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FORGET THE BRAG, GET REAL

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WITNESS ATTACKS 'FICTIONAL NARRATIVE PROPAGATED BY RUSSIANS'

VIVACITY 13
SMILE IS A MEDICINE

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LIVERPOOL
FACE CRYSTAL
PALACE IN PL
12 SPORT



Cong, NCP OK Uddhav as CM

Deliberations to continue on Saturday to fix unfinished Govt agenda

TN RAGHUNATHA ■ MUMBAI

As the talks among the Shiv Sena, the Nationalist Congress Party (NCP) and the Congress over Government formation in Maharashtra remained "inconclusive" on Friday evening, NCP president Sharad Pawar said that there was "unanimity" among the three parties over Sena president Uddhav Thackeray's choice as the Chief Minister. Senior leaders of the Congress and the NCP said they have reached "conclusions" on many issues.

At the end of a two-hour meeting among the leaders of the Shiv Sena, the NCP and the Congress at the Nehru Centre here, there appeared to be loose ends regarding issues discussed and decisions taken in matters relating to the Government formation.

The leaders of the three parties will meet once again on Saturday to deliberate on the unfinished agenda and decide on when to stake claim for a three-party Government.

Though Pawar said there was consensus among the leaders of three parties that Uddhav would head the "Maha Vikas Agadhi" Government in the State, there was no formal confirmation from the Shiv Sena president.

Emerging out of the meet-



Senior Congress leader Mallikarjun Kharge and others arrive to attend a meeting aimed at giving momentum to install a non-BJP Government in Maharashtra, at Nehru Centre in Mumbai on Friday

ing first, Pawar said, "The leadership issue settled now. There is unanimity over Uddhav Thackeray's choice as the Chief Minister. The discussion is going on other issues. After the leaders are through with the discussions, they will address a joint Press conference tomorrow and announce all the details relating to the Government formation."

On his part, Uddhav did not say anything on Pawar's

announcement about the consensus having been reached on his name as the Chief Minister of the three-party Government.

Later, Shiv Sena spokesperson Sanjay Raut was quoted by a leading Marathi channel as saying that upon the insistence by the leaders of the two alliance partners, Uddhav has agreed to accept the CM post.

Governor Bhagat Singh Koshyari, who was to leave for

Delhi, has cancelled his trip, anticipating a meeting with the leaders of the three parties during the weekend.

NCP's national spokesperson Nawab Malik said, "Both the NCP and Congress have obtained signatures of their respective MLAs. We can go with the Shiv Sena leaders any time to the Governor and give our letters of support to the Maha Vikas Agadhi Government."

D/N pink fever pitch at Eden Gardens



Cheteshwar Pujara avoids a rising delivery during the first day of the second test match between India and Bangladesh in Kolkata on Friday

PTI ■ KOLKATA

It was a party in pink at the "City of Joy" as India began its tryst with Day/Night Tests in front of political bigwigs, galaxy of sports stars and a sell-out crowd, which ensured that Sourav Ganguly's promise of a spectacle lived up to its hype.

Bangladesh Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina and West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee rang the Eden Gardens Bell ahead of the toss

here on Friday but it was the famously enthusiastic Kolkata fans, who gave the match its character.

After being reluctant for four years, India finally embraced the Day/Night format for Test cricket, following a strong push from new BCCI President Ganguly and Kolkata proved to be the perfect host.

Four days of the game are already sold out.

Tickets are also reportedly up for sale in black market

at five times their original prices, which start from Rs 150.

Spectators, a lot of them clad in pink, thronged the iconic stadium, making for the kind of carnival-like atmosphere that is now seen mostly in T20 games. The last memory of such overwhelming response to a Test was the epic 2001 game that India played against Australia and won by 171 runs following-on at the same ground.

At the BC Roy Clubhouse,

it was a pink carpet welcome for the invited dignitaries, which included the two greats of Indian sport — cricket icon Sachin Tendulkar and Olympic hero Abhinav Bindra — among a host of others.

From the 50-odd grounds-men in pink-coloured clothing to a giant pink balloon hovering over the Eden sky, it was a carnival-like atmosphere that greeted anyone who cared to walk in to the Eden Gardens.

50 fold reduction in water, sewer connection charges

Delhi Govt waives development fees, now pay ₹2,310 for 200 sqm plot

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal on Friday announced to waive the development and infrastructure charges for new water and sewer connections in the national Capital.

Kejriwal, who is also the chairman of the Delhi Jal Board (DJB), said people would have to pay just ₹2,310 now to get new water and sewer connections.

Earlier, a person having a plot of 200 square metres would have to pay nearly ₹1.14 lakh to get new water and sewer connections.

It has been observed that despite having a water pipeline in a particular area, most residents did not get "formal connection" due to the high development and infrastructure



Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal during a press conference in New Delhi on Friday

charges, even as they were using supply water through "illegal" means, Kejriwal said.

The board (DJB) today decided that it will not take development and infrastructure charges from Delhiites. Despite water pipelines laid in areas, lakh of households have not installed water or sewer connections because of high installation, infrastructural and development charges. Residents resort to illegal means for tapping water, but

refrain from taking a formal water connection because of high charges," he said.

The Government will invest in developing and fulfilling the infrastructural requirements like installing pipelines, water treatment plants, and pumping stations, etc, he said.

The 151st meeting of the DJB cleared many projects related to improving water and sewer networks and to clean the Yamuna River.

No SPG cover for family of ex-PM, Centre to table Amendment Bill

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The family members of former Prime Ministers will not be guarded by the elite Special Protection Group (SPG), as per the amendments approved by the Union Cabinet to the SPG Act which will need to be ratified by Parliament.

The move comes days after the Centre withdrew the SPG security cover accorded to Congress president Sonia Gandhi and her children, Rahul Gandhi and Priyanka Gandhi Vadra, almost after three decades.

The proposed legislation — the Special Protection Group (Amendment) Bill — has been listed in the Government's business for next week for introduction in the Lok Sabha, Union Minister of State for Parliamentary Affairs Arjun Ram Meghwal announced in the Lok Sabha on Friday.

As per the SPG Act, the force provides security to the Prime Minister and the members of his immediate family.

Will curb Capital's air pollution faster than Beijing: Javadekar

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Environment Minister Prakash Javadekar on Friday said India is expected to take less time than the 15 years taken by Beijing to improve air quality in the national Capital.

He was responding to a three-day long discussion in the Lok Sabha on the air and water pollution in Delhi. Meanwhile, in the Rajya Sabha, Minister of State for Agriculture Kailash Choudhary accused AAP-led Delhi Government of "creating hype" on the issue of rising air pollution in the national Capital due to "political reasons".

The Lok Sabha witnessed structured debate on the pollution with Speaker Om Birla giving opportunity to all parties and allowing maximum number of MPs to raise questions after Javadekar's speech.

Responding to a discussion on "air pollution and climate change", the Minister said a mass movement is needed to tackle the problem. "It took Beijing 15 years (to fight air pollution). We will take lesser



Environment Minister Prakash Javadekar speaks in the Lok Sabha during the Winter Session of Parliament in New Delhi on Friday

PTI

time," he said, referring to the air quality in Delhi.

There is a relation between pollution and climate change, the Environment Minister said, adding that 40 per cent of India's total power capacity will come from renewable sources before 2030.

Noting that India's green cover is increasing, the Minister said five times more trees have been planted in Delhi in place of trees cut down for construction of the Delhi Metro. Observing that pollution in Delhi was the topic of discus-

sion in the entire country, he said the "solution to the problem will come only when we recognise the problem."

On measures being taken to control pollution, he said round-the-clock monitoring was taking place.

He also said that a ban has been put on use of furnace oil and emission norms have been enhanced. The Government has formed a task force on Delhi's toxic smog and everyday the monitoring was being done by the Prime Minister's Office.

CAPSULE

3 COPS MARTYRED IN LATEHAR NAXAL ATTACK

Ranchi: Three Jharkhand police personnel were on Friday killed in a Naxal attack in the State's Latehar district, officials said. The attack by armed Maoists occurred around 8.30 pm when a police party was on board an official four-wheeler in the Chandwa police station area.

BILL INTRODUCED IN LS TO OUTLAW E-CIGARETTES

New Delhi: A Bill to ban production, import and sale of electronic cigarettes and similar products was introduced in the Lok Sabha on Friday.

PROTEST ENDS, BHU SANSKRIT DEPT REOPENS

Varanasi: A group of BHU students protesting against the appointment of a Muslim professor ended their "dharna" on Friday.

ALWAR POLICE ORDER TO COPS WITHDRAWN

Jaipur: The police in Rajasthan's Alwar district ordered nine Muslim members of the force to shave their beards, only to withdraw its instructions a day later. The original order on Thursday said the nine policemen were asked to cut their beards so that they acted and looked "unbiased".

MP gets award for growth in infra, agri

Bhopal: Madhya Pradesh has been awarded by the Government of India for outstanding progress in the field of infrastructure and agriculture development in the category of Best Performing States. On behalf of the Madhya Pradesh Government, the Minister for Urban Development Jaivardhan Singh received the award from the Union Information and Broadcasting Minister Prakash Javdekar.

Informing about the development journey of Madhya Pradesh, Singh said that hard work, inspiration and innovations are key factors of the development. He said that Madhya Pradesh is moving forward on the path of development owing to the vision, experience and administrative competency of the Chief Minister Kamal Nath. Referring to the Model of

Development of Chhindwara district, Singh mentioned that Chhindwara district has become indicator of development not only in the state but in the entire country. Informing about the innovations made in the field of urban development, Singh said that a new electric vehicle policy has been introduced in the state. Under the policy, initially 400 pollution free buses will be plying in 5 cities of the state. Along with this, a Real Estate Policy has been formulated in the state, which will be implemented in all 378 cities of the state.

Singh further said that Indore Model in the field of sanitation will also be followed in other districts of the state. The state has recently received the Best Smart State award. He assured that Chief Ministers' vision of development will soon be a reality in the State. SR

Release remaining flood relief of ₹5, 621 cr: CM to Centre

STAFF REPORTER ■ BHOPAL

Expressing gratitude towards the Union Government for releasing ₹1,000 crore relief amount against the damage caused by the excessive rainfall in the State in the rainy season, the Chief Minister Kamal Nath said that the remaining amount of ₹5621.28 crore should be released without any delay.

The Chief Minister said that crop in 60 lakh hectares of 55 lakh farmers were damaged in the state. The Chief Minister has urged the Prime Minister to immediately release the remaining relief amount, so that the loss suffered by the farmers could be compensated. Nath said that similar to other states, the Union Government should also show generosity towards the people of Madhya Pradesh.

HAILS GOVT FOR RELEASING INITIAL ₹1K CRORE

The Chief Minister said that in a memorandum submitted by him to the Prime Minister on the damage caused by the excessive rainfall, he also urged that it should be placed in the category of serious calamity. The Central Study Group has also visited all the affected areas and submitted its report. Assessment on the loss was also given in the report.

Kamal Nath said that the farmers are facing cash problem due to the loss suffered by them because of the heavy rainfall in the state in the recent past. The farmers need money for seeds and fertilizer for sowing in Rabi season. In

such a situation, the Union Government should immediately release the remaining relief amount which can be distributed to the farmers.

The Chief Minister said that the state Government is making all efforts to help the farmers with its own resources to provide relief. The help of the Union Government is also essential in the huge loss caused by the excessive rainfall. In view of the serious situation of delay in centre's assistance to provide relief to the farmers, the Chief Minister has appealed to the Prime Minister and Home Minister to release the relief amount at the earliest.

Mulayam cuts 81st b'day cake, picks son over brother

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

The Samajwadi Party celebrated the 81st birthday of its founder Mulayam Singh Yadav at the party headquarters here on Friday.

Flanked by his son and party president Akhilesh Yadav as well as senior leaders, Mulayam cut the birthday cake amid loud cheers from party workers and leaders.

Shivpal Singh Yadav celebrated Mulayam's birthday separately in absence of the big brother.

On the occasion, an 81-kg laddoo was presented to Mulayam by SP leaders. Sweets were distributed among the workers in presence of Mulayam.

Shivpal, on the other hand, rushed to Saifai in Etawah where he celebrated the birth-

day of his elder brother as Ekta Diwas and also organised a wrestling competition.

Addressing party workers and leaders after cutting the cake, Mulayam, who arrived here from Delhi on Thursday evening, asked them to celebrate the birthday of the poor party workers.

"You all celebrate the birthday of the poor, and I will also attend it," he told the enthused workers who raised slogans.

The SP patriarch attacked the Governments at the Centre as well as in UP, saying farmers were in distress and youths were unemployed.

"Don't tolerate injustice and organise yourself to protest against the prevailing situation as this will strengthen the party," he said.

Earlier, it was said Mulayam would be in Delhi on

his birthday due to the ongoing session of Parliament.

In Lucknow, banners and hoardings were put up outside the party office, which wore a festive look with party workers dancing to the tunes of drums and distributing fruit and sweets.

The SP leadership had directed all the district presidents of the party to organise birthday celebration in their districts.

A week ahead of Mulayam's birthday, Shivpal, who is president of Pragatisheel Samajwadi Party (Lohia), had softened his stand towards nephew Akhilesh and offered to bury the hatchet and join hands with the SP and support Akhilesh as the Chief Minister candidate in the 2022 UP Assembly polls.

He had also suggested joint celebration on Mulayam's birthday.

LOP BHARGAV TO SPEAKER NP PRAJAPATI

'Revoke Lodhi's disqualification'

STAFF REPORTER ■ BHOPAL

After several attempts to meet Speaker of the State Assembly, Leader of Opposition Gopal Bhargav finally on Friday succeeded in meeting Speaker NP Prajapati urging him to revoke disqualification of Prahlad Singh Lodhi, whose membership to the Assembly was terminated by the Speaker after Lodhi was punished by the court in an old case.

The High Court later stayed Lodhi's jail term on his appeal. Speaker NP Prajapati however stood his ground claiming that the disqualification was not ordered by him and came to force automatically once the court awarded two-year jail term to him.

While talking to media persons after the meeting with LOP Bhargav, Prajapati said he was saddened by allegations of the opposition and urged one and all to maintain the dignity of the con-



Leader of the Opposition in the State Assembly Gopal Bhargav calls on Speaker NP Prajapati at latter's residence in Bhopal on Friday. Pioneer photo

stitutional post while affirming that he is impartial in his behaviour to all the MLAs.

Notably, the BJP in the past had

accused him of partisan behaviour on Lodhi's disqualification and alleged that the speaker acted in haste under Congress pressure. "I had acted within the limits of the constitution," Prajapati told.

He also made it clear that there was no miscommunication while he was in his home constituency to attend a local event.

He also pointed out that all this while some discussions took place which seemed improper about two constitutional authorities including speaker and the governor.

On opposition allegations that he acted in a day after MLAs conviction and did not act for a week after HC stay, an anguished Prajapati claimed that decision of the MLA wasn't his decision, as there is clear SC guideline that MLAs membership gets terminated the moment he/she is punished with jail term of two or more years.

He rejected charges that he was in a haste saying the court verdict was delivered on 30th and he issued disqualification orders on 2nd offering three day-time and he wasn't acting in the manner when Chaudhary Rakesh Singh's membership was decided in six hours and Kalpana Parulekar's matter was disposed in four hours, in an apparent dig at previous instances when MLA faced hasty action.

Saying that for him all MLAs stand equal, Prajapati claimed that he has no option to act in case any court decides anything which is beyond his limits.

On the contrary, talking to the media persons, Bhargav said that he discussed matter of disqualification of the BJP MLA Prahlad Singh Lodhi and the speaker told him that the HC stay has been challenged in the SC and he is not the applicant in the matter, the State Government is.

Prosperity of farmers priority of Govt, says Agriculture Min

STAFF REPORTER ■ BHOPAL

Farmer-Welfare and Agriculture Development Minister Sachin Yadav has said that the first priority of the State Government is the prosperity of the 'Annadata' (Farmer).

The State Government has launched a campaign to free the farmers of loans by implementing the 'Jai Kisan Crop Loan Waiver Scheme' as per their manifesto.

In the first phase, loans worth ₹7154.36 crore have been waived, of 20 lakh 22 thousand 731 eligible farmers. In the second phase, which is being started soon, loans of 12 lakh 2 thousand 78 farmers will be waived.

Minister Sachin Yadav

said that the state government is supporting farmers at every step. By implementing 'Jai Kisan Samridhhi Yojana' on March 5, 2019 in the state, a provision of ₹160 per quintal incentive amount on wheat sold by the farmer through the Krishi Upaj Mandi and e-procurement centre has been made. Under the scheme, incentive amount of ₹1463.42 crore will be provided to 11.79 lakh farmers, selling 92.67 lakh metric tonnes of wheat.

Yadav has informed that the Chief Minister's Food Processing Scheme has been implemented in the state from this year. Under the scheme, one to two and a half acres of land will be made available to educated unemployed youth on lease for 30 years per

beneficiary.

Under the scheme, clusters of 100 acres each are being prepared for floriculture. Two new horticulture colleges have been started in Rehli and Chhindwara in the state.

Three Horticulture Centres of Excellence are being set up in the Indo-Israel Project. Out of these, Citrus Centre in Chhindwara, Vegetable Centre in Morena and Floriculture Centre is being set up in Bhopal.

Minister Sachin Yadav said that the state government has decided to take the state from bad condition, in the field of agriculture, to prosperity. For this, every kind of help is being provided to the farmers at every step.

SBI holds town hall meet at 32 centres in Bhopal circle



STAFF REPORTER ■ BHOPAL

State Bank of India has conducted Town Hall Meetings for its customers across the country at more than 500 centres on Friday. In Bhopal Circle, these meets have been conducted at 32 centres (23 in Madhya Pradesh and 9 in Chhattisgarh).

The General Manager of SBI, Rajeev Kumar Saxena presided over the Town Hall Meeting for Bhopal at Minto Hall, Old Vidhan Sabha. This is an attempt made by SBI to reach out its mass customer base across India to understand and obtain feedback of its esteemed customers to improve its services and products.

Speaking on the occasion, Saxena said that State Bank of India is serving more than 43 crore customers. These customers come from different segments. Bank delivers different products and services through different channels and is at forefront of the technolo-

The General Manager of SBI, Rajeev Kumar Saxena, presided over the Town Hall Meeting for Bhopal at Minto Hall, Old Vidhan Sabha. This is an attempt made by SBI to reach out its mass customer base across India to understand and obtain feedback of its esteemed customers to improve its services and products

gy. Many facilities have been extended by way of digital mode especially through YONO, an Omni channel experience, unique of its kind in entire Banking industry which offers Digital Banking, Financial Superstore and Online marketplace. Through YONO a customer can have cardless withdrawal also (YONO CASH). Customers can also avail retail loans through YONO app. YONO Krishi is also becoming very popular among farmers.

Bank is also giving priority to quality of redressal of complaints. SBI has launched

this year 'Customer Care Centres' at its Main Branch TT Nagar, Bhopal and Jabalpur Main Branch. These Centres provide comprehensive value added Non-Financial Banking services, digital products, enquiries for loan and other products and feedback / complaints etc for its customers. Customer Care Centres cater to all SBI customers, whether having accounts in Bhopal, Jabalpur or anywhere else.

Saxena mentioned that feedback gathered will be taken in proper perspective and all efforts will be made to fine tune the services further.

Medical practitioners protest against admin's intervention in health sector

PNS ■ GWALIOR

Protesting against the administrative action against nursing homes, the medical practitioners in Gwalior are up in the arms against the district administration. The physicians have threatened agitation if the action against nursing homes is not stopped.

It started on Wednesday when Government and private physicians held a meeting in the city protesting growing intervention of administration in the health sector.

Attended by physicians of Gajra Raja Medical College, Jaya Arogya Hospital, district hospital and private nursing homes, the meet on Wednesday expressed anguish over growing interference of administration on the pretext of inspection and relief to patients. President of Junior Doctors Association Dr Anil Sharma had announced that administrative interference would not be tolerated in the

medical college.

Besides, director of the Sahara Hospital Dr AM Bhalla had alleged that the state was under influence of bureaucratic activism and bureaucrats wanted to register their presence everywhere. The officers have turned medical colleges and hospital as their labs to implement their ideas.

The meet had mutually decided that the doctors won't address senior officers as 'Sir' and would offer respectable address according to the designation and would not visit residences of officers for treatment. The doctors had vowed not to follow instructions of administrative officers other than Chief Medical and health Officer. They had affirmed that they would not invite IAS and IPS officers in their functions and events.

Other demands included opposition to Clinic establishment bill, appointment of doctors at all the administrative posts in Health and Medical Education Department, com-

menement of Indian Medical and State Medical services and others.

However, on Thursday, administration served notices to half a dozen private nursing homes over usage of basement against the norms. A private hospital was served notice over encroachment on government land for hospital services.

This action was taken promptly without intimidating the establishments concerned and administration employees pasted the notices on the nursing homes and hospital concerned on Thursday evening.

Gwalior Divisional Commissioner MB Ojha claimed that the ongoing action by municipal corporation and department of Health was ordered by the court and there was no question of harassing the physicians. The officer further claimed that physicians are always welcome form a dialogue if they have any issue.

Man booked for allegedly raping 21-year-old girl

Bhopal: Gautam Nagar police on Thursday booked a miscreant for allegedly sexually assaulting and intimidation of a 21-year-old girl at Gautam Nagar. The accused Aman alias Zaki was booked after a complaint was lodged by the victim with the Gautam Nagar police.

Police said both the accused and victims live in the same locality. In the year 2011 victim was sexually assaulted when she was alone at her house and later she was lured of marriage after she would attain age of marriage.

After three years when the victim attained age of marriage she asked accuse to marriage but the accused escaped with excuses and later refused to marry her after which the victim went to lodge complaint and accused assured her that he would marry her and she agreed not to lodge complaint.

Later, the accused refused to marry, when the victim presurised him for marriage, the accused threatened her of life and escaped from his house. The victim informed her mother and they approached police and lodged a complaint with the Gautam Nagar police.

The Victim claimed that she was minor at the time of sexual assault. But when she turned 18 and asked for marriage, the accused refused to marry.

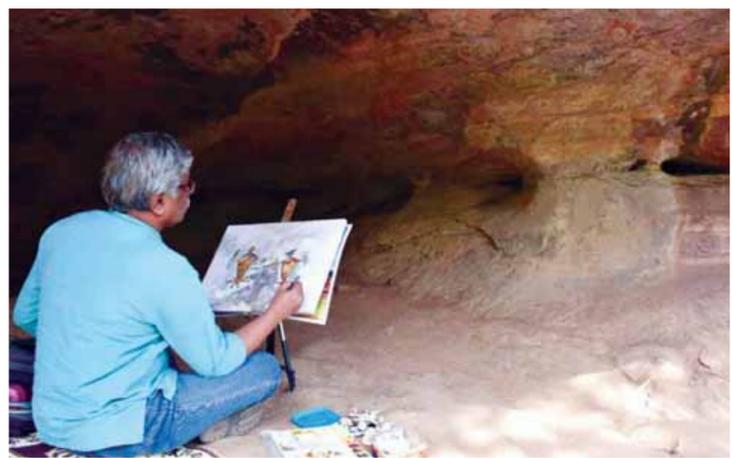
After the preliminary investigation police have registered a case against the accused under section 376 (2) (N), 506 of the IPC and Sections of Protection of Children from Sexual Offences act 2012 were also imposed. The search for the accused who went absconding after the case was registered has been started said police. **SR**

3-day national painting workshop ends

STAFF REPORTER ■ BHOPAL

On the occasion of 'World Heritage Week' and the Centenary Celebrations of Padmashree Vishnu Shreedhar Wakankar, (A great archaeologist, renowned artist and the Grandpa of Rock Art studies in India), a three-day national painting workshop concluded on Friday with the collaboration of Indira Gandhi National Centre for the Arts (IGNCA), New Delhi and Indira Gandhi Rashtriya Manav Sangrahalaya (IGRMS), Bhopal at Bhimbetka. In this workshop, 16 painting artist from different states of the country preserved the rock paintings here on their drawing sheet.

On this occasion, BL Malla (Project Director, IGNCA) congratulated all the participants and said that, The main aim of the purpose of this workshop is the oldest heritage



of the country, which is the bearer of the community, society and culture of ancient human beings in the form of

rock paintings and various activities related to it.

The people are mainly to make the youth aware of its

importance, as well as to spread this heritage of India to coming generations. Another major aim of this workshop is

also to make people aware of and of the promotion of Indian culture through the contribution of Padmashree Vishnu Sridhar Wakankar, grandpa of Indian rock art. The exhibition of these paintings can be organized with the joint collaboration of the Indira Gandhi National Centre for the Arts, New Delhi and Indira Gandhi Rashtriya Manav Sangrahalaya (IGRMS), Bhopal in future.

Vasudev Kamat (Trusty, IGNCA), Baba Yogendra (Founder, Sanskar Bharti), Narayan Vyas (Archaeologist) and Anthropologist were present on this occasion. During this three day national workshop, video and photo documentation was carried out by Rajeev Jain (Senior Cameramen, IGRMS), Tapas Kumar Biswas (Photography Officer, IGRMS) and his team.

50 bikers on 12-day ride reach Bhopal

STAFF REPORTER ■ BHOPAL

A group of fifty young bikers kick-started their journey from Varanasi, for a 12-day ride spanning a distance of over 2500 km, to reach their destination in Anand, Gujarat.

Starting from the serene ghats of Varanasi on November 15, travelling through the holy Sangam of Prayagraj, the city of Nawabs Lucknow, Kanpur, Agra and Gwalior, the rally reached Bhopal on Friday.

Later, the bikers started their trip towards Vidisha early in the morning to inaugurate an Amul Scooping parlour there. The chief guests to inaugurate this parlour were Shashank Bhargava (MLA), Senior BJP leader Manoj Katare and President of merchants association Munnalal Jain. Both Bhargava and Katare welcomed all the bikers at Vidisha.

They expressed their happiness on the inauguration of Scooping Parlour



To celebrate birth anniversary of Verghese Kurien, 'Father of the White Revolution' in India, as National Milk Day on Nov 26, a group of bikers started their bike journey from Varanasi arrive at MP State Co-operative Dairy Federation Ltd in Bhopal on Friday. The rally will culminate in Gujarat on Nov 26 after covering a distance of 2500 Km in twelve days. Pioneer photo

opened at Vidisha. They also expressed their gratefulness to Dr Kurien for bringing about this white revolution. After this, the riders had a halt at Saanchi stupa where they studied this 3rd cen-

tury architecture which is now a UNESCO World Heritage Site. Post this, the bikers moved back to Bhopal to visit the team of Sanchi Dugdh Sangh, Bhopal.

The chief guest, Shamim Uddin, MD, Sanchi Dugdh Sangh welcomed the bikers with lots of appreciation for their efforts in the rally, especially women's participation in the bike rally. He eulogised Dr Kurien for taking steps that were impossible to imagine during those times, and his work towards farmers welfare and profit. He said that we need to take inspiration for him and believe for what is right, and be courageous to follow on his footsteps. After this meet and greet session with employees of Sanchi Dugdh Sangh, the bikers went ahead to visit the Kaliyasot Dam, and retired for the day.

This 12-day motorbike rally spanning over 2500 km invites participants to join the route it would traverse from the holy city of Varanasi to the Milk capital of India, Anand.

Throughout their journey, the bikers will meet people and visit institutions created and inspired by Dr Verghese Kurien.

16-year-old boy sets himself ablaze at Bagh Farhat Afza

Bhopal: A 16-year-old boy committed suicide by setting himself ablaze at Bagh Farhat Afza under Aishbagh police station area on Thursday.

According to the police, the deceased Arif Khan was rushed to a nearby hospital where he was declared dead after he set him afire was found in a charred state in the night on Thursday.

The police said that the family members have claimed that the deceased committed suicide in the house when he was alone.

The reason behind the death remained unknown and would be investigated.

Post mortem report is awaited which could help in

revealing the reason behind the death.

The deceased was a class IX student. At the time of the incident the deceased closed his room from inside and set himself.

After the preliminary investigation the body was sent for the post mortem and the police have registered a case under Section 174 of the CrPC and have started further investigation.

During the investigation police found that the deceased was suffering from mental illness and was undergoing treatment for the same.

Meanwhile, an 18-year-old girl committed suicide by hanging from the ceiling at

her residence near Dhobi Ghat under Bajaria police station area on Thursday.

According to the police, the deceased, Sandhya Gupta was found hanging in the night 12 by the family members and was declared dead when taken to hospital.

Police were informed and based on the information; a police team reached the spot and started investigation.

The deceased left studies after class 9 and used to stay at home. The body was sent for the post mortem after the preliminary investigation.

The police have registered a case under section 174 of the CrPC and have started further investigation. **SR**

3RD DAY OF ITF WOMEN CHAMPIONSHIP

Rebecca, Kaur win their matches

STAFF REPORTER ■ BHOPAL

Marking the third day of ITF Women Championship on Friday Karman Kaur of India and Sarah Rebecca Sekulic of Germany won their respective matches giving an impressive performance.

The ITF Womens Tournament with 25 thousand dollars prize money being played at Arera Club.

On Friday, 4 singles and 2 doubles thus a total of 6 matches were played. The final of the doubles will be played at Arera Club on Saturday from 10.30 am. While the singles semi-final matches will be played.

The final match will be played between Rituja Bhosle of India and Imile Smith Bewley of Great Britain and Diana Marskiwica of Latvia



Tennis player Chihiro Muramatsu from Japan in action during ongoing International Tennis Federation (ITF) Women's Tournament at Arera Club in Bhopal on Friday

and Valeria Strakova of Ukraine. In the first match played on court number one, Sarah Rebecca Sekulic defeated Mana Kwamura of Japan with

6-2, 6-3 points in straight sets. In the second match, Karman Kaur Thandi of India defeated Sweden's Karin Kennel with 6-2, 2-6, 6-4 points.

In another match, Austria's Melanie Clafner defeated Bulgaria's Gergana Topalova with 6-4, 6-0 points and Japan's Chihiro Muramatsu defeated India Saujanya Bavisetti with 6-4, 6-2 points in straight sets.

