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# Federal front gathers mass

Bid on to revive non-BJP, non-Cong  
entity in case of fractured verdict

DEEPAK KUMAR JHA ■  
NEW DELHI

With just two phases of Lok Sabha polls remaining, there is an attempt to revive the idea of a non-BJP and non-Congress "federal front" that could occupy centre stage in the Government formation in case of a fractured verdict by the voters.

After holding talks with Kerala Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan, Telangana Chief Minister K Chandrashekar Rao (KCR) is trying to hold similar parleys with DMK chief Stalin in Chennai. There is no official confirmation about the meeting so far, but sources said it may take place on May 13 if Stalin agrees to hold talks with the TRS chief, who is seen close to the BJP camp.

Meanwhile, Karnataka Chief Minister HD Kumaraswamy has also contacted KCR and expressed his willingness to hold talks with him on formulating Opposition's future course of action in case of a split verdict at the Centre.

Congress sources said the party will be ready to extend

support to any formulation like a "federal front" if it could become platform to keep BJP out of power. A senior Congress leader said none of the major political parties — the BJP and the Congress — are likely to get the numbers to form a Government. "That would make the so-called federal front a viable alternative," he said.

"In that case the grand old party will not hesitate to repeat Karnataka and we may extend support to the federal front," said the leader.

In Karnataka Assembly polls last year when the BJP, despite being the single largest party, could not form a Government, the Congress extended its support to the third largest party giving an opportunity to Kumaraswamy to be the CM.

In March, KCR had mooted the idea of a "federal front" and initiated efforts to provide an alternative to both the BJP and the Congress and subsequently met leaders of Trinamool Congress, Biju Janta Dal, Samajwadi Party, Janata Dal (S) and DMK. Sources said he also invited the YSR



Telangana Chief Minister K Chandrashekar Rao meets his Kerala counterpart Pinarayi Vijayan at latter's residence in Thiruvananthapuram PTI

Congress Party to join the proposed front.

"With the Lok Sabha election results to be declared on May 23, KCR is planning meetings with leaders of various parties to prepare the ground for formation of a non-BJP,

non-Congress Government.

While a National Front (NF) coalition led by Janata Dal formed a Government between 1989 and 1990 with VP Singh and Chandra Shekhar as Prime Ministers, a United Front Government was formed

After holding talks with Kerala CM Pinarayi Vijayan, Telangana Chief Minister K Chandrashekar Rao is trying to hold similar parleys with DMK chief Stalin in Chennai

Karnataka Chief Minister HD Kumaraswamy too has contacted KCR, expressing his willingness to hold talks with him on formulating Opposition's future course of action in case of a split verdict

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between 1996-98 with HD Deve Gowda and IK Gujral as PMs. The parties in the Front were Janata Dal, Telugu Desam Party, DMK, Asom Gana Parishad and Indian Congress (Socialist). They were supported from outside by the Left Front and the BJP.

# Priyanka likens Modi to rude Duryodhana

Election results will determine whether Modi is Duryodhana or Arjun, says Shah

PNS ■ CHANDIGARH

Launching a blistering attack at the Narendra Modi Government, Congress general secretary Priyanka Gandhi Vadra on Tuesday invoked the fate of Mahabharata's main villain Duryodhana to warn that the country has never forgiven such arrogance.

Addressing a rally in Ambala (Haryana), Priyanka, used the Mahabharata analogy to hit back at Modi over his "bhrashtachari (corrupt) No. 1" jibe at her father Rajiv Gandhi and said the Mahabharata character Duryodhana too had "such arrogance".

The Congress leader also dared Modi to fight the Lok Sabha elections on issues like development rather than



Congress general secretary Priyanka Gandhi Vadra addresses an election rally in Hisar on Tuesday PTI

diverting the people's attention.

Priyanka said the country has never forgiven ego and arrogance. "History is witness to this, Mahabharata is witness to this...Duryodhana too had such arrogance. When Lord Krishna went to make him understand, he tried to take him captive," she said.

The Congress general secretary for UP also read out a couplet by Hindi poet Ramdhari Singh Dinkar, saying wisdom is the first casualty before someone's downfall, "Jab naash manush par chhata hai,

pehle vivek mar jata hai."

BJP president Amit Shah slammed Priyanka for comparing the PM with Duryodhana and said the election outcome on May 23 will determine whether Modi is Duryodhan or Arjun.

"Priyanka has compared Modi ji with Duryodhana. People of the country will decide who is Duryodhana and who is Arjun on May 23? Priyanka ji, do not worry, people will tell you whether Modi ji is Duryodhan or Arjun," Shah said at an election rally in Bengal's Midnapore.

# Aggrieved woman seeks copy of clean chit to CJJ

Protest outside SC against procedure adopted to reject sexual harassment charge by ex-staffer

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The former woman employee of the Supreme Court who levelled sexual harassment allegations against Chief Justice of India Ranjan Gogoi, on Tuesday sought a copy of the report of the In-House Enquiry Committee, which gave clean chit to the CJJ.

Meanwhile, 55 protesters, mostly women lawyers and activists, were detained outside the SC for protesting against the procedure adopted to deal with a sexual harassment case against the CJJ. "If the Supreme Court itself is violating the norms, then there will be no value in the system left," said a protester.

The woman complainant said, "The in-house proceeding rules are now being used to deny me and the public a right to the report... It appears from the press release that even I, the complainant, will not be provided with a copy of the report. I have a right to the report, the reasons for the same as well as copies of the depositions of any



Women being detained for protest against Supreme Court In-house Committee's clean chit to the CJJ in the sexual harassment case in New Delhi on Tuesday PTI

witnesses, any other persons or any other evidence considered by the Committee."

She added if the CJJ is given a copy of the report, directly or indirectly, the complainant too is entitled to it.

The CJJ on Monday got a clean chit from a three-member committee headed by Justice SA Bobde which found "no substance" in the allegations of the former woman employee and further ruled that the report was not "liable to be made public".

The Committee, which completed its task in 14 days, proceeded ex-parte as the woman had opted out of the enquiry on April 30 after participating for three days over feeling intimidated by the panel. In a letter to Justice Bobde, the woman has alleged lack of

transparency in the functioning of the enquiry panel and said that now, not providing her a copy of the order "would be a violation of the principles of natural justice and a complete travesty of justice".

She alleged that in the first hearing, she was not given any clarity on whether the present proceedings were the in-house.

"I find it rather strange that the complainant in a case of sexual harassment is not to be provided with a copy of the report which finds her complaint to be without substance and that my complaint has been held by the committee to be this without giving me any reasons for the same," she said, adding that both the parties had a right to receive a copy of the report.

# Digvijaya seeks refuge in sadhus to take on Sadhvi

STAFF REPORTER ■ BHOPAL

Hundreds of sadhus on Tuesday landed in Bhopal to seek votes for the Congress Lok Sabha candidate Digvijaya Singh and campaign against BJP nominee Pragya Singh Thakur. Digvijaya's excessive inclination to religious events is seen as a move to negate BJP's candidate Pragya's image as religious poster girl.

Digvijaya also took part in religious rituals with his wife Amrita Singh and sought blessings of the sadhus who were led by Computer Baba, aka Namdev Das Tyagi, former close aide of Shivraj Singh Chouhan.

Led by Computer Baba, they will camp in Bhopal for three days. They undertook Hath Yoga on Tuesday, followed by a road show. Hath Yoga involves asanas (positions) that help in relaxing and breathing control.

Computer Baba was bestowed Minister of State status by the then BJP-led Government in Madhya Pradesh and appointed on a panel to clean the Narmada.

However, Computer Baba later switched his loyalties and backed the Congress in Assembly polls.

Computer Baba told the media it was a fight of dharma and adharma. "Dharma was with Digvijaya Singh," he said.



Bhopal Spiritual leader Namdev Das Tyagi, popularly known as Computer Baba, performs puja at the election campaign venue of Congress candidate for Bhopal Lok Sabha seat Digvijaya Singh, in Bhopal on Tuesday PTI

Such events would continue in favour of Singh who is a 'dharma premi' and 'Narmada premi', said the seer who accused Chouhan of illegal mining in Narmada riverbed and corruption in plantation along with Narmada banks.

Notably, BJP candidate Pragya also has called this election against Digvijaya a battle of dharma and adharma.

"They (BJP) have fooled people. They have not even spared the saint community. They talked of Ram temple, they have not constructed it in five years and have come back with the same issue. The public won't be fooled now. No temple, no

Modi," Computer Baba told reporters here.

Asked if the ritual was to pray for Digvijaya's victory, he said, "The saints prayed to God that the person who is treading on the path of religion, the one who served the river Narmada and saints is Digvijaya Singh, and should win by lakhs of votes."

Asked about Pragya, an accused in the Malegaon blast case, he said one cannot become a sadhvi (saint) merely by wearing a robe. At the ritual, Digvijaya was seen dressed in a white kurta pyjama and seated on the ground, while the sadhus formed a semi-circle near him.

# SC junks Opp review plea on 50% VVPAT verification

New Delhi: The Supreme Court on Tuesday refused to modify its April 8 order which directed the Election Commission (EC) to increase random matching of Voter-Verified Paper Audit Trail (VVPAT) slips with Electronic Voting Machines (EVMs) to five polling booths per Assembly segment in the Lok Sabha elections, and dismissed the review plea of 21 Opposition leaders seeking that it be raised to 50 per cent.

As soon as hearing started, Chief Justice of India Ranjan Gogoi asked senior advocate AM Singhvi, who is representing the Opposition, during the hearing, "How much counting do you want now?"

"We have asked for 50 per cent, but we can settle for 33 per cent or 25 per cent verification. My Lords had agreed with our plea in principle, but increased the counting from one VVPAT to only five," Singhvi submitted.

# CAPSULE

**KARTI TO DEPOSIT ₹10 CR SECURITY TO FLY ABROAD**

New Delhi: The SC on Tuesday permitted Karti Chidambaram, son of senior Congress leader P Chidambaram, to travel abroad in May and June after depositing ₹10 crore as security with it.

**DOMESTIC VIOLENCE: FIR JUNKED AGAINST AAP MLA**

New Delhi: In a relief to AAP MLA Somnath Bharti, the Delhi High Court on Tuesday quashed an FIR which accused him of domestic violence, after his wife expressed no objection to it.

**FLOATING RESTAURANT SINKS IN TEHRİ RESERVOİR**

Dehradun: Marina, a floating restaurant of the Uttarakhand Tourism Department, sank partially in the Tehri reservoir on Tuesday, officials said.

**GIRIRAJ SURRENDERS IN COURT, GETS BAIL**

Begusarai: Union Minister Giriraj Singh on Tuesday surrendered before a local court in a model code of conduct violation case for making controversial remarks against Muslims at an election rally in Bihar.

# 2 workers die cleaning septic tank in Rohini

STAFF REPORTER ■  
NEW DELHI

Two labourers died while cleaning a septic tank of an under-renovated building in Prem Nagar of Rohini on Tuesday.

The men died of asphyxia, while three other men who had entered the septic tank to rescue the duo fell unconscious and are undergoing treatment in hospital.

According to SD Mishra, the Deputy Commissioner of Police (DCP), Rohini district, police got a police control room (PCR) call around 2 pm, and a team reached the spot and took the five labourers to Ambedkar Hospital, where two of them Deepak (30) and Ganesh Saha (35) were declared brought dead. While Rambir (33), Sher Singh (40) and Bablu (40) are undergoing treatment at hospital. They are residents of Bhagya Vihar in Prem Nagar," said the DCP.

"The owner had called these labourers to clean the septic tank of the house. Two of them had entered the septic tank and they fell unconscious. Seeing the plight of the duo, three others who were there, entered into the tank in

The men died of asphyxia, while three other men who had entered the septic tank to rescue the duo fell unconscious and are undergoing treatment in hospital.

"A case has been registered under appropriate sections and action will be taken as per law. It is also being ascertained whether the labourers were wearing safety gears or not," said the DCP.

Manual scavenging is an offence under the Prohibition of Employment as Manual Scavengers and their Rehabilitation Act, 2013. In February, Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal flagged off a fleet of 200 sewer cleaning machines.

On May 3, two workers died while working inside a sewage tank in Noida's Sector 39. A team of National Disaster Response Force (NDRF) was called to pull out the two workers from the tank. It was believed that the men died due to water suddenly gushing inside the tank.

# Noida's budding Hawking cut off in prime



PTI ■ NEW DELHI

**The precocious boy who dreamt like Stephen Hawking died during Class X exam, but scored nearly 100 in 3 subjects**

Vinayak Sreedhar, who idolised Stephen Hawking, scored nearly 100 in all the three subjects he appeared for during the CBSE 10 examination, and passed away in March before he could write the remaining two.

Sreedhar suffered from duchenne muscular dystrophy which is a genetic disorder characterised by progressive muscle degeneration and weakness.

He scored 100 in English, 96 in Science and 97 in Sanskrit and could not appear for Computer Science and Social Studies.

Topping the class 10 board exams, becoming an astronaut and a trip to Rameswaram are among some of the unfulfilled wishes of Sreedhar, who was diagnosed with muscular dystrophy when he was two-years-old.

Duchenne muscular dystrophy is caused due to the absence of dystrophin, a protein that helps keep muscle cells intact.

The results for the class 10 Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) examination were announced on Monday.

The Amity International School, Noida, student appeared for the exams under the general category and not the Children With Special Need (CWSN) category.

"His muscular movement was very limited. He could

write slowly but since there is a time duration for exams he used a scribe to write English and Science exam. For Sanskrit, he insisted to write himself. His body movement was restricted and he was wheelchair-bound, but his mind was very sharp and aspirations very high," Mamta Sreedhar, his mother, told PTI.

"He would always say I want to become an astronaut despite all the challenges and would say if Stephen Hawking could go to Oxford and make a name in Cosmology I can go to space too. He was confident that he will be among top rankers. We were always amazed with his confidence and would encourage him further," she added.

Legendary British theoretical physicist Stephen Hawking also suffered from a motor neuron disease.

Sreedhar had plans to visit Rameswaram temple near

Kanyakumari after his exams were over. "We are today in Rameswaram and are going for darshan in the evening. It was his unfulfilled wish so we decided to not postpone the plans and do it for him," his mother said.

However, Vinayak Sreedhar is not the only one in his family to make his parents proud.

His sister is an Indian Institute of Science (IISc) alumna and is currently pursuing her Phd at the University of British Columbia on a fellowship.

While Vinayak's father is vice president in GMR, his mother is a home maker by choice. "I made this choice. My entire day revolved around him. From brushing his teeth to feeding him, I did it all myself but it was his willpower which always gave us the strength," his mother said. PTI

PURPORTED VIDEO CLIP OF TEJ BAHADUR YADAV

BJP lashes out at Opp

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The BJP on Tuesday lashed out at the Opposition for its "silence" over the content of a video clip in which Tej Bahadur Yadav, whose candidature on an SP ticket from Varanasi Lok Sabha seat was rejected, is reportedly talking about assassinating Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

"It's a very serious matter. It is about the Prime Minister's safety. It is about conspiracy to assassinate an elected prime minister. Why is the opposition silent?" BJP spokesperson Sambit Patra said here at a press conference.

He questioned if SP president Akhilesh Yadav and BSP supremo Mayawati will apologise for projecting him as their alliance's candidate against Modi in Varanasi.

The "sponsored attack" on Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal echoes for days but the Opposition is silent at this threat to Modi, he said.

The Prime Minister is being attacked even though what he said about former prime minister Rajiv Gandhi was a "statement of fact", Patra



claimed.

On Supreme Court rejecting the opposition's review plea on VVPAT, he said their attack on electronic voting machines is an attempt to get an "anticipatory bail" for their impending loss in the general election.

The BJP is going to win more than 300 seats in the 543-member House, Patra claimed.

On other hand, BJP Vice-President Bajant Panda said West Bengal Chief Minister was disturbed as the ground has shifted in the state in favour of the BJP.

Accusing the opposition parties of targeting Prime Minister with a torrent of "abuses" in frustration over their "poor" show in the ongo-

"It's a very serious matter. It is about the Prime Minister's safety. It is about conspiracy to assassinate an elected Prime Minister. Why is the opposition silent?"



ANI

ing Lok Sabha polls, the BJP leader said people will give them a befitting reply on May 23 when votes are counted.

Panda and BJP media head Anil Baluni claimed that the "Modi wave" will help the saffron party gain many seats from states like Odisha and West Bengal, leading it to better its tally of 282 seats in 2014.

Panda said the opposition, which is in "panic mode", has been "abusing" Modi, referring to Congress leader Priyanka Gandhi Vadr's comparison of the prime minister with Duryodhan, the antagonist to righteous Pandavas in epic Mahabharat.

He also referred to West

Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee's remarks that Modi should get a "tight slap of democracy" to attack the opposition.

Baluni said Congress leaders have "abused" Modi as he had spoken about their past misdeeds, a reference to his attack on former prime minister Rajiv Gandhi.

"Why are Congress leaders apprehensive of their past? Their language is reflective of their frustration at their impending defeat. We repeat our challenge to the Congress to debate with us on the performance of its governments," he told reporters.

To a question about BJP

general secretary Ram Madhav's reported remarks that the saffron party may not get a majority on its own, Panda said Madhav has also clarified that he was misquoted, and asserted that no one in the party has any doubt over crossing the half way mark in Lok Sabha.

INSET

New Delhi, May 7 (PTI) Congress MP Sushmita Dev on Tuesday claimed before the Supreme Court that the Election Commission has failed to appreciate that the alleged "hate speeches" by Prime Minister Narendra Modi and BJP Chief Amit Shah are "corrupt practices" and promote the feeling of enmity on religious grounds.

In an affidavit, Dev, who placed before the apex court various orders of the poll panel on complaints of model code violation against Modi and Shah, said that the Election Commission has passed orders in a "cryptic manner without mentioning any reason whatsoever, in stark violation of the law laid down by this court" while disposing of some complaints.

The counsel appearing for the CBI informed the bench that charge sheet has been filed in the case against several police officials ranging from constable to former Inspector

Custodial death in Kotkhair rape case: SC transfers case from Shimla to Chandigarh

CJI Gogoi transferred case after the CBI and the accused said they have no objection

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Tuesday transferred a case related to alleged custodial death of an accused in gang-rape and murder of a minor school girl in Himachal Pradesh's Kotkhair in 2017, from Shimla to Chandigarh.

A bench headed by Chief Justice Ranjan Gogoi transferred the case to Chandigarh after the CBI and the accused said they have no objection if the case was transferred from Shimla.

"We order transfer of the case to a competent CBI court in Chandigarh," the bench, which also comprised Justices Deepak Gupta and Sanjiv Khanna, said.

The counsel appearing for the CBI informed the bench that charge sheet has been filed in the case against several police officials ranging from constable to former Inspector

General of Police (IGP).

The apex court had last month granted bail to former Himachal Pradesh IGP Zahur Haider Zaidi, an accused in the case, and said that it would later deal with the aspect of transferring the trial from a court in Himachal Pradesh.

The top court had in November last year sought responses from Zaidi, Deputy Superintendent of Police (Theog) Manoj Joshi and six other Himachal Pradesh policemen as to why the trial against them be not transferred from Shimla.

The CBI had earlier told the court that though the charge sheet has been filed, the trial in the case "has not seen the light of the day" and hence the matter be transferred to other court for expeditious disposal.

Zaidi and seven others were arrested in the custodial death case of Suraj, who was found dead at the Kotkhair police station on July 18, 2017.

A 16-year-old girl had gone missing in Kotkhair on July 4, 2017 and her body was found from the Halaila forests two days later on July 6.

INSHORT

APEX COURT QUASHES FIR AGAINST SASIKALA

New Delhi: In a relief to expelled AIADMK Rajya Sabha member Sasikala Pushpa, the Supreme Court on Tuesday quashed an FIR and chargesheet against her for allegedly forging documents in her anticipatory bail petition. The top court also granted protection from any coercive action in two other criminal cases related to alleged sexual harassment of her family help and damage to property.

EX-CIC DEMANDS SC PROBE REPORT PUBLIC

New Delhi: Former Information Commissioner Srinhar Acharyulu has advocated making public the report of the Supreme Court's in-house inquiry committee which looked into the allegations of sexual harassment levelled against the Chief Justice of India by a former woman employee of the apex court, saying the decision to withhold the finding "appears to have no reason or legal base".

GOVT APPROVES LOWERING OF NEET-PG CUT-OFFS

New Delhi: The Health Ministry, in consultation with the Board of Governors in the Medical Council of India (MCI), has decided to reduce the qualifying marks for NEET-PG for 2019-20 by six per cent. "All states/UTs were requested to make necessary arrangements for allowing students as per revised qualifying marks in any further rounds of counselling this year," the statement stated.

NITISH KATARA MURDER CASE

SC asks Centre to review security threat of key witness

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Tuesday directed the Centre to review within a week the threat perception and consider granting adequate security to a person, whose unequivocal testimony in the sensational Nitish Katara murder case had led to the conviction of three accused.

Ajay Katara was the key witness in the murder case

A bench headed by Chief Justice Ranjan Gogoi took note of the submission of one Ajay Katara that either he be granted "round the clock" security or be relocated to a "safer place" by the security agencies considering the threat to his life.

He was the key witness in the murder case of Nitish Katara who was kidnapped and killed by Vikas Yadav, son of controversial Uttar Pradesh politician D P Yadav, Vishal Yadav and Sukhdev Pehalwan in 2002.

It was Ajay who had testified that he had last seen the victim along with the accused before his murder and this had nailed the case leading to the conviction of the three accused. The convicts are serving varying jail terms in the case.

The witness, who has already been provided four Personal Security Officers (PSOs), has now moved the apex court for enhanced security.

Sources: Govt returns to collegium 2 names recommended for apex court

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The Government is learnt to have returned to the collegium names of two high court chief justices recommended for elevation as judges of the Supreme Court, sources aware of the development said Tuesday.

On April 12, the Supreme Court collegium had recommended the names of Jharkhand High Court Chief Justice Aniruddha Bose, and Gauhati HC Chief Justice A S Bopanna for elevation to the top court.

Seniority and representation of regions have been cited as reasons behind the government's decision, the sources said.

While Justice Bose whose parent high court is Calcutta, is at number 12 in all-India



Bopanna, the collegium has taken into consideration, apart from their merit and integrity, combined seniority on all-India basis of chief justices and senior puisne judges of high courts.

