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WORLD 12 LANKAN PM VOWS TO DECIMATE LOCAL ISIS

SPORT 16 FEDERER STARTS WITH WIN IN FRENCH OPEN

DELHI LUCKNOW BHOPAL BHUBANESWAR RANCHI RAIPUR CHANDIGARH DEHRADUN HYDRABAD VIJAYWADA

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Modi to take office on May 30

Maldives scheduled to be PM's 1st foreign visit; Parliament session from June 6

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Prime Minister Narendra Modi will take oath of office for his second term on May 30, the Rashtrapati Bhavan said here on Sunday. "The President (Ram Nath Kovind) will administer the oath of office and secrecy to the Prime Minister and other members of Union Council of Ministers on May 30 at 7 pm at Rashtrapati Bhavan," the communication issued by President's Press Secretary Ashok Malik said.

Earlier on Saturday, a delegation of the NDA led by BJP president Amit Shah, along with Prakash Singh Badal, Rajnath Singh, Nitish Kumar, Ram Vilas Paswan, Sushma Swaraj, Uddhav Thackeray, Nitin Gadkari, K Palaniswami, Conrad Sangma and Neelgagan Rao, called on the President and handed over a letter to him stating Modi has been elected the leader of the BJP Parliamentary Party. Letters of support from NDA constituents were also handed over to the President.

Sources said the first session of the 17th Parliament will begin on June 6 and continue



Prime Minister Narendra Modi takes blessings of his mother Hiraba at her house in Gandhinagar on Sunday

On May 30, a day after the Parliament session begins, Modi is expected to travel to the Maldives in his first bilateral visit as PM, according to diplomatic sources and Maldivian media reports.

Bhutan was the first country Modi had visited in 2014 after becoming Prime Minister. News agency PTI quoted diplomatic sources saying the Prime Minister is expected to travel to Male in the first half

of June, while the Maldivian media reported the visit will take place on June 7-8. External Affairs Minister Sushma Swaraj visited the Maldives in March, the first full-fledged bilateral trip from

'India will regain rightful position in world in 5 yrs'

PTI ■ AHMEDABAD

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Sunday said the next five years will be the time to regain the rightful position of India in the world order. He was speaking here at a function following the election victory, which was kept simple and short of pomp because of the Surat fire tragedy.

"Next five years will be very important in the history of the country, as was the period between 1942 to 1947. It will be the time to regain the rightful position of India in the world order. In the past our country had that place. I am sure India will regain its importance in the

world order," he said. Modi expressed grief over the death of 22 students in Surat building fire tragedy. "Till yesterday, I was in two minds whether to go for this felicitation function or not as on one hand, there was 'karyavya' (duty) and on the other hand, there was 'karuna' (compassion) for those who died in Surat. No amount of words can reduce the grief of the families who have lost their children in that tragedy," Modi said. "On the other hand, I had to thank the people of the state and also take blessings of my mother as my duty," the Prime Minister added.

India to the island nation after the Government of President Ibrahim Mohamed Solih came to power in November 2018. Modi attended Solih's swearing-in ceremony in November, signalling the importance India attaches to the island nation, where China has been trying to

expand its influence. Last week, Solih congratulated Modi for his "resounding victory". "Modi will visit Varanasi on Monday to thank the people for 'reposing faith' in him and offer prayers at Kashi Vishwanath temple.

Imran congratulates PM, Modi reiterates fight terror for peace

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Pakistan Prime Minister Imran Khan on Sunday called up Prime Minister Narendra Modi to congratulate him on his massive victory in the Lok Sabha elections, reiterating Islamabad's desire to work with Delhi. The Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) on Sunday said in a statement that PM Modi told his Pakistani counterpart on Sunday that creating trust and an environment free of violence and terrorism was essential for fostering peace and prosperity in the region. The MEA said Khan called up Modi to congratulate him on his re-election.

"The Prime Minister thanked the Prime Minister of Pakistan for his telephone call and greetings," the MEA said. "This was the first direct communication between the two leaders since the February 14 Pulwama terror attack and the subsequent Balakot air



strike carried out by India. On May 23, the day of election results, Khan had tweeted to Modi on his thumping win. "I congratulate Prime Minister Modi on the electoral victory of BJP and allies. Look forward to working with him for peace, progress and prosperity in South Asia," he tweeted.

Modi and Khan are scheduled to meet at the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation Summit in Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan next month.

Pakistan's Ministry of Foreign Affairs spokesperson Mohammad Faisal tweeted that Khan spoke to Modi and conveyed that he looked forward to working with him for the betterment of the people of the two countries.

After BJP's huge win, Andhra can't bargain for spl status: Jagan

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Andhra Pradesh CM-designate YS Jaganmohan Reddy on Sunday met Prime Minister Narendra Modi and later made a candid confession that since the BJP has returned to power with thumping majority, he is at the mercy of the Centre for special category status to the State. The YSR Congress Party chief also met BJP president Amit Shah and sought his support on the issue.

Jagan, whose party stormed to power in Assembly polls on the promise of getting special category status to the State, said he requested the PM to be "magnanimous" towards the people of Andhra Pradesh.

Talking to reporters after his meeting with Modi, Jagan said his party could only request and not "demand or command" the special category status. "I am not asking for Rs 2,58 lakh crore debt-ridden State during a meeting with the Prime Minister here.

Jagan, whose party stormed to power in Assembly polls on the promise of getting special category status to the State, said he requested the PM to be "magnanimous" towards the people of Andhra Pradesh.

CBI issues lookout notice against Kolkata ex-top cop

Summons ex-CP in Saradha scam case

SAUGAR SENGUPTA ■ KOLKATA

There was more trouble for former Kolkata Commissioner of Police Rajeev Kumar. Hours after the Supreme Court order providing the 1989-batch IPS officer protection from arrest for seven days lapsed on Saturday night, the CBI on Sunday served him a notice to appear before its officials on Monday morning.

A team of CBI sleuths led by senior officials Partho

Mukherjee and Manish Upadhyay on Sunday evening landed at the top officer's official residence at Rawdon Street in Kolkata in search of Kumar.

Apparently failing to find the top cop there, the officers arrived at the office of DCP South where a notice was served for Kumar to appear before the Economic Offence Wing officials at the CGO complex. He has been asked to report at the CBI office by 10 am in the morning, agency sources said, adding repeated efforts to contact him over telephone had failed.

Kumar was frantically trying to seek anticipatory bail from a lower court at Barasat

after the apex court refused to hear his plea for extension of the shield against arrest. The bail was rejected at lower court on technical grounds on Saturday and he was likely to apply for the same past 10 am on Monday making the CBI order directing him to appear before 10 am significant.

Earlier the CBI on Sunday issued a "look-out notice" on Kumar, who is being probed in the multi-crore Saradha and other chit fund cases for his role as the head of the Special Investigation Team formed by West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee to investigate the case.



BJP MP Smriti Irani is among the pall-bearers of the mortal remains of her aide Surendra Singh during his funeral at his village in Amethi on Sunday

Irani's aide shot, 5 held in Amethi

PNS ■ AMETHI

In the first incident of post-poll violence in Uttar Pradesh, a close aide of newly-elected Amethi BJP MP Smriti Irani was shot dead by two unidentified men, with police lodging an FIR against five persons and netting out the possibility of it being a "political murder".

Irani asked party workers to exercise restraint, even as she targeted Congress president Rahul Gandhi over his "take-care-of-Amethi-with-love" remark, saying she had got the message "loud and clear".

Defeat takes toll on Lalu's health



Former Minister Laluraj Prasad Yadav

Former Minister skips meals, remains quiet

SAURAV ROY ■ RANCHI



RJD chief Laluraj Prasad Yadav

The humiliating defeat of Rashtriya Janata Dal (RJD) candidates in the recently concluded general elections has taken a toll on party chief Laluraj Prasad's health. The incarcerated former Bihar Chief Minister has been skipping his meals and has started talking less, doctors at the Rajendra Institute of Medical Sciences (RIMS) in Ranchi said on Sunday.

"Lately, he (Lalu) has started skipping lunch. He remains quiet and only has breakfast and dinner," said Dr. Umesh Prasad, the in-charge of paid ward, where

Prasad is admitted at RIMS. "He (Lalu) would have breakfast in the morning and then directly have dinner late in the night. Such long periods of fasting is not advisable for diabetic patients," Prasad added.

The RJD could not win even a single seat in Bihar and Jharkhand this election. Despite the overwhelming Modi wave in the 2014, the party managed to win four seats in Bihar, once considered a stronghold of the party. This election, the party contested as a Mahagathabandhan ally in both the states and could not send any of its candidates to the par-

liament. In Jharkhand, it contested Chatra and Palamu constituencies and suffered an embarrassing defeat in both the constituencies.

Prasad is diabetic and is administered three shots of insulin every day, one before each meal. Now, with his tendency of skipping meals, the doctors are concerned that the medicines may not work as expected. Doctors have also started counselling him in order to convince him to take care of his health.

"He is already on heavy medication. Skipping meals in such a situation can have serious implications," said Dr.

Prasad. A CBI court on December 23, 2017 convicted Lalu in a fodder scam case related to fraudulent withdrawal of Rs.89 lakh from the Deoghar treasury from year 1991 to 1994 and sent him to jail. A month later, he was convicted in another fodder scam case and sentenced to five years of imprisonment.

He was admitted in the cardiology wing of RIMS the next year after he complained of discomfort while serving imprisonment in the Birsa Munda jail in Ranchi. Since then, he has been undergoing treatment at the hospital.

2018, he was referred to All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS) in New Delhi from where he was later released and sent back to Ranchi.

Nalin Verma, the co-author of Lalu's biography 'Gopalganj to Rainsin', met Lalu in the hospital on Saturday. Verma said that Lalu was affected by the defeat.

However, he was still well aware of the political equation in Bihar and Jharkhand and willing to plan a comeback for his party, he added.

"I will not speak about his health as that should be left to the doctors. But I know that he

is one of the sharpest political brains in India and his political acumen should not be questioned," Verma said.

Prasad has had a history of medical conditions. In August 2014, he underwent two major heart surgeries — one to replace an aortic valve and the other to repair the aorta, at Asian Heart Institute in Mumbai. He has since been under medications.

He has also had four episodes of perianal abscess, an infection in the rectum which may lead to formation of fistula, doctors said. Currently, he is under medication for hypertension, diabetes and heart.

CAPSULE

REPORTS OF JAITLEY'S SINKING HEALTH FALSE: New Delhi: The Government on Sunday said reports on the deteriorating health of outgoing Finance Minister Arun Jaitley are false and baseless, and media should stay clear of rumour mongering. Amid speculation about Jaitley's health, Government spokesperson Sitanshu Kar took to Twitter to clear the air.

30-YEAR-OLD MAN JUMPS TO DEATH OFF DND FLYWAY New Delhi: A 30-year-old man committed suicide after he jumped into the Yamuna river from the DND flyway in south-east Delhi, a police officer said on Sunday.

WILL LEAVE AAP IN 2020: DISGRUNTLED ALKA LAMBA New Delhi: Disgruntled Aam Aadmi Party legislator Alka Lamba has announced that she would leave the party next year.

43% NEWLY-ELECTED MPs HAVE CRIMINAL RECORD: ADR New Delhi: Nearly half of the newly-elected Lok Sabha members are facing criminal charges, a 25 per cent increase as compared to 2014, said Association of Democratic Reform.

PNS ■ CHANDIGARH

The ongoing spat between Punjab Chief Minister Capt Amarinder Singh and his 'outspoken' cabinet colleague Navjot Singh Sidhu is likely to be taken up by the former with the party's national president Rahul Gandhi in their meeting this week in New Delhi.

Both Capt Amarinder and Sidhu have been camping at the national capital to have audience with Rahul Gandhi to put forth their respective cases.

The Chief Minister, who is currently in the national capital for the Congress Working Committee's inspection meet following his Lok Sabha debacle, is returning Chandigarh on late Monday and will go back to meet Rahul later in the

week. "The Chief Minister is meeting Rahul Gandhi later in the week," a senior functionary in the Chief Minister's Office told IANS.

Capt Amarinder is said to have prepared a complete case against Sidhu with the list of constituencies where Congress had always fared well, but failed this time, holding Sidhu responsible for not doing his job well as the Urban Development Minister.

On the other hand, Sidhu is also all-prepared with his list of 'urban' segments where the party has performed well for which he should be given all credits.

The cold war between the Chief Minister and his Local Bodies Minister intensified when Capt Amarinder categorically blamed

SIDHU HAD ALSO DECLARED TO STEP DOWN IF THE BADALS WERE NOT PUNISHED IN THE 2015 SACRILEGE CASES

Sidhu for the party's poor performance in the state's urban areas saying that his actions during the parliamentary elections had not only harmed him but also Rahul Gandhi. The Chief Minister had stated that the urban vote bank had been

the backbone of the Congress in the State but Sidhu's failure to do any development work had hurt the party, which had performed well in the rural areas in these elections.

Capt Amarinder went in to add that he had raised the issue of changing Sidhu's portfolio some months ago, but the party decided to take a call on it after the Lok Sabha elections. "I am confident that both Rahul Gandhi and party leader Priyanka Gandhi Vadra would agree to the change in the interest of the state and the party," said Capt Amarinder after the declaration of results.

He had also expressed his unhappiness over Sidhu's 'friendly' relationship with the Badals, having waited for a day to give such a statement in case he had any dif-

ference of opinion. While addressing an election rally in Bathinda on May 17, Sidhu talked about a 'friendly match' without naming anyone, while asking the electorate to "punish" the "players" who have 75:25 share.

Before that, Sidhu's wife and former MLA Dr Navjot Kaur Sidhu had blamed Capt Amarinder and state party affairs' in-charge Asha Kumari for playing a negative role in declining her nomination from Chandigarh Lok Sabha seat — a statement backed by Sidhu.

Sidhu had also declared to step down if the Badals were not punished in the 2015 sacrilege cases. Referring to Sidhu's remarks on the investigation into the sacrilege cases in Bathinda, the seat that the Congress lost to Akali Dal's

Harsimrat Kaur Badal by a slender margin of 21,772 votes, the Chief Minister had said that the Minister evidently did not understand that the SIT had been set up by the Assembly.

The Chief Minister had also reiterated that Sidhu's 'yaari and jhappi' (friendship and hug) with the Pakistani Army Chief General Qamar Javed Bajwa, would not be tolerated, especially by Indian army personnel, who were being killed by ISI-backed terrorists while he was going hugging their leaders.

Meanwhile, cricketer-turned-politician Sidhu indirectly took a jibe at the Chief Minister by quoting a couplet from a famous ghazal of Iqbal. "I am not a lone warrior in this universe. I have a plenty of friends

8 varsities participate in Day 2 of fest at BAU



An artist performs during the ongoing Jharkhand Inter-University Youth festival of BAU at College campus, Karke, Ranchi on Sunday. Vinay Murmu | Pioneer



Students celebrate during the ongoing Jharkhand Inter-University Youth festival of BAU at College campus, Karke, Ranchi on Sunday. Vinay Murmu | Pioneer

PNS ■ RANCHI

Students of as many as eight Universities on Sunday participated with fervour in several competitions on the second day of the maiden four-day Jharkhand Inter-University Youth Festival-2019 held at Birsra Agricultural University (BAU).

The students participated in ten events including singing, solo dance completion, debate, spot painting and speech. The spot painting competition and debate and speech competitions were organised at Agriculture Engineering College of BAU in supervision of Z Haider and BK Jha. In this competition students of five universities participated.

In an another event, solo western singing competition, solo singing competition and classical solo dance competition were organised at Auditorium of Agricultural Department under supervision of MP Sinha and Sushil Prasad. The students from five different universities partici-

parted in these events. During the patriotic solo singing competition the audience shouted slogans of 'Bharat Mata Ki Ja'. The classical solo dance competition which included KathakKali, Bharatnatyam, Odyssey, Manipuri, Kuchipudi and others. Vice Chancellor, Binod Mahato, Koyalanchal University, AK Srivastava attended the fest on Sunday.

Addressing the gathering, Student Welfare Director, MS Yadav said that the outstanding talent in the State can be seen in the excellent performances of the students from various universities.

The Judge Committee of each competition is not from the participating universities and the declaration of winners and prize distribution together will be done during the closing ceremony.

About 300 students from Ranchi University, Vinoba Bhawe University, Hazaribag, Binod, Bihar, Mahto Koyalanchal University, Dhanbad, Kolhan University,

Addressing the gathering, Student Welfare Director, MS Yadav, said that the outstanding talent in the State can be seen in the excellent performances of the students from various universities

Chaibasa, Sido Kanhu Murmu University, Dumka, Nilamber-Pitamber University, Medininagar, BAU and National University of Study and Research in Law, Ranchi are participating in 19 events of music, dance, literature, theatre and fine arts groups during the 4-day festival.

Wooden sleepers seized from Jamshedpur-bound bus

PNS ■ JAMSHEDPUR

Divisional forest officers of Saranda and Jamshedpur jointly seized a consignment of wooden sleepers from a Jamshedpur-bound passenger bus at Hata under Potka thana area on Sunday morning.

The bus, which was coming from Kiraburu in West Singhbhum, bordering Keonjhar district of Odisha, was filled with passengers while a team of police and forest department, acting on a tip-off, stopped the vehicle at Hata and asked the passengers to vacate it. The bus was on its way to Jamshedpur.

During the raid, divisional forest officer (DFO), Saranda, Rainish Kumar in West Singhbhum and DFO, Jamshedpur, Abhishek Kumar were present along with the Potka police at the spot.

According to sources, six pieces of wooden sleepers were kept on the roof of the bus. The raiding team seized the bus after evacuating the passengers. The team also arrested the driver and conductor for carrying out the illegal business of smuggling woods.

DFO, Abhijit Kumar said in all 100 sq ft of wooden sleepers made out of saal wood were seized from the bus.

"It is a major achievement for us. We are working to unearth the racket. For making wooden sleeper of 100 sq ft, the culprits might have felled several trees. Moreover, such wooden sleepers were being carried in the bus on a regular way," said the DFO Abhishek.

DFO, ABHIJIT KUMAR, SAID IN ALL 100 SQ FT OF WOODEN SLEEPERS MADE OUT OF SAAL WOOD WERE SEIZED FROM THE BUS

Workshop on GST begins in Capital

PNS ■ RANCHI

The forms issued by the Central Board of Indirect Tax and Custom (CBIC) under Goods and Services Tax (GST) cannot overrule the provisions of the GST Law itself, said Chairman of Indirect Tax Committee of the Institute of Chartered Accountants of India (ICAI), New Delhi, Chartered Accountant (CA) Madhukar N Hiregange.

Addressing a gathering of Chartered Accountants as chief guest at a two day workshop on "Goods and Services Tax" organised on Sunday, Hiregange explained the concept of Input Tax Credit (Capital Goods, Services and Input) including input service distribution and merger of recovery of excess credit.

The event was organised by "Indirect Taxes Committee" of the Institute of Chartered Accountants of India (ICAI).

Hiregange said that Supreme Court in a famous case has affirmed that any



CA and GST expert Abhay Desai from Vadodra addresses a gathering during a workshop on GST in Ranchi on Sunday. Vinay Murmu | Pioneer

rule or circular against law is not valid and not binding as well. However in no case we should misuse law for tax evasion.

He explained that Chartered Accountants may by their diligent services help their clients to get the Input

Tax Credit for which they are eligible and contribute in the financial well being of their clients.

Addressing the gathering as guest lecture CA, New Delhi, Gaurav Gupta said that no GST is to be levied in case of donation received by the

NGO as there is no business involved and consideration is also missing. He also touched the impact of GST on NGO and explained that contractual obligation is important for taxability of transactions done by NGO under GST.

He addressed various

issues on brief concepts, levy, composition, exemption from tax including e-commerce and recent amendments.

Gupta explained the purpose of implementing GST. He stressed the need to look into the concept of Supply, Levy and Exemptions before coming into the conclusion of taxability of the Goods and Services.

Chairman of Ranchi Branch of Central India Regional Council (CIRC) of ICAI, CA Sandeep Jalan, welcomed the delegates of the workshop and explained the various initiatives of the branch towards continuous professional education of the members.

Convener of the workshop CA Arvind Modi, explained the purpose of organizing the workshop. The workshop was attended by more than 150 Chartered Accountants.

Vice Chairperson of the Ranchi Branch CIRC, CA Manisha Biyani, gave vote of thanks.

BJYM celebrates NDA win in Bokaro

PNS ■ BOKARO

Members of BJP Yuva in Morcha Bokaro District, led by President Mayank Singh, celebrated the victory of Prime Minister Narendra Modi by dancing and offering sweets at Naya More in Bokaro Steel City.

Enthusiastic party cadres burst crackers too to celebrate their happiness and distributed 'laddoos'. Bikers gave a thumbs-up and rode across the city shouting "Modi-Modi" and "Jai Shree Ram" which reverberated in the air.

The party members participated in a huge victory procession marking the NDA's victory.

The BJP registered a thumping victory in Lok Sabha polls that commenced on 11 April and wrapped up on 19 May. According to the media reports, this general election saw approximately 900 million voters exercising their franchise. They decided the fate of 7928 candidates across 542



BJP Yuva Morcha workers celebrate NDA's victory in the Lok Sabha elections at Bokaro on Sunday. Pioneer photo

seats across the country. Besides others, Kunj Bihari Pathak, Sachin Singh, Dilip Singh, Vijay Anand, Nandan

Singh, Raj Kumar, Anshu Gupta, Jishu Modi, Dhruv Singh, Kundan Singh, Arjun Swarnik, Suraj, Ratan, Dhruv

Shubham, Pankaj, Ashish, Vijay were present during the celebrations.

THE BJP REGISTERED A THUMPING VICTORY IN LOK SABHA POLLS THAT COMMENCED ON 11 APRIL AND WRAPPED UP ON 19 MAY. ACCORDING TO THE MEDIA REPORTS, THIS GENERAL ELECTION SAW APPROXIMATELY 900 MILLION VOTERS EXERCISING THEIR FRANCHISE

Cyber frauds dupe doctor of ₹1.9 lakh

PNS ■ BOKARO

Cyber criminals on Sunday duped a Bokaro-based ophthalmologist of ₹1.9 lakh through phishing.

Dr Pradeep Kumar, working at the Railway Hospital Adra Division, fell prey to fraudulent phone calls made by a cyber fraud who claimed to be an agent of Employees' Provident Fund Organisation. Kumar shared his One Time Password (OTP) with the caller and the amount was debited from his bank account in no time.

"The caller told me that today was the last day for updating details of PF account.

He asked for my personal number and the password sent to it through SMS," said

Kumar.

Dr Kumar filed a complaint with the local police against the caller. The cops have charged the unnamed accused under section 419, 420, 467, 468 and 379 of the Indian Penal Code and various sections of the Information Technology (IT) Act.

Police said that they were investigating the case, but people should be aware of such fraudulent phone calls and avoid sharing personal details with anybody.

"Any person receiving such calls must avoid sharing his or her personal details and immediately share the phone number of the caller with the police," said the investigating officer.



Lohardaga welcomes MP Sudarshan Bhagat



MP Sudarshan Bhagat gets a warm welcome in Lohardaga on Sunday. Pioneer photo

PNS ■ RANCHI

Sudarshan Bhagat, the newly Selected BJP MP from Lohardaga, was given a rousing welcome in city. The BJP supporters and cadres welcomed Bhagat by taking out a victory procession from Rana Chowk, former MLA Ramesh Oraon, Matti Kala Board chairman Srichand Prasad, BJP leader Om Prakash Singh, Chandrasekhar Agrwal, Rakesh Prasad, Naren Raj, senior BJP leader Sitaram Sharma, Rajesh Mahto, Niraj Nallen, AJSU leader Suraj Agarwal and large number of NDA leaders were present on the occasion.

during the victory procession dance to the tune of Mandar and Nagras. The BJP MP thanks the people of Lohardaga for making Prime Minister Narendra Modi's hand stronger. On the occasion, Lohardaga BJP president Rajmohan Ram, former MLA Ramesh Oraon, Matti Kala Board chairman Srichand Prasad, BJP leader Om Prakash Singh, Chandrasekhar Agrwal, Rakesh Prasad, Naren Raj, senior BJP leader Sitaram Sharma, Rajesh Mahto, Niraj Nallen, AJSU leader Suraj Agarwal and large number of NDA leaders were present on the occasion.