In the doubles matches, Rituja Bhosle of India and Imile Smith Bewley of Great Britain got a walk over. They were to compete with Switzerland's Karin Kennel and Croatia's Sylvia Nijekic. In another match, Latvia's Diana Marskiwica and Ukraine's Valeria Strakhova defeated Thailand's Punnin Kovapitukdat and Russia's Maria Timofeeva with 5-7, 6-3, 10-6 points.

Book on strong parenting released at SVL on Friday



President of Club Literati Seema Raizada along with other guests releases a book 'Sashakt Abhibhavak Safal Bachhe' authored by Shikha Rastogi and Preeti Jain at Swami Vivekanand Library (SVL) in Bhopal on Friday

STAFF REPORTER ■ BHOPAL

The book Strong Parent: Successful Children: A book on Weaving Success was released at Swami Vivekananda Library here on Friday.

The book was released under an event organised by Club Literati. On this occasion, President of Club Literature, Seema Raizada and President of Public Relations Society of India Bhopal Chapter, Pushpendra Pal Singh were present.

This book published by Indra Publishing House has been authored by psychologist DShikha Rastogi and journalist Preeti Jain. Through this book, Shikha elaborates on topics like personality development, life skills, stress and anxiety, child safety, identification of child psychiatrists, digital citizenship, parenting style, exam stress and family, self-management, minimalist lifestyle etc. Has been discussed which can be practically incorporated into his

life. By giving children education like life skills and self management, they can make their life orderly and happy. The dangers of climate change can be controlled by adopting the minimalist lifestyle.

Author Preeti Jain said Strong Parents and Successful Children, the book says, when parents are not only aware of the topics related to their children but also the challenges that will come in the future, then only they will be able to produce successful children.

This is possible only if they have the right information related to parenting so that they can plan their child's future. Online cyber bullying, climate change and child abuse have been described as a future challenge by international organizations for children. These challenges are mentioned in this book how cyber threats can be avoided by moving towards digital citizenship.

On this occasion, President of Club Literary, Seema Raizada said that the authors have written important issues like parenting in easy language. All those topics have been covered through the ten chapters which are the burning issues of today and every parent and teacher is eager to know about this. By bringing all the topics in one place, this book gives parents a chance to increase their understanding on those topics.

On this occasion, President of the Public Relations Society of India Bhopal Chapter, Pushpendra Pal Singh said that the empowered parent makes the successful child book a challenge in the future to introduce the issues facing us so that the parents become empowered and when the parents themselves are empowered Will definitely succeed. Parents should not only become aware of their children but also regularly store their information about every subject which affects the surrounding environment and other children as well.

Premchand's story staged at three-day theatre fest

Bhopal: Marking the second day of three day theatre fest Munshi Premchand's story 'Godaan' was staged. The play was staged at Shaheed Bhavan here on Friday.

The play was directed by Dinesh Nair. It was performed by the artists of Rang Madhyam theatre troupe.

The story revolves around many characters representing the various sections of Indian community. The peasant Hori is shown as a typical poor peasant who is the victim of circumstances and possess all the deficiencies of common man but despite all this, he stands by his honesty, duties and judgement when time requires. He is shown dead partially satisfied and partially unsatisfied.

The story starts from a point where Hori has a deep desire of having a cow as other poor peasants. He purchased a cow from Bhola, a cowherd by taking a loan. Hori tried to cheat his brothers. This in turn led to a fight between his wife and his younger brother, Heera's wife.

Jealous of Hori, his younger brother Heera poisoned the cow and ran away fearing the police action. When the police came inquiring the death of the cow, Hori took a loan and paid the bribe to the police and was able to clear off his younger brother's name. Jhunia, the daughter of Bhola, was a widow and eloped with Gobar. Because of the fear of the action from villagers Gobar also ran away to the town.

Hori again is compelled to take a loan and pay the penalty. Hori is in huge debt from local money lenders and eventually married off his daughter Rupa for mere 200 rupees to save his ancestral land from being auctioned.

But his determination to pay those 200 rupees and to have a cow to provide milk to his grandson, leads to Hori's death because of excessive work. When he is about to die, his wife Dhania took out all the money she had and made Hori pay the debt on behalf of Godaan. This eventually fulfils the traditional dream. SR

Javadekar hails Singhar's concern over conservation of Asiatic Lions

STAFF REPORTER ■ BHOPAL

Union Minister for Forest and Climate Change Prakash Javadekar has praised the concern of the Minister for Forest Umang Singhar of the State for the conservation of Asiatic Lions in the country.

Notably, a letter was written by Singhar to the Prime Minister on September 30, 2019 pertaining to the shifting of Lion from the Gir National Park of Gujarat to Kuno Sanctuary of the State. In India Asiatic lions survive in a small number only in Gir Forest.

The Union Minister in a letter sent to the Forest Minister Singhar has mentioned that the Supreme Court had directed on April 15, 2013 to shift Asiatic lions from Gir National Park to any other place ie Kuno of Madhya Pradesh in order to increase the population of lions. The Supreme Court had directed to shift the lions on the basis of guideline of International Union for Conservation of

Notably, a letter was written by Singhar to the Prime Minister on September 30, 2019 pertaining to the shifting of Lion from the Gir National Park of Gujarat to Kuno Sanctuary of the State

Nature and to constitute an experts committee in this regard by the Union Ministry for Forest.

Javadekar has informed that in compliance to the order of the Supreme Court, an experts committee was constituted by the Union Ministry for Forest. This committee is examining the process of translocation of Asiatic Lions to Kuno of Madhya Pradesh. Apart from this, a State Specific Empowered Committee has also been formed by Gujarat and Madhya Pradesh government in their respective states in connection to the shifting of Asiatic Lions under the chairmanship of Chief Wildlife Warden. Javadekar further stat-

ed that the translocation of the Lions will take place after the in-depth mutual discussion by these committees of both the states in connection to the safety, care, guidelines in process of shifting and assessment of habitat of lions.

At present, Asiatic lions are survived only in Gir National Park of Gujarat. The World Wild Life Federation and wildlife experts believe that they must also have a population in any other favourable environment to protect the species from extinction. The Kuno sanctuary in Madhya Pradesh has a favourable environment of all kind for the Lions. In Madhya Pradesh, the forest department has completed all possible preparations to increase the population of the Lions. In case of spread of any epidemic or the population of the Lions is more in proportion to the area, Kuno will be the most suitable place in the country after Gir for the increase in Gir Lions population.

Reward announced for providing info on burglars who fled with ₹21L valuables

STAFF REPORTER ■ BHOPAL

Deputy Inspector General of Police Bhopal has declared a cash reward of ₹20,000 each for providing information of two miscreants who escaped with valuables over ₹21 lakh from Sun City under Koh-e-Fiza police station area on November 4; two miscreants were narrowed down by police who were captured in CCTV grab in the locality.

The two suspects who came as delivery boy and escaped with valuables over ₹21 lakh are still at large and to nab them police have declared a cash reward of ₹20,000 each for providing their information.

Vikas Jain's house was targeted by miscreants during the day on the day of burglary. At around 3pm when victim's son Rajveer returned from school he found the lock of

The two suspects who came as delivery boy and escaped with valuables over ₹21 lakh are still at large and to nab them police have declared a cash reward of ₹20000 each for providing their information

door broken and informed parents. On the receipt of the information Vikas returned to house and on entering the house and found gold jewelry and ₹3 lakh cash were missing.

In the CCTV footages investigated of the burglary during the time of the incident two men who were delivery boy entered the campus and later escaped. The timing of the burglary is same of the entry

and exit of the two suspects. Based on the details found by the police further investigation has been started.

Police suspects that some insider is involved in burglary or tipped the miscreants regarding the whereabouts of the victim which helped them in targeting the house within very short period. The victim is property developer and director of Ocean builders.

Minister launches diamond cutting factory in Angola

STAFF REPORTER ■ BHOPAL

KGK opened of its high-tech diamond cutting and polishing factory in Angola, launched by Minister of Mineral Resources and Petroleum, Diamantino.

Speaking at the Inauguration, Azevedo said, "Angola is an extremely rich country in mining.

With great economic potential, the region is not only the third-largest producer of diamonds but also has one of the largest and most diversified mining resources in Africa.

The Ministry is working closely with efficient enterprises to devise a plan to

increase investments which will further lead to increased employment generation in the country and especially in Angola.

Thanks to KGK group for their initiative to work on exploration and impart knowledge about the huge potential of the country. We will always support such initiatives," he added.

The new KGK factory, in partnership with SODIAM, incorporates the latest and highly developed technologies. The advancement is yet another manifestation of the natural progression of KGK's global manufacturing operations already spread across India, Russia, South Africa, Botswana and Namibia.

Man booked for molesting woman at Old Dairy Farm

Bhopal: The Bairagarh police have booked a miscreant for molesting a 34-year-old woman inside her house at Old Dairy Farm in the morning on Friday.

The accused identified as Amardeep Singh entered the house and molested the victim and threatened her. The victim later approached police and lodged a complaint.

Based on the complaint, after the preliminary investigation police have registered a case under sections 354, 452 and 506 of the IPC and started search for the absconding accused.

The victim and accused live in the same locality and at around 10.30 am when she was alone at her house the accused entered the house forcefully and molested her and when the victim raised an alarm he fled the spot. The victim claimed that the accused before leaving threatened her of dire consequences if she would report the

incident to family or police.

Meanwhile, Gautam Nagar police booked a miscreant for assaulting molesting a 19-year-old minor girl on Thursday at Firdous Nagar; accused assaulted victim after she refused to

talk with the accused.

Police said that the accused identified as Asim molested the victim and was pressurizing her became friends which she had refused in the past still the accused used to harass her. SR

Play 'Shikarga Pather' staged at Tribal Museum

STAFF REPORTER ■ BHOPAL

In the weekly series 'Abhinayan' of dramas, play 'Shikarga Pather' was staged in Bhand Pather style. The play was performed at Madhya Pradesh State Tribal Museum here on Friday.

The play was performed under the direction of Imtiaz Ahmed (Kashmir).

The play begins with the life of the forest, where a woodcutter goes to cut wood. But a ghost living in the forest does not let him cut wood and drives him away. After some time, when a shepherd takes his animals into the forest, he sees a lion running after him to hunt deer.

The play begins with the life of the forest, where a woodcutter goes to cut wood. But a ghost living in the forest does not let him cut wood and drives him away

After the lion is gone, he is grazing his animals, then he finds a person and asks about the lion. But the shepherd understands that it is the hunter who wants to hunt the lion. At the same time the king of the state comes there, the hunter is not able to hunt on seeing the king.

Hence, the king appoints the shepherd to protect the wild

animals and the forest, and with this the end of the Natya Shikarga Pather in the Bhand Pather style. In this theatrical performance, the artists inspired the audience to preserve the life of the forest with their artistic acting skills.

The time limit for this presentation was about 45 minutes. The play was much enjoyed by the audience.

बैंक ऑफ बड़ोदा Bank of Baroda E-AUCTION SALE NOTICE

Appendix-IV-A [See proviso to rule 8(6)]

SALE NOTICE FOR SALE OF IMMOVABLE PROPERTIES

E-Auction Sale Notice for Sale of Immovable Assets under the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 read with proviso to Rule 8 (6) of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002

Notice is hereby given to the public in general and in particular to the Borrower (s) and Guarantor (s) that the below described immovable properties mortgaged/charged to Bank of Baroda the Secured Creditor the Physical possession of which has been taken by the Authorised Officer of Bank of Baroda Secured Creditor, will be sold on "As is where is", "As is what is" and "Whatever there is" basis for recovery of Amount mentioned below plus interest and other expenses due to Bank of Baroda the Secured Creditor from below mentioned Borrowers & Guarantors.

Name of the Branch / Borrower / Guarantors / Mortgagee	Description of Secured Assets (Moveable/Immovable Properties)	Reserve Price	Demand Notice Date
		EMD	Possession Date
Bank of Baroda Estwhile Vijaya Bank, Bhopal Main Branch, Berasia Road, Bhopal. Tel : 0755-2745030, 2745311 Authorised Officer/ Service provider : Shri Manoj Vadodariya Contact person : Ram Rai Bankira - 9755729725 EMD A/c No. : 760100301000310, Favoring The Authorised officer- Bhopal Branch, IFSC Code : VIJB0007601	All that part and parcel of the property consisting of Duplex House at Plot No 3, "Eden Garden" Gram Amravard Khurd Teh Huzur Dist Bhopal Ph No 19, ward No 56, District Bhopal (M.P.) Area- 1016.17 sq.ft. Boundaries: North : Duplex No- 02, South: Duplex No-04, East : Other Land, West : 7.5 mtr wide Road	₹ 25.20 Lacs	01.12.2018
		₹ 2.52 Lacs	06.08.2019
Borrower/s: Mr Jitendra Rajak S/o Vishnu Shankar Rajak Co-Borrowers : 2) Mr Vijendra Rajak S/o Vishnu Shankar Rajak Guarantor: 3) Mr Vishnu Shankar		₹ 10,000/-	as on 30-09-2019
		PHYSICAL POSSESSION	₹ 2265740/- +Intt & Charges

Date & Time of Auction : 11-12-2019, 1.00 PM To 4.00 PM

For detailed terms and conditions of the sale, please refer to the link provided in Bank of Baroda website : <https://www.bankofbaroda.com/e-auction.htm>

Date: 22.11.2019, Place: Bhopal

Authorised Officer

HDFC BANK LTD. **HDFC BANK**
We understand your world

Scheme No. 94, Brilliant Avenue, Behind Bombay Hospital, Indore

POSSESSION NOTICE

(As per Appendix IV read with rule 8(1) of the Security Interest Enforcement Rules, 2002)

Whereas, the undersigned being the Authorized Officer of the HDFC Bank Ltd., under the Securitization and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 and in exercise of powers conferred under section 13(2) read with rule 9 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002, issued a demand notice dated 13.07.2018, calling upon the borrower (1) **M/s. Pradeep Traders, Through Mr. Pradeep Jain S/o Shrikant Jain (prop.)** Add :- Shop No.13, Kotwali Road, Kareem Complex, Itwara Road, Bhopal, M.P. 462001. (**Applicant/Borrower**), (2) **Mr. Pradeep Jain S/o Shrikant Jain**, Add :- House No.232, S/2, C-Sector, Indrapuri, Raisen Road, Bhopal, M.P. 462021 (**Co-applicant/Co-borrower**) (3) **Mrs. Sandhya Jain W/o Pradeep Jain**, Add 1:- House No. 232, C, S/2-Mohini Vihar, Indrapuri, Raisen Road, Bhopal, M.P. 462021 (**Co-applicant/Co-borrower**) to repay the amount mentioned in the notice being **Rs. 54,82,359.61/- (Rupees Fifty Four Lacs Eighty Two Thousand Three Hundred Fifty Nine and Sixty One Paise Only)** in Loan Account No. **81642968** as on 13.07.2018 along with interest together with penal interest, & other charges, costs etc. within 60 days from the date of the said notice.

The borrower, having failed to repay the amount, notice is hereby given to the borrower, in particular and the public, in general, that the undersigned has taken **Physical Possession** of the property described herein below in exercise of powers conferred on him under section 13 (4) of the said Act read with rule 9 of the said Rules on this **20th Day of November, 2019.**

The borrower, in particular, and the public, in general, are hereby cautioned not to deal with the property and any dealings with the property will be subject to the charge of the HDFC Bank Ltd, for an amount of **Rs. 54,82,359.61/- (Rupees Fifty Four Lacs Eighty Two Thousand Three Hundred Fifty Nine and Sixty One Paise Only)** along with interest together with penal interest, charges, costs etc. From **14.07.2018.**

DESCRIPTION OF THE MOVABLE PROPERTY

- Commercial property situated at shop No. 6 on ground floor of "Karim Complex" Built up Area 182.31 Sq. Ft or 16.94 Sq. Mtrs. Part of House No. 9, A B & C Situated at Gali Masajid Kazi Sharif No.2, Atta Suja Khan, Itwara Ward No 21 Bhopal. And the property is owned by Shri Pradeep Jain S/o Shrikant Jain & Smt. Sandhya Jain W/o Shri Pradeep Jain. Boundaries : East- Shop No. 7, West - Shop No. 4&5, North- Danish House, South - Common Passage
- Shop No. 2 on Ground Floor of "Karim Complex" Built Up Area 151.00 Sq. Ft. Or 14.03 Sq.Mtrs. Part of House No. 9, A B & C situate at Gali Masajid Kazi Sharif No.2, Atta Suja Khan, Itwara Ward No 21 Bhopal. And the property is owned by Smt. Sandhya Jain W/o Shri Pradeep Jain. Boundaries : East- Shop No. 14, West - Road, North - Shop No. 3, South - Shop No. 1

Date : 23.11.2019
Place : Bhopal

Sd/- Authorised Officer
HDFC Bank Ltd.

JJP to get one more ministerial berth: Dushyant

PNS ■ CHANDIGARH/SIRSA

With two Cabinet berths yet to be filled in the State, Haryana Deputy Chief Minister Dushyant Chautala on Friday said that Jannayak Janta Party (JJP) will get one another ministerial berth in next Cabinet expansion.

To assuage the sentiments of the other Members of Legislative Assembly (MLAs), he said they will get major responsibilities to usher in a new era of development in the State.

Only one JJP MLA out of 10 was inducted as Minister in the Cabinet expansion held on November 14. JJP's Uklana MLA Anoop Singh Dhanak was inducted as Minister of State and given the charge of Archaeology & Museums (independent charge) and Labour & Employment (attached with Deputy Chief Minister).

The BJP had on October 27 formed the Government with



the support of 10 JJP MLAs.

While many senior BJP leaders did not make it to the list of 10 council of ministers on the basis of their seniority, the final

list of Ministers also did not go down well in the JJP camp.

Among other party MLAs, senior JJP leader Ram Kumar Gautam, who had defeated Capt

Abhimanyu to win Narnaund assembly seat, was ignored for a Cabinet berth despite his seniority and political standing. On being asked about the

common minimum programme of BJP-JJP, the Deputy CM on Friday said that the all developmental announcements made in the programme will be completed for which a committee has been set up. Cabinet Minister Anil Vij, Minister of State Anoop Dhanak and three former MLAs will chalk out the programme.

This committee will prepare a roadmap to give further impetus to the announcements of the common minimum program of BJP-JJP, he added.

On the issue of liquor ban in panchayats, Dushyant said that the decision of State Government to empower the village panchayat to ban the sale of liquor in its jurisdiction will show revolutionary results in the coming days.

He further said that the State Government has successfully organised the exam of Haryana Teacher Eligibility Test (HTET) within a radius of 50-

km as JJP had promised in its manifesto. He called it just the beginning of a new era and said that the government will ensure unprecedented development in Haryana.

Responding to the opposition's allegation on paddy procurement, the Deputy CM said that the State Government has procured the paddy more than its set target. We have successfully procured 63 lakh tonnes of paddy whereas the target was 50 lakh tonnes of paddy.

The State Government has also prepared a loan waiver programme and farmers have given an overwhelming response to the scheme, he added.

Dushyant further said that on Union Government's insistence, a special session of Haryana Assembly will be convened on November 26 to commemorate the 70th anniversary of the adoption of Constitution of India.

'Very poor' air quality in many dists of Hry

PNS ■ CHANDIGARH

Several districts in Haryana on Friday reported air quality indices in the "very poor" category.

Palwal, Ballabhgarh, Rohtak, Yamunanagar, Hisar, Jind reported the "very poor" air quality as their AQIs stood at 374, 317, 319, 311, 332 and 346 respectively, as per the data provided by the Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB).

Among other Haryana districts, Ambala (AQI 230), Bahadurgarh (286), Bhiwani (298), Panipat (297), Gurugram (288) and Fatehabad (256) reported air quality in the "poor" category, according to the CPCB data.

In Punjab, Mandi Gobindgarh recorded the air quality (AQI 323) in "very poor" category.

Among other places in the state, Jalandhar's AQI was 259, while Bathinda and Amritsar were comparatively better with AQIs of 148 and 119, respectively, the CPCB data said.

The air quality index in the Union Territory of Chandigarh was recorded at 271, which is considered as "poor".

An AQI between 0-50 is considered "good", 51-100 "satisfactory", 101-200 "moderate", 201-300 "poor", 301-400 "very poor", and 401-500 "severe". Above 500 is "severe-plus or emergency" category.

Even though the number of stubble-burning incidents have significantly dropped now in the two agrarian states, the air quality, which had slightly improved during the past few days, again deteriorated on Friday at many places.

Cong, SAD leaders spar over Sarpanch killing in Punjab

PNS ■ CHANDIGARH

The Congress and the Shiromani Akali Dal (SAD) leaders on Friday entered into a war of words over the allegations leveled against Punjab Cabinet Minister Sukhjinder Singh Randhawa by Akali MLA Bikram Singh Majithia following the former Akali Sarpanch Dalbir Singh Dhillwan's killing.

A day after Majithia accused Randhawa of executing a "political murder" in connivance with the police and gangsters, the Minister dismissed the allegations while blaming the Akali leader of politicizing the matter.

To support Randhawa, senior Congress leaders from Gurdaspur issued a joint state-

ment dubbing Majithia as the "godfather of crime, drugs and gangsters".

Dismissing Majithia's allegations, Randhawa said that Akali leader was trying to divert the public attention from the issues of his involvement in drugs and that of the Badals in the sacrifice of the Guru Granth Sahib "for which the Punjabis will chase them right to their grave and I promise, I will chase them to the jail".

Declaring that he was "ready for an independent judicial probe", Randhawa asked Majithia if he was also "prepared for a similar probe against himself for his involvement in drugs and patronizing the gangsters".

"Bikram Majithia is a failed and a frustrated man and he is

trying to politicize a murder," said Randhawa.

"Majithia should explain to people of Punjab that how can he justify visiting and supporting the family of a terrorist who had killed eight members of a Hindu community after dragging them out from a bus," said Randhawa, adding that the terrorist happened to be the brother of the slain Akali leader Dalbir Singh.

The law will take its own course and investigations will reveal the motive and the culprits behind the murder of Dalbir Singh, said the Minister while condemning Majithia for trying to politicize it.

Congress leaders from Gurdaspur, including Cabinet Minister Aruna Chaudhary, MLAs — Fateh Jang Singh Bajwa, Barindermit Singh

Pahra, Balwinder Singh Ladi, and former MLA Ashwani Sekhri, said that it was strange that a person who is the "godfather of crime, gangsters, peddlers and smugglers in Punjab" has the audacity to level such baseless allegations against Randhawa who has launched a vigorous campaign against gangsters. "Randhawa and his family do not need any certificate of patriotism from someone like Majithia. Randhawa family has a history of patriotism right from S Santokh Singh Randhawa onwards and everyone knows it," they reminded the Akali leader, while asking him not to stoop too low in failure and frustration.

Congress leaders said that the culture of gangsters and drugs was created by Majithia whose links with the drug

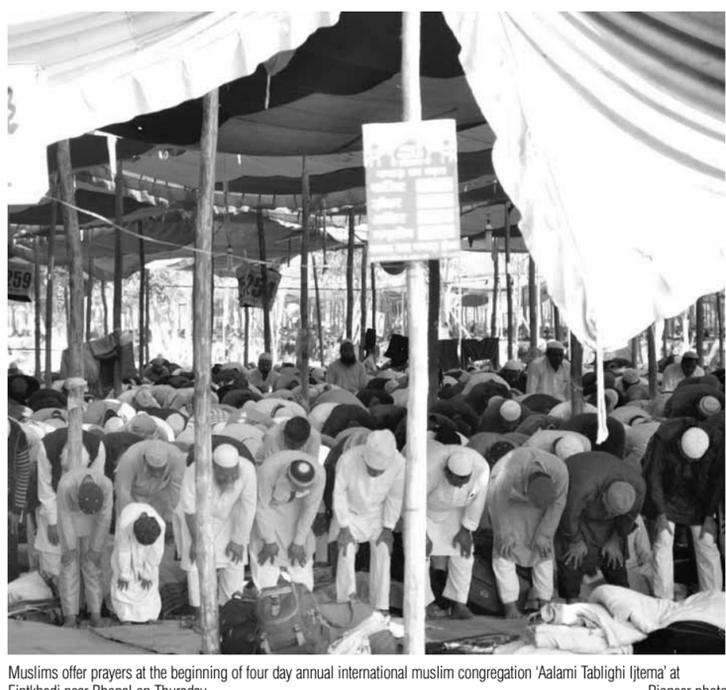
mafia, criminals and the gangsters are too well known. "The notorious criminal Jaggu Bhagwanpuria was patronized by Majithia only. No matter how hard Majithia and the Akalis may try to deflect the public attention from their sins of omission and commission, people of Punjab will never forgive them," they said.

RANDHAWA HAVE TO PAY FOR POLITICAL MURDER: SAD

Asking Punjab Jails Minister Sukhjinder Singh Randhawa not to deflect attention from the grave charges leveled against him by the family of slain former Akali Sarpanch Dalbir Singh Dhillwan, the SAD on Friday said that he would have to answer for the "political murder".



ADGP (Training) Anuradha Shankar Singh addresses a seminar on 'Emerging Trends in Media in Business Management: Futuristic Approach' organised at Makhn Lal Chaturvedi National University of Journalism and Mass Communication in Bhopal on Friday. Pioneer photo



Muslims offer prayers at the beginning of four day annual international muslim congregation 'Aalami Tablighi Jilma' at Elnkthedi near Bhopal on Thursday. Pioneer photo

Water samples found fit for drinking in Delhi

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

The Delhi Jal Board (DJB) Vice-Chairman Dinesh Mohaniya on Friday said that samples from eight out of nine places in Delhi that figured in a BIS report have been found fit for drinking during a second analysis. Mohaniya said that the DJB collected samples from the same places from where the BIS claimed to have collected it earlier and said that it failed in quality tests.

"Drinking water samples could not be collected from two places, including the official residence of the Union minister Ram Vilas Paswan, while one sample failed tests on one parameter — had less than required chlorine content," he said.

Mohaniya said the sample from the house of one Geeta Devi in Janta Vihar was found "unfit for drinking" as it had less-than-required chlorine content. "The tests were conducted

in three labs in different localities in Delhi on 31 parameters. Usually the tests are conducted on 29 parameters. Since our labs are highly equipped, we added two more parameters. The new results categorically prove the serious procedural lapses occurred while BIS collected the samples earlier," he said, adding that even the sample taken from Paswan's office in Krishi Bhawan has been found fit for drinking.

He said the Delhi Government will start collecting samples from the entire city on Saturday. Public notices will be issued informing people and the media of the places from where samples will be collected on a particular day.

"The media can come and cover the entire process. We will ensure complete transparency. After a sample is collected, it takes 48 hours for the results to come out. We will share them with the media and the public," he said.

BIS report submitted by Paswan fabricated: AAP

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

The Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) has alleged that the recent BIS report released by Union Minister Ram Vilas Paswan, which claimed that Delhi's water samples failed quality tests was 'fabricated' and presented an atmosphere in favour of the Reverse Osmosis (RO) companies.

AAP national spokesperson Raghav Chadha claimed that a false report was created to benefit manufacturers of RO purifiers. "Just before the hearing in the Supreme Court, an atmosphere was created to give the impression that quality of water was bad. It is BJP and Paswan who raised the issue whether water is fit to drink..," Chadha said.

Chadha demanded Paswan's resignation and asserted that the RO companies



regulate the use of purifiers and sensitise public about the ill effects of demineralised water.

AAP Rajya Sabha MP Sanjay Singh had on Friday demanded the resignation of Paswan for giving out a "false" report. Singh asked the Union Minister on whose provocation he lied and defamed Delhi through his allegations.

"The report on Delhi's water quality as disclosed by Paswan is completely fabricated as the people whose name is in the list, have claimed that nobody visited their houses to collect any such samples," he said.

The Centre and the city Government have been trading allegations since Paswan released a BIS report on November 16 that said water samples collected from 11 places in the city failed quality tests.

Kejriwal doing politics on water quality: Harsh

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Accusing Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal of doing politics on the issue of water quality in the national Capital instead of addressing the matter, Union Health Minister Harsh Vardhan claimed that cases of water-borne diseases among children and other diseases like cholera were on the rise due to contaminated water supply in Delhi.

Vardhan, who holds the portfolios of health, and science and technology in the Central government, defended the Bureau Of Indian Standards (BIS) report on the Delhi's water quality, saying only Kejriwal has questioned the report, which also stated that drinking water in 13 other cities failed quality tests.

"The BIS is an autonomous body working since Independence and it was never questioned by any political party.

Water samples of 13 other cities along with Delhi failed

tests, but only Kejriwal has questioned it," he said at a joint press conference at the BJP's Delhi office.

Vardhan claimed that the DJB skipped on Friday a meeting with BIS officials to specify modalities for a joint water-quality test in Delhi. "As a responsible Chief Minister, Kejriwal should have worked to address the sensitive issue of water quality, but he is involved in politics instead," he said.

Delhi BJP president and MP Manoj Tiwari, and parliamentarians Meenakshi Lekhi, Parvethi Verma and Vijay Goel were also present on the occasion.

The AAP and BJP are involved in a row over quality of water supply in the city which the BIS report has red-flagged for failing in all quality tests.

Tiwari slammed Kejriwal, saying that since 2014 he has been promising tap-water supply in every household, but has "failed" to do so. "Kejriwal's body language while lying is very convincing

and it can only be matched to that of an actor from the National School of Drama (NSD)," Tiwari said, while showing a video of the chief minister promising piped water supply to every household on various occasions in the last five years.

He asserted that the BJP was raising the issue as it is committed to fight till everyone is Delhi gets safe drinking water and not because of the Assembly election is approaching.

West Delhi MP Parvethi Verma claimed that 7.5 lakh complaints related to water supply were received by the DJB and the Chief Minister's office in the last few years, and sought to know from Kejriwal what action has been taken on it.

According to the report released by Union Minister Ram Vilas Paswan on November 16, water in the national capital was most unsafe among 21 major Indian cities and all water samples collected from Delhi failed quality tests.

BJP, AAP members clash in RS over water quality

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

BJP and Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) members clashed in Rajya Sabha on Friday over the quality of water being piped to households in the national Capital, prompting an angry response from Chairman M Venkaiah Naidu who asked members to maintain decorum. "Please follow rules, decency and decorum," Naidu said, adding Rajya Sabha is a House of elders and is supposed to live up to its name. Trouble started when BJP's Vijay Goel was called to make his Zero Hour submission on the quality of water in Delhi.

