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Maha Pawar play: Talks with Sonia yield no results

Modi reaches out to NCP, praises it for decorum on Parliament floors

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The much-awaited meeting between NCP chief Sharad Pawar and Congress president Sonia Gandhi on Monday did not throw up a decisive word on the future of a Government in Maharashtra involving them and the Shiv Sena, which continues to wait in anxiety having staked everything in a bid to corner the Chief Minister's post.

In an interesting turn of events, just ahead of Pawar-Sonia meeting, Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Monday utilised his address during the 250th session of the Rajya Sabha to praise the NCP for discipline in the House. "Today, I want to appreciate two parties, the NCP and the BJD. These parties have wonderfully adhered to parliamentary norms. They have never gone into the Well of the House (to protest). Yet, they have made their points very effectively. Every political party, including my party, should learn from them," Modi said.

While efforts are on for the Shiv Sena, the Congress and the NCP to come together, there has been a buzz also about the BJP and the NCP exploring an alternative possibility for Government formation in Maharashtra. The formation of a Government in Maharashtra will take some more time to



NCP chief Sharad Pawar addresses a Press conference after a meeting with Congress president Sonia Gandhi to discuss Government formation in Maharashtra on Monday PTI

become a reality as both the Congress and the NCP decided to hold talks with their allies in Maharashtra before taking a final decision.

But the BJP, the Congress and the NCP have all opted out of fray for the November 22 mayoral poll in the BMC, India's richest civic body. While Sena retaining the mayor and deputy mayor's post is thus a mere formality, it has increased Sena's importance and also the suspense over who will it eventually ally with.

Addressing a press conference after the meeting, Pawar said he briefed Sonia about the

political situation in Maharashtra but surprisingly, claimed, there was neither any talk on Government formation in the State nor the Common Minimum Programme (CMP) for the three parties. The three parties had earlier met in Mumbai to chalk out a 40-point CMP.

"We have discussed in detail the political situation in Maharashtra," he said, adding senior Congress leader AK Antony was also there.

"Certain leaders of both (Congress-NCP) parties will meet and discuss further and get back to us. We will keep an

eye on the situation in Maharashtra. The Congress and the NCP leaders will hold further talks on the future course of action," he maintained. Sources said the NCP has called its leaders like Ajit Pawar and Jayant Patil to Delhi to hold the talks.

Pawar has been keeping the guessing game on ever since the talks between the three parties started. Before his meeting with Sonia too, Pawar came out with a remark that puzzled all. "BJP-Shiv Sena fought together, we (the NCP) and the Congress fought together. They have to choose their path and we will do our politics," he told reporters before the Winter Session of Parliament began.

And before that when the mediapersons mentioned to him about the Shiv Sena telling them that it was in talks with the NCP, Pawar exclaimed, "Really?"

Asked if he would rule out the NCP supporting the BJP in forming the Government, Pawar evaded a direct reply and pointed out that the BJP was his party's major opponent in the Assembly polls. "The BJP and Sena contested the polls jointly. Ask them why they are not forming the Government," Pawar countered.

Sena leader and spokesperson Sanjay Raut met Pawar late in the evening.

Continued on Page 4

JNU protesters jolt Delhi to a halt

Students marching to Parliament detained, released later

SHEKHAR SINGH ■ NEW DELHI

Traffic in parts of Lutyens' Delhi was hit as students of Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU) carrying placards and chanting slogans marched towards Parliament on the first day of the Winter Session on Monday demanding the roll-back of the proposed hostel fee hike. But they were stopped by the Delhi Police on the road outside the Safdarjung Tomb.

The protesters sat on the road leading to jam on Aurobindo Marg and choking arterial roads with the cascading impact felt till C-hexagon, the Indian Gate roundabout.

Vehicles on Nelson Mandela Marg, Aurobindo Marg and Baba Gang Nath Marg moved at a snail's pace, a senior police officer said. The Delhi Metro closed entry and exit points of three stations near Parliament for a few hours due to the protest.

Many commuters took to Twitter to vent their ire as they got stuck in bumper-to-bumper traffic for hours due to protest.

Around 100 JNU students, including students union president Aishwari Ghosh, were detained and released later. Devesh Srivastava, the Joint Commissioner of Police, Southern eastern range, said that the protest ended around 7.30 pm after talks following which students moved towards their campus.

Following the students' protest, the Ministry of Human Resource Development on Monday appointed a three-member committee to recommend ways to restore normal functioning of JNU. The panel includes former UGC Chairman VS Chauhan, AICTE chairman Anil Sahasrabudhe and UGC Secretary Rajnish Jain.

"With a view to restore the normal functioning of JNU through dialogue with all stakeholders and to advise the university administration for res-



Jawaharlal Nehru University students during a protest march towards Parliament, on the first day of the Winter Session in New Delhi on Monday. The protesting students sat on a road leading to jam on Aurobindo Marg and choking several arterial roads. The students have been protesting for nearly three weeks against the proposed hostel fee hike, a dress code and curfew timings PTI

olution of contentious issues, the Government has appointed a three-member high power committee," HRD Secretary R Subrahmanyam said.

"The committee will initiate dialogue with the students and varsity administration immediately and submit recommendations. The UGC will provide required support for functioning of the committee," Subrahmanyam said.

Senior Delhi Police officers kept on appealing the agitating students to maintain law and order and return to hostel in the JNU campus but students dug in their heels. Despite the adamant students, police officers kept them engaged and finally succeeded in persuading them to leave for their respective destinations.

When asked whether the students could return on Tuesday to press for their demands, Srivastava said there is no information about this but they remain vigilant to ensure that no untoward incident

take place in the city. JNU Students Union, vice president Saket Moon said, "The police are telling us they will take a delegation to meet HRD officials. We will decide on sending a delegation only after our colleagues detained at unknown locations are released. We want representation in the HRD panel."

Meanwhile, the protesting students also alleged that police restored 'lathi' charge to disperse them in which several students' sustained injuries. However, police said that they will look into the allegation of lathi charge and they will speak to the students about it.

"Around 100 students were detained by police. Despite continued defiance by some groups of students, methods of persuasion were resorted to, and there was no use of water cannons, tear gas shells or lathi-charge at any stage of the protest. Apart from 10 companies of CAPF, around 800 Delhi Police personnel were

deployed to handle the protest and ensure maintenance of law and order," said a senior police official.

The students, who were holding a protest on the university's premises for the last three weeks, hit the streets seeking to get the attention of Parliament about their demands, asserting they will not relent until the Government withdraws the hike.

Earlier on Monday morning, section-144 was imposed outside the JNU campus ahead of the protest. Delhi Police personnel and Central Armed Police Force (CAPF) stopped the students on the Baba Ganganath Marg, around 600 metres from the main gate of the university.

But initially on Monday afternoon, the barricades outside JNU's gates were removed and the students were allowed to march towards Parliament but were again stopped on

Continued on Page 4

Power employees, enrgs strike work

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

Around 45,000 employees, including engineers, of UP Power Corporation Limited went on a 48-hour strike from Monday, demanding an undertaking from the state government on payment of provident funds to employees.

The employees are agitated over a scam in the Power Employees Provident Fund Trust, which invested over Rs 2,000 crore of provident fund in tainted housing non-banking finance company DHFL.

The employees staged a noisy demonstration in front of UPPCL headquarters at Shakti Bhawan and in all districts

and power installations on Monday.

The strike, which started at 8 am on Monday, will continue till 8 am on Wednesday.

Power Employees' Joint Action Committee convenor Shailendra Dubey claimed that the strike was a total success.

Disruption in work by power employees caused inconvenience to consumers as faults in distribution lines were not attended and most offices of Lucknow Electricity Supply Administration were locked.