Girls walk under an umbrella to protect themselves from the heat on a hot summer day in Ranchi on Sunday. The temperature has been soaring above 40 degrees Celsius in Ranchi in the past one week. The MET department on Sunday also issued heat wave alert in some of the districts. Vinay Murmu | Pioneer

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Tremors in J'khand, 4.8 magnitude earthquake hits WB

Heat wave alert in north-western districts

Tremors were felt in several districts of Jharkhand after an earthquake with epicentre in neighbouring West Bengal's Bankura hit eastern India on Sunday morning.

The mild tremors were felt in parts of Ranchi, Giridih, Dhanbad, Jamtara, Bagodar and Dumka at around 10.39am after the earthquake measuring 4.8 on Richter scale hit the neighbouring state.

Earlier in the day, an earthquake of a magnitude of 4.5 on



A girl covers her face to protect herself from scorching heat on a hot summer afternoon in Ranchi on Sunday. Vinay Murmu | Pioneer

Richter scale hit Andaman & Nicobar Islands at 7.49am. This too caused mild tremors in some parts of Jharkhand.

The epicentre of the second tremor was 10 km below the surface of Earth at latitude 23.3 degrees north and longitude 86.9 degrees east, officials from the Meteorological Department of India said.

Residents moved out of their houses in parts of Giridih and Dhanbad during the second earthquake. However, no loss of property or life was reported from any part of the state. MET officials said that the tremors were too mild to cause any damage to life or property.

According to the MET

department, maximum effect of the earthquake was felt in Jharkhand's Dhanbad and Jamtara, the districts nearest to the epicentre.

Meanwhile, the weather department on Sunday issued heat wave alerts for districts in northwest Jharkhand, including Daltonganj, Garhwa, Latehar and Chatra, for next 48 hours.

Director of Ranchi Meteorological Centre, SD Kotal said maximum temperature was 3 to 4 degrees Celsius higher than the normal temperature across Jharkhand on Sunday.

The weather will remain hot and humid for the next three days. Minor fluctuation in

temperature is expected from Wednesday evening due to incursion of moisture from the Bay of Bengal, said Kotal.

Around eight people have reportedly died so far allegedly due to heat in Jharkhand. However, state disaster management department has no such record of deaths.

Daltonganj remained the hottest district of state at 43.2 degrees Celsius, while Chaibasa recorded 42 degree Celsius, four degree above the normal, on Sunday.

Ranchi's mercury remains over 40 degree Celsius since Friday. The city, on Sunday, recorded maximum temperature of 39.2 degrees Celsius. "Relief from scorching heat in

Ranchi is unlikely at least for next two to three days," Kotal said.

Jamshedpur sizzles at 41.2 degrees Celsius, while Bokaro recorded 39 degree Celsius on Sunday.

Daltonganj remained the hottest district of State at 43.2 degrees Celsius, while Chaibasa recorded 42 degree Celsius, four degree above the normal on Sunday

2 State MPs may find place in Modi's Cabinet

ROSHAN KUMAR ■ RANCHI

As the BJP-led NDA swept to power with a spectacular performance for second term, all eyes are now on government formation, amid speculation that several new faces will be included in the Modi's cabinet. From Jharkhand too names of some probable candidates are doing the rounds. In Modi's last cabinet the state had two representatives, Jayant Sinha minister of state of civil aviation and Sudarshan Bhagat minister of state for tribal welfare.

Sources said that going by the Jharkhand demography and regional aspirations this time too there will be at least two ministers from State in Modi's Cabinet. A senior BJP leader requesting anonymity said, "This time too there will be two ministers from Jharkhand in Modi's cabinet, one tribal and other from non-tribal community."

The BJP led NDA has won 12 seats out of 14 seats in Jharkhand out of which 11 MPs are from BJP while one MP Chandra Prakash Choudhary is from AJSU party.

Out of 12 MPs in NDA, there are three tribals—Arjun Munda from Khunti, Sudarshan Bhagat, Lohardaga MP and outgoing minister in Modi's cabinet and new face Sunil Soren who defeated JMM heavyweight Shibu Soren.



Arjun Munda



Sunil Soren



Jayant Sinha



Sudarshan Bhagat



Chandra Prakash Choudhary

names of Hazaribag MP and outgoing Minister in Modi's cabinet Jayant Sinha, Godda MP Nishikant Dubey and Koderma MP Annapurna Devi and Palamu MP VD Ram are doing the round.

Sources said that while choosing the ministers, the BJP leadership will also go through regional aspiration and caste demography as by year end the State has to go for Assembly election.

Among the three tribal MPs, the name of Khunti MP Arjun Munda and Dumka MP Sunil Soren are at the top. Arjun Munda in a nail biting contest won from Khunti with a slender margin of 1445 votes.

BJP and Munda especially had to face tribal ire in Khunti as tribals were against ruling party on the issue of Pathalgadi and Chottanapur/Santhal Pargana Tenancy Act (CNT/SPT) Act. Sources said that adding more problems for Munda was some Christian missionaries' directives to vote for Congress candidate. Munda who has long political experience as he had

served as Chief Minister of state is considered as BJP's tribal face.

For Sunil Soren, the advantage is that he had defeated JMM heavyweight and party chief Shibu Soren in a similar way two decades back when BJP candidate Babulal Marandi defeated Shibu. Later when Jharkhand was formed in 2000 Marandi was made the first Chief Minister of State.

For Sudarshan Bhagat a leader who is considered as down-to-earth and always away from controversies has become advantageous for becoming the minister again.

Among the non-tribal face, the names Jayant Sinha, Nishikant Dubey, Annapurna Devi and VD Ram are doing the round. Jayant an IITian from IIT Delhi also holds the MBA degree from prestigious Harvard Business School and MS M.S. in Energy Management & Policy from the University of Pennsylvania. Sinha earlier stint as junior finance and civil aviation minister is also an advantage for him.

Three times MP from Godda, Nishikant Dubey who has strong grip on BJP organi-

SOURCES SAID THAT WHILE CHOOSING THE MINISTERS, THE BJP LEADERSHIP WILL ALSO GO THROUGH REGIONAL ASPIRATION AND CASTE DEMOGRAPHY AS BY YEAR END THE STATE HAS TO GO FOR ASSEMBLY ELECTION. AMONG THE THREE TRIBAL MPS, THE NAME OF KHUNTI MP ARJUN MUNDA AND DUMKA MP SUNIL SOREN ARE AT THE TOP. ARJUN MUNDA IN A NAIL BITING CONTEST WON FROM KHUNTI WITH A SLENDER MARGIN OF 1445 VOTES. BJP AND MUNDA ESPECIALLY HAD TO FACE TRIBAL IRE IN KHUNTI AS TRIBALS WERE AGAINST RULING PARTY ON THE ISSUE OF PATHALGADI AND CHOTTANAGPUR/SANTHAL PARGANA TENANCY ACT (CNT/SPT) ACT

zation is also a strong contender. Dubey, an excellent orator has been raising state issue in Parliament. In election he defeated Mahagabhandhan candidate Pradeep Yadav which was considered as tough battle.

The name of former RJD state president Annapurna

Devi who switched side to BJP months before election is also doing round.

Annapurna apart from being a woman's party experience in state politics as she had represented Koderma assembly for several times.

The name of former state

VD Ram and Palamu MP VD Ram is also considered as probable contender. Ram said, "I do not know whether my name is as ministers from Jharkhand. My work is to fulfill the aspirations of my leader Modi and people who have voted for me."

Woman who set ablaze her lover had aborted two fetuses

She was arrested on Saturday from Kathitand

PNS ■ RANCHI

A 26-year-old woman, who was arrested on Saturday for setting her lover ablaze in a car, on Sunday, confessed to the police that she had aborted two fetuses during her relationship with her boyfriend and decided to kill him after he refused to marry her.

The arrested woman poured kerosene on her 24-year-old boyfriend Deepak Sahu and set him afire during a heated argument on May 19. Locals rescued Sahu from a burning car in Ratu and rushed him to hospital. He succumbed to his injuries at Rajendra Institute of Medical Sciences (RIMS) burn ward on Friday.

"He was exploiting me. He took money from me, impregnated me twice and found excuses whenever I asked him to marry me," she told the police in her statement.

Manoj Kumar Ray, in-charge of Ratu Police Station said that the police arrested her

from Kathitand under Ratu Police Station in Ranchi on Saturday.

"They were in a long term relationship. The deceased man and the woman lived in the same locality under Thakurgaon Police Station in Ranchi. The woman claims that the boy had refused to marry her despite giving assurances in the past and that is why she killed him in a fit of rage," said Ray.

Even on the fateful day, they had an argument over Sahu's reluctance to marriage while they were in the car, Ray said, adding that the incident occurred at around 10am last Sunday on a road connecting Jakhratand and Hurhuri.

Locals found Sahu crying for help on the driver's seat of the burning car. They poured water on him and pulled him out but by then he had already sustained severe burns.

"Locals could not find the woman. She may have fled after setting the car afire," Ray said.

Born in a humble family of farmers, the woman was the youngest of eight siblings. She told the police that she had helped Sahu financially to buy the car and also took loans for him to help him start a business.



Chief Minister Raghubar Das was given a rousing welcome by BJP cadres and members on the victory of BJP in Lok Sabha election in Jamshedpur today. Das reached Sibal City today from Delhi where he had gone to attend the function where Modi was chosen as NDA leader in Lok Sabha at Central Hall of Parliament. The BJP had made spectacular performance in Lok Sabha election by winning 12 out of 14 seats. Das accompanied by newly elected MPs and AJSU party president Suresh Mishra had gone to Delhi. Pioneer photo

State MPs agree with PM's 'avoid media' remark

Stop giving masala to media, Modi said

PNS ■ RANCHI

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Saturday asked new MPs not to fall for temptation of media publicity. Addressing the newly elected MPs at Central Hall in New Delhi, the Prime Minister said that with speculations rife over who will join his council of ministers, leaders should be cautious of media reports. Modi said, "Do not trust such media reports, as they are aimed at creating confusion and often put out with bad intentions. I am still to go through details of all NDA MPs but in media there are speculative reports on council of ministers," Modi said. "Don't fall prey to media questions."

Meanwhile, the newly elected MPs from Jharkhand have

taken PM's word seriously, with many of them claiming that what Modi said was true and public representatives should be cautious while talking to media.

VD Ram elected as MP for second consecutive time from Palamu said, "A public representative is known by his work. If MPs or MLAs are serious with their work they don't require media attention." Ram, who defeated RJD candidate Guran Ram by the whopping margin of more than 4.77 lakh votes said, "Public representatives should refrain from talking to media. If a leader has no knowledge or understanding of a particular matter, he or she should not give his comment before media unless they are authorized by the party to talk before the media."

Echoing the views of Ram, Godda BJP MP Nishikant Dubey also said that a leader should keep away from media

publicity. Even State BJP leaders claimed that a leader should keep away media publicity. State BJP general secretary, Dipak Prakash said, "Only spokespersons and senior leaders authorized by party should talk to the media and others should be cautious. We will see to it that there is discipline in party."

Sources said that though the PM's advice was to all NDA MPs, it was indirectly targeted at some of the vocal MPs who have formed a habit of seeking media attention. One such leader is Bhopal's newly elected MP, Sadihi Pragya Thakur. Thakur during election campaign had brought discomfort for BJP. She had stated that "Nathuram Godse was a 'deshbhakt', is a 'deshbhakt' and will remain a 'deshbhakt'. People calling him a terrorist should instead look within, such people will be given a befitting reply in these elections."

The senior BJP leadership, including PM Modi and BJP national president Amit Shah, had kept a distance from Sadihi's remark. Modi had even stated that he will never forgive Sadihi for her remark.

The BJP had issued a show cause notice to Sadihi asking her to give her reply within ten days.

Sources said that in Jharkhand there are no BJP MPs who are known for giving controversial statements to the media, but in BJP there are several leaders apart from Sadihi who are known for their controversial statements.

Begusarai MP and BJP firebrand leader Giriraj Singh, BJP's main saffron-clad MPs, Sakshi Maharaj and Sadihi Niranjani Jyoti from Uttar Pradesh who too were successful in reaching Parliament are also known for their controversial remarks, many a times aimed at targeting minorities.

Learning gap spurs brain drain in Jamshedpur

PANVINDER BHATIA ■ JAMSHEDPUR

With results of the Class XII board examination declared, students in the city have started heading for destinations outside the Jamshedpur.

Every year, the city sees a huge exodus, with students preferring Delhi, Mumbai and other metro cities in North and West for higher studies. School authorities informed that on an average around 6000 to 7000 students migrate to metros for higher education and numbers are increasing every year.

Moreover, most of the students after completion of their education settle in other States thus leaving their hometown to struggle with exodus of human resource too.

Teachers and the principals of city-based schools opine that crisis of qualified teachers in colleges, delayed academic



Students of Loyola School celebrate their success in ISC examination in Jamshedpur on Sunday. Pioneer photo

We need to have better colleges: Father Pius

PNS ■ JAMSHEDPUR

Father Pius Fernandes, principal of Loyola School, said that Jamshedpur is known as a hub of education in Jharkhand but it is sad that the students are forced to move out for higher education in different cities. "We need to make effort to have better higher education facilities in

Jamshedpur too. Like every year, this year too, the performance of students of Jamshedpur is overwhelming. Our student Sriшти Vaidya has topped the state in ISC. It is the result of teamwork of students and their teachers. Our students have proved their mettle in the academic fields. We wish them all the best for their future," he said.

He said that the students are moving to other cities for higher education and preparations of competitive examination. This may also be the reason why Mumbai zone has registered an overwhelming performance in IIT-JEE while eastern zone has done pretty badly in comparison to last year.

Those who are keen to study humanities and commerce are eyeing University of Delhi (DU), St Stephen's College, Shri Ram College of Commerce (SRCC), Hans Raj College, Kiri Mal College, Lady Shri Ram College for Women (LSR) and Miranda House are some of the top choices.

Colleges in Kolkata that are a big draw include Lady Bradburne, St Xavier's, and Scottish Church. Christ College, Mount Carmel College and City College are some of the preferred desti-

nations in Bangalore while Symbiosis and Fergusson College are the most sought after in Pune.

When contacted, a senior professor of Kolhan University college said that the poor infrastructure and educational facilities in the colleges forces students to move for greener pastures.

The scope to excel is limited here, for instance there is a dearth of good institutes and teachers in the city. If a student wants to study space engineering, where should he go," said Rajesh Singh, a student of Karim City College.

He said that everyone is aware of the condition of Kolhan University.

Now who would want to spend his career by taking admission in such colleges where the infrastructure is not up to the mark and the conditions of classrooms and laboratories are worse.

to other cities. "We cannot deny that exodus of the students to other metro cities for better education facilities is also one of the

reasons for average performance of the city in the engineering examination," said RK Mishra, a city-based trainer of IIT aspirants.

WB govt reinstates 11 IPS officers transferred by EC

Kolkata: Soon after the Election Commission lifted the model code of conduct, West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee on Sunday reinstated 11 IPS officers, including Rajeev Kumar, to their old posts.

Kumar, who was removed by the poll body from the post of Additional Director General of West Bengal CID, was reinstated by an order issued by the state home and hill affairs department.

Kumar was embroiled into a controversy in the Saradha chit fund scam. He was relieved from his duty by the EC following violence in the city during BJP President Amit Shah's roadshow.

According to the order issued by the state government, Rajesh Kumar, who was named as the Kolkata Police Commissioner by an EC directive, was sent on "waiting for

posting order", while his predecessor Anuj Sharma was named in his place.

The EC had ordered the transfer of Sharma from the post of Kolkata Police Commissioner to the position of ADGP and IGP (Operations) of the state police.

Natarajan Ramesh Babu, who was appointed the Commissioner of Bidhannagar Police by the EC, was transferred from the post and sent on "waiting for posting order".

Gyanwant Singh, the earlier Bidhannagar police commissioner, who was transferred by the EC as Director of the Directorate of Economic Offences, was brought back to his old post, the order stated.

Devendra Prakash Singh, the DIG Midnapore Range, was named as the new Commissioner of Police of Barrackpore Police in place of

Sunil Kumar Choudhary. Choudhary, who was made the CP of Barrackpore Police by the Commission, was sent on "waiting for posting order".

Shyam Singh was reinstated as the Superintendent of Police of Birbhum in place of Avvaru Ravindranath, who was made the new DC, Zone II (airport division) under the Bidhannagar Police Commissionerate.

Amit Kumar Singh who was appointed as the Superintendent of Police of Goochbehar district by the EC was transferred by the state government and put on "waiting for posting order".

Abhishek Gupta, the Commanding Officer (CO) of Specialised India Reserve Battalions (SIRB) was appointed the new Superintendent of police of Coochbehar district, the order said.

Patnaik: Politics not complicated if people kept priority

Bhubaneswar: Odisha Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik, who won the State Assembly election for the fifth consecutive time, on Sunday said politics is not complicated when people and their welfare are kept in the forefront.

"People ask me often what is the secret of the BJD's continuous success and I always tell them these two points — keep people in focus and work for people," Patnaik told newly-elected party legislators, who elected him as the Biju Janata Dal's legislating party leader.

Welcoming the lawmakers, he advised them to lead a simple life. "Always remember to lead a simple life. When you are simple, people are close to you," he added.

Patnaik also advised the



MLAs to work hard and take Odisha to the next level in development.

"We have to honour the faith, people have on us by sincere and dedicated hard work," he said.

Patnaik will take oath as Chief Minister for fifth consecutive time on May 29.

The BJD won 112 of the state's 146 Assembly seats. PTI



Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik pampers an infant during a visit to Surya Temple in Jamshedpur on Sunday. Pioneer Photo

Naveen meets Gov, to take oath on May 29

- In a first, he'll be sworn in outside Raj Bhavan
- Over 5,000 guests to attend event at Exhibition Ground
- DGP reviews security measures

PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

Shortly after elected as the BJD Legislature Party Leader, Naveen Patnaik on Sunday met Governor Prof Ganeshi Lal at the Raj Bhavan and staked his claim to form a new Government led by him in the State.

The Patnaik Ministry will be sworn in on Wednesday (May 29).

Earlier in the day, all the newly-elected BJD MLAs met at the party's head office here and unanimously elected Patnaik as the BJD Legislature Party Leader formally paving a way for him to become the

Chief Minister for a fifth consecutive time. Welcoming all MLAs, Patnaik advised them to keep people's interests in focus and work for their welfare. "Most of you are newcomers. I welcome you all. Politics is not complicated when we keep people and their welfare in the forefront," said he.

Patnaik along with some senior MLAs met the Governor and submitted to him a resolution of his election as the BJD Legislature Party Leader and a list of 112 BJD MLAs.

For the first time, Patnaik will be sworn in as Chief Minister outside the Raj

Bhavan. The grand event will take place at the Idco Exhibition Ground.

Sources said the oath-taking ceremony would be held between 10 am and 12 pm on May 29.

Around 5,000 people, including BJD MLAs and other functionaries, would be part of the ceremony. Many leading women supporters have been specially invited to the event.

"To ensure a smooth event, the BMC and the Works Department have together undertaken cleaning works at the event venue.



Aspirants vie for Odisha Cabinet berths

On Sunday, a preparatory meeting for smooth conduct of the swearing-in ceremony was held by the Commissioner police where DGP Dr RP Sharma, Police Commissioner Satyajit Mohanty and DCP Anup Sahoo were present.

The top cops also visited the venue. It is learnt that the entire venue would be checked by sniffer dogs and put under CCTV cameras. The Police Commissioner would directly supervise the security measures.

"Many VIPs and VVIPs from within and outside the State are likely to attend the swearing-in ceremony. In view of this, tight security measures have been planned. An adequate number of security personnel will be deployed in and around the ground. A control room will monitor all the activities," said the DGP.

BHUBANESWAR: Hectic lobbying by a number of BJD MLAs is on for getting a berth in Naveen Patnaik's fifth Ministry. There are long queues of the aspirants at the Naveen Niwas to seek Patnaik's favour.

Patnaik is likely to make a 21-member Ministry. While outgoing Ministers are lobbying to secure Ministerial berths again, some others dropped earlier also trying to make a comeback. Of the existing Ministers, Bijayshree Routray has not contested polls this time while Maheswar Mohanty lost the election and Ramesh Mahi has been elected to Lok Sabha. Remaining Ministers Badri Narayan Patra and Prafulla Samal have defeated OPCC president Niranjan Patnaik in their constituencies and hope to be retained in the Cabinet. PNS



Gujr-based Indian billionaire Padam Shri Yashwanth Prasad Singh congratulates PM Narendra Modi on his grand victory in the just concluded Lok Sabha Elections. Pioneer photo

BSY rules out formation of Govt with JD(S) support, favours fresh polls

Bengaluru: Amid speculation that JD(S)-Congress coalition may collapse following its drubbing in the Lok Sabha polls, Karnataka BJP Chief BS Yeddyurappa on Sunday said his party favoured fresh assembly elections in such an event, ruling out partnering with the regional party to form a new Government.

"Forming a Government with JD(S) help is an impossibility. I have had a distasteful experience of 20-20 rule under Kumaraswamy's Chief Ministership. I do not want to repeat the mistake again," Yeddyurappa told PTI in an interview here.

The BJP had to withdraw support to the Kumaraswamy led Government as the JD(S) leader refused to step down as per 20-20 power sharing deal in 2007.

Responding to a question, Yeddyurappa said the party is ready for fresh State elections. "We are ready for fresh Assembly elections. There is no option left for our party," he said. Claiming that the JD(S)-Congress Government has lost people's faith after losing 26 seats in Karnataka's Lok Sabha constituencies, he said despite this the coalition partners have decided to run the Government, which was against the verdict of the people.

He also alleged that the coalition partners have buried the hatchet just to remain in power, instead of solving people's problems including drought and drinking water across the State. To another query, the senior BJP leader said the party has convened a meeting on June 1 to chart out the next course of action.

Asked if the BJP would welcome Sumalatha Ambareesh, who defeated Kumaraswamy's son Nikhil Kumaraswamy in Mandya Lok Sabha constituency, into the party, Yeddyurappa said if Sumalatha wants to join his party, she would do so. "Sumalatha told us that she would talk to the people of Mandya and decide on joining BJP," he added. The Congress and JD(S) formed a coalition Government in the State after the May 2018 Assembly elections through a hung verdict. Congress and JD(S) ended up winning only one seat each in the Lok Sabha elections dealing a blow to the one-year-old coalition. JD(S) patriarch HD Deve Gowda and Chief Minister Kumaraswamy's son Nikhil lost in Tumkur and Mandya respectively. PTI

Modi will transform Muslim lives, says tea vendor

Ahmedabad: Imtiyaz bhai, who runs a tea stall near Gujarat BJP's old headquarters in Ahmedabad's Khanpur area from where Prime Minister Narendra Modi took his baby steps in politics, on Sunday said he was sure Modi would change the lives of Muslims in the country. Imtiyaz bhai, in his 60s, remembers Modi having tea and snacks at his stall while another Muslim man joined in to recall that the Prime Minister used to ask for video cassette recorder (VCR) from his TV shop nearby to "show video cassettes to journalists".



Asked about his expectations from the BJP Government, Imtiyaz bhai told Gujarati TV channel GSTV: "I was very happy to hear Modi Sahab's speech yesterday when he spoke about the welfare of minorities." With others around nod-

Lalu Prasad skips lunch, goes mum after RJD rout

Ranchi: Jailed former Bihar Chief Minister and RJD chief Lalu Prasad has stopped taking lunch and keeping quiet most of the time after his party suffered a humiliating rout in the Lok Sabha elections in Bihar. The Rashtriya Janata Dal failed to win any seat in Bihar, once its bastion, and Jharkhand. Despite the Modi wave in 2014, the RJD had won four seats from Bihar. "Lalu's routine has changed in the last two to three days. He is having breakfast and dinner but not taking lunch," said Umesh Prasad, the doctor in-charge of the former leader's health at the Rajendra Institute of Medical Science (RIMS) here. According to doctors, Lalu Prasad, currently serving a 14-year sentence in Jharkhand in a multi-million-rupee fodder scam, is given insulin doses three times a day. But since he was not taking his meals on time, the doctors were not being able to administer the doses as they did earlier. PTI



Girls dress-up as gunfighters during Wild-Wild West programme at Aqua world in Ranchi on Sunday. Pioneer Photo

IN BRIEF

SHOOTING OF HINDI FILM COMPLETES IN RANCHI Running Horses Studio Private Limited informed that it is producing a Hindi Feature Film "Fauj". A number of artists from Jharkhand are performing in the film. The shooting of the film was completed near Dassam Falls and adjoining areas. The Director of the film is Aryan Kashyap and junior artist Abhijita Kashyap from Ranchi is also performing in the film.