As soon as Vijay Goel started speaking on the matter, AAP's Sanjay Singh started replying to him in loud voice.

Naidu ordered that Singh's comments would not go on record and should not be reported. He asked him to sit down as no allegation against any person or Government has been made. But Singh continued, angering Naidu.

"Are you the Minister to correct it," he asked Singh. Naidu also told Goel that any display of articles published in newspapers, or any other items such as air purifiers, water bottles or pollution masks is "totally unauthorised and is not



allowed in the House.

The BJP leader had displayed newspaper articles during a short duration discussion on pollution in Delhi on Thursday. Naidu said no member can bring pressure on the Deputy Chairman by such actions. Rajya Sabha was being presided over by Deputy Chairman on Thursday when Goel had displayed the news article.

During zero hour on Friday, Goel said quality of water supplied in Delhi is a matter of concern as most

households either use ROs to filter it or consume bottled water.

He said Delhi needs 3,800 million litres of water a day but in absence of adequate supplies, residents have to depend on borewells to serve their needs. As much as 40 per cent of the water piped in the city is being wasted during transmission due to leakage and theft, he said, adding 25 per cent of the habitation particularly unauthorised colonies had no water pipelines.

Sale of air purifiers and

ROs in Delhi would bear testimony to the quality of water and air in the national Capital, he said.

On the AAP countering the report of water samples tested by the Union Consumers Affairs Ministry, he said Union Minister Ram Vilas Paswan has suggested that teams of officials drawn from the Centre and Delhi Government be constituted for collecting samples and testing. He questioned the delay in constituting such teams. Goel was constantly countered by AAP's Singh only to be overruled by Naidu.

LJP youth wing stages protest against AAP Govt

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

The Lok Janshakti Party's (LJP) youth wing staged a protest against the Arvind Kejriwal Government on the issue of allegedly polluted water supply in the Capital.

The protest was led by LJP youth wing national president Sanjay Saraf and its Delhi wing president Bikas Kumar Singh on Thursday.

Singh, a doctor by profession, said that Delhi Government has summarily rejected the recent report of Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS) which stated that drinking water in the national Capital had failed quality tests.

Singh, who was recently appointed as president of LJP youth wing's Delhi unit, has been actively participating in political activities of the party. He is chief medical officer at a reputed North Delhi-based hospital.

Army issues WhatsApp advisory

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

With Pakistan resorting to social media to trap Indian services personnel to gather sensitive intelligence, the Army has issued an advisory to all its personnel to change their WhatsApp settings to make sure they are not automatically added to any group. This caution comes weeks after the Army warned its officers and men to be beware of fake spiritual gurus trying to entice them through social media.

The latest advisory comes after an Indian Army officer was reportedly added to a group by a Pakistan based mobile number. As per the advisory, the alert officer showed the presence of mind, took a screenshot of the group and exited it. It noted that there had been attempts to target Army personnel on messaging

apps such as WhatsApp in the past. Thereafter, it listed the steps to change the WhatsApp settings to avoid such incidents in the future, sources said here on Friday.

Some days back the Army had warned officers holding sensitive posts in operational areas, all headquarters, divisions and brigades to stop using WhatsApp for official communication as it was vulnerable platform.

The advisory also noted that social media website Facebook could be used for collecting intelligence and personnel were advised to refrain from using their Facebook accounts, sources said here on Friday.

Amongst other precautions to be taken, officers and men were advised not to upload their pictures in uniform or discuss about their posting, officials said adding even the families of those post-

The advisory also noted that social media website Facebook could be used for collecting intelligence

babas are reaching out to personnel in an attempt to seek military information. The Army has also issued an advisory to its personnel cautioning them about fake social media sites as nearly 150 such sites used by Pakistan Intelligence Officers has come to light.

Issuing this warning, the Army also alerted its personnel from refraining unknown social media sites that are being used by adversaries for honey trap to extract sensitive information, sources said.

Elaborating upon the threat posed by fake spiritual gurus and babas, they said these persons through the social media try to trap gullible and vulnerable soldiers undergoing some issues thereby depressed and their families. After gaining their confidence over a time, these so-called gurus then try to seek information about movement of

troops and other sensitive military information.

Explaining the modus operandi about the Pakistani intelligence officers using the fake sites, officials said families of the soldiers are also targeted and sometimes they may inadvertently given information about the posting of their relatives.

The threat is more prominent in civil areas with the army coming in contact with the public and the men in uniform may give out sensitive information.

Some of the fake identities pose as nurses or claim to be from the Army Headquarters seeking details about the whereabouts of the personnel from their families.

The fake profiles are generally 2-3 years old. So, they do not raise suspicion and appear to be authentic. It is then that they started targeting, officials added.

Shah holds meeting with PSMC over onion price hike

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

With onion prices showing no signs of decline, the Modi Government on Friday brainstormed over the issue to get root cause to the problem which giving sleepless night to the people.

The Home Minister Amit Shah on Friday chaired a meeting of Price Stabilization Management Committee (PSMC) involving all stakeholders to discuss the strategies to cool down onion prices. Union Ministers Ram Vilas Paswan, Piyush Goyal and Narendra Singh Tomar and senior officials of ministries and intelligence agencies were also present.

Currently, retail onion prices across the country have been hovering around ₹80 to ₹90 per kg, even crossing the

₹100-mark in some places. The wholesale onion price has increased to ₹79.50 per kg at Lasalgaon and ₹82 per kg at Pimpalgaon in Maharashtra on Friday. Daily onion arrivals have dipped to barely 10-15 percent of arrivals a year ago. Traders say the situation is expected to remain till December end due to shortage of onion.

Onion prices have come under pressure due to 26 per cent fall in the production to 52.06 lakh tonnes during the kharif output late-kharif seasons of 2019-20. The Government is also facilitating private imports and also relaxed phytosanitary and fumigation norms till December. PSMC reviews prices of essential commodities whenever they shoot up and figures out the reason behind

the surge and then decides on measures to be taken to rein them in. Since August, these officials have become a regular fixture at the meetings of the government's PSMC Officials of intelligence, enforcement and income tax department work in tandem with the agriculture, commerce and consumer affairs ministries to ensure that onion prices are kept under check.

The central Government has been holding regular meetings on ways to check the rise in the price of onions. The Union Cabinet had on Wednesday approved import of 1.2 lakh metric tonnes onion in view of high prices of the essential commodity in the market. The Government has been trying to tackle the issue since August when prices first touched ₹40 per kg.

FROM THE PARLIAMENT

Opp says BJP receiving crores from firm being probed by ED

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Opposition on Friday accused the BJP of receiving crores in donation from a company being probed by the ED for allegedly buying properties from Iqbal Mirchi, an accused in the 1993 Mumbai bomb blasts, and asked whether or not it was a case of "treason".

Parliament witnesses uproar over electoral bonds issue with Congress attacking the Government and asking Prime Minister Narendra Modi to come clean on the allegations surrounding the electoral bonds scheme and accused the Government of legalising corruption.

Opposition parties led by the Congress, which protested in Parliament premises and described the issue as a "threat to democracy", sought to raise the matter in the Rajya Sabha but were not allowed to do so by the Chair. The CPI(M) along with the CPI also hit out at the government over the issue of electoral bonds and said it was "legalised political

corruption".

Several senior Congress leaders, including leader of opposition in Rajya Sabha Ghulam Nabi Azad, Congress leader in Lok Sabha Adhir Ranjan Chowdhury, Anand Sharma, Shashi Tharoor and Manish Tewari, protested against the Government inside Parliament House premises.

The MPs held placards asking the prime minister to break his silence on the issue, raised slogans against the government and called for ending the electoral bonds scheme. The issue of electoral bonds has snowballed into a political flashpoint following a report by a news portal that the Reserve Bank of India and the Election Commission had reservations against them but were overruled by the Modi government.

Citing the same report, Congress general secretary



Priyanka Gandhi Vadra said it has made four disclosures in the case of donations through electoral bonds. CPI(M) general secretary Sitaram Yechury also attacked the government on the matter.

Congress' chief spokesperson Randeep Surjewala cited a media report claiming the BJP took a large donation from a firm being probed by the Enforcement Directorate for carrying out transactions with and buying properties from the late Iqbal Mirchi, an accused in the 1993 Mumbai bomb blasts and a close aide of global terrorist Dawood Ibrahim. There was no response from the BJP on the allegations.

Govt introduces Bill to ban e-cigarettes

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Ignoring the demand for reconsideration of the ban imposed on e-cigarettes and Electronic Nicotine Delivery Systems (ENDS), the Government on Friday introduced a Bill in this regard in the Parliament.

The proposed Prohibition of Electronic Cigarettes (Production, Import, Export, Sale, Distribution, Storage and Advertisement) Bill, 2019, prepared by the Ministry of Health and Family aims to replace the Ordinance that was promulgated in September 18.

Introduced by Union Health Minister Harsh Vardhan, the bill makes the manufacturing, production, import, export, distribution, transport, sale, storage or advertisements of such alternative smoking devices a cognizable offence, attracting a jail term and a fine.

First-time violators will face a jail term of up to one year and a fine of ₹1 lakh. For subsequent offences, a jail term of up to three years or a fine of ₹5 lakh, or both.

The storage of e-cigarettes shall also be punishable with imprisonment of up to six months or a fine of up to ₹50,000, or both, it said.

The government had cited health risk to people, especially youth and issued an ordinance to ban such products.

The bill authorised officials to conduct searches in premises, stating that where such searches were not permissible, authorities might attach properties, stocks of e-cigarettes or records maintained by the manufacturer, producer, exporter, transporter, importer, stockist against whom a complaint had been made. It said the owner or occupier of the place that stocks e-cigarettes should voluntarily prepare a list of such stock in his possession and without delay submit the stock to the nearest authorised officer.

However, e-cigarettes promoting trade bodies, users and other stakeholders have been opposing government's move to ban "alternative" smoking device, alleging it was a "draconian" step taken in haste to protect the conventional cigarette industry.

'Notices will lapse if RS gets disrupted'

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Rajya Sabha Chairman M Venkaiah Naidu on Friday said that notices given by MPs for raising issues of public importance during Zero Hour will lapse if the proceedings of the House in the morning session are adjourned due to disruptions.

Usually, notices are carried over to the next day in case of adjournment of proceedings of the House during Zero Hour, which is scheduled every day from 1100 hrs to 1200 hrs. However, Naidu said some notices can be allowed the next day after taking special permission.

"Some people have developed a habit of disturbing the House in making their point of view and insisting it beyond a point and thereby stalling the House for a variety of reasons. Then the Chairman adjourns the House because I don't want ugly scenes to be seen by the people," he said.

"Members think that automatically if they (notices) are

not taken up today, they will be taken up tomorrow. Hereafter, except by taking special permission, they will not be repeated again," he ruled.

The Chairman also directed that no placards, newspaper articles, air purifiers or masks should be displayed in the House. "Nothing should be displayed in the House," he said, and warned of action against it.

Naidu objected to letters written to him being leaked in the media even before he receives it and said the Chair would not come under such pressure tactics. He warned against running commentary by MPs and defying the Chair, saying he will "name" such members.

Naidu said it is the Chairman's prerogative to allow or disallow discussions under a particular rule. Observing that Rajya Sabha is currently holding its 250th session, the Chairman said members should cooperate in running proceedings of the House in a smooth manner.

Left, BJP spar over JNU fee hike in RS

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Members of Left parties and the BJP on Friday clashed in Rajya Sabha over the issue of Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU) students' protest against a hike in hostel fees and a draft hostel manual which imposes dress codes and curfew timings.

At the backdrop of issue rocking in the Parliament ever since the Winter session started, HRD Ministry appointed three-member panel to recommend ways to restore normal functioning in JNU, concluded its meetings on Friday and will submit its recommendations next week.

Through a Zero Hour mention in the upper house, K K Ragesh of the CPI (M) raised the matter and sought a judicial probe into police action against agitating students. Immediately after this, Prabhat Jha of the BJP raised the issue of "defacement" of a yet-to-be-unveiled statue of Swami Vivekananda on the JNU campus.

Modi Govt plans to merge 2 UTs

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

After reorganization of J&K, the Narendra Modi Government has decided to merge two Union Territories - Daman and Diu, and Dadra and Nagar Haveli into one and a Bill to this effect is expected to be tabled in Parliament next week. The merged UT is likely to be named as Dadra, Nagar Haveli, Daman and Diu and its headquarters could be Daman and Diu.

The move comes three months after reorganization of J&K into two UTs - J&K, and Ladakh. Union Minister Arjun

Meghwal on Friday said in the Lok Sabha that Dadra and Nagar Haveli and Daman and Diu (Merger of Union Territories) Bill 2019 is part of the proposed Government business for the next week.

Officials said the merger of the two UTs, located along the western coast near Gujarat, will be done for better administration and check duplications of various work.

So far, both the UTs have separate budgets and different secretariats even though they are just 35 km apart. Dadra and Nagar Haveli has just one district while Daman and Diu has two.

India, China to hold 70 celebratory activities

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

India and China will jointly hold 70 celebratory activities to mark the 70th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic ties between the two countries.

The modalities for celebration was agreed to during last month's informal summit meeting between Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Chinese President Xi Jinping. The activities, including parliamentary exchanges, will demonstrate the historic connect between the two civilisations as well as their growing bilateral relationship over the

years, the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) said in a statement on Friday.

They will further deepen people-to-people exchanges between the two countries at all levels, including between their respective legislatures, businesses, academics, cultural and youth organisations as well as the defence forces, the MEA further said.

The two sides will also engage in cooperative projects in studying ancient maritime links between India and China through the establishment of sister-state relations between Tamil Nadu and Fujian Province, it added.

RTI applications increase by 11% in PMO

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Prime Minister's Office (PMO) received a slight drop in receiving RTI applications during 2018-19 compared to 2017-18 - from 12,500 to 12,143. And the ministries of Tribal Affairs and Home Affairs topped the list in rejecting the most number of RTI applications filed by the public to seek information from the Government.

However, the overall number of applications has increased by 11 per cent in 2018-19 as compared to previous year 2017-18. According to the Central Information Commission's (CIC) annual report 2018-19, 64,334 applications, which come to 4.70 per



cent of the 1.37 million applications received during 2018-19, were rejected.

The report says of the total 12143 applications, 2000 applications went to the first appeal while only 259 preferred to go to the second appeal. As per report, a total of 12,787 applications were filed with the PMO in 2016-17 as against 11,138 in 2015-16 and 12,674 during 2014-15.

As many as 7,077 such queries were raised in 2013-14 and 5,828 during 2012-13.

According to report, of the total applications, 26.54 percent applications rejected was reported by Ministry of Tribal Affairs and 16.41 per cent by the Home Ministry.

The report says as many as 13.70 lakh RTI applications were received by the registered Central Public Authorities (PAs). This is higher by 1, 36,922 or 11 per cent than the previous year 2017-18. A total 64,344 applications processed during 2018-19 showing a downward trend in rejections which have come down by 0.43% from the 5.13% reported in 2017-18.

The report shows highest number of application was received by Ministry of Finance (2.11 lakh), followed by

Ministry of Communication and Information Technology (1.47 lakh), UT of Delhi (1.28 lakh) and Ministry of Railways (1.28 lakh).

The RTI Act allows Indian citizens to seek governance-related information from Government departments in a time-bound manner. The Act has provisions to raise appeal in case the applicant is not satisfied with the response provided by the Government department concerned.

The CIC disposed of 17,188 Second Appeals and Complaints cases in 2018-19. A total of 22,736 cases were registered during the same period. At the end of the year the Commission had 29,655 cases pending before it.

25,000 tonnes of plastic waste generated every day

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Increasing use of plastics by the Fast-Moving Consumer Goods (FMCG) sector among others is posing huge environmental hazards with more than 25,000 tonnes of plastic waste being generated every day. More alarmingly, 40 per cent of this plastic waste remains uncollected and littered in the environment, the Government informed the Lok Sabha on Friday.

In a written response to a question in the Lower House, Union Environment Minister Prakash Javadekar also talked about a study conducted by the Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB) in 60 major cities of India, which estimated that around 4,059 tonnes per day of plastic waste is generated from these cities.

The Minister said the demand of plastic has increased significantly due to its increased use in the FMCG sector, which has indirectly resulted into the challenge of plastic waste management.



"With continued economic development, the demand for consumer goods is increasing. Among the various factors driving this growth, one of the most significant factor is increasing use of plastics by FMCG sector.

"Due to its durability, strength, inert behaviour and low cost, plastic emerged as one of the most reliable packaging material for the industries. As an outcome, the increase in demand for plastic has indirectly resulted into the chal-

lenge of plastic waste management," Javadekar said.

The Government aims to rid the country of single use plastic by 2022 as part of the Clean India (Swachh Bharat) part two campaign. Replying to another question on developing green alternatives to plastic, the Minister said due to its cheap cost, finding an alternative was a "challenging task".

"Due to various positive factors including cheap cost associated with plastic packaging, finding an ecologically sustainable and green alterna-

tive to plastic is a challenging task.

It is estimated that around 25,940 tonnes/day of plastic waste is generated in India. There are 4,773 registered plastic manufacturing/ Multi-Layer Plastic manufacturing / recycling units in the country.

Approximately 15,384 tonnes/day, which is 60 per cent of the total plastic waste is collected and recycled. This recycled plastic is used in manufacturing of several products. The remaining 10,556 tonnes/day of the plastic waste, which is estimated to be approximately 40 per cent of plastic waste generation, remains uncollected and littered in the environment," Javadekar said.

The Minister informed that an expert group has been constituted by Central Institute of Plastics Engineering and Technology (CIPET) with respect to research and development for compostable or biodegradable technology on plastic.

MEA: Ayodhya judgment explained to other countries

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

India has satisfactorily explained the Ayodhya judgment to other countries and the engagement with them on this matter has been "largely successful", Ministry of External Affairs spokesperson Raveesh Kumar said on Friday.

"It is the job of the MEA that if there is any important development in India, then we should engage others on that, and if there is any request from the diplomatic community - asking us what happened and why did it happen - then it is our job to engage them and put our perspective," Kumar said. Kumar said India engaged with some countries in Delhi itself or through Indian missions abroad on the matter of the Supreme Court's Ayodhya judgment.

SC to examine validity of amended law allowing private firms to use Aadhaar data

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Friday decided to examine the constitutional validity of amended Aadhaar law and the regulations allowing private entities to use the 12 digit unique number as proof of identity of consumers for opening bank accounts and getting mobile phone connections.

A bench of Chief Justice S A Bobde and Justice B R Gavai issued notices to the Centre and the Unique Identification Authority of India (UIDAI) on a PIL which alleged that the amended law and the regulations were violative of fundamental rights such as right to privacy of the citizens.

A 5-judge Constitution bench, by a majority verdict of 4:1 in September last year, held the Centre's Aadhaar law as "constitutional" with certain caveats.

It held however that Aadhaar would not be manda-



tory for opening the bank accounts, mobile connections or school admissions.

The government then brought the amended Bill which was passed on July 8 by Parliament and the amendments provide for use of Aadhaar number for KYC authentication on voluntary basis under the Telegraph Act, 1885, and the Prevention of Money Laundering Act, 2002.

The amendment and the regulations allow voluntary use of Aadhaar number for authentication and identity proof in

opening bank accounts and procuring mobile phone connections. The fresh PIL filed by S G Vombatkere, a former Army officer and Bezwada Wilson, a social activist has challenged the validity of the Aadhaar and Other Laws (Amendment) Act, 2019 and the Aadhaar

(Pricing of Aadhaar Authentication Services) Regulations, 2019 on grounds including that they are violative of fundamental rights of privacy, equality and freedom of speech and expression.

Clean campaigns

Electoral bonds are deeply flawed and more than debate, we need to create a transparent module of political fund-raising



The opacities about funding through electoral bonds have been discussed for quite some time now, benefitting almost all political parties in varying degrees, though the latest expose, courtesy transparency activists accessing RTI documents, has stirred up a big storm in the ongoing Parliament session. That the bonds would further institutionalise the politico-corporate nexus has long been established through the Opposition, which has clearly received the thinnest slices of such donations, is now crying foul. What was under the table is just legitimate now, allowing any corporation, trust, NGO or individual to donate unlimited amounts of money to our political parties. The lies have been piling up ever since the electoral bonds were introduced. For example, while it was claimed that the secret alphanumeric code would insure the donor from being tracked or identified, documents have proven that the State Bank of India (SBI) not only knows who bought how many bonds for whom, it is even required to furnish the information to probe agencies when they need them. The blackout of information has only been in the public domain. Latest documents have proven a more insidious link and a cavalier dismissal of objections. The bond movements, it appears, were closely watched by the Finance Ministry and the protests by SBI and Reserve Bank of India (RBI) over grey areas were turned down. The Election Commission was summarily dismissed as well. And while the ruling party indeed sought the Opposition's views on the scheme and assured transparency to them, it had set up a clandestine architecture. Yet all internal communications on the subject were denied by several Ministers when grilled in the Parliament. In short, the Government of the day successfully firewalled any criticism and set up a system which implied crony capitalism. Donors, by virtue of the guarantee of anonymity, could route kickbacks to parties and the latter would have to reward the largesse of the former with "friendly" policy-making and trading off favours. The poll panel had earlier claimed that electoral bonds made its job of tracking donations from overseas and Government companies difficult. The Government had consistently defended itself saying since the bonds were purchased through banking channels, there was no question of slush money being in circulation, and there was an in-built accountability. But fact of the matter is that accountability is for a few privileged eyes only to decide whether the funds are ethically intended or a backdoor form of wheeling-dealing. Remember, apart from a sealing on cash donations, there is no upper limit for donations. The bonds may be issued by banks but they can never gauge the larger understanding between donor and recipient that drives such transactions.

Real transparency demands that the haze of doubts be eliminated once and for all. Else, the electoral bonds scheme will poison the electoral process rather than cleansing it. Both the donor and political recipient must be identified clearly. Some reformists have suggested State funding, at least at the candidate level, but that would involve an estimated outlay of ₹2,000 crore, something, experts say, can be achieved by truncating the MPLADS (MP Local Area Development Scheme) allocations from five to four years. Direct funding will undoubtedly encourage entrants to participate in elections, clean up the system, reduce dependency on parties to call the shots and dilute the bargaining strength of criminal candidates with muscle and money power. More people in the fray will further motivate the bigger parties to democratise themselves. In the end, elections and their management are an expensive affair and streamlining campaign funding is a work in progress. The main purpose for which electoral bonds were introduced, the need to remove ambiguous sources of money coming into the electoral process and stash cash, has still not been achieved, if seizures during the May Lok Sabha elections are anything to go by. The Election Commission, too, has to set realistic limits of electoral spending, the sum of ₹70 lakh per candidate too little to make good. A workable budget per Lok Sabha constituency, coupled with full disclosure of corporate donations, should be the way forward. Former Chief Election Commissioner SY Quraishi had once suggested creating a National Electoral Fund to which all donors could contribute. The allocations to political parties would then be in proportion to the votes they got. Not only would this protect the identity of donors, it would also weed out black money from politics. But neither the corporate nor the political class believes in such altruism or accountability. So a sustained push by the citizenry may take long but is the only way to drive change.

Kolkata turns pink

Pink-ball cricket is upon us. Is it going to just be a gimmick or a reality of the modern game?



The lights that shine across all major monuments of Kolkata had changed their hue from blue, which is Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee's favourite colour, to pink. This to acknowledge India's first day-night Test match and its uniquely coloured pink ball. It was appropriate that this new format was being played in India's greatest cricket ground, Kolkata's Eden Gardens, and the crowds included the likes of Banerjee and Bangladeshi Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina. Unfortunately, for the latter, even though Indian cricketers were polite with her while being introduced, they were nothing like that to Bangladesh's batsmen, bundling them out for just 106. Watching India bat under the lights at the end of a Friday is a good way to begin the weekend, according to most Indian cricket fans and therein lies the greatest attraction of pink-ball cricket. The Test format might be the longest and most challenging of all and the most adaptable of major sports but it is unwieldy both for fans at the stadium and even those watching on television. The shorter variants of the game, both one-day internationals and T20, are played in the evenings and afternoons to attract more spectators into the stadium. Moving Tests towards the evening should help get both working-age people and students in droves.

However, what would really make the game interesting is a viable opponent. Taking nothing away from the stellar performances of India's outstanding pace battery away, Bangladesh has barely put up a fight. Our neighbour has improved tremendously over the past few years but this is clearly a team in strife, thanks to corruption allegations that have cost them their best player, Shakib Al Hasan. Success on the field and a good game are what ensure the long-term viability of a sport or format. India was initially aghast at T20 cricket and commentators called it a travesty. Then, it won the inaugural T20 World Cup in South Africa in a thrilling contest with Pakistan. And well, we know the rest. Would better competition have made a major difference? One could argue that there are few good teams in the sport right now. But at least India has made a start and the best part of pink-ball cricket may be when our boys tour — no more early morning starts to watch when they travel to Australia and New Zealand and morning cricket when India is in the Caribbean. As for us fans, there is a long way to go.

Forget the brag, get real

Like in J&K, where the Government's decision to split the former State into two Union Territories has led to resentment, undemocratic methods are allegedly under way in Nagaland, too



ASHOK K MEHTA

On November 20, Union Home Minister Amit Shah stated in the Rajya Sabha that after more than 100 days, the situation in Jammu & Kashmir was "normal" and that not a single bullet was fired, nor a death reported in Kashmir ever since the abrogation of Article 370. The normalcy claim was, however, debunked by a total shutdown the very next day. Shah must know that the absence of violence should not be construed as peace. Lockdown in the region has not been lifted: Political leaders and activists are still in detention and internet and cell phone services are totally or partially shut. It is, perhaps, too early to celebrate the mirage of normalcy.

Now, rewind to last month. October 31 will be remembered for more than one reason. It marked the deadline for converting the former State of Jammu & Kashmir into two Union Territories — Jammu & Kashmir and Ladakh — following the abrogation of Article 370. It was also for the first time in the history of India that a full-fledged State anywhere in the country was reduced into two Union Territories, whose security would be managed centrally. Two Lieutenant Governors were sworn in on the same day as Sardar Patel's 144th birth anniversary and Indira Gandhi's 35th death anniversary, the latter becoming coincidental but meaningful.

October 31 was also the deadline set by Prime Minister Narendra Modi for the closure of the Naga identity issue, following the Nagaland Framework Agreement of August 2017. Like in Jammu & Kashmir, undemocratic methods are allegedly under way here, too, to achieve a political solution to India's oldest and mother of all insurgencies in Nagaland.

Ironically, the National Socialist Council of Nagaland (Isak-Muivah) or NSCN (I-M)'s demand for a separate flag and Constitution — both done away with in Jammu & Kashmir — has created a flutter among the Northeastern States, who enjoy special status under Article 371 of the Constitution. The opening up of two fronts is never a wise option with adversaries like Pakistan and China scouting for opportunities.

Still, the Government can rejoice for achieving its long-standing nationalistic agenda of terminating Jammu & Kashmir's special status and integrating it with the Union of India, though without pondering over the long-term consequences, as premature self-congratulations indicate. The aim of the political surgery is to end terrorism, corruption and dynastic rule, which will put Jammu & Kashmir on the path of development — these ills, the Government feels, have been the result of its special status. Lockdown in Jammu & Kashmir has crossed the 100-day mark despite the international community urging us to restore human rights currently being denied to the people. The Supreme Court, too, had asked the Government to come up with a plan by November 10 to relax restrictions.



On November 14, Constitutional issues relating to Article 370 and Jammu and Kashmir Reorganisation Act, 2019, came up for a second hearing but was moved to a new date, December 14. In the first hearing on October 4, the Constitution bench had overruled a plea for an interim order, staying the implementation of the Jammu and Kashmir Reorganisation Act, 2019, by October 31. It said that "we can always turn the clock back."

The independence of the judiciary against a strong executive and legislature is faced with a test. Business and trade are at a standstill. The president of the Kashmir Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Sheikh Ashiq, pegged the loss to the business sector at over ₹10,000 crore. But the overall damage to Kashmir's economy could be double this figure.

Delhi has been preparing younger, new political actors, most of who have been vetted by Shah to replace the old leadership. Prime Minister Modi praised the Block Development Council (BDC) elections as a democratic exercise though it was anything but that. Elections were held before October 31 under the Jammu and Kashmir Panchayati Raj Act and not the Indian Panchayat Act, so that polls could be indirect and "managed." Elected Panches and

Sarpanches selected one among them as the head of the block councils. Many of the elected Panches were confined to hotels in Srinagar, removed from their regions. The elections were farcical as 60 per cent of the Panches and Sarpanches' seats were vacant and winners were elected unopposed.

All political leaders, except the BJP, were in detention. Still, it was the Independents who won the maximum seats. The aim is to create a political class owing allegiance to New Delhi, preferably from Jammu. With the Legislative Council abolished, Legislative Assembly seats have been increased effectively from 83 to 90, excluding 24 for Pakistan-occupied Kashmir. It is still not clear as to who will do the delimitation: The Election Commission of India or a delimitation panel. Any tinkering with the demography will be outright dangerous.

The new Lieutenant Governor of Jammu and Kashmir, GC Murmu, has said that elections will be held soon. Managing Srinagar by remote control from New Delhi will not be easy given the decades of trauma generations of Kashmiris have suffered. A 11-member team, comprising mental health specialists, which visited Kashmir after scrapping of the special status, reported "marked increase in psychological distress

in the region." A report titled, *Imprisoned Resistance: 5th August and its aftermath*, was released in New Delhi last week. No meaningful political outreach will be feasible when Kashmiris are stripped off their identity. Their hearts and minds, won over the years by the Army, are now largely lost.

Three security issues will continue to cross-fertilise: Existing alienation, which has turned into resentment; mounting radicalisation and Islamisation; and home-grown and cross-border terrorism dormant at present due to the lockdown. Kashmiris are less angry about deprivation of the special status than their land being downgraded to a Union Territory. The insult to their identity is palpable and will remain even when statehood is restored. The largely spontaneous civil disobedience movement will breed more radicalised youth, who will take to street violence and join the ranks of insurgency. The contours of a new insurgency will likely appear by next summer. Unlike in the past, Kashmiris will more readily support insurgents than the security forces.