The state government has decided to act tough against the agitating power employees and

has directed all district magistrates to lodge FIRs against employees if they tried to damage government property or obstruct power supply.

Meanwhile, Shailendra Dubey said that the action committee had warned the UPPCL that if their demands for issuance of a notification by the government taking responsibility for safe return of their provident fund money invested in DHFL by the Uttar Pradesh Power Sector Employees' Trust and action against IAS officers, including former chairman of UPPCL, responsible for it were not met by Tuesday, the employees would intensify the agitation.

Dubey said that engineers and employees maintaining generation units and other emergency services had been exempted from the strike.

A PEJAC press release issued on Monday said that the UPPCL deposited ₹ 2631.20 crore of the GPF and ₹ 1491.50 crore of CPF of employees in the DHFL. However, ₹ 1185.50 crore of the GPF and ₹ 669.30 crore of CPF were withdrawn by the Trust.

The action committee alleged that over ₹ 2,200 crore of the provident fund deposit had been lost while the deposit in the DHFL was made on an annual interest rate of 7.75 per cent.

RS marshals' uniform given total makeover

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

On a day the Rajya Sabha entered its 250th Session on Monday, the House witnessed a makeover of the House marshals' uniforms that have been redesigned by the National Institute of Design (NID) — from the traditional Indian attire comprising a turban to a military-style outfits with a cap. Customarily, the presiding officer of the House (Vice-President) is flanked by two marshals who march ahead of the Chairman to announce



In this combo photo, (left) Rajya Sabha Chairman M Venkaiah Naidu flanked by an Upper-House marshal in his new dress during the first day of the Winter Session of Parliament on Monday; and (right) the marshal in their old dress PTI

the commencement of proceedings and also assist the chair in his or her official functions, including organising the desk and providing order

documents. The all new Navy blue uniform sported an aiguillette, an ornamental braided cord with decorative metal tips for the winter months.

However, it is different from military uniforms. For the summer months, the uniform will be all-white on the lines of Navy except the change in design.

Earlier, the marshals sported safari suits during the summer months and Indian bandhgals during the winter along with turbans as head gear. On Monday, the first day of the 250th session of the House of Elders, two marshals in military-style uniforms and caps marched in ahead of the Chairman's arrival, much to the surprise of the members.

Bill Gates praises soil health card

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Microsoft founder and the co-chair of the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, Bill Gates on Monday hailed the 'soil health card' saying the soil quality data helps farmers determine what fertilisers to use. However, there are opportunities to add additional data to the existing one and make a detailed soil mapping. "Better soil, better information and better statistics will help minimise the damage of climate change," he added.

In his keynote address at the 8th global conference on agri-statistics at the Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR), Gates said that better statistical information and innovative tools will help minimise the damage of climate change on the farm sec-

tor. "As the effects of climate change on smallholder farmers will increase in future, there is an opportunity for engaging with the private sector in the field of agriculture and play an important role in boosting the crop yields, he said. "At a time when we have to increase productivity, climate change is making it far difficult. Understanding how the changing weather is affecting our crops and productivity and how we can adapt to that — requires best work in agriculture statistics including use of new tools," he said.

Gates, said since the issue of climate change is "complicated", different interventions are required to be taken including developing new variety of seeds and their distribution to farmers. There is an opportunity to



Prime Minister Narendra Modi with Co-Chair of the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation Bill Gates during a meeting in New Delhi on Monday PIB/PTI

engage with the private sector in agriculture, as there is a need to make available the innovative models and products to the farmers for tackling the challenge of climate change, he added. Noting that smallholder farmers

are most affected by the climate change across the world, Gates said these farmers are very poor and their children suffer from malnutrition, especially stunting issues. "One drought and one flood

is enough to wipe out any savings of their family. The intensity and frequency of both drought and flood is going to change. The effects of climate change will increase," he said adding that this is also an issue in India.

Inaugurating the event, Agriculture Minister Narendra Singh Tomar said, "India is an agriculture-based economy. The Government depends on data for policy making."

He also said the subject of statistics and probabilistic ideas in India seem to be of ancient origin in India. A four-day global conference is being organised by the agriculture ministry in partnership with the United Nations' FAO, the US Department of Agriculture, the World Bank, the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation and other agencies.

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Govt advised to draft new MSME policy

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

The MSME Export Promotion Council has suggested to the state government to draft a fresh MSME Policy for micro and small units for utilising the vast employment potential in the sector.

As per projections of the Council, the setting up of three crore MSMEs could create direct employment for 10 crore youths and indirect employment for 12 crore people in the next five years.

The Council has drawn a roadmap for the development of MSME sector in Uttar Pradesh.

In its suggestions, the Council said that the two main problems facing the MSME sector was flooding of Indian market with cheap imported goods from China and other countries and credit crunch.

The Council recommended that a MSME Finance Development Corporation be set up in UP to finance the sector and to link it with the ambitious One District, One Product (ODOP) scheme.

These suggestions were made by the Council chairman DS Rawat in Lucknow on Monday in the presence of chairman of UP unit, Hari Narayan Rajbhar.

Later, talking to media persons, Dr Rawat said that it was only the MSME sector which could generate jobs. He said that the new MSME Policy should address only micro and small units.

Dr Rawat said that UP registered 100 per cent growth in micro, small and medium



MSME Export Promotion Council chairman DS Rawat addressing media persons in Lucknow on Monday

enterprises between 2015 to 2018 and their numbers rose from 44.03 lakh units to 88.89 lakh units.

The Council chairman, who also released a study on MSME sector in Uttar Pradesh, claimed that UP was in the top position both in numbers and employment.

"UP has been adding on an average 15 lakh MSME units per year since 2015-16 and they are providing jobs to over 165 lakh people, including 27.27 lakh females. If the growth pattern remains the same, it is expected that by 2022, the number of MSME units could touch 1.40 crore, providing jobs to three crore people," he said.

The MSME Export Council chairman said that a roadmap for five years till 2025 had been prepared, targeting three crore units and direct jobs to 10 crore people and indirect jobs to 12 crore

people. "As the unemployment rate is increasing in the country, there is need to set up of a UP MSME Finance Development Corporation to support the sector so that it becomes competitive through skill development, upgrading of technology and establishing contacts globally," he said.

Meanwhile, the Council will hold a four-day summit and trade fair, "Agra-rural entrepreneurship: unleashing opportunities for youth, women and artisans", in Lucknow from February 13 to 16 next year.

This will be followed by a Scheduled Caste, Scheduled Tribe Entrepreneurship and Women Empowerment Summit in Purvanchal during May next year.

The Council has also proposed an 'Uttar Pradesh Pavilion' at the World SMEs show in China in June next year.

No proposal to change name of Agra: Govt

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

Agarwals, for whom Maharaja Agrasen is a revered figure, the name of Agra be changed to Agravan.

Late Jagan Prasad Garg, who had won five times from Agra North Assembly constituency dominated by Agarwals, had in the past written to the Uttar Pradesh government, urging it that Agra be renamed as Agravan.

Sources said that the state government had asked the history department of Dr Bhimrao Ambedkar University in Lucknow to research facts about naming of Agra and sought historic proof about it earlier name of Agravan.

But as the process is time consuming and since Agra is an international tourist hot spot, changing its name will not be easy. Meanwhile, the UP government is yet to decide on changing the name of Chandauli district to Deen Dayal Upadhyaya district even after receiving positive response from the people in general. Earlier, the Mughalsarai railway station was renamed as Deen Dayal Upadhyaya Nagar junction.

Uddhav may postpone visit to Ayodhya

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

Shiv Sena chief Uddhav Thackeray, who is engaged in a tough political battle to become the first Sena chief minister in Maharashtra, is likely to postpone his proposed Ayodhya visit on November 24.