GARHWA GIRL GETS AMBEDKAR FOUNDATION AWARD Ambedkar Foundation an autonomous body run by Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment has awarded Shivali Rani, a meritorious student belonging from Scheduled Caste (SC), Garhwa DC Harsh Manjia handed over a citation letter and a cheque of Rs. 20,000 to meritorious student at his chamber. The Director of the film is Aryan Kashyap and junior artist Abhijita Kashyap from Ranchi is also performing in the film.

GOAIR PUTS THE POWER OF 10 IN HANDS OF CUSTOMERS Bhubaneswar: GoAir, the fastest growing airline, today put the power of 10 in the hands of customers. GoAir today launched its mega million sale for its domestic routes with ticket fares starting at Rs 899 onwards (all-inclusive). Total of 1 million (10 lakh) seats are up for grabs for travel from 15th June 2019 to 31st December 2019. The limited-period 3-days' booking window will open on Monday 27th May 2019 and close on Wednesday 29th May 2019. Jethu Wadia, managing director, GoAir, said: "Starting 27th May 2019, customers will have the power of 10. It will give them the freedom to choose their date, time and cost of travel between June and December of 2019. Moreover, the Mega Million Sale with a starting price of Rs 899 onwards comes at a time when everybody has been voicing concerns about rising fares. This initiative is a manifestation of our endeavours to make air travel affordable."

MAN GETS TWO YEARS JAIL FOR HARASSING WIFE A Bokaro court on Saturday awarded two years of rigorous imprisonment to a man for demanding dowry and harassing his wife. District and Session Judge-II of Bokaro Court Jansardhan Singh convicted Praduman Yadav, a resident of Gopalganj, Bihar, and awarded him two years imprisonment and Rs 50 thousand fines, informed Rakesh Kumar Rai, Prosecutor Bokaro Court. The judge held Yadav guilty of subjecting his wife to cruelty under section 498A and 406 of Indian Penal Code.

TWO BOYS DROWN IN WELL IN RANKA Two seven-year-old boys drown in an open well in Larkorija village under Ranka police station on Saturday evening. The discovery of their bodies in the well early on spread a pall of gloom in the village. Police said the boys, Shahanshah Rajia Ansari, son of Nasim Ansari and Van Rajia Ansari, son of Zikriul Haqim Ansari fell into the well while playing near the well. The police recovered the bodies and sent it for post mortem.

FOR FANI-HIT PURI DIST Pinaki to donate 5 yrs' MP salary

PURI: Puri BJD MP Pinaki Misra has decided to donate his MP salary for the next five years to the Fani-ravaged Puri district. He would contribute his entire MP salary and daily allowance to the Chief Minister's Relief Fund on a microblogging site Twitter after the poll results. "In view of the awful cyclone/fani tragedy and the misery of people of Puri I have decided to give my entire MP salary and daily allowance to the Chief Minister's Relief Fund (CMRF). He informed his decision

PNS

Will probe schemes launched by Naidu: Jagan

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister-designate Jagan Mohan Reddy on Sunday said he would order a probe into the alleged financial irregularities in the construction of the new State Capital Amaravati, the Polavaram project and other schemes launched by former Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu.

Set to take oath as the Chief Minister on May 30, Jagan said a white paper in this regard would be released after reviewing the works of each department in the State.

He was in the national Capital to call on Prime Minister Narendra Modi and BJP president Amit Shah to discuss the issue of special category status and financial help to ₹2.58 lakh crore to debt-ridden State.

Asked if his Government would probe the alleged irregularities in the construction of the new State Capital and other

schemes launched by the previous government, Reddy said, "It is a Catch 22 situation. We have to look into the scams... These are not ordinary scams. They are going to be sensational scams."

Accusing Naidu of misleading people about the place where the new Capital would come up in order to buy himself land at lower rates, Jagan said, "This is an inside story. This is something like insider trading. He (Naidu) has bought vast expanses of benami land. This scam does not stop there. He forced people to sell under land pooling and exempted his own benami land," Reddy said, adding that he had nothing personal against Naidu.

On the multi-purpose Polavaram project on the Godavari river, he said, "We will probe if there was any scam in the implementation of the project. This project has to be completed as per the timeline and there is no other option." The state did not have the



YSR Congress Party president and Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister-designate YS Jaganmohan Reddy is greeted by his supporters on his arrival at Andhra Bhawan in New Delhi on Sunday

mandate to complete the project but there was a necessity to finish the work, he added. "If there is a need to involve

the Central Government to call for reverse tenders (for the Polavaram project), that will also be done. We do not mind.

All I want is that the Polavaram project should be completed in a time-bound manner," Reddy said.

He was in the national Capital to call on PM Narendra Modi to discuss the issue of Special Status and financial help to the debt-ridden State

Since the Centre declared it as a national project in 2014, an amount of ₹11,210 crore has been spent on the Polavaram project. The Centre has reimbursed ₹6,727 crore to the State Government, according to the official data.

The project aims to irrigate 2.91 lakh hectares, generate 960 MW of power, and fulfil the water needs of industries and 540 villages in Andhra Pradesh.

He further said his priority would be implementing his party's poll promise of "nine large-scale welfare programmes".

minister, I will chalk out a plan of action," Jagan told reporters here.

Asserting that the YSRCP-led Government would be "transparent and corruption-free", Reddy said, "We will not only clean the system and show how it is cleaned, but we will also show how to stop scams." "We will bring in reverse tendering. If scams are found in a project, we will identify and cancel that work and increase the pre-qualification criteria so that more number of people can participate. We will give projects to those who quote less. Everything will be transparent. We will monitor all projects," he added.

The YSRCP chief said his Government will be "revolutionary" and will set an example in the country. "Within six months or a year, I will make sure that this Government will stand as an exemplary one in the country. I will ensure that there is no

corruption and clean up the entire system," he added.

Asked about the 32 cases lodged against him, Reddy claimed that those were filed by the Telugu Desam Party (TDP) and the Congress, adding that the huge verdict in the Assembly polls in favour of his party was a clear indication that the cases were false.

"The cases were filed after my father's (former chief minister, late YS Rajasekhara Reddy) death and after I left the Congress. The petitioners in the cases are none other than the TDP and the Congress," he said, adding that everyone in Andhra Pradesh knew about it and that's why people had given this verdict. Reddy's party has won 151 of the 175 Assembly and 22 of the 25 Lok Sabha seats in Andhra Pradesh, the elections for which were held on April 11. Reddy was unanimously elected as the leader of the YSRCP Legislature Party on Saturday.

Alert after 15 ISIS ultras set off for Kerala from Lanka

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Security agencies have issued an alert warning a boat carrying 15 ISIS terrorists had set off from Sri Lanka to Lakshadweep Islands.

Following the alert, the stakeholder agencies for coastal security like Navy, Coast Guard and Coastal police have beefed up the level of surveillance off Kerala and Lakshadweep coasts, sources said.

The Navy and Coast Guard are maintaining vigil. Ships and aircraft have been engaged to ensure high level of coastal surveillance, the sources said.

This besides, the coastal police has also upped its vigil in its domain after the alert was passed on Saturday to all the coastal police stations and coastal district police chiefs. The coastal police has also been asked to be alert in case suspicious vessels are sighted in their areas.

The security agencies issued the alert following inputs from Sri Lankan agencies which were shared on Thursday. The South Indian States



have a considerable presence of Islamic State radicals and sympathizers if the number of cases registered against the outfit by the NIA are any indication. The ISIS is suspected to have penetrated a number of so called mainstream Muslim outfits. NIA investigation in ISIS module of Kerala had revealed that IS operatives had planned attacks in Kerala.

Lack of cross-equatorial flow hinders progress of monsoon

New Delhi: Unfavourable cross-equatorial flow over the Arabian Sea that aids in the progress of the monsoon is one of the reasons for its delay, the national weather agency said on Sunday.

Monsoon reached the Andaman and Nicobar Islands on May 18. But it is yet to cover the entire region, the India Meteorological Department said. Conditions are likely to become favourable for the movement of the southwest monsoon into some more parts of south Bay of Bengal, Andaman Islands and north Andaman Sea during Wednesday-Thursday, the IMD said.

It is also expected to make an onset over Kerala on June 6, five days after its normal onset date, it had said. The weather department said the monsoon was yet to get traction from the Arabian Sea.

"The slow pace is because of the lack of cross-equatorial flow in the Arabian Sea," Mritunjay Mohapatra, the additional director general of the IMD, said.

Mohapatra attributed the sluggish pace to the unfavourable Madden-Julian oscillation (MJO) and anticyclonic circulation over the south Indian Ocean that aids

the progress on monsoon.

The MJO can be defined as an eastward moving 'pulse' of clouds, rainfall, winds and pressure near the equator that typically recurs every 30-60 days. It is a traversing phenomenon and is prominent over the Indian Ocean.

In its bulletin, the IMD said 'fairly widespread to widespread rainfall' activity with isolated heavy fall were very likely to occur over Assam and Meghalaya and sub-Himalayan West Bengal, Sikkim on Wednesday and Thursday.

Scattered to fairly-widespread rainfall activity with isolated heavy falls are very likely to occur over southern Karnataka from May 26-28 and over Tamil Nadu on Tuesday-Wednesday, it said.

On the other hand, heatwave conditions continue in central Indian and parts of Andhra Pradesh and Telangana, east UP, Chhattisgarh, east UP, Jharkhand and Odisha during the next four-five days. PTI

Assam Rifles battalion to be deployed in J&K as NDRF

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Assam Rifles, a central paramilitary force that guards India's border with Myanmar, will soon have presence in Jammu & Kashmir after the Centre decided to place one of its battalion (1,000 personnel) into the National Disaster Response Force (NDRF).

The National Disaster Response Force (NDRF) will have four new battalions that will be based in Jammu & Kashmir, Himachal Pradesh, Uttarakhand and the National Capital Region. The new battalions of the NDRF will be drawn from the Assam Rifles (located in J&K), the Indo-Tibetan Border Police (Himachal Pradesh and Uttarakhand) and the Border Security Force (Delhi-NCR region), officials said.

The Assam Rifles draws its strength of officers from the Army and functions under administrative command of the Defence Ministry and the operational command of the Union Home Ministry. Established in 1835 as a



graphical area of the country, the government had said. The NDRF has 12 operational battalions at present. It is a specialised force that was raised in 2006 for specific tasks of relief and rescue during natural and man-made disasters. The operational battalions are located in Assam, West Bengal, Odisha, Tamil Nadu, Maharashtra, Gujarat, Punjab, NCR (Ghaziabad), Bihar, Arunachal Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh and Andhra Pradesh.

43% newly-elected MPs have criminal record: ADR

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Nearly half of the newly-elected Lok Sabha members have criminal charges against them, a 26 per cent increase as compared to 2014. According to the ADR, 162 Democratic Reforms, of the 539 winning candidates analysed by the ADR, as many as 233 MPs or 43 per cent have criminal charges. With ₹660.19 crore assets, Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister's son, Nakul Nath is the richest MP in the 17th Lok Sabha. Nakul Nath, who won the elections from Chhindwara in Madhya Pradesh has declared moveable assets worth ₹6,18,41,72,757. His immovable assets are valued at ₹41,77,74,000, followed by Vasanthakumar H of the Congress, having total assets of ₹417 crore who won the elections from Kanyakumari in Tamil Nadu.

According to ADR, the BJP has 116 MPs or 39 per cent of its winning candidates with criminal cases, followed by 29 MPs (57 per cent) from the Congress, 13 (81 per cent) from the JDU, 10 (43 per cent) from the DMK and nine (41 per cent) from the TMC.

In 2014, 185 Lok Sabha members (34 per cent) had criminal charges and 112 MPs had serious criminal cases against them. In 2009, 162 (nearly 30 per cent) out of the 543 Lok Sabha MPs had criminal charges and 14 per cent had serious criminal charges, it said.

In the new Lok Sabha, nearly 29 per cent of the cases are related to rape, murder, attempt to murder or crime against women, the non-governmental organisation said. "There is an increase of 109 per cent (in 2019) in the number of MPs with declared serious criminal cases since 2009," it said. Eleven winners — five from the BJP, two from the BSP, one each from the Congress, NCP, and the YSR Congress Party, and an Independent — have murder charges against them, the ADR said.



Sadhvi Pragya Singh Thakur, the newly-elected BJP MP from Bhopal, faces terror charges in connection with the 2008 Malegaon blasts. The BJP has faced a lot of criticism for fielding her. Moreover, 29 winners have declared cases related to hate speech, it said.

Dean Kuriaoke from the Congress, who won from the Idukki constituency in Kerala, has 204 criminal cases against him, including culpable homicide, house trespass, robbery, criminal intimidation, it added.

Prez gives assent to Guj Bill for redevelopment of 25-year-old apartments

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

President Ram Nath Kovind has given his assent to a Bill which will facilitate redevelopment of 25-year-old group housing societies in Gujarat with the consent of 75 per cent residents, instead of all, officials said on Sunday.

The Gujarat Ownership Flats (Amendment) Bill 2018 was enacted by the Gujarat Assembly in September 2018 and it was subsequently sent to the President for his assent.

The President has given his assent to the Gujarat Bill recently, a Home Ministry official said.

According to the legislation, apartments which were

built 25 years ago or earlier can be redeveloped with the consent of 75 per cent of the owners.

Till now, redevelopment of any group housing society in the state required consent of all residents, which had led to conflicts in many apartments.

As many apartments in Gujarat are more than 25 years old and require redevelopment, the new legislation will accelerate such activities, the official said.

Last year, the President gave his assent to a similar bill enacted by the Maharashtra Assembly to smoothen the process of reconstructing dilapidated buildings or a complex of buildings in land-starved Mumbai.

Modi calls on Vice-President Venkaiah Naidu

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

A day after being appointed Prime Minister for a second term, Narendra Modi on Sunday called on Vice President M Venkaiah Naidu. Sources described it as a courtesy call.

Modi reached the Vice-President's house here to meet Naidu on Sunday morning. "Shri Narendra Bhaji Modi ji called on me today morning. Greeted him by being elected as the leader of NDA and the Prime Minister. Over breakfast, we discussed many issues including accelerating development and strengthening Parliamentary institutions," Naidu's office tweeted.

Modi too tweeted saying he called on Naidu and posted two photographs.

Tech to help Vit D-rich shiitake mushroom cultivation cheap & fast

ARCHANA JYOTI ■ NEW DELHI

Doctors say that as least 80 per cent of urban population in India suffers from deficiency of Vitamin D - vital for absorption of calcium-naturally available from sunlight. Absence of Vitamin D can cause many critical diseases. Says Dr Sanjay Kumar, Director of the IHBT, "It is well known that mushrooms — Shiitake (Lentinula edodes) being one of the varieties — are the vegetarian source of vitamin D. The technology developed by our scientists aim to enhance production of ergocalciferols (Vitamin D) in Shiitake mushroom which is most preferred variety in India particularly North India."

Talking about the key features of the agri-technology, he said that duration of captive cultivation has been cut down

to two months from conventional eight-nine months and yield is also high ie .5-6 kg fruiting body per 1 kg of saw-



dust substrate. "Capsule of 500 mg Shiitake powder meets 50 per cent recommended dietary allowances (RDA) of Vitamin D," Kumar explained. The development of the technology is part of the Government's Nutraceutical



Mission launched with an aim to ensure nutritional security, enhance farmers' income and provide employment in the



country. Rakshak Kumar, scientist and assistant professor at the IHBT added that the mushroom has the attributes of great crops in the coming years. The global demand for Shiitake mushroom is expected to reach approximately 4500 tonnes by 2025 with an estimated market of \$35.4 billion and the international demand for vitamin D is estimated to reach USD 140 million by 2025 growing annually at 1.2 per cent.

In fact, the technology developed by the IHBT is already catching the attention of the entrepreneurs. Innotech AgroPustikam Pvt Ltd, Govatki Biotech Park, Assam, Pravin Masalewale, Hadapsar Industrial Estate, Hadapsar, Pune, Maharashtra and Ray's Tech Hamirpur, Himachal Pradesh have signed the pact with the IHBT for transfer of technology while talks are on with two more stakeholders, said Rakshak Kumar. From general pain in bones and irritability, the deficiency of Vitamin D can cause severe diseases like osteoporosis. It reduces the immunity of the body to fight infections and makes the body vulnerable for several killer diseases such as cancer, brain disorders and heart problems, as per the doctors. A survey by the Associated Chambers of Commerce and Industry of India (ASSOCHAM), a trade lobby, conducted between October 2017 and March 2018, found that over half of the population in Delhi, one of the worst smog affected cities, is suffering from Vitamin D deficiency.

ISIS BOAT SETS OFF FROM LANKA Kerala, Lakshadweep coasts on high alert

Thiruvananthapuram: The Navy, Coast Guard and Coastal police are maintaining a high level of surveillance off Kerala and Lakshadweep coasts following intelligence reports that a boat carrying 15 Islamic State terrorists had set off from Sri Lanka to Lakshadweep islands.



Representational image

The Navy and Coast Guard are maintaining vigil. Ships and aircraft have been engaged to ensure high level of coastal surveillance. Naval sources told PTI on Sunday. Coastal police are also continuing their vigil.

The coastal police department said it was on alert since May 23, the day the alert came from Sri Lanka. After the serial bombings in Sri Lanka, Kerala was on high alert, especially after NIA investigations revealed that IS operatives had planned attacks in the State.

Intelligence agencies believe that a considerable number of Keralites are still with the ISIS, which was recently wiped out from Iraq and Syria. Sri Lanka witnessed a deadly terror attack on Apr 21 when eight blasts rocked the island nation, claiming over 250 lives.

Balakot attack was to warn terrorists: Gen Rawat

Ezhimala: Chief of Army Staff General Bipin Rawat has said the Balakot attack in February was to ensure that terrorists being trained across the border do not survive to carry out action against India.

Coordinated efforts are being made by various Government agencies to tackle cross-border terrorism, he said. "Through the coordinated efforts of various Government agencies, now the NIA has stepped in, the Enforcement Directorate has stepped in and all are trying to ensure financing and funds available to terrorists are cut off," he said.

He also said the situation there has been brought under control. "We have been able to ensure that the insurgency has been brought under control. Of course in the Kashmir Valley, we have been witnessing ups and downs of insur-



gencies.

"That's because they got support from our western neighbour. At the same time many (people) are misguided due to a misinformation campaign spread by terrorists. But we have brought the situation under control," he said. The Chief of Army staff was interacting with the media here yesterday after reviewing the passing-out parade of 264 trainees, comprising midshipmen and cadets of the Indian Navy, Indian Coast Guard and 10 international cadets.

THE COUNTRY HAS BEEN FACING TERRORISM SINCE INDEPENDENCE AND THAT SECURITY FORCES AND ALL AGENCIES SUPPORTING THEM HAVE MET THESE CHALLENGES HEAD ON —General Bipin Rawat

comment of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Rawat said some types of radar cannot see through clouds because of the manner in which it operates. There are various kinds of radars working with different technologies. Some have the capacity to see through, some don't have the capacity to see through. Some kinds of radar cannot see through clouds because of the manner in which it is operating. Sometimes we can, sometimes we can't," Rawat said.

In a television interview aired recently, Modi had said he used his 'raw wisdom' to dispel doubts of defence experts, who wanted the air strike to be deferred due to bad weather. "The weather was not good on the day of air strike. There was a thought that crept in the minds of the experts that the day of strike should be changed. However, I suggested that the clouds could actually help our planes escape the radars," Modi had said while talking about the cross-border strike on terror camps in response to

the Pulwama attack that claimed the lives of 40 CRPF personnel. The Prime Minister's comment drew widespread ridicule and condemnation from various quarters, including a large number of memes on the social media. The cadets who passed out Saturday marked the culmination of their training at the Indian Naval Academy (INA) here. The passing-out parade was reviewed by General Rawat and meritorious midshipmen and cadets were awarded medals after the ceremonial review. The commanding Vice Admiral R B Pandit and Director of the Indian Institute of Science, Bengaluru, Anurag Kumar, were in attendance at the parade. The parade also saw 15 female cadets marching shoulder to shoulder with their male counterparts to join the ranks of the Indian Navy, a release issued by the Academy said. There were 10 trainees from various friendly nations, including two each from Maldives, Myanmar and Seychelles, one from Tanzania and three from Sri Lanka. **PTI**

Sons, daughters of leaders shine in LS polls in TN

Chennai: Amid a raging nationwide debate over dynastic politics, five kin of noted politicians in Tamil Nadu emerged victorious in the recently concluded Lok Sabha polls. What makes their victories more noteworthy is that many sons of politicians in the North and one in Karnataka bit the dust, chief among them being former Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi's son and Congress President Rahul Gandhi, who lost from the party's bastion of Amethi.

Raveendranath Kumar, son of former Union Minister O Panneerselvam, who won from Theni, defeating senior Congress leader EVKS Elangovan. Other prominent winners were Karti Chidambaram, son of former Finance Minister P Chidambaram, who triumphed at Sivaganga and former Union Minister Dayanidhi Maran, son of the late Murali Manjunath. Dayanidhi Maran won from Central Chennai segment. No less noteworthy was the victory of Kanimozhi, daughter of late DMK chief M Karunanidhi, from Tuticorin warding off the challenge from BJP Tamil Nadu unit President Tamilaisi Sundarajan.