"The collegium has also kept in mind the desirability of giving due representation on the bench of the Supreme Court, as far as possible, to all the high courts," the collegium resolution had read.

The Calcutta High Court is represented in the Supreme Court by Justice Indira Banerjee. Justices S M Mallikarjuna and S Abdul Nazeer represent the Karnataka HC.

At present, the Supreme Court has a working strength of 27. Its sanctioned strength is 31 judges, including the chief justice.

Jurist: Suppression of enquiry report on CJI dented credibility of judicial system

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Suppression of the In-House Inquiry Committee report giving clean chit to Chief Justice Ranjan Gogoi on allegations of sexual harassment has dented the "prestige, credibility and integrity" of the judicial system, noted jurist Rakesh Dwivedi said on Tuesday.

The senior lawyer, who had earlier advocated "impartial enquiry" into the allegations, made scathing observations on the inquiry proceedings and non-disclosure of the report saying "scrutiny by people is the hallmark of Justice".

The CJI Monday got a clean chit from a three-member Inquiry Committee headed by Justice S A Bobde which found "no substance" in the

allegations of a former woman employee of the apex court and further ruled that the report was not "liable to be made public".

"It has been the trait of Monarchy, Imperialism, Dictatorships and Authoritarian Empires to shut out information and knowledge about what may supposedly impact them adversely so as to avoid scrutiny," Dwivedi told PTI.

"Why has our Highest Judiciary relapsed into this Monarchical and Dictatorial Scheme of dispensing justice by seeking refuge behind the smokescreen of informal in house enquiry at a time when the credibility of the Institution is at stake," he said.

The apex court should undergo 'Agni-Pariksha' and

share the report with the public for larger interest of the judiciary, the noted jurist said.

The CJI, the person complained against, would get to see the report but not the complainant, nor the nation, he quipped.

"Please do not shirk collective responsibility. Judicial power vests there (full court). We look up for a responsible and democratic Judiciary. Please for God sake remove the blindfold from our eyes. Trust the people. People need Judiciary. They want its independence. They trust their judges. Do not betray their trust. You stand at the brink.

Don't run away from the Agni-Pariksha. Disclose the report to the people," he said.

He was critical of the argument that as the inquiry was

"informal and in-house", the common public was "persona non grata" (unwelcome person).

An attempt has been made since beginning to "shut out the inquiry," Dwivedi said.

"Lets recall the Saturday emergent sitting of three judges with the CJI presiding to clear himself. Protests led to a panel of enquiry ratified by full court... The lady was denied lawyers assistance despite heavy atmosphere of deposing before three judges against their own senior most. This was difficult to understand..." he said.

Citing example, he said Judge Kavanaugh was examined by the US Senate in the process of appointment and the process "instilled confidence in the judicial System" and institutional integrity and credibility was preserved.

FROM DELHI MINISTER KIN

ED seizes assets worth ₹1.48cr

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Enforcement Directorate (ED) has seized a flat in posh Vasant Kunj area of Delhi and a land in Haryana worth ₹1.48 crore in connection with a FEMA and hawala case against Harish Gahlot, brother of Delhi minister Kailash Gahlot.

The agency said it issued a seizure order under section 37A of Foreign Exchange Management Act (FEMA) freezing the flat and a land in Chauba village in Haryana in lieu of alleged illegal assets held abroad.

"Investigation was initiated under FEMA based on the information received from the Income Tax Department

informing about transfer of money to the tune of ₹1 crore from India to Dubai through hawala channel by Harish Gahlot through a Delhi-based hawala dealer for making advance payments toward purchase of two flats in Dubai in September, 2018," the ED said.

Premises linked to the family and associates of Kailash Gahlot, Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) MLA and Delhi Transport minister, were raided by the I-T Department in October last year. The properties of his brother Harish Gahlot were also searched during the action by IT Department.

The tax department searches were conducted as part of a tax evasion probe

against two firms — Brisk Infrastructure and Developers Pvt Ltd and Corporate International Financial Services Ltd — that are reportedly operated and owned by the family members of Kailash Gahlot.

Kailash Gahlot had denied any wrongdoing and the AAP had termed the action "political vendetta".

The ED probe revealed that in September, 2018 Harish Gahlot had given ₹1 crore cash to his younger son Nitesh Gahlot, who is an NRI and studying in Dubai, for sending this money to Dubai allegedly through unauthorised hawala channel, that denotes skirting legal banking route to transfer money, the agency said.

"Nitesh Gahlot, through his contact, approached Inderal Wadhawan, a Delhi-based hawala dealer for transferring the amount. Wadhawan kept ₹4 lakh with him as commission and illegally delivered Dirhams equivalent to ₹96 lakh in Dubai which was collected by the friend of Nitesh Gahlot and deposited the said amount in the Dubai bank account of Nitesh Gahlot," the agency charged.

Out of these funds, Nitesh Gahlot made payment to Dubai-based developers for booking of two flats in the name of himself, his father Harish Gahlot, his mother and his elder brother, the agency said.

ED attaches cash worth ₹89L from Pawan Bansal's nephew

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Enforcement Directorate has attached cash worth ₹89.68 lakh in a money laundering case involving Vijay Singla, nephew of Congress leader and former railway minister Pawan Kumar Bansal.

ED initiated investigation under the provisions of PMLA on the basis of FIR and chargesheet filed by CBI under IPC section relating to criminal conspiracy and for provisions of the Prevention of Corruption Act. The CBI had chargesheeted Mahesh Kumar Member (Staff), Railway Board, Vijay Singla, Sandeep Goyal and seven other accused persons.

CBI investigation revealed that Mahesh Kumar, a 1975 batch officer of Indian Railway

Service of Signal Engineers (IRSSE), was posted as General Manager, Western Railways. He wanted to get himself appointed as Member (Electrical), Railway Board instead of Member (Staff). For this he was in touch with N Manjunath, who was further in touch with Sandeep Goyal, a friend of Vijay Singla.

Vijay Singla demanded ₹10 crore through Sandeep Goyal from N Manjunath to get Mahesh Kumar posted as Member (Electrical). While delivering a token amount to Vijay Singla and Sandeep Goyal, the CBI team raided the premises of office of Vijay Singla at Sector 28, Chandigarh and recovered ₹89,68,000.

During the relevant period, Pawan Kumar Bansal was the Railway Minister and his nephew Vijay Singla was caught red handed while accepting a bribe of ₹89,68,000, the ED said in a statement.

ED probe revealed that N. Manjunath on behalf of Mahesh Kumar was persuading various Railway vendors/S&T manufacturers/contractors for making arrangement of bribe amount for promotion of Mahesh Kumar as Member (Electrical) by alluring them that all the contributors would be taken care off/benefited from the desired posting of Mahesh Kumar, the agency said.

Investigation further revealed that first installment of bribe amount of ₹89,68,000 was contributed by N Manjunath, MV Murlu Krishna, Sushil Daga and private firm Venketeshwara Rail Nirman Pvt. Ltd.

Over 1 million plant species at risk: Report

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

More than one million of the estimated eight million plant and animal species on earth are at a risk of vanishing - many of them within decades - because of lopsided human activities, a UN report has warned.

Painting a grim picture, the UN global assessment report prepared by over 100 scientists from the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES) said that the biomass of wild mammals has fallen by 82 per cent, natural ecosystems have lost about half their area and a million species are at risk of extinction - all largely as a result of human actions.

Compiled over three years by more than 450 scientists and diplomats, the report, the summary of which was approved at the 7th session of the IPBES Plenary, meeting last

KEY HIGHLIGHTS

\*75% of land environment and some 66% of marine environment significantly altered by human actions.

\*Over a third of world's land surface and nearly 75% of freshwater resources are used for crops or livestock.

\*Up to \$577 billion in annual global crops are at risk from pollinator loss.

\*Between 100 million and 300 million people now face increased risk of floods and hurricanes due to loss of coastal habitats and protection.

\*Since 1992, world's urban areas have more than doubled.

\*Plastic pollution has increased tenfold since 1980 \*300-400 million tons of heavy metals, solvents, toxic sludge dumped into the world's water systems.

week (29 April - 4 May) in Paris said that the average abundance of native species in most major land-based habitats has fallen by at least 20 per cent, mostly since 1990. "More than 40 per cent of

amphibian species, almost 33 per cent of reef-forming corals and more than a third of all marine mammals are threatened. At least 680 vertebrate species had been driven to extinction since the 16th cen-

tury and more than 9 per cent of all domesticated breeds of mammals used for food and agriculture had become extinct by 2016, with at least 1,000 more breeds still threatened," it said.

The overwhelming evidence of the IPBES Global Assessment, from a wide range of different fields of knowledge, presents an ominous picture, noted IPBES Chair, Sir Robert Watson. "The health of ecosystems on which we and all other species depend is deteriorating more rapidly than ever. We are eroding the very foundations of our economies, livelihoods, food security, health and quality of life worldwide," he added.

Based on the systematic review of about 15,000 scientific and government sources, the Report also draws (for the first time ever at this scale) on indigenous and local knowledge, particularly addressing issues relevant to Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities.

EC should verify all VVPATs: Naidu

New Delhi: A delegation of 22 opposition parties, led by Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu, on Tuesday approached the Election Commission requesting for verification of all Voter-Verified Paper Audit Trail (VVPATs) in an assembly segment if discrepancy is found in counting of VVPAT slips of five random machines.

The delegation met the EC immediately after the Supreme Court dismissed a plea by opposition parties to review its judgment rejecting 50 per cent random physical verification of EVMs using VVPATs.

The delegation also demanded that the EC "suo motu" increase the physical counting of VVPAT slips with Electronic Voting Machines (EVM) vote count in order to restore voters' confidence, credibility, transparency and robustness of institutional mechanism of counting process.

The Supreme Court has directed the EC to count VVPAT



Opposition leaders (L-R) Farooq Abdullah, D Raja, N Chandrababu Naidu, Ahmed Patel, Ashok Gehlot, Abhishek Manu Singhvi and others after meeting with Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) at Nirvachan Bhawan in New Delhi on Tuesday PTI

slips of five random EVMs in each assembly segment.

Senior Congress leaders Ahmed Patel and Abhishek M Singhvi as well as National Conference leader Farooq Abdullah, CPI parliamentarian D Raja and AAP MP Sanjay Singh were among other leaders present in the meeting. "After the SC dismissed our

petition, we came to the EC and requested it clearly that if any discrepancy is found in five VVPATs then what action it should take. Some of the booths are manipulated. Our demand is clear that all VVPATs in the entire assembly segment should be verified," Naidu told reporters after the meeting. Naidu said the delegation

told the EC that it is possible to count 50 per cent of VVPAT slips easily.

"There are 14 tables in every counting hall for an assembly constituency. Therefore the amount of time and energy in which slips from one VVPAT machine can be supervised by returning officer and observer is same for 14 VVPAT machines.

"Therefore slips from at least 70 VVPAT machines can be counted in the same time. If they are counting 5 VVPATs, then they can count 70 VVPATs at a time," he said.

The Telugu Desam Party (TDP) chief said that the EC has been requested to honour the demand of a candidate for recounting.

The delegation not only urged the EC to come out with revised guidelines in this regard at the earliest, but also asked it to investigate and publish on its website all cases of discrepancies found during the counting process. PTI

# BJP will be left with 'smriti' of defeat in Amethi: Baghel

Chief Minister predicts landslide victory for Congress president Rahul Gandhi who is locked in a direct fight against BJP's Smriti Irani

STAFF REPORTER ■ RAIPUR

Chhattisgarh Chief Minister and PCC president Bhupesh Baghel predicted that Congress president Rahul Gandhi will once again emerge victorious from Amethi Lok Sabha constituency with an impressive margin.

In a tweet on Tuesday Baghel said "Kamal Walon Ko Sif Haar Ki 'Smriti' Milegi Is Baar," which can be roughly translated as the BJP would be left with only memory of defeat in Amethi.

Baghel referred to "smiri-



**In a tweet on Tuesday Baghel said "Kamal Walon Ko Sif Haar Ki 'Smriti' Milegi Is Baar,"**

tion" drawing an analogy with union minister Smriti Irani, who is the BJP candidate from the constituency, regarded as a

home turf of the Gandhis. He further mocked Smriti in his tweet and said "when an examinee goes for the exami-

nation without preparation then either he/she objects to exam pattern or terms the question paper out of syllabus".

Notable, Baghel and other senior leaders of the state were on a whirlwind tour of Amethi constituency and had done electioneering for the Congress president by putting all their energy.

Meanwhile, Baghel after returning from Amethi predicted a landslide victory for Gandhi and had claimed that Smriti would now be forgotten.

# Shraddha Sahoo tops state in ICSE-2019

RAIPUR: Shraddha Shranjali Sahoo became state topper by securing 98.75% marks in class 12th Indian Certificate of Secondary Education (ICSE) Examination, the result of which was announced on Tuesday.



Chief Minister Bhupesh Baghel extended greetings to Shraddha and wished for her bright future. Shraddha Sahoo is a student of Rajkumar College, Raipur and is the daughter of Chhattisgarh Chief Electoral Officer Subrat Sahoo. She got 100 marks each in Geography and Mathematics and 98 in political science.

Shraddha gave the credit for her success to regular guidance of her parents and encouragement of school teachers. She adds that she used to study as per her choice as no restrictions were imposed.

Discipline and self-control played the key role in her success, she added.

# Youth commits suicide in police station

STAFF REPORTER ■ GARIABAND

A youth reportedly committed suicide in police custody at Gariaband district on Tuesday morning.

The deceased was identified as Sunil Shrivastava, who was arrested in connection with a cheating (420) case and was kept at Panduka police station. He used to work as a salesman in a firm selling tractors.

"On Monday evening Sunil was arrested by Panduka police station staff and was brought to the police station. When his family members met him on Tuesday morning he appeared normal," Superintendent of Police (SP) Gariaband MR Ahire said.

In the morning hours the deceased went to toilet and two guards stood outside. Inside the

**"On Monday evening Sunil was arrested by Panduka police station staff and was brought to the police station. When his family members met him on Tuesday morning he appeared normal," Superintendent of Police (SP) Gariaband MR Ahire said**

toilet he hanged himself with the shirt he was wearing, the SP said adding that when Sunil did not come out the iron door was broken open but he was found dead.

Five persons including TI Vedvati Dario, an ASI, one head constable and two constables have been suspended in this connection, the SP said.

A magisterial inquiry has also been ordered into the case.

# Extensive drive against illegal liquor sale to continue

STAFF REPORTER ■ RAIPUR

The Commercial Tax (Excise) department will continue their extensive drive in all the districts of Chhattisgarh to stop illegal sale of liquor.

Excise commissioner Dr Kamalpreet Singh conducted state level monthly reviewed meeting of excise department at Abkari Bhawan on Tuesday.

Briefing the meeting, excise officials stated that within a month 947 cases were registered and 894 accused were arrested under different sections of the Excise Act.

A total of 3,632 litres of illegal liquor was seized in a month while eight vehicles involved in transportation of the

illegal items were also seized.

Excise commissioner directed the officials to hold regular surprise inspection at outlets selling Indian Made Foreign Liquor (IMFL) and country made liquor. During the inspection, quality of liquor should also be tested.

The officials should also ensure that the liquor should not be over priced under any circumstances. Immediate action should be taken to probe any complaint of over pricing and legal action against those involved should be taken, he said.

The concerned district excise officials would be held responsible if any laxity in dealing with case of overcharging is found.

Already there are a few instances of action being taken against the excise officials in this regard.

Dr Kamalpreet said officers have to ensure action within 24 hours of receiving a complaint or information about illegal sale of liquor or overpricing.

The CCTV cameras of the shops should be kept in operational condition round the clock. In all the 650 outlets -- 340 of country made liquor and 310 of IMFL shops-- the cameras have been installed.

Similarly, the customers should be given printed bill on the purchase. Commercial tax (excise) special secretary, additional commissioner, district officials were present at the meeting.

# Why Bofors scam makes Cong jittery, asks Raman

STAFF REPORTER ■ RAIPUR

Former Chief Minister and BJP national vice president Raman Singh on Tuesday defended Prime Minister Narendra Modi's comment about former Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi.

Singh in a tweet on Tuesday said "When Congress president could apologize for telling a lie against Modiji, then why not we bring to fore the truth that Rajiv Gandhi was indulged in corruption in Bofors defence deal".

Responding to Chhattisgarh Chief Minister Bhupesh Baghel's strong reaction against Modi's jibe, Singh without naming him said "the entire opposition becomes jit-

tery when Prime Minister Narendra Modi raised the issue of corruption of Bofors defence deal".

"It was during the tenure of Rajiv Gandhi when we have seen high level of corruption prevailing in the country and only 15 paise reached the beneficiaries when Rs 1 was allocated to them. If Congress looks at it as an achievement then this is their perspective, but the BJP as per its ideology will never accept this corruption", Singh added.

Modi at an election rally in Uttar Pradesh had said Rajiv Gandhi's life had ended as "Bhrashtachari (corrupt) number one".

# Raman has no right to claim corruption in Bofors: Cong

RAIPUR: Congress on Tuesday took serious exception to former chief minister Raman Singh's remark on Bofors defence deal, claiming the BJP national vice president had no right to say anything on corruption as he and his family members were neck deep in corruption.

In a statement state general secretary and chairman communication wing of the PCC Shailesh Nitin Trivedi said when the newly formed Congress government in the state set up committees to probe into corruption of the erstwhile BJP

government it had irritated the saffron party which was calling it 'politics of vengeance'.

Raman and his wife have been named in infamous Nagrik Aapurti Nigam's PDS scam worth Rs 36000 crore and name of their son Abhishek is surfaced in Panama Papers. Son-in Law of Raman is at present on bail, who is an accused in the DKS super specialty hospital scam, Trivedi alleged.

Trivedi further said only because of high level corruption in the previous BJP government, the people of Chhattisgarh

rooted it out in the recently concluded assembly polls.

Raman Singh had earlier defended Prime Minister Narendra Modi's comment that former Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi's life had ended as "Bhrashtachari (corrupt) number one".

Incidentally, Delhi High Court had acquitted the late Prime Minister in the Bofors case and the Modi government's attempt to reopen the chapter didn't receive a favourable response either from the Supreme Court, which refused to entertain its plea.

# Child Marriage: WCD to take action against parents

STAFF REPORTER ■ RAIPUR

Women and Child Development (WCD) department, Raipur district lodged a complaint with Kharora police station as a boy, aged 18, was married off even after his father gave an affidavit, pledging not to conduct the marriage ceremony.

Ashok Pandey, the district programme officer of WCD Raipur when contacted said information was received that a resident of Kesla village had fixed the marriage of his son who has not yet attained the legal marriageable age of 21 years.

A WCD task force and police team had approached the parents and advised them that under the Prohibition of Child Marriage Act, 2006, legal action will be initiated against



them, if they go ahead with the marriage. The father then filed the affidavit.

But, later it came to the notice that the father had gone

ahead with the marriage in the village. Based on the information, Amit Sinha, the child marriage prevention officer, Raipur lodged a complaint

with Kharora police station for registering an FIR against the parents after conducting a probe into the matter.

Pandey further said that in a day or two the FIR will be lodged after collecting evidences regarding the age-proof and marriage ceremony.

In another similar incident, a Sarora village resident had fixed the marriage of his daughter aged 16 years 4 months, on 'Akshya Tritiya'. After getting the information, the WCD task force and police team members interacted with the parents and relatives to stop the marriage as it will invite legal action. They also briefed them about the adverse impact on health and other problems related to child marriage. The father also signed an affidavit promising not to marry off his daughter before she is 18.

# 10% EWS reservation: Officials appointed to issue income certificates

RAIPUR: Government of Chhattisgarh in an order has appointed Sub Divisional Officer (Revenue) and Tehsildhar as competent officers to issue the income certificate for economically weaker sections (EWS) eligible for 10 percent reservation in jobs and educational institutions.

The Central Government introduced 10 percent quota for the EWS among general category candidates in government jobs and educational institutions.

In the prescribed form, specified by the Government of India, the income and property certificate will be issued by the authority.

General Administration department, Government of Chhattisgarh has issued the circular to all the departments, Revenue Board chairman, all heads of departments, all divisional commissions, all district collectors and Zila Panchayat Chief Executive Officers.

# Amrit Pharmacy in AIIMS complex raided



STAFF REPORTER ■ RAIPUR

After an expiry date injection was administered to a patient in the All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS), Foods and Drugs Administration Department on Tuesday raided the Amrit Pharmacy inside the institute's

complex and seized medicines from there.

The raid was made after complaints of the pharmacy issuing expiry date medicines were received. The pharmacy was set up to supply generic medicines to the patients of the state owned hospital.

# Suspected Naxals kill man branding him as informer

SUKMA: A man was thrashed to death in insurgency-hit Sukma district by suspected Naxals who branded him as police informer, police said here on Tuesday.

The deceased was identified as Kadi Ganga (35), a resident of Maraiguda village under Errabor police station limits.

"Few armed Naxals on the intervening night of Monday and Tuesday stormed into the house of Ganga and took him away," SP Sukma DS Maravi said.

Later on Tuesday morning his body was found nearby along with a hand written note which said "Kadi Ganga was killed by Naxal PLGA. If anyone in the village is working for the police then they must stop doing so or else they will be also killed. Konta area committee CPI (Maoist)."

Police has registered a complaint in this connection, the SP said.

# 26 tribal villagers trapped in Tamil Nadu brought back

STAFF REPORTER ■ KONDAGAON

Kondagaon district collector Neelkanth Tekam advised tribal villagers not to fall prey to dubious recruitment agencies that push gullible villagers from Chhattisgarh into forced labour outside the state after alluring them with promises of better wages.

Tekam's advisory comes after 26 villagers from the state were rescued from Tamil Nadu

where they were mistreated by their employers.

The villagers went to the southern state after being trapped by a recruitment agent who promised them better job opportunities.

As per information 16 villagers from Narayanpur district, 7 from Kondagaon and 3 from Kanker had left their respective native villages to work at a paper roll factory at Erode in Tamil Nadu.

But these 26 villagers--15 women and 11 men--were mistreated there and were not given proper wages.

The plight of the villagers came to the fore after a villager intimated the district collector about the migration of labours from the state.

After being informed, a joint team of labour, child protection and police department was constituted and sent to Tamil Nadu.

