam in the film would make one question where does such a school, which does not reflect a real world exist? Why does the film showcase such a thing which is not even relevant to an Indian student's life? Tiger explains, "I agree (laughs). It gives out the message that the focus shouldn't be just on academics but on other activities as well which are important for personal growth and development. Also, we are not trying to preach anything, but there are many facets in the film," he says. The other message that it gives is that "while one should live for others and their loved ones, at the same time one should also follow one's dreams wholeheartedly. We are trying to have fun and say this as an under-current in the film."

Well, shooting for this film, Tiger says, was no less than "partying" since his previous films have mostly been packed with action and stunts. "As compared to *Baaghi* and *Baaghi 2*, I would say that this one was very light-hearted, easy-going and chilled out. A lot of physical work went into my previous films. The scenes and my role were more candid and conversational. I

had to practise many things before to perform. And it's been a while since I have done any such project. When you do it, you'll realise that every scene is so full of fun," he explains. It wasn't at all difficult, he says. "The role in *Baaghi* was heavy and I had to put in my everything. Here, I didn't have to use my powers or 'superpowers.'"

When an actor picks up a certain kind of role in every film back to back, the industry and even the audience, to an extent, start stereotyping him/her under a particular genre. Even Tiger, who has done a series of action films has been through the same. He says, "Yes, you do want to get out of a particular space and try out more things. However, doing the same kind of drill doesn't confine you to a box. It takes time to get into other things and certainly even I will."

However, he believes that his action hero image gives him an edge in a competitive industry. "When people talk about action heroes of the present time, one of the names could be Tiger Shroff. Yes, I am typecast but this whole thing has given me an identity and made me stand out. It makes me feel good."

Besides, his appeal his inspirational. Tiger says, "Youngsters want to be like heroes. They put their poster on the wall and admire them. As an action hero, I want to have some meaning in my life, and I want to touch many hearts." For Tiger, the best part of being an actor is that he can "touch and stir some emotions in thousands of people and then return the love that they give you for your work. However, the worst is that you don't get enough time for your loved ones."

Talking about his evolution since the time of *Heropanti* (2014), the actor says, "I have grown more aware since that time. The more you do something, the more tricks you have up your sleeve. At that time, I was very raw, naive, fresh, simply unaware, and also very sheltered from the world. There was this entire baggage of being my father's son. I had so many insecurities. I would constantly think about how will I look in front of the camera confidently. How will I say a certain line? How will people think of me? How will I perform the action? What if I hurt someone? There were a plethora of thoughts. I think today I can channelise those thoughts, put them into a framework and work accordingly."



'No one is scared to be herself'

Actors ANANYA PANDAY and TARA SUTARIA believe that women are finally having a say in all aspects of the industry. And effecting a gender balance. By AYUSHI SHARMA

There seems to be no end to the nepotism debate sparked off by actress Kangana Ranaut who had called Karan Johar "a flag-bearer" of it. However, actress Tara Sutaria defends her mentor and says he doesn't favour star kids in the industry. She says, "If you look at Sidharth (Malhotra) and me, we are not from the industry. That's reason enough to dismiss the claim."

She feels that it's a bit unfair. "The viewers these days are incredibly smart. They certainly decide whether someone deserves to be in a film or not. Whether you look at Sara or Janhvi or even Ananya, they are constantly working hard. They really deserve to be where they are not because they are from the industry but instead they have earned it."

Actress Ananya Panday, Chunky Panday's daughter, further elaborates and explains that it's a simple concept one needs to understand, that people won't invest money and their time in somebody they don't believe in. "At the end of the day we are representing Karan and Dharma productions. Unless and until you are not good enough, you don't give them a reason to believe in you, no one would do that," says Ananya. The newest kids on the block from the KJo stables are in town to promote *Student Of The Year 2* along with their co star, Tiger Shroff.

Ananya appraises us that even though she is a product of this film industry she still auditioned for the role. And this makes her feel proud that she was tested and landed the role on her own steam. She feels, "Being a part of the industry gives you access and can get you into those rooms where you can meet big personalities but then what you do in

those rooms is solely on your shoulders." Ananya says that she wanted to be an actor since her childhood. "I have dreamt of it. But I don't think Karan was aware of that. He always thought that I am this kid who is passionate about acting but not of an age where I could pursue this as a career. I wanted to really audition for this film. So I went to meet him and asked him whether I should join college or audition? He told me to try my hand at it and I did," she adds.