Lawyer, assistant held in murder case sent to CBI custody

Pune: A court here on Sunday remanded two men, including a lawyer, in CBI custody till June 1 in the rationalist Narendra Dabholkar murder case. Advocate Sanjeev Punalekar, who had represented some of the accused in the same case, had asked one of the alleged shooters to destroy the weapons, while Vikram Bhawe had helped them in reconnaissance before the crime, the CBI said. Punalekar and Bhawe were arrested in Mumbai on Saturday. Bhawe, a member of the right wing outfit Sanatan Sanstha, was earlier convicted in the case related to a low-intensity blast at Gadkari Rangyatan auditorium Thane. He worked as Punalekar's assistant in his office, the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) said. The duo was produced before additional sessions judge S N Sonawane amid tight secur-

Dabholkar in custody

September 2017) were linked. On July 23, 2018, Kalaskar dismantled country-made pistols by taking out their barrels and sliders, and threw them into the Thane creek while on the way to Nalasarpa from Pune, the prosecutor said, adding the dismantled pistols were yet to be recovered. Advocate Virendra Ichalkaranjikar, the accused's lawyer, said the CBI has arrested Punalekar on the basis of Kalaskar's statement to the Karnataka Police in October 2018, which Kalaskar had later retracted. The CBI arresting Punalekar on the basis of that statement after seven months was "illogical," he said. In February 2019, the CBI annexed a copy of this statement when it filed a charge-sheet against Andure and Kalaskar, but Punalekar was not probed, and "now all of a sudden they are stating that his role was revealed during the investigation," he said. **PTI**

Normalcy returns to Kashmir after restrictions withdrawn

Srinagar: Life returned to normal in Kashmir on Sunday after two days of restrictions and shutdown in the wake of the killing of Zakir Musa — the so-called head of an Al-Qaeda affiliate in the valley — in an encounter with security forces in Pulwama district, officials said. They said there were no restrictions in place in any part of the valley on Sunday. "Normally has returned to the valley as there is no strike today and no restrictions have been imposed anywhere," an official said. "Officials said shops, fuel stations and other business establishments re-opened this morning while public transport also operated normally. The weekly flea market on the TRC Chowk-Batamooli axis through the Lal Chowk city centre was also open, they said. Musa, the so-called head of the Ansar Ghazwat-ul-Hind, was killed in an encounter with

Low-intensity quake hits WB's Bankura district

Kolkata: A low-intensity earthquake, measuring 4.8 on the Richter Scale, shook West Bengal's Bankura district and its nearby areas on Sunday, the Met department said here. A tweet by the India Meteorological Department said the quake hit Bankura on 10.39 am. Official sources in Jharkhand maintained that tremors were also felt in the Santhal Pargana region of the neighbouring state, mainly in Dumka, Rajmahal and Deoghar districts. There was no report of any casualty or damage to property so far from anywhere, according to reports. The epicentre of the 10.39 quake in Bankura was 10 km below the surface of Earth at latitude 23.3 degrees north and longitude 86.9 degrees east. **PTI**



People pay their last respect to the mortal remains of Indian climber Kuntal Karar during his funeral at his residence in Howrah on Sunday

BJP supporter killed in Tripura

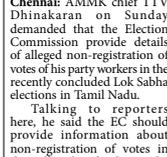
Agartala: A supporter of the ruling BJP was killed in Tripura's West Tripura district, police said on Sunday. The BJP alleged that the CPI(M) had a hand in the death of its supporter, but the communist party denied the allegation. A BJP karyakarta was murdered at Bankiya Chowmuhani area on Saturday night. We have report that there is involvement of CPI(M). There is also silent Congress support from behind," BJP state spokesperson Nabendu Bhattacharya told reporters. Police said Shibui Das was found severely injured at Bankiya Chowmuhani area under mysterious circumstances and he died on way to a local police station. A case has been registered

Surat fire: 2 more persons arrested

Surat: Two persons who were on the run in connection with the devastating fire in a coaching class in Surat which killed 22 students were on Sunday arrested, police said. They were identified as Harshul Vekhariya and Jignesh Paghda, and their arrest came a day after coaching class owner Bhargav Butani was held, an official said. Twenty-two students, including 18 girls, of an art and craft coaching institute died in a massive blaze in the four-storied Takshashila Arcade in Sarthana area of Surat on Friday. "Vekhariya is the builder while Paghda used to handle the overall management of Takshashila Arcade. Both were arrested today. We have also got two-day remand of Butani," Surat Police Commissioner Satish Sharma said. **PTI**

TTV urges EC to provide info on non-registration of party votes

Chennai: AMMK chief TTV Dhinakaran on Sunday demanded that the Election Commission provide details of alleged non-registration of votes of his party workers in the recently concluded Lok Sabha elections in Tamil Nadu. Talking to reporters here, he said the EC should provide information about non-registration of votes in the polling booths during the April 18 elections. He also termed as 'strange' non-registration of votes for his party. "How can it be possible? Even if a booth has only about four or five party cadres, what happened to their votes?" he asked. "It is strange that there is non-registration of votes. I have received information from party functionaries that there was zero registration of votes to



our party," he claimed. It was EC's responsibility to reveal whether the votes of his party were registered or not, he said and clarified that he was not targeting anyone on the issue. Asked whether he would take legal action on the matter, the Amma Makkal Munnetra Kazhagam (AMMK) leader said he cannot do so due to lack of evidence to support his claim. **PTI**

Expose elements bent upon creating disturbance in J&K: DGP

Jammu: Jammu & Kashmir Director General of Police Dilbag Singh on Sunday asked his force to remain alert and expose the elements who want to create disturbance in the State. He said the achievements of the security forces including the state police against militancy particularly in neutralising terrorists like Zakir Musa has been appreciated by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Union Home Minister Rajnath Singh and state Governor Satya Pal Malik. Musa, the so-called head of the Ansar Ghazwat-ul-Hind, was killed in an encounter with security forces at Dadsara village of Tral in the south Kashmir's Pulwama district on Friday.



"You need to expose the elements who will try to create any disturbance... The police being local has a greater responsibility in foiling any attempt of reviving militancy in the areas (declared militancy free in Jammu region)," Singh told policemen

during his visit to Gool in Ramban and Mahore and Reasi in Jammu region. "The Ramban and Reasi districts were declared militancy free about a decade ago but recently two Lashker-e-Toiba (LeT) militants were arrested in Gool as army

claimed to have scuttled an attempt by the outfit to revive militancy in the region. The DGP appreciated the achievements of the police in the districts in tackling militancy and other crimes and said that the state police was capable and competent of handling any kind of contingency. Singh, who also visited 58 Rashtriya Rifles and 15 sector headquarters of the army and interacted with the officers there, said police and other security agencies are facing different challenges. "Police along with security forces including army, CRPF, SSB, ITBP and BSF is doing an excellent job in tackling militancy and other challenges," he said.

The state police would continue its good work for the service of the people and by their increasing cooperation, it will succeed in restoring peace in the state, he added. The DGP also appreciated the efforts of the police in smooth and peaceful conduct of panchayat, local body and the recently held parliamentary elections in the state. Singh said necessary formalities for effecting the second phase of promotions in the state police force have been started and that pre-promotion courses have begun at various places. "Police headquarters is well aware of some difficulties of the police personnel and measures will be taken to redress these issues," he said. **PTI**

Post Surat tragedy, experts to conduct Vadodra fire audit, says Civic chief

Vadodra: Civic and police authorities in Vadodra in Gujarat have sealed and snapped electricity connections of 192 coaching classes in fire safety compliance action initiated against the backdrop of the devastating blaze on Friday in Surat which killed 22 students. Vadodra Municipal Corporation Commissioner Ajay Bhadoo Sunday said the civic body planned to carry out the first ever fire audit in the city for which experts from the Delhi-based Institution of Fire Engineers will be brought in. "Experts from the Institution of Fire Engineers are expected in Vadodra in the

next couple of days to carry out the audit," Bhadoo said, adding that it may be the first of its kind exercise anywhere in the state and possibly in the country. "The VMC Fire Brigade has sealed 192 coaching classes and their power supply halted over the last two days," he informed. "It is strange that there is non-registration of votes. I have received information from party functionaries that there was zero registration of votes to

said apart from sealing establishments that were not complying with fire safety norms, the process of issuing notices to several coaching classes had also begun. Twenty-two students, including 18 girls, of an art and craft coaching institute died in a devastating fire that engulfed the four-storied Takshashila Arcade in Sarthana area of Surat on Friday. Preliminary probe revealed that use of highly inflammable materials and tyres, which doubled up as chairs in the coaching class, caused the fire to spread rapidly, Gujarat Chief Secretary J N Singh said on Sunday. **PTI**

Rahul's reckoning

Congress chief must mean his 'ordinary worker' aspiration, break the old coterie and become a building block himself



“It is better to be patient and get what you desire in the right time, than have high office thrust upon you when you are not ready.” One doesn't know if King George VI indeed uttered the exact words as shown in the hit show, *The Crown*, but they do aptly summarise the situation that a precariously perched Congress president Rahul Gandhi finds himself in after his career-best failure as captain of the ship. With one crucial difference. He did try sincerely to make it his desire, overcoming his limitations and the tag of dynastic entitlement. Granted he may not have chosen his legacy but was born to it. Granted he was the reluctant prince who was given the trusteeship of the party as a family conglomerate than feeling the grand old party ground up as the nation's aspiration. Granted, he wasn't comfortable with the existing durbar style engineering of the party which even denied him space to take his own decisions. Still, he tried. But surrounded by obsequious compliance than constructive criticism, he lost reality. For all his honest efforts, neither he, nor his sister could live down the tag of elitist arrogance set by the overarching image of his mother Sonia Gandhi and her trusted lieutenant. So much so that he himself became presumptuous, one that cost him his home seat of Amethi. As the coterie strengthened the hand-me-down logic, a national assumption gained ground that Gandhi and sister Priyanka were immature and incapable, simply because they seemed to be toeing the line rather than effecting real change. And therein lies the Congress conundrum. Gandhi is a victim of the popular perception outside and the intrinsig party structure inside. Somewhere, he feels let down inside more. That is why he insisted he would resign and begin like an ordinary worker. Question is whether the hawks, fossilised over time with stale strategies, can afford to let go of their only person who can seemingly stir things up a bit yet while appearing to be in continuity with the old order? The Congress old guard must learn that they won't even make it to a BJP-style *margdarshak mandal* as the party undergoes an existential threat and must give way to an assertive leadership that is bubbling under. If Rahul himself wants to take the back seat, they should first.

An epic can be written about Congress' electoral bungling. Foremost among them being the refusal to shun old style optics, pretending to be commoners for three months, commiserating with the masses and ignoring that Indian polity now trusts only performance over intent. The revival was more cosmetic than structural. Even Prime Minister Modi and deputy Amit Shah went into a research lab huddle as to why the BJP slipped in the three heartland States in the Assembly elections and changed every leader on the ground to infuse new energy. The Congress' Lok Sabha rout in Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh and Chhattisgarh was solely the price of its presumptive logic compared to the redress urgency of the BJP. The party further failed to begin Nyay experiments on the ground in the States it had power, something which would have appealed to the troubled farmer and the poor instead of the abstraction called Rafele that needlessly drew attention to its own suspicious Bofors deal. It did not acknowledge the grassroots tenacity of its federal partners. Incidentally, its nemesis — Mamata Banerjee, Jagannathan Reddy, Himanta Biswa Sarma — were Congressmen once. Rahul, therefore, allowed the growth of new talent at the State level. But when it came to chief ministership in Rajasthan and MP the old hawks came to roost at Sonia's insistence, shattering the hard work of Sachin Pilot and Jyotiraditya Scindia. Yet an Amarinder Singh's retention ability should have taught the Congress an essential lesson of empowering State level leaders and disseminating the message of governance, considering national-level muscular leadership of the Modi kind is not its strength. Rahul's good-soul image won't wash unless he is seen as scything through the deadwood with a firm hand. And is willing to build a competent, even if shared, leadership. If he wants any kind of relevance beyond being seen as the charioter who took the party on the road to perdition, he should work the soil for the next five years and allow an alternative matrix to develop that is not dependent on traditional ways of deal-making. That style has ended with Modi 2.0's new rich-poor binaries. He has to get down and dirty in his own party first.

What's next for Britain?

Britannia once ruled the waves and much of the world, today British polity is in a shambles



When Theresa May exits 10 Downing Street soon most likely having failed to deliver Brexit, it would mean that Queen Elizabeth II would have seen off 14 Prime Ministers. One cannot forget that two of those leaders — Margaret Thatcher and Tony Blair — served for over a decade. And Britons are not placing much hope on the choice of leaders that will replace her in the Conservative Party. In such a situation, one would have supposed the Opposition to rise to the challenge but the Labour party is also riddled with strife. While voters in the prosperous south-east of England are still opposed to leaving the European Union and are demanding another referendum, it is almost certain that parties advocating leaving the European Union will do extremely well in, ironically, elections to the European Parliament. Where Great Britain goes from here is anyone's guess, but it is not going to be a land of milk and honey. At least, England stands a good chance in the cricket World Cup.

Other democracies in the world must learn from Britain that direct democracy, where the electorate is asked to take a decision on a major economic and political issue, is not advisable. David Cameron, the former Prime Minister who called the referendum, will go down in history as being the man who threw the country into turmoil and promptly ran away from the mess he had created. Much has been written about the Brexit campaign on both sides and now movies are being made as well to unequivocally state how easily the 'leave' campaign hijacked certain issues and how false narratives can confuse and terrify voters. There is a reason we elect politicians into Parliaments. They have to take the tough decisions. Sure, they should listen to the worries of their constituents but one expects them to be better informed and educated than the average voter and not let emotive issues change the way they vote. The Brexit referendum was a disaster at many levels but it was at its core an abdication of responsibility by politicians. And as the rest of the world is learning that promising your voters that they could eat their cake and have it, too, when those promises depend on someone else acquiescing, is nothing better than lying. The British negotiations to leave the European Union have been torturous for the rest of the world to watch, let alone for British citizens. Britain has produced some remarkable leaders over the years, it might be time for some to emerge again.

opinion Culture wars

India has emphatically spoken its voice. People have rejected self-appointed guardians of the 'Idea of India' and have their own vision of a 'New India'



KUSHAN MITRA

The most astounding thing about the 17th Lok Sabha election has not just been the magnitude of the Bharatiya Janata party's (BJP) victory with Narendra Modi at the helm and party chief Amit Shah as his able general. In a way, they have become a modern-day Octavian and Agrippa combination. But more than the 300 seats, it was the scale of the vote-share that was truly amazing. The BJP and its allies got close to half of the total votes polled. Just think about it for a few minutes — one in every two Indians voted for Narendra Modi. This can only mean that the vote for the National Democratic Alliance (NDA) was an all-inclusive one, something that those who are screaming from the rooftops about this being a majoritarian Government, should take note of.

It is almost a 10 per cent climb in the vote share for the alliance since the 2014 polls. And this despite some economic pressures on the country, the aftermath of demonetisation, a lack of jobs, agrarian crisis and what not. In the modern democratic era of India following the Emergency, only the vote garnered by Rajiv Gandhi in 1984 in the aftermath of his mother's assassination exceeds this. Indeed, when one looks at other major democracies, only Margaret Thatcher in the United Kingdom in 1983 in the aftermath of the Falklands war and Ronald Reagan in 1984, thanks to the early 1980s economic boom, have seen sharp rises in popularity among voters. This election has changed so many perceptions of Indian politics — in the so-called 'cow belt' of northern Indian States, Narendra Modi's popularity has smashed caste-based politics for good. Of course, many, many tomes, theories and thesis will be written about the 2019 elections that will slice and dice the data to show how India has changed and many of them will be fun to read.

But when Narendra Modi swept into power in 2014, a whole host of professional agitators came out of the woodwork vowing to resist. These professional malcontents — from Bollywood celebrities to some journalists — swarmed the ranks. They went around with begging bowls claiming to be bulwarks against the BJP's 'Hindu nationalism' and stood firmly against Modi and Shah. Some invented stories of how they were attacked for carrying leather bags and, shamefully, some national newspapers pandered to those myths. And there are the very people, who in their arrogance and immense elitism, blame the voters for the victory of the BJP and its perceived nationalism.

In the last few days, some journalists and failed comedians alike have completely lost the plot on social media, even claiming that they don't recognise India "anymore."



One can argue that they never realised that India was changing right around them — they wanted welfare programmes for the poor blind to the fact that those very welfare programmes were changing the dynamics of the country. They saw themselves as the arbiters of Indian culture without realising how India was changing, they made fun of Narendra Modi supporters calling them 'bhakts', they demeaned and laughed at the 'chokidar' epithet and it all seemed so funny on social media memes. They claimed they wanted to end the 'Hindutva' brigade and went out of their way to demean the nation in the foreign media. Of course, one cannot ignore that some elements of the BJP's core support base have done severely reprehensible things and Modi himself was often too slow to condemn such incidents. There is also little doubt that the BJP and Narendra Modi have been almost blatantly anti-intellectual at a level and have listened to bad advice, demonetisation being the single biggest example of this. But the hypocrisy of

“ AN EYE HAS TO BE KEPT OVER BAD AND STUPID THINGS THAT THE GOVERNMENT WILL WANT TO DO. THE MEDIA AND THE CITIZENS MUST ALWAYS BE READY TO PROTEST, BUT BEING PROFESSIONALLY AND PERPETUALLY OUTRAGED JUST BECAUSE THE BJP IS IN POWER, WILL NOT CUT IT ANYMORE ”

these malcontents was remarkable, their selective blindness and amnesia was comical and what one is flabbergasted that these people did not realise that this double-standard chipped away at their credibility every passing day among the public at large, but definitely pleased the literature festival crowd. These people have lost the culture wars, they have to accept that India has changed. The idea that there has to be a resistance like 'AntiFA' in the US is almost laughable. And the constant and unending use of the term 'fascists' is getting tiresome and only harming the need for an opposition. This loud minority must not again be allowed to derail India, their relevance comes from this, their pockets are lined, thanks to this. Sure, there needs to be an eye kept over the bad and stupid things that the Government will want to do. The media and the citizens of the country must always be ready to protest, but being professionally and perpetually outraged just because the BJP is in power will not cut it anymore. Those people will find that even their echo

chamber is now in interstellar space. They have lost the culture wars, they painted this election as a battle for India's soul but India's soul has clearly moved on. That said, the BJP and the Prime Minister should be acutely aware of the fact that even if they might have won the battle for India's soul, a battle which can easily be framed as a cultural victory, they must not only be inclusive but also try to integrate some of those who have found it difficult to believe in them. Not everybody viscerally opposed to the BJP can be persuaded to change; but others should give Modi a chance. Narendra Modi did squander a lot of his political capital after his 2014 victory. That plainly ridiculous suit which he wore when former US President Barack Obama came to town was the cherry on top. He should use this political capital wisely to unite even some of those who have not been on his side. Winning this war does not mean finishing off the enemy as some on his corner believe he should do. It means integrating them. (The writer is Managing Editor, The Pioneer)

SOUNDBITE

The margins of loss have been very huge, which means something did not work. We will see what needs to be corrected.

Congress leader —Sheila Dikshit

Over Bharat, she (Priyanka Chopra) chose the US. She has worked hard all her life and when she got the biggest film of her life, she dumped it.

Actor —Salman Khan

My message is of gratitude for the enormous contribution that India has been giving to all causes of the United Nations.

UN Secretary-General —Antonio Guterres

I don't believe in selling religious aggression, I believe in a religion that draws light from humanism. Those, who believe in tolerance, let us come together and awaken all.

TMC chief —Mamata Banerjee

Where does he stand now?

Ganapathi Bhat Akola

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

The mandate of 2019

Sir — This refers to the editorial, "Naya Bharat" (May 24). Cometh the hour — a general election — cometh the man — Narendra Modi. There can be no doubt about the fact that the spectacular mandate delivered in favour of the BJP-led NDA alliance is, in reality, proof of India's unshakable faith in the leadership of Prime Minister Modi. Remember, on becoming the Prime Minister in 2014, he had asked India's electorate to give him at least 10 years to put India on a path of progress and prosperity?

Well five years later, India's voters have agreed — resoundingly and unhesitatingly. For now, India must rejoice in its selection of a stable and strong Government, while the ruling party assesses how it may learn from past mistakes to provide better governance in the next five years. The new Government has its work cut out. Having raised the pitch on security, it will have to adroitly handle relations with Pakistan and China. J Akshobhya Mysuru

Testing time for regional leaders

This refers to the editorial, "Naya Bharat" (May 24). One of the tragic stories of the 'Modi wave 2' has revolved around some strong regional chieftains, who were blown off by a gale. Foremost among them is N Chandrababu Naidu of Andhra Pradesh. The Telugu Desam Party was crushed to defeat in the Lok Sabha elections; more humiliatingly, Naidu was dethroned as Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister by YSR Congress party's YS Jaganmohan Reddy. Naidu, whose dream-child Anaravathi needs massive funds to survive the arduous gestational period and see the light of day, must introspect as to how and why he has crumbled under his own weight of ego, arrogance and hyped up expectations. In Uttar Pradesh, Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP) chief Mayawati took a costly gamble of tying up with the Samajwadi Party (SP), its sworn enemy. People could see through Mayawati's ambitious designs and the *raja-gathbandhan* was dethroned. The Datt icon should take a fresh look at her famed social engineering which she orchestrated so beautifully some years ago.

Then there is the maverick Mamata Banerjee, perhaps shell-shocked by the numbing results. The well-oiled machinery of Amit Shah-Narendra Modi ensured the unthinkable. Mamata must be worried because the



Assembly polls are due in two years in West Bengal. An overconfident, aloof and rude Mamata requires to mend ways to remain in the voters' hearts. Next in line is HD Deve Gowda, the former Prime Minister. Gowda bungled badly in selecting a 'safe' seat, Tumkur and had to bear the ignominy of witnessing grandson Nikhil Kumaraswamy lose in the prestigious Mandya constituency. If the Karnataka coalition breaks, then it is a battle for survival for Gowda and sons. Lastly, Delhi's Arvind Kejriwal, the least ambitious of all at the national level.

Where does he stand now? Ganapathi Bhat Akola

Lessons in debate

Sir — This refers to the editorial, "Naya Bharat" (May 24). As the Indian election neared an end, *Time*, the American magazine, dedicated its cover to India's

Prime Minister Narendra Modi, labeling him as the country's "divider to chief". The author of the article, Aatish Taseer, asked if India can endure five more years of the Modi Government. He also said that the Congress has "little

to offer than the dynastic principle" and described Congress chief Rahul Gandhi as "an unteachable mediocrity". People of India have given the answer by granting five more years to Modi and handing him

Send your feedback to: letterstopioneer@gmail.com

Single authority for GST refunds likely by August

For sanctioning and processing GST refunds

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

A single authority for sanctioning and processing GST refunds is in the offing as the Finance Ministry looks to speed up and simplify the process for exporters, an official said.

The current mechanism entails a twin refund sanctioning authority of the central and state tax officers but that could well change by August when the proposed new structure involving a single authority comes in place.

As per the system being worked out by the Revenue Department, the taxpayer will get full refund from his jurisdictional officer once the claim is sanctioned, while at the back-end the Centre and states will apportion the amount to be paid to each other.

Currently, once a taxpayer files refund claim with the jurisdictional authority, say the central tax officer, then he would clear 50 per cent of the claims, and the remaining is cleared by the state tax officers after further scrutiny.

A similar system is followed when a taxpayer approaches the state tax officers for Goods and Services Tax



(GST) refunds. Thus, the time taken to clear the entire refund amount gets longer, leading to liquidity crunch for exporters — an issue that the proposed single mechanism for refund clearing intends to fix.

Under the proposed single authority at times tends to delay the GST refund.

As per the formula for division of GST assesses decided by the GST Council, state tax officials administer and control 90 per cent of the assesses below ₹1.5 crore annual turnover, and the remaining 10 per cent is with the central tax officers.

The Centre and states share control of those assesses with annual turnover of over ₹1.5 crore in 50:50 ratio.

Commenting on the move, AMRG & Associates Partner Rajat Mohan said: "A single window tax refund in a federal, democratic economy would be a massive jump in ease of doing business. Inter government tax adjustments have to be done on month-on-month basis to avert any possibility of temporary revenue deficit to a particular Government."

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FinMin to launch ETF with bank stocks, fin institutions this fiscal

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The Finance Ministry is planning to launch an exchange traded fund (ETF) consisting of stocks of PSU banks and financial institutions this fiscal and will soon appoint an advisor to explore its feasibility, according to an official.

After the resounding success of CPSE ETF and Bharat-22 ETF, the Government is looking at diversifying the ETF basket by including stocks of public sector banks and financial institutions.

"We will be soon appointing an advisor to suggest on launching an ETF with PSU bank scrips. The advisor will also look into the feasibility of including stocks of financial institutions and insurance companies into the basket," the official told PTI.

The plan to launch a bank ETF comes on the back of the Government seeing huge investor demand for two existing ETFs. It has raised ₹32,900 crore through two tranches and an additional fund offer of Bharat-22 ETF, and ₹38,000 crore in five tranches of CPSE ETF in the domestic market.

"We expect balance sheet of PSU banks to strengthen going forward and an ETF would provide risk-averse investors an option to hold

shares of multiple banks through a single financial instrument," the official said.

Currently, there are two state-owned insurance companies — General Insurance Corp of India and New India Assurance Co Ltd — and 19 public sector banks that are listed on exchanges. Besides, financial institution IFCI is also listed on the exchanges.

The Government currently has two exchange-traded funds — CPSE ETF and Bharat-22 ETF — listed on domestic exchanges. ETFs function like a mutual fund scheme and have underlying assets of Government-owned companies.

The Finance Ministry has also started consultations with global investors for launching CPSE-scrip based ETF in overseas market.

The official further said that the Government does not intend to launch in the domestic market any new ETFs comprising stocks of public sector companies since in most of these companies Government holding is near 51 per cent.

Bharat-22 ETF, which was launched in 2017-18, has 16 central public sector enterprises covering six sectors, three public sector banks and three private sector companies where the Government holds minority stake.

Jaypee Infra insolvency: Creditors' meet on May 30 to discuss NBCC bid

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Debt-laden Jaypee Infratech's financial creditors, which include bankers and homebuyers, will meet on May 30 to discuss state-owned NBCC's bid to acquire the realty firm and complete stuck housing projects.