In the short-term, once the passes close and snow sets in the hinterland by the end of November, insurgents will be forced to take refuge in villages and towns. The pause in secu-

city forces' operations due to the lockdown has undermined the counter-insurgency and intelligence grids considerably.

Troop density in the Valley is at the highest levels since "Operation Parakram" (2001-02) when nearly 2,000 terrorists were killed. Pakistan will remain constrained due to the fear of the Financial Action Task Force (FATF), which will review its actions in blocking terrorist financing in February 2020. Pakistan has not launched a single big attack after Pulwama, in fact, after Mumbai. But the 250-300 terrorists in the Valley, radicalised youth and overground workers will keep the security forces busy for long. Disaffected Kashmiris are hurt when Modi brags at home and abroad about having abrogated their special status while chasing the mirage of turning Kashmir into a land of milk and honey. "We have tried other ways and failed... so let's give abrogation of Article 370 a chance", is the contention.

Emotional integration of Kashmir has been put off even as North-eastern States, enjoying special status, are getting restive. Shah must get real.

(The writer, a retired Major General, was Commander IPKF South, Sri Lanka and founder member of the Defence Planning Staff, currently the Integrated Defence Staff.)

SOUNDBITE

This is now a fight for the dignity and self-respect of Maharashtra. Now, even if we are offered the throne of (Lord) Indra, we are not interested.



Sena MP —Sanjay Raut

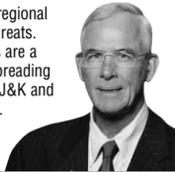
The truth is that no discussion about the Indian-Afghan relationship would be complete without a mention of Bollywood and cricket.

Afghan Ambassador to the US —Roya Rahmani



India faces many regional and geopolitical threats. Islamic insurgents are a constant threat, spreading terror throughout J&K and elsewhere in India.

Congressman —Francis Rooney



We hope Pakistanis will ask the Chinese Government why it is pursuing a development model in Pakistan that deviates from what brought it its own economic success.

Top American diplomat —Alice Wells



LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Deeper malaise

Sir — Amid vigorous efforts to tackle non-performing assets (NPAs), the revelation of ₹95,760 crore being ripped off from Government banks in April-September reflects deep systemic disorder. The Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code (IBC) was rolled out to sort things out but none factored in the time-frame of resolution, thus making the entire process ineffective. The focus of every segment of governance is on being seen to be doing something rather than on when, how and in what time-frame.

R Narayanan
 Mumbai

Clear the air

Sir — The Supreme Court's decision on the ambit of the RTI Act will serve as a precedent to usher in greater transparency, especially on the part of organisations that have hitherto been reluctant to comply with the Act, such as the Board of Control for Cricket in India and Mother Dairy. This judgment contradicts the opinion of former Chief Justice of India

All is not lost for the telecom industry

This refers to the editorial, "Turmoil in telecom" (November 21). The telecom industry is turning out to be another aviation business because of the kind of returns it is giving. Vodafone-Idea's spectrum dues to the Government reached ₹88,000 crore and those of Bharti Airtel stood at ₹45,000 crore. However, it's not just the Indian telecom that is witnessing a decline. This trend is to be seen worldwide as growth rates have taken a setback in the face of declining average revenue.

The two-year moratorium given by the Government will bring partial reprieve. Unless return on capital employed for global telecom services is raised, this industry cannot revive. Higher operating costs have squeezed margins for telecos. And while Vodafone has threatened to leave the Indian market, if indeed it were to shut shop, the biggest sufferers could be the consumers as this would lead to the duopoly of Reliance and Airtel. There could be a possibility that these two firms may take end users for granted, knowing it well that competition is



all but over, with little incentive or pressure to reduce prices. It is, therefore, essential that the Government offers them incentives to induct newer technologies so as to make the shift to 5G technology at the earliest, invest more in R&D and better customer experience.

Bal Govind
 Noida

Sad reality

Sir — The recent trend of the IFS losing ground to the IAS as a career choice is alarming. IFS officers enjoy the privilege of global appointments along with diplomatic immunity — enjoyed only by a niche segment in bureaucratic circles. With the growing importance of geopolitics and trade

bodies like the World Trade Organisation (WTO), BRICS and Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RECP), an IFS officer's career is much more exciting now. The External Affairs Ministry has not expanded much by establishing more embassies and consulates and, hence, the number of candidates designated for the IFS has hardly gone up.

Varun Dambal
 Bengaluru

Take lessons

Sir — This refers to the editorial, "Breathing new life" (November 22). All the five public sector undertakings (PSUs), which have been put on strategic sale by the Government, had been performing quite well. Some were even role models for private firms. The Government should have taken corrective steps when they started registering losses. Even now, a comprehensive examination must be done to find out the causes for their debacle.

Rati
 Via email

Send your feedback to:
 letterstopioneer@gmail.com

FIRST COLUMN

Reap the AI benefit

Soon job seekers will be sifted by algorithms and exercises that test problem-solving skills, creativity and how people respond to stress



KUNAL GUPTA

For years, the biggest challenge in the recruiting industry was manually testing applicants. Now, thankfully, Artificial Intelligence (AI) is a reality and its use for recruitment is rapidly evolving. Soon, the days of reading endless resumes and covering letters, then holding interviews, will give way to AI-led candidate assessment. Job seekers will be sifted by algorithms and exercises that test everything, from problem-solving skills and creativity, to how they respond to stress. AI will enable Human Resource (HR) professionals to reach the right candidate in the least possible time, with low-cost inclusion.

According to a recent study, 52 per cent of talent acquisition leaders say the hardest part of recruitment is identifying the right candidates from a large applicant pool. While, 56 per cent say their hiring volume will increase this year, 66 per cent of recruiting teams will either stay the same size or contract. This means that recruiters are being tasked to do more with lesser resources.

Business leaders looking to hire or HR managers should consider fast-rising employment solutions that provide AI-enhanced recruitment. It is crucial for any company to not merely hire employees but recruit the most qualified person.

In today's business climate, firms with first-mover advantage usually lead the way and soon, talent acquisition in India will undergo a paradigm shift. So, to keep up with advancements in the industry, HR professionals should become part of the AI revolution as the benefits of doing so are many. AI-enhanced HR solutions are becoming the backbone of the industry, especially for companies that need to recruit thousands of employees in a short time.

A recruitment system based on AI is capable of screening candidates in a more systematic way while looking out for a particular skill set, without any human intervention. It has algorithmic power to conclude the performance of job applicants.

It can even track online interviews on a real time basis and if an applicant faces difficulties in a particular sphere, then the AI will ask similar questions, repeatedly, to gauge how the candidate reacts to pressure. The only thing left for the recruiter is to provide the AI with a database to work on and to check the final list of the candidates before the recruitment system sends out emails for an interview. AI recruiting systems are designed to tremendously improve the recruiter's efficiency to ensure that companies don't miss the best candidates and they are the first ones to be selected for the interview.

Today's business leaders are always looking for people who perfectly fit the skill set they are looking for and there is tremendous pressure on recruiters to match and hire the candidates who can meet the management's expectations. AI-optimised hiring helps recruiters match the right employees with the right company. Plus, the AI recruitment software delivers solutions at a low cost so that it reduces a firm's cost per hire. Companies have to invest in the AI system once unlike the recurring costs of recruitment agencies that charge firms per employee hired.

However, there are many challenges to leveraging AI's full potential. First is competence, as the AI ecosystem, like its most important subfield, machine learning (ML), is still very small. It's difficult to find and hire good talent. The simple way to solve it is to hire an agency which has highly-skilled professionals familiar with AI technologies that will give HR teams training on fixed intervals. Non-adoption is another major risk. Any challenge in the world and especially in business, is an opportunity for AI. Adopting AI will require patience and a willingness to learn and will be complex and lengthy, so firms need to start now. Between the ongoing development of AI to recruit applicants and the understandable lag in implementation at this early stage, many of the features that it can bring to the hiring process are still to be completely implemented.

Like every new computing technology, AI still has a long way to go and there are some serious concerns which need to be addressed. As is obvious, AI has been invented to replace the human workforce and if it is adopted on a large scale, this will result in huge unemployment. There is no doubt that adopting AI will enhance the work culture and productivity, but it will also create economic imbalance in most sectors.

The second big concern is privacy, as we have seen various AI-infused web platforms like Facebook and WhatsApp lacking in this sphere. So along with adopting AI, organisations should equally give importance to the protection of the privacy of their staff and prospective employees.

To conclude, AI is a very new and unexplored segment and it will require major infrastructure to educate people about it before we let it come into our lives in a major way.

(The writer is MD of a talent consulting firm.)

MODI HASN'T BEEN ABLE TO FORGIVE PRAGYA FROM THE HEART BUT SHE HAS BEEN GIVEN RESPONSIBILITY ON IMPORTANT ISSUES SUCH AS INDIA'S DEFENCE.

—CONGRESS SPOKESPERSON
RANDEEP SURJEWALA

POINT COUNTERPOINT



THE CONGRESS SEEMS TO HAVE LOST ITS FAITH IN DEMOCRACY AND FORGOTTEN THAT PRAGYA THAKUR IS AN ELECTED MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT

—BJP MP
MEENAKSHI LEKHI

Too little and a little too late

The Govt has put a moratorium on pending spectrum payments for telecoms without altering the overall timeline of clearing all dues by 2030-31. But, given the huge amount to be paid, this won't be of much help



UTTAM GUPTA

Vodafone Idea Limited (VIL) — a joint venture between UK-based Vodafone and KM Birla-owned Idea Cellular — and Bharti Airtel have reported a staggering loss of ₹51,000 crore and ₹23,000 crore respectively for the second quarter of the current financial year ending September 30, 2019. This is primarily due to a recent order of the Supreme Court (SC) directing telecom companies to give "unpaid" dues towards licence fee and spectrum usage charges (SUC).

The order is the culmination of a long-drawn court battle between the Department of Telecommunication (DoT) and service providers. While the former insisted that for determining the licence fee and SUC — which is charged as a percentage of adjusted gross revenue (AGR) (at eight per cent and three-five per cent respectively), apart from telecom services revenue — AGR should also include revenue from non-telecom services viz. rent, profit on sale of fixed assets, dividend, interest and so on, the latter opposed it. The SC upheld the DoT's view.

As a result, service providers will now have to pay excess of the amount calculated on the basis of total revenue i.e. from telecom services plus non-telecom activities over the amount already paid based on revenue from telecom services only. Together with interest on excess amount, plus penalty, interest on penalty, this would be ₹53,000 crore for VIL and ₹36,000 crore for Airtel.

However, with a view to avert the crisis for the telecoms, the Government has put a moratorium on pending spectrum payments during 2020-21 and 2021-22 (without altering the overall timeline of clearing all payments by 2030-31). But, considering the magnitude of the unpaid dues (as per the SC's order), this won't be of much help. For instance, in case of VIL, against total liability of ₹53,000 crore, the relief from suspension of spectrum payments is only ₹24,000 crore. In the case of Airtel, the quantum of relief works out to ₹11,000 crore against a liability of ₹36,000 crore. The Government has also alluded to exonerating them from payment of interest and penalty on dues as per the apex court's order but that is no consolation as this would be available only when the SC allows it, which is unlikely.

So, the three big firms are staring at a bleak future. Vodafone has opined that "the future of the Indian JV is in doubt and we won't be infusing any further equity into the venture." The Birla Group too, has echoed similar views, hinting that the company could be taken to insolvency. Bharti Airtel, too, is on the brink.

VIL has a customer base of 320 million whereas Bharti Airtel has 265 million. At 585 million, they account for nearly 50 per cent of the total subscribers in India. If, these two companies go into liquidation, this could have catastrophic implications, not just for banks who have an exposure of over ₹200,000 crore to the duo, but also for subscribers, who would be left high and dry.

They are looking to the Government for relief by way of reduction in licence fee and SUC, reduction in Goods and Services Tax (GST) from the existing 18 per cent to five per cent and so on. Even as the Government considers this, it needs to ascertain as to how the sector landed in the current morass.

In September 2016, in a bizarre move rarely seen before, greenfield 4G operator Reliance Jio



“ AT THE CORE OF THE TELECOM CRISIS IS THE FREEBIES CULT, WHICH RJIO HAS IMPLANTED AND WAS GLOSSED OVER BY THE POWERS THAT BE. THERE IS URGENT NEED TO GET RID OF IT. THE INITIATIVE HAS TO COME FROM SERVICE PROVIDERS ONLY. EVEN AS VIL AND AIRTEL HAVE DECIDED TO RAISE TARIFF, RJIO'S INTENT TO FOLLOW SUIT IS A GOOD SIGN. TRAI MUST NOT ABDICATE ITS RESPONSIBILITY. IT SHOULD PROMPTLY ORDER A 'FLOOR PRICE' AND ENSURE THAT NO OPERATOR SETS TARIFF BELOW IT ”

(RJio) entered the Indian telecom market with "free" and "unlimited" voice calls and low-cost data. After launching an introductory offer for free — both data and voice for six months, from April, 2017, it charged data at a throwaway price of ₹50 per GB, even as voice calls continued to be free ad infinitum. For a conglomerate (RJio) investing thousands of crores in laying infrastructure, an attempt to sell services virtually for free was a brazen case of "predatory" pricing with the sole intent to snatch customers from incumbent players. The latter were forced to reduce their tariff drastically to match the former. Post-revision, the tariff in India at less than \$1 per GB is a fraction of what customers in other countries pay (\$30 in Japan; \$18 in Korea; \$15 in UK, China and Germany and \$10 in the USA).

As a result, incumbent operators, who were making profits prior to RJio's entry, are incurring losses. Several operators downed shutters while others were bought over (e.g. Tata Teleservices was acquired by Bharti Airtel). Today, there are only three private operators viz. VIL, RJio and Airtel, down from a dozen earlier. When, predatory pricing happens, it is for the sector regulator, in this instance the Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI), to intervene. The TRAI should have nipped the problem in the bud. But it saw nothing wrong and adding insult to injury, in February 2018, it came out with fresh amendments to the Telecom Tariff Order (TTO) to define predatory pricing in a manner so as to give legitimacy to the actions of RJio.

As per the amended order, a tariff is considered predatory if in a relevant market (circle), an operator, who is a significant market player (SMP), offers services at a price that is below its average variable cost (AVC) with a view to reduce competition or eliminate competitors in that relevant market. An operator will be

considered SMP if "it controls 30 per cent of the market share or above," which is calculated on the basis of gross revenue and subscriber market share. Further, AVC is defined as the cost that is calculated by identifying those expenses, which change with output, adding them and then dividing the result with total number of units produced.

Simply put, the regulator prescribed a two-fold criterion for a firm to be a predator. First, it offers services at less than AVC. Second it has market share over 30 per cent. During the relevant period, 2016-18, even as all firms were selling below the AVC, incumbent operators had market share more than 30 per cent (natural as they have been around for over two decades) whereas, RJio had share of less than 30 per cent. So, in the eyes of the regulator, the former were predators even as the latter was not. In other words, a company which started it all (RJio) was termed innocent even as others who suffered due to its onslaught were charged with indulging in predatory pricing and scuttling competition.

The amended order was "one-sided" and "discriminatory", aimed at favouring RJio and unfairly targeting incumbent players. The order was challenged before the Telecom Disputes Settlement Appellate Tribunal (TDSAT), which set aside TRAI's order and even observed that it was "non-transparent." However, by the time TDSAT pronounced its verdict on December 13, 2018, the damage was already done.

Other actions of the TRAI, such as a steep cut in the Interconnect Usage Charge (IUC) (it is a charge the telecom service provider of a caller pays to the telco on whose network the call terminates) in September 2017 from the existing 14 paise per minute to six paise per minute also impacted the incumbent operators. This drastically reduced their revenue from IUC even as RJio was increasing its market share by leaps and

bounds (courtesy, free voice calls).

TRAI has also prescribed adopting the "Bill and Keep" (BAK) regime from January 1, 2020, thereby reducing the IUC to zero. This will give a further jolt to the incumbent operators. The only reason (unsaid) behind the powers that be letting RJio continue with its bizarre practice may have something to do with Modi's grandiose plans for pan-India broadband connectivity. Low tariff (even free voice call) which RJio had promised, helped increase coverage, especially for a majority of the poor. But, what it ignores is that public interest is not served merely by keeping price low/free. Providing services on a "sustainable" basis and maintaining "quality" is no less important.

This won't be possible if, service providers are in dire financial straits. To some extent, incumbent operators are themselves to blame. For instance, they ought to have factored in a negative outcome of court proceedings (these have gone on for over a decade) and made contingency provisions in their books. They have also lagged behind in embracing new technologies (they are still glued to 2G/3G) even as RJio has latched on to 4G. But, at the core of the crisis is the freebies cult, which RJio has implanted and was glossed over by the powers that be. There is urgent need to get rid of this cult.

The initiative has to come from service providers only. Even as VIL and Airtel have decided to raise tariff, RJio's intent to follow suit is a good sign. TRAI must not abdicate its responsibility. It should promptly order a "floor price" and ensure that no operator sets tariff below it. It should watch out for an act of predation and deal with it sternly.

However, there is no getting away from the fact that the service providers have to set their house in order.

(The writer is a New Delhi-based policy analyst.)

Is judicial action divorced from public interest?

In Goa, livelihoods of 300,000 people associated with the mining industry disappeared overnight after judicial intervention. This is painful, particularly when the country is going through the worst employment crisis and has no alternative



ABHAY RAJ MISHRA

The recent Supreme Court (SC) verdict on Ayodhya has again established that law cannot be detached from the interests of the people it serves. There is a raging debate whether the judgment was based on credible evidence or influenced by the faith of the majority. Irrespective, the ruling has been accepted by all factions, not necessarily for its veracity but for bringing to an end a painful impasse. What is undebatable is that it has brought peace to the nation.

This ethos of acting in public interest must now be extended to end pain in other areas as well. Take the case of Goa, the only State where mining rights were granted to citizens by the Portuguese Government in perpetuity. These rights were later revoked by the Centre and now, lakhs of Goans

are staring at a major employment crisis. Over 300,000 people are dependent on mining in the State and they have become the face of massive livelihood loss triggered by judicial intervention. Ever since the SC cancelled 88 mining leases in Goa on February 7, 2018, life has come to a grinding, tragic halt for these workers and their families.

This is no longer just an economic crisis — which is severely debilitating in its own right — but a grave humanitarian crisis as well.

Livelihoods disappearing overnight as a result of judicial intervention, because the Executive and the corporate masters did not do their jobs properly, is painful particularly at a time when the country is going through the worst employment crisis in its history. According to the National Sample Survey Office (NSSO), unemployment in 2017-2018 was at a four-decade high of 6.1 per cent. New job seekers are not able to find sustainable employment and August 2019 saw the highest rate of unemployment in India at 8.4 per cent.

The most recent example of mass job losses as a result of the collapse of

a big organisation is Jet Airways. Due to poor management of funds, the founder himself led one of India's best airlines into bankruptcy and closure. However, employees of the airline were aware of the unfolding situation and had braced themselves for the layoffs. But in the case of Goa, the miners and other workers were unprepared.

This, when there was no financial crisis in the mining sector. Rather it was booming, with iron ore being an exportable produce of the State.

Goa could have generated three times more revenue from iron ore mining but has not only lost this opportunity but is dealing with the extensive collateral damage that has followed the cancellation of the leases. The ban has taken a toll on the State's revenue stream and its social fabric has been ripped apart. Not just the mining sector but all other stakeholders and the supportive infrastructure, comprising equipment suppliers, the logistics and ancillary industry and the transport sector, have flourished.

Goa is the only State with a unique logistical arrangement for

movement of iron ore from the mines to the ports, unlike other States which rely on Indian Railways for the same. Iron ore is carried by trucks and barges from the mines to the ports.

The ban on mining has resulted in unemployment for workers hired by 12,000 truck owners, 150 barge owners and 150 ancillary units and has spelled doom for them. Not only have they suffered from livelihood loss, there is a larger crisis looming as the families have near about exhausted their meagre savings and have been subsisting on loans and handouts from well-wishers.

Even banks and Non-Banking Financial Companies (NBFCs) in the State have been drawn into the slide. When the going was good, these institutions eagerly extended credit lines to the truckers and storage providers. Now, in the absence of a running business concern, the ability of people to repay has vanished and a huge Non-Performing Asset (NPA) crisis is looming in the State.

Added to this is the loan and money-recovery trauma being faced by those dependent on the mining sec-

tor and the burgeoning tragedy begins to hit uncomfortably home.

In any economic ecosystem, one segment aids and benefits from the other. The interdependency, which the Goan mining industry had so healthily created with respect to the State's other revenue driver, internal tourism and food industry, is also hit as people don't have the money to spend anymore. As individual economies of families waste away and die, the State is suffering from a socio-economic disaster. It is imperative that mining restarts to provide livelihoods in the mining sector and ancillary industries to lakhs of people of the State.

There is enough research available to indicate a direct link between crime and lack of livelihood. Studies have established that India's Maoist movement is deeply rooted in the poor socio-economic conditions prevalent in parts of the country with large tribal populations. It has mostly affected areas where there is a conflict between the State and the populace on the economic derivation of forest produce and mining such as in Chhattisgarh and Jharkhand, and agriculture in parts of

Andhra Pradesh and Odisha. Such aggressive posturing by citizens has huge direct and indirect costs. In Goa there were only two major sources of livelihood — mining and tourism. Without these, Goa has nothing. Any social unrest and spikes in crime rate can spell doom for Goa's tourism economy too, which so far has been characterised by friendly service by the Goans, discipline, cleanliness and law and order.

Laws are meant to create a conducive environment for the citizens of the State. Goa, however, has become a case where the law and its interpretation has spelled doom for its residents. This cannot become a precedent and must be addressed immediately. Situations like these need more complex solutions. It is simplistic to penalise lakhs of people for the actions of a few with the stroke of a pen. Stakeholders must come together to rescue these lives and livelihoods before it is too late.

(The writer is president of a Delhi-based not-for-profit organisation dedicated towards finding solutions to the problems of the helpless.)



FOREIGN EYE



DON'T EXTRADITE ASSANGE TO USA

Sweden's decision to drop an investigation into a rape allegation against Julian Assange has illuminated the situation of the WikiLeaks founder and made it more pressing. He must be defended against extradition to America in a case that digs at the foundations of freedom and democracy and could see him sentenced to a total of 175 years. It is a matter of Press freedom, and the public's right to know. It's unclear if it would be safe to extradite Assange to the US. It is certain that it would not be right.

(The Guardian editorial)

Protest ends in BHU, Sanskrit dept reopens

PTI ■ VARANASI (UP)

A group of Banaras Hindu University students protesting against the appointment of a Muslim professor at the Sanskrit literature department ended their 'dharna' on Friday.

The university had announced on Thursday that classes at the department would resume, indicating that the stir against the appointment of assistant professor Feroze Khan had ended.

"The Faculty of Sanskrit Vidya Dharma Vigyan, Banaras Hindu University, has reopened," the BHU tweeted on Thursday.

But the protest by a small group, mostly from the RSS-affiliated student's union ABVP, continued for some hours for the 15th day on Friday till an announcement by the agitating students themselves. The group had insisted that a Muslim cannot teach Sanskrit, a stand opposed by other students.

The dharna was called off following an assurance by the dean of the Sanskrit literature department.

According to BHU student and Akhil Bharatiya Vidyarthi Parishad (ABVP) leader Chakrapani Ojha, the dean of the Sanskrit literature department met the students on



The dharna was called off following an assurance by the dean of the Sanskrit literature department

Friday and assured them of an inquiry.

Ojha said they would again resume their protest if no action was taken within 10 days into the "irregularity" in the appointment process of the assistant Sanskrit professor in the SVDV.

Meanwhile, the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh said it did not agree with the students' protests.

In a statement, RSS leader Jai Prakash Lal said a meeting

was held with organisation leaders in Varanasi, in which they held that the opposition by a section of BHU students was wrong.

Lal added that they do not support the students staging dharna in the campus on this issue. A BHU spokesperson said several rounds of talks were held on Thursday in the vice chancellor's office by students, teachers, chief proctor.

It was decided to open the classroom and hold classes from the next day. Soon after the meeting, the classroom's locks were opened, the spokesperson said.

Earlier, some of the students also burnt the effigy of the vice chancellor to protest against the appointment of Khan. The protesters had demanded for a high-level probe of CBI in the matter.

Unlike his BHU brother, new Sanskrit teacher of Belur college enjoying job

Kolkata: At a time when students of the Banaras Hindu University are up in arms over appointment of a Muslim Sanskrit teacher, a man from the minority community selected as an Assistant Professor of Sanskrit by a city-based college on Friday said he was overwhelmed by warm welcome from students as well faculty members.

Ramzan Ali has been chosen to teach Sanskrit at Ramakrishna Mission Vidyamandira in Belur, on the outskirts of the Bengal's capital. He joined his new assignment on Tuesday last. He earlier taught at a college in north Bengal for nine years.

Ali said he was overwhelmed by the kind reception he received from the students

and faculty members. "I was welcomed by principal Swami Shastrajandaji Maharaj, and everyone... Maharaj told me that my religious identity was not important, what mattered was my grasp over the language, my in-depth knowledge and my ability to share it with the students," Ali told PTI.

The Belur based institution is a fully residential degree college for boys affiliated to the University of Calcutta. It was founded in 1941 by the Ramakrishna Mission.

It got the 11th NIRF (National Institutional Ranking Framework) in the college category in 2018-19 academic session from Union HRD ministry.

Asked about the agitation

in Uttar Pradesh based BHU, Ali said he would not like to make any comment about another educational institution, but "I believe Sanskrit embodies India's inclusiveness, its rich culture. Don't forget Sanskrit is the mother of all languages. How can anyone bar people from other religions from learning and teaching Sanskrit?"

A section of students at BHU has been demonstrating against the appointment of Feroze Khan as the assistant professor of the varsity's Sanskrit department.

Although the BHU authorities backed him, Khan has not been able to take classes.

The university tweeted on Thursday that the faculty of Sanskrit vidya dharma vigyan

has reopened after days of protests.

Unlike the BHU professor, Ali, who is in his early 40s, said he never faced any discrimination as a Sanskrit teacher.

"I never felt that I was out of place or unwanted while studying or teaching Sanskrit. Here, at the Belur college, the management has arranged for my accommodation and ensured that I do not face any inconvenience," the assistant professor maintained.

A student of the Sanskrit department at Ramakrishna Mission Vidyamandira said he was looking forward to attending Ali's classes.

It is "unfair" to question the religious identity of a teacher, he said.

"Ali sir has just joined, so

far I haven't had the opportunity to attend any of his classes. I am looking forward to it," the student added.

The principal of the college could not be contacted for his comment.

Ali said since the time of joining the college on November 19, he is liked by students and has even joined their 'adda' after class hours.

"I have already taken classes of first and second years and the students have showered me with love. Some of them have even commented why I did not join before the Teachers' Day on September 5 so that they could have shown me their love and respect. And I tell them my greatest reward will be if they follow teachers' words." PTI

Country united on temple construction: Shah Nawaz Hussain

Jaipur: BJP national spokesperson Shah Nawaz Hussain said here on Friday that the entire country is united in supporting the construction of a Ram Temple in Ayodhya.

The former Union Minister said two big issues — the removal of Article 370 from Kashmir and the case of the Ayodhya Temple — that were going on since independence have been resolved after the Modi government came to power at the Centre.

"Today the whole country is united to build Ram temple," he said.

"Iqbal Ansari, who was fighting in Supreme Court on the issue of construction of the Ram temple, has also accepted this decision.

But Asaduddin Owaisi is not ready to accept the court verdict. There has been solidarity with the temple construction in the country, brotherhood has increased. PTI

Alwar police asks 9 Muslim cops to shave beards, withdraws order day later

PTI ■ JAIPUR

The police in Rajasthan's Alwar ordered nine Muslim members of the force to shave their beards, only to withdraw its instructions a day later.

The original order on Thursday said the nine policemen were asked to cut their beards so that they acted and looked "unbiased".

As the news spread, on Friday Alwar SP Anil Paris Deshmukh withdrew own order.

Police said they had earlier given permission to 32 Muslim personnel to sport beards. Thursday's order withdrew this permission for nine of them.

The remaining 23 policemen were allowed to continue

with their beards, police said. "Policemen should not only work in an unbiased manner but they should also look unbiased," the SP initially told reporters.

"There is a provision of the State Government which allows the HoD (head of department) to permit policemen to keep beards," he said.

"Under the provision, 32 policemen were given permission. The permission for nine policemen has been cancelled while for the rest of them it stands unchanged," he added.

Deshmukh had said the decision can be reconsidered and those dissatisfied with it can approach the department.

Telangana HC rejects plea against privatising bus routes in State

Hyderabad: In a breather to the K Chandrasekhar Rao-led TRS Government, the Telangana High Court on Friday dismissed a petition challenging the State Cabinet decision of privatising over 5,000 bus routes.

A Division Bench, comprising Chief Justice Raghendra Singh Chauhan and Justice A Abhishek Reddy, dismissed the petition of PL Vishweshwar Rao, vice-president of the Telangana Jana Samithi, challenging the cabinet's November 2 decision to privatise permits of 5,100 TSRTC (Telangana State Road Transport Corporation) routes.

Advocate General BS Prasad said he gave an under-

taking to the court saying that due procedure would be followed by the Government while awarding the routes to private parties. The court said the State Government has the authority to take a decision on privatising the routes.

After the cabinet meeting on November 2, KCR had said the cabinet decided to award as many as 5,100 bus routes to private operators to maintain healthy competition and also warned that the rest of the routes would also be given to private operators if the RTC employees do not join duty.

Employees and workers unions of TSRTC started the indefinite strike from October 5 across Telangana on a call given by the JAC of TSRTC,

demanding merger of the RTC with the Government and recruitment to various posts, among others.

Later the unions said they were willing to drop the merger demand if it becomes a hurdle for the government to hold talks with them.

The Telangana High Court on November 18 directed the Commissioner of Labour to take a call on whether the ongoing strike by the unions of TSRTC should be referred to the Labour Court or not, in two weeks to decide the legality of the strike.

Two days ago, the unions said they were willing to join duty if the government provides a congenial atmosphere. PTI

Cong wants a 'grand temple' to be built in Ayodhya: Pilot

Jaipur: The Congress wants a "grand temple" to be built in Ayodhya, Rajasthan Deputy Chief Minister Sachin Pilot said on Friday, days after the Supreme Court cleared the way for the construction of the shrine in the Hindu holy town.