Talking about the film Ananya tells us that there's a strong message in the film about following your dreams. She says, "It's not about living for anyone but for yourself. Go confidently in the direction of your passion and live the life you have imagined. This is a bubble gum film but it also has a message which is so important for youth. It teaches you in a fun manner rather than by preaching."

Tara appraises us that the film has many disparate facets to it. There is an emphasis on *kabaddi*. Then there are Tiger's dance and action moves for which he is loved. About her character, she says that Mia is much like the youth of today. "She is very strong, independent and knows what she wants and when she wants. I don't completely relate to her because we are opposites in certain ways and that's where the exciting part comes in as you get to play versatile roles. She does make mistakes in the film but then she tries to redeem herself, which all of us do as the youth. So I have learned that it's okay to make mistakes."

Ananya completely relates to her character. She says, "Shreya is extremely loud, expressive and confident. She doesn't take 'no' for an answer, is super passionate and a fighter as well. These

qualities match perfectly with the ones I had since school. Now that I am growing up, they are even more visible. I could also relate so much with Poo's character in *Kabhi Khushi Kabhie Gham* and Shanaya in *Student of the Year*. So Shreya's character is a lot like how girls are today. They can look up to her."

Ask Ananya and Tara about what does it mean to be a modern Indian woman? They both strongly feel that women are more fierce and independent than before. Ananya says, "It is obvious from the fact that there are two girls in the film with strong roles and different characters. It's so lovely to see that two women are given so much importance and it's high time. I feel empowered. The freedom women have these days is laudable. No one is scared to be herself."

Tara agrees with her and adds, "It's actually a very exciting time as a young woman. The fact that we are producing, directing, writing, acting, doing everything in every sphere of life is something which has changed over the years. There's hasn't been a better time for women in general. And it's showing in our films. There's no stopping us."

There is always a flip side to being an actor and talking about actors' private lives being under constant watch. Link-up rumours are a part and parcel of being under the spotlight. It has been no different for Tara, who is rumoured to be dating actor Sidharth Malhotra. Tara said, "We were completely expecting this to be a part of our journey. We have just begun. But I think something it is fun to read these things. It's flattering in a way that people care and want to know about us."

Tara ventured into showbiz in 2010 with *Big Bada Boom* and was seen in shows like *The Suite Life of Karan & Kabir*, *Best of Luck Nikki* and *Oye Jassi*.

(The film directed by Punit Malhotra, will hit the theatres on May 10.)

Photo: Pankaj Kumar



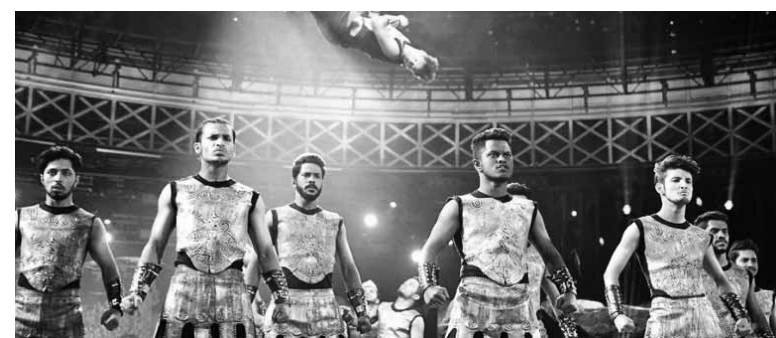
The Kings, a hip-hop dance crew from Mumbai, are the new rulers of the American reality television show *World of Dance*. Their choreographer Suresh Mukund says after this victory, the 15-member crew is done with dance competitions.

Talking about the group's last performance at the competition, Mukund said, "We did a *Baahubali* act in India two years ago that went viral, so I knew the concept of cinematic feel and slow motion will work for sure. I kept that for the finale round. Coincidentally, they asked us to do a performance with a cinematic theme in the finale round. I knew they wouldn't understand it (*Baahubali*) as it's not a Hollywood film. Then I planned to do it in Spartan style."

The show's judge Ne-Yo called it the "greatest action film" he has ever seen, while Derek Hough thought they "altered reality". Jennifer Lopez was happy to be surprised by their act.