A meeting of Committee of Creditors (CoC) has been called on May 30, sources said. As many as 13 banks and 23,000 homebuyers have voting rights in the committee.

Earlier this month, creditors rejected a bid by Mumbai-based Suraksha Realty through a voting process.

Later, the CoC decided to put on the NBCC's offer even as bankers were opposed to this move citing certain conditions in the resolution plan submitted by the public sector firm.

On the bankers' plea, the National Company Law Appellate Tribunal (NCLAT) had on May 17 annulled voting by homebuyers and lenders on NBCC's bid and allowed renegotiation on the offer by May 31.

At present, bankers and NBCC are negotiating on the latter's bid to acquire Jaypee Infratech.

Sources had earlier said that NBCC was unlikely to dilute certain conditions, including exemption from future tax liability, mentioned



in its bid but the public sector firm was open to negotiating on the offer related to unsold flats.

Lenders have shown reluctance to acquire up to 2,207 unsold flats worth ₹1,756 crore as proposed by NBCC in its revised offer.

In its latest offer, NBCC has proposed infusion of ₹200 crore equity capital, transfer of 950 acres of land worth ₹5,000 crore as well as Yamuna Expressway to banks and completion of flats by July 2023 in order to settle an outstanding claim of ₹23,723 crore of financial creditors.

On this bid, lenders had reservations on certain concessions sought by NBCC and had sought clarifications from the firm.

However, NBCC decided not to dilute the conditions of exemption from future income tax liability as well as from taking consent of development authorities for transfer of busi-

nesses, including land parcels and Yamuna Expressway.

Clarifications from the NBCC were sought in the wake of Jaypee Infratech's Interim Resolution Professional (IRP) Anuj Jain flagging to the lenders that the state-owned firm's bid was conditional and non-binding.

The IRP had written to the CoC that NBCC's revised bid was conditional as the plan would not be binding unless key relief measures such as extinguishing of income tax liability and exemption from seeking consent of YEMA (Yamuna Expressway Industrial Development Authority) for any business transfer, were taken.

In 2017, Jaypee Infratech went into insolvency process after the National Company Law Tribunal (NCLT) admitted an application by an IDBI Bank-led consortium seeking revival of the realty firm.

In the first round of insolvency proceedings conducted last year, the ₹7,350-crore bid of Lakshdeep, part of Suraksha Group, was rejected by lenders.

Later in October 2018, the IRP started the second round of bidding process to revive Jaypee Infratech on the NCLT's direction.

India's coal import up 13% to 21 MT in Q4



PTI ■ NEW DELHI

India's coal import increased by 13.4 per cent to 20.72 million tonnes in April compared to 18.27 million tonnes (MT) in the same last year, according to a report.

Of the total imports during April 2019, non-cooking coal or thermal coal shipments were at 15.08 MT, according to provisional data by junction services. Imports of coking coal, used in iron and steel making, were 3.52 MT in April while metallurgical coke imports during the month were at 0.22 MT.

Mjunction, a joint venture between Tata Steel and SAIL, is a B2B e-commerce company that also publishes research reports on coal and steel verticals.

Coal and coke imports

during 2018-19 increased by 9.66 per cent to 235.35 MT as compared to 214.61 MT imported in FY2017-18, latest junction data showed.

Commenting on the import trend, junction MD and CEO Vinaya Varma said, "The flat trend in non-cooking coal import in April was in line with expectations, as the power plants continued to have sufficient stock of coal."

"This scenario may continue in the current month," he added.

The Centre had earlier urged state-run Coal India to pledge self-sufficiency in production to eliminate import of thermal coal.

The Government set a target of 1 billion tonne of coal production by 2019-20 for the mining major, but is considering relaxing the timeline.

'Don't be too optimistic': Huawei employees fret at US ban

APP ■ BEIJING

While Huawei's founder brushes aside a US ban against his company, the telecom giant's employees have been less sanguine, confessing fears for their future in online chat rooms.

Huawei CEO Ren Zhengfei declared this week the company has a hoard of microchips and the ability to make its own in order to withstand a potentially crippling US ban on American semiconductors owned by Chinese companies.

"If you really want to know what's going on with us, you can visit our Xinsheng Community," Ren told Chinese media, alluding to Huawei's internal forum partially open to viewers outside the company.

But a peek into Xinsheng shows his words have not reassured everyone within the Shenzhen-based company.

"During difficult times, what should we do as individuals?" posted an employee under the handle Xiao Feng on Thursday.

"At home reduce your debts and maintain enough cash," Xiao Feng wrote.

"Make a plan for your financial assets and don't be overly optimistic about your remuneration and income."

This week Google, whose Android operating system powers most of the world's smartphones, said it would cut



ties with Huawei as a result of the ban.

Another critical partner, ARM Holdings — a British designer of semiconductors owned by Japanese group Softbank — said it was complying with the US restrictions.

"On its own Huawei can't resolve this problem, we need to seek support from government policy," one unnamed employee wrote last week, in a post that received dozens of likes and replies.

The employee outlined a plan for China to block off its smartphone market from all American components much in the same way Beijing fostered its internet tech

giant's behind a "Great Firewall" that keeps out Google, Facebook, Twitter and dozens of other foreign companies.

"Our domestic market is big enough, we can use this opportunity to build up domestic suppliers and our ecosystem," the employee wrote.

For his part, Ren advocated the opposite response in his interview with Chinese media. "We should not promote populism; populism is detrimental to the country," he said, noting that his family uses Apple products.

Other employees strategized ways to circumvent the US ban.

One advocated turning to Alibaba's e-commerce platform

Taobao to buy the needed components. Another dangled prospect of setting up dozens of new companies to make purchases from US suppliers.

Ren denounced the US and proposed China ban McDonald's, Coca-Cola and all-American movies and TV shows.

"First time posting under my real name we must do our jobs well, advance and retreat with our company," said an employee named Xu Jin.

The tech ban caps months of US effort to isolate Huawei, whose equipment Washington fears could be used as a Trojan horse by Chinese intelligence services.

Still, last week Trump indicated he was willing to include a fix for Huawei in a trade deal that the two economic giants have struggled to seal and US officials issued a 90-day reprieve on the ban.

In Xinsheng, an employee with the handle "Wang" retorted: "I want to advance and retreat alongside the company, but then my boss told me to pack up and go," followed by two sad-face emoticons.

NTPC Group profit after tax up by 20.3%

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Country's largest power generator — NTPC Ltd. which along with its group companies, has an installed capacity of 51,260 MW, announced its audited annual financial results for FY19 along with the unaudited financial results for Q4 FY19 on 25 May 2019.

The Gross Generation of NTPC Group for FY19 was 305.90 Billion units as against 294.27 Billion units during the previous year. On consolidated basis, in FY19, the Total Income was ₹97,537.34 crore as against ₹81,629.83 crore in Q4 FY18. Profit after Tax for FY19 is ₹11,749.89 crore as compared to ₹10,343.17 crore in the previous year, registering an increase of 13.60%. For Q4 FY19, Profit after Tax is ₹4,350.32 crore as against ₹2,925.59 crore in Q4 FY18.

The Board of Directors of NTPC Ltd. has recommended a final dividend for FY19 25% of paid-up share capital i.e. ₹2.50 per equity share of the face value of ₹10/- each, subject to the approval of shareholders in the Annual General Meeting scheduled to be held in the month of August 2019. The Company had paid an Interim Dividend of 35.80% of paid-up share capital i.e. ₹3.58 per equity share in February 2019.

Q4 FY18, NTPC Coal stations achieved PLF of 76.68% in FY19 as against the National Average PLF of 61.07%.

On Standalone basis, for FY19, the Total Income is ₹92,179.26 crore as against ₹85,207.95 crore during previous year, registering an increase of 8.18%. For Q4 FY19, Total Income is ₹27,545.61 crore as against ₹23,617.83 crore in Q4 FY18. Profit after Tax for FY19 is ₹11,749.89 crore as compared to ₹10,343.17 crore in the previous year, registering an increase of 13.60%. For Q4 FY19, Profit after Tax is ₹4,350.32 crore as against ₹2,925.59 crore in Q4 FY18.

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COAL urges new Govt to ease telecom sector's financial woes, review spectrum prices

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The new Government should take urgent steps to ease the financial burden on the stressed telecom sector, slash overall levies to an ideal 4-5 per cent and review spectrum prices to make it affordable ahead of the crucial 5G rollout, industry body COAI said.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi has led Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) to a landslide victory for a second term in office, while the Congress suffered a serious setback in the Lok Sabha polls.

The new Government, which is set to be formed in the next few days, will present the full Budget for 2019-20, and the mobile operators' association is hoping that some of its long-pending demands will be taken up in the coming months.

Topping its wishlist is cut in levies, as the industry hopes that the current level of 30 per cent levy would be reduced to provide a breather to the stressed sector.

"Charges like Licence Fee, Spectrum Usage Charges and redefinition of Adjusted Gross Revenue (AGR) needs to be looked at," Cellular Operators' Association of India (COAI) Director General Rajan

Mathews told PTI.

Asked what the association considers to be an ideal level, Mathews said globally levies do not exceed 5 per cent and hence 4-5 per cent would be "ideal".

On the issue of debt restructuring, Mathews said telecom operators should be given more time for repayment of spectrum bought in auctions. This, he said, can be done by increasing the moratorium period to four years and payment period to 18 years keeping the Net Present Value unchanged.

The industry also wants the Government to look at making spectrum prices "more affordable."

"If we want 5G to take off, the present pricing will not get you there," Mathews added.

He noted that at the present prices proposed, operators will not be able to afford the radio waves which, in turn, will pose a challenge in rollout of 5G services.

A section of the industry has questioned regulator TRAI's methodology of computing the reserve price, claiming it has resulted in spectrum prices being unreasonably higher than global benchmarks.

Earlier this year, Bharti Airtel Chairman Sunil Mittal too had flagged high reserve prices of 5G spectrum. He had said the Government must price spectrum reasonably and lower various levies to encourage rollout of 5G services in the country at the earliest.

The telecom czar had also warned that the spectrum auction may fail and Airtel might not bid for airwaves if the auctions are held at prices recommended by TRAI.

The Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) has recommended auction of about 8,644 MHz of telecom frequency for 5G services, at an estimated total base price of ₹4.9 lakh crore.

The telecom sector is burdened with staggering debt levels and cut throat competition.

Competition has only intensified since 2016, when Reliance Jio, owned by richest Indian Mukesh Ambani, stormed into the market and offered lifetime free calls and dirt cheap data. Jio's disruptive offerings forced rivals to slash rates, affecting profit margins. Since Jio's launch, rivals have either merged, resorted to acquisitions or folded up.

Ex-servicemen of Assam Rifles to organise rally tomorrow

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Assam Rifles will be organising an Ex-Servicemen rally in Darjeeling district of West Bengal on May 28, 2019. Rally will commence at 8:30 AM at Gymbkhana Club Auditorium, Darjeeling.

The aim of the rally is to assist Assam Rifles Ex-Servicemen & Veer Naris in resolution of their grievances, if any. It also aims at enhancing their awareness with regard to latest policies/regulations as well as job opportunities.

Stalls would be established by various branches of Headquarters Directorate General Assam Rifles like Record Office, Pension Cell (UPAO), Assam Rifles Ex-Servicemen Association & Welfare and Rehabilitation Board Directorate. Civil Administration will also put up stall like Banking Services, Agriculture and Horticulture departments, PAN Card & Aadhaar Card services. Medical camp will also be organised by the Headquarters Directorate General Assam Rifles during the rally for the benefit of the Ex-Servicemen fraternity.

Indians lead top 10 nationalities investing in Dubai's gold sector

PTI ■ DUBAI

Indians lead the top 10 nationalities investing in Dubai's gold sector followed by the citizens of Pakistan, Britain, Saudi Arabia, Switzerland, Oman, Jordan, Belgium, Yemen and Canada, according to a new report.

As many as 4,086 companies operate in the gold sector in Dubai and the number of investors stands at 62,125 including 60,012 businessmen and 2,113 businessmen, the Business Registration and Licensing (BRL) sector in the Department of Economic Development (DED) said in its new report.

The report includes statistics on the number of companies operating in Dubai, the activities of the gold market sector and the distribution of the companies across the emirate.

It aims to familiarise entrepreneurs with the gold sector, and highlight its role in adding value to the economy, a statement from the DED said.

Of the 4,086 companies, 2,498 licences were issued for

"Jewellery and jewels of gold and silver", 1,184 for trade in "Gold and precious metals, 392 for "Goldsmiths and precious jewellery", seven for "Gold foundry and precious metals", and five for "Gold liquidation" activity, it said.

The total gold, jewellery and diamond sales, reached 274 billion dirhams last year, an increase of about three per cent compared to 2017, according to the Dubai Gold and Jewellery Group.

The UAE's trade in gold and precious stones has also grown significantly in recent years and its BRL sector in this sector is estimated at about 400 billion dirhams annually, while the value of exports amounted to 75.9 billion dirhams, and the value of re-exports to 26 billion dirhams, according to the Federal Customs Authority.

The gold and jewellery sector provide residents of Dubai with gold imports from about 30 countries. This also meets the demand of tourists who visit Dubai.

TRAI SPECTRUM PRICES HIGH DUE TO INCONSISTENCY IN PRINCIPLES: STUDY

New Delhi: The spectrum price recommended by regulator Trai is high due to inconsistency in the principle applied by the watchdog for calculating base rates, a joint study by ICRIER and Broadband India Forum said.

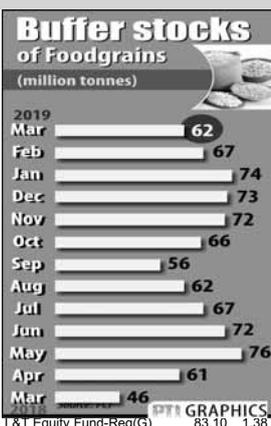
It said that the Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (Trai) has placed immense value on the bid price of previous auctions and this method does not always account for changing market conditions or operator circumstances even when the gap between two subsequent auctions is not significant.

PTI



The three-day expo was a congregation of innovators & imaginers, academia, makers & city administrators, entrepreneurs, business delegates, multinationals, etc that came to strike business deals, expand their networks, and explore new technologies and solutions in the fields of smart cities, water management, solar, transport and infrastructure. With more than 400 exhibitors, the expo saw record 15000+ visitors and strong sales across all disciplines.

Scheme	NAV	1Yr%	Fund(G)				
SBI Banking & Financial Services Fund-Reg(G)	19.09	21.39	DHFL Pramerica Large Cap Fund-2-Reg(G)	12.82	8.19	Franklin India Technology Fund(G)	157.24 4.83
HDFC Top 100 Fund(G)	510.21	16.52	DSP Focus Fund-Reg(G)	23.71	8.07	UTI Equity Fund-Reg(G)	141.61 4.80
ICICI Pru Banking & Fin Serv Fund(G)	68.83	16.40	JM Core 11 Fund(G)	9.12	8.04	Invesco India Contra Fund(G)	48.32 4.77
Reliance Large Cap Fund(G)	36.29	15.78	Principal Focused Multicap Fund(G)	64.92	7.72	Invesco India Tax Plan(G)	51.27 4.63
Baroda Banking & Fin Serv Fund(G)	24.28	15.45	SBI BlueChip Fund-Reg(G)	40.43	7.53	Franklin India Equity Fund(G)	593.25 4.60
HDFC Sensex ETF	417.41	15.25	Aditya Birla SL Frontline Equity Fund(G)	228.66	7.41	Tata Digital India Fund-Reg(G)	14.68 4.59
HDFC Index Fund-Sensex(G)	348.67	14.69	SBI Focused Equity Fund-Reg(G)	145.49	7.33	Franklin India Taxshield(G)	573.63 4.59
Tata Index Fund-Sensex Plan(G)	96.71	14.58	SBI Tax advantage Fund-III(G)	36.89	7.22	IDBI India Top 100 Equity Fund(G)	24.18 4.49
HDFC Equity Fund(G)	691.33	14.39	Reliance Pharma Fund(G)	145.03	7.21	Reliance Vision Fund(G)	538.92 4.46
Reliance Banking Fund(G)	300.37	14.22	IDFC Large Cap Fund-Reg(G)	32.91	7.17	Motilal Oswal Focused 25 Fund-Reg(G)	28.17 4.45
HDFC Nifty 50 ETF	1231.95	14.17	JM Tax Gain Fund(G)	17.29	7.13	Axis Focused 25 Fund(G)	28.17 4.45
UTI Nifty Index Fund-Reg(G)	77.15	13.92	UTI Mastershare-Reg(G)	123.32	7.05	ICICI Pru Value Fund-11(G)	12.47 4.35
Reliance Index Fund - Sensex Plan(G)	19.37	13.86	Invesco India Largecap Fund(G)	28.73	7.04	Reliance Consumption Fund(G)	64.68 4.24
IDFC Nifty Fund-Reg(G)	24.41	13.76	Aditya Birla SL Global Real Estate Fund(G)	19.51	6.99	Sundaram LT Tax Adv Fund-Sr II-Reg(G)	14.89 4.15
HDFC Index Fund-NIFTY 50 Plan(G)	107.47	13.73	Aditya Birla SL India GenNext Fund(G)	83.06	6.94	ICICI Pru Bharat Consumption Fund-2-(G)	10.09 4.13
Franklin India Focused Equity Fund(G)	42.87	13.66	Franklin India Bluechip Fund(G)	470.17	6.81	Edelweiss Large & Mid Cap Fund-Reg(G)	31.63 4.09
Tata Index Fund-Nifty Plan(G)	71.29	13.57	SBI Technology Opp Fund-Reg(G)	64.04	6.80	Sundaram LT Tax Adv Fund-Sr I-Reg(G)	13.83 4.08
Mirae Asset Large Cap Fund-Reg(G)	51.98	13.48	Axis Long Term Equity Fund(G)	45.07	6.80	Reliance Growth Fund(G)	1131.23 4.00
Tata Banking & Financial Services Fund-Reg(G)	19.73	13.44	SBI Magnum Multicap Fund-Reg(G)	49.99	6.75	HDFC Capital Builder Value Fund(G)	298.58 3.98
SBI Nifty Index Fund-Reg(G)	101.52	13.40	Franklin India Feeder - Franklin U.S. Opportunities Fund(G)	30.61	6.75	Aditya Birla SL Intl. Equity Fund-A(G)	20.57 3.85
ICICI Pru Growth Fund-1(DP)	11.68	13.40	SBI Large & Midcap Fund-Reg(G)	224.43	6.40	UTI LT Adv Fund-III(G)	14.01 1.13
Canara Rob Equity Tax Saver Fund-Reg(G)	67.15	13.22	DHFL Pramerica LT Equity Fund-Reg(G)	14.63	6.32	Tata Resources & Energy Fund-Reg(G)	14.34 1.04
ICICI Pru Nifty Index Fund(G)	114.10	13.09	DSP Equal Nifty 50 Fund-Reg(G)	10.25	6.21	Aditya Birla SL Intl. Equity Fund-B(G)	18.36 0.89
Reliance Index Fund - Nifty Plan(G)	19.78	13.07	Reliance Focused Equity Fund(G)	48.65	6.10	Reliance Tax Saver (ELSS) Fund(G)	56.74 0.81
Invesco India Financial Services Fund(G)	59.19	13.04	DSP Equal Nifty 50 Fund-Reg(G)	10.25	6.21	Franklin India Opportunities Fund(G)	75.10 3.71
Kotak Standard Multicap Fund(G)	36.47	13.02	UTI LT Equity Fund (Tax Saving)-Reg(G)	87.29	3.43	ICICI Pru Value Fund-8(D)	10.56 3.63
Aditya Birla SL Index Fund-Reg(G)	115.77	12.88	ICICI Pru Global Stable Fund(G)	14.87	3.34	SBI LT Advantage	13.65 3.60
IDBI Nifty Index Fund(G)	21.80	12.82				Sundaram Infra Advantage Fund(G)	34.04 0.48
Franklin India Index Fund-NSE Nifty(G)	93.52	12.79				IDFC Multi Cap Fund-Reg(G)	93.05 0.47
DHFL Pramerica Global Equity Opp Fund(G)	18.27	12.64				UTI Focused Equity Fund-I(G)	13.29 0.41
Axis Bluechip Fund(G)	29.46	12.57				ICICI Pru Exports & Services Fund(G)	56.19 0.34
Kotak Tax Saver Scheme(G)	45.09	12.44				Principal Nifty 100 Equal Weight Fund(G)	71.99 0.34
Reliance Multi Cap Fund(G)	101.15	12.34				Aditya Birla SL Equity Advantage Fund(G)	409.32 0.33
Franklin Build India Fund(G)	44.05	12.33				SBI LT Advantage Fund-II-Reg(G)	14.00 0.12
SBI Magnum Equity ESG Fund-Reg(G)	107.62	12.28				Motilal Oswal Midcap 30 Fund-Reg(G)	25.02 0.09
Mirae Asset Emerging Bluechip-Reg(G)	53.91	12.20				Sundaram Select Small Cap Series-III-Reg(G)	14.16 -0.08
Mirae Asset Tax Saver Fund-Reg(G)	17.88	12.13				Sundaram Select Small Cap Series-IV-Reg(G)	14.19 -0.14
ICICI Pru Growth Fund-2(DP)	12.26	11.66				Tata Equity P/E Fund(G)	136.10 -0.17
Tata Large Cap Fund(G)	226.60	11.59				DSP Global Allocation Fund-Reg(G)	12.01 -0.33
Sundaram Fin Serv Opp Fund(G)	43.64	11.59				IDFC Tax Advt(ELSS) Fund-Reg(G)	57.13 -0.43
ICICI Pru Value Fund-15(G)	11.06	11.49				DSP World Agriculture Fund-Reg(G)	15.98 -0.46
Sundaram Select Focus(G)	184.58	11.49				SBI LT Advantage Fund-IV-Reg(G)	12.78 -0.80
ICICI Pru Multicap Fund(G)	298.38	11.23				DSP Midcap Fund-Reg(G)	54.18 -0.85
Reliance US Equity Opp Fund(G)	15.08	11.01				IDBI Pru Growth Fund-3(DP)	10.36 -0.86
ICICI Pru LT Equity Fund (Tax Saving)(G)	385.56	10.98				SBI Magnum Comma Fund-Reg(G)	36.77 -0.89
Canara Rob Bluechip Equity Fund-Reg(G)	25.28	10.88				Invesco India Infrastructure Fund(G)	17.30 -0.92
Canara Rob Equity Diver Fund-Reg(G)	136.72	10.87				Franklin India Prima Fund(G)	950.98 -0.92
Tata Large & Mid Cap Fund(G)	208.55	10.66				Sundaram Rural and Consumption Fund(G)	41.71 -0.95
Aditya Birla SL Banking & Financial Services Fund-Reg(G)	30.62	10.58				DSP Natural Res & New Energy Fund-Reg(G)	32.06 -0.97
Axis Multicap Fund-Reg(G)	11.73	10.56				Kotak Infra & Eco Reform Fund(G)	20.72 -1.11
Baroda Large Cap Fund(G)	14.82	10.35				SBI LT Advantage Fund-I-Reg(G)	13.53 -1.14
DHFL Pramerica Large Cap Fund(G)	171.46	10.12				L&T Tax Advt Fund-Reg(G)	54.28 -1.30
L&T India Large Cap Fund-Reg(G)	28.08	9.99				ICICI Pru Value Fund-10(G)	11.37 -1.30
ICICI Pru US Bluechip Equity Fund(G)	26.64	9.72				SBI Magnum Global Fund-Reg(G)	166.84 -1.42
BNP Paribas Large Cap Fund(G)	90.57	9.52				Sundaram Small Cap Fund(G)	83.97 -14.14
DSP Tax Saver Fund-Reg(G)	49.09	9.40				DSP World Energy Fund-Reg(G)	12.62-14.15
DSP Top 100 Equity Fund-Reg(G)	214.34	9.36				DSP World Mining Fund-Reg(G)	7.60-15.30
UTI Banking and Financial Services Fund-Reg(G)	103.47	9.29				Edelweiss Gr China Equity Off-Shore Fund-Reg(G)	24.79-15.38
Aditya Birla SL Focused Equity Fund(G)	60.85	9.25				Kotak Global Emerging Mkt Fund(G)	14.77-15.62
ICICI Pru Value Fund-9(G)	12.81	9.11				Invesco India Feeder - Invesco Pan European Equity Fund-Reg(G)	10.00-15.78
Tata India Tax Savings Fund-Reg(G)	18.59	9.05				Sundaram LT Micro Cap Tax Adv Fund-Sr III-Reg(G)	10.59-16.33
Kotak Equity Opp Fund(G)	121.55	8.96				Kotak World Gold Fund(G)	7.41-16.72
Kotak Bluechip Fund(G)	237.44	8.84				Sundaram LT Micro Cap Tax Adv Fund-Sr V-Reg(G)	8.74-16.99
Tata India Pharma & Healthcare Fund-Reg(G)	8.82	8.81				Aditya Birla SL Emerging Leaders Fund-7-Reg(G)	12.63-17.07
ICICI Pru Bluechip Fund(G)	42.96	8.79				Sundaram LT Micro Cap Tax Adv Fund-Sr IV-Reg(G)	8.94-17.60
Kotak India Eq Contra Fund(G)	53.40	8.68				IDBI Equity Advantage Fund-Reg(G)	25.96 -2.55
SBI Tax Advantage Fund-III-Reg(G)	25.43	8.67					
Edelweiss Large Cap Fund(G)	36.28	8.49					
ICICI Pru Focused Equity	30.42	8.29					