He also said the court's decision was acceptable to all and people should now stop doing politics on the issue.

In its verdict announced on November 9, the Supreme Court backed the construction of a Ram temple by a trust at the disputed site in Ayodhya, and ruled that an alternative five-acre plot be allotted for building a mosque in the town. "Everyone has welcomed the decision and the Congress

party wants a grand temple to be built there (Ayodhya)," Pilot told reporters in Dausa district.

"We have to happily respect and maintain that decision. Now we have to stop doing politics on this issue; the world is moving forward," he said.

People who had been doing politics over the case for the past 30 years understand now that no one will benefit politically by raising the issue again and again, he added, without naming anyone.

Speaking about the Congress' performance in the recent civic body polls in Rajasthan and assembly elections in some states, Pilot said there is a change in the country's atmosphere. PTI

KERALA SNAKEBITE CASE — Principal, Vice Principal suspended, protests mount

Wayanad: Amid mounting protests, the Kerala Government on Friday suspended the principal and vice-principal of the school where a 10-year-old girl had died of snake bite inside the classroom, as students hit the streets vowing not to enter their classrooms till justice was delivered to their schoolmate.

Various student organisations also took out protest marches to the district collectorate at Kalpetta demanding action against those responsible for her death.

Protests were also held at Thiruvananthapuram.

The state education department suspended principal AK Karunakaran and vice-principal KK Mohan of the Government vocational higher secondary school at Sulthan Bathery in Wayanad district.

After a preliminary probe, a teacher, Shijil, was suspended for alleged lapse on Thursday. PTI



The school authorities came under attack after teachers failed to ensure that the fifth standard student, Shehala Sherin, who was bitten by a snake inside her class on November 20, was rushed to hospital.

Though her parents rushed her to four hospitals, no anti-venom was administered and they were told to take the child to the Kozhikode Medical college hospital, which is about 90 km from Sulthan Bathery. Shehala's father said she died before reaching the medical college.

The deputy director of the education department has dissolved the school's Parent Teacher Association (PTA). PTI

Notice Inviting e-Tender
 No.SSA/TT&P/EPB/351/2019/10280 Date : 22.11.2019
 Mission Director, Axom Sarba Siksha Abhijan Mission, Kahilipara, Guwahati-19, Assam (under Samagra Siksha Abhiyan) invites tender through e-Tendering process from reputed exercise book manufacturers for the supply of Evaluation and Practice Books for class -I & II (Four Line and Square Line).
 To participate in this tender process through e-procurement document, bidder should have valid Digital Signature Certificate (DSC) of class-II (minimum) and have to register in the portal https://assamtenders.gov.in by themselves.
 The Bidder who have downloaded the tender schedules containing the tender details, terms and conditions, from the website shall submit their tender on-line on the website https://assamtenders.gov.in, with proof of payment of non refundable tender fee of Rs. 5000/- (Rupees five thousand) only in the form of demand draft/Bankers Cheque drawn in favour of Mission Director, Axom Sarba Siksha Abhijan Mission, Kahilipara, Guwahati-19, Assam, from any nationalized/scheduled Bank and payable at Guwahati. The tender should be submitted on-line as per date and time of submission as per prescribed schedule.
 Sd/- Mission Director, SSA, Assam, Kahilipara, Guwahati-19

OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER PWD (R&B) CONST. DIVN. NO. II, JAMMU EXTENSION - IST
Subject : (i) Providing and laying Wet Mix, 50mm thick Bitumen Macadam and 25mm semi dense bituminous concrete on Jagti Tanda and allied links. (under Langushing Programme). (ii) Providing and laying Wet Mix, 50mm thick Bitumen Macadam and 25mm semi dense bituminous concrete on Nandani Tara to Madrasa road in Km Ist RD 0-1000 and km 2nd RD 0-500. (under Langushing Programme).
Reference :- Short e-NIT No. 99 of 2019-20/Div-2 dated 11-11-2019.
 The following changes to the critical dates of the above said works are hereby made as under:-

Please read	Instead of
Bid submission end date 27-11-2019 (1800 hours)	Bid submission end date 22-11-2019 (1800 hours)
Bid opening date 28-11-2019 (1400 hours)	Bid opening date 23-11-2019 (1400 hours)

 All other terms and conditions remains same. Sd/- Executive Engineer PWD (R&B) Const. Divn. No. II Jammu
 No. DIP/J-9555/19 Dated:- 21.11.2019

AXIS BANK PUBLIC AUCTION NOTICE FOR SALE OF VEHICLE
 Whereas pursuant Order dated 02.11.2019 passed by Ld. Arbitrator (Sh. S.C. Rajan) in the Arbitration proceedings bearing ARB Case No. 4290/2019, M/s Axis Bank Ltd. proposes to sell the below mentioned vehicle/secured assets in the name of the Corporate Debtor i.e. M/S Shilpi Cable Technologies Ltd. (Company under liquidation proceedings) on "As is where is" and "As is what is" and "Whatever There Is" and "No recourse" basis for realization of Bank's dues by inviting Bid proposal Form/offer document on public at large latest by 30-November-2019 between 9:30 AM to 5:30 AM at Axis House, 2nd Floor, Tower-2, I-14, Sector-128, Noida Expressway, Landmark Jaypee Greens wish town, Noida (U.P.)-201301 for inviting Bids in an open public auction to be conducted on 02-Dec-2019 at 11.00 A.M. having same venue.

Borrower/Co-Borrower Name	NPA Date	Description of Vehicle	Reserve Price (in Rs.)	Earnest Money Deposit (in Rs.)	Outstanding dues as on 30-May-2019 (in Rs.)	Last date and time for submission of bids	Date and Time of opening of bids.
M/S Shilpi Cable Technologies Ltd.	04-Aug-2017	Registration No.: DL1CX4219 Engine No.:CYC007079 Chassis No.:5CBEN53W8FC050093 Model: BENTLEY CONTINENTAL FLYING SPUR V8	Rs 1,21,21,000/-	Rs. 12,12,100/-	1,15,82,668/-	30-NOV-2019 between 9:30 A.M. to 5:30 P.M.	02-DEC-2019at 11:00 PM

Terms and conditions of the said open public auction:-
 1. Offerers shall have to give complete offer.
 2. Each bid offer shall be accompanied by and Earnest Money Deposit (EMD) equal to 10% of the Reserve Price amount, by D.D. / Pay Order drawn on a Scheduled Bank in favour of 'Axis Bank Limited payable at Delhi'. D.Ds / P.Os should be purchased by the Auction bidders on his/her/their behalf only.
 3. The offer in the prescribed Bid proposal Form/offer document shall only be considered and free copy of the same can be obtained from the Authorised Officer of the Bank. This Bid proposal form duly completed shall be put in an envelope which should be sealed and super scribed with "Offered from Mr/Ms/ M/s." for purchase of the Secured Asset(s)/Vehicle of "M/S Shilpi Cable Technologies Ltd., I-14, Sector-128, Noida Expressway, Landmark Jaypee Greens wish town, Noida (U.P.)-201301 on or before 30-Nov-2019 between 9:30 AM to 5:30 PM. Bid proposal Form/offer document received after the due date & time shall not be considered under any circumstances.
 4. The successful bidder(s) shall deposit 100% of the bid amount (including 10% deposited before bid) immediately or on next day of the sale being knocked down in his/her/their favour. Remaining payment to be made only in the form of Cheque/DD/PO drawn in favour of 'Axis Bank Limited' payable at Delhi. Cash payment shall not be accepted. In case of default in payment, entire amount so deposited shall be forfeited without any further reason and notice and the vehicle shall be resold forthwith. In such case the successful bidder shall forfeit all claims in regard to the vehicle or to any part of the sum for which it may be sold subsequently. Further, all costs, charges and expenses incurred by the Bank on account of such resale shall be borne and paid by the defaulting purchaser who shall also be bound to make good any deficiency arising on such resale and he/she/they shall not be entitled to make any claim in the event of the secured asset(s)/vehicle realising higher price on such resale.
 5. Inter-se Bidding to all the eligible bidders is allowed.
 6. The Bank reserves its right, solely at its discretion and on such terms & conditions it may stipulate, to extend the aforesaid time limit.
 7. Bid proposal Form/offer document will be opened by the Authorised Officer of the Bank on 02-DEC-2019 at 11:00 A.M. at Axis House, 2nd Floor, Tower-2, I-14, Sector-128, Noida Expressway, Landmark Jaypee Greens wish town, Noida (U.P.)-201301 in the presence of the borrowers, Co-borrowers, mortgagors (if available) and the prospective buyers or their authorized representatives who may choose to remain present at the day and time as aforesaid, inter alia, for negotiations, for raising / revising their respective offers.
 8. Respective Offerers, and/or their authorized representatives, may remain present at the time of opening of the Bid proposal Form/offer document. The offerers will have an opportunity to increase their offers at this time if they so desire. They are, therefore, advised to remain present themselves or through their duly authorized and empowered representatives. The amount by which the biddings are to be increased shall be determined by the officer conducting the sale.
 9. Any disputes/differences arising out of sale of the vehicle/secured asset(s) offered for sale shall be subject to the exclusive jurisdiction of Courts / Tribunals at Delhi only.
 10. The secured Asset(s)/vehicle is/are offered for sale on "As Is Where Is", "As Is What Is", "Whatever There Is" and "No Recourse" Basis. The Bank does not undertake any responsibility to procure any permission/license etc. in respect of the secured asset(s) vehicle offered for sale or for any dues/charges including, dues of the RTO and/or any other dues of the authority, taxes, if any, in respect of the said movable secured asset (s) / Vehicle.
 11. The Authorized Officer of the Bank reserves his right to accept or reject highest, any or all offer (s) without assigning any reason and in case all the offers are rejected, either to hold negotiations with any of the Offerers or to sell the secured asset(s) /vehicle through private negotiations with any of the Offerers or any other party / parties. The Bank's decision in this behalf shall be final.
 12. The amount by which the biddings are to be increased during negotiations held, if any, shall be determined by the Authorised Officer conducting the sale.
 13. It is to be noted that against the said corporate debtor, liquidation proceeding has been commenced pursuant Order dated 01.05.2019 passed by Hon'ble NCLT, Principal Bench, New Delhi in the case No. CA 1144(PB)/2018, titled as "Macquarie Bank Ltd. Vs. Shilpi Cable Technologies Limited" and during the pendency of the said liquidation proceedings, Axis Bank Ltd. had realized its security interest and accordingly, Ld. Liquidator has anding physical possession of the said Vehicle to the Bank. However, in view of Regulation 37 (2) of "The Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code of India (Liquidation Process) Regulations, 2016", Axis Bank Ltd. have to inform the Ld. Liquidator about the highest bidding price and in turn, Ld. Liquidator will inform the Bank Ltd. within next 21 days if any other person is willing to buy the said vehicle higher than the intimated price, therefore confirmation of sale by Axis Bank Ltd. shall be subject to confirmation of Ld. Liquidator and highest auction purchaser have to mandatorily wait till next 30 days for confirmation.
 14. It is also to be noted that in such cases where, bidding will not confirm during the said 30 days' period, The highest auction purchaser (s) will not be entitled to claim any interest on EMD and balance sale consideration already paid by him/her/ them.
 15. Final sale conclusion shall be subject to confirmation by the Authorised Officer of the Bank.
 16. For inspection of the vehicle, the intending bidders may contact Mr. Kamendra Kumar Rajput @ 9811890880 or Mr. Tarun Parashr @ 7840025009 / Mr. Manish Jain @ 8475001008 at Axis House, 2nd Floor, Tower-2, I-14, Sector-128, Noida Expressway, Landmark Jaypee Greens Wishtown, Noida (U.P.)-201301 during office hours from 9:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. It is advisable that intending bidders should take prior appointment before reaching to the said Office. The bids is not transferable.
Date : 23-11-2019, Place : New Delhi
 Sd/-, Authorized Officer, Axis Bank Ltd.,

SOUTH CENTRAL RAILWAY
 Follow us on @SCRRailways
 Details of the Tender Notices of S.C. Railway can be seen on our website: www.scr.indianrailways.gov.in
TENDER NOTICE No: 30/19 dt.22.11.19 SUPPLY OF STORES ITEMS e-Procurement Tender Notice
 The following Tenders have been floated online. Tenderers are requested to visit the website www.ireps.gov.in and submit their offers online. The Tender Description, Qty, EMD, SD may be seen in website. Offers submitted manually will not be accepted. Offers by post will not be entertained. Tender Closing time is 14:30 hrs of the Due date of the Tender. For all indigenous offers, EMD will be accepted only via online system as available on www.ireps.gov.in

75.18.1252B	THINNER
82.19.0069	SECUKINUMAB 150MG INJ
82.19.1391	CITICOLINE 500MG TAB
38.19.1016A	Yoke for CBC
84.19.1169	Nature Flore THERMOSET COMPOSITE
30.19.1301	Silent Block for anchor link
83.19.1537	Pre-Printed Thermal (Automatic Ticket Vending Machine)
83.19.1531C	PRS Ticket with Advertisement
Money Value Item	Running Contract for Machine Numbered Money Value Books & Forms
30.19.1801	Mirror Assembly
30.19.1211	Hydraulic shock absorber
30.19.3460	Lavatory door arrangement
33.19.5011	Supply, Installation & Commissioning of pressurized flushing system in LHD Coaching
25.19.1003	Brake shoe complete

 Note:- Due dates of Tender Opening: S.Nos. 01 to 03 on 13.12.19; S.No. 04 on 16.12.19; S.No. 05 on 17.12.19; S.Nos. 06 to 09 on 20.12.19; S.Nos. 10 to 13 on 23.12.19; S.No. 14 on 01.01.2020.
 Beside above mentioned tenders there are other tenders having value below Rs. 25 lakhs. For details, please visit Railway website above.
Principal Chief Materials Manager, A1914 Secunderabad
 For further tender conditions / details and for downloading the tender documents, please visit website at www.ireps.gov.in
 http://www.scr.indianrailways.gov.in

Sharad Pawar outwitted Chanakya of politics, NCP takes a jibe at BJP

Mumbai: NCP chief Sharad Pawar has finally "outwitted" the "so-called Chanakya of the Indian politics", the party said on Friday, as it inches closer to forming a Government with Shiv Sena and Congress in Maharashtra.

The NCP's chief spokesperson Nawab Malik also reiterated that the throne of Delhi could not make Maharashtra bow before it.

"@PawarSpeaks Sahab has finally outwitted the so-called Chanakya of Indian politics. The throne of Delhi could not make Maharashtra bow down before it. Jai Maharashtra," Malik tweeted, without naming anyone.

It is believed that Malik's jibe was directed at Union Home Minister and BJP president Amit Shah, who is often credited for being instrumental in the BJP's victories in several polls and Government formations in the country.

The BJP and the Uddhav Thackeray-led Shiv Sena had contested the October 21 Maharashtra Assembly polls jointly and won 105 and



56 seats respectively.

However, the saffron partners fell out after the Sena persisted with its demand for sharing the Chief Minister's post on rotational basis.

Now in a bid to form a Government, the Sena is in talks with the NCP and Congress, who have won 54 and 44 seats respectively in the 288-member Maharashtra Assembly. Maharashtra has been under the President's rule since November 12, after no party came forward with enough numbers to form a Government.

Sena won't side with BJP even if offered Indra's throne: Raut

Mumbai: Shiv Sena won't side with the BJP even if offered Lord Indra's throne, Sena MP Sanjay Raut said here on Friday.

Talking to reporters, Raut reiterated that his party will get the Maharashtra CM's post when the three-party alliance with Congress and NCP assumes power.

"The time for offers has ended," Raut said, when asked about reports that the BJP had agreed to share the CM's post with the Sena.

"People of Maharashtra want Sena chief Uddhav Thackeray to become the CM," he said.

Asked if the three non-BJP parties would meet the State governor on Friday itself, Raut quipped, "Why meet the governor when the President's rule is in place?"



MAHA MAYORAL POLLS Sena-Cong-NCP get the better of BJP

Mumbai: The BJP was outsmarted on Friday by emerging political combinations in Maharashtra and lost mayoral polls in Latur and Ulhasnagar despite having a majority in both civic bodies.

The Shiv Sena managed to win the posts of mayor and deputy mayor in Mumbai and neighbouring Thane.

The BJP, however, managed to keep its flock together and got the support of the Maharashtra Navnirman Sena to win the posts of mayor and deputy mayor in Nashik.

In Latur, the Congress' Vikrant Gojamunde was elected mayor, in what is being seen as a setback for former BJP Minister Sambhaji Nilangekar. In Ulhasnagar, the BJP, despite having a majority in the municipal corporation, was beaten by former saffron ally Shiv Sena which won the mayor's post after it got the support of the NCP, Congress and a local outfit called Team Omi Kalani (TOK).

In Mumbai, the Sena's Kishori Pednekar and Suhas Wadkar were

Whoever forms Govt, we will get farmers' work done: Gadkari

Nagpur: Irrespective of whose Government is formed in Maharashtra, we will get the work done in the interest of farmers, Union Minister Nitin Gadkari said on Friday.

The Minister for Road Transport and Highways was speaking at the inauguration of Agrovision, an expo showcasing a wide range of agricultural products, here.

He said instead of taking so much interest in covering who is forming the next Government in Maharashtra, the media should focus on farmers' issues.

"Whoever forms the government, work will be carried out in a good manner. Irrespective of whose Government comes to power in Maharashtra, we will get the work done in farmers' interest. Farmers are more important...Who is part of the government is insignificant," the Minister said.

Marathwada gets ₹819 crore relief for unseasonal rain

Aurangabad: The State administration has sanctioned ₹819.59 crore relief for Marathwada farmers who suffered losses due to unseasonal showers, an official said on Friday.

The fund has been sanctioned for farmers in eight districts of the region.

"The State administration has sanctioned ₹819.59 crore as aid for post-monsoon showers that hit farmers in Marathwada," deputy divisional commissioner Parag Soman said. The drought-prone region didn't receive adequate rainfall during monsoon, but farmers suffered more when ready crops were damaged due to unseasonal showers that hit the State, a State official said.

"This damage was surveyed by Government agencies and a demand of ₹2,909.36 crore was earlier presented to the State administration," he added.

NC, Cong workers join BJP in Jammu & Reasi

PTI ■ JAMMU

Raina said the BJP's commitment to work for the welfare of the people and the strong belief on "Sabka Saath, Sabka Vikas and Sabka Vishwas" policy has touched the lives of people living in the remote areas of the region.

"The BJP believes that there is lot of work to be done for the welfare of the common masses and hence we need committed party activists who can serve the nation and the society without any self interest," he said.

The new entrants assured the BJP leadership that they would promote the party's policies with their "dedicated and selfless" working, the spokesman said.

Welcoming the new entrants into the party fold,

Shops, businesses shut for third consecutive day

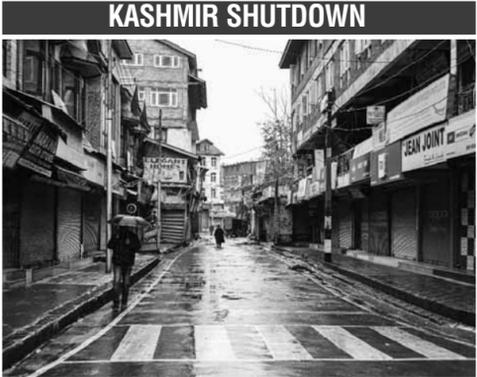
Srinagar: Most shops and other business establishments in Kashmir were closed on Friday, the third consecutive day of a Valley-wide shutdown following a brief semblance of normalcy.

On Wednesday, posters warning shopkeepers against opening their shutters as well as public transport operators appeared at several places in the city and elsewhere in the Valley, officials said.

This ended the sense of the last few weeks that life was getting back to normal.

Main markets in the city and most other areas in the Valley were shut and shops did not open even for a few hours in the morning as they had been doing for the last few weeks.

Public transport was also largely off the roads and there were fewer private vehicles



than usual, officials said. However, some auto-rickshaws and inter-district cabs were plying.

Jamia Masjid, the grand mosque of Kashmir, was closed for prayers for the 16th consecutive Friday — ever since August 5 when the Centre announced the revoking of Jammu & Kashmir's special status under Article 370 and its bifurcation into two union territories.

Madras HC stays order on TN Govt's efforts to legalise temple land encroachments

KUMAR CHELLAPPAN ■ CHENNAI

Tamil Nadu Government's efforts to meddle with the encroached lands measuring thousands of acres belonging to the temples in the State administered by the Hindu Religious and Charitable Endowments Department came to a nought on Friday as the Madras High Court stayed the Government Order issued on August 30 in this regard.

A Bench consisting of Justices M Sathyanarayana and N Seshasayee stayed the sections of the GO which had empowered the State to buy the encroached land from the encroachers and sell it back to them with pattas.

The contention of the petitioner T R Ramesh was that the GO was issued by the Government to circumvent the court order of February 2018 in which it had asked the HR&CE Department to furnish the details of more than 50,000 acres of prime land owned by the temples that had vanished.

Though the Court had asked the HR&CE Dept to furnish the details in six months, nothing has come out even after 18 months. Meanwhile the misappropriation of the temple lands continued with the active connivance of the officials of the HR&CE Department, pointed out Ramesh, president, Temple Worshipers Society, the main petitioner.

In Friday's order the judges asked the Department to collect the details of the encroached lands and the action taken report to retrieve the same from the encroachers.

"While staying the section of the GO in the interim verdict, the bench directed the Commissioner HR&CE to file a detailed report regarding Hindu temple lands, extent, encroachments and the steps taken to clear the encroachments. We will soon see skeletons tumbling down from the cupboards of the Government," said Ramesh.

It may be noted that the HR&CE Department is already in the eye of a controversy regarding the thefts of nearly 5,000 antique temple idols from the temples under its jurisdiction.



Akhil Gogoi-led KMSS stages protest against CAB in Assam

Guwahati: RTI activist Akhil Gogoi-led Krishak Mukti Sangram Samiti (KMSS) on Friday staged a protest here against the proposed tabling of the Citizenship (Amendment) Bill, 2019 during the Winter session of the Parliament.

The KMSS organised its 'Raj Bhavan Chalo' agitation to submit a memorandum to the governor against the Bill for forwarding it to the President.

The Indigenous Forum, Assam led by ULFA (pro-taliban) faction leaders Anup Chetia and Mrinal Hazarika and human rights activist Lachit Bordoloi staged a separate sit-in against the Bill.

Speaking to reporters, Gogoi said, "Under no circumstance can the anti-indigenous people CAB be accepted



drop of blood, we will oppose CAB which is against the interest of the indigenous people of the State."

Protests against the Bill have been raging in Assam over the past week, with activists of the All Assam Students' Union (AASU) along with 30 ethnic students' organisations organising rallies across the state on Thursday evening.

Speaking to reporters, AASU Chief Advisor Samujjal Bhattacharya had asserted, "Assam is not a dustbin for illegal Bangladeshis. Under the Assam Accord, 1985, we have already accepted the Bangladeshis who came here illegally till March, 1971. Now, attempts are being made by the Centre to divide Assam on religious lines...Till our last

by our State as 1.9 crore Hindu Bangladeshis will come to Assam and threaten the existence of the Assamese language besides taking up the jobs, rendering the local people unemployed."

Gogoi expressed fears that due to opposition of the state Governments of Meghalaya,

Why scrap final NRC after taking credit of draft: Gogoi

PTI ■ GUWAHATI

Veteran Congress leader Tarun Gogoi on Friday asked the BJP-led Central Government to make it clear why the final NRC would be scrapped, when the saffron party had taken all the credit and promised to deport 40 lakh illegal immigrants after its draft was published.

Gogoi, former Chief Minister of Assam, also alleged that Union Home Minister Amit Shah's announcement to carry out the National Register of Citizens (NRC) process across India is a tactic to divert people's attention from the real issues of the country.

"The Centre should clarify on what basis the updated final NRC in Assam will be scrapped. When the first draft of the NRC was published, the BJP had taken all the credit and promised to detect and deport 40 lakh illegal foreigners," he told a press conference here.

The part publication of draft NRC was done on the midnight of December 31, 2017, and the complete draft was published on July 30, 2018. The names of 40.07 lakh applicants did not find a place in that document. The exercise was carried out under the supervision of the Supreme Court.

Notice Inviting e-Tender
No. SSA/Esstt/TT&P/EPB/2020/378/2019/10284 Date :22.11.2019
Mission Director, Axom Sarba Siksha Abhijan Mission, Kahilipara, Guwahati-19, Assam (Samagra Siksha Abhijan) invites tender through e-Tendering process from reputed exercise book manufacturers for the supply of Evaluation and Practice Books for class -VII (Single Line and Plain).

To participate in this tender process through e-procurement document, bidder should have valid Digital Signature Certificate (DSC) of class-II (minimum) and have to register in the portal <https://assamtenders.gov.in> by themselves.

The Bidder who have downloaded the tender schedules containing the tender details, terms and conditions, from the website shall submit their tender on-line on the website <https://assamtenders.gov.in>, with proof of payment of non refundable tender fee of Rs. 5000/- (Rupees five thousand) only in the form of demand draft/Bankers Cheque drawn in favour of Mission Director, Axom Sarba Siksha Abhijan Mission, Kahilipara, Guwahati-19, Assam, from any nationalized/scheduled Bank and payable at Guwahati. The tender should be submitted on-line as per date and time of submission as per prescribed schedule.

Sd/- Mission Director,
SSA, Assam, Kahilipara, Guwahati-19

GOVERNMENT OF JAMMU AND KASHMIR
OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER PHE DIVISION UDHAMPUR
NOTICE INVITING TENDER 2ND CALL
Date of Issue : 18-11-2019
Dead line of submission of Bids : 03-12-2019
Bid Identification No. e-NIT No: 128 of 2019-20 dated 16.11.2019 under endorsement No. PHE/10751-779 dated 16/11/2019

The Employer [Executive Engineer, PHE Division Udhampur] on behalf of REGISTERED OF INDIA invites bids from bidders [Class A / Special Class] registered with the State Governments/Central Government / MES / Railways for the construction of work as detailed in the table below.

SI. No. 1 Name of Work : Construction of GI Rising main, Gravity main and Distribution system and Construction of Anchor Blocks under "Upgradation of Water Supply Infrastructure in IIO Battal Ballian Udhampur Phase I&II" under Languishing projects. **SI. No. 2** Bid Identification No. (BIN) : ENIT NO : **SI. No. 3** Estimated Cost of Bid : **Rs. 347.07 lacs SI. No. 4** Earnest Money (EMD) : **Rs. 694140.00** Earnest Money should be in the form of CDR/FDR/BG pledge to Superintending Engineer Hydraulic Circle Udhampur payable at Udhampur and valid for **06 months** from the last date of submission of bid. **SI. No. 5** Tender Fee : **Rs. 5000/- (Non refundable)** Tender fee in shape of e-challan/Treasury Receipt to be deposited in MH-0215-WSS (Revenue Head) or through RTGS in J&K Bank Branch Udhampur bearing Bank Account No. **0028010200000047, IFSC code JAKA0UDMPUR in favour of Executive Engineer PHE Division Udhampur SI. No. 6** Bid Validity : **60 days** from the last date of submission of online Bid. **SI. No. 7** Period of Completion : **06 Months SI. No. 8** Availability of Bid Document on e-Procurement Portal : From **18-11-2019 To 03-12-2019 upto 18.00 Hrs. SI. No. 9** Pre Bid meeting : **On 26-11-2019 at 12.30 PM** in the Office of the Superintending Engineer Hydraulic Circle Udhampur. **SI. No. 10** Date and Time for Submission of Bids online : **On or before Date 03-12-2019 upto 18.00 Hrs. SI. No. 11** Date and Time for Submission of Hard copy of Bids : **Hard copy shall have to be submitted by 11** within three days after opening of Financial Bid. **SI. No. 12** Time and Date of Opening of Bids : **Date 04-12-2019 Time 11:00 Hrs. SI. No. 13** Place of Opening of Bids : **Office of the Superintending Engineer Hydraulic Circle Udhampur. SI. No. 14** Bid Inviting Officer (BIO) : Executive Engineer PHE Division Udhampur

1. The Bid documents consisting of instructions to Bidders (ITB), Bid Data Sheet (BDS), Qualification Criteria and Documents to be furnished with the Bid, General & Special Conditions of Contract, Contract Data, Drawings, Specifications, the schedule of quantities and set of terms and conditions of contract and other forms will be uploaded on the website: www.iktenders.gov.in on or before **03-12-2019 upto 18.00 Hrs** last date. Bidders can download the bid documents after the due date upto last date for submission of online bid.

Position of T/AAA: Accorded
Position of funds: Approved under Languishing Projects
Signed for and on behalf of the PRESIDENT OF INDIA
Sd/- Executive Engineer
PHE Division Udhampur

No. DIP/J-9588/19
Dated: 22.11.2019

BJP takes strong view of Bache Gowda supporting son for K'taka bypoll

PTI ■ BENGALURU

BJP MP BN Bache Gowda seems to be in trouble as the party has taken a strong view of his support to his son Sharath Bache Gowda who is contesting the December 5 Assembly bypoll from Hoskote segment as an independent against the party's official candidate.

We have received information that Bache Gowda is calling people seeking their support for his son.

People have told us that he is also holding meetings with them in favour of his son, Revenue minister R Ashoka told reporters on Friday.

Replying to a query on non-cooperation to the party's candidate M T B Nagaraj, Ashoka said, "We have brought all these facts to the notice of our Central leadership.

The minister emphasised that the party will not tolerate any anti-party activities and such people will be expelled.

We have already expelled Sharath Bache Gowda. Leaders, irrespective of how big they are, will meet the same fate if they indulge in damaging the party, Ashok warned.

Notice Inviting e-Tender
No. SSA/Esstt/TT&P/EPB/2020/376/2019/10282 Date :22.11.2019
Mission Director, Axom Sarba Siksha Abhijan Mission, Kahilipara, Guwahati-19, Assam (Samagra Siksha Abhijan) invites tender through e-Tendering process from reputed exercise book manufacturers for the supply of Evaluation and Practice Books for class -V (Single Line and Plain).