The team comprising

Deputy Collector Gautam Patil, labour inspector Amar Singh Khande and Sub Inspector Bodku Ram brought back the distraught villagers on Monday.

Tekam said rural youth should search for work in their district, villages or nearby areas.

District administration is running different schemes and also imparting training for their employment, he said.

Collector said that all the workers would be registered under labour department and based on their interest they can choose a suitable job for which training will be imparted to them.

The collector, meanwhile, directed the officials to take stern action against the agents who are alluring innocent villagers with false promises of better job opportunities and forcing them into virtual bonded labour.

# Pushpa gets Dr Ambedkar National Merit Award

JANJGIR-CHAMPA: Kumari Pushpa of Janjgir-Champa district has been conferred with Dr Ambedkar National Merit Award for

Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment gives the award every year to meritorious students belonging to Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes for their commendable performance in Class 10th and Class 12th examinations.

The award carries a citation and cash award. Janjgir-Champa district collector Neeraj Kumar Bansod handed over a cheque of Rs 20,000 to Kumari Pushpa.

Kumari Pushpa, a student of Saraswati Sishu Mandir, Baradwar got the award for her meritorious performance in class 12 examination in the year 2016-17.

The government invites proposal every year from state governments for the award.

The district-level officials blessed Pushpa and wished her a bright future.

# CLASS 10, 12 RESULTS Two students score 100% marks in ICSE

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

For the first time, two students, who have appeared for the Indian School Certificate Examinations (ICSE) examination, have scored 100 per cent marks in the results declared on Tuesday. This year too, the girls have outshone the boys once again with the pass percentage of 99.05 per cent in class 10 examination as against 98.12 per cent of boys. The pass percentage, achieved by girls in class 12 examinations, is 97.84 per cent as against 95.40 per cent of boys.

According to a statement released by the ICSE, "Dewang Kumar Agarwal from Kolkata and Vibha Swaminathan from Bengaluru have topped with 100 per cent marks. The second rank has been shared by 16 students with 99.75 per cent and the third rank has been shared by 36 students with 99.50 per cent marks".

Juhi Rupesh Kajaria and Muktsar's Manhar Bansal from Mumbai have topped the class X examination with 99.60 per cent. The second rank has



Representational image

been shared by ten students with 99.40 per cent marks and the third rank has been shared by 24 students with 99.20 per cent marks.

Among all the regions i.e. Western, Southern, Eastern, Northern and Abroad, the southern region have performed well in ISC class 12th exam with a pass percentage of 98.91 per cent. Region wise, the second position has been secured by the western with 98.13 per cent pass percentage. The eastern region scored 96.66 per cent pass percentage, while the pass percentage of Northern region is 96.66. Students from foreign schools have secured 99.69 per cent pass percentage this year.

In 10th pass percentage, the Western region has secured the first position with 99.76 per cent. The southern region recorded a pass percentage of 99.73 per cent while the north and eastern region have secured 98.06 and 97.87 pass percentage.

About 86,713 registered for the 12th examination 96.52 per cent have passed the ISC exams. Also, there is a slight rise in the pass percentage with 0.31% from last year.

The Council for the Indian School Certificate Examinations (CISCE) chief executive and secretary Gerry Arathoon has announced the class 10th and 12th exams.

# Wanted gangster with reward of ₹1L held in Delhi

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

A 31-year-old gangster, carrying a reward of ₹1 lakh, was arrested by the sleuths of Delhi Police Special Cell after an encounter in outer Delhi's Rohini area in the early hours Tuesday.

The man has been identified as Paramjeet Dalal (31), a resident of Bahadurgarh in Haryana. The encounter took place on the main heliport road opposite Rohini's Sector-37 at 5.15 am.

Police said that the accused has been on crime spree since 2009. "He was earlier involved in 10 cases of murder, extortion, robbery, Arms Act etc. Paramjeet is notorious for making extortion calls in Rohini and Outer Delhi area. He used to extort money from property dealers, illegal satta operators and other businessmen," said a senior police official.

According to Sanjeev Kumar Yadav, the Deputy Commissioner of Police (DCP), Special Cell, specific inputs were received regarding



Paramjeet that he would come to Pooth Kalan village to meet his associate and to collect money for shifting his hideout to a new place, somewhere in Himachal Pradesh.

"Acting on the tip-off, a trap was laid and at around 5:15 AM Dalal was spotted. On seeing the police the accused tried to flee away but was surrounded by the police team. The police team warned him to surrender but despite clear, unambiguous and loud warning, he whipped out a weapon and started firing indiscriminately towards police personnel," said the DCP.

"During the confrontation, Dalal received a bullet injury in his left leg. He was rushed to Baba Saheb Ambedkar Hospital where he is undergoing treatment," said the DCP adding that further investigation is going on.

# Dynastic politics delaying India's progress: Hry CM



PNS ■ SURAJPUR (PANCHKULA)

Haryana Chief Minister Manohar Lal on Tuesday said that the dynastic politics of the Gandhi family which India saw after Independence has hampered the country's progress.

Manohar Lal, while addressing the Vijay Sankalp Rally at Surajpur, which is part of Ambala Lok Sabha constituency from where sitting MP Rattan Lal Kataria is the BJP's candidate, said that if there had been no dynastic rule, the country would have been at the top of the world.

He said that the dynasts have derailed India's progress.

Referring to the visit of Congress general secretary Priyanka Gandhi Vadra to Haryana, the Chief Minister said that she has come to the state searching for land for her husband Robert Vadra. The Congress, which

ruled the country for most periods after Independence is responsible for the backwardness and poverty in the country today. The Gandhi family did not want anyone else to attain the seat of power at the Centre, he added.

Besides the Congress, the Chief Minister attacked the two other opposition parties - INLD and JJP - saying the two parties only considered their own well being. They filled their homes and worked for the welfare of their relatives, he said adding that only the sons and grandson of leaders of the two parties are flourishing.

He further said that the two parties due to their family feuds are trying to outsmart each other with the result that the state is suffering. Those parties which are faced with internal bickering can never develop the state; he said adding that time has come to eliminate dynastic rule and family rule.

Manohar Lal said that the ongoing elections are not routine Lok Sabha elections. The process of change started in 2014 when Narendra Modi became the Prime Minister. The time has come to ensure the return of Modi so that the systems can be further set right to ensure corruption free administration and development of all sections of the society in different spheres, he said.

The Chief Minister further said that if the BJP returned to power the government will give pension to all having monthly income of Rs 15,000.

Manohar Lal taking a dig at the opposition said that on May 23, on their defeat they will put the blame of EVMS, which, however, is acceptable when the Congress recently won the State Assembly elections in three states of Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh and Chhattisgarh.

# AAP releases manifesto for South Delhi

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

With focus on regularisation of unauthorised colonies, ensuring basic amenities and decongesting major stretches, Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) candidate from South Delhi and party's Delhi Convener, Gopal Rai, on Monday launched specific manifesto for South Delhi constituency.

The 34-page manifesto for South Delhi entitled "It's Time For Change". It includes promises that the AAP MP from South Delhi will use the resources to combat pollution caused by crop-burning in other States and arrive at an inter-state solution. Besides, a push for an automated and systematic water wastage monitoring system and setting up Mahila Panchayats in the constituency's unauthorised colonies to train women about legal issues and laws related to crimes against women.

Talking about challenges in South Delhi constituency, Raghav Chadha said that the real challenge is to provide basic essential services to the people. For 70 years, Congress and BJP politicians did not provide these basic services like

roads or sewerage facilities such as sewage, water and sanitation." He further said that he would also ensure that all unauthorised colonies would be regularised, including Asia's largest unauthorised colony of Sangam Vihar.

"An issue in South Delhi that needs to be addressed is the gundaraj of BJP leaders. They attack our brothers from Purvanchal, misbehave with women and discriminate with Dalits. I will not be scared, nor will I let bullies scare others," he said.

"With the same determination and willpower, Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal has done revolutionary infrastructural changes of government school and revamped education in Delhi. I will end lawlessness in south Delhi and create such robust law and order situation that even if our sisters and mothers step out in the middle of the night, no one will dare so much as to catcall them," he said.

Lambasting Congress and BJP, Chadha said the both parties win elections in the name of providing water, but do nothing once elected. In total contrast, the AAP Government



under Kejriwal in the last four years gave water through pipelines to 90 per cent of the areas of South Delhi and vowed the remaining 10 per cent areas would have piped water over the

next one year.

The manifesto vowed to add new bus routes. Further, the 30-year-old AAP candidate said that as an MP he would ensure that metro work would start in

South Delhi within 100 days and address the traffic problems of the major road arteries of South Delhi including the busy Mehrauli-Badarpur and Gurgaon-Badarpur roads.

# Delhi Chief Secy removes officers for 'misconduct'

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

In a special drive against corrupt practices in the Government departments, the Delhi Chief Secretary Vijay Kumar Dev has, on Tuesday, removed three senior officers of Delhi Government from their services for committing serious misconduct.

According to the statement issued by the Delhi Government the officers who have been removed are VED Prakash ex-sub-registrar-II Punjabi Bagh-Nangloi, Sushel Bhatti, Ex-teshildars Preet Vihar and Sameer Sharma Mehrauli.

"As a part of sustained drive against corrupt practices, Vijay Kumar Dev, Chief Secretary, has removed three senior officers of the Delhi government from government service for committing serious misconduct," read the statement.

These officers belonged to the revenue department and held positions of, and The statement stated that as part of a "sustained drive against corrupt practices, The then sub-registrar of Punjabi Bagh-Nangloi was removed on charges of registering sale deed of agricultural land of Tikri Kanan village in 2013

without obtaining the no-objection certificate from the additional district magistrate, according to the statement.

Further as per the statement, the officer registered the sale deed despite the land being under draft notification and proposed to be acquired for public purpose.

"He (Ved prakash) violated provisions of the Delhi Land Revenue Act, 1954, and the Delhi Lands (Restriction on Transfer) Act, 1972, as well as the departmental instructions issued there under," read the statement.

# Capt vows to make everyone down from Badal pay for their crimes

PNS ■ ZIRA

Punjab Chief Minister Capt Amarinder Singh on Tuesday vowed to make everyone, from Prakash Singh Badal downwards, pay for their crimes, including the desecration of the holy scriptures to create a communal divide in the state to woo Sikh votes dur-

ing their rule. Capt Amarinder, addressing an election rally at Zira Dana Mandi in support of Congress candidate from Khadoor Sahib Jasbir Singh Dimpa, sought votes for the party to protect the nation from the divisive BJP and their allies such as SAD, and also to safeguard India from the secu-

riety threats at the border. "JG Kunwar Vijay Pratap, who was transferred by the EC under pressure of the Badals, exerted through the Union Government, would be back in the SIT to complete the probe on the 29th of May, the day the code of conduct is lifted. If Prakash Singh Badal is found guilty, he will go behind the

bars," said the Chief Minister, asking the Akali supremo, "How long do you think you can save yourself from the consequences of your actions."

Pointing out that there had not been a single case of sacrilege under the Congress Government, the Chief Minister said that it was obvious that the desecrations dur-

ing the Akali rule were deliberately triggered to divide votes on communal lines.

Citing the total devastation of Punjab during the BJP-SAD rule, the Chief Minister called on the people to strengthen the Congress hands and let the Badals know where Sikhs and Punjab stands today. The whole of Punjab wants to get rid of the

Badals and the only way to do it in a democracy is to vote them out, he said, quipping that he would personally go to Ferozpur and Bathinda today to turn the tide against Sukhbir and Harsimrat Badal.

Lashing out at the misuse of SGPC and Akal Takht by the Badals for political gains, the Chief Minister stressed the

need to send all 13 Congress MPs to the Parliament to ensure that the SGPC elections, now due, are conducted without delay. He reiterated that he would support anyone who can help take SGPC out of the control of the Akalis.

Lashing out at Prime Minister Narendra Modi's divisive politics, the Chief Minister

warned that he would ruin the country completely if allowed to get a second term as the Prime Minister.

"India is facing threats from all sides, but Modi can only think in terms of 'my fauj (army)', which is a crap...the Armed Forces do not belong to the PM but is India's pride," he said.

# CUSTODIAL DEATH IN KOTKHAJI RAPE CASE SC transfers case from Shimla to Chandigarh

NEW DELHI ■ PTI

The Supreme Court Tuesday transferred a case related to alleged custodial death of an accused in gang-rape and murder of a minor school girl in Himachal Pradesh's Kotkhai in 2017, from Shimla to Chandigarh.

A bench headed by Chief Justice Ranjan Gogoi transferred the case to Chandigarh after the CBI and the accused said they have no objection if the case was transferred from Shimla.

"We order transfer of the case to a competent CBI court in Chandigarh," the bench, which also comprised Justices Deepak Gupta and Sanjiv Khanna, said.

The counsel appearing for the CBI informed the bench that charge sheet has been filed in the case against several police offi-

cials ranging from constable to former Inspector General of Police (IGP).

The apex court had last month granted bail to former Himachal Pradesh IGP Zahur Haider Zaidi, an accused in the case, and said that it would later deal with the aspect of transferring the trial from a court in Himachal Pradesh.

The top court had in November last year sought responses from Zaidi, Deputy Superintendent of Police (Theog) Manoj Joshi and six other Himachal Pradesh policemen as to why the trial against them be not transferred from Shimla.

The CBI had earlier told the court that though the charge sheet has been filed, the trial in the case "has not seen the light of the day" and hence the matter be transferred to other court for expeditious disposal.

Zaidi and seven others were arrested in the custodial death case of Suraj, who was found dead at the Kotkhai police station on July 18, 2017.

A 16-year-old girl had gone missing in Kotkhai on July 4, 2017 and her body was found from the Halala forests two days later on July 6.

The post-mortem report had confirmed rape and murder and a case was registered. Amid a huge public outcry in the state, a SIT headed by Zaidi was constituted by the then Virbhadr Singh-led Congress government. The SIT arrested six persons, and after the custodial death of one of the accused Suraj, the high court had handed over the investigations of both the cases to the CBI.

The CBI had arrested Zaidi, DCP Joshi and other policemen in connection with the custodial death.

# Met issues warning of thunderstorm in HP



PNS ■ SHIMLA

The Meteorological Department (Met) on Tuesday issued a fresh yellow weather warning for thunderstorm in Himachal Pradesh on May 10 and 11.

The Met centre in Shimla issued the warning of thunderstorm accompanied with hailstorm and gusty winds in the plains, low and the mid hills on Friday and Saturday.

The weatherman has also forecast rainfall from May 10 to 13.

The Met office issues colour-coded warnings to alert

the public ahead of severe or hazardous weather which has the potential to cause "damage, widespread disruption and/or danger to life."

Yellow is the least dangerous out of the weather warnings. It indicates the possibility of severe weather over the next few days that could affect the public.

On Tuesday, the highest temperature in the state was recorded in Una at 40.8 degrees Celsius, while the lowest was registered in tribal district Lahaul-Spiti's administrative centre Keylong at 3.2 degrees Celsius.

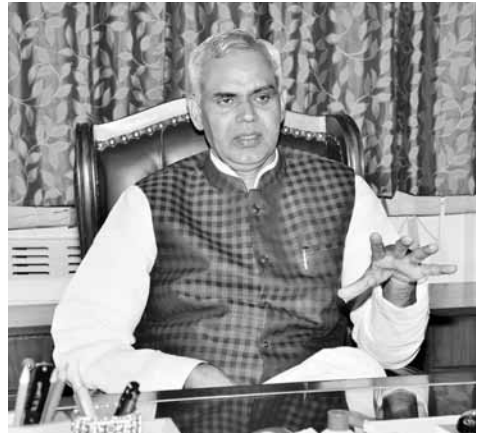
# Himachal Governor uses postal ballot for voting

PNS ■ SHIMLA

Himachal Governor Acharya Devvrat and his wife Darshana Devi used their franchise by using the option of postal ballot to cast their votes during Lok Sabha Elections-2019.

The Governor and his wife, who were enrolled in the list of Kurukshetra parliamentary constituency, sent their postal ballots by Post to Returning Officer, Kurukshetra. Elections for 10 Lok Sabha seats of Haryana State will be held on May 12. The postal ballot was certified by the Secretary of Raj Bhawan.

Governor said that they have taken this decision to save the expenses and time spent on travelling to Kurukshetra for voting. He said that this avoided unnecessary expenditure on travelling with security and per-



sonal staff and also have reduced the burden on the local polling booth as he is under "Z" category protectee. The Governor has also appealed to the voters to take

part in this great fest of democracy and use their franchise, which would be a productive step towards strengthening our democratic system.

Lanka still faces threat of ISIS terror attacks: PM

PTI ■ COLOMBO

Sri Lankan Prime Minister Ranil Wickremesinghe on Tuesday said that authorities have arrested or killed all the militants responsible for the deadly Easter blasts, but warned that the country still faces the threat of ISIS terror attacks.



Addressing a press conference on Monday night, the tri-forces commanders and the police chief said the security of the country following the April 21 bombings has been ensured with adequate measures and steps have been taken to implement a special security plan.

Speaking in Parliament during a debate on the current security situation in the country, Wickremesinghe said all those directly linked to the Easter Sunday attacks were either killed or are in custody.

Nine suicide bombers carried out a series of devastating blasts that tore through three churches and three luxury hotels on the Easter Sunday. The Islamic State claimed the attacks, but the government blamed local Islamist extremist group National Thawheed Jammath (NTJ) for the bombings that killed more than 250 people.

Wickremesinghe said investigations had revealed the bombers had direct or indirect links with Islamic State and the

island nation needed sophisticated technology to deal with the threat posed by such terror networks.

"The danger is not over, we are now a victim of global terrorism," he said.

He said that Sri Lanka must work with the international community to face the global threat from terrorism.

"Some assume working with the international community means bringing down foreign troops. That will not happen," he said.

His comments came as Sri Lankan police and military chiefs assured that the country is now safe and can get back to normalcy.

Climate change missing as US defends Arctic policy

AP ■ ROVANIEMI

The Arctic is melting, but don't ask US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo to mention climate change. Nor to agree a text that mentions it.

For the Trump administration, disappearing sea ice in the world's "high north" is first and foremost an opportunity to exploit rather than a crisis to mitigate.

That position was made clear by Pompeo over two days as the foreign ministers of the eight members of the Arctic Council met in Finland, which is wrapping up its two-year chairmanship of the Arctic Council.

Finnish Foreign Ministry Timo Soini said Tuesday there will be no joint declaration at the summit couldn't get the United States to agree on a text that includes language about climate change. Instead, he said there would be statements from ministers and Finland which currently holds the chair of the Arctic Council.

May seeks Brexit deal amid mounting pressure to quit

AP ■ LONDON

British Prime Minister Theresa May faced renewed pressure on Tuesday from lawmakers in her Conservative Party to abandon efforts to seek a Brexit compromise deal with the opposition Labour Party.

After several weeks of fruitless negotiations, senior Conservative and Labour lawmakers resumed discussions in what appears to be one final push to reach an agreement.

The talks have been given new urgency by last week's local elections, which saw the Conservatives hammered and Labour also lose ground as voters expressed anger at the country's Brexit impasse.

Almost three years after Britain voted to leave the EU, the date and terms of Brexit remain uncertain. The U.K.'s departure date has been postponed from March 29 until October 31 because lawmakers have repeatedly rejected May's divorce deal with the bloc.

That has led her to seek a deal with Labour. But the left-of-center opposition party insists it will only agree to a Brexit deal that includes a permanent customs union with the EU to avoid barriers to the trade of goods.

The government wants a looser relationship with the bloc that would let Britain strike new trade deals around the world.

Foreign Secretary Jeremy Hunt said "compromises on all sides" were needed "because the message of last week was that voters for both main parties are very, very angry about the fact that Brexit hasn't been delivered."

But suggestions the government might soften the terms of departure from the EU has infuriated pro-Brexit Conservatives, who are demanding May's resignation.

"The time has come for her to resign," said lawmaker Bill Cash.

"She needs to be given a date. The sooner the better. But it needs to be done in an orderly manner."

Istanbul vote re-run is 'best step': Erdogan

AFP ■ ANKARA

Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan on Tuesday welcomed a controversial order to re-run the recent Istanbul election after complaints of corruption as the "best step" for the country.

"We see this decision as the best step that will strengthen our will to solve problems within the framework of democracy and law," Erdogan told a meeting of his party members in parliament.

Erdogan's comments come a day after the top election body cancelled the March 31 vote that handed opposition candidate Ekrem Imamoglu a narrow lead over Erdogan's ruling Justice and Development Party (AKP).

The AKP has refused to accept defeat, citing "irregularities and corruption" in the vote.

Erdogan on Tuesday talked of "organised crime" and "serious corruption" during the vote.

"The documents we have presented are quite solid and based on concrete evidence which cannot be disputed," he said.

4 KILLED AS HOUSE COLLAPSES IN PAKISTAN

Peshawar: Four persons, including a woman and her two daughters, were killed when roof of their dilapidated house collapsed in the northwest Pakistan on Tuesday, police said.

SHARIF SET TO RETURN TO JAIL AS BAIL EXPIRES

Lahore: Pakistan's ousted PM Nawaz Sharif will return to Kot Lakhpat Jail here on Tuesday following the expiry of his six-week bail in a corruption case in which he has been sentenced to seven years imprisonment.

JAPAN FINDS PARTS OF CRASHED F35 FIGHTER JET

Tokyo: Japan said on Tuesday it had recovered some debris from a stealth fighter jet that crashed in April, but was still looking for the "all-important" memory that could offer clues into the crash.

STRONG 7.2 QUAKE ROCKS PAPUA NEW GUINEA

Port Moresby: A powerful but deep 7.2-magnitude earthquake rocked Papua New Guinea on Tuesday, officials said, cutting power and knocking items off shelves though there were no immediate reports of serious damage.

PUBLIC NOTICE

My client Rampal Singh S/o Late Sh. Liley Singh R/o 57, Village Kondli, Delhi-110096 has debarred hisson Thath Singh alongwith his wife Rekha as well as his another son Ravi alongwith his wife Arti and their children from his all movable-immovable properties due to their misbehave and bad conduct and broken all his relations from them, if anybody deals with them shall be himself responsible. Bilal Ahmad (Advocate)

Indonesia thwarts ISIS-linked bomb plots: Police

AFP ■ JAKARTA

Indonesia has thwarted a bid by Islamic State-linked militants to stage a series of bombings when it announces official election results this month, authorities said.