ICICI Pru Midcap Fund(G)	96.16	-2.64
UTI MNC Fund-Reg(G)	190.06	-2.65
ICICI Pru Dividend Yield Equity Fund(G)	16.75	-2.73
HDFC Mid-Cap Opportunities Fund(G)	54.51	-2.76
Templeton India Equity Income Fund(G)	46.23	-3.00
IDBI Nifty Junior Index Fund(G)	20.76	-3.13
L&T Infrastructure Fund-Reg(G)	16.35	-3.14
L&T Large and Midcap Fund-Reg(G)	47.13	-3.16
ICICI Pru Nifty Next 50 Index Fund(G)	24.37	-3.22
UTI India Consumer Fund-Reg(G)	25.05	-4.10
Reliance Japan Equity Fund(G)	12.22	-4.16
HDFC Small Cap Fund-Reg(G)	43.34	-4.26
Reliance Power & Infra Fund(G)	102.18	-4.58
SBI Magnum Midcap Fund-Reg(G)	73.08	-4.65
HDFC Infrastructure Fund(G)	17.48	-5.24
Aditya Birla SL CEF-Global Agri-Reg(G)	22.58	-5.28
DSP World Gold Fund-Reg(G)	10.76	-5.40
Invesco India Multicap Fund(G)	46.55	-5.56
Aditya Birla SL Mfg. Equity Fund-Reg(G)	12.90	-5.70
Aditya Birla SL Midcap Fund(G)	286.22	-5.72
Aditya Birla SL Dividend Yield Fund(G)	157.73	-5.79
IDFC Focused Equity Fund-Reg(G)	37.09	-5.83
L&T Midcap Fund-Reg(G)	131.73	-5.97
Tata India Consumer Fund-Reg(G)	16.72	-6.20
Edelweiss Emerging Markets Opp Eq. Offshore Fund-Reg(G)	11.81	-6.31
ICICI Pru Smallcap Fund(G)	25.71	-6.37
IDFC Sterling Value Fund-Reg(G)	51.46	-6.39
DHFL Pramerica Midcap Opp Fund-Reg(G)	18.15	-6.49
UTI Mid Cap Fund-Reg(G)	99.15	-6.62
Sundaram Mid Cap Fund(G)	465.03	-6.65
Invesco India Feeder - Invesco Global Equity Income Fund(G)	12.24	-6.69
Edelweiss Mid Cap Fund-Reg(G)	26.52	-6.76
Reliance Small Cap Fund(G)	40.38	-7.14
Aditya Birla SL Emerging Leaders Fund-4-Reg(G)	14.91	-7.39
IDFC Infrastructure Fund-Reg(G)	15.67	-8.25
Baroda Mid-cap Fund(G)	8.93	-8.32
Sundaram Global Advt(G)	16.11	-8.36
SBI Small Cap Fund-Reg(G)	51.25	-8.40
SBI Consumption Opp Fund-Reg(G)	112.46	-8.75
IDBI Midcap Fund(G)	10.45	-8.97
Kotak Small Cap Fund(G)	71.00	-9.11
Franklin India Smaller Cos Fund(G)	53.80	-9.14
DSP Small Cap Fund-Reg(G)	55.61	-9.79
IDBI Small Cap Fund(G)	9.40	-10.13
Franklin Asian Equity Fund(G)	20.70	-10.16
L&T Emerging Businesses Fund-Reg(G)	24.09	-10.39
DHFL Pramerica Euro Equity Fund(G)	12.84	-11.33
Edelweiss Eur Dynamic Equity Off-shr Fund-Reg(G)	10.44	-11.35
Sundaram Select Micro Cap-Series X-Reg(G)	13.83	-11.41
Principal Global Opportunities Fund(G)	27.32	-11.62
Aditya Birla SL Pure Value Fund(G)	51.87	-11.79
Aditya Birla SL Global Emerging Opp Fund(G)	12.20	-12.43
Aditya Birla SL Small Cap Fund(G)	35.00	-12.92
Sundaram Small Cap Fund(G)	83.97	-14.14
DSP World Energy Fund-Reg(G)	12.62	-14.15
DSP World Mining Fund-Reg(G)	7.60	-15.30
Edelweiss Gr China Equity Off-Shore Fund-Reg(G)	24.79	-15.38
Kotak Global Emerging Mkt Fund(G)	14.77	-15.62
Invesco India Feeder - Invesco Pan European Equity Fund-Reg(G)	10.00	-15.78
Sundaram LT Micro Cap Tax Adv Fund-Sr III-Reg(G)	10.59	-16.33
Kotak World Gold Fund(G)	7.41	-16.72
Sundaram LT Micro Cap Tax Adv Fund-Sr V-Reg(G)	8.74	-16.99
Aditya Birla SL Emerging Leaders Fund-7-Reg(G)	12.63	-17.07
Sundaram LT Micro Cap Tax Adv Fund-Sr IV-Reg(G)	8.94	-17.60
IDBI Equity Advantage Fund-Reg(G)	25.96	-2.55
UTI Transportation & Logistics Fund-Reg(G)	95.59	-19.32

Lankan PM vows to decimate local ISIS

PTI ■ COLOMBO

Sri Lankan Prime Minister Ranil Wickremesinghe has vowed to take security measures to prevent the Islamic State (ISIS) terrorism raising its head again in the country as he appealed to people not to support extremism or religious fanaticism.

The premier after meeting with a group of representatives of civil societies and trade union collective at Temple Trees on Saturday said the security forces and police have been able to apprehend everyone involved in the Easter Sunday attacks that killed 258 people, the Colombo Page reported.

"But this doesn't mean that this is the end of this type of terrorism. We now have to take certain measures of counter-terrorism to ensure that the country will not face terrorism again," he cautioned.

He said the government is discussing the counterterrorism measures that are being taken, with the country still on edge after the attacks on three hotels and three churches that were blamed on a local jihadi group, the National Thowheeth Jamaath (NTJ). The Islamic State group has also claimed a role in the attacks.

"We have also had the help



of the Muslim community in bringing about many changes and suggestions. Madrasa education bill not allowing sharia universities, ensuring name boards in only the three national languages," the premier said.

Civil societies and trade union representatives inquired the prime minister on the political and institutional responsibilities which have failed to prevent the Easter Sunday attacks and also on the security situation in the country after the attacks.

The premier responded, saying the parliamentary select committee (PSC) has been appointed to investigate the issue.

He pointed out that the attacks in Sri Lanka is one instance that the ISIS did not have the support of the local Muslim community for their actions and that should be maintained.

8 in the fray to replace May as British PM

PTI ■ LONDON

At least eight candidates, including hard Brexit Boris Johnson, have joined the fray to battle it out to take over the reins from British Prime Minister Theresa May as the UK's ruling Conservative Party leadership contest gets underway.

While Johnson, the former foreign secretary, is seen as the frontrunner to succeed May, the contest still remains wide open to at least seven other contenders.

May had announced her resignation earlier this week and is set to formally step down as Tory leader and PM on June 7, after a three-day state visit to the UK by US President Donald Trump.

The formal segment of the party leadership contest will then kick off on June 10, but prospective candidates have already begun laying out their bids for the top job.

UK environment secretary Michael Gove became the latest Tory MP to announce his intention to challenge Johnson on Sunday.

"I can confirm that I will be putting my name forward to be prime minister of this country. I believe that I'm ready to unite the Conservative and Union Party, ready to deliver Brexit, and ready to lead this

great country," he told reporters outside his home in London on Sunday.

Gove's decision is reminiscent of the 2016 leadership race, when he was accused of betraying Johnson by withdrawing his support for him and choosing to contest himself. It led to Johnson withdrawing his bid and Gove went on to lose out in the party ballot, resulting in May being chosen for the post.

Among some of the other contenders eyeing Downing Street include the former Brexit secretary, Dominic Raab, and former Commons leader Andrea Leadsom - both of whom confirmed their leadership bids in different Sunday newspapers.

"We see that extremists are mobilising, we see a lot of their billboards and activities all over Slovakia. We can't let someone steal Europe from us. It's our Europe," Kiska told reporters on Saturday.

But the right and the far-right have not had everything their own way so far. In the Netherlands, the centre-left party of EU vice president Frans Timmermans won the most votes and added two seats to the Socialists and Democrats (S&D) bloc in parliament, according to exit polls.

Establish its authority. Britain and the Netherlands were first to vote, on Thursday, followed by Ireland and the Czech Republic on Friday with Slovakia, Malta and Hungary on Saturday.

Emmanuel Macron has taken it upon himself to act as figurehead for the centrist and liberal parties hoping to shut the nationalists out of EU jobs and decision-making.

"Once again Macron is daring us to challenge him. Well let's take him on his word. On May 26, we'll challenge him in the voting booth," Le Pen told a rally in France on Friday.

Meanwhile, the mainstream parties are vying between themselves for influence in the choice of a new generation of top European officials, including the powerful president of the European Commission.

And Brussels insiders are closely following the turnout figures, fearing that another drop in participation will undermine the credibility of the EU parliament as it seeks to



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Iran's President could hold vote over nuclear deal

AP ■ TEHRAN

Iran's president has suggested the Islamic Republic could hold a referendum over the country's nuclear program amid the unraveling deal with world powers and heightened tensions with the United States, Iranian media reported Sunday.

According to the official IRNA news agency, President Hassan Rouhani, who was last week publicly chastised by the country's supreme leader, made the suggestion in a meeting with editors of major Iranian news outlets on Saturday evening.

Rouhani said he had previously suggested a referendum to Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei in 2004, when he was a senior nuclear negotiator for Iran.

At the time, Khamenei approved of the idea and though there was no referendum, such a vote "can be a solution at any time," Rouhani was quoted as saying.

A referendum could provide political cover for the Iranian Government if it chooses to increase its enrichment of uranium, prohibited under the 2015 deal with world powers.

10 KILLED IN GAS LEAK IN CARGO SHIP IN CHINA

Beijing: At least 10 people died and 15 others injured after carbon dioxide leaked from a cargo ship's fire preventing system at Longyan Port in eastern China's Weihai city, officials said on Sunday. The accident happened around 4 pm. On Saturday, when the ship owned by the Fujian Shipping Company was being repaired.

PAPUA NEW GUINEA PM PETER O'NEILL RESIGNS

Port Moresby: Papua New Guinea PM Peter O'Neill resigned on Sunday, media reports said, following a string of high-profile political defections that threatened his leadership. O'Neill — who had been in power since 2011 — handed over the reins to Julius Chan, who has twice been prime minister, PNG broadcaster EMTV reported.

10 HURT AFTER OPEN FIRE OUTSIDE NEW JERSEY BAR

Trenton: Authorities say at least two gunmen fired into a crowd outside a bar in New Jersey's capital city, wounding 10 people, two critically, but the motive for the shooting remains unknown.

APPARENT TORNADO KILLS 2 IN OKLAHOMA

Elmore: An apparent tornado killed at least two people as it destroyed a mobile, roared through a nearby mobile home park and caused other significant damage in the Oklahoma City area, officials said Sunday.

Record 7 women in Australian PM Morrison's Cabinet

PTI ■ MELBOURNE

Australian Prime Minister Scott Morrison on Sunday announced his new 22-member Cabinet which includes a record seven women.

The new Cabinet will be sworn in on Wednesday. The ruling conservative coalition, led by Prime Minister Morrison, defied exit polls to deliver a shock defeat to the opposition Labor Party, forcing its leader Bill Shorten to resign.

Morrison announced Linda Reynolds to be the Defence Minister while Bridget McKenzie will become Australia's first-ever female Agriculture Minister.

"I have high expectations of my ministry and clear goals for each of their roles," Morrison was quoted as saying by media reports from Canberra.

"This will include congestion-busting on regulatory and bureaucratic roadblocks, making better use of technology and better integrating service

delivery across portfolios," he said.

Peter Dutton will remain in Home Affairs and Senator Arthur Sinodinos will be the new Ambassador to the United States, succeeding Joe Hockey when he finishes his term.

Sussan Ley was announced as the environment minister, replacing Melissa Price.

He will also recommend Mitch Fifield to become Australia's Ambassador to the United Nations, with Paul Fletcher to take over his communications portfolio.

"They will both be exceptional representatives and our countries interests abroad will be well served in that role," Morrison said.

David Littleproud will now focus on the natural disaster and emergency management portfolio. Ken Wyatt becomes the first Aboriginal person to hold the Indigenous Affairs portfolio. "Incredibly honoured to be the first Aboriginal Minister for Indigenous Australians," Wyatt tweeted.

Final votes cast as Europe chooses bloc's future

AFP ■ BRUSSELS

Tens of millions of Europeans will vote Sunday as 21 countries choose their representatives in a battle to open their polling stations at 0400 GMT and pro-EU forces to chart a course for the bloc.

Greece, Hungary, Bulgaria, Romania, Lithuania and Cyprus were the first to open their polling stations at 0400 GMT and France, Germany, Italy and the rest followed over the next two to three hours.

Seven EU member states had already voted, but no official results can be published until rest of the union has taken part. The European Parliament will give an estimate at 1815 GMT and provisional results will begin to emerge from 2100 GMT.

Euro-sceptic parties opposed to the project of ever closer union hope to capture as many as a third of the seats in the 751-member Strasbourg assembly, disrupting the integration consensus.

The far-right parties of

Italy deputy PM Matteo Salvini and France's Marine Le Pen will lead this charge, and anti-EU Brexit will be swelled by the ranks of British populist Nigel Farage.

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US President Donald Trump is served a baked potato with butter while sitting at a counter with first lady Melania Trump, Japan's Prime Minister Shinzo Abe and his wife Akie Abe during a dinner at the Inakaya restaurant in the Roppongi district of Tokyo on Sunday.

Trump downplays N Korea launches on Japan visit

AFP ■ TOKYO

US President Donald Trump on Sunday played down recent missile launches by North Korea as he teed off a state visit to Japan with a round of golf with Prime Minister Shinzo Abe.

Before hitting the course, Trump tweeted that North Korea had tested "some small weapons" that had "disturbed some of my people, and others, but not me."

"This appeared to be a reference to one of his 'people', National Security Advisor John Bolton, who had said the previous day there was 'no doubt' the launches had contravened UN Security Council resolutions.

But Trump said: 'I have confidence that Chairman Kim will keep his promise to me.' The American president maintains that North Korea's

leader Kim Jong Un had pledged he was serious about denuclearisation although experts say there is still a wide gulf between the two sides over what that means exactly.

At their summit, Trump and Abe are likely to touch on tensions with North Korea, which have mounted after a summit in February in Hanoi collapsed without an agreement, as well as trade as Tokyo and Washington attempt to thrash out a deal.

On trade, Trump tweeted that "great progress" was being made in the negotiations but "much will wait" until after Japanese upper house elections expected in July -- with rumours rife Abe might also call a snap general election at the same time.

The serious diplomacy started on Monday when Trump will be the first leader to meet Japan's new emperor, Naruhito,

who has been on the throne for less than a month following his father's historic abdication.

But Sunday was more about cementing diplomatic bonds between the two countries over the leaders' shared passion for golf -- the fifth time they have found time in their schedules for a round.

Under a cloudless sky with sizzling temperatures above 30 degrees Celsius (86 Fahrenheit), the two world leaders played at the Mobra Country Club course in Chiba, just outside the capital.

Aerial footage on Japanese television showed the pair practising and teeing off, as well as putting on the manicured greens, accompanied by former professional golfer Isao Aoki.

As Trump's Marine One helicopter thundered in, shading the serenity of the course, a casual-looking Abe

was there to greet him, sporting white trousers and a blue top. Trump was dressed in a red sweater and black trousers with a red USA cap.

Abe later tweeted a selfie of the two grinning into the cameras as the pair relaxed before the formal element of Trump's four-day trip begins.

After the golf, the two leaders were set to take in the final day of the sumo "basho" or tournament in Tokyo. Trump will present Japanese grappler Asanoyama with the "President's Cup" -- weighing 60-70 pounds (27-32 kilograms) and measuring 54 inches (137 centimetres).

Security around the hallowed Ryogoku Kokugikan sumo stadium was ultra-tight, with fans screened with metal detectors and asked to sip from any bottle they planned to take in to prove the liquid was not dangerous.

Experts say Japanese officials should be taken into account in

UN says Afghan captives held by Taliban subjected to abuse

AP ■ KABUL

Afghan captives held by the Taliban have been subjected to abuse, ill-treatment and actions that may amount to torture, the UN said Sunday -- a statement that comes as the US is trying to find a negotiated solution to the country's protracted war.

The UN Assistance Mission in Afghanistan said it interviewed 13 detainees from a group of 53 recently rescued from the Taliban, mainly members of Afghan forces but also civilians and government officials captured by the insurgents.

The group was freed on April 25 when Afghan troops raided a Taliban-run detention facility in the Khas Uruzgan district in southern Uruzgan province.

Most of the captives were held since 2018, with three since 2016, the UNAMA statement said, adding they were kept in poor conditions and subjected to forced labor. It cites the detainees as saying that the Taliban killed some of

their captives.

"I am gravely concerned about these serious allegations of ill-treatment, torture and unlawful killing of civilians and security personnel, as well as the deplorable conditions of detention," said Tadamichi Yamamoto, the head of UNAMA.

The detainees were shackled while in captivity and almost all said they were beaten. The Taliban told them it was punishment for supporting the government, working with the Americans or fighting the insurgents.

The UN statement comes as Washington's peace envoy, Zalmay Khalilzad is pressing ahead with talks with the Taliban, who refuse to negotiate directly with the Kabul government.

The talks so far have focused on a timetable for US Troop withdrawal as well as Taliban guarantees that they won't harbor terrorist groups or allow Afghanistan to be used as a staging ground for global terrorist attacks.

Kurdish rebel leader calls end to jail hunger strikes in Turkey

AFP ■ ANKARA

Imprisoned Kurdish rebel leader Abdullah Ocalan has called for an end to hunger strikes by thousands of jailed supporters in Turkey protesting the conditions of his detention, his lawyers said Sunday.

Ocalan, the co-founder of the outlawed Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK) held on Imrali island off Istanbul since 1999, was allowed to see his

lawyers this month for the first time in eight years.

"I expect the action to come to an end in light of the broad statements to be made by my two lawyers," Ocalan said in a message read by his lawyer Nevroz Uysal during a press conference in Istanbul.

The first visit took place on May 2.

After Turkish authorities lifted an official ban on lawyers' visits to Ocalan, a second trip

by two of his lawyers was made on May 22.

His lawyers said during their visit on May 22, Ocalan said the hunger strikes "had achieved their goal" and was a message read by his lawyer Nevroz Uysal during a press conference in Istanbul.

"We believe the hunger strikes will end their action after this," the lawyers added.

Some 3,000 prisoners across different prisons were on hunger strike, the pro-Kurdish

Peoples' Democratic Party (HDP) has said, in solidarity with one of the party's lawmakers who launched the action in November.

MP Leyla Guven was in custody when she went on hunger strike to protest Ocalan's isolation from his family and lawyers but she was later released.

Other detainees then followed suit. Eight people also killed themselves over the issue,

according to the HDP.

Ocalan's PKK, blacklisted by Ankara and its Western allies as a terrorist group, has been waging an insurgency against the Turkish state since 1984 during which more than 40,000 people have been killed.

Ocalan was caught in February 1999 in Kenya and jailed several months later after he was found guilty of treason, separatism and murder.

Despite the almost complete isolation, Ocalan is still a key figure of the Kurdish insurgency and the movement generally in the region.

His lawyers said Ocalan indicated he would "play a positive role" in Syria in confronting the issues there "including the Kurdish issue" if he was given the chance.

Ocalan previously said in a message following the May 2 visit that "Turkey's sensitivities" should be taken into account in

Syria, where the US-backed Kurdish YPG militia is battling the Islamic State group.

Turkey says the YPG is a "terrorist offshoot" of the PKK.

The visits come just weeks before a controversial re-run of the Istanbul mayoral election, which was lost by the ruling party of President Recep Tayyip Erdogan on March 31.

Experts say Kurdish votes should be taken into account in

Erdogan's party loss and now he is hoping for their support again in the repeat vote on June 23.

Turkish Justice Minister Abdullahi Gul said Friday the lawyers' visits "had nothing to do with a peace process" and "no link to the Istanbul mayoral election."

Ocalan had called for a ceasefire in 2015 to allow peace talks a chance to reach a negotiated settlement.

Trend Blazer

Ayushmann's film teaser out

Actor **AYUSHMANN KHURRANA'S** forthcoming film, *Article 15's* teaser will be unveiled today.

The day marks the fifth anniversary of the Badaun Rape case, which had shook the nation. The case is also one of the true events, which the film showcases.

The film is based on 'Article 15' of the Indian Constitution that prohibits discrimination on grounds of religion, race, caste, sex or place of birth.

The film is also set to premiere at the tenth edition of the London Indian Film Festival.

The actor plays the role of a cop in the film, directed by Anubhav Sinha. It also stars Isha Talwar, M Nassar, Manoj Pahwa, Sayani Gupta, Kumud Mishra and Mohammed Zeeshan Ayyub.



'OTT puts you on a global platform and that is big enough for any artiste. Having these players in the game has essentially changed everything for many. I am here to tell stories and to be an actor, not a superstar. But that's not my endgoal. My endgoal is to be a better actor than yesterday... and Netflix is giving me an opportunity to do that.'

—Mithila Palkar



Filmmaker **RAJKUMAR HIRANI** met actors **Rishi Kapoor** and **Neetu Singh** in New York to discuss about films. Neetu posted a photograph on social media.

"We both love and admire Raju, so we're super excited today. Spent so many hours discussing and talking movies. Exhilarating. Great director," she captioned it.

Apart from Hirani, other Bollywood stars like Karan Johar, Shah Rukh Khan, Amir Khan, Priyanka Chopra Jonas, Deepika Padukone and Anupam Kher have also paid the actor a visit in NY.

Trump all day: Kanye West

Rapper **KANYE WEST** refused to back down on his support for US President **Donald Trump** in an appearance on popular talk show host David Letterman's new series, *My Next Guest Needs No Introduction*.

He said, "This is Trump's thing — we don't have to feel the same way, but we have the right to feel whatever. His decision to wear a *Make America Great Again (MAGA)* hat is a way to show people they shouldn't be afraid to express opinions, Kanye said, adding that it is "not about politics."

He had earlier tweeted: "Trump all day. One of my favourite of many things about what the Trump hat represents to me is that people can't tell me what to do because I'm black."



BLOCK BLUE

Not just the brain and eyes, the light emitted from digital devices can harm the skin as well. By **TEAM VIVA**

It wasn't too long ago when people realised the harmful effects of the UV (ultraviolet) rays from the sun and started shielding their skin from its exposure. The fear of skin tanning and damage by these rays transformed the contours of conversation in the skincare industry. People started vouching for products such as sunscreens and face masks before stepping out in the sun. And that is largely the origin story behind all the anti-UVA and anti-UVB skincare products.