The Shiv Sena chief had termed the day the apex court pronounced its verdict on the Ayodhya dispute as historic for the country. He had also announced to meet Bharatiya Janata Party leader Lal Krishna Advani to thank him for his dedication for the Ram temple movement.

However, the relationship between the BJP and Shiv Sena turned sour over government formation in Maharashtra and they parted ways.

on November 9, Thackeray had announced to offer prayers at the Ram Lalla temple on November 24.

The Shiv Sena chief had termed the day the apex court pronounced its verdict on the Ayodhya dispute as historic for the country. He had also announced to meet Bharatiya Janata Party leader Lal Krishna Advani to thank him for his dedication for the Ram temple movement.

However, the relationship between the BJP and Shiv Sena turned sour over government formation in Maharashtra and they parted ways.

Petrol pump mgr shot, looted in Gorakhpur

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

In a daring broad daylight incident, motorcycle-borne armed miscreants fatally shot a petrol pump manager and looted a bag containing Rs 11.22 lakh near Baghabera Baba temple in Gorakhpur on Monday.

As per reports, manager of the petrol pump in Belipara area, Anand Swaroop Mishra, and another employee were going to the State Bank of India branch at Mahavir Chhapra area on a motorcycle to deposit the collections of Sunday and Saturday when two miscreants riding a motorcycle came from behind and opened fire at them. After being hit by bullets on his leg and chest, Mishra lost balance and crashed to the ground with the bike. The miscreants later snatched the bag containing Rs 11.22 lakh and fled.

The victims were rushed to BRD Medical College hospital in Gorakhpur where Mishra succumbed to his injuries.

The other petrol pump employee, Sunil Singh, sustained minor injuries. Soon after, senior police officers rushed to the spot and started investigations. ASP (South) at Gorakhpur, Vipul Kumar Srivastav, told media persons that CCTV camera footages on the route were being scanned for leads and all roads in the vicinity were being checked for the robbers.

Meanwhile, in Muzaffarnagar, unidentified miscreants robbed a truck driver of Rs 1 lakh and strangled him to death in Khatauli township on Sunday.

The body of driver Javed was found with a belt wrapped around his neck. He had come to Muzaffarnagar where he sold tomatoes and was on his way to Amroha when the incident took place in Khatauli.

A case was registered in this connection and efforts were on to identify and nab the accused. In another incident, a 50-year-old man killed his wife and later committed suicide by jumping in front of a train in Chitrakoot on Saturday.

Surajbhan Kesarwani had an argument with his wife Asha alias Rani (45) on Saturday night, and he hit her with a blunt object in a fit of rage. Later that night, he fled home and

ended his life by jumping in front of Mahakaushal Express near Piprawal Bridge.

After ascertaining his identity, the police reached his house early Sunday morning to find his wife dead.

Kesarwani ran a roadside eatery and was a drug addict. The couple is survived by two sons and a daughter, who were at home when the murder took place but were unaware of the incident.

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Cost of tender form: ₹ 3000; Period of work: 06 months. Date of publishing on IREPS website: 18.11.2019. Date of opening of tender: 10.12.2019. Similar work definition for minimum Eligibility Criteria: Not Applicable. Note:- 1. The complete information along with tender booklet of above E-Tenders will be available/uploaded since Date of publishing on IREPS website and shall be remained on Website www.ireps.gov.in up to 15.00 hrs. on the due date of tender opening. 2. Bids other than in the form of E-Bids shall not be accepted against above tenders. For this purpose, vendors are required to get themselves registered with IREPS website alongwith Digital Signature Certificate issued by CCA under IT Act -2000. 3. Rates entered into Financial Rate page and duly signed digitally shall be considered. Rates and any other financial entry in any other form / letter head if attached by vendors shall be straightway ignored and shall not be considered. 4. Document being attached should be signed by the tenderer on its body. 5. This tender notice have been uploaded on www.ncr.indianrailways.gov.in. 6. Payment of Earnest Money Deposit (EMD) and Tender Document Cost (TDC) in respect of E-Tendering shall be accepted through net banking or payment gateway only. Any firm recognized by Department of Industrial Policy and Promotion (DIPP) as 'Startups' shall be exempted from payment of earnest money deposit detailed above. 7. In case of any difficulty/helpdesk available on the website of IREPS may be approached. 8. Online E-Tender can be submitted up to 15.00 hrs. on the due date of tender opening. 1643/19 FA

North central railways @CPRONCR

UPSCW jansunwai in 23 dists on Nov 20

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

The Uttar Pradesh State Commission for Women will hold jansunwai in 23 districts of the state on November 20. The UP State Commission for Women's member-secretary has sent a letter in this regard to the district magis-

trates and district police chiefs concerned.

The jansunwai will be held from 11 am onwards in Saharanpur, Bahadri, Etawah, Siddharthnagar, Hardoi, Maharajganj, Meerut, Varanasi, Amroha, Agra, Hapur, Jhansi, Kanpur Dehat, Unnao, Kaushambi, Amethi, Sultanpur, Ballia, Shravasti, Etah, Mirzapur, Banda and Mau districts.

The UP State Commission for Women has asked the district magistrates and district police chiefs to direct the officers concerned and women's police station in-charges to remain present during the jansunwai.

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I No. JC688607H Rank SUB/SKT Ghulam Shadani S/o Late Abdullah, hereby inform that in service record my Son & Daughter name Mohd Hannan & Hera Ansari, which should be recorded as Mohd Hannan Ansari & Hera Ansari, which is true & correct. Ghulam Shadani (Father) 256/212/1, Khajua Gazi Nagar, Lucknow.

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Arranging crowd for Delhi rally no easy task for UPCC chief

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

Ensuring encouraging crowd participation from Uttar Pradesh in the proposed 'Bharat Bachao' rally of the Congress at Ram Leela Ground in Delhi will be a herculean task for UP Congress Committee chief Ajay Kumar 'Lallu'.

The Congress state chief has been facing resentment not only from party veterans, but also those sidelined to adjust his coterie in the state committee.

Sources in UP Congress said that after facing resentment from party leaders at a meeting to chalk out strategy for the Delhi rally on Monday, UPCC chief cancelled further meetings in Lucknow.

Now, the AICC secretary, looking after UP will directly interact with office-bearers and senior leaders after visiting important districts across the state.

Lallu had earlier called a meeting of all former MLAs and MPs of the state on coming Wednesday to discuss about the Delhi rally and seek their cooperation. The meeting now stands cancelled.

He had also called a meeting of newly-appointed chiefs of city and district units but they have now been directed to hold three chaupals in each parliamentary constituency between November 21 and 28 and seek support from the public for the Delhi rally.

Sources in the Congress confirmed that on Monday, Lallu called a meeting of existing presidents of city and districts even as Priyanka was yet to clear the names of new incumbents to replace

them. One of the Congress leaders attending this meeting claimed that barely a dozen out of the 68 city and district presidents called for the meeting turned up. Those who came to the meeting expressed unhappiness over the manner in which the new committee was formed and decisions were being taken at the helm.

He said that as senior leaders tried to cool down the irate participants, saying that as Priyanka Gandhi Vadra had started looking after party affairs, they must support her.

However, a leader of a western UP city said Priyanka's decisions seemed to be going against the party. The participant wanted to make it clear that marginalising all senior leaders and adjusting new ones would impede the party's revival. They said everyone should be given respectable position if the Congress wanted to make a comeback.

Congress veterans in UP, including former MLAs and MPs, had recently met to express their angst over their marginalisation. They plan to take up the matter with Congress chief Sonia Gandhi and inform her how Priyanka's decisions are doing more harm to the party than paving way for its revival.