Police in the Southeast Asian nation said Monday that they had arrested eight suspects at several locations over the past week, including in Sumatra and near the capital Jakarta.

Afghan official: Taliban hit security checkpoints, 8 die

AP ■ KABUL

An Afghan official says the Taliban have targeted security checkpoints in northeastern Takhar province, killing eight members of the security forces.

Wafullah Rahmani, head of the provincial council, says three soldiers and five policemen were killed in Monday

night's attack in Khwaja Bahaudin district.

The Taliban claimed responsibility for the attack. The insurgents stage near-daily attacks on Afghan forces, even as peace efforts have accelerated to find an end to Afghanistan's 17-year war.

Separately, Dadullah Qaneh, councilman in western Farah province, says coalition forces on Sunday carried out airstrikes against Taliban-run heroin labs, killing 15 laborers.

But Mohibullah Mohib, the provincial police chief's spokesman, says those killed in Bakwa district were all members of the Taliban.

Russia probes pilot error after deadly plane blaze

AFP ■ MOSCOW

Russian investigators were on Tuesday considering pilot error as the cause of a crash-landing that saw a plane erupt in flames at Moscow's busiest airport and kill 41 people, media reported.

The Sukhoi Superjet-100 had just flown out of Sheremetyevo airport on Sunday evening when it sent out an emergency signal and circled back, bouncing on the runway and catching fire.

Sources in the investigation told Kommersant newspaper the Aeroflot pilots made a number of errors including flying into a thunderstorm and landing with a full tank rather than circling to use up fuel.

Temporary Cancellation / Diversion/ Rescheduling of Trains

Railways have planned pre-non-interlocking and non-interlocking works at Bachhwara, Vidyapatidham and Mohiuddin Nagar Stations in Sonapur Division upto 14.05.2019. Consequently, the following trains will remain temporarily Cancelled/Diverted/Rescheduled as per the details given below :-

Table with 3 columns: Train No. & Name, Date of Cancellation (Date of Commencement of Journey), and Date of Cancellation. Lists trains like 04023 Barauni Jn. - Delhi Jn. Exp. and 04024 Delhi Jn. - Barauni Jn. Exp.

DIVERSION OF TRAINS

Table with 4 columns: Train No. & Name, Date (Commencement of Journey), Diverted Via, and Date. Lists trains like 19305 Indore Jn. - Kamakhya Express and 20506 New Delhi - Dibrugarh Rajdhani Exp.

RESCHEDULING OF TRAINS

Table with 3 columns: Train No. & Name, Duration of Rescheduling, and Details. Lists trains like 15715 Kishanganj - Ajmer Jn. Garib Nawaj Exp.

Note: For any kind of information passengers are requested to contact Railway Enquiry No. 139 or visit Indian Railways website www.enquiry.indianrail.gov.in. Security Helpline No. 182 and Passenger Complaint Helpline No. 138

NORTHERN RAILWAY Always at your service. Visit us at www.nr.indianrailways.gov.in

Public notice regarding the postponement of an auction for the sale of immovable property. Includes details of the property and the auctioneer's name.

Form No. JNC-26. Pursuant to Rule 30 of the Companies (Incorporation) Rules, 2014. Advertisement to be published in the newspaper for change of registered office of the Company from one state to another.

GOVERNMENT OF JAMMU AND KASHMIR. OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER PWD (R&B) B.C. ROAD DIVISION BHADERWAH. CORRIGENDUM. Ref.: E-NIT No. 02 of 2019-20 Dated: 04.05.2019.

NORTHERN RAILWAY TENDER NOTICE (Through e-tendering). Tender No.: 558-Sig-16-Tele-AMC-554. Dated: 07.05.2019. Name of work with its location: Comprehensive AMC of Coral IRIS Exchange installed at Delhi Division for three years.

UNIDENTIFIED DEAD BODY. General Public is hereby informed that one male Namely: Shyamal, S/o: Unknown, Address: Unknown has been found dead at in front of Police Bhawan, Asaf Ali Road, Kamla Market, Delhi, on 03.05.2019.

GOVERNMENT OF JAMMU AND KASHMIR. OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER PWD (R&B) B.C. ROAD DIVISION BHADERWAH. CORRIGENDUM. Ref.: E-NIT No. 02 of 2019-20 Dated: 04.05.2019.

SEARCH FOR MISSING. General public is hereby informed that one person (depicted in the photo) namely Pradeep Tyagi, S/o Lt. Sh. Bal Kishor, R/o H. No. A-50, Nathupura, Swaroop Nagar, Delhi, has been missing since 15.04.2019.

SEARCH FOR MISSING/KIDNAPPED BOY. General public is hereby informed that this boy namely Karan Sahani S/o Nothani Sahani R/o H.No. 1361, Pkt. 11, Sector-A-6, Narela, Delhi Age : 3 years 5 months, Complexion : Sallow, Height : 2', Face : Round, wearing light green colour shirt and yellow colour pant, has been missing/kidnapped since 21.04.2019.

Appeal For Identification. General public is hereby informed that this person Name : Unknown S/o : Unknown, R/o : Unknown, Age : 35 Years, Sex : Male, Height : 5 Ft. 5 Inch, Complexion : Shallow, ID Mark : A Snake Tattoo on Right Hand, Wearing : Violet Colour Sando Baniyan and Blue Colour Jeans, has been found dead on 29.04.2019 at 09:33 am at 50 Futa Road, Near Jai Veer Naan, Nihal Vihar, Delhi.

PAPER WITH PASSION

## Justice or injustice?

By hurriedly clearing the CJI of sexual harassment charges, the SC probe panel raises more questions than answers



Why is it that the terse dismissal of sexual harassment charges against the Chief Justice of India (CJI) Ranjan Gogoi by an in-house panel hasn't quite given us a sense of closure? Why is it making us all too uncomfortable? Wasn't it led by extremely learned justices, two among them women, who were expected to be armed with the best legal knowledge and stand as protector of human rights? Or was it the case of institutional integrity having a far higher cost than the dignity of an individual, a woman in

this case? She has a right to know as do we. Perhaps so many questions are the reason why women lawyers turned up outside the Supreme Court and shouted slogans of "supreme injustice." This reinforces what we have been saying from the beginning of this delicate case, that procedural propriety be adhered to even if the nature of the proceedings was "informal, in-house" and not liable to public consumption. This became even more imperative in a scenario as the accused, in this case the CJI, can only be impeached by Parliament and cannot be subjected to any prevalent legal mechanism. Which is why his image needed to come clean in absolute terms with full transparency than the hush-hush probe that has done more damage than repair. The opacity, the non-inclusion of neutral observers and the summary disposal have only lent credence to people's worst doubts, that the judges of the Supreme Court are untouchable, answerable to no one and can interpret the law to rise above it themselves. Considering the extreme polarities — the CJI claiming that the charges were trumped up to force his hand on key verdicts and the woman claiming there were reprisals against her and her family for bringing the issue up in the first place — it was important for the probe panel to not appear one-sided. For at one end was the suggestion of a mischievous conspiracy against the highest court by using something as coarse as a honey trap. On the other was the accuser, standing up for the rights of all working women, who become soft targets of vilification campaigns and are always assumed to have motives. For the sake of both, the court needed to walk the thin red line without wavering a hair's breadth. But the court-appointed panel swung appallingly to put it mildly. Not only did it appear to have pre-judged the case, it did not even go through the motions. Neither did it take umbrage at the CJI's special hearing without the complainant, nor did it check the backstory of the judges on the panel till the complainant pointed out one of them was a friend of the CJI. He recused himself thereafter.

Considering the case was based on highly unequal circumstances — a junior employee versus the CJI — the investigation turned out to be more intimidating than trustworthy. All the complainant wanted was the presence of her lawyer or any support person for the sake of neutrality, an audio-video recording of the committee proceedings and a copy of her statements as recorded on two sessions for the sake of fair play and cross-questioning. By keeping an apolitical third party at the proceedings, the court could have prioritised fairplay and made the complainant feel secure enough and not walk away. The fact that the court disregarded public pressure to comply with democratic rules and principles and even ignored the counsel of senior judges Chandrachud and Nariman on the matter shows the impunity with which it pushed a closure rather than a satisfying resolution. The court's claims that informal proceedings need not be made public run counter to the transparency and right to information it espouses in its other rulings. And here the public needs to know the details about the actions taken or not taken against a Constitutional authority. If indeed Gogoi is innocent or the woman guilty, wouldn't it have been better to publicise the findings, both for himself, the institution that he represents and women's rights? Wouldn't it have been better to avoid a stigma and set a precedent for all time to come? A conspiracy of this scale against the judiciary, if it was indeed so, should have been exposed widely and made an example of. Clearly, after this shoddiness, the court and the CJI will forever be under doubt. As are the other judges against whom no sexual harassment charges were ever proven. As for the woman, the intimidating force of the country's topmost institution is too big to wage a crusade on her own. The legal route is out. As for us, there's always our conscience. And unending assumptions in the absence of waterproof evidence.

## Silencing the doubters

The apex court has closed the debate around VVPATs but they have to be factored in next time



Ever since the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) came to power in 2014, many political parties have been crying wolf about the Electronic Voting Machines (EVM) malfunctioning across the country and have been protesting to all and sundry, even though it appears that the public at large has not really been interested in the debate. Their latest approach to the Supreme Court demanding that the Voter Verifiable Paper Audit Trail (VVPAT) system be used more intensively during the current general elections was a lost cause any which way, with the poll process largely complete. The court dismissed the petition with just two phases remaining and it being impossible for the Election Commission (EC) to change machines now. Criticism has been a constant since these machines made their debut, the loudest cries before 2014 being ironically made by the BJP in the aftermath of the 2009 elections.

But can VVPAT machines be brought into more widespread use going forward so as to allay fears that the machines can be tampered with to benefit one party or another? Yes, it must be done. However, one has to remember that in India with 900 million potential voters and 600 million plus votes cast, the scale of VVPAT issues can be mind-numbing and the extent of recounts has to be managed. Otherwise the political turmoil that will invariably follow contested elections could go on for weeks if not months, and India cannot afford that. So while more machines should have VVPAT printers and storage, if any political party or candidate demands a recount or an audit, they should be made to pay, just like those students who want their examination papers re-evaluated. The sum of money should be significant enough to pay for the hundreds of staff required to conduct such an exercise. Meanwhile, the EC must use more authentication units before the polls to weed out counterfeit/tampered EVMs, progress on which has been slow. It can fix a uniform sample size for hand-counting VVPAT slips for all constituencies. And it should fix a margin of error before ordering an automatic recount. The process may be time-taking but would ensure credibility of devices among voters. India must not return to the days of paper ballots, and as we have been noticing in these elections, the problem is more to do with booth security rather than the EVMs.

# Nobody joined the dots

The Easter Sunday self-inflicted tragedy was in military parlance a total command failure, which is likely to take Sri Lanka a decade back



ASHOK K MEHTA

Neither Sherlock Holmes nor Alfred Hitchcock would have been mystified by intelligence oversights that led to one of the world's most deadly terrorist attacks in Sri Lanka last month. Simply because it was a case of just connecting the dots — so detailed and specific were the tip-offs. According to a top secret intelligence memo of April 9 (there were two others before the fateful day dawned on Easter Sunday), the country's intelligence chief had warned the Inspector General of Police that "Zahran Hashim of the National Tawheed Jamaat and his associates were planning to carry out suicide terrorist attacks in Sri Lanka shortly." How this classified warning was not shared with President Maithripala Sirisena and Prime Minister Ranil Wickremesinghe is a riddle. Rarely has there been an intelligence goof-up of this magnitude in recent memory.

That such a catastrophic intelligence foul-up took place in Sri Lanka, which only a decade ago had destroyed the invincible Velupillai Prabhakaran-led Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE), ending root and branch a 30-year-long deadly insurgency and becoming the first country to achieve such a feat in the 21st century, is intriguing. The Army, Navy and Air Force have held annual international seminars in Colombo to showcase their military successes, including the Army's prowess in deep penetration intelligence acquisition skills. According to the then Defence Secretary and brother of former President Mahinda Rajapaksa, Gotabaya Rajapaksa, now a presidential hopeful for the elections this year, the present Government dismantled the elaborate intelligence and surveillance network of 5,000 personnel he had set up in 2011 across the country, including the Muslim majority areas of the east.

Nine suicide bombers, including one woman, struck in coordinated attacks followed by two or three *hara-kiri* acts by family members and associates of the mastermind Hashim. It is now known that the suicide squad consisted of 15 members and the support group was 150 of whom 100 cadres have been arrested. Thirty-six Sri Lankans are reported to have gone to fight with the Islamic State in Syria and many had returned. The preparation for serial human bombing of this scale and sophistication would have taken months if not years. Sirisena has revealed that planning for the attacks started in Syria in 2017. How this massive diabolical plot escaped detection is a mystery. The Sri Lankan Army Commander, Lt Gen Mahesh Senanayake, in an interview to BBC, has said that the suicide bombers "got some sort of training" in Kashmir and Kerala. This should worry India. Given the severe communal



polarisation exacerbated by the elections, major terrorist attacks are not unlikely in India in the near future.

In 2017, I retraced my times with the Indian Peace Keeping Force (IPKF) 30 years ago in the east, travelling through Muslim majority Ampara and Kalmunai areas near Batticaloa and saw an increased density of population, mosques and madrasas as also prosperity and development. The Muslims were targeted by the LTTE notably in their massacre in Sri Lanka's biggest mosque in Kattankudy near Batticaloa in the 1990s. (Kattankudy is the hometown of Hashim, the mastermind of the attacks and its training ground). Later, the Sinhala Buddhist extremists Bodu Bala Sena (BBS), ostensibly supported by the Government, targeted Muslims periodically from 2013, culminating in the big anti-Muslim riots in Kandy last year, which led to the Government declaring an Emergency. The trigger for Muslim alienation and radicalisation is the BBS attacks and objections to *hijab* and *halal*. How the Government did not pick up these straws in the wind is an enigma. Initially, the Government

ascribed the horrific attacks to the Islamic State (IS)-inspired Sri Lankan Muslim National Thowheed Jamath (NTJ) as retaliation for Christchurch till IS supreme Abu Bakr Al-Baghdadi claimed responsibility as revenge for loss of Baghouz, the caliphate's last bastion in Syria. Sri Lanka's own counter-terrorism czar, the Singapore-based Rohan Gunaratna, confirmed that IS has created support groups around the world and NTJ has joined the IS.

The rift and infighting between Sirisena and Wickremesinghe is a folklore. The politics of the carnage is beguiling. Sirisena has squarely blamed the Prime Minister, the Defence Secretary and the Inspector General of Police and said he was kept in the dark and that he would reconstitute security structures. On his part, Wickremesinghe said, "I did not know... still we have to take responsibility for that part of Government machinery that did not work." Sirisena is not only the Defence Minister but has also kept the Law and Order Ministry with him, some say, unconstitutionally. This has kept Wickremesinghe quarantined from defence and security, including national security

council meetings. That the left hand did not know what the right hand was doing is the black hole in the security system.

Former Army Commander General Sarath Fonseka was the key architect of victory of the LTTE but he fell out with the old regime's top leaders, the Rajapaksas. The Sirisena Government appointed Fonseka a Field Marshal and a Minister. Speaking in the Emergency debate in Parliament after the bombings, Fonseka lambasted his own Government, including Sirisena, Wickremesinghe and other defence and intelligence officials. Demands for making Fonseka Minister for law and order are increasing.

Sri Lanka is under Emergency rule with the Prevention of Terrorism Act in place but is likely to be replaced with the new counter-terrorism Bill. It is the first country to ban the face veil in South Asia. Both the curfew and ban on social media were lifted after a week. The preliminary report on the bombings has been completed, which Sirisena is keeping close to his chest. A new military command territoriality, including parts of west and northwest provinces,

including Colombo and Puttalam and strangely called Overall Operational Command, has been established and coastal security beefed up. India's offer of sending its elite National Security Guards has been politely rejected. The joke in Colombo is about how NSG messed up in Mumbai in 2008 taking four days to complete the operation. Tongue-in-cheek Sri Lankan military veterans say what the IPKF started and did not complete, we finished.

Over-indulgent in its conquest of LTTE, Sri Lanka let its guard down. A dysfunctional cohabitation Government has been rent apart by catastrophic terrorist attacks, which are likely to take Sri Lanka a decade back. The Easter Sunday self-inflicted tragedy was in military parlance a total command failure. That neither the Prime Minister nor President has resigned is to borrow a famous war time Churchillian one liner: A riddle wrapped in a mystery surrounded by an enigma.

(The writer is a retired Major General of the Indian Army and founder member of the Defence Planning Staff, currently the revamped Integrated Defence Staff)

## SOUNDBITE

Political parties are not evincing serious interest in taking up electoral reforms. They are happy with the status quo.

Former CEC — TS Krishnamurthy



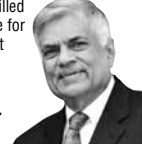
Alia has always been my idol. When she came in with 'Student...' she was raw and fresh and people saw her grow.

Actor — Ananya Panday



Authorities have arrested/killed all the militants responsible for the deadly Easter blasts but the country still faces the threat of IS terror attacks.

Sri Lankan Prime Minister — Ranil Wickremesinghe



People keep asking me this question (on rivals dubbing him an outsider) and I say, I am not here to reply to what all is being said.

BJP candidate — Sunny Deol



## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

### Face the harsh truth

Sir — This refers to the editorial, "A speech too far" (May 7). Dead leaders, who are widely known, like Hitler, Stalin, Mahatma Gandhi, Jawaharlal Nehru and Indira Gandhi among others, have been derided for some of their actions no doubt. Agreed late Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi also had his failings. History won't ignore the blunders made by leaders but there is a civil way of addressing them than brute name-calling.

M Ratan  
Via email

### Take consistent stand

Sir — This refers to the editorial, "Poll panel under fire" (May 6). Undoubtedly, the 2019 Lok Sabha election is one of the dirtiest in a long time where below-the-belt and insensitive remarks have become the norm for our politicians. Political leaders, both in the ruling and opposition parties, are to be blamed as much the Election Commission (EC) of

### Political discourse has reached a new low

India has seen many erudite orators as Prime Ministers before. Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru was an orator par excellence and was a standout statesman, too. Atal Bihari Vajpayee, the first ever Prime Minister of a far-right party, used to mesmerise the masses with his poetic oratory. His words always had an impeccable decency. A stunned nation recently heard Prime Minister Modi describe the life and death of a predecessor, who was killed in a ghastly terrorist attack, in derogatory language and with denigrating gestures. Rajiv Gandhi assumed the mantle when his mother fell to the assassin's bullets and his politician-brother, the heir apparent, had died in a plane crash. True, the Bofors gun deal had brought much infamy, but the charges against him enthused none of the trial and appeal courts.

A saying goes: "Great minds discuss ideas; average minds discuss events; small minds discuss people." Congress chief Rahul Gandhi's tweet, "Your karma awaits



you" — with an emphasis on the *Bhagavad Gita* — also remind one of a verse from the *Bible* (Matthew): "But I tell you that everyone will have to give account on the day of judgement for every empty word they have spoken." Be that as it may, one can only lament about the falling standards in Indian politics this time around.

Haridasan Rajan  
Kozhikode

India. It was former chief Election Commissioner TN Seshan, who had given the much-needed tooth to the EC and redefined the way elections were conducted in our country.

Keeping aside the malfunctioning of EVMs, which could be attributed to faults in the machine, the Model Code of Conduct is brazenly torn by our

leaders. The flow of money and liquor during election time has become way too common. This is especially true among rural voters, who become easy targets and can be manipulated by the leaders. But it is disheartening that the EC has been found wanting in all parameters.

It is not that the EC has not punished erring leaders, it has barred many from campaigning

for 24 to 72 hours but has not been consistent. In fact, it has displayed selective amnesia.

Consistency is what is the need of the hour. Even now, two more rounds of polling are yet to take place — one on May 12 and the other on May 19. The EC can still pull up its socks and correct past wrong doings.

Bal Govind  
Noida

### Mayawati's dream

Sir — In an anti-climax of the feverish pitch of the poll campaign, Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP) supremo Mayawati has hinted that she is a contender for the post of the Prime Minister. One must not be offended by her tall claims, for our polity is so free that anyone can aspire to be anyone and, hence, political leaders have enough room for manoeuvre.

There's no harm in Mayawati wanting to become the Prime Minister but she has to think whether she is acceptable to all across the country or has she ever grown to become a pan-India leader?

Our country is much more diverse and vibrant than Uttar Pradesh and Mayawati has to grow to such a national level to be received by millions of people. So, she is free to dream but its relevance and reality are as impractical as crying for the moon.

TK Nandanam  
Chennai

Send your feedback to:  
letterstopioneer@gmail.com

**FIRST COLUMN**

## Key to success of small businesses

Cash-flow management is an important element to run a business. One must learn this skill to improve the prospects of the firm



HIMA BINDU KOTA

Entrepreneurs and small business owners are passionate about their products/services. However, at times, cash flow management can be quite tricky and not everyone is able to manage their finances properly. Lost between chasing invoices and making payments, cash management becomes a tightrope to walk. This article will provide a guide to cash flow management.

**Don't get slack on invoicing:** This is the first step for cash inflows to come in. Send invoices as soon as possible after providing goods/services. Set terms to make sure that payments are not forgotten or lost in the process. Always follow up on sent invoices. You can make this easy by creating set templates for email or SMS and by following up on them. Always refer to invoice numbers and cross-refer them with payments.

**Keep a tight grip on expenses:** In the early stages of a business, it is smart to keep fixed expenses as low as possible. Expenses are everything that maintain gross revenue from going straight into the piggy bank. Although this is very obvious, when things get busy, it becomes easy to lose track. So make sure to keep track of all small expenses as they can add up quickly. A review allows one to keep track where the money goes. Planning a year in advance for large expenses such as rent, payrolls, taxes, interest, materials for goods and products, debts, utilities and other operating expenses can help reduce the financial burden. They will also aid in ensuring that the cash flow stays stronger even in the tightest months.

**Make financial projections:** Having a clear financial estimate is important. If one does not know where he/she wants to get to, how will one know how to get there? And more importantly, how much one needs to spend along the way? The main business plan can help anticipate and address possible future obstacles.