To participate in this tender process through e-procurement document, bidder should have valid Digital Signature Certificate (DSC) of class-II (minimum) and have to register in the portal <https://assamtenders.gov.in> by themselves.

The Bidder who have downloaded the tender schedules containing the tender details, terms and conditions, from the website shall submit their tender on-line on the website <https://assamtenders.gov.in>, with proof of payment of non refundable tender fee of Rs. 5000/- (Rupees five thousand) only in the form of demand draft/Bankers Cheque drawn in favour of Mission Director, Axom Sarba Siksha Abhijan Mission, Kahilipara, Guwahati-19, Assam, from any nationalized/scheduled Bank and payable at Guwahati. The tender should be submitted on-line as per date and time of submission as per prescribed schedule.

Sd/- Mission Director,
SSA, Assam, Kahilipara, Guwahati-19

NORTHERN RAILWAY PUBLIC NOTICE

Smt. Amrit Kaur D/o Sh. R.S. Walla, Commercial Clerk / Hazrat Nizamuddin Railway Station, whose last known address is E/200, Amar Colony, Lajpat Nagar-4, New Delhi, is unauthorized absent from her duty w.e.f. year 1996 to till date. She was issued a major penalty charge sheet on 24.09.2015 which was pasted at your last working station and public notice was also issued in newspapers. Since Smt. Amrit Kaur did not attend the enquiry, inquiry officer conducted D&AR inquiry ex-parte on the basis of evidence available on record. Copy of inquiry report was sent to her above address by speed post on 01.10.19 for comments on inquiry report, but same was returned back undelivered with the comments that "No search person in this address". Therefore, Smt. Amrit Kaur is hereby informed through this public notice that if she desires to say anything about the D&AR proceeding against her, she may do so within 15 days. If she requires any documents for this purpose, she may contact Chief Office Superintendent/ Commercial/ Divisional Railway Manager Office, New Delhi for the same. If no response is received from her within 15 days, ex-parte decision will be taken by Disciplinary Authority against him on the basis of evidence available on record.

3739/2019

SERVING CUSTOMERS WITH A SMILE

S. No.	Name of work with its location	App. Cost of work (in Rs.)	Cost of Tender Form (in Rs.)	Address of the office from where the tender form has been issued	Earnest Money to be deposited (in Rs.)	Completion period of the work	Date & Time for submission of tender & opening of tender	Website particulars & notice board location where complete details of the tender can be seen etc.
1.	28/S/DEE/GMB/2019: Provision of Web Based Pump Automation at Various Stations over Moradabad Division.	38,38,117.32	3,000/-	Divisional Railway Manager's office, Northern Railway, Moradabad	76,800/-	36 (Thirty Six) Months	Tender will be received upto 15:00 hrs shall be opened at 15:00 hrs on 20.12.2019	Website www.ineps.gov.in Notice board is located in the Electrical Branch, Divisional Railway Manager's office, Northern Railway, Moradabad
2.	29/S/DEE/GMB/2019: Electrical General Service works in connection with Provision of 2 Nos. Escalator at Dehradun, 2 Nos. Escalator at Bareilly and 04 Nos. Escalator at Moradabad Railway station over Moradabad Division.	22,29,407.01	3,000/-	Divisional Railway Manager's office, Northern Railway, Moradabad	44,600/-	06 (Six) Months		

Tender Notice No.-17/2019 dated :- 21-11-2019

SERVING CUSTOMERS WITH A SMILE

Tata Motors, Yes Bank to move out of Sensex from Dec 23



PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Among other changes, Indiabulls Housing Finance, Yes Bank, InterGlobe Aviation, SBI Life Insurance Company and Info Edge (India) will make entry in the S&P BSE Sensex Next 50, while Cadila Healthcare, Dabur India, Glenmark Pharmaceuticals, UPL Ltd and Edelweiss Financial Services will be dropped from the index. The changes will be effective from Monday, December 23, 2019, Asia Index said.

Apart from these, changes have been made in several indices including S&P BSE 500, S&P BSE 200 and S&P BSE 100.

Govt looking at gold policy: Fin Min official

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The Government is working on an integrated gold policy, which is expected to be released soon, a senior finance ministry official said on Friday.

The policy is aimed at promoting growth of the yellow metal industry and exports of jewellery.

Niti Aayog has submitted a detailed report on gold policy and it is being examined, Joint Secretary in the Department of Economic Affairs Surinder Pal Singh said at an event here.

"Government is definitely looking into it. Definitely there will be a gold policy," he said.

The domestic industry has demanded a cut in import duty on gold to 4 per cent from the current 12.5 per cent.

Currently, there is no gold policy despite the fact that India is the largest consumer and importer of the precious metal. The then finance minister Arun Jaitley had announced formulation of a comprehensive gold policy to develop the yellow metal as an asset class.

Mehul Choksi's company tops RBI's list of wilful defaulters

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has for the first time released a list of top 30 wilful defaulters in response to an RTI application. The list contains the names of usual suspects with absconder Mehul Choksi's Geetanjali Gems topping the list, followed by REI Agro, Winsome Diamonds, Ruchi Soya, Rotomac Global, Kingfisher Airlines, Kudos Chemie, Zoom Developers, Deccan Chronicle and ABG Shipyard in the top 10.

The RBI's response to an RTI application came four years after the Supreme Court had first directed the central bank to disclose a list of India's wilful defaulters.

In response to a Right to Information (RTI) application filed by a private digital media outlet, RBI released the list of 30 major wilful defaulters. For many years, RBI had declined to give this information arguing that it would be against the economic interests of the country and that its regulatory powers over banks disallowed it from doing so.

RBI fast-tracks DHFL resolution

Appoints 3-member advisory panel

PTI ■ MUMBAI

After superseding the board of the crippled mortgage lender DHFL, the Reserve Bank on Friday constituted a three-member panel to advise its administrator to help recover nearly ₹84,000 crore that the troubled company owes to the system.

The panel constitutes a veteran banker, the head of a leading insurer and also representation from a lobby grouping of asset managers.

The RBI had on Wednesday used recent changes in the laws to supersede the board of DHFL, announced to resolve the issue under the provisions of the



bankruptcy code and appointed R Subramaniakumar as the administrator.

Subramaniakumar, the ex-DM of the state-run Indian Overseas Bank, will be helped by the advisory committee consisting of IDFC First Bank non-executive chairman Rajiv Lall, ICICI Prudential Life Insurance chief executive NS Kannan and the mutual funds body Amfi chief executive NS Venkatesh, an official statement from the central bank said.

The panel will be assisting

the administrator in "discharge of his duties", it added.

The Insolvency and Bankruptcy (Insolvency and Liquidation Proceedings of Financial Service Providers and Application to Adjudicating Authority) Rules, 2019 provide for appointing such a panel to advise the administrator "in the operations of the financial service provider during the corporate insolvency resolution process", it said.

The city-headquartered pureplay mortgage lender is the first NBFC/HFC to go for bankruptcy resolution.

Last Friday, the government had notified Section 227 of the IBC empowering RBI to refer financial sector players like NBFCs and HFCs, but excluding banks, with assets worth of at least ₹500 crore to

insolvency courts.

As of July 2019, the home financier owed ₹83,873 crore to banks, the National Housing Board, mutual funds and bondholders, including retail bondholders. Of this, secured debt is ₹74,054 crore and ₹9,818 crore is unsecured.

Most banks have or are going to declare DHFL account as NPA in the third quarter.

DHFL defaulted on its payment obligations in respect of bank borrowings and market borrowings, which reveals serious concerns about the conduct of the affairs of the company, the RBI said.

DHFL lenders were working on a resolution plan to pick up 51 percent in the company by converting a part of their debt into equity. But the plan was yet to be formally cleared.

BUSINESS CORNER

NTPC GETS AWARD FOR EXCELLENCE IN POWER GENERATION

New Delhi: NTPC Ltd, India's largest power generation company, has been bestowed with the "Best Performing Power Generation Company" 2019 award, at the Dun & Bradstreet Infra 2019 awards, held in New Delhi.



General (retd) VK Singh, Union Minister of State for Road Transport and Highways, GOI presented the award to Prakash Tiwari, Director (Operations), NTPC during the function. The best Performing Power Generation Company award has been awarded to NTPC for its robust operational performance. NTPC's five power stations were among India's top ten best performing power stations in the country in the year 2018-19. NTPC has established itself as the dominant power major with presence in the entire value chain of the power generation business. From fossil fuels it has forayed into generating electricity through hydro and renewable energy sources. NTPC has been operating its plants at high efficiency levels with about 15 per cent of the total national capacity, NTPC contributes nearly 22 per cent of total power generation with its focus on high efficiency.

RBI mulling new rules on corporate governance

PTI ■ MUMBAI

The Reserve Bank is looking at introducing new rules on corporate governance for banks in sync with global ones, and would also like lenders to disclose more. Deputy Governor NS Vishwanathan said on Friday. Vishwanathan also urged banks to recognise losses because of NPAs as early as possible and not to defer the same.

The comments from the top central banker come at a time when the system continues to go through the issues of asset quality, even though the new additions have slowed down. Speaking at an event organised by Business Standard, a business daily, Vishwanathan listed out a slew of initiatives the RBI has undertaken, with the compensation structures for key management personnel and whole-time directors being the latest additions, and hinted that it is looking at more.

Das: Need to institutionalise State finance commissions

PTI ■ MUMBAI

Mumbai: Reserve Bank Governor Shaktikanta Das on Friday said there is a "great need" to institutionalise State finance commissions and helping the local bodies enhance their revenue generation capacities.

He said fiscally strong states and Centre is the "essence" of Indian federalism and weakness at either end poses a slew of challenges for the country.

"There is a great need to strongly institutionalise the state finance commissions and empower the third tier of governance by enhancing their revenue-generating capacity," Das said.

He was speaking at the central bank headquarters before the 17th LK Jha Memorial Lecture which was given by 15th Finance Commission chairman NK Singh. Das said local bodies deserve more attention and is an aspect that needs to be looked into.

Finance commission chief blasts frequent tinkering with GST rates

PTI ■ MUMBAI

Fifteenth finance commission chairman NK Singh on Friday called for major changes in the GST structure, including reducing the cumbersome compliance procedures and also doing away with frequent rate changes, to improve collection.

He also pitched for a rationalisation in Centrally-sponsored schemes, and blamed the government for not clearly defining the role of the Niti Aayog, which as of now does not have any powers to take financial decisions.

The comments from the chief of the commission that decides on the revenue distribution between the Centre and the states, come amidst concerns about the continuous fall in GST collection which has not touched the targeted ₹1 lakh crore every month barring one month.

"If you do not simplify GST, you will be defeating the very purpose and intention of why we took this far reaching step," Singh told SBI chairman

Fitch: Moratorium on spectrum payment, tariff hike insufficient to offset SC ruling impact

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

A two-year moratorium on payment of spectrum dues and hike in mobile call and data tariffs from next month may not be sufficient for Bharti Airtel and Vodafone-Idea to offset the impact of the Supreme Court ruling on payment of past statutory dues, Fitch Ratings said on Friday.

The Supreme Court had on October 24 ruled that non-telecom revenues will be included while calculating statutory dues towards the government.

"The decision by all three private Indian telecommunication companies (Airtel, Vodafone Idea and Reliance Jio) to raise tariffs from December 2019 and a two-year moratorium on payment of spectrum dues (announced by the government this week) are positive for the industry," Fitch said.

"However, these are unlikely to be sufficient to offset the impact of a recent Supreme Court judgment for incumbents Bharti Airtel and Vodafone Idea Ltd," it added. Reliance Jio, a subsidiary of Reliance Industries Ltd (RIL), is not affected by the ruling and is likely to continue to gain revenue market share, which will support RIL's deleveraging plans, it said.

Fitch said it has a negative outlook on the telecom sector for 2020 primarily due to heightened financial risk associated with the large unpaid statutory dues.

On November 20, the government announced plans to suspend the payment of deferred spectrum dues for two years, which will ease cash flow pressure on all three telcos.

Vodafone Idea and Bharti will benefit the most as their negative free cash flow will reduce by USD 1.7 billion and USD 850 million a year, respectively, for the financial year ending March 2021 (FY21) and FY22, it said.

FSSAI slaps notice on McDonald's for disparaging 'ghiya-tori' in its ad

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Food regulator FSSAI has slapped a show-cause notice on McDonald's for disparaging freshly cooked food and vegetables in its advertisements to promote fast food.

In its notice, the FSSAI referred to a full-page advertisement by McDonald's in newspapers earlier this month that had said, "Stuck with Ghiya-Tori (bottle gourd-sponge gourd) Again? Make the 1+1 Combo you love".

The food sector watchdog issued a show-cause notice to Hardcastle Restaurants and Connaught Plaza Restaurants and Connaught Plaza Restaurants Ltd — the franchise that operates McDonald's fastfood chain in India — seeking response on why action should not be initiated against them, a statement by the FSSAI said.

McDonald's had over the last weekend carried advertisements in newspapers seeking to get traffic at its outlets by allegedly disparaging home cooked food and healthy vegetables. The regulator has "noted with concern incidence of irresponsible advertising by some food companies to promote sales of their own foods often considered unhealthy as substitute for healthy foods", the Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI)



said. McDonald's has been asked to give explanation in stipulated timeframe.

Violation of FSSAI's advertisement code attracts a penalty up to Rs 10 lakh.

Central licensing authority and FSSAI's designated officer at New Delhi and Mumbai have taken cognizance of this and issued show cause notices for contravening the provisions of Food Safety and Standards (Advertising and Claims) Regulations, 2018 as to why further action should not be initiated against McDonald's for this," the statement said.

Hardcastle Restaurants Private Limited (HRPL) said in a statement that it "operates restaurants in west and south India and the print ad in question was not issued by us. We have already written to the FSSAI clarifying the same".

In a letter to the regulator,

88% of Indians use mobile to make purchases: Study

PTI ■ MUMBAI

As many as 88 per cent of Indians surveyed use a mobile device to make payments, way above the global average, according to a study.

The PayPal and IPSOS 'mCommerce Report', based on a survey conducted across 11 countries with about 22,000 consumers and 4,000 business respondents, examined how people shop and sell online.

In India, the respondent pool comprised of 2,000 consumers aged 18-74, who owned or used a smartphone and over 300 business influencers or decision makers who sell or accept payments online.

"88 per cent of the surveyed Indians use a mobile device to make payments, way above the global average of 71 per cent," the survey said.

It also said 45 per cent of merchants have made mobile optimisation a business priority in the next 12 months.

"Time saving and ease of transacting is the main drivers for mobile commerce," it said and added social commerce adoption is led by the young.

According to the study, apps are a popular way of transacting, wherein 98 per cent of Indian mobile shoppers pay through apps as against 90 per cent of the global average.

Report: Economic insecurity of youths to shape India's politics

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Amid a growth slowdown, India's politics will be increasingly shaped by the economic insecurity of its vast youth population, the Economist Intelligence Unit said in a research note on Friday.

The issue of unemployment and underemployment has been an unavoidable topic in India's politics and slower economic growth has translated to poor employment numbers.

"Although Prime Minister Narendra Modi successfully won re-election for the Bharatiya Janata Party earlier this year on a platform of strong leadership and emphasis on social and security issues, politics will increasingly be shaped by the economic insecurity of India's vast youth population," the research note by the Economist Intelligence Unit (EIU) said.

Citing Centre for Monitoring Indian Economy data, the EIU said that in October 2019, the unemployment rate rose to a three-year high of 8.5 per cent, up from 7.2 per cent in September.

Defence Ministry plans product testing facilities for MSMEs

IANS ■ CHENNAI

The Ministry of Defence plans to set up 6-8 product testing facilities to enable the micro, small and medium enterprises (MSME) to test their products for defence supplies, said a senior official here.

The first testing facility, likely for drones, is to come up soon, he said on Friday.

"In order to provide MSME's a level playing field in defence supplies and also expand the vendor base, the Ministry of Defence has come up with a scheme to set up 6-8 product testing centres in the defence industrial corridors," Rear Admiral A. George, Additional Director General Quality Assurance (Warship Projects), directorate general, quality assurance (DGQA), told reporters.

He was here to participate in the Quality Assurance-Industry Conclave South Zone.

The government has allocated about ₹400 crore for this scheme whereby it would provide a grant-in-aid of up to 75 per cent of the cost of equipment for the product testing facility.

Notice Inviting e-Tender
No. SSA/Esst/TT/P/EPB/2020/379/2019/10285 Date: 22.11.2019
Mission Director, Axom Sarba Siksha Abhijan Mission, Kahilipara, Guwahati-19, Assam (Samagra Siksha Abhijan) invites tender through e-Tendering process from reputed exercise book manufacturers for the supply of Evaluation and Practice Books for class -VIII (Single Line and Plain).
To participate in this tender process through e-procurement document, bidder should have valid Digital Signature Certificate (DSC) of class-II (minimum) and have to register in the portal https://assamtenders.gov.in by themselves.
The Bidder who have downloaded the tender schedules containing the tender details, terms and conditions, from the website shall submit their tender on-line on the website https://assamtenders.gov.in, with proof of payment of non refundable tender fee of Rs. 5000/- (Rupees five thousand) only in the form of demand draft/Bankers Cheque drawn in favour of Mission Director, Axom Sarba Siksha Abhijan Mission, Kahilipara, Guwahati-19, Assam, from any nationalized/scheduled Bank and payable at Guwahati. The tender should be submitted on-line as per date and time of submission as per prescribed schedule.
Sd/- Mission Director,
SSA, Assam, Kahilipara, Guwahati-19

SEARCH FOR MISSING
General public is hereby informed that one male namely **Pankaj S/o Late Krishan Lal Sharma** R/o H.No. 6/22 B Tilak Nagar, Delhi, has been missing from the area of P.S. Tilak Nagar, Delhi since 8.11.2019. In this regard, a case **DD No. 26A dated 09.11.2019** has been registered at P.S. Tilak Nagar, Delhi. The description of the missing male is as under.
Age: 38 Years, **Complexion:** Shallow, **Height:** 5'7", **Face:** Round, **Built:** Normal, **Wearing:** black colour T-shirt, blue colour jeans and black & white colour shoes in feet. Sincere efforts have been made by the local police to trace out him but no clue has come to light so far. If anyone has any information about the missing male then please inform P.S. Tilak Nagar, Delhi at following Tel No. / e-mail: **cic@cbi.gov.in** and Website: **http://cbi.nic.in**
Ph: 011-24368638, 24368641
Fax No. 011-24368639
Sd/- S.H.O.
P.S. Tilak Nagar, Delhi
Ph.-011 25407800
DP/8502/WD/19

SEARCH FOR MISSING/KIDNAPPED
General Public is hereby informed that one boy namely **Salman, S/o. Mohd. Balal, R/o H. No. 356, Indira Vikas Colony, In front of 17/4 Hostel, Delhi** has been missing/ kidnapped from the area of P. S. Mukherjee Nagar, Delhi since **17.07.2013**. In this regard a case vide **FIR No. 279/13 u/s 363 IPC, dated 17.07.2013** has been lodged in P. S. Mukherjee Nagar, Delhi. The description of missing/ kidnapped boy is as under:- **Age:** 6 year, **Height:** 3'1", **Complexion:** Fair, **Face:** Round, **Built:** Normal, **Wearing:** Brown colour pant, white colour T-shirt & ladies slipper. If anyone having any clue/ information, kindly inform the undersigned.
Website: http://cbi.nic.in
E-Mail ID - cic@cbi.gov.in
Fax No. 011-24368639
Ph. Nos.: 011-24368638, 24368641
SHO
P.S. Mukherjee Nagar, Delhi
Ph.: 011-27654675,
8750870234
DP/9526/NW/19

SEARCH FOR MISSING/KIDNAPPED MALE
General Public is hereby informed that one male (depicted in the photo) namely **Arvinder Singh S/o Sukhvinder Singh R/o RZT-493, Nihal Vihar, Delhi Aged-32 Years** has been reported missing/kidnapped since 06.09.2019 from the area of P.S. Nihal Vihar, Delhi vide **DD No.43A Dated 02.11.2019** registered at Police Station Nihal Vihar, Delhi. His physical description is as under:-
Complexion: Fair, **Height:** 5'7", **Face:** Round, **Clothing:** Green coloured t-shirt and black coloured pant and white coloured shoes in feet.
Any person having any information/Clue about this missing/kidnapped male, may inform SHO, Nihal Vihar, Delhi at E-mail: **cic@cbi.gov.in** or website: **http://cbi.nic.in**
Sd/-
Ph: 011-24368638 or 24368641
FAX No. : 011-24368639
SHO, Nihal Vihar, Delhi
Tel.: 011-25946700, 25946710
DP/2869/OD/19
Arvinder Singh
Ph. : 7065036129

Notice Inviting e-Tender
No. SSA/Esst/TT/P/EPB/2020/377/2019/10283 Date: 22.11.2019
Mission Director, Axom Sarba Siksha Abhijan Mission, Kahilipara, Guwahati-19, Assam (Samagra Siksha Abhijan) invites tender through e-Tendering process from reputed exercise book manufacturers for the supply of Evaluation and Practice Books for class -VI (Single Line and Plain).
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The Bidder who have downloaded the tender schedules containing the tender details, terms and conditions, from the website shall submit their tender on-line on the website https://assamtenders.gov.in, with proof of payment of non refundable tender fee of Rs. 5000/- (Rupees five thousand) only in the form of demand draft/Bankers Cheque drawn in favour of Mission Director, Axom Sarba Siksha Abhijan Mission, Kahilipara, Guwahati-19, Assam, from any nationalized/scheduled Bank and payable at Guwahati. The tender should be submitted on-line as per date and time of submission as per prescribed schedule.
Sd/- Mission Director,
SSA, Assam, Kahilipara, Guwahati-19

GLOBE TROTTER

10 KILLED IN B'DESH ROAD ACCIDENT

Dhaka: A microbus packed with wedding guests collided head-on with a bus in central Bangladesh on Friday, killing at least ten people including two children, according to media reports.

COMBAT EVIL THROUGH COOPERATION: POPE

Bangkok: The pope on Friday urged religious leaders to cooperate and foster mutual respect to face the complex challenges of today in a speech in a Thailand university.

PAYPAL DECLINES TO EXTEND SERVICES TO PAK

Islamabad: Pakistan Govt officials on Friday said that as of now PayPal, an American company which operates a worldwide online payment system that supports online money transfers, has refused to extend its services to Pakistan.

SMOG PUTS LAHORE AT RISK: AMNESTY

New Delhi: The Imran Khan Government has been slammed in an international report for the inadequate response to the hazardous level of smog in the Pakistani city of Lahore that has put people's health at risk.

BRAZIL CREATES 8.41,000 JOBS IN 10 MONTHS

Rio De Janeiro: Brazil created 8,41,589 jobs from January to October, a 6.4% increase year-on-year, the Brazilian Ministry said on Thursday. According to the ministry's labour secretariat, the Brazilian economy generated 70,852 jobs in October, the best figure for the month since 2016.

TRUMP IMPEACHMENT

Witness attacks 'fictional narrative propagated by Russians'

Washington: A former top White House adviser on Russia on Thursday said the "fictional narrative" pushed by Donald Trump and the Republicans about Ukraine's role in influencing the 2016 US election was propagated by Russia, as he testified before the House Intelligence Committee's impeachment probe.

Fiona Hill, the former top Russia expert on the National Security Council, was testifying before the House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence as part of its series of public hearings on its impeachment proceedings against President Donald Trump.

The impeachment inquiry centers on the accusation that

Trump withheld a White House visit for Ukraine's president and security aid for the country as leverage to push the government to announce investigations into former Vice President Joseph Biden and the claim that Ukraine conspired to help Democrats in the 2016 election.

Hill said that such a fictional native is being perpetrated and propagated by the Russians.

"Based on questions and statements I have heard some of you on this committee appear to believe that Russia and its security services did not conduct a campaign against our country and that perhaps somehow for some reason Ukraine did. This is a fiction-

al narrative that is being perpetrated and propagated by the Russian security services themselves," Hill said.

"The unfortunate truth is that Russia was the foreign power that systematically attacked our democratic institutions in 2016. This is the public conclusion of our own intelligence agencies confirmed in bipartisan congressional reports. It is beyond dispute even if some of the underlying details must remain classified," she said.

The impact of the successful 2016 Russian campaign remains evident today, Hill said.

"Our nation is being torn apart. Truth is questioned. Our highly professional expert

career foreign service is being undermined. US support for Ukraine which continues to face upon Russian aggression has been politicised," she said.

She said the Russian government's goal was to weaken the US, to diminish America's global role and to neutralise a perceived US threat to Russian interest.

Hill said Russian President Vladimir Putin and the Russian security services aim to counter US foreign policy objectives in Europe including in Ukraine where Moscow wishes to reassert political economic dominance.

Responding to questions, Hill said that the Russian's interests are to delegitimise US' entire presidency. PTI

Hearings highlight immigrants' stories

AP ■ WASHINGTON

One came from northeast England. Another came from the former Soviet Union. A third was born in Canada to parents who fled the Soviet Union and Nazi Germany.



Several witnesses who testified in the House impeachment inquiry this week chose to highlight their immigrant backgrounds, sharing their families' stories in highly personal opening

statements.

They drew a connection to how those experiences led them to public service and a strong desire to safeguard US national security.

Their stories offered a sharp counterpoint to President Donald Trump, who has often derided immigrants as a threat to American national security.

"I can say with confidence that this country has offered for me opportunities I never

would have had in England," former National Security Council official Fiona Hill testified Thursday.

She spoke in what she called a "very distinctive working-class" British accent that would have impeded her professional advancement at home, but that "never set me back in America."

On Tuesday, Lt Col Alexander Vindman, an Army officer who works with the National Security Council, testified that his family fled to the US from the Soviet Union when he was 3.

Trump doubles down on debunked Ukraine conspiracy theory

Washington: President Donald Trump is still promoting a debunked conspiracy theory that Ukraine interfered in the 2016 election, a day after a former White House security adviser called it a "fictional narrative".

Trump called in to "Fox & Friends" on Friday and said he was trying to root out corruption in the Eastern European nation when he withheld aid over the summer. Trump's July 25 call with Ukraine's president is at the center of the House impeach-

ment probe, which is looking into Trump's pressure on Ukraine to investigate political rivals as he held back nearly \$400 million.

Trump said, "There was no quid pro quo," contradicting testimony by impeachment witnesses.

On Thursday, a former White House Russia analyst said the debunked theory that Ukraine was behind election interference played into Russia's hands. AP

US short-term spending Bill passed

Washington: The US Senate has passed a short-term spending Bill that could keep the federal Government funded through December 20, avoiding a possible Government shutdown. The legislation, which was passed by the House earlier this week, will be sent to President Donald Trump, who is expected to sign it. The Senate passed it by a vote of 74-20 on Thursday, Xinhua news agency reported.

In early August, the US Congress passed a bill that will increase the federal budget and

lift the debt ceiling for the next two years. The Bill, signed by Trump, lifts the budget cap for discretionary spending to \$1.37 trillion in 2020 and \$1.375 trillion in 2021, expanding defense outlays, demanded by Republicans, and boosting domestic spending, including health care for veterans, sought by Democrats.

The US Congress did not complete action on appropriations before the end of the fiscal year on September 30, and it enacted a continuing resolution

in September that keep the Government open through November 21, which means Government funding would expire Thursday at midnight.

While Congress is supposed to complete a budget resolution to lay out fiscal principles and set an appropriations level, lawmakers have not adopted one, according to the Committee for a Responsible Federal Budget, a nonpartisan watchdog group.

Congress should pass 12 annual spending bills to fund government agencies. IANS

HK would have been 'obliterated in 14 minutes' if not for me: Trump

AFP ■ WASHINGTON

US President Donald Trump claimed on Friday that were it not for him, Hong Kong "would have been obliterated in 14 minutes" by Chinese troops.

In an interview with Fox News, Trump said President Xi Jinping refrained from sending in the military against pro-democracy demonstrators in the semi-autonomous city only because he asked him to.

"If it weren't for me, Hong Kong would have been obliterated in 14 minutes," Trump said.

Xi "has a million soldiers standing outside of Hong Kong, are not going only because I asked him. Please don't do that. You will be making a big mistake. It will have a tremendous negative impact on the trade deal."

UN, other international bodies should take up Dalai Lama succession issue: US

Washington: Rejecting China's claim on deciding the 84-year-old Dalai Lama's successor, the US on Thursday said the issue should be taken up by the international bodies, including the UN. China has been asserting that its ascent to the Dalai Lama's successor is a must.

"There are many people who follow the Dalai Lama and don't live in China. He is a well-known spiritual leader throughout the world and deserves respect and deserves the succession process picked by his faith community..." US Ambassador at Large for

International Religious Freedom Samuel Brownback told reporters at a news conference here. Rejecting the Chinese claim, he reiterated that it was an issue that should be taken up in international bodies.

The United States is going to keep pushing on that, said Brownback who was recently in Dharamshala and addressed the Tibetan community.

China accuses the Dalai Lama as a "splittist" working for Tibetan independence. The 14th Dalai Lama fled to India in early 1959 to escape from the Chinese occupation and lives in exile in the hill town of Dharamshala.

"He used to travel so much, was such a great spokesperson. I met him several times when he travelled to the United States - just as energetic and lively and clear," Brownback said.

US working with Taiwan to combat China election interference

Taipei (Taiwan): The top US representative in Taiwan says Washington is working with it to combat efforts by Beijing to influence upcoming elections on the island.

The US is "aware that China is attempting to apply pressure through various means on Taiwan ... To influence Taiwan's democratic process," Brent Christensen told reporters on Friday.

"We believe that malign actors are using disinformation campaigns to make people lose faith in democratic institutions," said Christensen, who serves as the de facto US ambassador to Taipei.

The US and Taiwan have been "working very closely to combat these disinformation efforts" by sharing information and experience and mobilising

civil society, he said.

Independence-leaning President Tsai Ing-wen is seeking a second term in the January 11 vote for head of state and lawmakers.

China is believed to strongly favor Tsai's main opponent in the race, Han Kuo-yu of the Beijing-friendly Nationalist Party. Self-governing Taiwan split from China in 1949 and transitioned to full democracy in the 1990s. China claims the island as its own territory, which it threatens to annex by military force, and opposes all official contact between the US and the island.