RAILWAY ELECTRIFICATION-LUCKNOW

Tender No. : RELKO_HTTL_Gr. 281 Date: 13.11.2019

OPEN e-TENDER NOTICE

Open e-Tenders in Single pocket system are invited by the Dy. Chief Electrical Engineer, Railway Electrification, Lucknow for & on behalf of the President of India for the work of:-

- Name of the work with its location: Work of LT, HT modification of section Akbarpur (Excl) to Barabanki- (Excl) of Gr. 281 of Lucknow Division of Northern Railway.
- Approximate Cost of work ₹ 58792654.87 (Rupees Five Crore Eighty Seven Lakh Ninety Two Thousand Six Hundred Fifty Four and Paise Eighty Seven only)
- Earnest Money ₹ 440000/- (Rupees Four Lakh Fourty Thousand only).
- Cost of Tender Paper ₹ 10000/- (Rupees Ten Thousand) only.
- Tender closing date and time Up to 11.12.2019 to (15:00 Hrs.)
- Validity of offer 45 days
- Completion period 12 (Twelve) Months.

Note:- 1. The Cost of Tender Document & Earnest Money Shall be deposited only through payment mode available on IREPS portal like net banking, debit card, credit card etc or payment gateway only as per payment option available in <http://www.ireps.gov.in> website. The cost of Tender Document and Earnest money in any other form shall not be accepted. 2. For other details and to download the entire Tender Paper, please visit website <http://www.ireps.gov.in>. 3. Online offer without earnest money will be summarily rejected. 4. Manual offers are not allowed against this tender and any such manual offer received shall be ignored. 5. Railways reserve the right to accept/reject any or all tenders without assigning reasons to any or all tenderers. 6. General Condition of Contract September, 2019 of Railway or latest correction slip upto closing date shall be applicable in this tender.

Dy. Chief Electrical Engineer
Railway Electrification, Lucknow
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NOTICE

Mr. Vikas Gupta being owner of House No. 358/40, Biharpur, Sahadaganj, Lucknow has offered the same to Allahabad Bank, Mawajya Branch for creation of equitable mortgage against said property for availing housing loan facility. The original sale deed dated 17.09.1975 in serial No. 3864 in the office of Chief Sub-Registrar Lucknow executed by Gaya Prasad S/o Kanhiya Lal in favour of Satya Prakash has been lost by me and property is free from all encumbrances. If anyone has objection in this regards the same may be made within 4 days of this publication in the bank otherwise I & bank will not liable for any loss and injury caused to him.

Branch Manager
Allahabad Bank
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NOTICE U/S 13(2) OF SECURITISATION & RECONSTRUCTION OF FINANCIAL ASSETS AND ENFORCEMENT OF SECURITY INTEREST ACT 2002 (HEREINAFTER CALLED 'ACT')

It is to bring to your notice that your loan account has been declared as NPA by secured creditor Shubham Housing Development Finance Company Limited having its registered office at D-305, Ground Floor, Sarvodaya Enclave, New Delhi - 110017 (herein after called 'SHDFC') and you are liable to pay total outstanding against your loan to SHDFC. You are also liable to pay future interest at the contractual rate on the aforesaid amount together with incidental expenses, cost, charges etc. Therefore, we hereby call upon you to discharge in full your liabilities to SHDFC within 60 days from the date of this notice failing which SHDFC will be empowered to exercise the power under Section 13(4) of the ACT. The details of borrowers and secured assets are as under:-

S. No.	Borrower(s) Name	Address	Notice Amount	Secured Asset
1.	Rahul Jaiswal, Raj Hadurlal Jaiswal	218, Garwan Tola Khuladabad Allahabad Uttar Pradesh - 211003	Rs. 15,47,733/-	House No.240-A/218, Garwan Tola, Khuladabad, Parg & Tehsil-Sadar, Distt. Allahabad Uttar Pradesh 211003
2.	Dhirendra Kashyap, Kalavali	538, KA-907, Triveni Nagar, 60 Feet Road, Near Sarodaya Public School Sitapur Road Lucknow Uttar Pradesh - 226001	Rs. 7,77,976/-	Khasra No.309A, Kakauli, Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh

PLACE : GURGAON, DATE : 18-11-2019

Authorized Officer,
Shubham Housing Development Finance Company Ltd.

UCO BANK Possession Notice

ZONAL OFFICE: 8-1/22, VINEET KHAND, GOMTINAGAR, LUCKNOW - 226110 Phone: 0522-4937864, Email: zo.lucknow@ucobank.co.in

Notice is hereby given under the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Securities Act, 2002 (No. 54 of 2002) and under 13 (2) & 13 (12) read with Rule 8 of the security interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002, calling upon the borrowers to repay the amount within 60 days from the date of receipt of the said notice. The borrowers having failed to repay the amount, notice is given to the under noted borrower and the public in general that the undersigned has taken possession of the property described herein below in exercise of the power conferred on him/her under section 13 (4) of the said Act read with rule 8 on the dates mentioned hereunder. The borrower in particular and the public in general is hereby cautioned not to deal with the property and any dealing with the property will be subject to the charge of the UCO Bank for an amount and interest thereon mentioned against each account herein below:

Sl. No.	Name, Address of Borrower(s) & Branch Name	Amount Outstanding (Rs.)	Description of Property & Name of Owner	DL of Demand Notice (Possession taken)
1.	M/s J.K. Group, Prop. Mr. Durgesh Chaurasiya S/o Shri Ram Achal, Village- Bawan Bujurg Balla, Mahrajganj, Raebarily.	5,14,424.00 + Interest + Other Expenses	Property situated at Gata No. 321, Village- Bawan Bujurg Balla, Mahrajganj, Raebarily, Owner: Shri Jagdish Chaurasiya S/o Shri Ram Achal and Mr. Durgesh Chaurasiya S/o Shri Ram Achal, Boundary: East-Plot of Seller at present shop of Bal Karan, West- Khet of Seller at present shop of Prakash, North- Mahrajganj to Bachrawa Road, South- Khet of Ram Prasad Bari, Area: 55.8 Sq. Mtr.	11.05.2017 15.11.2019
2.	M/s Jaan Enterprises, Prop. Jainul Haque S/o Shri Nurul Haque, Mohall & Village- Atrehta, Pargana- Semrauta, Tehsil- Raebarily, Dist- Raebarily.	10,48,449.75 + Interest + Other Expenses	(1) Property situated at Mohall & Village- Atrehta, Pargana- Semrauta, Tehsil and Dist- Raebarily, Owner: Shri Nurul Haque S/o Shri Samsul Haque, Boundary: East-Plot Chedi Lal, West- Plot Kamlesh, North-Baag Mahadev, South- Plot of Seller, Area: 0.378 hectare (2) Property situated at Mohall & Village- Atrehta, Pargana- Semrauta, Tehsil and Dist- Raebarily, Owner: Shri Nurul Haque S/o Shri Samsul Haque, Boundary: East- Brij Lal & other Khet, West- Plot Kamlesh, North-Khet Mani Ram, South- Khet of Ram Naresh & other, Area: 0.105 hectare (3) Property situated at Mohall & Village- Atrehta, Pargana- Semrauta, Tehsil and Dist- Raebarily, Owner: Shri Nurul Haque S/o Shri Samsul Haque, Area: 0.378 hectare	03.05.2019 15.11.2019
3.	M/s Vaishnavi Constructions, Prop. Mrs. Deepika Singh W/o Lt. Shiva Singh, Village- Saleempur Khas, Pargana and District- Raebarily.	31,78,473.90 + Interest + Other Expenses	All Part and parcel of residential plot situated at Gata No. 29, Village- Saleempur Khas, Pargana and District- Raebarily, Owner: Mrs. Deepika Singh W/o Lt. Shiva Singh, Boundary: East- Kharanj Rasta, West- Harchandpur Mahrajganj Road, North- House of Umaid Khan, South- Middle School, Area: 2800 Sq. Mtr.	24.05.2019 15.11.2019
4.	Mr. Shiv Naresh Pandey, R/o Vill- Badal Nagar Palika, Mohalla- Civil Line, Begum Ganj, Nawabganj, Barabanki	3,99,255.90 + Interest + Other Expenses	EMTD land & building situated at Min zulmia Arazi Khasra No. 15, Vill- Badal Nagar Palika, Mohalla- Civil Line, Begum Ganj, Nawabganj, Barabanki, Owner: Mr. Shiv Naresh Pandey, Boundary: East- 25 ft wide- way Rasta, West- Seller's Plot - Nala, North- Plot Prop. of Manoj Rajpoot, South- Plot of Maya Singh - House of Maya Singh, Area: 750 Sq. ft.	02.05.2019 13.11.2019