**Maintain a borderline between personal and business finance:** Once done with the selection of business name and registration, the need is to open a commercial bank account. Personal and business bank accounts should be kept separate. Holding a borderline between these two finances will provide a more straightforward accounting at the end of the financial year for tax ascertainment purposes. It will also eliminate situations of cash crunch in business caused due to withdrawals for personal expenditure. Keeping the business' money separate will make gauging of profitability easier and help keep proper track of expenses.

**Considering insurance:** For an entrepreneur, insurance is one of those things that one hates paying for the business. But in the end, one may actually need it. In order to build a profitable portfolio and managing small business finances, one must spend some time researching about what's right for the business and personal as well.

**Set up a retirement account:** As a small business owner in the competitive business world, one is probably used to taking up a lot of responsibility such as drawing up a detailed business plan to creating a budget for the success of the company. So, it should come as no surprise that funding for retirement, too, shall fall on the shoulders.

**Invest in technology:** The next thing to manage small business finance is to invest in technology and understand all terms related to the business. Sometimes, it is better to use online software to keep records for finances and accounts and establish an online presence in order to attract more customers.

**Keep track on money movements:** No matter how small the company is, one is required to have outlined payment terms concisely and efficiently to manage small business finances. Even though this is challenging in today's business world, one needs to take into account both the financial and legal side of monetary transactions and trace all movements of the capital regularly.

**Negotiate with vendors before confirming a contract:** It is better to negotiate with the vendors before signing a contract and indulge in a good bargain. Successful negotiators know before they begin negotiating what they want to achieve during the negotiation. Examine purchase terms like late payment penalties and grace periods for negotiating for a great deal. Sometimes being given an extra 30 days to pay can save more than a five per cent discount.

**Design an emergency fund:** Once one understands the importance of negotiating the prices from vendors in order to manage small business finances, the next thing that needs to be done is to design an emergency fund for the success of the business entity. Companies don't give consistent sales month on month.

While running a start-up can be exciting, it can also create challenges, especially when it comes to managing finances. So, if one is facing the same issues of how to manage the finances and wants to stand outside the crowd, one must keep the above tips in mind and give one's venture a bright future.

(The writer is Assistant Professor, Amity University)

THIS COUNTRY HAS NEVER FORGIVEN EGO AND ARROGANCE. HISTORY IS WITNESS TO THIS, THE MAHABHARATA IS WITNESS TO THIS.

—CONGRESS LEADER  
 PRIYANKA GANDHI

**POINT COUNTERPOINT**



PRIYANKA/ THIS IS DEMOCRACY, NOBODY BECOMES 'DURYODHANA' JUST BECAUSE YOU CALLED THEM SO. WE WILL FIND OUT ON MAY 23.

—BJP CHIEF  
 AMIT SHAH

# A common school system

The national priority for the investment of public funds must be teacher training and school education. This will ensure highest level of returns. Let the country realise this goal



JS RAJPUT

Education systems across democracies promise equality of opportunity, access and success to every child. This raises high hopes and kindles bundles of aspirations, particularly among the weaker sections of society, who have waited for generations for better and dignified human existence. Towards this, to begin with, the first requirement is to create a Common School System (CSS). It means no child can be denied admission by any school in the neighbourhood, irrespective of his/her social or economic background. The next step is to ensure individual attention to every child, ascertain his/her interests and ensure that his/her creativity and curiosity are not hindered. In simple terms, it requires an inviting learning environment, competent, committed and performing teachers, and a right teacher-taught ratio.

India's public education system could not prevent the decline of credibility and acceptability of 'sarkari schools' as the essential spirit of CSS was just ignored. Prominently included in the National Policy on Education (NPE) 1968, CSS did find a place in the subsequent policies of 1986 and 1992, but the system continuously drifted away from honestly implementing it. Post-independence, the experience in Indian educational initiatives and expansion has clearly established that the elite-dominated system of governance — even in the presence of political masters — invariably succeeds in preserving their interests. This unstated endeavour and attitude resulted in severe decline of public-funded schools, unprecedented mushrooming of private schools and rise in demand for 'good quality schools', which became synonymous with high-fee charging schools. Government schools are now patronised only by those, who have no other alternative. This either because of their meagre economic resources or non-availability of a private school nearby. A feeble attempt was made with the enactment of the Right to Education Act, 2009, to reserve 25 per cent seats in initial classes for children of weaker sections. But a majority of schools found 'strategies' to hoodwink it. After the first batch of children admitted under this category in 2010 completed Class VIII, schools asked them to pay regular school fees or get lost. Such an obvious concern was ignored by our policy-makers. The psychological and emotional damage inflicted on the learner and his family would be anything but devastating in such cases. This clearly indicates the callous attitude and also prevalent ignorance within the education system on finer and subtle aspects of learning. Is it not amazing, if not agonising, that children of most functionaries responsible for school education policies and its implementation prefer to enroll in private schools only?

Around 60-65 per cent of the school-going children still study in 'sarkari' schools, which are invariably deficient on infrastructure, teachers, learning materials and even in basic professional requirements. Expectedly, most of the surveys and studies on learning outcomes indicate not only low learner attainments but also consistent annual decline. This is indeed worrisome. In spite of such a large chunk of school-going children completing their schooling under deficient conditions and severe impediments — and only a small proportion of them getting a place in higher education institutions — the educated youth of India are among the most sought-after in the developed countries.



They are offered really challenging assignments and invariably come out with flying colours, bringing prestige and praise to the motherland. However, there is a dimmer picture within the country. Graduates of highly coveted higher education courses of technical and management education are found deficient in their readiness to accept job responsibility in the job market and the proportion may indeed be alarming — up to 80. What a wastage of young manpower in an era where India is supposed to be in the 'golden period of demographic dividend', solely because of its young manpower. Around 50 per cent of India's population is below 25 years of age and 65 per cent below 35 years. What a great chance to make India's presence felt globally through its young ones. The basic responsibility is to offer good quality school education and ensure dynamism and comparability in higher education. Once access and participation in education is ensured with basic professional and infrastructural inputs, the issue of nurturing individual talented deserves attention. One can recall several Indian initiatives on this count, two of which deserve special mention: The introduction of the Science Talent Search — NTS — scheme in the 1960s and the opening of Navodaya Vidyalayas in pursuance of the 1986 Education policy. The NTS was later transformed to include social sciences as well and Navodaya Vidyalayas have indeed provided great opportunity to the talented children from rural India. I have personally found lasting motivation among NTS scholars and the alumni of Navodaya Vidyalayas. This in itself is a great achievement. Numbers catered to by these initiatives need to increase and it is encouraging that the same is under consideration by the authorities.

It will be relevant to recall a model of talent nurturing that was being successfully implemented on large-scale in the erstwhile USSR. The essence of it can still be suitably digested and gainfully utilised. A three-member delegation of the Government visited several schools over there in 1982. The objective was to study the school education system that

flourished under conditions vastly different from India. It was particularly indicated to the delegation that it would be interesting to find out how they are nurturing talent, dealing with gifted children and the issue of a common language. Those were the days of a bipolar world and terms like 'Iron curtain' were in considerable usage. In every meeting, the hosts spoke only Russian; translations were the only means of interacting during official meetings. However, during dinners and receptions, they spoke chaste English without any hesitation. When — and it happened on several occasions — the delegation tried to understand how Russian language was being accepted in federation units that had their own languages, the answer was short, crisp and precise: Everyone learns Russian voluntarily. The discussion on language never proceeded beyond this. However, there was much more to learn that could be examined gainfully in Indian conditions.

One morning, the schedule included visit to a music school and a physics school. The delegation was told that the most important task of the teachers in every school is to observe the students, find out their inclinations and interests, keep a record and once they find consistency, encourage the child to go ahead and see the progress. There may be a change of interest area, something else may fascinate the child and that should be permissible. The idea behind the approach was that USSR needed not only scientists, engineers and technocrats but also painters, poets, scholars, musicians, folklore specialists and the like. Teachers must be trusted to ascertain the right path of passage to excellence in each individual case. Once this was done, the school would send a report to the regional level; the child in all probability would be picked up by the State and shifted to a residential school. Here, he would study all the curricula as in other schools but there would be big plus in his area of his identified interest — be it music, physics, history, literature or sports. These special schools were located after thoughtful consideration of locally

available expertise. A physics school would be located in a town that has university department, research laboratory and other establishment connected with research and innovations in physics and related area. Same would apply to other disciplines. In the music school, eminent masters were voluntarily helping children move ahead of the regular curricular prescriptions.

The most significant challenge before the Indian education policy-makers and implementers can be summarized crisply as providing "equality of opportunity of access and success and nurturing the talented", as said by John W Gardner in his book, *Excellence: Can We Be Equal and Excellent Too?* Though Gardner wrote these lines in the context of the US around 1984, the relevance of some of his observations remains universally relevant even in current times: "Diagnosis of an individual's future capacity to perform remains a hazardous undertaking. There are mysteries in individual development that are far from understanding. No stone should be left unturned to ensure that decisions are based on a wide range of evidence, carefully gathered and sifted."

For sure, in India, marks obtained in the board examination are certainly no guarantee of total personality development and specialised talent. However, talent identification and fulsome personality development have to be a continuous process that must begin from the early stages. It should include traits of personality development, value internalisation and character formation as an integral part of the process. The topmost national priority for the investment of public funds must be teacher training and school education. This will ensure highest level of returns. Let the country realise it. Simultaneously, no let up in locating and nurturing talent is a must. In Indian psyche, commercialisation of education is unacceptable and must be discouraged effectively. Education is still the only ray of hope for the weaker sections.

(The writer is the Indian Representative on the Executive Board of UNESCO)

# Scrub allegations and come clean

The Election Commission has been at the receiving end of scathing attacks from the Opposition for being unjust in its decisions. The panel must quell all doubts over its ethics and uphold its reputation



KALYANI SHANKAR

Perhaps the Election Commission of India (EC) has never been under such scrutiny as it is today. The polarised campaign during the ongoing General Elections has put the spotlight firmly on the referee — the EC. As an impartial watchdog, it is the responsibility of the electoral body to provide for a level-playing field to all political parties. The perception that the EC has not been addressing Opposition complaints, in this case against the ruling party, has been doing the rounds.

An exasperated Congress president Rahul Gandhi called the poll panel "completely biased" against the Opposition last week. He said that

when it comes to the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) and Prime Minister Narendra Modi, the commission toes the straight line and when it comes to the Opposition, it becomes biased. During a media interaction, Rahul Gandhi even threatened EC officials with "consequences" in the future for being biased.

But Rahul Gandhi is not the only leader who has grouse against the EC. There are other Opposition leaders like Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu, West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee, Samajwadi Party chief Akhilesh Yadav, Bahujan Samaj Party supremo Mayawati, Aam Aadmi Party chief Arvind Kejriwal and many other leaders in the Opposition, who have complained against the EC's bias towards the leaders of the ruling party. The BJP, too, has been lodging complaints against other parties to the EC.

Recently, in an unprecedented manner, a group of 66 former bureaucrats wrote to President Ram Nath Kovind, expressing concern

over what they called the questionable functioning of the Commission, requesting him to intervene to ensure free and fair polls. The leaders included former National Security Advisor Shivshankar Menon, supercop Julio Ribeiro and former Lt Governor Najeeb Jung.

Why is the EC facing such charges? Is the Commission so helpless that the Chief Election Commissioner recently pleaded helplessness in the Supreme Court, lamenting that he lacked the powers to crack the whip? The court not only blasted the Commission but also reminded it that it had adequate authority to enforce the Model Code of Conduct under Article 324 of the Constitution.

Even its decision to ban Union Minister Maneka Gandhi, Mayawati, Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath and Samajwadi Party leader Azam Khan from campaign for specific hours for violating Model Code of Conduct came only after the Supreme Court's nudging.

Alas, even after the apex court pulling it up, the EC has maintained

silence on the complaints launched by parties against alleged hate speeches, which have piled up all the more. The Congress claims that it has given more than 37 representations — ten against the Prime Minister — to the EC on violations of Model Code of Conduct but the Commission did not act. It was only after Congress MP Sushmita Dev approached the apex court, which directed the Commission to dispose of all complaints registered by the party immediately, that the EC gave a clean chit to the Prime minister in six cases last week.

Interestingly, Ashok Lavasa, one of the Commissioners, dissented on the decision. The Congress has not given up and has gone to the top court on the orders once again, alleging that the EC has been partial to the ruling party.

Many political parties have raised doubts about the functioning of the Electronic Voting Machines, too. The petition filed by 21 Opposition parties in the Supreme Court, for counting of at least 25 per cent EVM paper trail machines — instead of

only five — in every Assembly segment has been rejected by the top court. On the other hand, the EC maintains that the EVMs are fool-proof and cannot be manipulated.

The EC has not always been so timid. In 1989, the then Chief Election Commissioner RVS Peri Sastri had introduced wide-ranging electoral reforms, including reducing the voting age to 18 from 21. He also stood his ground on his principles, which prompted the then Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi to make a multi-member panel to clip the powers of the Chief Election Commissioner (CEC).

Similarly, in the early 1990s, former CEC TN Seshan had introduced a number of reforms, including the issuance of voter IDs. He deployed the security forces to keep a check on booth capturing and voter intimidation. He earned the nickname of "Al-Seshan" and punished those who flouted the Model Code and even recommended the sacking two Ministers to the then Prime Minister Narasimha Rao for violating the code. There have been other

successful CECs like Sukumar Sen and SY Quraishi.

The question, however is: Has the EC played an impartial role in the current Lok Sabha polls? The Opposition has complained that the electoral body is not ensuring the rules of the game in order to ensure parity. For instance, eyebrows were raised when it suspended an IAS officer for checking the chopper of the Prime Minister in the course of his duty.

Also, income tax raids were being conducted only on Opposition leaders. It is nobody's case that whatever the Opposition wants, the EC must comply, but it should appear to have done justice. There is still time to send a signal that the EC is impartial and it must earn the trust of the Opposition. The EC's performance has not always been uniform but it is a huge exercise to hold the elections peacefully and in a free and fair manner. No doubt poll reforms are required and the EC should be given more teeth but within the constraints, the body can certainly perform.

(The writer is a senior political commentator and syndicated columnist)



**FOREIGN EYE**



## DONALD TRUMP REQUIRES AN ADULT RESPONSE

Unfortunately for China, Iran and the international community, we are dealing with a childish job in the White House, but one in charge of a superpower, not a train set in the nursery. The only possible approach, at least in the short term, is to attempt to deal with him, and to accommodate at least some of America's more reasonable wishes. (The Independent editorial)

# Film stars lose their sheen in elections

SIANS ■ LUCKNOW

Until the turn of the millennium, film stars guaranteed crowds and votes in politics. Political parties wooed them ardently. As a result, top stars like Rajesh Khanna, Vinod Khanna, Shatrughan Sinha, Raj Babbar, Dharmendra, Hema Malini, Jaya Prada, Govinda and Jaya Bachchan braved the heat and dust of campaigning for their political parties.

Some like Dharmendra and Govinda could not understand the manipulations of politics and called it a day after one term. Others like Raj Babbar, Shatrughan Sinha, Hema Malini and Jaya Bachchan continue to stand their ground.

However, if various political parties are to be believed, the stardust is losing its glitter and film stars can no longer guarantee a win on the seats they campaign for.

A clear indication of this is the fact that the demand for film stars as campaigners is rapidly going down in these elections.

A BJP candidate said: "There is no use getting film stars to campaign because they cannot give speeches and do not leave any impact on voters."

Explained senior journalist RK Singh: "The stars are losing their credibility because they lack conviction in what they say. People know that in most cases stars take money to campaign and this erodes their sincerity. Some stars like Ravi



Krishna and Manoj Tiwari have changed more parties than they have delivered hits." Besides, he explained, the glamour factor has also reduced because film stars were now seen 24x7 on the social media and television. "Earlier, people would wait for hours to catch a glimpse of their favourite actor but not any



more. You just need to get on to the Internet and you can have your fill," he added. Bhojpur stars Ravi Kishan and Dinesh Yadav Nirahua, who are contesting the Gorakhpur and Azamgarh seats respectively, are already finding the going tough. Raj Babbar, who is presently seeking election for his sixth



term to Parliament and holds the position of Uttar Pradesh Congress President, explains that it needs more than just stardom to survive in politics. "Much before I started working in theatre and then films, I was associated with the socialist youth politics. I joined the Janata Dal in 1989 and actively participated in party



activities. I later joined the Samajwadi Party and then the Congress. "I never confined myself to campaigning and that is one reason why the parties and the people started taking me seriously," he says. When Raj Babbar was appointed president of the Uttar Pradesh Congress in July

2016, few took him seriously in his own party. But two years later, they understood that he means business. Hema Malini, Jaya Prada, Jaya Bachchan and most others have, on the other hand, confined themselves to campaigning in their own constituencies or in select constituencies. They have not actively involved themselves in party matters. One actress who spoke to this correspondent on the condition of anonymity said: "I did try to get my word in a few times but was politely told to restrict myself to campaigning. I have understood that apart from my star value, I mean nothing to the party."

## NYAY surgical strike on poverty: Rahul Gandhi



SIANS ■ JHALDA (WEST BENGAL)

Describing the ambitious Nyuntam Aay Yojana (NYAY) promised by his party as a "surgical strike on poverty", Congress President Rahul Gandhi on Tuesday said an amount of Rs 3.60 lakh would be given to each of the five crore poor families if his party was voted to power in the Lok Sabha elections.

"I give a guarantee that Hindustan's next Government will give the amount to each of the 5 crore families — that is 25 crore people in the next five

Congress president Rahul Gandhi addresses a public meeting for the Lok Sabha polls, in Purulia district of West Bengal, on Tuesday PTI

years," Rahul told an election rally here in support of Congress candidate from Purulia Nepal Mahato.

"Wah wah, this a surgical strike on poverty," Rahul exclaimed.

Turning to farmers' issues, Gandhi said the law will be changed to ensure that farmers were not jailed for failing to repay bank loans.

"If India's farmer takes a loan of Rs 20,000 and fails to return, then are they sent to jail or not?" he asked.

Rahul said he doesn't find it right when rich people are not jailed after taking big amounts while the farmers are caught if they take loans. "Do you think there is

Nyay (justice)? No farmer belonging to Bengal or any state will be sent to jail if they fail to pay the bank loans.

He promised that the new government to be formed after the Lok Sabha elections will have a separate budget for the farmers. "After 2019, there will be two budgets, first, the farmer's budget will be made.

"In the beginning of the year, the farmers will know that the amount of money allotted by the government, the number of food processing units, how many storage facilities will be there and what kind of technology will be given for the farmers.

"In the very first year, they will be told about their earnings

and profits," he said.

He slammed Prime Minister Narendra Modi and West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee for failing to provide employment and ensuring fair price for farmers.

Rahul said the BJP's only aim was to ensure Modi becomes Prime Minister again. "But I tell you no power can make him the PM, as the citizens are going to hit a sixer this time," he added.

Mocking Modi, he said Modi earlier talked about his 56-inch chest, but now "two glasses are fixed that are known as teleprompters. He is warned that he should not speak about unemployment and farmers as the public can become angry."

## CCTV shows J&K BJP leaders giving money to reporters

MOHIT KANDHARI ■ JAMMU

State BJP leaders in Jammu & Kashmir have been caught 'red handed' distributing envelopes, allegedly filled with currency notes, to reporters in Leh.

On May 3, Press Club Leh had accused the BJP of trying to bribe its members by offering "envelopes filled with money".

On the same day, State BJP leaders had denied these allegations claiming they were "politically motivated".

On Tuesday, a CCTV footage, surfaced in public domain which clearly exposes BJP MLC, Vikram Randhawa, handing over envelopes to journalists after the Press conference.

State BJP Chief Ravinder Raina is also seen standing in the hall.

In the same CCTV footage, two other BJP leaders Vikram Randhawa and Narinder Singh, party general secretary, can be seen pacifying local reporters in Leh after they refused to accept the currency notes.

Some of the journalists can be clearly seen returning the packets and placing it on a table in the hall in the presence of every one present there.

Earlier, State BJP Chief Ravinder Raina had also threatened to file a defamation suit if the Press Club Leh did not issue a public apology.

Press Club, Leh, president Morup Stanzin said the letter was written but said they had not lodged the complaint with the police.

"We have lodged our complaint with deputy commissioner, Leh, who is also the returning officer on Friday.. After a press conference, Randhawa handed over the envelopes filled with money to some journalists who returned these to him immediately," Stanzin added.



On May 3, Press Club Leh had accused the BJP of trying to bribe its members by offering "envelopes filled with money"

However, State BJP leaders had denied these allegations claiming they were "politically motivated"

On Tuesday, a CCTV footage, surfaced in public domain which clearly exposes BJP MLC, Vikram Randhawa, handing over envelopes to journalists after the Press conference

Some of the journalists can be clearly seen returning the packets and placing it on a table in the hall in the presence of every one present there

Earlier, State BJP Chief Ravinder Raina had also threatened to file a defamation suit if the Press Club Leh did not issue a public apology

Vikram Randhawa for allegedly trying to bribe journalists by offering money in envelopes to influence the outcome of elections.

## Modi should get 'tight slap' of democracy: Mamata

PTI ■ RANIBANDH/ RAGHUNATHPUR

Narendra Modi should get a tight slap of democracy," a furious TMC supremo Mamata Banerjee said on Tuesday, hitting back at the prime minister for alleging repeatedly that her Government is run by extortionist syndicates.

She also questioned the BJP's nationalistic and patriotic claims, saying it was an "RSS man" who killed Mahatma Gandhi. "I do not bow my head in politics. When Modi alleges that Trinamool Congress is a party of syndicates... Its government is run by syndicates, I feel he should get a tight slap of democracy (be defeated in election)," she said at a public meeting at Raghunathpur in Purulia.

Calling Modi a prime minister who is "known for telling lies", Banerjee said during his visits to West Bengal for election he says her Government does not allow Durga Puja and other Hindu rituals to be performed. "Do you believe those allegations?" she asked.

Joining issue with the PM over his claim that she does not allow people to chant 'Jai Sri Ram' and throw those who do behind bars, she said, "I will not



join them (the BJP) in shouting their slogan. I will rather say Jai Hind."