This isn't Mukund's first stint at a dance show. He and Vernon Monteiro were part of the World Fictitious Dance Group which

Dance the Baahubali way
Indian hip-hop crew to stop competing after US dance show win



participated in dance reality shows like *Boogie Woogie*, *Entertainment Ke liye Kuch Bhi Karega* and *India's Got Talent*. Later his crew, Kings United India, bagged the bronze at the World Hip Hop Dance Championship. Asked about

competitions, he said, "I feel that in order to grow in any talent-based field, you need to compete so that you can improve yourself. When we won bronze, I thought that we would stop competing as that was a really big achievement. But then I started

following other dancers. I noticed that their level was going up. They were coming close to us, so that was the time when I thought that we have to do something to show that we are the best."

World of Dance provided them the platform to prove that

'WE DID A BAAHUBALI ACT IN INDIA TWO YEARS AGO THAT WENT VIRAL, SO I KNEW THAT THE CONCEPT OF CINEMATIC FEEL AND SLOW MOTION WILL DEFINITELY WORK. COINCIDENTALLY, THEY ASKED US TO PERFORM WITH THE SAME THEME IN THE FINALE ROUND'

they are the real "kings" of dance. "It was about all the dance forms coming together on one platform. I thought that if we win this, we will be the best in the world. We also had the opportunity to go for *America's Got*

Talent, but then we got *World of Dance* first," he said. "The Kings (managed by Qyuki) will no longer compete at dance competitions now. We have already achieved the world's best dance group title. My team is pretty settled right now and is doing shows worldwide," added Mukund, who was one of the inspirations for the Bollywood film *ABCD 2*.

The crew, consisting of Ritesh Vishwakarma, Karthik Priyadarshan, Shijin Ramesh, Chandan Acharya, Sunny Chatterjee, Mohan Pandey, Charles Edward, Pratik Gojare, Prem Bhawar, Pavan Rao, Raja Das, Hardik Rawat, Akshay Varavdekar, Hritik Gupta and Naidu Vishwakarma, has taken home a cash prize of \$1 million. The choreographer is flooded with offers from channels to judge dance-based reality shows.

"That's on my bucket list. I want to enter Bollywood as a choreographer and ultimately, a film director," said the 31-year-old, who had served as an assistant director on *ABCD 2*. I want to work with Ranveer Singh. It's a dream," added Mukund. —IANS

MEMOIRS OF PAIN

TAYEBA BEGUM LIPI's sculptures of blades represent the pathos-filled stories of patriarchy in the world of Muslim women of northern Bangladesh, says UMA NAIR

Belonging to a large family in northern, rural Bangladesh, Tayeba Begum Lipi, Bangladesh's most avant garde artist has an early memory of secretly witnessing her sister-in-law giving birth at home. Done under the care of a midwife, who cut the umbilical cord with a razor blade sterilised in boiling water. The 11th among the 12 children in her home, she says that she could still hear the water boiling. The blade is Lipi's metaphor. It is her message and a medium in the art of provenance.

The artist has taken over the art world with her sculptures that are created out of stainless steel blades. She says she loves places that have living memories and histories. Lipi's exhibition just opened at the Sundaram Tagore Gallery in New York to rave reviews and a host of curious gallery-goers.

Feminine everyday objects

Best known for her use of razor blades, Lipi employs them in sculptures of feminine everyday objects: handbags, dresses, bras, bathtubs, baby strollers, shoes and even a sewing machine.

The birthing event remains emblazoned on Lipi's mind. Reminiscent of Freud's 'primal scene', the razor blade symbolises her recognition of her own entry into the world, entanglements of love, domesticity and physical pain. Her sculptures with glimmering chains of blades, expose matrimonial paradoxes in rural Bangladesh: pathos-filled stories of patriarchy in the world of Muslim women and also bring upon us images of all that is beautiful and inviting, but speak of pain and death and danger.

Bangladeshi Muslims

Lipi's work has been profoundly influenced by the September 11 attacks in New York in 2001 and the July 7, London bombings in 2005. Her countrymen's responses to these events and how



Unveiling womanhood



Not for me 2



Replicated

the world subsequently treats Bangladeshi Muslims. She recalls experiencing racial discrimination during travels in Europe prior to 2001 — where she participated in residencies, exhibitions and workshops — and it noticeably intensified afterward. As an artist, she also observed Bangladeshis at home and abroad suddenly questioning their own identity and felt compelled to announce their allegiance to their faith. "People felt that they had to stick to only one identity," Lipi noted and added, "So, they turned to religion."