Despite the lack of formal diplomatic relations, the US is legally bound to ensure the island can defend itself and to treat all threats to it as matters of "grave concern." AP

Rajapaksa appoints interim Cabinet, brothers take major portfolios

Colombo: Sri Lankan President Gotabaya Rajapaksa on Friday appointed a 16-member interim Cabinet, including two of his brothers, and gave the major portfolios of defence, finance and trade to them while inducting two Tamils as a sign of reaching out to the minority community.

Prime Minister Mahinda Rajapaksa, 74, got the key portfolios of defence and finance while the President's eldest brother Chamal Rajapaksa, 77, got trade and food security ministries.

"This is an interim government," Gotabaya Rajapaksa, who took over as the country's President on Monday, said during the swearing-in ceremony of the ministers.

He said the ministers of state would be appointed next week. AP

Iran says 'world war' against it foiled

AFP ■ TEHRAN

Iran's Basij militia said the unrest sparked by fuel price hikes amounted to a "world war" against Tehran that was thwarted, pointing the finger of blame at Washington, Riyadh and Israel.

The protests erupted across the sanctions-hit country on November 15, after the price of petrol was raised by as much as 200 per cent.

Authorities said some of the protest leaders in which police stations were attacked, petrol pumps torched and shops looted had been arrested.

"A full-fledged world war against the system and the revolution was born and fortunately the child died at the moment of birth," said Brigadier General Salar Abnoosh, a deputy head of the Basij, an Islamic volunteer militia.

Quoted by semi-official news agency ISNA late Thursday, Abnoosh said interrogations had

revealed a "coalition of evil" made up of "Zionists, America and Saudi Arabia" was behind the "sedition".

The United Nations human rights office, for its part, has said it was alarmed by reports that live ammunition used by security forces to quell the unrest had caused a "significant number of deaths".

Officials have confirmed five deaths, while Amnesty International said that more than 100 demonstrators were believed to have been killed and the real death toll could be as high as 200.

Iran's Revolutionary Guards said that during the unrest, "incidents ... Caused by the rise in petrol price took place in (a little) less than 100 cities".

The "incidents were ended in less than 24 hours and in some cities in 72 hours" as a result of the "armed forces' insight and timely action", it said.

Internet remained mostly

blocked in Iran on Friday for a sixth day, with officials and news agencies saying the blackout was gradually being rolled back. Iran's telecommunications minister told ISNA that connectivity had returned in some provinces but did not give a date for full coverage.

"Other places will also be reconnected" upon orders of the Supreme National Security Council, said Mohammad-Javad Azari Jahromi, adding the ministry was still assessing damage done to businesses.

Access via ADSL was partially restored in a number of provinces and for some universities in Tehran as of Thursday, according to ISNA, although mobile data connections could still only access local websites.

NetBlocks, a website that monitors net shutdowns, showed Iran's connectivity to be at only 14 per cent at mid-Friday.

LOST & FOUND

HU, M/S. INDERJIT SINGH NARULA (Wife), would like to inform the general public that we have lost/misplaced our Original Flat Buyers Agreement from Ansal Properties and Industries (P) Ltd for office space no 807, Chiranjiv Tower, 43 Nehru Place, New Delhi. If any person finds kindly contact within seven (7) days of this publication, at:

INDERJIT SINGH NARULA C 226, Third Floor, Defence colony, South Delhi, Delhi 110024

DEBT RECOVERY TRIBUNAL II, DELHI

4TH FLOOR, JEEVAN TARA BUILDING, PARLIAMENT STREET, NEW DELHI- 110001

PROCLAMATION OF SALE NOTICE

The under mentioned Property will be sold through auction on "AS IS WHERE IS BASIS" and "AS IS WHAT IS BASIS" for recovery of dues, in the matter of ICICI BANK LTD vs SURENDER KUMAR O.A.No. 267/2019 & I.A. No: 1302/2019

1. Description of Property: Make: INNOVA CRYSTA 2.4 G Reg No: HR29AR4335 Manuf Year: 2017 Reserve Price- Rs. 9, 50,000 EMD- Rs. 95,000 2. Date and Time of Auction: Dec 10, 2019 3. Auction Venue: Ridhi Godara Yard, Kataria Chowk Sector 17, Sukhraili Gaon Behind Air Force Station, Gurgaon 4. Manager: Shankar Kapoor Mob No: 9650193259

Terms of Sale The particulars of the said asset specified herein above have been stated to the best of the information and knowledge of the undersigned, who shall however not be responsible for any error, misstatement or omission in the said particulars. The interested participant/s are therefore requested, in their own interest, to satisfy himself / themselves/ itself with regard to the said asset and other relevant details pertaining to it before submitting the bids.

Interested bidders shall be required to deposit an Earnest Amount mentioned above against the respective vehicle by way of pay order/Demand Draft payable at Delhi and in favour of ICICI Bank Ltd., Delhi. Successful highest bidder shall have to deposit balance amount within 5 days from the approval shared with them. In Case of failure to deposit the amount as mentioned above, the amount of Earnest Money deposited shall be forfeited. Interested participant/s are requested to participate Dec 10, 2019 for physical auction or call Bank Manager Shankar Kapoor.

कार्यालय अधीक्षण अभियन्ता, निर्माण मण्डल, उत्तरखण्ड पेयजल संसाधन विकास एवं निर्माण निगम, नई दिल्ली

कार्य का नाम - निर्माण शाखा, उत्तरखण्ड पेयजल निगम, घनसाली के अन्तर्गत जनपद टिहरी के विकास क्षेत्र जाखणीघार में कोशियार पथिंग पेयजल योजना के अन्तर्गत, विवरण प्रणाली, एवं तत्सम्बन्धी निर्माण कार्य।

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e-TENDER NOTICE Office of Executive Engineer (M&G), Kulhal Power Station, Dehradun invites online bids for following work- Tender No. : e-14/UJVNL/EE (M&G)/KPS/2019-20, Capital Maintenance of Unit B of Kulhal Power Station (3x10 MW)

NORTHERN RAILWAY Tender Notice

Sr. DEN/II/MB acting for and on behalf of The President of India invites E-Tenders against Tender no. 180-DRM-MB-19-20 closing date 17.12.2019, 16.00 hrs. Name of work: CTR(P) 8.00 km by PQRS in the section of Sr. DEN/II/MB, Tender closing date / time: 17.12.2019, 16.00 hrs., Cost of work: Rs. 45,68,723.08, Earnest Money: Rs. 91,400.00, Tender Cost: Rs. 3000.00.

UK election: Tories plan stamp duty hike on non-UK residents

London: Foreigners buying properties in England will be forced to pay three per cent more in stamp duty than the UK residents, if the Conservatives win the general election.

The party claims it will help people get on the housing ladder by taking the heat out of the property market, the BBC reported.

The government was already planning a one per cent hike for foreign buyers.

Labour is also proposing a levy on "overseas companies buying housing", and wants to give local people "first dibs" on homes built in their area.

Currently, foreign individuals and companies can buy homes as easily as the UK residents, but there are longstanding

concerns about properties being bought as investments and standing empty, particularly in upmarket areas of London.

Conservatives quote a study saying 13 per cent of homes in London were bought by overseas buyers between 2014 and 2016.

Research last year by the King's College Business School suggested foreign buyers did not just push up prices at the high-end of the property market, but there was a "trickle down" effect to less expensive properties, and that cities outside London also felt the effect, said the BBC Report.

The Conservatives are now proposing a surcharge of three per cent to be paid in addition to all other stamp duty charges. IANS

S Korea salvages military pact with Japan at 11th hour

Seoul: South Korea decided on Friday against scrapping a critical military intelligence-sharing pact with Japan, in a dramatic 11th-hour U-turn that will come as a relief to the United States.

The pact was due to expire at midnight amid a sharp deterioration in ties between the two democracies and market economies that has alarmed Washington as it seeks to curb the threat from nuclear-armed North Korea.

But after a flurry of last-ditch diplomacy, Seoul announced it would "conditionally" suspend the expiry of the agreement with just six hours left on the clock. Kim You-geun, a national security official at Seoul's presidential Blue House, confirmed the accord, known as GSOMIA, would not be allowed to lapse at midnight. AFP

Israel braces for bitter fight after Netanyahu indictment

Jerusalem: Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's indictment is expected to sharpen the battle lines in Israel's already deadlocked political system and could test the loyalty of his right-wing allies, Israeli commentators said on Friday.

The serious corruption charges announced Thursday appear to have dashed already slim hopes for a unity government following September's elections, paving the way for an unprecedented repeat vote in March, which will be the third in less than a year.

In an angry speech late Thursday, Netanyahu lashed out at investigators and vowed to fight on in the face of an "attempted coup." His main

opponent, the centrist Blue and White party, called on him to "immediately resign" from all his Cabinet posts, citing a Supreme Court ruling that says indicted ministers cannot continue to hold office. Netanyahu also serves as minister of health, labor and Diaspora affairs, as well as acting minister of agriculture.

He is not legally required to step down as PM, but Netanyahu faces heavy pressure to do so, and it is unclear whether an indicted politician could be given the mandate to form a new government. Netanyahu has already failed to form a majority coalition of 61 seats in the 120-seat Knesset after two hard-fought elections this year. AP

WESTERN RAILWAY STORES DEPARTMENT e-AUCTION SALE DURING DECEMBER, 2019 FOR P-WAY & OTHER VARIOUS SCRAP SPECIAL ATTENTION: ALL STEEL PURCHASERS & RE-ROLLERS

Notice Inviting e-Tender No.SSA/Esstt/TT&P/EPB/2020/375/2019/10281 Date: 22.11.2019 Mission Director, Axom Sarba Siksha Abhijan Mission, Kahilipara, Guwahati-19, Assam (Samagra Siksha Abhiyan) invites tender

Special one to rescue Spurs?

Mourinho seeks quick fix to win over Lilywhites doubters

AFP ■ LONDON

Jose Mourinho believes the quality of players he has at Tottenham do "not belong" down in 14th in the Premier League as he tries to salvage Spurs' season.

Mourinho starts his tenure at a third English club after grossly different experiences at Chelsea and Manchester United hoping to inspire Tottenham's first away win in the league



since January at West Ham today. That run saw Mauricio Pochettino sacked on Tuesday just six months after reaching the Champions League final. Pochettino's five-and-a-half years at the club transformed Tottenham's fortunes. The Argentine made Spurs Champions League regulars and eventually paid for his own success in raising the bar of expectations.

It also paved the way for a marriage of convenience. Tottenham needed to make a statement with Pochettino's successor to prove their growing status, and so turned to Mourinho.

Similarly, the



Manchester City teammates Kevin De Bruyne and Sergio Kun Agüero chats during team's practice session ahead of home game against Chelsea AP

West Ham vs Tottenham
Live from 6:00pm IST
STAR SPORTS SELECT 1

Portuguese needs a project that will rebuild his reputation after an unhappy two-and-a-half years at Manchester United.

"In the short term we have to try to get results," said Mourinho on Thursday.

"It is important in the Premier League we need to disappear from the area where we do not belong."

Spurs start the weekend 11 points adrift of the top four having taken just 25 points from their last 24 Premier League matches.

However, Mourinho insisted he will not make

big changes in personnel or to the team's style of play amid concerns from supporters that the manner in which he has won so much silverware in his career is not an easy fit with Spurs' traditional brand of attacking football.

"The style of play has to be always adapted not just to the club culture, but especially to the players' qualities," he added.

"These are the players, they have the qualities, adapted to a certain way of playing football, and that's the way I want to do it."

Mourinho has spent 11 months out of the game since being sacked by United in December.

And he cut a far more introspective figure as he briefed the media on Thursday than the man who announced himself as "the special one"

during his first press conference as Chelsea manager 15 years ago.

"I always thought that these 11 months were not a waste of time. These 11 months were months to think, to analyse, to prepare and anticipate things," added Mourinho.

"I had time to think about many things. Don't ask me what are the mistakes, but I realise that during my career I made mistakes. I am not going to make the same mistakes, I am going to make new mistakes."

"From an emotional point of view I'm relaxed, I'm motivated, I'm ready and I think the players they felt that in these two days."

"They felt that I'm ready. I'm ready to support them. This is not about me. In your career but also in your life, you go through moments and periods and I am in a period where it's not about myself at all. It's about my club, my club's

fans, my players."

Even if Mourinho claims to be a changed man, his reputation precedes him.

There was no love lost in many clashes with Tottenham in his Chelsea days and that allied to the joy Pochettino brought the Spurs fanbase leaves many unconvinced this managerial change is one for the better.

In his glory days at Chelsea, Porto, Inter and early in his spell at Real Madrid, Mourinho could always rely on results to win over the doubters.

That is what he needs to provide Spurs' supporters with, starting today.



Juve take Atalanta in Serie A battle

AFP ■ TURIN

Cristiano Ronaldo conceded he is not '100 percent' despite his goal spree for Portugal but always ready to play as injury-hit Juventus head to Atalanta today looking to extend their unbeaten run this season to stay top of Serie A.

Juventus visit fifth-placed Atalanta before hosting Atletico Madrid in the Champions League next week.

Maurizio Sarri's side are just one point ahead of Antonio Conte's Inter Milan after 12 matches, with Lazio and Cagliari eight points adrift of the leaders in joint third.

Atalanta have gone three league games without a win and will be eager to get back into the Champions League berths, as they sit two points off fourth place, before next week's

trip to Shakhtar Donetsk.

Their fortunes have slipped following the high injury suffered to Colombian star Duvan Zapata, who scored six goals in six Serie A matches before being sidelined for their last five league games.

As Atalanta sweat Zapata's return, Juventus will be without full-back Alex Sandro, who picked up a high problem playing for Brazil, with Blaise Matuidi recovering from a rib injury.

Full-back Danilo, who scored his first goal for Brazil during the international break, warned: "The games after the international break are never easy, let alone against Atalanta, a team who are doing well."

"We can't make mistakes or underestimate them."

Inter will be looking to make it a perfect seven league games on the road this season as they travel to Torino, before their European trip to Slavia Prague.

Conte's side face a tough task against the Andrea Belotti-powered Torino, who ended their six-match winless run against Brescia last time out, and are in 11th position.

Serie A runners-up Napoli are in crisis, having slipped to seventh, and desperately need a result at 14th-placed AC Milan, who are themselves floundering.



Atalanta vs Juventus
Live from 7:30pm IST
SONY TEN 2 NETWORK



India finish WC Final on high

PTI ■ PUTIAN

India finished their engagements at the ISSF World Cup Finals on a high, with their shooters featuring in teams that won the President's Trophies for both the 10m air pistol and air rifle mixed team competitions here on Friday.

In the mixed air pistol final, Manu Bhaker first paired with world number one Russian Artem Chernousov to get the better of the India's Saurabh Chaudhary and Olympic champion Anna Korakaki 17-13.

It was then the turn of

Divyansh Singh Panwar to team up with Croatian legend Snjezana Pejic, to win the trophy in the 10m air rifle mixed team competition. Divyansh and Snjezana prevailed 16-14 over India's Apurvi Chandela and D Zhang.

It got even better when Shahzar Rizvi also won Bronze in the 10m air pistol mixed team competition.

Both Manu and Divyansh had earlier won their individual 10m competitions air pistol and rifle, ensuring that India topped the medals tally with three Gold medals.



Jos Buttler, centre top, watches as the ball rolls near the stumps AP

England on top in see-saw battle

AFP ■ MOUNT MAUNGANUI

The manner of Kane Williamson's dismissal and a blow to the head of Henry Nicholls put the maiden Test wicket at Bay Oval under scrutiny with three days to play in the first Test between New Zealand and England on Friday.

In the first Test at the ground, the wicket showed signs of becoming unpredictable late on day two.

Although honours appeared even after the first two days, England believe if the wicket continues to deteriorate then they are in the box seat.

New Zealand go into day three today at 144 for four in reply to England's first innings 353, but with Williamson and Ross Taylor already dismissed.

Williamson had cruised to 51, reaching his half-century with a boundary off Sam Curran, but fell on the next delivery which unexpectedly

reared sharply, forcing the New Zealand skipper to take evasive action and the ball was gloved to second slip.

Nicholls, who was not out 26 at stumps, was felled by a sharp bouncer from Jofra Archer but a medical check showed no immediate sign of concussion, although he will undergo a further examination before resuming today.

Earlier after England resumed the day at 241 for four, Stokes and Ollie Pope advanced the total to 277 when Southee struck with three wickets in 11 balls including the prized scalp of Stokes for 91.

Buttler and Leach otherwise a late 52-run stand but otherwise there was little England resistance at the bottom of the order.

Southee finished with four for 88 and Wagner took three for 90, while Curran was the pick of England's bowlers with two for 28.

The mercurial opener was on

Zidane urges fans to back Bale

AFP ■ MADRID

Zinedine Zidane has urged Real Madrid fans to get behind Gareth Bale and insists he does not believe the Welshman is happier playing for his country than Real Madrid.

Madrid play Real Sociedad at the Santiago Bernabeu today, when Bale is likely to feel the frustration of the home supporters.

The 30-year-old sparked outrage in the Spanish press this week after he celebrated Wales' victory over Hungary on Monday with a flag from the crowd that read: "Wales. Golf. Madrid. In that order."

The slogan has been adopted by Welsh fans after an interview given by former Madrid player Pedja Mijatovic to *Cadena Ser*, in which he referred to those as Bale's priorities.

It has been interpreted in Spain as a slight against Real Madrid, particularly after Bale played twice for Wales over the international break, having missed the last six matches for his club through injury.

But, in a press conference on Friday, Zidane refused to criticise Bale. "When you look at what he has given to the club and the fans, that is what we are all here for: for the club.



Gareth Bale celebrates with Wales teammates after their team won in Euro 2020 qualifiers against Hungary UEFA/Twitter

R Madrid vs R Sociedad
Live from 1:30am (Sunday)
FACEBOOK

"Gareth is one of the team and the fans have to be behind us, always. I will always be behind my players. Outside, things can happen but inside, we should only look at the football."

Zidane would not comment on whether Bale's celebrations were aimed at Real Madrid or the media's criticism of him for spending too much time

playing golf. "I'm not going to get into that, it's not my area," Zidane said. "What I can tell you is Gareth Bale is my player. That's what interests me."

Bale has not played for Real Madrid since October 5 but his recovery came just in time for him to play twice for Wales last week, meaning he is fit to face Real Sociedad in La Liga.

"There is a lot of noise around Gareth but the most

important thing for him and for me is to focus on football," Zidane said.

"He has been away, he has been able to play and now he is back and is available."

"He can make the difference, he is a decisive player. If he is fit, he has shown he is a key player and he will show it again."

It remains to be seen if Bale returns to the starting line-up against Real Sociedad, who have enjoyed a brilliant start.



Fortune favours the Dave

Australia vs Pakistan
Live from 5:30am IST
SONY SIX NETWORK

BRISBANE (AFP): Pakistan were left to rue a basic error from 16-year-old debutant Naseem Shah as Australia opener David Warner plundered the visitors' attack with a brilliant 151 not out on the second day of the first Test at the Gabba on Friday.

Australia finished the day on 312 for the loss of just one wicket, 72 runs ahead of Pakistan's first innings total of 240 and already in the driving seat.

Marnus Labuschagne was alongside Warner on 55, with the only wicket to fall that of Joe Burns, who made 97 before sweeping a Yasir Shah (1-101) delivery onto his stumps.

Warner scored his first Test century since a year-long ban for ball-tampering, but only after a huge let-off when he was caught behind off a Naseem no-ball.

The mercurial opener was on



David Warner celebrates after hundred AP

56 at the time, and he then survived a near run-out on 93 before ending a century drought stretching back nearly two years.

"For me it's about going out there and backing my ability," he said, insisting he never felt any pressure about his place in the side.

"At the end of the day you get selected or you don't get selected and you've just got to accept that."

Earlier, Naseem looked impressive on debut and regularly bowled at over 145 kilometres (90 miles) per hour, but he was guilty of overstepping the mark on a number of occasions, despite not being called by the umpire.

He looked like he belonged on the big stage with a number of bristling spells before leaving the field late in the day with an apparent leg injury.

"He won't get a harder Test debut, bowling at the Gabba," Warner said.

"He kept his speed up the whole day — he charged in all day, there's a (future) superstar there."

Top Pak players over-reacted by pulling out: Zeeshan



Novak Djokovic celebrates after singles win AP

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Top Pakistan players Aisam-ul-haq Qureshi and Aqeel Khan "overreacted" by pulling out of the Davis Cup tie against India, said coach Zeeshan Ali on Friday and questioned why they did not boycott their earlier matches at neutral venues.

After much suspense over the venue for the Asia/Oceania tie, the ITF finally moved the matches out of Islamabad on November

4. The decision did not go down well with the top Pakistan players and they decided not to compete in Nur-Sultan against India.

"I feel Aisam and Aqeel just overreacted by deciding not to play this tie. They did not need to do it. It's the ITF which moved the tie out of Islamabad, though we had our reasons to request ITF the same," Zeeshan said after a practice session.

"You can not have a tie when the players are packed in a bus and escorted by some 40 armoured vehicles. Is that a suitable environment for sport?," he asked referring to the security arrangements made by Pakistan for the visiting Sri Lankan cricket team recently.

Since 2017, Pakistan hosted four Davis Cup teams and Hong Kong was the only team which decided against travelling to Islamabad.

"What about previous ties? Why the teams were not travelling there. We would also have gone and played but ITF also felt that it was a good decision to move the tie of Pakistan."

"And why Aisam and Aqeel did not boycott when their other ties were moved out of their country? Why this particular tie?" Zeeshan asked.



Fouaad Mirza riding a horse during an equestrian event.

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Double Asian Games medalist equestrian Fouaad Mirza secured an Olympic quota after finishing as the top-ranked rider in his group in the qualifiers, ending a wait spanning nearly two decades.

The 27-year-old was the highest ranked rider in Group G for the South East Asia, Oceania in the individual eventing category after the end of the Europe stage earlier this month. However, the official confirmation will be announced by the International Equestrian Federation (FEI) on February 20. Imtiaz Anees (2000 Sydney) and Late Wing Commander IJ Lamba (1996 Atlanta) are the only Indians to have represented the coun-

try at the Olympics.

Mirza, who was honoured with the Arjuna Award in August, finished with a total of 64 points from six qualifying events. He scored 34 points on his first horse Fernhill Facetime and 30 with his second horse Touchingwood.

"I had an idea that I was in the reckoning for the quota but had to wait for China and Thailand to qualify as teams. Both of them qualified last week in Italy. If these two countries had not qualified as teams they would have taken up the individual slots and I wouldn't have got the Olympic berth," Mirza said from Germany.

"I am elated but there's still enough work to be done. It's one tick out of the many boxes. Now we have to prepare the best we can and enter the competition in top form," Mirza said.

vivacity

GAVASKAR,
MY FAVOURITE:
RANI MUKHERJEE

- P 14



SMILE ACTS LIKE MEDICINE

An act of smiling can have both short- and long-term benefits on people's health and well-being, says **TEAM VIVA**



Many see smiling simply as an involuntary response to things that bring you joy or laughter. While this observation is certainly true, what most people overlook is that smiling can be just as much a voluntary response as a conscious and powerful choice.

Countless scientific studies have confirmed that a genuine smile is generally considered attractive to others around us. Other studies have shed light on how the act of smiling can elevate your mood and the mood of those around you. Still, others have found a strong link between good health, longevity, and smiling.

We are naturally drawn to people who smile. There is a real physical attraction factor linked to the act of smiling.

Not surprisingly, more severe or negative facial expressions like frowns, scowls, and grimaces actually work in the opposite manner, effectively pushing people away. Instead, use the attraction power of your smile to draw people in.

Next time you are feeling down, try putting on a smile. There's a good chance your mood will change for the better. Smiling can trick the body into helping you elevate your mood because the physical act of smiling actually activates neural messaging in your brain.

A simple smile can trigger the release of neural communication boosting neuropeptides as well as mood-boosting neurotransmitters like dopamine and serotonin. Think of smiling like a natural anti-depressant.

Smiling and laughing more appear to help lower your blood pressure, which is good news for your heart health. A review explains that laughter causes an initial increase in heart rate, followed by a period of muscle relaxation and a decrease in heart rate and blood pressure, which helps reduce your risk of developing heart disease.

Whether you call it a grin, smirk, beam or smile, there's no denying the feel-good power of this happy facial expression. We are born with the ability to smile, yet as we age, we smile less often.

Research shows that children smile an average of 400 times per day, compared to the average happy adult who smiles 40-50 times per day and the typical adult who smiles only 20 times per day.

Why is smiling important? Smiling not only offers a mood boost but helps our bodies release cortisol and endorphins that provide numerous health benefits.

When you smile, there is a measurable reduction in your blood pressure. Give it a try if you have a blood pressure monitor at home.

Sit for a few minutes, take a reading. Then smile for a minute and take another reading while still smiling.

Not only can smiling make you more attractive it can also make you look more youthful. The muscles we use to smile also lift the face, making a person appear younger.

So instead of opting for a facelift, just try smiling your way through the day — you'll look younger and feel better.

Some research has shown that

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smiling can actually trick your brain into thinking that you are happy. This is also the case whether your smile is authentic or not, it can have the same result.

When you smile, it can also trigger us to think about pleasant memories we have experienced which can improve our mood. Smiles can also release happy hormones called endorphins, this can make us feel happier, as smiling can alter your brain's emotional pathway.

Research has also shown that those who smile can be seen to be

more friendly and likable by others, as well as making others feel cheerier too. Smiling can be contagious!

Smiling can also help with stress and anxiety because of the hormones that are released when we smile.

When Endorphins are released, we can feel happier and more positive. Endorphins are the same hormones that are normally released when you exercise, which can make you feel much better, more motivated and less stressed or worried.

Smiling Makes You More

Approachable. Studies have also shown that most people feel that others who smile are much more approachable than those who do not smile.

This can help with work, friends and complete strangers, as others can feel like you are easier to talk to and they are not afraid to approach you.

Similarly, this can provide an overall nicer experience when talking and interacting with someone who smiles, rather than with someone who doesn't.

Try this test: Smile. Now try to think of something negative without losing the smile. It's hard, isn't it?

Even when a smile feels unnatural or forced, it still sends the brain and ultimately the rest of our body the message that "Life is Good!" Stay away from depression, stress, and worry by smiling.

Smiling has been shown to help ease any pain that you could be experiencing. As mentioned previously, smiling can release endorphins, which can make you feel happier.

These hormones are also known as a natural painkiller. They can also help to ease the pain you are experiencing.

Smiling can also make you look younger than you are, studies have shown. On average, the research has shown that you normally can look about 3 years younger. When you smile, it can naturally lift your face and can fend off any frown lines that you may get. Consequently, this can help you to look younger.

Smiling has been shown to increase your productivity while performing tasks. There's truth to the "whistle while we work" mentality. This also explains why silly internet memes and pictures of cute animals can actually get people motivated and working harder after a few moments of smiling or laughter.

Studies show that we are more trustful of others when they smile and smile genuinely.

Trust is an essential part of social health when dealing with people, whether they are loved ones or simple acquaintances. Seems relationships are genuinely built on smiles.



DEV PATEL

For us, we lived in the siege for 3 months and everytime we see a hotel entry and exit, it takes us back to the series of events. It was traumatising. But as an artiste you invest whole heartedly in these characters. You give a part of yourself in these roles. I hope that when people watch me on screen, they are able to see that.



ARSHAD WARSI

I think when I started, things were simpler, people were less complicated and baggage was less. Now it is a bit more complicated. Earlier, you were an actor, now you are a product. You are a commodity, which needs to be sold. So, you have to dress in a certain way, you have to walk and talk a certain way, look a certain way.



SAJID KHAN

Basically, the entire team thought about the strategy but Salman *bhai* is the person who takes the final decision when it comes to music of the film. He is, Masha Allah, a very talented and musical man. He has the knack to bring his own personality into music and he advises us.

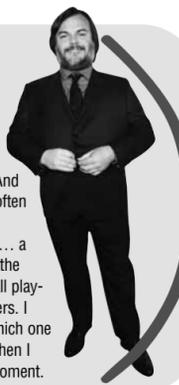


RANI MUKHERJEE

My favourite cricketer has always been Sunil Gavaskar. The reason behind this is, when I was young, my parents watched a lot of cricket, and I have seen him play from those days. When I used to watch him play, there was some enigma around him when he used to walk to the ground; it was electrifying.

JACK BLACK

Jumanji is a great game in the world. And when you play you often think who made this extraordinary game... a possible plotline for the third part. I had a ball playing my new characters. I don't know about which one is my favourite as when I am doing it at the moment.



SHORT CIRCUITS

ENCOUNTER 45 MINUTES

SONGS OF THE HEART

Singer MOHIT CHAUHAN gives voice to characters while establishing an invisible connect that cannot be broken, says TEAM VIVA

Sajra Savera Mere Tan Barse Kajra/ Andhera Teri Jalti Lau Katra Mila Jo Tere Dar Par Se, O Maula... Maula... Mohit Chauhan's voice wafted softly across the screen and then soared as Ranbir Kapoor looked up at the dome of Hazrat Nizamuddin's dargah for salvation and inspiration. While creating an iconic cinematic moment where the audience connected with the despair that the singer Janardhan, who would soon metamorphosis into Jordan, felt, Chauhan became inseparable from the film that firmly established him in the realm of songs that were ethereal and could not be replicated. In ephemeral times, *Rockstar's* music still continues to feature in the playlists of millennials and Generation Z (as well as their parents) despite the passage of eight years.

The voice, which expressed the emotions effortlessly, connected with thousands of others who failed to bring out the same emotion and wanted to. He, sort of, gave words to everybody's feelings. While Imtiaz Ali, AR Rahman and Irshad Kamil created the cult film, it was only Chauhan who could have expressed each of the emotions that Jordan goes through, whether it is the unattainable love that he felt for Heer or the anguish he feels at her death or the rage at the system. Mohit, who is in the capital to perform at the *Mayur Utsav*, feels that *Rockstar* is one of the most important milestones in his musical career. He met Imtiaz for the first time, when music composer Pritam Chakraborty to sing in *Jab We Met*. But it almost did not happen. He shares, "I had disappeared into the mountains and they were not able to contact me because I am not fond of using phones too much. A couple of months went by and I got a call from Imtiaz saying, 'where have you been? We have been trying to get in touch with you desperately for almost three months'. Then I came to Mumbai and sang that song. I am still very thankful that he waited for me. There were so many singers, he could have easily approached someone else but he didn't." And that's where their relationship started. Gradually they were on the same wavelength. Interestingly, Mohit says that right from *Tum Se Hi* to every song that he has sung for Imtiaz's film is written by Irshad Kamil. And they have been all very successful songs. "It's so great to spend time with him. He's an amazing director as well as a great friend," says he.