At another meeting at Ranibandh in Bankura district, she questioned BJP's claim of patriotism. "I do not know who Gandhi's killers were. But we know the name of Nathuram Godse, an RSS man. When you speak of patriotism and serving the nation can you tell us who was he?"

"Did you fight for the country's independence? You (the BJP) had supported the British. Don't you feel ashamed?" Banerjee said. Speaking in the same vein at

Barjora, also in Bankura district, Banerjee said, "They (the BJP) don't revere Gandhiji and Netaji as leaders of the nation .... Modi should not sermonise us on patriotism!"

A combative Banerjee alleged that BJP starts doing politics over Lord Ram during elections. She said the saffron party could not build even a small Ram temple in the last five years.

The TMC supremo asserted Modi will not get a second term in office as he failed to bring in 'acche din' that he had promised in 2014.

Instead, more than 12,000 farmers committed suicide, factories got closed and three crore jobs were lost.

However, she claimed, while there was distress everywhere, income of those living in West Bengal went up three-fold. She accused the BJP of orchestrating riots between "Hindus and Muslims, Nathuram Godse, an RSS man, Muslims and Christians and Muslims and adivasis" during the last five years.

"I don't tolerate rioters — both Hindu and Muslim. We want peace not unrest. We (TMC) do not want Modi to stay in power. We will help in Government formation in Delhi," she added.

## Will Lord Ram's name be taken in Pak, if not in India: Shah

PTI ■ GHATAL/BISHNUPUR/ KESHIARI

BJP president Amit Shah on Tuesday alleged that West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee is not allowing people to chant 'Jai Shri Ram' in the state, and wondered if the Lord's name cannot be taken in India, will it be uttered in Pakistan.

Shah also dared Banerjee to arrest him for chanting 'Jai Shri Ram' at the multiple election rallies he addressed in the state on Tuesday.

"Lord Ram is a part of the culture of India... Can anybody stop people from taking his name? I want to ask Mamata didi, if Shri Ram's name is not taken in India, will it be chanted in Pakistan?" he said.

"I want to tell Mamata didi that this is West Bengal and not Pakistan... I am going to Kolkata from here (Bishnupur), put me in jail if you have the guts," the BJP chief said.

He addressed rallies in Ghatal, Keshiari and Bishnupur in West Bengal. Shah claimed that Banerjee had stopped her car a few days ago to tell people that they will be put in jail if they chant the name of Lord Ram.

A video had appeared in the social media that showed Banerjee stopping her car at a



BJP president Amit Shah with Mukul Roy and other leaders being garlanded during an election campaign rally for the Lok Sabha polls, in Bankura district of West Bengal, on Tuesday PTI

place in West Midnapore district on Saturday, and chasing some persons who chanted 'Jai Shri Ram' as her carcade was crossing the area.

Shah said he has come to know that the CM has cancelled permission for two rallies of Prime Minister Narendra Modi in the State — one at Purulia and the other at Bankura, scheduled for Thursday.

"Can you (Banerjee) prevent your defeat in this manner?" he asked. On Modi invoking the Bofors scandal, the BJP president wondered if remind-

ing people what had happened was tantamount to insulting former PM Rajiv Gandhi.

"What wrong has PM Narendra Modi done by saying that the Bofors scam happened during Rajiv Gandhi's tenure... Rahul baba says his father has been insulted. Is it an insult to be reminded of what had happened?" Shah said.

The BJP chief was referring to Modi's recent remarks at a rally in Uttar Pradesh, where he said that Rajiv Gandhi's life ended as "bhrashtachari no. 1" (corrupt no. 1).

## Will coalition Govt in K'taka survive after May 23?

KESTUR VASUKI ■ BENGALURU

The shadow boxing within the coalition partners, the JD(S) and Congress is an early indication of the instability of Chief Minister HD Kumaraswamy led JD(S)-Congress Government in Karnataka. Many Congress Ministers and legislators are also openly pitching for former Chief Minister Siddaramaiah as the Chief Minister again to lead the party and the Government.

Many observe in the political circles that the mandate in the Hassan, Mandya and Tumakuru (it's now popularly called HMT) where JDS is contesting with the help of Congress might hold the key to the survival of coalition Government led by HD Kumaraswamy of the JDS.

In Hassan Prajwal Revanna grandson of HD Deve Gowda and son of HD Revanna a PWD Minister, in Mandya constituency Nikhil Kumaraswamy son of HD Kumaraswamy and another grandson of Deve Gowda and at Tumakuru HD Deve Gowda are contesting.

The well-known rivalry between Siddaramaiah and Deve Gowda has trickled down to the grass roots and party workers in both the Congress and the JDS are worked against each other in these constituencies.

The results in the these constituencies are expected to provide some hints about how powerful dominant Vokkaliga (Gowdas) and Kuruba (shepherd) communities have voted.

Deve Gowda, the JD(S) supremo leads a family party JDS and has the support of vokkaligas one of the dominant communities and Siddaramaiah who belongs to Kuruba community made them a dominant community and made them politically strong.

In another significant development Karnataka Home Minister MB Patil on Tuesday made a pitch for Siddaramaiah "as Chief Minister again," but clarified the present coalition Government under HD Kumaraswamy would complete its full term.

"What's wrong in that? Siddaramaiah is our leader in

the Congress. People want to see him as Chief Minister again.

"Even we too want to see him as Chief Minister again. He gave good governance for five years. He should have come back again," Patil told reporters in Bengaluru.

He was responding to a query on "growing demand" among the Congress MLAs to see Siddaramaiah occupy the top post again. His statement resonates with Chikkaballapura Congress MLA K Sudhakar's remarks on Monday that it would be good if Siddaramaiah becomes CM again.

"Siddaramaiah had done a lot of good work. He deserves one more term... But we have to accept people's mandate... When we come to power on our own... but presently that question does not arise... This government has to complete five years," he said.

"Siddaramaiah has got the eligibility (for the second term as Chief Minister)," Patil added.

After the Congress and JDS formed the coalition Government following the May



2018 Assembly elections, Kumaraswamy took over as the CM of the State. The coalition partners also fought the Lok Sabha elections together

though there have been strains between the two ever since. Many Congress MLAs were not content with the present arrangement and had stat-

ed that Siddaramaiah was their leader and they would like to see him as the chief minister again, an issue that has irked JDS leadership.

Meanwhile, BJP strongman Yeddyurappa predicts "political ups and downs" after May 23. He strongly ruled out any truck with JDS to form the government in case the present coalition Government falls with the disgruntled Congress legislators. He said in Kalaburgi that BJP was not in a hurry to form the Government.

"I want to say one thing clearly: Kumaraswamy had betrayed me after deciding to share power 20 months each (in 2006). There is no question of coming to an understanding with JDS. There is no question of coalition Government (with that party)," Yeddyurappa said.

"It's too early to say anything... I have never said the Government will collapse and I shouldn't say it also. What I'm saying is there will be political ups and downs after May 23 results, anything may happen. I'm not saying we will form the

government or we will come to power," he added.

In 2006, the BJP and a section of JDS MLAs forged an alliance to form a Government on the basis of a power-sharing deal, according to which Kumaraswamy and Yeddyurappa will be the CM for 20 months each.

As JDS refused to transfer power to Yeddyurappa after 20 months, the BJP in October 2007 decided to withdraw support to the Kumaraswamy Government, ending an uneasy and often bitter relationship, accusing the regional party of "betrayal."

Pointing out that there is a "lot of confusion" in the state politics, Yeddyurappa said it is certain that Narendra Modi will become the PM of the country once again, and the results of Lok Sabha polls will have an implication on the politics here.

"I'm not day dreaming to say that their (Congress and JDS) Government should col-

lapse. Let them concentrate on them being together. Am I responsible for Congress and JDS fighting each other; am I responsible for differences between them?" he questioned.

Predicting the defeat of former Union Ministers Veerappa Moily in Chikkaballapur and KH Muniyappa in Kolar, Yeddyurappa said, in Tumkur the chances of our candidate winning is more against former Prime Minister HD Deve Gowda, in Mandya independent candidate Sumalatha Ambareesh supported by the party will win "100 per cent" against Kumaraswamy's son Nikil, while there is a fight in Hassan, where Gowda's other grandson Prajwal Revanna is the JDS nominee.

Yeddyurappa also said the party high-command will decide on the next state unit president, and he would continue as the Leader of the Opposition.



# Maya, Tipu target BJP's 'guru, chela'

PTI ■ JAUNPUR/BHADOHI

BSP supremo Mayawati and SP chief Akhilesh Yadav on Tuesday said their alliance will "shake the very roots" of the BJP and dislodge the "chowkidar of capitalists" from the Prime Minister's chair.

Addressing election rallies in favour of Mahagathbandhan candidates in Machchlisahr and Jaunpur seats, they also targeted the Congress, alleging that it is "anti-dalit" like the BJP and wants the people to remain poor.

"BJP's guru and chela are all set to be out of power at the Centre," Mayawati said at a rally in Bhadohi, attacking Prime Minister Narendra Modi and BJP chief Amit Shah.

"This alliance is so strong that in the 2022 Assembly elections in UP, it will send Yogi baba back in his mutt," Mayawati said, referring to Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath. The BSP supremo alleged that the BJP tried to break their alliance, but she "exposed" it in the media and gave a "befitting reply" to the saffron party.

"The BJP is going out of power in these elections... It has failed to fulfil the promises made to the poor and the middle classes in 2014 elections... Despite all this the Prime Minister is seeking votes again," she said in Jaunpur.

Mayawati said, "Terror attacks are taking place and the Government is busy in taking mileage of the Army's valour." Terming Prime Minister Narendra Modi as 'chowkidar of capitalists', she alleged that he helped the rich become richer. She also alleged that the GST and note ban were a 'source of corruption'.

Hitting out at the Congress, Mayawati alleged "both BJP and Congress are anti-dalits".

Referring to the Congress' Nyaya scheme, she said the party which is claiming to provide Rs 6,000 every



BSP supremo Mayawati and Samajwadi Party president Akhilesh Yadav wave at the supporters during an election campaign rally for the Lok Sabha elections, in Bhadohi, on Tuesday

month to poor families "only wants people to remain poor and helpless... There is a need to remain vigilant from them."

On Uttar Pradesh, she said farmers in the state were facing immense hardships because of stray cattle and blamed the Adityanath Government for it.

She also promised permanent jobs if the SP-BSP alliance is voted to power at the Centre.

In his address, Samajwadi Party president Akhilesh Yadav echoed Mayawati's view that both "BJP and Congress are the same". "Had the Congress worked earnestly since

Independence, there would not have been the need for formation of SP and BSP... No one thought SP and BSP would form an alliance. All efforts to somehow break the alliance have failed. After five phases of polling, the BJP's morale has also come down. Its leaders and workers are worried," he said.

"These BJP people talk about security of the country but could not reply to questions of 'roti and daal' raised by a BSF jawan," he said referring to dismissed BSF jawan Tej Bahadur Yadav whose nomination papers from Varanasi were rejected.

"BJP is standing on a foundation of

lies and our alliance will shake its very roots... Perhaps the BJP is not aware that this alliance is a storm.

This time round, people will snatch the chair of the chawki-turned-chowkidar...

He said the alliance "will uproot the BJP which is standing on the foundation of lies and hatred. There is a wind of change which is blowing... How can the prime minister, who got scared of a jawan in Varanasi, face terrorism and naxalism."

"Not only the public but animals also are unhappy with this Government," he quipped.

# Talk about Agusta before Rafale: Sitharaman to Cong

IAN S ■ KOLKATA

Attacking the Congress for raising questions on the Rafale deal, Defence Minister Nirmala Sitharaman on Tuesday said the Opposition party must first give answers on the Rs 3,600-crore AgustaWestland VIP chopper deal and Backups before talking about which the party has spoken.

Before they talk about the BJP and Modi ji or the Defence Ministry, they themselves have more to answer," she said in response to a query.

Attacking Congress chief Rahul Gandhi, Union Minister Arun Jaitley had recently said Gandhi's former business partner, Ulrik Mcknight, at Backups Ltd in the UK had got

offset defence contracts from French defence supplier Naval Group for Scorpene submarines in 2011 during the UPA rule.

He also alleged Gandhi had a 65 per cent stake in Backups between 2003 and 2009, when it was wound up.

first of all, to have an enquiry and give answer on AgustaWestland (deal) and also give answer on Backups about which the party has spoken. Before they talk about the BJP and Modi ji or the Defence Ministry, they themselves have more to answer," she said in response to a query.

Attacking Congress chief Rahul Gandhi, Union Minister Arun Jaitley had recently said Gandhi's former business partner, Ulrik Mcknight, at Backups Ltd in the UK had got offset defence contracts from French defence supplier Naval Group for Scorpene submarines in 2011 during the UPA rule.

He also alleged Gandhi had a 65 per cent stake in Backups between 2003 and 2009, when it was wound up.

# EVMs found in Bihar hotel, 4 cops suspended

Poll official issued showcause notice

Patna/Muzaffarpur: Four police personnel were suspended and a poll official was issued show cause notice in Bihar's Muzaffarpur district on Tuesday for keeping six EVMs inside a hotel room while voting was on for the fifth phase, a top official said.

The district authorities were, however, quick to assert that none of the EVMs were used or their seals broken. The matter came to light when several local leaders of the Opposition 'Mahagathbandhan' noticed that poll-related paraphernalia were being taken inside a hotel by Sector Magistrate Awadhesh Kumar and raised an alarm.

Sector Magistrate Awadhesh Kumar has been served with a show cause notice and based on his reply, which has to come within 24 hours, further action will be taken," Bihar Joint Chief Electoral Officer Pravin Kumar Gupta told a press conference in Patna.

"The four police personnel a sub-inspector and three constables who accompanied him have been suspended, he added. Muzaffarpur district magistrate and district election officer, Alok Ranjan Ghosh dismissed allegations of suspected misuse of the EVMs. "None of the EVMs were used for voting and all were sealed. These were kept in reserve meant for replacement in case of a snag being reported from anywhere, he said. PTI



# Cong insulted PM by calling GST as Gabbar Singh Tax: BJP

PTI ■ LUCKNOW

Accusing the Congress of being far from ground reality, the BJP on Tuesday said by calling the Goods and Services Tax (GST) as 'Gabbar Singh Tax', the party had insulted Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

"The Congress leadership does not know about the issues faced by traders and had unleashed inspector raj to harass them. On the contrary Modi ji thinks about the welfare of traders," Ravikant Garg, chairperson of UP Vyapari Kalyan Board told PTI here.

"What is the relevance of calling GST as Gabbar Singh Tax. Is it (tax money) going into Modi ji's pocket? You are insulting the Prime Minister by making such statement," he added.

The Opposition parties have spread fear and misguided the people by portraying GST as an evil whereas it has given relief to the traders and businessmen, Garg said.

"In the past there were 9 Central taxes, and 12 taxes levied by the UP Government. Initially the traders may have faced teething trouble, as they were not used to it, but the

The Opposition parties have spread fear and misguided the people by portraying GST as an evil whereas it has given relief to the traders and businessmen, Ravikant Garg, chairperson of UP Vyapari Kalyan Board said

problems were technical in nature. As soon as the problems were conveyed to the government, the GST council redressed them," he said.

The UP Vyapari Kalyan Board functions as a link between the State Government and businessmen and solves the problems faced by traders and entrepreneurs within a fixed time, he said.

Referring to the BJP's 2019 Sankalp Patra, he said that if the party is voted to power, small traders and marginal farmers will get pension benefits after 60 years of age.

"Sankalp Patra talks about setting up a National Traders Welfare Board, new retail policy to boost retail trade, pension scheme for small traders above the age of 60 years, Rs 10 lakh accidental insurance to all GST-registered traders and credit cards to traders on the lines of Kisan Credit Cards," he said.

# Central forces to be deployed for Tripura West re-polls

IAN S ■ AGARTALA

The Union Home Ministry has deployed 15 companies of paramilitary forces during re-polling to the Tripura West Lok Sabha seat where voting took place on April 11, a top police official said on Tuesday.

"On the advice of the Election Commission (EC), the Ministry has deployed 11 companies of the Border Security Force and four of the Central Reserve Police Force," the official told IANS on the condition of anonymity.

However, the state Chief Electoral Officer (CEO) Sriram Taranikanti said that he was yet to receive an official confirmation from the EC on the re-polls.

"I do not know when or in how many polling stations re-polling will be held. We have sent our reports and recommendations to the EC," the CEO told IANS.

Besides the Tripura West seat, the State has a second constituency — Tripura East — which went to the polls on April 23.

The Opposition Congress and CPM has been demanding the re-polls after they alleged large-scale rigging, booth capturing, intimidation and attacks by the ruling BJP.

Tripura Pradesh Congress Vice-President Pijush Kanti Biswas on Tuesday reiterated that if the EC did not hold the re-polls, the party would move the SC.

"We have learnt that BJP leaders in Delhi are influencing the EC to hold re-polls only in a few polling stations to ensure their victory," Biswas told the media.

The CPI-M leaders held several demonstrations in Agartala and also in New Delhi to highlight their demand.

# A lot at stake for BJP in Gorakhpur

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

Once considered to be the bastion of Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath and the safest Lok Sabha seat for the Bharatiya Janata Party in eastern Uttar Pradesh, Gorakhpur has taken a queer turn, forcing the ruling party to deploy all resources at its command to ensure the victory of its candidate, Bhojpur star Ravi Kishan, from this prestigious constituency which goes to poll in the seventh and last phase of Lok Sabha elections on May 19.

The BJP won the Gorakhpur seat from 1991 till 2018, when the party lost it in the by-election to a joint opposition candidate. The bypoll was necessitated due to resignation of Yogi Adityanath from Lok Sabha after he was elected the UP Legislative Council after becoming the Chief Minister of UP.

"In this election, two constituencies, Gorakhpur and Amethi, have evoked maximum interest. The interest in Amethi was due to the contest between Union Minister and BJP candidate Smriti Irani and Congress president Rahul Gandhi, who is seeking re-election from his traditional seat. In Gorakhpur, the focus is on Yogi Adityanath.

"The question is whether the BJP will be able to wrest the Gorakhpur seat from Samajwadi Party this time," said Nomita P Kumar from the Giri Institute of Development Studies.

Gorakhpur was considered a BJP bastion because politics in this impoverished region revolved around Gorakhnath Mutt. Earlier, Mahant Avidyanath represented the Gorakhpur seat in Lok Sabha but after his death, Yogi



Adityanath kept on winning the seat since 1998.

But in 2018, Praveen Kumar Nishad of Nishad Party contested the bypoll to Gorakhpur on SP ticket and defeated BJP's Upendra Dutt Shukla by over 21,000 votes. This was the first experiment of opposition unity which was replicated in Kairana bypoll later.

Since then, Praveen Nishad has joined the BJP and has been fielded from Sant Kabir Nagar constituency.

"The opposition was able to win the Gorakhpur seat because of the combination of castes. Nishads, Dalits and Muslims united and voted against the BJP. Secondly, the voting percentage in bypoll was just 43 per cent, indicating lack of interest among the voters," Kumar said, adding that the BJP leaders had become complacent about the outcome in their 'impregnable' stronghold, an attitude which boomeranged.

The caste equation in Gorakhpur is complex. There are around 4.5 lakh Nishad votes

followed by 3.5 lakh Muslims and around 1.5 lakh Dalits. The upper castes account for around 2 lakh votes.

To take advantage of this equation, the SP-BSP-RLD alliance has fielded former minister in Akhilesh government, Ram Bhuwal Nishad from Gorakhpur. He is pitted against BJP's Ravi Kishan, a Brahmin. The Congress has fielded Madhusudan Tiwari from the seat.

The trouble for the BJP does not end here as one time close confidant of Yogi Adityanath, Sunil Singh, too has jumped into the fray under the banner of Hindu Yuva Vahini Bharat.

At one time, Singh was considered the right hand man of Yogi Adityanath. Singh's former stature could prove detrimental for the BJP, as he would definitely eat into a chunk of BJP votes.

In this scenario, BJP's Ravi Kishan relies totally on Yogi Adityanath. Being a Bhojpur actor, he may draw crowd but will his charisma translate into votes, only time will tell.



BJP MP Rupa Ganguly during an election campaign roadshow in favour of the party candidate for Lok Sabha constituency Anupam Hazra (unseen) for the Lok Sabha polls, at Sonarpur in South 24 Parganas district of West Bengal, on Tuesday

**MODI IS WORKAHOLIC, RAHUL LOVES HOLIDAYS: SHAH**  
Narendra Modi has been working 18 hours a day for around two decades without taking a leave, while Congress president Rahul Gandhi dashes off to undisclosed foreign destinations at the slightest discomfort, BJP president Amit Shah claimed here on Tuesday. Alleging that Gandhi is in love with the terrorists, he asserted that under Prime Minister Modi, their every 'goli' (bullet) will be retaliated with a 'gola' (mortar shell). "I have known Modi for a long time. For the past 20 years he has not taken a leave. He works 18 hours a day for the people," Shah said.

**BOFORS PETITIONER CAMPAIGNS AGAINST MODI**  
Former BJP leader Ajay Agarwal, who contested against Sonia Gandhi from Rae Bareilly Lok Sabha seat in 2014 polls on BJP ticket on Tuesday condemned Prime Minister Narendra Modi's remarks against Rajiv Gandhi. Agarwal, a senior lawyer, said that no charge was ever proven in any court of the country against former Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi in the Bofors case and he was given a "clean chit".



Union Minister and BJP leader Piyush Goyal with party candidate from Allahabad Parliamentary constituency Rita Bahuguna Joshi and other leaders during an election campaign rally, in Prayagraj, on Tuesday

## Appeal for Identification



General public is hereby informed that one male Name: Unknown, S/o: Unknown, R/o: Unknown, Age: Approx 42 Years, Height: 5'7", Complexion: Wheatish, Sex: Male, Wearing: Brown Colour Shirt was found dead on 30.04.2019. Place of

Recovery: Expired during Treatment at BSA Hospital, Rohini, Delhi. In this regard DD No. 13-A, has been lodged at PS Narela, Delhi on 30.04.2019. Any clue come to notice please inform undersign.