However, with the changing lifestyles today, if you think wearing sunscreen before stepping outside is enough to protect your skin from damage, you would only be partially right. There could be various other sources even indoors which could have devastating effects on our skin — the blue light emitted from digital devices.

So what is blue light? It is a colour in the visible light spectrum which can be seen by the human eyes. Experts suggest that although the rising dependence on technology and digital screens (on TVs, smartphones, computers, laptops and gaming systems) might have

illuminated the evenings, but this could charge people a high price for basking in that light.

As per reports, visible blue light is one of the major skincare concerns as it contributes to premature-aging including wrinkles, worsening skin laxity and hyperpigmentation. Statistics indicate that with 60 per cent of people spending more than six hours a day on digital screens, the exposure to blue light from them is significantly higher than that from the sun. Blue light has the ability to penetrate deeper into the skin as compared to UVA rays. While long-term exposure to the concentrated energy can cause colour changes, inflammation and weakening of the skin's surface, a constant exposure to these radiations can cause more pigmentation, redness and swelling as compared to UVA rays from the sun, as per studies.

Looking at the risk of getting pigmentation, dermatologists say that blue light could worsen or trigger it. One example of this is with a skin condition called 'Melasma', which mainly affects women and has been thought to be caused by

a combination of our hormones (which tend to flare during pregnancy) or in women who take the pill) and exposure to UV light. There has been increasing evidence in recent years that blue light in particular might be provoking melasma or making it even harder to treat.

Recent statistics reveal that while 43 per cent of adults have a job that requires prolonged use of a tablet or computer, around 70 per cent of adults, who regularly use electronic devices, report symptoms of digital eye strain. While around 93 per cent of teens have access to or have a computer, at least 74 per cent of teens use electronic devices occasionally.

Given the perils of modern living, one cannot escape the screens completely. Listing a few skincare tips, Rahul Agarwal, CEO of a skincare brand, says, "Hence, measures to ensure safety of skin both indoors and outdoors is very crucial. It is advisable to wear a sunscreen that guards you from all the screens even while working indoors."

He suggests that some chemical sunscreens now have extended

protection to protect against various forms of visible light, and all physical sunscreens made up of titanium dioxide and zinc oxide do the same task.

TIPS:

- Use blue light shields on your digital devices to limit the harmful effects.
- Use sunscreen with blue light technology when indoors and not just when you step out in the sun as 24x7 protection is required. Organic sunscreens with ingredients such as Aloe Vera and Kaolin Clay act as protective layer on the skin.
- Don't forget to go for wide-spectrum SPF.
- Dim the light on your phone and computer screens to lessen the impact of blue light or apply a filter, but this does not guarantee complete prevention of damage.
- Some smartphones also have the option to disable blue light in favour of yellow light (often called night mode) which is considered to be easier on the eyes — and in turn, the skin.

Ranveer preps to play Jayesh Bhai



Actor **Ranveer Singh** and Yash Raj Films will be coming together on what Ranveer calls a "miracle script" penned down by debutant writer-director Divyang Thakkar. *Jayeshbhai Jordaar* is a humorous entertainer set in Gujarat.

The *Gully Boy* actor said, "I have been immensely fortunate to have collaborated with some of the finest filmmakers in the country. It is humbling and gratifying that they believed in my craft and chose me to lead their cinematic vision. All that I have achieved as an actor today is due to these titanic cinematic forces having put their faith in me. I am glad that today I find myself in a position where I can recognise exceptional talent and wholeheartedly back the vision of a brilliant new writer-director. Like Divyang, *Jayeshbhai Jordaar* will be my next release after '83'."

Adding that it is a film with a "big heart", Ranveer said, "Both in its concept as well as in its appeal, the film encompasses the broadest spectrum of the cinematic audience. It's a film for everyone. It is, in fact, a 'miracle script' that YRF found for me out of nowhere. The sheer brilliance of the writing compelled me to immediately greenlight this film. Both humorous and poignant, *Jayeshbhai...* is right up there with the most solid on-paper material I've ever come across."

The film, produced by Maneesh Sharma, will go on floors in October. Maneesh said, "For a producer and a filmmaker, the holy grail is a script that is a balance of a relevant message delivered in an entertaining manner. Divyang's script is a great example of this balance and we are all very excited to have him helm it. What makes this a truly thrilling venture is that I see this as Ranveer and I paying it forward." Almost a decade ago, we started our journey together when YRF placed their faith in us newcomers and today we collaborate with another new talent to offer the audience a content driven mass entertainer."

TECH TALK

Beyond time and traffic

NASA's first-of-its-kind tests look to manage drones in cities

NASA has launched the final stage of a four-year effort to develop a national traffic management system for drones, testing them in cities for the first time beyond the operator's line of sight as businesses look in the future to unleash the unmanned devices in drones above busy streets and buildings.

Multiple drones took to the air at the same time above downtown Reno recently in a series of simulations testing emerging technology. It will be someday used to manage hundreds and thousands of small unmanned commercial aircraft delivering packages, pizzas and medical supplies.

"This activity is the latest and most technical challenge we have done with unmanned aerial systems," said David Korsmeyer, associate director of research and technology at NASA's Ames Research Centre in Mountain View, California.

An autonomous drone took off from the rooftop of a five-storey casino parking garage and landed on the roof of another out of view across the street. It hovered as onboard sensors adjusted for gusty winds before returning close to the center of the launchpad. Equipped with GPS, others flew at each other no higher than city streetlights but were able to avoid colliding through onboard tracking systems connected to NASA's computers on the ground.

Similar tests have been conducted in remote and rural areas. The Federal Aviation Administration has authorised individual test flights in cities before but never for multiple drones or outside the sight of the operator.

The new round of tests continuing this summer in Reno and Corpus Christi, Texas, marks the first-time simulations have combined all those scenarios, said Chris Walach, executive director of the Nevada Institute of Autonomous Systems, which is running the tests of unmanned aerial vehicles or UAVs.

"When we began this project four years ago, many of us wouldn't have thought we'd be standing here today flying UAVs with advanced drone systems off high-rise buildings," he said. The team adopted a "crawl, walk, run" philosophy when it initiated tests



The drones are equipped with programmes for landing, avoiding crashes, surveillance, detection and identification, optical cameras and systems similar to radar that work with lasers

in 2015, culminating with this fourth round of simulations, said Ron Johnson, project manager for unmanned aircraft systems traffic management at NASA's Ames Research Centre. "We are definitely in the 'run' phase of this development," he said.

The results will be shared with the FAA. The agency outlined proposed rules in January that would ease restrictions on flying drones over crowds but said it won't take final action until it finishes another regulation on identifying drones as they're flying — something industry analysts say could be years away.

Critics assert that the FAA has stymied the commercial use of drones by applying the same rigid safety standard it uses for airlines.

"There can be a lot of Silicon Valley mentality where people don't want to wait, so we're trying to strike a balance between unleashing entrepreneurship and ensuring we're doing it safely while trying to accelerate acceptance of drones in public," Johnson said.

Amazon and FedEx are among the companies that hope to send consumer products by drone by 2020. Drone delivery company Flirtey began testing delivery of defibrillators for cardiac arrest patients last year in Reno under FAA oversight. Johnson said cities present the biggest challenges because of limited, small landing areas among tall buildings that create navigation and com-

munication problems. He said it became apparent early on that the travel management plans for drones would have to be completely automated because FAA air traffic controllers can't handle the enormous workload.

The system is being tested with the help of 36 private partners, including drone manufacturers, operators, software developers and other third-party service providers, Johnson said.

The system uses software on the ground that communicates flight plans and positions to other software systems. The drones are equipped with programmes for landing, avoiding crashes, surveillance, detection and identification, optical cameras and systems similar to radar that work with lasers.

Huy Tran, director of aeronautics at NASA's Ames Research Centre, said her supervisors at NASA headquarters were surprised to hear they had been testing drones in Reno. "They said, 'Are you crazy?'" she said. "We hope the test shows drones can be flown and land safely."

WEBBED

CHOPSTICKS



Directed by Sachin Yardi, the film traces a day in the life of a gifted but insecure woman, Nirma (played by Mithila Palkar), who teams up with an enigmatic man (played by Abhay Deol) to retrieve her car from an eccentric "goat-loving" gangster (played by Vijay Raaz).

"The first Indian original film on Netflix" releases on May 31.

HOSTAGES



In this remake of the eponymous Israeli show, a surgeon is held hostage by a group of criminals, who want her to compromise with her profession — kill a patient on the surgery table — in exchange for her family's safety.

Directed by Sudhir Mishra, the series stars Tisca Chopra and Ronit Roy in the leading roles. The show premieres on Hotstar from May 31.

GOOD OMENS



The end of the world is nearing. An angel and a demon who have become overly fond of life on Earth must form an unlikely alliance to stop the approaching Armageddon and save the world before it's too late.

Starring Michael Sheen, David Tennant, Jon Hamm, the Original series releases on Amazon Prime on May 31.

Experts say that changing markets and confusion over what can be thrown in recycling bins have forced some communities to rethink or even suspend their recycling programmes

Changing markets and confusion over what can be thrown in recycling bins have forced some communities to rethink or even suspend their recycling programmes. But many more recycling programmes are working well, experts say. The difference is partly based on which methods are being used for collection and processing.

Are you sorting paper from plastic at the bin, for instance, or tossing it all in one bin? Are you certain the items going into the bin are the ones your recycler can accept? How up to date is the processing facility in your area?

"Some programmes are hurting and need to adjust, particularly in the residential stream. But the majority of them are working successfully and continuing to grow," says Robin Wiener, president of the Institute of Scrap Recycling Industries. The non-profit trade association represents more than 1,300 companies that make, process, sell or consume scrap commodities, including metals, paper, electronics, plastics, glass and textiles.

Success or failure seems partly linked to whether recyclables are going into one mixed curbside bin for pickup (single-stream recycling) or are divided by residents into separate bins (multi-stream recycling).

Single-stream was adopted by many communities and companies because it costs less to haul. But creating one big pool of recyclables creates more difficulty later, when they must be sorted out. In addition, experts say people tend to be sloppier about what they put in a single, combined bin. That produces a lower grade end product.

WINNING ISN'T RIGHT

Multi-stream tends to produce a less-contaminated, thus more valuable, end product.

For the past two decades, it hasn't mattered so much because China and a few other countries were buying large quantities of low-grade, single-stream recyclables, which cost them less and could be sorted out using inexpensive labour there.

All that changed in January 2018, when China stopped accepting lower-grade recyclables. That left many communities in the US without a market for the low-grade, mixed recyclables they were producing.

"A total of \$5.6 billion of scrap a year was going to China before the policy change," says Wiener. In 2018, that number dropped precipitously to \$3.5 billion, with most of the loss in low-grade materials. It takes time to find another home for that volume of materials, she says.

In some cases, says Dylan de Thomas of The Recycling Partnership, an industry-sponsored non-profit dedicated to transforming the recycling system in the country, the problem is a combination of contamination and macroeconomics.

"In March of 2017, mixed paper was trading at almost \$90 a ton. Now it's worth roughly



zero. Almost all the recycled paper on the West Coast was going to China," he says.

Despite the challenges of finding new markets, he says his organisation has identified only 31 programmes across the country that have suspended their recycling programmes. Its data base includes 2,000 of the estimated 10,000 recycling programmes across the country, he says.

Sorting recyclables at the front end turns out to make more sense for many communities and the market for higher grade, pre-sorted recy-

SUCCESS OR FAILURE OF THE RECYCLING PROCESS IS PARTLY LINKED TO WHETHER RECYCLABLES ARE BEING DUMPED INTO ONE MIXED CURBSIDE BIN FOR PICK-UP OR ARE DIVIDED BY RESIDENTS INTO SEPARATE BINS

clables — both domestically and with big international players like China — remains strong, experts say.

Areas where single-stream recycling continues to thrive tend to be those with a series of good practices to help ensure a less contaminated recycling stream. They also tend to be areas with access to advanced sorting and processing technologies, Wiener says.

Of course, tweaking a recycling programme is easier said than done. Some cities and towns have had to limit the types of recycled material they accept and accept cost increases.

A lot depends on educating the public, says Mitch Hedlund, executive director of Recycle Across America, a non-profit that pushes for clear, standardised labels on recycling bins.

"There are certain materials that manufacturers want to reuse, but the public is confused about what is recyclable and which bin it should go in, so there's too much garbage ending up in recycling bins," she says.

Heidi Herzberg, mayor of Deltona, Florida, which suspended its recycling programme because it had become too expensive and ineffective, says it's more complicated than that. While part of the problem was that almost 40 per cent of what people were putting in bins shouldn't have been there — like lights and greasy pizza boxes — there also turned out to be no market in her area for glass or certain types of plastics, she said.

"They say 'reduce, reuse, recycle,' but people have been skipping straight to recycling in order to feel better," she said. Her community was facing a \$25,000 a month increase, she said, and much of the collecting material was ending up in landfills anyway.

"It's a reality check, and it's very emotional." Environmentalists agree that producing less waste in the first place is preferable to even the best recycling programmes.

"We need to figure out how to reduce and reuse, not just how to recycle," said Herzberg.

—AP

Which is the best model of development?

The right system of economy is one which is based on social justice and on economising rather than borrowing and deficit-financing, says RAJYOGI BRAHMAKUMAR NIKUN JI

The US economy is seen as the engine that drives the world economy and that is why any sign of slowdown in it raises serious concerns about harmful spillovers in other economies. Any keen student of current economics would know that the economic policies of America, especially during the last few years, have not been very effective. In fact, the defeat of most powerful leaders in the presidential elections that were held in past few decades is attributed mainly to the failure of their economic policies which created many problems for the country.

However, most people do not realise that the economic problems faced by Americans emanate not merely from wrong policies that have been adopted recently. Their roots are hidden in some wrong economic, political and cultural concepts and models built over a period of time. For example, the mounting unemployment and the huge foreign debts are not the phenomena that have sprung up overnight and the result of a sudden change in the million Americans, living in poverty, also has not arisen in the short period of one or two years. The roots of their sad economic state go at least as far as a period as the end of the World War-II when they adopted a very lavish life-style and an utterly consumeristic attitude and built their economy on militarism, giant industries, transactional and multi-national business corporations, import of raw materials at cheaper rates from the undeveloped countries and export of their goods to such nations and economic capture of foreign markets through their multi-national corporations. In short they thrived on the basis of this unfair economic system as long as other industrial nations other nations did not stand up against their economic exploitation or injustice. Nevertheless, their economic system was not based on some morally sound and enduring economic principles.

Since it was based on commercialism, competition, consumerism and exploitation of weaker nations and on hot or cold war with an adversary nation as they had a powerful army which was well-equipped for war. Now, when some other industrial nations have grown stronger, these American factories cannot compete with them and have therefore, closed down or retrenched workers as was done recently when there is no war, they are forced by economic reasons to sell their military hardware to many Asian countries in order to keep the workers employed as was done recently when fighter jets were sold. Their country has had their ills of recession or inflation or heavy taxation or it had to resort to deficit budgets, foreign debts, protectionist policies, etc, to keep the economy going.

It would have, therefore, been appropriate if developing nations like India had learnt some lessons from the failures of the so called developed models of economy and had, instead, kept in mind their own national ethos and ancient heritage which suggests that a right system of economy is one which is based on social justice and on economising rather than borrowing and deficit-financing. We should also keep in mind our own national situation which necessitates national and regional self-sufficiency and affords opportunities of full employment to its citizens and promotes balance between rural and urban economy, equitable distribution of income and wealth and prevention of the growth of wide disparities in income and wealth. We must remember that unbridled consumerism and commercialism and also large scale borrowing are against the value-system which is embedded in our spiritual heritage and will, sooner or later, lead us to a grave economic crisis. So, let us all learn to lead a life of simplicity and frugality and be honest and just to all.



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Do you need vitamin sea?

Water quality conditions can change rapidly at beaches because of tides and 24 hours could be long enough to notify people. Experts are looking for more rapid and cost-effective ways to stay on top

Planning a trip to the beach? Along with looking forward to some summer fun, beachgoers may be thinking about the safety of their waterfront destination. Will the water be clean enough for swimming, surfing, wading and all the other ways people enjoy the nation's shoreline?

Across the US, county, city and state water quality managers measure levels of indicator bacteria to gauge water quality. When bacteria such as E. coli — used for monitoring freshwater beaches like the Great Lakes — and Enterococcus — used for marine beaches — are present, so might other dangerous bacteria and viruses that are trickier and more expensive to measure.

High levels of the indicator bacteria signal that microorganisms that are a concern to human health, such as Salmonella and Norovirus, may also be in the water. Viruses and bacteria that can make you sick sometimes enter beach waters through stormwater runoff, accidental sewage spills and even failing septic systems. When the numbers of E. coli or Enterococcus in water samples from the beach exceed a certain threshold value, officials either post a sign advising the public not to swim or close the beach altogether.

The system generally works well, but one serious current drawback is the time it takes to get the results after the water samples are collected — nearly 24 hours. This means that if a beachgoer checks the reported water quality at her favorite beach on a Tuesday, the results

she sees would be from a water sample collected on Monday morning. Even though water quality is generally good across the nation's beaches, tens of thousands of advisories are issued each year.

Water quality conditions can change rapidly because of tides, wind and storms, so 24 hours is a long time for the public to wait for accurate notification. Beach managers are looking for more rapid, cost-effective ways to stay on top of water quality. In an environmental microbiologist who's developed and patented one such solution.

FASTER TEST, QUICKER RESULTS

Here's how it works. A user collects about a cup of the water of interest and passes the sample through a filter about the size of a 50-cent piece that captures the bacteria. With the traditional methods, that filter would be placed in a petri dish specially formulated to help bacteria grow. The user would incubate the plate around 20 to 24 hours and then count the bacterial colonies that grew. He or she can then report those final concentrations and give an assessment of whether the water was clean or not — yesterday.

With the newer methods, including the versions I've developed, the operator places the same kind of filter in a tube. Instead of waiting for bacteria to grow, she purifies the DNA in the tube and adds a series of chemicals and enzymes. Then a machine performs quantitative polymerase chain reaction, a technique that copies the DNA many



times over. Clinical laboratories have widely used this technology for over a decade to rapidly test for bacterial infections, influenza and antibiotic-resistant bacteria.

The QPCR machine heats and cools the sample, allowing the enzymes and chemicals to copy the DNA; one copy of E. coli DNA in the water sample becomes two, then four, then eight, then 16 and so on. Each incorporates a chemical that acts as a fluorescent tag in the new DNA strands. Then the machine can measure how much fluorescence is present in all the copies combined. The greater the fluorescence means more bacteria were in the original water sample.

It only takes about 45 minutes to an hour to make these measurements and the machine spits out an easy-to-

use spreadsheet of the results. Overall, the water quality testing process takes only an hour or two, which is a big time savings.

RAPID BENEFITS AT THE BEACH
Faster results allow the public to be knowledgeable of beach conditions that are more related to the timing of their visit.

Another important advantage is that rapid tests can be used immediately following a storm or accidental sewage overflow event to ensure that the water quality at the beach has returned to normal and recreation can resume.

Quicker results also allow beach managers to understand the conditions that typically drive the water quality at their beaches — things like river flows, stormwater inputs and wind mixing

and direction. They can become adept issuing warnings during particular conditions that are frequently dangerous to public health.

Despite the EPA promoting the use of these kinds of rapid tests that rely on analyzing DNA rather than waiting for bacteria to grow, though, their adoption has not been widespread. This is because most of the tests recommended to date have required technical ability and have been relatively expensive.

I've developed one rapid test for E. coli that's good for freshwater beaches. Another version looks for Enterococcus bacteria and is used at marine beaches. Ultimately, the aim is to get these tests to be easily portable. Beach personnel such as lifeguards could do quick water sample collection and analysis, feeding the data by mobile phone to reporting websites.

Beach water quality has an impact not only on the public but on businesses dependent on beach visitation such as restaurants, shops, parking, rental vendors and snack bars. The use of the rapid testing approaches to ensure return to good water quality and reopening of a high-use beach with thousands of beachgoers each day can be a boon for beach economics, keeping restaurants and shops open and active.

But most importantly, fast water quality results would reduce the number of illnesses associated with swimming at recreational beaches.

—The Conversation/AP

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I've developed one rapid test for E. coli that's good for freshwater beaches. Another version looks for Enterococcus bacteria and is used at marine beaches. Ultimately, the aim is to get these tests to be easily portable. Beach personnel such as lifeguards could do quick water sample collection and analysis, feeding the data by mobile phone to reporting websites.

Beach water quality has an impact not only on the public but on businesses dependent on beach visitation such as restaurants, shops, parking, rental vendors and snack bars. The use of the rapid testing approaches to ensure return to good water quality and reopening of a high-use beach with thousands of beachgoers each day can be a boon for beach economics, keeping restaurants and shops open and active.

But most importantly, fast water quality results would reduce the number of illnesses associated with swimming at recreational beaches.

—The Conversation/AP



Don't limit a child to your own learning, for he was born in another time. —Rabindranath Tagore

VR CAN IDENTIFY EARLY ALZHEIMER'S

Virtual reality (VR) technology can identify early Alzheimer's disease more accurately than 'gold standard' cognitive tests currently in use, says a study.

The findings, published in the journal *Brain*, highlight the potential of new technologies to help diagnose and monitor conditions such as Alzheimer's disease.

"These results suggest a VR test of navigation may be better at identifying early Alzheimer's disease than tests we use present in clinic and in research studies," said study lead author Dennis Chan, Professor at the University of Cambridge in Britain. The researchers developed and trialled a VR navigation test in patients at risk of developing dementia.

"We live in a world where mobile devices are almost ubiquitous and so app-based approaches have the potential to diagnose Alzheimer's disease at minimal extra cost and other current diagnostic approaches," Chan said.

DON'T EAT POTATO CHIPS DURING PREGNANCY

Women should avoid eating too much vegetable oil and potato chips during pregnancy as such a diet may result in an increased risk of pregnancy complications and poor development of the babies, warns a study.

Foods such as potato chips and vegetable oil contain omega 6 fats, particularly linoleic acid, and the research suggests that overconsumption of this nutrient can promote inflammation and may be associated with an increased risk of heart disease.

"It is important for pregnant women to consider their diet, and our research is yet another example that potentially consuming too much of a certain type of nutrient can have a negative impact on the growing baby," said study/lead author Deanne Skelly, Professor at Griffith University in Australia. The finding, published in the *Journal of Physiology*, found that eating a diet with three times the recommended daily intake of linoleic acid might be harmful in pregnancy.

APP TO BOOST PHYSICAL ACTIVITY IN WOMEN

A mobile phone application designed to boost physical activity for inactive women has shown promise in a trial.

The study, published in the journal *JAMA Network Open*, shows that the mobile app created for women did help when combined with an activity tracker and personal counselling.

"We showed that if you design an activity app using an evidence-based approach, it will be more effective," said study lead author Yoshimi Fukuko, Professor at the University of California in the US.

"Our findings could go a long way to get more people to move, particularly women," Fukuko said. The study, which lasted nine months, was called the mobile phone based physical activity education (mPEd) trial.

The app, which was developed exclusively for the study and is not commercially available, had three main functions, including a pre-programmed interactive daily message or video that reinforced what was learned during a beginning counselling session, and a daily activity diary to record progress.



READING WITH KIDS HELPS IN PARENTING

People who regularly read with their kids are less likely to engage in harsh parenting and their children are less likely to be hyperactive and have attention problems, say researchers.

The study, published in the *Journal of Developmental and Behavioral Pediatrics*, suggests additional benefits from shared reading — a stronger parent-child bond.

"For parents, the simple routine of reading with your child on a daily basis provides not just academic but emotional benefits that can help bolster the child's success in school and beyond," said study lead researcher Manuel Jimenez, Assistant Professor at Rutgers University in the US.

"Our findings can be applied to programmes that help parents and care givers in underserved areas to develop positive parenting skills," Jimenez said.

GENE LINKED TO OBESITY IN KIDS IDENTIFIED

Researchers have identified a common gene variant that increases the risk of obesity in children.