Date: 19.11.2019 Place: Raebarily Authorised Officer, UCO Bank

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Police, lawyers on warpath

Lawyers beaten up at police station, colleagues stage dharna

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ LUCKNOW

An advocate and his juniors were allegedly roughed up by PGI police station on Sunday night after he confronted the cops on changing the content of an FIR. The police action stirred the hornet's nest as a huge number of lawyers thronged the police station to stage dharna. The deadlock ended only on Monday afternoon after senior police officials assured the protesters action against the cops in question. Pushed on to the back foot and apprehending backlash from lawyers, the police registered a case against four policemen, including two sub-inspectors.



Sources said the cops put Tiwari behind the lock-up where they beat him black and blue. "A commotion ensued during the brawl and the news reached lawyers who assembled at the police station in huge numbers

As per reports, advocate Ramshanker Tiwari of Goel Apartment (Faizabad road), along with a complainant, identified as Arvind, reached the police station around 8 pm to lodge an FIR in connection with an incident. Arvind, who is a retired armyman, was attacked by a group of youths when he was returning home on his bike. He sought help from Tiwari in getting an FIR registered. "The cop working as computer operators shouted at Arvind for giving a fake complaint and asked him to change the content of the FIR which he opposed. At this, the computer operator blew his top and started abusing Arvind. As the counsel of Arvind, I opposed the computer operator's act and it stoked up his anger. He called his colleagues and in no time, around 50 cops reached there. They attacked me, Arvind and also my juniors

inside the police station," Tiwari stated in the FIR.

He alleged that he and his colleagues were kicked and beaten up with belts. "When I told them I was a practising lawyer of High Court, they used abusive language for the judges and also uttered contemptuous words against the High Court," Tiwari alleged.

He further alleged that the cops attacking him and his colleagues told them that even the judges could do no harm to them. "The PGI SHO, who reached the scene, and some of my colleagues whom I called for help, rescued me from the cops," he said. In the FIR, Tiwari said the cops taunted him and his colleagues for the Tiz Hazari Court episode in which police and advocates. "They mocked at all of us saying they had trapped us now and will now avenge the insult to police in the Delhi case," some lawyers said.

Tiwari later identified four policemen as Ashutosh Singh, Raju Singh, S-I Ram Kumar and Rajkumar during an iden-

tification parade. ASP (North) Amit Kumar said the deadlock ended after senior officials intervened and assured action following an investigation.

Sources said the cops put Tiwari behind the lock-up where they beat him black and blue. "A commotion ensued during the brawl and the news reached lawyers who assembled at the police station in huge numbers. The assembly of advocates at the police station made the senior policemen apprehensive and they reached the scene to bring the situation under control," the sources said. They said the police would bully complainants and force them to change the content of FIRs at almost all the police stations in Lucknow. "There will hardly be a single case in which the police register a case as per the FIR content. This is because the complainants exaggerate on being advised by their counsels. But the attack on advocates and locking them up at police station for dissent is wrong," the sources opined.

Cops forced to remain on toes

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ LUCKNOW

Three incidents, including the thrashing of advocates at PGI police station, kept the Lucknow police on their toes for over 16 hours since Sunday night. Forces from different police stations, including Krishna Nagar, Mohanlalganj, Nagam, Banthra and Sarojininagar, were summoned at the PGI police station after the news of the attack on lawyers spread and a huge number of advocates reached there.

Senior officials overseeing the handling of the situation were apprehensive that the issue would backfire. "The reason behind the apprehension was the animosity which cropped up between the lawyers and police following the Tiz Hazari Court episode in Delhi. At the time of the incident, many of the policemen condemned the attack on Delhi police and came in support of their Delhi counterparts. Some of them had also posted messages in support to Delhi police," the sources said.

While the police were busy in addressing the issue, the news of attack on a shanty-dweller, Rajesh Rawat, sent them into a tizzy. Subsequently, a team was sent to the crime scene where it

surfaced that the victim was admitted to KGMU Trauma Center. A team then left for trauma Centre to record the statement of the victim.

By Monday morning, the police got a hint of reconciliation in the lawyers' issue and they started working to give it a final shape. Around 11 am, the police got the news of a firing incident in which a property dealer had suffered injuries and a team was pressed into service.

Meanwhile, the police registered a case on the complaint of Arvind, whose case was being pleaded by advocate Ramshanker Tiwari. The PGI SHO said the case was registered for attack on Arvind and blocking his movement and for opening fire while leaving the place against Shani, Abhishek and Bhupendra. He said the police are hunting for the accused. Ramshanker Tiwari, along with Arvind, had gone to the PGI police station to get the case lodged. Sources said a sub-inspector and a constable raised objection on Arvind's claim that the attackers opened fire at him during the attack and asked him to delete the sentence. This later resulted into a brawl between the cops and the advocate and later snowballed into a high-voltage drama.



Students torching the effigy of government at the gate of Lucknow University on Monday to protest lathicharge on BHU students and Unnao farmers

Ayodhya case: Nirmohi Akhara plans to meet PM

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ LUCKNOW

After deciding not to file a review petition after the Supreme Court scrapped its petition on Ayodhya title suit, the Nirmohi Akhara has sought time from Prime Minister Narendra Modi to meet him to convince the government to include the Akhara in the proposed trust to oversee Ram temple construction.

A letter written by Mahant Dinendra Das of Nirmohi Akhara to the Prime Minister was handed over to Ayodhya District Magistrate Anuj Kumar Jha in Lucknow on Monday by Akhara's spokesman Prabhath Singh.

A copy of the letter was also e-mailed to the Prime Minister's office for getting an audience. In the letter, the Akhara leader said that a five-member delegation would meet the Prime Minister. The Akhara's chief seers

and executive body members met in Lucknow on Sunday and decided to meet the Prime Minister. Prabhath Singh said that the Akhara would not only ask for a seat in the proposed trust but also important position in the management, like secretary or president. The Akhara has also sought the right to worship the deity.

"Another meeting will be held after the meeting with the Prime Minister and then our future plan will be decided," he said. In its executive committee meeting, the Nirmohi Akhara had decided not to file a review petition against the Supreme Court verdict on Ayodhya, in which its petition was dismissed. The Nirmohi Akhara was one of the main plaintiff in the Ram Janmabhoomi case.

In its order, the Supreme Court has asked the Centre to grant representation in the Trust to Nirmohi Akhara, whose suit was dismissed.