Mohit says that it's almost like a



spiritual experience to be able to sing about 10 to 11 songs in one film. I sang *Sadda Haq, Tum Ho, Kun Faya Kun* and *Phir Se Ud Chala* in the same film, which is extremely unheard of. A playback singer usually sings one or two songs in a single film. People use six music directors and then 10 different singers for 10 songs. But to be able to sing all of them in just one album is an indescribable feeling. I went through all the emotions that an artist can go through and express. Also, the character that I was singing for was like really close to me. Almost like me as the story is that of a contemporary musician and his journey. How he learns music all by himself, so all the emotions and expressions were so real for me," says he and narrates how he met AR Rahman. He says, "I was a part of the band called Silk Route. We sang songs like *Dooba Dooba* and *Boondein*. There was this huge music award festival in Delhi in November, 1998. That evening we won four awards. We got the best songs, best debut and best band of the year award. I met him there for the very first time. I paid my respects to him and he complimented me saying, 'Your band has a beautiful sound'. He, later, asked me if I have every tried singing



in films. I replied in the negative. Then almost after five years later, I got a call from him for *Khoon Chala* for *Rang De Basanti*. That was my first song. And that's when my musical journey started. It has been really amazing since then to work with him. I really consider myself fortunate to record with him, under his guidance."

The singer has always been keen on promoting arts and culture. He believes that it's a natural process that when you

value art, you feel the urge to promote it more and why not? "Folk music should be heard by people and especially by the younger generation, so that they understand, absorb and enjoy our roots and culture. I have always promoted folk music because it's related to our tradition and culture. It's great to be a part of art and make it a part of you," feels Mohit.

The most important change that has happened over the years, according to him, is the advent of technology. It has become much easier for individuals of all kinds to be able to showcase their talents. "A lot of people have gained acclaim just because of the internet. That's something huge and good, especially for the artistes," says he.

It was in 2017, when the singer himself started his online show, CoHear, on YouTube. "I did it for a year. I am a traveller. I always travel to hills. The idea came from my wife. She said that 'you hang out so much in the mountains, why don't you do this live concert show?' And then I thought about it. People love to come to concerts but not everyone is able to attend them. I got a really good response for that. Nobody was doing it at that time," says he.

Mohit has also been conducting var-

ious workshops in colleges. He feels that it's great to inspire someone with your own story. He says, "I was made the ambassador for the Skill India initiative. I really feel, it's about turning your passion into your skill. It's, in fact, a theory — if you are passionate about something you spend so much time on it that it becomes a skill, which you can use to reach out to people and make things better. I have learned from artists who are senior to me or people that I have read about in their biographies. I loved hearing how they made their music, what came in their mind and everything, so that inspires me to do my work. In the same manner I can help youngsters understand that they can do it too. After all, they are the future."

Just like 'I Love New York', every city has a campaign. Ask Mohit what does he think can be done to brand Delhi, and he will tell you that Delhi is a great city with a greater history. "The capital will always remain, '*Dilvalon ki Dilli*'. Delhiites are filled with love. Their hearts are pure and the amount of energy they have is unbeatable. Each and everything adds colour to this beautiful city," says the singer.

(*Mayur Utsav is on November 24 and 25.*)

Hollywood girl gang in Dubai



An eight-minute short film titled *A Story Takes Flight*, starring Hollywood stars Gwyneth Paltrow, Zoe Saldana and Kate Hudson, has captured the imagination of netizens with its vivid portrayal of landscapes in and around Dubai.

Dubai's Department of Tourism and Commerce Marketing launched the film, shot by Emmy and Director's Guild award-winning director Reed Morano. In the film, the three Hollywood stars are seen embarking on three journeys of exploration through Dubai, filled with inspiration, discovery, and human connections.

This global campaign resolves the mystery of the last edition of Dubai's popular #BeMyGuest series. In the last video, Shah Rukh Khan bumped into Hollywood actress Gwyneth Paltrow on a beach.

The campaign showcases unique locations spread across the Emirate that include the old souks, the Dubai Creek and the vast expanse of sand dunes.

Sharing her travelling experience in Dubai, Gwyneth Paltrow said: "One of my favorite parts of traveling is to truly connect with a city, its people and the local culture. Dubai is special because it's a melting pot. Both the ones born here, who are so proud of their heritage, and those who are recent transplants, bringing with them their own values and traditions, contribute to writing the future story of the city. My time in Dubai was beyond anything I expected and there's still so much more to see."

Kate Hudson spent a lot of time exploring the winding streets of Old Dubai. "It's incredible to find such a vibrant art and music community in the heart of such a modern, futuristic city — which is what most people think Dubai is. But really, the friendliness of the people is what made my visit amazing, and it's why I'll come back," Hudson added.

Said Issam Kazim, CEO, Dubai Corporation for Tourism and Commerce Marketing (DCTCM) said: *A Story Takes Flight* is unlike any other film in that it speaks to this defining character of our city. It is a story of each person's discovery through their interaction with Dubai. Regardless of who you are or where you are from, your journey with us also has no finish line — and the paths to explore are endless."

STUDIO CHAT 15 MINUTES

Experience matters

Executive producer and author of *His Dark Materials*, PHILIP PULLMAN tells us how CGI is just a value-addition to story-telling



How did this TV series of His Dark Materials come about?

It was a few years ago. There had been various attempts to make adaptations of this story and in all sorts of different media. It's been on the stage. It's been on the radio, it's been a film, but I was always attracted to the idea of long-form television, as we now call it. It gives the opportunity to tell a long story in full. When you adapt a long novel to a movie, which can only be realistically about two hours in length, you have to lose a great deal,

but TV does allow a story to be unfolded in more or less real-time.

Why do you think now was the time to do it? Was it the advance of CGI technology?

I'm not sure that the CGI argument is the best one for doing it now. Yes, CGI is extraordinarily effective now and it's possible to create demons, animals, all sorts of things and put them on screen as if they're alive, but there's a storytelling problem with that. Which



has to do with the fact that you mustn't crowd the screen. If we had a demon in the shot every time there was a person in the frame, it would be very cluttering and it would be a terrible job for the script writer and director. What you want to do is focus the viewer's attention on the important thing. In most cases, it's the person not the demon. We don't find it difficult in the book because the narration only draws attention to the demon when they say something or when they do something. But if they're not doing anything, as they're not for quite a lot of the time, we don't need to have them around. So, it's a storytelling problem really rather than a CGI problem.

How protective of your story were you?

In any adaptation, the story has to suit the nature of the medium into which it's going. If a story goes from a novel onto a stage, for example, you'd have to arrange the story in such a way that every element in it is clear, both to the person on the front row and the person on the back of the stalls.

Also, there's a matter of getting on and off stage; you have to adapt the story. It's the same thing for television, same thing for films, same thing for radio, so it's inevitable. I wasn't going to be insistent that every single item in the story had to be exactly presented as it was on the page.

Why do you think your novels have proved so popular and enduring?

I think the thing that keeps most people reading once they've started reading is the fact that they're intrigued by what's going to happen to the main character. This

is why children follow along stories through all sorts of complexities, enigmas and mysterious passages. They want to know what happens to Lyra. She doesn't know what's going to happen to her, she's in a state of mystery and doubt for some of the time. The kind that reassures the reader because they know that if they follow Lyra there'll be alright. I think that's one of the things that's kept people's imagination going.

I also think it's because the story as a whole concerns something that every one of us experiences, goes through in our life. That's the change from childhood to adulthood, from innocence to experience, in terms of William Blake. The meaning of puberty, not under the obvious physical, sexual changes, but the changes in the way we apprehend things, the way we think of things, the way we see the world. That's the heart of the story and because that's something that happens to all of us, I think that's where people have related to us.

(*His Dark Materials* will soon premiere in India on Star World.)

WALKTHROUGH 45 MINUTES



Golden times for the golden fibre

From traditional mats and household items to the jute sari, IITF this time is all about developing eco-friendly living. By TEAM VIVA

With plastics now a classified enemy, good old jute is back in our lives, manifesting itself as an array of lifestyle and household items at India International Trade Fair. And if you thought that it is only a functional textile, the jute saris on display showed how it could be the next big craze after khaki.

While the pure jute sari is a warming ethnic statement in the Delhi winter, its variants are also in demand. Jute has excellent blending qualities with other fibres and can be used in combination with pure silk saris, cotton saris, sico, art silk georgette, chiffon, dupion, tussar, organza, crepe and so on. The best part, these saris are strong and easy to carry even during the rough and tumble of a working day.

The fair has a slew of jute prod-

ucts — curtains, mats, jewellery, hair accessories and innovative toys and dolls. One of the stall owners, Rakesh Mehta, says, "You can find a variety of jute products here, right from a hair band to footwear. The pick-ups have been good and I am extremely happy." Emphasising on the lastability of the textile, he adds, "Jute is first stripped from the plant, then scraped to remove the extraneous fibres and treated with chemicals for softening and smoothening it. The pure jute fabric properties, such as its strength, coarseness, roughness and thickness make it a great raw material for making sacks, ropes and especially saris." There are jute coasters and cushion covers, too, that have been combined with areca nut and corn.



Little did we know of another innovation, a jute layering for roads, which protects the surface from getting affected by seepage of water. Explains Vivek, who is doing a road-show on the same, "These mats will help the roads retain their quality for years. Nowadays we see roads breaking down every now and then. This is a very useful product on a large scale."



We noticed a woman vendor from Patna making a terracotta mural as earth elements make their way into our homes. Says she, "Terracotta toys and utensils are very popular but murals still have

their charm intact." Another earth element, bamboo furniture, was a hit too with people making eco-friendly choices.

Amid the expected line-up of a variety of attractive Pashmina

shawls and Madhubani paintings, the products made by the Tihar School of Art caught our attention. The prisoners at the jail make scented candles, biscuits, snacks and mustard oil every year. Its representative Ravi Mahajan tells us how portraits, paintings and jute bags were new additions and that the artworks presented interesting perspectives of the world seen from captivity.

Meanwhile, a nationalist mood has meant that a large number of students assembled near a CRPF stall, which displayed equipment and weapons.

Focussing on this year's theme — *Ease of doing business*, the general manager of the fair, Hema Maity says, "The theme was decided last year inspired by India's 63rd ranking on the World Bank's Ease of Doing Business Index. It also

focusses on the need to bring more businesses into India and strengthen its trade market internationally."

The fair gives a deeper insight into Micro and Small Scale Enterprises (MSMEs), non-government agencies, artisans, self-help groups, and more.

A PhD scholar, Reena Dikshit, who has taken the oath to replace every plastic material, with wood gained appreciation from all over. She says, "I studied in detail about plastic and the increasing level of harm that it does. I then decided to replace every possible plastic product with wood. You will find that all my products are infused with a personal touch." Of course, the innovation is clearly evident in terms of multiple folding pieces, something which was once a preserve of the very moldable plastic.

CONVERSATION 30 MINUTES

NO END TO LEARNING

Whether it is her music or other activities, SHIBANI KASHYAP does not get hemmed in. By TEAM VIVA

You have done a variety of work, from singing at music festivals to being a judge. What has your journey been like?

I enjoy the journey more than the result. If you have passion and sincerity, you will achieve success. There have been many ups and downs too, which are necessary during the course of any career. But it's been interesting, from being a judge to a singer, composer, live performer and even a social activist. I feel that it's very important that we use the full spectrum of our talent. Especially for me, music is a tool to communicate with the world and I hope to bring about a change. Hence, I have a lot of cause-oriented songs. Last year I released one music video called *Want To Be Free*, which talks about our addiction to social media and how it takes over our lives. It makes us forget about the organic and real things. Now, I'm working on a song called *Don't Drink and Drive to Stay Alive*, a song against drunken driving. For me, it's not just about being a voice but, also a personality. I hope that I'm not just creating a brand of my own signature music but also something which people can relate to.

How have you explored various genres of music?

I love experimenting with different genres. It started with pop music with *Ho Gayi Hai Mohabbat*. And then I had a tryst with Sufi music, after I heard the *Kabbalah* sing in Rajasthan and at a Durga Puja show in Delhi. Something moved within me, I learnt qawwali and did my song.

Then I experimented with the Blues in *Kya Nazakat Hai* where I got Murad Ali (Muzaffar Ali's son) to do poetry. It's a very interesting fusion. I recorded a song called *Sonia* with Mika, which is a Punjabi Indian song. My latest is a fantastic Sufi remake of *Akhiyan Udeek Diyan* and *We Main Chori* with singer Surayveer. It's an interesting collaboration.

One of my favourites has been the collaboration with the LA-based Reggae band, Big Mountain, who gave the hit *Baby, I Love Your Way*. So they got in touch with me and we did a song called *24 Hours Irresponsible*.

I'm really proud of that song because it's an Indie, Reggae Jazz song and it's really doing well on Spotify. The experiments still continue.



How is it, performing live in front of an audience?

I love it. It gives me an instant energy exchange with the audience and also a one-on-one response from them when I sing. I have been performing live for more than 19 years now. I started in 2000. From performing at the Channel V awards in 1998; winning an award; performing across the world, I have been blessed. I have done four concerts in Egypt. Then there was a recent tour around the USA, where I held a show in New York, Washington DC and Nashville. Now, I am all set to perform in Gurugram, which is also my hometown and I'm really excited. I will be singing a combination of my latest hits and some covers. We are a six piece band including me — I play the guitar. We have a flutist, keyboardist, guitarist, bass guitarist, drummer and Indian percussionist.

You have a wide range, so how do you customise your playlist in a way that you connect better with the audience?

Sometimes an artist might get bored performing the same set over and over again. And I do too. So I try to innovate on each performance according to the category and target audience of my show. For instance, in Egypt, they really love the songs of

Shahrukh Khan and Amitabh Bachchan. So there, we did an entire Bollywood musical history, where I began my performance with the music of the 1940s, till contemporary times. You really need to research before you hold a show in a particular region before you choose your playlist for them. Soon I'll be travelling to Bengal and do four shows in Africa. They also love Bollywood. So I'll be customising this show in a very different and colourful format and twelve dancers will accompany me.

Also, when it comes to college shows, students really like Rock music. And they love melancholic songs, about love and romance. Of course, Punjabi music works everywhere in the world so that is the *taqda* I put in the second half of my shows. I also add Sufi, which is of course, my own signature music.

With the current Rap culture ruling the industry, do you think other genres are losing their charm?

Rap music has been around for the longest time and it's caught on in a big way, especially after Ranveer Singh's *Gully Boy*. However, it doesn't interfere with other genres of music. If you take a film like *Kabir Singh*, its music is very melodious with no traces of Rap at all. So it's mostly about content. It's about how

good the music is, how well it has been composed, rendered and delivered. So it's not that if Rap is trending, people will only listen to that. Let's not undermine and underestimate our audience. With all the audio streaming platforms today, we get exposed to a variety of music. So I think there's room for everything. Hip Hop is what I'm coming up with in my next song called *Ishq*, which is an collaboration with DJ Sin from the UK. It's a UK-based music label called "Your Damn Self". I am really excited about it because they specialise in R&B.

What would you say about the charm of your specialisation, the Sufi-Western blend?

First, thank you for calling it a charm. Yes, I always had to create magic and when you fuse different genres together, there is definitely a jam and some magic. And that's what I like to do. I like to experiment with different genres. Sufi comes naturally to me. The Western and Sufi blend especially is something in which I am very involved and it's inexplicable.

As artistes, when we have something natural to offer, it is always more convincing and far more magical. So there's a certain divinity in it, and that's what I try to do through all my songs. I like to have a Sufi and Western blend.

Where do you think are the global trends heading?

I think globally everybody is ready to absorb different kinds of music. And it's pretty much the same everywhere you go, when you have music apps and are exposed to all genres. We have our own home-grown random music, which is Bollywood, an Indie Pop and folk music and classical music. And then we have the exposure to Western music and all kinds of genres. Globally, Spanish music is trending a lot. Especially songs like *Desperado* and *Senorita*, they are like global number one hits. So there is something about this language and about the music of Spain, which is hitting the right note. Melody is back. In between, the music was very noisy and it was just about sounds. But now with artistes that hold a lot of expression, I would say a lot of lyrical and musical content is back. And of course, I love Latino and Spanish music and I'm really happy that that is a trend because I completely ascribe to it.

A PLAYER'S NEXT GOAL

Actor PRACHI TEHLAN talks about how her prior experience of acting in TV helped her get into her character as the strongest woman in Kerala in *Mamangam*. By TEAM VIVA

If given a chance, whose biopic would you like to act in as? Well, most common answers would be people's role models and different ideals. But sportsperson-turned-actor Prachi Tehlan, who has made her debut in the South with period film *Mamangam*, opposite Mammootty, wants to make her own biopic since she looks at her life story as challenging if not inspiring.

"I have made films on boxing. If given an opportunity, I would love to showcase my own story because my journey in sports has been an adventurous one in various ways. If I get a good director and a writer, I would definitely share my experiences and a story can be made out of it, which doesn't necessarily need to be about someone. It can simply be about sportspersons or the journey of a women's basketball team. For instance, *Chak de India!*" says Prachi, also a netball and basketball player who has represented India at the Commonwealth Games 2010.

She tells us how joining the film industry was like a destiny's call. "I had just randomly got a call for a role in a TV soap and I quite liked the character. It was basically an opportunity that came knocking on my door. I was nowhere near to films or TV. I took it as an opportunity and became an actor. But yes, it wasn't as easy as it sounds because both the fields are very different," says the actor, who made her TV debut with *Diya Aur Baati Hum*.

The process of reaching films has been very organic for Prachi as a prior experience with TV helped her. "When I started acting, my first step to understanding it came from TV as I was working on a daily soap. I was undergoing an intense training. I had to face the cameras everyday. That helped me a lot and I ended up bagging this role in *Mamangam*."

Based in Valluvanad, a conservative town in Kerala, the film, which releases in four languages including Hindi, is a period drama that revolves around Chaver Thalavan (played by Mammootty) and Unnimaya (played by Prachi). She says, "It's a story that's set around the time of the Mamangam



festival, which was celebrated around 400 years ago in Kerala. It narrates a story of some unsung heroes during the time. My character is that of a *devadasi*, who is also an entertainer and a warrior." Well, Unnimaya, who represents the strong old women of Kerala, quite resonates with Prachi's real life journey and transition from being a basketball player to an actress.

Since the war drama features the martial art of Kalaripayattu, Prachi says that there was an intense training and research involved. "I watched films like *Kerala Varma Pazhassi Raja*, *Urumi*, which are also period dramas and come from similar eras, for reference. It did look challenging but I just went with the flow," says she.

So how did she contemporise the sensibilities? She replied, "I asked a lot of questions from the director. And he told me how it's entirely different than what I have done before. But I didn't find it that difficult because I have done TV. When you keep on playing the same character and bring out its different nuances on TV, you kind of learn how to adapt. I just had to adapt into a serious character and

tend to understand it better."

After working in two Punjabi films and now a Malayalam one, the actor has plans to work in Bollywood. But she believes that Malayalam cinema has a lot of scope as it caters to the sensible audience who is sensitive towards societal issues. "Malayalam films are the most sensible cinema made in India. They are very intelligent, sensitive to things and don't like unnecessary commercial *masala*. Its audience likes to watch films that make sense at the end of the day," says Prachi.

Only a few films from South India have had a mass appeal across India and globally, the most recent example being that of *Baahubali*. However, Prachi calls it a "wrong comparison." "*Baahubali* is fiction but this is based on true events. There is a lot of difference. *Baahubali* was more commercial and very loud. It was exaggerated to appeal as a mass entertainer. But *Mamangam* is infused with very realistic elements. Here, the sets are original, and even the acting is subtle. The story is beautiful. It connects with the audience very emotionally," she adds.

Ishant in Pink mode

Senior pacer's 2nd 5-wicket haul in India (first in 12 years) help all-round India lord over Bangladesh, hype beats cricket hands down

PTI ■ KOLKATA

Bangladesh won the toss and India everything else against a ball they are not acquainted with on the first day of their maiden Day/Night Test, the quality of contest spectacularly failing to match the manic pre-match hype.

First the Ishant Sharma-led Indian pace unit terrorised the visitors, bundling them out for 106 in just under 31 overs even before twilight set in.

With two of their batsmen concussed, the mentally-scarred Bangladesh attack then found itself at the receiving end of a masterclass from the Indian captain Virat Kohli, who remained unbeaten on 59 off 93 balls, as India reached 174 for three at stumps on the opening day.

The stodgy Cheteshwar Pujara, with two pink ball hundreds under his belt in first-class cricket, scored a chiselled 55 as India took a 68-run lead. It looks like the cricket loving Kolkata public will not have an opportunity to witness even three full days' action.

The city turned pink, the crowd responded to the brainchild of its favourite son Sourav Ganguly, who arranged a first-of-its-kind match in less than a month's time.

However, the gulf in standards along with the singular lack of intent from the visitors took some sheen away from the game.

Earlier, Ishant grabbed his first five-wicket haul on Indian soil after a good 12 years, finishing with 5 for 22 in 12 overs after a brave decision by opposition captain Mominul Haque to bat first on a seamer-friendly pitch.

Umesh Yadav hurried the Bangladeshi batsmen for pace with 3 for 29 in 7 overs while Mohammed Shami was deadly bowling the cutters wide off the crease with figures of 2 for 36 in 10.3 overs.

He also bowled two sharp bouncers, leaving Liton Das (24) and Nayeem Hasan (19) concussed.

Bangladesh lasted just 30.3 overs in their first innings with specialist spinners Ravindra Jadeja bowling a solitary over and Ravichandran Ashwin wasn't even required to roll his arms over.

Clearly the menacing Indian pace attack exposed Bangladesh's lack of technical finesse as the 'Pink Ball Test' was agreed upon three days before their tour departure on the initiative of newly-elected BCCI president Sourav Ganguly.

Bangladesh batsmen looked unimpressed by the capacity crowd, something they have never encountered even in their home Tests and the world-class bowling made it even more difficult.

Such was their plight that for the first time in the subcontinent, batsmen Nos 3, 4 and 5 (skipper Mominul Haque, Mohammad Mithun, and senior-most player Mushfiqur Rahim) were all dismissed for a duck.

Pushed into the unknown territory without any practice back home, Bangladesh opening duo of Shadman Islam and Imrul Kayes survived some anxious moments in the first six overs before Ishant Sharma trapped the latter.

Umesh then triggered the collapse in his second spell with two wickets in three balls, first being skipper Mominul who was dismissed by a beautiful diving one-handed catch by Rohit Sharma.

Next was Mohammed Mithun



Ishant Sharma celebrates after taking wicket of Bangladesh batsman during first day of first Day/Night Test between India and Bangladesh at Eden Gardens in Kolkata

India vs B'desh (2nd day)
Live from 1:00pm IST
STAR SPORTS 1

beating him by pace as it sharply cut in with the batsmen playing on to his stumps.

Despite the catching scepticism surrounding the pink ball, Saha looked a class act behind the stumps as usual as the ball was swinging a lot after moving the batsman.

His low catch of Mahmudullah, outstretched and dragged across Virat Kohli at the first slip, was the highlight of his keeping as he also completed a milestone of 100 dismissals in longest format.

While Bangladesh captain Mominul had a point when he spoke about lack of preparation but when Kohli with barely one and a half net session hit those elegant boundaries under light, one knew why a solid basic technique made such a difference.

With a quick trigger, Kohli would cover the line and negate the seam movement hitting those languid cover drives with grace.

Left-arm spinner Tajjul Islam, who was not supposed to play this game, came in as a concussion substitute for Nayeem Hasan, as he was driven down the ground as if it was net session.

Pujara on the other hand also looked solid after quick departure from Mayank Agarwal and Rohit Sharma, adding 94 runs for the third wicket with his captain.

Das, Nayeem concussed

PTI ■ KOLKATA

Two Bangladesh batsmen — Liton Das and Nayeem Hasan — were retired hurt from the ongoing Day/Night Test, forcing the visitors to bring in as concussion substitutes players who had been dropped from the team. Both Das and Nayeem were hit by Mohammed Shami snorters and were replaced by Mehidy Hasan and Tajjul Islam at the Eden Gardens.

Bangladesh wicketkeeper-batsman Das was taken to a city hospital for a scan before another Shami delivery hit Nayeem, who was interestingly attended to by Indian team physio Nitin Patel.

Bangladesh, thus, became the first team to make two concussion substitutes in a Test match.

Mehidy came in as concussion substitute after Das was hit.

However, Mehidy, an off-spinner, will not be allowed to bowl as per the concussion substitute rule. Mehidy, though, did not last long as he was dismissed by pacer Ishant Sharma for just eight runs.



Nayeem Hasan stands as physiotherapists look into the helmet after he was injured

Das was retired hurt after being hit on his head at the stroke of lunch.

Trying to play a pull short off a Shami bouncer, the heavily-lacquered pink ball blazed in and hit his helmet in the forehead region in the third ball of the 20th over. He was batting on 16 then.

The physio rushed in, conducted a test and he continued batting, responding with a boundary in the next delivery.

Das hit another boundary in the next over off Ishant and

added nine runs before complaining of discomfort. He was next seen walking off the field after a long conversation with the umpire, forcing the end of the first session.

Das' like-for-like substitute Saif Hassan is down with a (split webbing) injury, forcing the visitors to opt for Mehidy as concussion substitute.

According to the protocol, a proper medical report has to be submitted to the match referee for a concussion substitute.

Hasina, Mamata ring bell



Bangladesh's Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, center right, and Chief Minister of West Bengal Mamata Banerjee, center left, stand to ring the Eden Bell to start the 2nd Test

PIANS ■ KOLKATA

Bangladesh Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina and West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee rung the customary Eden bell in the presence of BCCI President Sourav Ganguly, Bangladesh Cricket Board chief Nazmul Hasan Papon and batting legend Sachin Tendulkar among other dignitaries.

Hasina and Mamata met the athletes before the national anthem was played by the Army Band in front of a packed house. Union Home Minister Amith Shah, who was supposed to be in attendance, however could not make it.

The historic match was supposed to kickstart with Army paratroopers flying into Eden to hand over a pink ball each to the two captains just before the toss. But due to security reasons, that

had to be cancelled at the last moment by the Cricket Association of Bengal (CAB).

The other former cricketers present were S Ramesh, Saba Karim, Sunil Joshi, Ajit Agarkar, Venkatesh Prasad, Kapil Dev, Dilip Vengsarkar, Mohammed Azharuddin, Kris Srikkanth, Farokh Engineer and Chandu Borde.

Athletes from other sports like Abhinav Bindra, P. Gopichand, PV Sindhu, Sania Mirza and Mary Kom were also there.

Naimur Rahman, Mohammed Mahmudul Hasan, Maharab Hossain, Mohammed Hasibul Hussain, Shahrar Hossain Biddut, Kazi Habibul Bashar and Mohammed Akram Khan were the former Bangladesh cricketers who were present.

Captain Kohli fastest to 5K

PTI ■ KOLKATA

Virat Kohli on Friday became the fastest to 5000 runs as captain, completing the feat in 86 innings during day one.

As captain, Kohli was also the quickest to 4000 Tests runs (65 innings). He is the sixth captain to reach the 5000-run mark.

Australian great Ricky Ponting had taken 97 innings to complete 5000 runs as captain, ahead of West Indian legend Clive Lloyd (106 innings), South African Graeme Smith (110), Australian Allan Border (116) and New Zealand's Stephen Fleming (130).



Legends relive glorious Eden moments



India's former cricket players Sachin Tendulkar, Anil Kumble, Harbhajan Singh and VVS Laxman join in a talk show during break on 1st day

PTI ■ KOLKATA

Indian cricket legends including Sachin Tendulkar and Anil Kumble on Friday revisited their glorious on-field moments at the Eden Gardens.

In a special programme during the lunch break on the opening day, Tendulkar, Kumble, Harbhajan Singh and VVS Laxman relived some of the iconic moments at the famous venue here, including the 1993 Hero Cup final versus West Indies and the 2001 Test versus Australia.

All of them thanked their captain and BCCI president Sourav Ganguly for bringing them together. Ganguly, too, was supposed to be part of the 40-minute discussion on Star Sports but could not make it as he was understandably caught up with administrative issues.

"We have not had a chance to sit like this since our playing days. It is a special day and there could not have

been a better venue for this historic game," said Kumble, whose sensational spell of six for 12 helped India to a famous win over West Indies.

The Kolkata crowd is probably the most passionate in the country and they showed all their love for Tendulkar by chanting 'Sachin Sachin', taking the master blaster back to his playing days.

While Laxman and Rahul Dravid produced a match-winning 376-run stand after India followed on against Australia, Harbhajan and Tendulkar came up with stellar bowling performances. Harbhajan even took a hat-trick in his match haul of 13 wickets.

"The game changed so quickly because of that hat-trick. The way we won the game ushered in a new phase for the Indian team. Bhajji was sensational, got Ricky Ponting out so many times and Laxman and Dravid partnership did wonders for the confidence of the dressing room," said Tendulkar.

The electric atmosphere at the Eden Gardens reminded Harbhajan of his playing days.

"The atmosphere here takes me back to 15 years ago. Test cricket was different back then. It is a special feeling and I feel so much love every time I come here. Hats off to Ganguly for doing this. Even if I play under 100 captains, he will always be my captain," said the champion off-spinner.

Tendulkar had heard good things about Harbhajan from the local officials during a game in Mohali and, subsequently, asked for the spinner to bowl to him in the India nets. Harbhajan, a teenager then, was in awe of Tendulkar.



An illuminated building displays an image of BCCI President Sourav Ganguly, on the eve of the 1st pink-ball Test; B'desh PM Sheikh Hasina and West Bengal CM Mamata Banerjee meet players



Ganguly posts picture of 'Sweets go pink in Kolkata' via Twitter



Indian cricketer Mithali Raj rides in a cart during a grand parade of India's former cricket captains; (right) Sourav Ganguly posts picture with Eden crowd during first day of Day/Night Test