In a study published in *Obesity Journal*, the researchers from the University of Columbia found that a specific variant (single nucleotide polymorphism) of a gene called "FTO" affects eating behaviour that may be predictive of subsequent weight gain in children, who are at obesity risk.

Early identification of the physiology and behaviours that constitute early risk factors for subsequent weight gain will help inform best practices for intervention and prevention of obesity in children," said study author Michael Rosenbaum, a professor at Columbia University.

"This study shows that even before the development of an obese phenotype, children at risk, in this case by virtue of a common genetic variant, exhibit increased food intake," added Rosenbaum.



'We will work on our batting skills'

After suffering 6-wicket defeat against NZ in first warm-up game, Men In Blue hope to get better wickets and perform well in World Cup

PTI ■ LONDON

All-rounder Ravindra Jadeja is hoping to get better pitches in the World Cup than the one at Kennington Oval where India's batsmen were blown away by New Zealand in their first warm-up game.

With a brisk half-century, Jadeja was the only batsman to stand out in a dismal performance.

But the senior player assured there was nothing to worry about. "It was typical English conditions, wicket was soft initially but it got better as the game progressed. We are hoping that we don't get this much amount of grass and get a better wicket to bat in the World Cup," Jadeja said at the post-match press conference.

Opting to bat, India were all out for 179 in conditions slightly favourable to bowlers, and New Zealand chased down the target with plenty to spare.

"This is our first game, it is just one game and we can't judge players on one bad innings, one bad match. So nothing to worry as a batting unit," Jadeja said.

"It is always difficult in England, you are coming from India, where you play on flat wickets, we still have time to work on it. There is nothing to worry, we just have to keep playing good cricket."

"As a batting unit we will work harder on our batting skills, everyone has a lot of experience, so nothing to worry."

Jadeja said the aim was to utilise the opportunity of batting over the remaining overs after he walked in to bat in the 20th over.

"I was telling myself that my shot selection should not be faulty. There was no rush," he said. "There were many more over left. So I was taking my time."



"I knew that if I could play out the initial overs then it would become easy gradually. I kept my shot selection very limited in that initial phase. That proved beneficial. I played out the good overs they bowled me early on and then it became easy."

Asked about India's decision to bat first in seaming conditions, Jadeja said: "We knew there will be seaming conditions, so we decided to bat to face tough conditions because if we bat in such conditions it will be easy for batsmen in actual matches. We took it as a challenge. We will do well, we have no doubt."

Jadeja said he will look to play his natural game and not put himself under pressure during the showpiece event.

Kohli pleased with lower-order fightback

After the Indian top order failed to live up to the expectations in the warm-up game against New Zealand, skipper Virat Kohli expects his lower-order batsmen to rise to the occasion if a situation arises in the upcoming World Cup.

"Very good," Kohli said of the lower-order contributions at the post-match presentation. "I mean, the one thing we spoke about in a tournament like the World Cup is, you could easily have

your top order out for not too many, so the lower order has to look forward to that and I think Hardik (Pandya) batted really well. MS (Dhoni) absorbed the pressure really well and (Ravindra) Jadeja got a few runs as well, so I think we got a lot out of this game. The lower order getting some runs that was the biggest positive."

The Indian skipper lauded bowlers' effort and felt that the fielding and catching need to improve. **IANS**

'Hope to end our losing streak'

PTI ■ KARACHI

Pakistan's chief selector Inzamam-ul-Haq is confident that the national team will break its six-match losing streak in the World Cup against India when it takes on the arch-rivals at the mega-event on June 16.

Pakistan have never won against India in a World Cup match but the former Test captain feels that they can post a breakthrough victory against the neighbours this time around when the two teams meet at Manchester next month.

"People take a Indo-Pak match very seriously and some even go on to say that we will be happy even if only we can win against India during the World Cup," said Inzamam.

"I'm hopeful that we will end our losing streak against India in World Cup matches," he told a Pakistan Cricket website.

The veteran of 120 Tests, however, said that the World Cup is not just about the match against India, and "Pakistan have the potential to beat other sides as well."

Pakistan go into the World Cup having suffered 10 successive ODI defeats and were also beaten by Afghanistan in the warm-up



match of the World Cup. Inzamam, who is under-fire in recent times for making late changes in the World Cup squad, spoke about the difficulties of selecting national team and the pressure that comes with it.

"People think it is easy to jot down 14-15 players in order to form a squad but it's nothing like that because there is a lot of pressure. For example it was very difficult for us to select fast-bowlers for the World Cup because there were a lot of good names around including the likes of Amir, Junaid and (Usman Khan) Shinwari," said the 49-year-old.

On threat posed by minnows like Afghanistan during the upcoming tournament, Inzamam said no team should be taken lightly in the WC.

Rain washes away warm-up games

PTI ■ CARDIFF/BRISTOL

The ICC World Cup warm-up matches between Pakistan and Bangladesh and South Africa and West Indies were on Sunday called off due to rain in both the venues.

While the Pakistan-Bangladesh match in Cardiff

was abandoned without a ball being bowled, the tie between South Africa and West Indies saw very little action.

South Africa were coasting at 95 for no loss in Bristol after being sent into bat when the match was called off. Hashim Amla was batting on 51 off 46 balls.



'We will take confidence from win against India'

PTI ■ LONDON

Acknowledging the swing on offer during their warm-up game against India, fast bowler Trent Boult says the convincing win over one of the favourites gives them confidence heading into the World Cup.

Boult was the wrecker-in-chief, returning impressive figures of 4/33 to bowl out India for 179 in under 40 overs at the Kennington Oval.

"Nice to see it swinging around a little bit," Boult told ICC after the game here on Saturday.

"I'd love to expect that everywhere, some good wickets around the country. It's going to be a good challenge, but as a bowling unit, we're definitely looking forward to it, but we'll take some confidence out of today."

"But yeah, the biggest challenge will be when it's not swinging and not nipping around a little bit. Then how do we take wickets? So we'll look at that."

With batsmen dominating one-day internationals in England in recent years, there is a belief that this World Cup could see imposing totals being notched on regular basis.

"We know what early wickets does to the batting side," Boult said.

"We want to be as aggressive as we can to try and get into any team's batting order, so we know if we get two or three wickets at the top of the order, it puts a lot of pressure on the opposition. That is the basic plan, and for me, it's about pitching the ball up and swinging the ball around as much as it can."

Boult was the joint leading wicket-taker in the 2015 edition with 22 scalps from nine matches. The conditions have become more challenging since then, but he isn't intimidated by predictions of 500-plus scores.

"The ball hasn't really swung around as much since then, but I don't know if I'm going to make any drastic calls like someone's going to make 500," he said. "But we'll face it if it happens."

Aussies look for win

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Beware, for Australia are on the prowl. With recent one-day international series wins against India and Pakistan, they gave a glimpse of what they can do at the ICC Men's Cricket World Cup 2019; with the win over England in their first warm-up game, they've sounded out a downright warning to other teams.

Steve Smith is in sublime form. His 116 against England in Southampton on May 25 was a lesson in pacing an innings, as he progressed from caution to chaos. Others, such as David Warner, Shaun Marsh, Usman Khawaja and Alex Carey also scored some solid runs.

Australia's bowling was good too — it has to be if you're able to defend 297 against this England batting line-up — but that hardly comes as a surprise. Even during their slump, the bowling was never really an issue. But what was impressive was that they were able to put the brakes on England even in the



absence of Mitchell Starc and Pat Cummins, who will lead the attack in the tournament proper.

While in their first warm-up fixture, they conceded 338 to South Africa and then folded for 251.

On a positive note, Dimuth Karunaratne found runs once again, with a valiant 87, while the experienced Angelo Mathews notched up 64. Sri Lanka will hope that runs from the leadership group can have a positive impact on the others. **(Venue: The Rose Bowl)**

England to face Afghanistan in warm-up

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

England, the world No 1 side, suffered defeat in their first warm-up match against a resurgent Australia. So much has been said about the strength of this English side and their contention for their maiden World Cup title. But even before the tournament has begun, the signs have already emerged that when it comes to the World Cup, every team goes in with a chance of winning it and that nothing is a foregone conclusion.

It wasn't a typical game in these conditions. Aus put up 297 — well below what has been par in ODIs in this part of the world recently — before going on to successfully defend it. While their failure to chase down a sub-300 total was an aberration on the part of Eng, they did have their share of positives to take from the match, such as James Vince, who replaced Alex Hales in their



Poms sweat on Wood's fitness regime

England fast bowler Mark Wood was left with a nervous wait after his World Cup chances were thrown into doubt by a foot injury that saw him leave the field during a warm-up defeat by Australia in Southampton on Saturday.

The Durham quick had managed just 3.1 overs in his opening spell when he

abandoned his run-up after feeling pain in his left foot.

Wood's injury-plagued career has been blighted by a history of repeated ankle problems but he did give Eng some cause for optimism by running off to the pavilion, although the fact he then went to hospital for a scan and took no further part in an eventual 12-

run defeat was concerning. "We'll see how it turns out in the morning. It can be a worry for him," said England stand-in captain Jos Buttler.

"He's worked hard and it's something he's battled a bit which is a frustration for him. I'm sure he's in the best hands. We hope for the best for him." **AFP**

Old warhorse Malinga keeps Sri Lanka dreaming



AFP ■ COLOMBO

Lasith Malinga will be one of the World Cup's oldest players but the Sri Lanka paceman shows no signs of slowing down as he bids to prove his critics wrong.

Malinga was stripped of the Sri Lanka one-day international captaincy in April after losing all eight matches in a troubled reign that lasted just four months.

Sri Lanka's selectors, led by former fast bowler Ajantha de Mel, said Malinga was unable to unite the team, while he was also accused of falling out with other senior players.

The 35-year-old recently reminded the world of his enduring qualities when he claimed 16 wickets for the Mumbai Indians in the Indian Premier League.

He produced a sensational final over in the Twenty20 final against Chennai Super Kings to hand Mumbai a record fourth IPL title.

Malinga frequently hits speeds of over 86 miles-per-hour (138 kph), while his devastating slower balls were in evidence during the IPL, a welcome sign for embattled Sri Lanka ahead of the World Cup in England and Wales, which starts on May 30.

With several inexperienced bowlers in Sri Lanka's squad, Malinga, with 322 ODI wickets to his name, is expected to be the cutting edge to the team's attack.

Malinga was Sri Lanka's captain when they won the 2014 World T20 title with a host of stalwarts by his side including Mahela Jayawardene, Kumar Sangakkara and Tillakaratne Dilshan.

But following the retirement of Sri Lanka's big guns, a new crop of players made their way into the side, a group selector De Mel believes did not fully back the quick bowler as skipper. New captain Dimuth Karunaratne's first major goal will be to bring a hurting Malinga back into the fold to ensure the team get the best out of the old warhorse.

If Sri Lanka are to have any chance of repeating their 1996 magic they need Malinga fit and firing in what is likely to be his final World Cup.

Introspection made me better person: Smith



PTI ■ MELBOURNE

Self introspection and social work during the year-long ban for his involvement in the infamous ball-tampering scandal has helped him grow as a better person, says Australia batsman Steve Smith.

"Having a year to reflect and do some different things that I'd never done before (was beneficial). Doing stuff in the mental health space, doing stuff with Gus Worland (an Australian television and radio personality) — that was incredibly eye-opening and satisfying in a way to know I was making a difference to other people," Smith was quoted as saying by *cricket.com.au*.

"I took a lot out of that. I do feel I've certainly grown as a person over the last year, that's for sure," said the prolific batsman.

Smith was involved in activities to help raise awareness of mental health during his suspension period.

"I've really enjoyed the way everyone has got around me and Dave (Warner), it's just like fitting back in like we never left in a way."

It's a case of creating our own legacy: Holder



PTI ■ BRISTOL

Hopes are pinned on a born-again West Indies to relive their glory days but skipper Jason Holder says the upcoming World Cup is "a case of creating our own legacy."

Windies have a proud history at the World Cup, winning the first two editions of the tournament and making the final of the third. After struggling for nearly two decades, a few stunning wins against England recently lifted their spirits.

"Not personally," Holder told the ICC when asked if he feels pressured to re-establish their dominance, adding, "It's just a case of us creating our own legacy."

"We obviously know our history what the past players have done. We will take it stage by stage, step by step, not get too far ahead of ourselves."

The presence of big players such as Andre Russell and Chris Gayle have helped, acknowledged the 27-year-old skipper.

"Guys like Andre Russell make it easy for me, they tend to give a lot of support. I can't thank them enough for the support they have given me, I know they continue to rally behind me. It's important for us to continue to build as a group. It's a relatively young side and we have got one or two experienced heads in the cam it's a good mix."

He has rated hosts England as the favourites in the showpiece. "England are the number one side in the world for good reason, you now they are playing some very good cricket, lot of hype around them, they have obviously got the home advantage."

"I guess god to give them respect being the number side in the world. All teams are practically equally matched, they are well-balanced sides, sides that can defeat anyone on any particular day. We have just got to take it game by game, give everyone the respect they deserve and we will have to execute our plans," Holder said.

FedEx: Back & Running

Roger beat Lorenzo in his first match on clay court Slam



AFP ■ PARIS

Roger Federer marked his return to Roland Garros after a four-year absence with a 6-2, 6-4, 6-4 win over Italy's Lorenzo Sonego on Sunday and said he had "missed playing in Paris so much".

Federer, the 2009 champion in Paris, will face German lucky loser Oscar Otte

for a place in the third round. The 20-time major winner hadn't reached the quarter-finals. However, on Sunday, it was as if the 37-year-old had never been away as he swept to victory in one hour 41 minutes on a rebuilt and packed Court Philippe Chatrier. It was his 60th successive first round

win at a Grand Slam. "I missed it so much so thanks for the welcome," said Federer. "I felt great playing on this court. It looks great and attractive, so congratulations to everyone involved. "Hopefully I can play here again for my next match." Federer broke serve five times and fired 36 winners past 24-year-old Sonego,

the world number 73 who made the quarter-finals at the Monte Carlo Masters this year after qualifying. "Two breaks in the first set were very important for me and when I was leading 4-0 I could take more risks, be more aggressive," said the third seed. "I know that I can play very well on clay and I am very happy to win in straight sets."

TSITSIPAS ENTERS ROUND 2

Rising Greek star Stefanos Tsitsipas moved into the French Open second round on Sunday with a comfortable straight-sets win over Maximilian Marterer on Court Philippe Chatrier. The 20-year-old sixth seed, a semi-finalist at the Australian Open earlier this year, brushed aside German Marterer 6-2, 6-2, 7-6 (7/4). Tsitsipas raced into a 2-0 lead and edged a third-set tie-break to see off an opponent who reached the fourth round in Paris last year. "It was a difficult first match... In the tie-break I managed to play like I did in the first two sets," said Tsitsipas, who was playing on the Roland Garros show court for the first time. "These are the moments we're practising for and dreaming of, I'm really happy to play here."

Tsitsipas will next face either Indian Prajesh Gunneswaran or Bolivia's Hugo Dellien as he looks to reach the third round for the first time.

NEW COURT UNVEILED

The new Court Simonne Mathieu, a 5,000-capacity semi-sunken arena enclosed by greenhouses, was officially unveiled on Sunday. It forms part of the 350 million euro upgrade of the entire site which will also see the demolition of the Court 1 'building' after the 2018 tournament. Spain's Garbine Muguruza, the 2016 champion, had the honour of opening proceedings against America's Taylor Townsend and the 19th seed marked the occasion with a 5-7, 6-2, 6-2 win. "It's cute," said the Spaniard. "It's not small, but it's, you know, cosy."

Other winners on the first day included Japanese seventh seed Kei Nishikori, a quarter-finalist in 2015, who eased past France's Quentin Halys 6-2, 6-3, 6-4. However, Italian 16th seed Marco Cecchinato, the man who sent Novak Djokovic crashing out in the quarter-finals in 2018, fell at the first hurdle.



Kerber suffers shock defeat

AFP ■ PARIS

German fifth seed and reigning Wimbledon champion Angelique Kerber saw her hopes of a career Grand Slam ended by Russian teenager Anastasia Potapova at Roland Garros on Sunday as Roger Federer prepared to make his Paris return after a four-year absence. Fifteenth-seeded Wimbledon champion Kerber suffered a 6-4, 6-2 defeat to 18-year-old Potapova who hit 28 winners past her German opponent. "I had a lot of confidence and I have to thank my coach for that," said 81st-ranked Potapova who hit 28 winners past her German opponent. Kerber, 31, has now lost six times in the French Open first round. The German left-hander had come into Roland Garros carrying a right ankle injury which forced her to pull out of the Italian Open and retire from her second round tie in Madrid. "She played really good. I tried my best," said Kerber who was broken six times in the match which brought the curtain up on a rebuilt Court Philippe Chatrier. "I didn't really have great preparation and I was just happy to get on court to play the match."

"I didn't have many expectations coming in." Potapova's first win over a top 10 player gives her a second round clash against Russia's Wang Yafan or Marketa Vondrousova of the Czech Republic.

Valencia stun Barca to win Copa del Rey



AFP ■ SEVILLE

Barcelona wanted a trophy to ease their Champions League heartache but instead fell to another shock defeat as Valencia pulled off a thrilling 2-1 victory on Saturday to win the Copa del Rey.

Chasing a record fifth consecutive triumph, Barca were undone by a relentless and gutsy Valencia side, who hung on after Lionel Messi pulled a goal back to set up a dramatic finish in Seville.

By then, Valencia were already two up, Kevin Gameiro and Rodrigo scoring twice in 13 frantic first-half minutes, after the latter spurned a golden early chance that could have spared them a nerve-shredding last 17 minutes.

Messi drove the comeback effort and Goncalo Guedes twice should have wrapped it up for Valencia, missing a one-on-one and then an open goal before the final whistle sparked pandemonium.

Valencia's coach Marcelino, who might have been sacked when his team were four points off relegation in January, raced around the pitch in a frenzy

CHASING A RECORD FIFTH CONSECUTIVE TRIUMPH, BARCA WERE UNDONE BY A RELENTLESS AND GUTSY VALENCIA SIDE

Barcelona's players sank to their knees. "We always had faith," said Marcelino. "Beating Barcelona to win the cup is very special. We deserved to win."

Messi admitted on Friday his team had still not recovered from the "hard blow" suffered against Liverpool and certainly they seemed too easily disheartened here, finding their fight only once it was too late.

Messi also threw his support behind Barcelona's coach Ernesto Valverde but it remains to be seen whether the backing of the board remains after two

dreadful defeats have now spoiled such a brilliant La Liga success. "I do not think it's the coach's fault," said president Josep Maria Bartomeu. If Barca's season all but ended three weeks ago, Valencia's arguably found life a few days later, as they moved into the top four for the first time and then held on to qualify for the Champions League.

'HISTORY MADE' Winning their first trophy since 2008, in the club's centenary year, completes a remarkable comeback campaign that, after 15 games, had them languishing in 15th. "We have made history," said captain Dani Parejo. Gameiro added: "In the difficult moments we stayed close. I don't have the words to describe it."

Some saw a metaphor in Barcelona's pre-match tifo, spelling out 'All Together' splitting down the middle, while there were key absences from their starting line-up too, Marc-Andre ter Stegen, Luis Suarez and Ousmane Dembele all injured.

Valencia should have been ahead within five minutes, Clement Lenglet's error sending Rodrigo clear but his finish was brilliantly scooped off the line by the recovering Gerard Pique. Barca, with Sergio Busquets in the centre of a back three, settled but lacked zip and in the 23rd minute they were behind. Jose Gaya scuttled in behind Nelson Semedo and his pull-back wrong-footed everyone except Gameiro, who fired in. Barcelona stirred before the break. Ivan Rakitic volleyed and then headed wide, before Messi registered their first shot on target in the 43rd minute.

Malcom and Arturo Vidal came on for Semedo and Arthur during the interval, as Barca turned the screw. Messi might have turned the match but after wriggling through his sumptuous flick towards the far corner brushed the post. There were 17 minutes to survive and with six left, Messi headed over but he was dispossessed by a sliding challenge.

Messi drove from the edge of the area but it was blocked and Guedes twice should have wrapped it up, first missing a



AFP ■ PARIS

When Yannick Hanfmann takes on 11-time champion Rafael Nadal in the biggest match of his career at Roland Garros, he won't be lazed by the noise generated by thousands of fans getting behind the Spaniard as being partially deaf from childhood means he probably won't hear them anyway. The 27-year-old German, ranked a lowly 184 in the world, has come through three tough rounds of qualifying to make the main draw in Paris for the first time. Likely to play Nadal on the 15,000-seater Court Philippe Chatrier, Hanfmann says his

childhood deafness can occasionally work to his advantage. "A centre court full of spectators doesn't affect me," the Munich resident told Germany daily Bild in an interview. "I have a hearing aid but it doesn't really work. Sometimes it's a problem, because not everyone knows. "If I don't react when somebody calls my name, they think 'what's up with him?'" Hanfmann only turned professional four years ago after a four-year US college stint in which he helped the University of Southern California win two national titles. He has won just one match on the main tour all year and his

earnings reflect that. In 2019, he has banked just \$3,600 while world number two Nadal has earned \$3.7 million in the same period, taking his career total to almost \$107 million. Whatever happens when he faces Nadal, Hanfmann is guaranteed his biggest pay day yet — 46,000 euros if he exits in the first round. Despite the disparity in achievement on court, Nadal will not be over-confident. At Roland Garros, however, Nadal has only lost twice in 14 years — against the now-retired Robin Soderling in 2009 and this year's top seed Novak Djokovic in 2015. Against those two losses are an astounding 86 wins.

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

India's Apurvi Chandela continued her golden run of form, winning the women's 10m Air Rifle after a closely-fought contest on Sunday at the year's third International Shooting Sport Federation (ISSF) World Cup gold of the year followed by a world record score in New Delhi in February. In the second Beijing leg she had finished just outside the

Apurvi shoots Gold



medal bracket — at fourth place. This was also Apurvi's career's fourth ISSF medal. Another Indian in the fray today, Elavenil Valarivan also made it to the finals along with teammate Apurvi but narrowly missed out on a medal, finishing

fourth. She lost to eventual bronze medalist Xu Hong of China by just 0.1 points. After 20 shots in the 24-shot final, Xu edged out Elavenil 208.4 to 208.3. Earlier, all three Indians in the 149-strong qualifying field

China whitewash Japan to win Sudirman Cup

AFP ■ NANNING

Shi Yuqi stunned world Champion Kento Momota as hosts China whitewashed Japan for an 11th Sudirman Cup title on Sunday. Japan have never won the badminton world mixed-team championship and their search goes on after they were well beaten 3-0 in the Chinese city of Nanning. China's dominant victory over the top seeds is an ominous indication of the depth they possess in their ranks with next summer's Tokyo Olympics on the horizon. Routed on by the home crowd, China went 1-0 up through their men's doubles and then took a 2-0 lead after a captivating women's singles match between Chen Yufei and Akane Yamaguchi.



Japan needed their talisman Momota to beat Shi in the men's singles to keep the tie alive. The world number one had defeated second-ranked Shi four times in five previous meetings, including last year's world championship final. It looked like more of the same when the 24-year-old Momota won the first game 21-15, but Shi suddenly found rhythm and his subdued Japanese rival faded spectacularly. The 23-year-old Shi raced to the second game 21-5 and took that searing momentum into the deciding, winning the third game — and with it the Sudirman Cup — 21-11. Shi sealed the championship with a smash and was mobbed by his team-mates, who raced onto the court after his surprise win. China, the long-time pre-eminent power in badminton, reclaim the trophy that they lost to South Korea two years ago.

India's four top consisting of two Indians and two Chinese were not eligible. India already has five quota places in Rifle and Pistol competitions. As a result they forfeited their right to quotas in the women's air rifle and men's 10m air pistol competitions, given they have already secured the maximum possible two quotas in these events. Apurvi, Arjun, Saurabh Chaudhary, Abhishek Verma and Divyansh Singh Panwar have secured quotas for the country so far. India's other quota is in the men's 10m air rifle and thus the shooters would be eligible for only one quota. Monday will witness three finals with six Tokyo quota places up for grabs.