Owaisi trying to disturb peace in country: Katiyar



Lucknow (PNS): Bharatiya Janata Party's firebrand leader and former member of Rajya Sabha, Vinay Katiyar, lambasted All India Majlis-e-Ittehad-ul-Muslimeen (AIMIM) leader Asaduddin Owaisi for trying to trigger communal disturbances on the Ayodhya verdict for his own vested political interests.

"When the entire country showed a picture of harmony with Hindus refraining from celebrations after the Supreme Court verdict, the act of Owaisi and All India Muslim Personal Law Board (AIMPLB) of filing a review petition exposes the intentions of Muslim leaders," Katiyar told media persons in Lucknow on Monday.

Katiyar, once the Hindu hardline mascot of Bharatiya Janata Party, said: "When the Ayodhya issue has been resolved, these leaders are trying to create problems for their own vested political interests."

Katiyar said that at present, the atmosphere in the country after the Ayodhya verdict was peaceful and there was total communal harmony with majority of Indians - both Muslims and Hindus - accepting the verdict.

"But it is unfortunate that leaders like Owaisi are trying their best to disturb peace in the country and making attempts to incite minorities in the name of Ayodhya judgement," he said. Katiyar even warned Owaisi that if he did not mend his way, they "knew how to treat such people".

Property dealer suffers firearm injuries

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ LUCKNOW

A property dealer suffered firearm injuries under mysterious circumstances in PGI police station area on Monday morning. Police termed it a case of accidental firing. According to police spokesman, Ramakant Awasthi (42) of Eldeco Saubhagyam (tower 6), along with his nephew, was at his

house when he suffered firearm injuries on his shoulder. "Awasthi drove to Trauma Centre II in PGI police station area and got himself admitted there," he said.

The police said they were trying to find out how Awasthi suffered the gunshot and discounted reports of an attack on the property dealer. "There was no truth to this theory. Awasthi suffered injuries in an

accidental firing. He may have been cleaning the nozzle of the revolver or he may have unthinkingly mishandled the weapon when it went off," the police said.

Sources said the police did not even recover the firearm from the property dealer as yet. "As per standard norms, the police take the weapon in custody and send it for ballistic test. In this case,

the police have yet to take such action," they said.

Meanwhile, an e-rickshaw driver attacked his friend with a sharp-edged weapon and locked him in a makeshift shanty, in which both were living together, in the dead of the night on Sunday. Hearing the commotion, the residents freed the victim and rushed him to hospital. The police spokesman said the victim

identified as Rajesh Rawat of Barabanki had a brawl with his friend Raju of Pratapgarh during a drinking session at the shanty and Raju later attacked the victim. "The victim was admitted at Trauma Centre and the police are searching for the accused," the spokesman said. He said Rajesh runs a temporary shop selling helmets near PGI hospital.

Students from Sydney in LU for two-week course



PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ LUCKNOW

Students from Sydney (Australia) arrived at Lucknow to attend an international course at Lucknow University. A two-week international course was launched at the university on Monday. Incharge of the Institute of Wildlife Sciences (IWS) Amita Kanaujia said the programme is being organised by Centre for Environment Education (CEE) in association with the University of Lucknow where IWS is the nodal department. Director of IQAC Cell Rajeev Manohar made a presentation to the group about LU.

Senior programme director from CEE Preeti R Kanaujia said this association

and exchange programme began in year 2018. She said there was an overwhelming response from students from both the universities, thus a visit was organised this year too. A group of 20 graduate students from various streams and four senior academics arrived at Lucknow on November 17. From the University of Lucknow and its affiliated colleges and BBAU, over 20 students are attending this course.

She said the entire programme is divided into two parts - the first part will take place at Lucknow and for the second part, the students will be visiting to Suhelwa Wildlife Sanctuary to look at rural life and indigenous communities.

This exchange programme aims at introducing learners to sustainability concerns in the context of development in India with a special focus to northern India. The objective of the course is to interpret perspective on sustainability along ecological and social dimensions and use these to examine critical themes of importance to India, like population, water, health and climate change in view of Sustainable Development Goals.

Local experts such as Venkatesh Dutt from BBAU, Tanu Tandon from Amity University and Kurvilla Thomas from UP Forest department will conduct sessions during the programme.

Maya slams govt for lathicharge on farmers

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ LUCKNOW

The Bahujan Samaj Party targeted the Yogi Adityanath government over the "brutal lathicharge" on farmers protesting against inadequate payment or non-payment of compensation for their land acquired by the government for a township project in Unnao. The angry farmers also burnt their standing crop as a mark of protest.

In a tweet posted on Monday, BSP chief Mayawati said, "The state government

needs to immediately resolve the land compensation dispute that has been going on for the past few days in Unnao. They should be sitting across with land owners rather than indulging in police lathi-charge and exploitation, which is highly condemnable. The government should take this very seriously." Following the protests, Congress general secretary Priyanka Gandhi Vadra on Saturday shared a 22-second video of the clash on Twitter.

"UP chief minister is making big speeches in Gorakhpur,

but see the condition of his police. A farmer in Unnao is lying semi-conscious after being beaten by a lathi (stick). He is still being beaten up. There should be some shame. A person who grows grains for you is subjected to such cruelty," she tweeted in Hindi.

For the past two days, farmers have been protesting in Unnao over inadequate compensation for their land acquired for Trans-Ganga City project that will come up near Kanpur. On Sunday, some plastic pipes and two vehicles were

set ablaze outside the godown of Uttar Pradesh State Industrial Development Authority (UPSIDA), a day after the farmers clashed with the police. On Saturday, the protesting farmers clashed with the police when government officials visited the project site to clear encroachments. Several farmers and three police personnel were injured in the incident. Unnao District Magistrate Devendra Kumar Pandey has dismissed the claims of the protesters, saying that the farmers have been adequately compensated.

LDA to launch drive to pull down illegal structures

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ LUCKNOW

Can Lucknow Development Authority (LDA) demolish or seal 24,000 unauthorised structures located in different parts of the city in the current financial year? The figure was disclosed in a survey carried out by the development authority with the assistance of a multi-national company specialising in civil engineering.

It is expected that a special drive would be launched from December 15. It would be planned in a meeting scheduled to be held here in the last week of this month. However, officials have not disclosed the

company on administrative grounds. LDA Vice-Chairman PN Singh said a strategy has to be chalked at the earliest to complete the task and demolish the illegal structures in public interest. Interestingly, the worst-hit areas are the newly-developed localities, and not the old parts of the city. In fact, the LDA administration has no skilled manpower or equipment to pull down structures having four or more than storeys.

Sources said the LDA administration should be held responsible for the mushrooming illegal structures as it looked the other way when

they were being constructed.

Chief engineer IS Singh said he was confident that the LDA administration would launch a drive with the help of experts and government departments. It is said there are influential groups consisting of politicians and bureaucrats who have invested millions in the real estate in gross violation of rules and regulations to earn huge profits.

The state government has also been informed of the massive network of the unauthorised structures. The government officials are aware of the problem and have also expressed concern.

Roundtable meet on breast cancer today

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ LUCKNOW

Cell is organising Lucknow Regional Roundtable Meet on Breast Cancer on Tuesday. Organisers said that it will bring together key policy-makers and healthcare providers at state level to deliberate and discuss how to take breast cancer management forward. "Using evidence and recommendations outlined in National Whitepaper and encapsulating insights from state roundtable, these will be taken further to enhance effectiveness and outcome of interventions part of NCD programmes," he said.

"The mortality to incidence ratio was found to be as high as 66 in rural registries and as low

as eight in urban registries. There are multiple reasons for late detection including lack of awareness, shyness on part of patients, social stigma, and ignorance at primary and secondary health care level," said the organisers. "In India, the burden of breast cancer is increasing due to various factors and more young women reported diagnosed at advanced stage. An early diagnosis and treatment with appropriate medical management improves the outcome and quality of life and decreases the burden on the patient and the dependent. Current innovative treatment options offer to extend the life of advanced breast cancer patients with acceptable quality of life," they pointed out.