SHO PS. Narela, Delhi Ph.: 011-27282350

## NEW DELHI MUNICIPAL COUNCIL

STORE DIVISION, CIVIL ENGINEERING DEPARTMENT, ROOM NO. 224, SHAHID BHAGAT SINGH PLACE, GOLE MARKET, NEW DELHI-110001  
e-Procurement Tender Notice  
Name of Work: 9-B Suspense Stock during 2018-19.  
Sub-Head: Supplying and Stacking of Road Marking Paint of White and Golden Yellow Shade.  
Estimated cost: ₹7,74,088/-  
Date of release of tender through e-procurement solution : 06.05.2019  
Last date/time for receipt of tenders through e-procurement solution : 14.05.2019 upto 4:00 PM  
Further details can be seen at https://govtprocurement.delhi.gov.in  
Note: To participate in e-tender in NDMC, registration with e-tendering system, Govt. of NCT of Delhi is Mandatory.  
Tender ID No. 2019 NDMC 172180 1 Executive Engineer (Store)  
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**TEMPORARY DIVERSION OF TRAIN NO. 22436/22435 VANDE BHARAT EXPRESS UP TO 30.06.2019**

It is notified for all the concerned that due to operational reasons, Railways have decided for a temporary diversion of Train No. 22436/22435 New Delhi-Varanasi-New Delhi Vande Bharat Express up to 30.06.2019. It's temporary route will be Allahabad-Allahabad City-Madho Singh-Manduadih-Varanasi instead of New Delhi-Kanpur Central-Allahabad-Janghai-Varanasi section during the aforesaid period. It's Time-Table & all the Stoppages will remain same.

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

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**NOTICE INVITING TENDER**  
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Sealed tenders under two Bid System (Unpriced & Priced) are invited for following jobs:

Sl. No.	Brief Work Description	Estimated Cost (₹)	Cost of EMD (₹)	Due Date & Time of Submission	Date & Time of Opening
CMC/BY/19-20/RB/SV/012	RATE CONTRACT FOR SUPPLY OF 11KV XLPE INSULATED ALUMINIUM CONDUCTOR POWER CABLE & 11 KV AB CABLE OF VARIOUS SIZES	14.00 Crore	14.00 Lakh	30.05.2019 14:30 HRS	30.05.2019 14:30 HRS
CMC/BY/19-20/RB/SV/013	RATE CONTRACT FOR SUPPLY, INSTALLATION, TESTING & COMMISSIONING OF PACKAGE SUB-STATION WITH 2 MVA DT RATING	4.40 Crore	8.88 Lakh	30.05.2019 14:30 HRS	30.05.2019 15:00 HRS
CMC/BY/19-20/RB/SV/014	RATE CONTRACT FOR SUPPLY OF ONAN COOLED TRANSFORMERS OF RATINGS 400, 630, 1000, 1600 & 2000 KVA 11/0.433KV	30.50 Crore	30.50 Lakh	30.05.2019 14:30 HRS	30.05.2019 15:30 HRS
CMC/BY/19-20/RB/SV/015	RATE CONTRACT FOR SUPPLY OF DRY TYPE DISTRIBUTION TRANSFORMERS OF RATINGS 400, 630, 1000 KVA 11/0.433KV	1.31 Crore	2.61 Lakh	30.05.2019 14:30 HRS	30.05.2019 16:00 HRS
CMC/BY/19-20/RB/SV/016	RATE CONTRACT FOR SUPPLY & SUPERVISION OF 11KV MANUAL INDOOR & OUTDOOR RING MAIN UNITS	7.50 Crore	7.50 Lakh	30.05.2019 14:30 HRS	30.05.2019 16:30 HRS
CMC/BY/19-20/RB/SV/017	RATE CONTRACT FOR SUPPLY OF AIR CIRCUIT BREAKER 400, 1250 AND 2000 A WITH ENCLOSEUR	6.50 Crore	6.5 Lakh	30.05.2019 14:30 HRS	30.05.2019 17:00 HRS

For details in respect of Equipment/BOM/Services, Qualifying requirements, Terms & conditions, purchase/submission of tender documents, corrigendum etc. please visit our website www.bsesdelhi.com -> BSES YAMUNA POWER LTD -> Tender -> Open Tenders

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## US wants India to end trade barriers for American firms

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The US wants India to eliminate trade barriers for American firms and remove data localisation restrictions, while expecting that the new Government here will address these issues, said visiting US Commerce Secretary Wilbur Ross Tuesday.

"Our goal is to eliminate barriers to the US companies operating here including data localisation restrictions that actually weaken data security and increase the cost of doing business," he said here.

Ross was speaking at the Trade Winds Forum and Trade Mission. He is leading a delegation of over 100 American businesses in India.

"We applaud India's commitment to addressing some of these barriers once the government is reformed probably in the month of June," he said in his speech.

Ross also alleged that India imposes very high import duties on goods like automobiles, motorcycles, agri-products and alcoholic beverages.

"As President Trump has said, trade relationships should be based, and must be based, on fairness and reciprocity. But, currently, US businesses face significant market access barriers in India. These include both tariff and non-tariff bar-

riers, as well as multiple practices and regulations that disadvantage foreign companies," he said.

He said that India's average applied tariffs rate is 13.8 per cent and remains the "highest" of any major world economy, "the very highest".

Citing examples, he said, there is a 60 per cent tariff on auto, while the US has 2.5 per cent.

India has 50 per cent import duty on motorcycles and 150 per cent on alcoholic beverages, "just a few extreme examples," he added.

India imposes bound tariff rates — maximum import duty India can charge under global trade rules of WTO — on agricultural products at the average of an "incredible" 113.5 per cent and some are as high as 300 per cent, he said, adding that "they are way too high".

However, India's trade experts counter this by saying that India is not a 'tariff king' and it has all the right to take appropriate measures to protect the interest of specific sectors like agriculture.

"We are working diligently with the Indian Government and our private sector partners to address market access issues through the US-India commercial dialogue and through the recently re-convened US

India-CEO forum," Ross said.

Major obstacles being faced by the US companies include price controls on medical devices and restrictive tariff and inspections on electronics and telecommunications products.

He noted that duties on routers, switches and parts of cellular phones are as high as 20 per cent.

In stark contrast, he said, the duty on these products imported by the US from India is zero.

"Zero versus 20 per cent. That's not a justified imbalance. These high tariffs undermine India's goal of improving digital access and literacy," Ross added.

He expects that the new government will look at these matters.

"In the World Bank's Ease of Doing Business report, India climbed an impressive 23 spots this year but it still ranks 77 out of 190 countries. So, there is lots of room for further improvement," he said.

He also mentioned that India is the US' 13th largest export market due to "overly restrictive" market access barriers.

Referring to trade imbalance with India, the commerce secretary said the US accounts for 20 per cent of India's total exports.

## ₹ slips 3 paise to 69.43 against US dollar

PTI ■ MUMBAI

The rupee on Tuesday slipped further by 3 paise to close at 69.43 against the US currency due to lag-end dollar demand from banks and importers amid sustained foreign fund outflows.

Losses in the domestic equity market and a strengthening dollar against major currencies overseas amid trade worries also weighed on the local unit, forex traders said.

Investor sentiment took a beating after IMF chief Christine Lagarde said US-China trade tensions were a 'threat' to the world economy.

Crude oil prices also dropped further on growth concerns. Brent crude futures declined 1.19 per cent to trade at \$70.39 per barrel.

The rupee opened flat at 69.40 and later rose to the day's high of 69.29 at the interbank forex market. However, it failed to maintain gains and touched intra-day low of 69.46 against the US dollar. It finally settled at 69.43, down 3 paise from the previous close.

The rupee had settled 18 paise lower at 69.40 against the US dollar Monday. "Rupee is consolidating in

narrow range," V K Sharma, Head PCG & Capital Markets Strategy, HDFC Securities commented.

The rupee came under pressure following a massive selloff in the domestic equity markets.

The BSE Sensex ended 323.71 points, or 0.84 per cent, lower at 38,276.63. The index hit an intra-day low of 38,236.18 and a high of 8,835.54.

Similarly, the NSE Nifty dropped 100.35 points to settle below the 11,500 level at 11,497.90. During the day, the bourse hit a low of 11,484.45 and a high of 11,657.05.

Foreign investors were net sellers in capital markets Monday pulling out assets worth Rs 948 crore on a net basis, provisional exchange data showed.

Meanwhile, the Dollar Index which gauges the greenback's strength against a basket of six currencies, rose 0.04 per cent to 97.55.

Meanwhile, Financial Benchmark India Private Ltd (FBIL) set the reference rate for the rupee/dollar at 69.3095 and for rupee/euro at 77.7010. The reference rate for rupee/British pound was fixed at 90.9706 and for rupee/100 Japanese yen at 62.59.

## IMF chief says US-China tensions 'threat' to world economy

AFP ■ PARIS

The head of the International Monetary Fund said on Tuesday that fresh trade tensions between the United States and China were the main threat to the world economy.

"Clearly the tensions between the United States and China are the threat for the world economy," Christine Lagarde told journalists at a conference in Paris, adding that recent "rumours and tweets" made an agreement between the countries less likely.

President Donald Trump jolted global markets on Monday by threatening on Twitter that tariffs already imposed on \$200 billion in Chinese exports to US would more than double to 25 per cent on Friday from their current level of 10 per cent.

Also speaking at the Paris Forum event, French Economy Minister Bruno Le Maire warned about the impact of a trade war between the world's two biggest economies.

"We are following the current negotiations very closely between China and the United States and we want them to respect the principles of transparency and multilateralism," he said.

He called on the two sides to "avoid taking decisions that would threaten and would undermine global growth in the months ahead."

## Business Corner



For being a changemaker with a track record of innovation and achievement, Atul Sobti, CMD, Bharat Heavy Electricals Limited (BHEL) has been bestowed with the 'Manav Rachna Excellence Award 2019 for Nation Building'. The award was presented by Prof. DP Singh, Chairman, University Grants Commission at a glittering ceremony



Petroleum Conservation Research Association (PCRA), Ministry of Petroleum & Natural Gas, Government of India and world's third largest tractor manufacturer by volumes, TAFE Tractors and Farm Equipment Limited, signed an MoU to aid conservation of resources across the country

## 3 NSE officials banned by Sebi rejoin office post-SAT relief

PTI ■ MUMBAI

Three senior officials of the NSE resumed work at the same position Tuesday, after getting an interim relief from the Securities Appellate Tribunal (SAT) after being barred by the regulator Sebi in the co-location case last week.

The Sebi had barred the three NSE officials from holding any office in any stock exchange for colluding with brokerages which were found

guilty of gaining an unfair advantage over others by placing their in close proximity the main servers of the exchange.

"The three have resumed work in the same positions as they were holding earlier," a source in the know of the development said.

The three are Ravi Varansi, head of business development; Nagendra Kumar SRVS, head of membership department; and Deviprasad Singh, head of collocation support.

## GST will not reduce deficits of State Govts significantly: Report

PTI ■ SINGAPORE

Goods and Services Tax (GST) regime in India is not likely to reduce the deficits of state governments significantly, amid large and growing expenditure mandates for the social sector as well as capital spending, says a report.

According to S&P Global Ratings the institutional framework for Indian states is evolving, but there is structural deficits due to persistent revenue expenditure mismatch.

S&P Global Ratings credit analyst YeeFarn Phua in the report titled "Public Finance

System Overview: Indian States" noted that the passage of the GST bill in 2017 is a major overhaul of tax structure and will help to widen the tax base and improve revenues of state governments.

"However, states will continue to run large deficits because a significant part of this imbalance is from the expenditure side. States are unable to cut expenditures because of large and growing expenditure mandates for the social sector as well as capital spending. Therefore, the revenue-expenditure gap will remain large," said Phua.

## Skill training of 12 K tyre mechanics

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Under its Saamrath project, Rubber Skill Development Council (RSDC), the sector skill council for Rubber & Tyre sector in the country, has launched a major drive to skill up tyre mechanics dotting the length & breadth of India. As many as 12000 tyre mechanics are being upskilled across the State highways of Uttar Pradesh, Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh, Tamil Nadu and Odisha under this project.

The skill training of tyre mechanics popularly known as tyre fitters has won RSDC the coveted ATMA Tyre safety partner award at the recently held ATMA Annual Convention 2019.

## Prabhu for Govt-to-Govt pact between India, United States

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Commerce and Industry Minister Suresh Prabhu Tuesday made a case for a Government-to-Government agreement between India and the US to facilitate private companies in both the countries.

"Can we have Government-to-Government agreement in which we will make sure that the policy support that is required for private sector emanates from this umbrella agreement," he said here a function, which was attended by the US business delegation, led by US Commerce Secretary Wilbur Ross.

Prabhu said public policies may sometimes create challenges for corporates "but if we have a government-to-government agreement, we can clearly spell out the certainty, stability, forward-looking policies and this will facilitate companies to prepare their corporate plans".

He also expressed hope that issues being faced by businesses in India and the US can be sorted out in a way that benefits both the countries.

"I can clearly see that issues can be sorted out in a way that



benefits both the countries," Prabhu said one needs to look at big picture and make sure that irritants are tackled in a manner that helps foster this relationship.

The remarks assumes significance as Indian companies are raising issues like restrictive visa regime in the US, American firms are flagging concerns related to India's intellectual property policies and e-commerce norms.

Prabhu said India's economy is expected to touch \$5 trillion in the next 7-8 years and \$10 trillion by 2035 and in this, US companies can help.

"These numbers are possible to achieve only when we have friends like you (the US). With this growth, US companies will also benefit," he added.

Further, the commerce minister said that in the US, President Donald Trump's slogan that let's "Make America Great Again", "I would add and say let's Make America Great Again by making India-US relationship far better again".

Speaking on the occasion, Ross said, "I think we should rephrase that (slogan) to MAG-AWIC — Make America Great Again with Indian Cooperation."

## SEARCH FOR MISSING



General public is hereby informed that a Male namely **Vikky S/o Satbir Bagdi, R/o Jhuggi Near Gate No. 2, Anaj Mandi, Narela, Delhi, Age : 25 yrs., Height : 5'7", Complexion : Wheatish, Face : Long, Wearing : Unknown,** has been missing / kidnapped since 23.04.2019 from the area of P.S. Narela. In this regard a

case DD. No. 150-A dated 23.04.2019 has been lodged at P.S. Narela, Delhi. Sincere efforts have been made by local Police to trace out the missing / kidnapped Male but no clue has come to light so far. If anyone have any information about this missing / kidnapped Male please inform undersigned.

Website: <http://cbi.nic.in>, Email: [cic@cbi.nic.in](mailto:cic@cbi.nic.in), Ph.: 011-24368638, 24368641, Fax: 011-24368639

## PUBLIC NOTICE

This is for notice of the general public that a political party is proposed to be registered by the name of MAHAN SAMTAWADI PARTY. The office of the party is located H.No. 571, Gali No. 10, Adarsh Colony, Bhanipura, Near Khiluram Academy, Vijay Nagar, Ghaziabad Pin Code 201009. This Party has submitted application to Election Commission of India, New Delhi for its registration as Political Party under Section 29A of the Representation of People Act, 1951 - Names/Address of the office bearers of the Party are as follows: President/Chairman : Itwari Lal Shakya, General Secretary/Secretary : Sushil Kumar Shakya, Secretary, Treasurer : Madhu. If any one has objection to the registration of Mahan Samtawadi Party they may sent their objection with reasons thereof, to the secretary (Political Party), Election Commission of India, Nirvachan Sadan, Ashoka Road, New Delhi - 110001 within 30 days of the publication of this notice

## SEARCH FOR MISSING



General public is hereby informed that a girl namely **Banno D/o Mohd. Alam, R/O H.No. C-426, J.J. Colony, Bawana, Delhi.** The girl has been missing from the area of P.S. Narela Industrial Area, Delhi since 29.03.2019.

In this regard DD No. 44A dated 03.04.2019 has been registered at P.S. Narela Industrial Area, Delhi. Sincere efforts have been made by the local police to trace out the missing girl but no clue has come to light so far.

The description of the missing girl is as under: **Name: Banno, Age: 18 Years 6 Month, Height: 5' Complexion: Fair, Face: Round, Wearing: White Colour Kurta, Black Colour Pajama and Jutti in Feet.**

If anyone has any information regarding this missing girl, kindly inform SHO/P.S. Narela Industrial Area, Delhi.

Email: [cic@cbi.gov.in](mailto:cic@cbi.gov.in), Website: <http://cbi.nic.in> Ph.: 011-23015229, 23015218 Fax: 011-23011334

SHO P.S. Narela Industrial Area, Delhi DP/245/ON/19 Ph. No. 011-27787592, 27787593, 07065036324

## EASTERN COALFIELDS LIMITED

(A Subsidiary of Coal India Limited)

**e-TENDER NOTICE**

Area : Rajmahal; NIT No. ECL/HQ/CMC/Transport/NIT/2019/3485 Date: 06.05.2019, Name of Work : Loading & Transportation of Coal from Simlong Coal stockyard to Rajmahal Wharf wall siding including loading of coal into Railway Wagons with allied work (Lead range of 63-64 KM) under Rajmahal Area. Estimated Cost : ₹1,61,01,402.74; Downloading of Tender Document Start Date & Time : 08.05.2019 from 17.00 Hrs.; Downloading of Tender Document Closing Date & Time : 24.05.2019 at 17.00 Hrs.; Tender Opening Date & Time : 27.05.2019 at 11.00 AM. Details of tender can be seen in ECL website or [www.tenders.gov.in](http://www.tenders.gov.in) or <http://coalindiatenders.nic.in>

ECL's Website : [www.easterncoal.nic.in](http://www.easterncoal.nic.in)

## CHITTARANJAN LOCOMOTIVE WORKS E-TENDER NOTICE

Tender Notice No.: PCMM/CLW/KOL/E-Procurement/19-20/07 Dated: 02-05-2019. The Principal Chief Materials Manager, CLW on behalf of the President of India invites electronic bids from established reliable manufacturer for supply of the followings. The following E-Tenders is/are for supply of materials for manufacture of Electric Locomotive. The Prospective/likely suppliers are requested to look up the website [www.ireps.gov.in](http://www.ireps.gov.in). For detailed instructions please refer to website. Sl. No.; Tender No.; Description of Stores; Quantity; Due On; Cost of Tender (Rupees): [9]; 34192671; Set of Gasket for WAG-9/WAP-7 Loco to Specn. No. CLW/ES/3/0142/F (Details of set as per annexure uploaded); As per tender doc.; 29/05/2019; 00.00. [10]; 34192707; Set of Neoprene Hose to CLW Specn. No. CLW/ES/3/0094/E; As per tender doc.; 29/05/2019; 00.00. [11]; 34192515; Resistor Harmonic Filter for WAP-5 to Specn. No. CLW/ES/3/0307/A; As per tender doc.; 30/05/2019; 00.00. Principal Chief Materials Manager (ADK-035) CLW/Kolkata

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## Porsche fined 535 mn euros over diesel cheating

AFP ■ FRANKFURT AM MAIN

German sports car maker Gand Volkswagen subsidiary Porsche will pay a 535-million-euro (\$598 million) fine over diesel vehicles that emitted more harmful pollutants than allowed, Stuttgart prosecutors said Tuesday.

"The Stuttgart prosecutor's office has levied a 535-million-euro fine against Porsche AG for negligence in quality control," the investigators said.

Porsche "abstained from a legal challenge" against the decision, the prosecutors office added.

Tuesday's levy against Porsche is the latest in a string of fines against VW over its years-long "dieseldgate" scandal.

The auto behemoth admitted in 2015 to manipulating 11 million vehicles worldwide to appear less polluting in laboratory tests than they were in real driving conditions.

Following fines against VW, high-end subsidiary Audi and now Porsche, no further investigations over "administrative offences" remain open against the group, a spokesman told AFP.

## NCLT begins bankruptcy process for Anil's RCom

PTI ■ MUMBAI

The lenders to the crippled Reliance Communications (RCom) on Tuesday moved NCLT to appoint a new resolution professional and form a committee of creditors, the first step to begin the bankruptcy process of the Anil Ambani group company that owes close to ₹50,000 crore RPT crore to 31 lenders led by State Bank of India.

Meanwhile, RCom through the existing resolution professional, sought 13 months exclusion in the insolvency process citing the stays it had on the process by the appellate tribunal and the Supreme Court.

The RP sought the exclusion from April 30, 2018 to May 30, 2019 as the initial insolvency proceedings was stayed by the National Company Law Appellate Tribunal (NCLAT) and later by the apex court.

RCom was in trouble for years forcing it to discontinue operations two years ago. Its effort to stave off bankruptcy by selling spectrum to Reliance Jio got scuttled after the long legal and Government delays for approvals.

Also, the company has



not been successful to meet any of the several publicly made promises to pay back the lenders by monetising real estate and spectrum assets.

Last month company chairman Anil Ambani managed to avoid a contempt of the Supreme Court and a possible jail term after a last-minute bailout by elder brother Mukesh who extended him over ₹480 crore to pay back vendor Ericsson, which was the first operational creditor to drag it to NCLT last year.

Earlier, China Development Bank from which RCom had borrowed over \$1

## 12 women students pursuing careers in STEM get scholarships

PNS ■ MUMBAI

Booking.com, a digital travel e-commerce company, announced the extension of their scholarship initiative to two leading STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) studies universities in India. These scholarships build on an initiative launched by Booking.com in 2017 to encourage more women into the global tech industry by supporting their ongoing STEM education, with the goal to help close the gender gap in technology and open up more opportunities for women to pursue tech careers.

The year-long residential program, implemented with an objective to coach students belonging to economically weaker families, brought these aspirants a step closer to fulfilling their dream of studying in some of India's premier institutes.

As part of this noble initiative, rolled out in association with the Centre for Social Responsibility and Leadership (CSRL), NTPC bears the entire cost of boarding, lodging and coaching for the girl students belonging to underprivileged families.

After an MoU was signed between NTPC Northern Region Head Quarter in Lucknow and CSRL, New Delhi, NTPC & CSRL jointly initiated the 77.03 lakh-program for 30 girls selected from families living in the vicinity of NTPC plants in the northern region.

## 18 girls under NTPC's 'Super 30 Girls' programme crack IITJEE mains

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Enrolled under NTPC's 'Super 30 girls' programme, a Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) initiative introduced by India's largest power generating company, 18 girls, out of 25, have successfully qualified for the IIT JEE mains.

The year-long residential program, implemented with an objective to coach students belonging to economically weaker families, brought these aspirants a step closer to fulfilling their dream of studying in some of India's premier institutes.