Dissent and protest

I distinctly recall seeing the bikinis at the India Art Fair. There is a striking way in which these undergarments

REMINISCENT OF FREUD'S 'PRIMAL SCENE,' THE RAZOR BLADES SYMBOLISE THE RECOGNITION OF HER OWN ENTRY INTO THE WORLD, ENTANGLEMENTS OF LOVE, DOMESTICITY AND PHYSICAL PAIN

appear to be animated, despite the fact that no bodies inhabit them. The apparent fragility of *Comfy Bikinis* (2013) is belied by the realisation that the interlocking safety pins, which are used to create the piece, actually form a shield for the wearer. Upon realising that the objects we normally wear or sit on are forged from hazardous materials, Lipi's sculptures become sites of dissent and protest.

She wields razor blades to address violence against women — and this is what sets her apart as an artist. To draw attention to the excesses of violence against women is one of Lipi's primary goals. In doing so, she gives voice to the anonymous, often invisible, women of Bangladesh.

Fear and oppression

She crafts the likeness of commonplace items like handbags, bathtubs and strollers from the small, menacing strips of metal, mainly to address the culture of fear and oppression that defines daily lives in Bangladesh. "I did not even think about why I was choosing it. I was only looking for a sharp, violent readymade object that could express my reaction to the vulnerable political situation in both Bangladesh and Pakistan," the artist said. "At some point, I questioned why I was attracted to this object, and then I found my answer in a childhood memory," added she.

Perils of a society

Lipi fuses intimate subject matter

with aggressive materiality, reflecting on the personal and political perils of a stifling society. "My work always expresses a paradoxical human condition that a human being experiences in a country like Bangladesh," she explains. "Being in such a society, a woman's experience is completely different than the experience of a man."

She identifies a duality in her environment and translates it viscerally into the personal experiences of her work. When you glance at her sculptures, they make a statement — they are luminous yet delicate in a surreal way. They look uncanny from afar, but terribly painful-inducing from up close.

Photo: Sundaram Tagore Gallery, New York

Headgear for prosperity

VIRENDRA BANGROO's series of photographs, representing the culture and lifestyle of the Dard Aryans of Ladakh, combines history and calls for saving a dwindling tribe, says U NAIR

Not much is known about the Dard Aryans, one of the ancient peoples who are known to still live by age-old cultural practices and beliefs despite facing many odds. They are considered to be ever-vigilant soldiers defending our frontiers along with our Army. It is their spirit of deep valour and courage that needs to be saluted by common mortals like us.

Their life is captured in photographs by Virendra Bangroo at the India International Centre (IIC). The images combine history and the call for attention to a dwindling tribe that needs sustenance.

RICH CULTURAL LEGACY

The Aryan Valley of Ladakh boasts a colourful and rich legacy of the Dard Aryans inhabiting the area. According to Bangroo, the Dardic languages are a subgroup of the Indo-Aryan languages natively spoken in northern Pakistan's Gilgit Baltistan and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Jammu and Kashmir and eastern Afghanistan. They speak a distinct dialect of Dard-Shina, which is also known among the people of Ladakh as *Brokskat*. Interestingly, they have a dialect but no script.

HILLSIDE PEOPLE

Bangroo, an assistant professor at the Indira Gandhi National Centre for the Arts (IGNCA), says "The word *Dard* itself comes from *Daradas*, which roughly translates into people who live on the hillsides." Bangroo, who has spent years studying this community, states that the people of this ethnic community are also linguistically and culturally different from those living in other parts of Ladakh. His images have a poignancy that we cannot miss.



The photographer gives us a cluster of images that speak of the ethnicity and rich symbolism in clothes, jewellery and distinctive and colourful head gears. "A *Brokpa* tribal is identified by a colourful head gear called *Tepi* that has various colourful props attached, embellished with berry flowers," says Bangroo. The *Tepi*, they believe, wards off the evil eye. The women wear heavy metal, gold and silver jewellery along with full-length sheep skin capes and sheep wool *pherans*. While it might look heavy, it also looks exotic and vintage in terms of design and allure. What entices are the old metal coins which are a compulsory part of the accessories.

METAL TO PREVENT SICKNESS

The men too have their own



unique customs in costume, they mostly wear maroon gowns with cummerbunds. There is a belief that metal worn on the body prevents sickness.