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EMERGENCY

ZEBRA CROSSING - SAFE CROSSING

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TRANSPORT DEPARTMENT, UTTAR PRADESH

5 killed, 30 hurt as bus overturns in Deoria

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ LUCKNOW

Five passengers were killed and over 30 injured when a speeding private bus met with an accident in Deoria on Sunday night. In three separate incidents, seven persons, including four children, were killed since Sunday night.

Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath expressed grief over the Deoria mishap and directed senior officials to ensure immediate medical relief to the injured. As per reports, the driver of a private bus going from Sitamarhi (Bihar) to Jaipur lost control on wheels as a result of which the vehicle overturned on NH-28 near Hetimpur toll plaza in Deoria late Sunday night.

The mishap resulted in the death of five passengers and left 30 others injured. Four of the five deceased were identified as Suraj, Rajesh, Guddu and Dheeraj of Suhagbarwa hamlet of Maharajganj.

The injured were rushed to Deoria district hospital from where 11 critical passengers — Smita (Motihari), Shankar Jha (Madhubani), Aarti Devi (Sitamarhi), Santosh Singh, Rajesh Verma, Shambhu Kumar, Manu, Nathuni, Prabhu, Vivek, Akhilesh — were referred to BRD Medical

College hospital in Gorakhpur. The victims told the police that the driver was inebriated at the time of accident.

Gorakhpur Divisional Commissioner Jayant Narlikar and IG (Gorakhpur Range) Jai Narain Singh visited the spot along with district magistrate and district police chiefs of Kushinagar and Deoria, respectively. They supervised rescue operation and ensured treatment for the injured.

Meanwhile in Bijoor, Rohit Agarwal of Azad Colony was returning with his family members after attending a marriage ceremony in a SUV and as he was passing through NH-74, the SUV rammmed into a tree near Kalakheri railway crossing and overturned on Sunday night. In the mishap, Rohit, his wife Roopal, son Vanshu, brother Rajat Agarwal's wife Divya, his friend Ankush's wife Anupama of Janakpuri (Bareilly) were critically injured while Ankush's three-year-old daughter Aarohi and Rajat's four-year-old daughter Aadhya died on the spot.

The injured were rushed to a primary health centre in Nagina from where they were referred to District Hospital in Bijoor.

In a similar mishap in Balrampur, three members of

a family were killed and eight others were seriously injured when the SUV they were travelling in overturned and fell into a roadside ditch on Sunday. SP of Balrampur, Devranjan Verma said that 11 occupants of the SUV were returning from a marriage function from Maharajganj to Ithiatok area of Gonda when the accident took place near the jungles of Quano on Sunday night. While Khalid Islam (43), his wife Arifa (41), and a kin Sikander Ali (45) died on the spot, eight others were seriously injured and rushed to the district hospital. The injured were identified as Suhail, Sufiya, Salman, Kistun, Latif and Azad. In another incident reported from Chittaur hamlet in Fatehpur, a fire broke out in Nanka's house under mysterious circumstances on Sunday evening.

Nanka had died a few months back and his two wives, Rajkali and Murahi, were working in the field. Nanka's five-year-old daughter Shweta and his nephew Vijay's four-year-old daughter Rajni were trapped inside and were burnt alive. Fire brigade personnel took over an hour to control the fire. A case was registered and efforts were being made to confirm the cause of fire.

Discussion on making city child-friendly, improving transport



PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ LUCKNOW

Divisional Commissioner Mukesh Meshram held a meeting on Monday to discuss matters related to making the city child-friendly and improving transport facilities.

He said in order to make the city child-friendly, it is important to paint the primary school buildings in nice colours and have a number of equipment in schools. He said efforts should be made to conserve water bodies and discussions should be held to invite suggestions from people too.

He said that for increasing the quality of education in government schools, experts and teachers should be invited from outside. "There should be areas marked for walking, cycling and entertainment for children. It is important to give a right ambience to the children apart from giving them qualitative education," Meshram said. The Commissioner was apprised by

Vastuvidh Sangh that experts across the city will prepare a concept note on the same and submit it shortly.

Meanwhile, the Divisional Commissioner held a meeting of Urban Mobility Node Project under which a Smart City road had to be constructed from Charbagh to Hazratganj. The meeting was attended by officials from Lucknow Metro Rail Corporation, Public Works Department, Jal Kal, Nagar Nigam and Lucknow Smart City Limited.

There are some works pending on the road between Charbagh and Munshipulia, and directions were given to the PWD workers to ensure coordination with Lucknow Metro Rail Corporation to complete the work in a week's time. Directions were also given to the departments to provide details of their utilities to UPMTS officials so that they can include it in their work strategy plan.

CITYBRIEFS

AWARD CEREMONY

Unity College held an awards ceremony on Monday to honour the toppers in ICSE and ISC exam. The best students of pre-primary, primary, secondary and senior secondary were also given award medals and scholarships. Also felicitated on the occasion were their parents. The programme was presided over by founder-president Dr Kalbe Sadiq. Speaking on the occasion, he said all virtues spring from knowledge, hence more and more good educational institutions should be established to rid the community and nation of poverty and ignorance. Shubair Alam, the only national champion of the college in the 100m race ASISC, received a special honour. Principal Francis Castellino applauded the awardees and thanked the teachers.



Dr Kalbe Sadiq during the awards ceremony at Unity College

SGPGI director Rakesh Kapoor for the next three months or till the appointment of the new director, whichever comes first. Kapoor's term was ending on November 19.

SANATKADA FEST

Sanatkada Fest will be held from January 31 to February 4 next year. Key organiser Madhavi Kukreja said the theme will be 'Awadh Ke Qasbat Rang'. "Suburban settlements at some distance from

the city, many qasbas predate urban centres. Qasbas evolved as centres of 'sufi' and 'bhakti' traditions and learning. Art forms employing local contexts flourished, plays such as 'Inder Sabha', folk theatre, Ramlila were popular forms of cultural expression, 'sufi' poets composed in praise of Prophet Mohammad, Hazrat Ali and Lord Krishna, and no festival was celebrated without participation of people of other faiths," she said.

TERM EXTENDED

Governor Anandiben Patel has extended the term of



Students taking part in a contest on the fourth day of the five-day International Geography Olympiad 'Geofest International-2019' at CMS Kanpur Road auditorium on Monday



STUDENTS VISIT AGRA, DELHI

A tour comprising 18 college students, along with two teachers from Kumbi district of Assam, was flagged off from Kumbi on November 8 for Delhi and Agra. During their halt at Delhi from November 12 to 15, the students had an opportunity to interact with the General Officer Commanding, Delhi Area. The

students visited prominent historical monuments like Qutub Minar, Red Fort, India Gate and Akshardham Mandir. They also visited the newly-constructed National War Memorial. They then visited Agra from November 16 to 17. They were awestruck by the beauty of Taj Mahal and Agra Fort. They were also shown the Army Public School, Fatehpur Sikri and Mother Teresa's

Missionaries of Charity. The students expressed happiness over the opportunity presented to them by the Indian Army to witness such historical places. Army conducts a large number of educational awareness and national integration tours for various strata of society, especially from Jammu and Kashmir and North East regions, with students forming a predominant part of the initiative.

Always wanted to take readers on magical journey: Manav

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ LUCKNOW

A talk session between Bollywood actor Manav Kaul and 'qissagoi' artiste Himanshu Bajpai was organised on Monday as a curtain raiser to the Repertvahr Fest, scheduled to be held in December. Manav discussed his recently launched book titled 'Bahut Door, Kitna Door Hota Hai'. Manav said he has always wanted to take his readers on a magical journey through his words and the thought of this book occurred to him while he was on a trip to Europe.