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# City in Good KOMPANY

Manchester City captain nets stunner to help Pep's men beat Leicester 1-0



AFP ■ MANCHESTER

Manchester City manager Pep Guardiola led the tributes to Vincent Kompany after the Belgian's thunderous strike earned a nervy 1-0 win over Leicester City on Monday to move the English champions to within one win of retaining the Premier League. City moved back one point clear of Liverpool despite not being at their fluent best as centre-back Kompany unleashed a long-range shot into the top corner 20 minutes from time. Guardiola's men will become the first side in a decade to retain the title at Brighton on Sunday as long as they match or better the Reds' result at home to Wolves. Kompany, who has endured terrible luck with injuries over recent years, was in tears as he led

a lap of honour with his children to mark City's final home game of the season and may have played for the last time at the Etihad with his contract expiring at the end of the campaign. "There are players that help us to be where we are right now," said Guardiola. "Vincent is one of them. When is fit he is an incredible central defender. He is beloved, he is a leader. I'm happy for him, for the club, for everybody." After edging past Newcastle 3-2 on Saturday night, Liverpool, who have not won the league since 1990, were left praying that former manager Brendan Rodgers could do them a favour at the Etihad. Leicester's marked improvement since Rodgers took charge in February was on show in an

impressive display from the visitors as City were made to sweat but just got over the line for a vital three points. And Guardiola admitted he had urged Kompany not to shoot as he lined up his first goal from outside the box since he was playing for Hamburg in 2007. "It's not about the amount of goals you score it's about when you score them. Today it was necessary," said Kompany.

"WE HAVE THE PRESSURE" "Every step in the last four months was significant. Liverpool keep making the steps and now we have a final to play in Brighton. Nothing is won yet." City have now won 13 consecutive league games to overhaul a seven-point deficit at the top of the table in January and Guardiola claimed it is his side that have had to play under pressure despite Liverpool's 29-year wait to win the title.

"It was outstanding the way we played in the second-half. The character, the personality, knowing how difficult it is," added Guardiola. "Right now Liverpool play without pressure. We have the pressure, we know we can lose it because it is in our hands."

Sergio Aguero came closest to opening the scoring before the break with a header that clipped the inside of the post and was palmed clear by Kasper Schmeichel. Yet, it was not until after the break that City upped the tempo to lay siege on the Leicester goal. City thought their moment had come when the ball fell kindly for Aguero inside the area, only for Schmeichel to make a miraculous stop. Guardiola's men have now scored 157 goals this season but there will not be a more spectacular or unexpected one than that which may deliver the title.

Kompany looked short of options as he strode forward before unleashing a rocket of a shot that arrowed into the top corner. "At the end of the season we are going to talk to him," said Guardiola on whether Kompany will be handed a new deal. "He is an incredible human being. He helped me a lot since I've been here. Always we can count on him for his personality."

Leicester still had a huge chance to answer Liverpool's prayers three minutes from time. But against his former club Kelechi Iheanacho shot wide with just Ederson to beat and a titanic tussle for the title remains in City's hands heading into the final day. "He should score, I've said that to him afterwards," said Rodgers. "We didn't have many chances, but the one that came he's got to score that."



Danny Rose battles for ball possession with Ajax players during first leg clash UEFA/Twitter

## Pochettino urges Spurs to make history

AFP ■ AMSTERDAM

Ajax vs Tottenham  
Live from 12:30am IST  
SONY TEN 2 NETWORK

Mauricio Pochettino has challenged Tottenham to seize their unexpected chance to make history as they try to overturn a 1-0 deficit against Ajax in the Champions League semi-final second leg on Wednesday. Pochettino is convinced Tottenham can still reach the club's maiden Champions League final despite losing the first leg in north London last week. Many pundits and fans claim Tottenham have blown their opportunity after Donny van de Beek's strike gave Ajax a priceless lead to defend in Amsterdam.

Tottenham go into their biggest game for decades on a low note after losing 1-0 at Bournemouth on Saturday, a defeat that stopped them wrapping up a place in the next season's Champions League via a top-four finish in the Premier League. It was a third successive loss in all competitions for Tottenham, who finished with nine men after red cards for Son Heung-min and Juan Foyth.

Fortunately for Tottenham, they are still all but certain to finish at least fourth after Arsenal and Manchester United were both held to draws on Sunday. Tottenham are three points clear of fifth-placed Arsenal heading into their last league game of the season against Everton on Sunday and a draw will be enough to ensure their return to Europe's elite club competition. But before that Tottenham, trying to reach their first European final since the 1984 UEFA Cup, have to focus on the challenge presented by Ajax's vibrant young side. Having already eliminated Real Madrid and Juventus this season, Ajax showed their vast potential

against Tottenham in the first leg and should have been further ahead after Van de Beek's opener. Tottenham improved slightly in the second half, but largely looked toothless without the suspended Son and injured top scorer Harry Kane. Crucially, Pochettino will have Son back from his ban for the second leg and the South Korea forward should give his team a far more dynamic look.

"MASSIVE WEEK" Pochettino remained upbeat despite the frustration of losing to Nathan Ake's last-minute goal at Bournemouth, and the Tottenham manager hopes his confident attitude transfers to his players against Ajax. "We have ahead two finals' against Ajax and Everton and it's in our hands to be in a good position at the end of the season," Pochettino said.

Although Tottenham will know they have missed a golden opportunity to reach the final if they don't succeed in the second leg, Pochettino is adamant his players have done more than enough already to make him proud of their efforts this term. "No-one believed we'd be in this position in the last week of the competition," Pochettino said.

"We are in a position where it depends on us to be in the (Champions League) final or not and then it depends on us to finish in the top four. It's a massive week and that's why we need to move on, try to recover as soon as possible and be ready again but whatever happens I am going to feel proud."



Novak Djokovic returns the ball to Taylor Fritz during the Madrid Open match AP

## Djokovic destroys Fritz in solid start

AFP ■ MADRID

Novak Djokovic needed just 65 minutes to make a winning start at the Madrid Open on Tuesday, hammering Taylor Fritz 6-4, 6-2 to reach the third round. The top seed and world number one broke three times as he schooled the American. Djokovic won the Madrid title in 2011 and 2016. He will be chasing a fourth straight Grand Slam trophy at Roland Garros next month. Third seed Roger Federer was making his clay return after two full seasons off the surface when he faced Frenchman Richard Gasquet later in the second round after a bye. Unseeded treble Grand Slam champion Stan Wawrinka started his Madrid campaign with a 6-2, 6-3 win over Pierre-Hugues Herbert to move into the second round. "It was a great first match. I've been good on the practice court, feeling really good, so it was important to start well today," Wawrinka said. Wawrinka will next play Argentine Guido Pella, who

put out Barcelona finalist Daniil Medvedev 6-2, 1-6, 6-3. In the women's WTA draw, third seed and two-time champion Simona Halep of Romania ended the hopes of Johanna Konta 7-5, 6-1 in the second round. The Briton had made a dash to Madrid on Sunday evening after playing the Rabat clay final. Konta won her opening match against Alison Riske but could not match Halep, the defending French Open champion. "I feel good every time when I come to Madrid and I'm happy to be back and winning matches," Halep said. "It was a good match. Both of us played very well and, in the end, I was a bit stronger mentally and I found a rhythm." Fourth seed Angelique Kerber withdrew before her second-round match. The defending Wimbledon champion is suffering from a right ankle injury. Kerber was to have played in the evening session against Croatian Petra Martic.

# GODIN CONFIRMS ATLETICO EXIT

AFP ■ MADRID

Atletico Madrid captain Diego Godin announced on Tuesday that he will leave the club at the end of the season. Godin has been one of the best central defenders in the world under Atletico coach Diego Simeone, who attended an emotional press conference at the Wanda Metropolitano, along with several players and president Enrique Cerezo. The 33-year-old would not confirm his next club but indicated regret at not being able to agree a new contract. "I'm nervous, even more

than for a match," said a tearful Godin. "These will be my final days at Atletico Madrid. I want to communicate all the love I have for this club, this shirt. I am Atletico, because this is not a club, it's a family and a way of life. It has been my home and it's very hard to say goodbye. I never imagined this moment would come and I am not prepared." Godin has made 381 appearances for Atletico and remains a key figure in the team, but the Uruguayan has rejected offers to extend his contract, which expires on June 30.



He is unlikely to be the last high-profile player to leave Atletico this summer. After a disappointing season, Lucas Hernandez has already agreed to join Bayern Munich, while uncertainty hangs over the futures of Filipe Luis, Juanfran, Thomas Partey, Saul Niguez and even Antoine Griezmann. "In short, I am captain of the team and have been here many years," said Godin. "We have not reached an agreement to continue so my time here is over. It has been the best of my career and my life."

Godin added: "I would like to play here until I'm 40 but it's impossible. For me the priority has always been the club, the team, my teammates. But we could not reach an agreement so I have decided to leave. There's nothing more to it than that." Since joining Atletico from Villarreal in 2010, Godin has won La Liga, the Copa del Rey and the Europa League twice. He also reached the Champions League final in 2014 and 2016. Atletico lost both to Real Madrid.

## Trump awards Presidential Medal to Woods

AFP ■ WASHINGTON DC

Tiger Woods, fresh off his epic comeback victory in the Masters, was awarded the Presidential Medal of Freedom by President Donald Trump at the White House on Monday. Presenting the golfing great with the nation's highest honor, Trump praised Woods' "relentless will to win, win, win."

"These qualities embody the American spirit of pushing boundaries, defying limits and always striving for greatness," the president said. Trump congratulated Woods on "your amazing comeback and your amazing life and for giving sports fans a lifetime of memories. We can't wait to see what's next. Tiger," said Trump, an avid golfer and owner of several golf courses around the world. Woods, 43, choked up as he thanked his mother, his two children, his girlfriend and his caddy during the ceremony in the White House Rose Garden. "You have seen the good and the bad, the highs and the lows," said Woods, who battled back from injury to win the Masters last month, his first major title since the 2008 US Open. "I have tried to hang in there and I have tried to come back and play the great game of golf again," Woods said. "I have been lucky enough to have had the opportunity to do it again." He said his Masters victory was "probably the highlight of what I have accomplished so far in my life on the golf course. To have had that type of experience and to be able to come out on top and win," he said. Woods' Masters was his 15th major title, leaving him just three short of the record held by Nicklaus.



US President Donald Trump presents the Presidential Medal of Freedom to Tiger Woods during a ceremony in the Rose Garden of the White House on Monday AP

## 32 Indian youth eligible for US Kids Golf Europe events

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

India's growing strength in junior golf has been amplified with the qualification of as many as 32 players in various age-group competitions under the global banner of the US Kids Golf. The 32 kids are from as many as 13 age groups — eight among boys and five among girls. The 32 comprise 20 boys and 12 girls, who are now eligible with Priority Status for US Kids global events in Europe and some of them will also be eligible for World Championships, depending on their status. Of the five categories of Priority Status, Burgundy status holders will be eligible for US Kids World Championships and 13 of the 32 Indian players have earned the Burgundy status on the basis of their scoring. Of the remaining, 14 have Orange Status and five have Blue Status. The opportunity to play on international courses also reads the youngsters to play on

Championship courses where the world's best compete annually. This year the European segment of US Kids will see the players practice and play at courses like the Renaissance, Gullane, Craighelaw, Archerfield Links and others. Each age-group's competition is held at a different venue and all the events are scheduled for the last week of May. Gullane is where the prestigious Scottish Open was held last year with India's Shubhankar Sharma playing it for the first time, while this year's Scottish Open is scheduled to be held at the Renaissance, so the UK Kids Golf events will give the teen and pre-teens a chance to see and play course they will hope to play on as adults later on. A lot of the youngsters who have achieved Priority Status this season will be playing in Europe for the first time, adding to their experience of playing in quality courses in India and Asia and now Europe.

LEADERBOARD

RUNS	692	David Warner (SRH)
WICKETS	25	Kagiso Rabada (DC)
6S	743	SRH has a very good past in such situations but we are also looking forward to creating history
4S	1563	— SHREYAS IYER

# IPL 2019

# DHONI, RAYUDU HELP CSK TO 131

PTI ■ CHENNAI

Mahendra Singh Dhoni failed to launch a brutal assault on a sluggish pitch but did enough in company of Ambati Rayudu to propel Chennai Super Kings to 131 for 4 against Mumbai Indians in the first IPL Qualifier on Tuesday.

The CSK total was built largely on a fifth wicket stand of 66 off 48 balls between Dhoni (37 no off 29 balls) and Rayudu (42 no off 37 balls) when other batsmen found going tough.

Dhoni smashed Lasith Malinga for two huge sixes in the penultimate over to provide impetus to the CSK innings, which was stymied by the MI bowlers, especially the spinners.

MI leg-spinner Rahul Chahar continued his impressive season, with a superb spell of 2 for 14 in his quota of 4 overs. He kept the batsmen on a leash with turn and bounce.

CSK didn't get off to a good start, losing three wickets in the Powerplay, as MI skipper Rohit Sharma used five different bowlers in the first five overs.

The visiting team kept things under control in the Powerplay, restricting CSK to 32 runs while picking up three wickets.

At the halfway stage, CSK barely managed to reach 50, which was a sign of their struggles.

Faf du Plessis (6) got one from Rahul that bounced a bit more as his cut went straight to substitute fielder Anmolpreet Singh at backward point.

Suresh Raina's (5) attempt to slog Jayant Yadav resulted in a skier which the bowler took with ease.

Shane Watson, who struggled for form, played a trademark pull off Jasprit Bumrah, but fell going for a big hit off Krunal Pandya, taken brilliantly by Jayant Yadav running backwards from his mid-on position.

Murali Vijay attempted to consolidate in Watson's company and succeeded to an extent, before being stumped by Quinton de Kock off Rahul Chahar for 26 (26 balls, 3X4).

Dhoni hit the first six of the match in the 14th over, lofting Jayant (1/25 in 3 overs) over long-on. Rayudu on the other hand hit three fours and a six and concentrating taking the singles and doubles with boundaries hard to come by.



## DC face SRH in eliminator

PTI ■ VISAKHAPATNAM

The road to the final has become difficult but Delhi Capitals have the means to drive their way through the obstacles, starting with the eliminator against Sunrisers Hyderabad here on Wednesday.

Re-branded before the start of the 12th season, Delhi Capitals have been one of the top sides in this edition, playing cricket never seen before from them.

It is a bit harsh on Delhi Capitals that they are playing the do-or-die game despite securing 18 points after nine wins and five losses from 14 matches.

Despite winning three matches more than Hyderabad, severely weakened by the departure of David Warner and Jonny Bairstow for their World Cup national camps, DC find themselves in the same boat as SRH and a defeat will knock them out of the league.

Delhi Capitals have never reached the IPL final, never made the top-two, and ventured into the top-four for the first time since 2012.

Considering the results and consistency, it seemed DC's search for that elusive winning combination has finally ended, which brought the smiles back on the faces of fans after years of disappointment.

Picked in the trading window, India opener Shikhar Dhawan lived up to the expectations of the team management and franchise, scoring over 450 runs.

Along with the young Prithvi Shaw, the experienced Dhawan formed a fine opening combination, and scored briskly in the

Live on Star Sports 18 & 2	HEAD TO HEAD
DC VS SRH	M 14
VISAKHAPATNAM	DC 5
WEDNESDAY 7:30 PM	SRH 9

powerplay overs. Skipper Shreyas Iyer (over 400 runs) showed immense maturity while leading the side and also played some substantial knocks.

Ignored from the World Cup squad, Rishabh Pant has proved his worth in the side with his handy cameos at crucial junctures.

They will miss the services of pace spearhead Kagiso Rabada but DC have enough firepower in bowling to surprise SRH, who became the first team in IPL history to qualify for the playoffs with 12 points.

While the duo of Warner and Bairstow played a pivotal role in SRH's performances and dominated the powerplay better than other teams, the likes of Manish Pandey stepped in after they left to be with their respective national teams.

In bowling, Rashid Khan, Bhuvneshwar Kumar and Khaleel Ahmed have done just enough to help Sunrisers Hyderabad keep things

In Kane Williamson, SRH have a dependable captain and he will expect a little more from his New Zealand team-mate Martin Guptill.

It will be another opportunity for Vijay Shankar to make a mark before flying to the United Kingdom for the World Cup.



## Warner should open with Finch: Mark Waugh

PTI ■ MELBOURNE

Considering that David Warner can be much more destructive than any other batsman during the field restrictions, he must open for Australia alongside Aaron Finch at the World Cup, suggests former selector Mark Waugh.

Usman Khawaja has scored more ODI runs (769) for Australia this year than anyone else and formed a formidable opening combination with along Finch during Australia's two most recent ODI series against India and Pakistan but Waugh thinks Warner is still the best option.

"I would definitely have him (Warner) opening. He is the number



a flyer."

"The left-handed Warner has been in excellent touch as he scored lot of runs at the top of the order in the IPL. In fact, all his 104 ODI innings for Australia has come as an opener.

Waugh feels Khawaja and Shaun Marsh are the best options to bat at number three, while the remainder of Australia's batting order looks pretty clear cut.

"I think either Khawaja or Shaun Marsh bat at three and they should be fighting for that spot," he said.

"The rest probably picks itself...With (Steve) Smith at four, (Glenn) Maxwell (at) five, (Marcus) Stoinis (at) six and (Alex) Carey (at) seven."



## Hales still has future with England: Bayliss

AFP ■ LONDON

England head coach Trevor Bayliss says Alex Hales still has an international future despite being axed from the World Cup squad after he reportedly failed a second positive test for recreational drug use.

The Nottinghamshire player was named in England's preliminary 15-man squad for the tournament only to be withdrawn last week.

Bayliss said the door is open for the hard-hitting 30-year-old batsman, who has played 70 one-day internationals and 60 Twenty20 internationals.

"Alex still has an international future," Bayliss told Sky Sports. "I have spoken to him and given him that message."

"It's certainly not the end of him. He's a very important player and there is no reason why he can't come back." He added: "I think we've come to the right decision. Being respected off the field as well as on it is very important."

The English head coach also said that the selectors would have to make a "very difficult decision" following the impressive form of newcomer Jofra Archer, who made his debut against Ireland last week.

Speaking about the Barbados-born all-rounder, Bayliss said: "He's fitted into the group extremely well. I thought he bowled some good spells in Ireland without too much luck and I thought he bowled pretty well in the T20 match a couple of days ago."

"It's all looking good. It's going to be a very difficult decision for the selectors, whichever way we go."

## Will use Ashwin's tips in the World Cup: Mujeeb

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Injury and poor form made it a forgettable IPL season for Afghanistan spinner Mujeeb ur Rahman but the time away from the field was well spent as he picked on Kings XI Punjab skipper Ravichandran Ashwin's brain ahead of the World Cup in England.

A shoulder injury meant that the 18-year-old wasn't at his best during the cash-rich league, getting only three wickets in five games with an expensive economy rate of 10.05 runs per over.

"I have learnt a lot having spend quality time with Ravichandran Ashwin in the KXIP set-up. He has given me a lot of useful tips and I am sure that I will execute those plans in the World Cup. During this edition of IPL, my shoulder injury was an issue. But now I am fully fit for the World Cup," Mujeeb told reporters at a promotional event to announce Amul's association

with Afghanistan national team.

While he hasn't played many matches this year, the best part about IPL according to Mujeeb is the opportunity to bowl at some of the prospective World Cup opponents.

"The IPL schedule is so hectic and you are travelling a lot. It's not that you get a lot of chance to talk about the game. But since you get a chance to bowl in matches where there are batsmen who will be there in the World Cup, it helps a lot," said the Afghan teenager.

Asked if he faced the second season blues, something which was evident when he went for 66 runs in his four overs against Sunrisers Hyderabad, Mujeeb said it was part and parcel of cricket.

"You will have a few bad days and it's just that you have to be consistent with your line and length," Mujeeb said.

The youngster is hopeful that along with senior spinners Rashid Khan and Mohammed

Nabi, it will be a better World Cup for Afghanistan compared to the 2015 edition when they were making debut.

"Our aim is to at least qualify for the semi-finals. All three of us have different strengths and the main thing that we discuss on-field is to stick to our respective plans. The basic plan is to consistently bowl good areas and hopefully we will be able to do that," he said.

Meanwhile, Afghanistan chief selector Dawlat Khan Ahmadzai justified the unexpected sacking of ODI skipper Asghar Afghan ahead of the World Cup, saying the decision was taken looking at the long-term future of the team.

"We realised that we can't win the World Cup at this moment under Asghar's captaincy or anyone else who would have been in charge. We made the decision not just thinking about this World Cup, we are thinking about the 2023 edition.



## Morris replaces Nortje in SA squad

PTI ■ JOHANNESBURG

South Africa suffered a blow ahead of the World Cup with fast bowler Anrich Nortje being ruled out of the tournament due to a fractured thumb.

Chris Morris has been called up as his replacement for the mega-event, commencing on May 30. Nortje overcame ankle and shoulder injuries over the course of the summer before he could make his international debut in March this year. On the basis of his performances, the 25-year-old was selected in South Africa's World Cup squad.

Unfortunately, Nortje fractured his right thumb while practising in the nets, and it has now been confirmed that he would need six to eight weeks rest to recover fully.

The 32-year-old all-rounder Morris, who has not played an ODI in more than a year, has replaced Nortje in the 15-member squad.

## WI name Gayle as Holder's deputy

PTI ■ JAMAICA

Explosive opener Chris Gayle has been named vice-captain of the West Indies team for the World Cup.

Gayle, who is set to retire from ODIs after his fifth World Cup appearance, is in top form going into the tournament, having scored close to 500 runs in the IPL. He was also in devastating form in the home series against England, hitting two hundreds and as many half-centuries in the five-match series.

"It is always an honour to represent the West Indies in any format and this World Cup for me is special," Gayle said after being named Jason Holder's deputy on Monday.

Gayle is a former West Indies captain who last led the regional side in June 2010.

"As a senior player, it is my responsibility to support the captain and everyone else in the team. This will probably be



the biggest World Cup, so there will be great expectations and I know we will do very well for the people of the West Indies," said the 39-year-old, who has amassed 10151 runs in 289 ODIs at 38.16.

It was also announced that Shai Hope will be the vice-captain in the on-going tri-series in Ireland involving the hosts and Bangladesh.