With absolutely no medical facilities in the past being far removed from urban settlements, it seems that their head gears are worn for intrinsic meaning — each prop on the head gear has a significant medicinal purpose.

The seven-coloured ribbons ward off any ailments caused by the sun or sudden kinds of sickness that are related to the eclipses. The silver brooches ward off planetary influences and the peacock feathers ward off paralyses.

BUDDHIST LEANINGS

Many of them converted to Buddhism nearly two centuries ago, the Dards as a group are followers of the Drigung Kagyu lineage of Mahayana Buddhism. Bangroo's research also states that some members of the community, particularly those on the other side of the Line of Control (LOC), are primarily Shia Muslims. What is deeply stirring is their belief in living in harmony with nature. Also, the fact that they still follow age-old, traditional customs of worshipping rivers, trees and mountains and also practice a form of animism, a tradition which, according to some, hails from as far as 5,000 years ago.

Bangroo belongs to the group of scholars at the IGNCA, which has had an immensely vital contribution in the mapping of intangible cultural heritage of our country. Bangroo, has in his research, traversed the length and breadth of the Himalayas and worked for the preservation of ethnic cultural pockets which has seen leaps and bounds in connectivity.

His work for this community in creating awareness about the rich cultural diversity of the region becomes a boon and a lifeline of sorts. Through his works, we see two community museums in the Aryan Valley, which have become role model institutions for safeguarding the cultural heritage and sustainable development in the region. (The show runs till 13 May.)



Opposites attract

An exhibition aims at showcasing how threatened trees and demolished houses in the city strive to co-exist amidst urbanisation

An exhibition of photographs by Juhi Saklani showcases the demolished houses of Delhi's Sarojini Nagar and Netaji Nagar, juxtaposed with the banyan, peepul, neem and semal trees of these areas. It is currently open at the Delhi Photo Company's new gallery here.

The show, titled *Human/Nature*, focuses on the loss of Delhi's trees as the city's old housing colonies undergo redevelopment. It was previously on public view at the *Photosphere* at the India Habitat Centre (IHC) here. "In my photographs, these threatened trees and demolished houses are still trying to co-exist," said the artist, for whom Delhi's redevelopment means loss of a quality of life that was full of trees, birds, cleaner air, and a gentler pace of living.

"In our cities, faced with critical levels of air pollution and severe depletion of groundwater, the only smart city planning is to integrate old standing trees into our project designs. To cut trees and compensate by planting saplings elsewhere, or to transplant the trees into alien soil where they slowly die, is no solution," she added.

There are no people in the photographs to mirror the absence of people from the planning processes and decision making, said Saklani. The



ruined houses and trees glowing in evening light create a surreal effect, framed in old, broken window frames of the kind used in government housing. The exhibition will run till June 2 at Janpath's DPC Gallery. —JANS

WATCH OUT



Art Explore Gallery presents *Visual Aural*. A show inspired by ambient sounds of daily life, featuring works by artists Abhijit Pathak and Rajesh Srivastava. WHEN: May 16 to 30 TIME: (Monday to Saturday) 11 am to 6 pm WHERE: Art Explore, 23 Lakeside, Hauz Khas village.



Silent Conflicts is a group show by 12 contemporary artists who use varied media such as staple pins, wood, bronze, video, photographs, canvas and more to create deeply personal and political works that delve into the inner conflicts that we need to conquer in an ever-changing, evolving world. WHEN: May 8 TIME: 7 pm WHERE: Visual Arts Gallery, India Habitat Centre.



AIFACS Art Gallery presents *The Tryst With Nature*, a solo exhibition of paintings by artist Sanjukta Barik who showcases her passion of art and how she uses it as a medium of expressing her life journeys and emotions. WHEN: May 10 to 16 WHERE: AIFACS Gallery.

Microcosm: Macrocosm, an art exhibition at Artist Playground, aims to explore the continuity of time, space and energy, celebrating the living world. TIME: All day WHEN: Till May 17 WHERE: Lower ground floor, Pullman New Delhi, Aerocity.



Korean Cultural Centre presents *Impressions: a Journey backwards*, an exhibition with a view to bring the spirit of South Korea to Delhi. With 31 art works on display, the show will have calligraphy, pottery ink paintings and photographs. WHEN: Till May 31 TIME: 9 am to 5 pm WHERE: Korean Cultural Centre, Lajpat Nagar - IV.