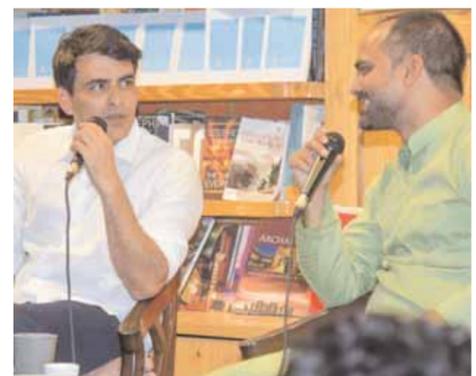
"This book is not a travelling account but a beautiful amalgamation of fantasy and real experience," he said. The book has a tone of reality

mixed with fiction. The conversation was made interesting with Himanshu's remarks and Lakhnavi *andaaz*.

Manav also read out a section of the book and discussed his childhood days when he looked at the airplanes and wondered where did they go. He also shared his travelling experience and how his background and growing years helped him become a writer and an actor. He said his identity as a writer and actor is completely different.

"Writing for me is a flow of thoughts being written down along with transcription of real life experiences," he said.

Himanshu also discussed with him the language that he uses to express his thoughts in his books, and Manav said it is



the language of his soul that flows without conscious filters. Manav was born in

dream for a theatre group was taking shape somewhere in his mind. His plays like 'Shakkhar Ke Paanch Daane' and 'Park' made their mark in national and international circles, and his group 'Arany' became well-known in the creative sphere. In his play 'Pile Skootar Wala Aadmi', Manav's poetic style of writing was compared with veterans like Nirmal Verma and Vinod Kumar Shukla. His tryst with the cine world started with 'Jantaram Mamantaram' in 2003 and he has been praised for his roles in films like 'Kai Po Che', 'Wazir' and 'Jai Gangajal'. His short story collection 'Theek Tumhare Peechhe' was the most loved story book of 2016. 'Prem Kabootar' is his second book.

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NIT No. : 25/SIIDCUL/2019. **Tender Notice**
SIIDCUL invites online bids from O.E.M. or Authorized dealer for Supply of LED Street Light fittings (as per bid document). Detailed bid document can be downloaded from website of SIIDCUL www.siidcul.com or www.uktenders.gov.in. Bids can be submitted on www.uktenders.gov.in on/before 18.12.2019 time:-03.00 PM.
Letter no.-2536, Date - 18.11.2019 **MANAGING DIRECTOR**

NORTHERN RAILWAY E-TENDER NOTICE
Chief Workshop Manager N.R., C&W Workshop Alambagh Lucknow invites following e-tender: **Name of Work:** Comprehensive Annual Maintenance of AJTB Lathe (WS-63) — Make HVT, installed in Wheel Shop for Two Years. **Location:** C&W Workshop, Alambagh, Lucknow. **Approx cost of the work:** Rs. 28,37,900/- (Rupees Twenty Eight Lakh Thirty Seven Thousand Nine Hundred Only). **Cost of Tender form:** Rs. 3,000/- (Rs. Three Thousand Only) **Earnest money to be deposited:** Rs. 58,800/- (Rs. Fifty Six Thousand Eight Hundred Only) **Completion period of the work:** 02 Years from the date of issue of Letter of Acceptance. **Date & Time for Submissions of Tender:** from 29.11.2019 to 13.12.2019 up to 15:00 Hrs. **Format for Affidavit:** AFFIDAVIT AS PER ANNEXURE-A MUST BE SCANNED AND UPLOADED. **Opening of Tender:** Tender opening will be done any time after the tender closing time. The Tenderers are not required to be present during the Opening. **Address of the office from where the form can be purchased:** All complete details of Tender Notice/Documents are available at website www.ireps.gov.in Website particulars where complete details of tender can be seen etc.: All complete details of Tender Notice/Documents are available at website www.ireps.gov.in Tender Notice No: 2019-AMV-C and W-Etender-36 Date : 15.11.2019 3684/19
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EASTERN RAILWAY NOTICE OF E-AUCTION PROGRAMME FOR THE MONTH OF DECEMBER, 2019
No. : S4/S/DAP/2019-20 Dated : 14.11.2019
Eastern Railway will conduct E-Auction for the following Depot/Division as per following table :

Auction Date	Jurisdiction (Depot & Division)
06.12.2019 (Friday)	Halisahar Depot & Sealdah Division
09.12.2019 (Monday)	BESY Depot, Howrah & Asansol Divisions
09.12.2019 (Monday)	Jamalpur Depot, Malda Town, Howrah & Asansol Divisions
12.12.2019 (Thursday)	Howrah Division
13.12.2019 (Friday)	BESY Depot, Howrah & Asansol Divisions
13.12.2019 (Friday)	Halisahar Depot & Sealdah Division
13.12.2019 (Friday)	Sealdah Division
16.12.2019 (Monday)	Jamalpur Depot, Malda Town, Howrah & Asansol Divisions
19.12.2019 (Thursday)	BESY Depot, Howrah & Asansol Divisions
20.12.2019 (Friday)	Halisahar Depot & Sealdah Division
20.12.2019 (Friday)	Jamalpur Depot, Malda Town, Howrah & Asansol Divisions
24.12.2019 (Tuesday)	Sealdah Division
27.12.2019 (Friday)	Howrah Division
27.12.2019 (Friday)	Halisahar Depot & Sealdah Division
30.12.2019 (Monday)	BESY Depot, Howrah & Asansol Divisions

N.B. : Schedule of E-Auction, other details and terms and conditions are available on the website <http://www.ireps.gov.in/> (Stores-48/2019-20) **Principal Chief Materials Manager, Kolkata**
Tender Notices are also available at Website www.e.r.indianrailways.gov.in/ | www.ireps.gov.in

Electoral bonds must be scrapped: Cong

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The Congress on Monday alleged that the Modi government had overruled the RBI to introduce electoral bonds to enable "black money to enter the BJP coffers" and demanded that the scheme be scrapped immediately.

Describing it as "opaque" and promoting "money laundering", the party also demanded that the names of those who bought these bonds be made public and asked what the "quid pro quo" was.

Citing media reports and RTI responses, the opposition party alleged that the government asked the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) for its opinion just days before unveiling electoral bonds, but dismiss the Central bank's reservations and objections.

Congress spokesperson and MP Rajeev Gowda alleged that the government seeking the RBI's nod just ahead of the unveiling shows it was done in a "perfunctory" manner and

the Central bank's reservations were dismissed in haste.

Congress general secretary Priyanka Gandhi Vadra also attacked the government on the issue, alleging that electoral bonds were "cleared by bypassing RBI" and "dismissing" national security concerns in order to enable black money to enter the BJP coffers.

"It appears that while the BJP was elected on the promise of eradicating black money it was busy lining...its own pockets with exactly that! What a shameful betrayal of the Indian people," she said on Twitter.

Addressing a press conference, Gowda termed the electoral bond scheme "fraudulent" and claimed that it eliminates a level-playing field.

"It is a fraud on the people of India. It is a fraud on the electoral process. It eliminates the level playing field that needs to be there in a true democracy. It brings in opacity and this opacity was

objected to by the Election Commission of India," the Congress MP said.

He alleged that the government brought the scheme as a money bill so that changes cannot be made in it in the Rajya Sabha.

"The Congress party has opposed the electoral bond scheme because it lacks transparency, it lacks fairness... we demand that the BJP government if it has nothing to hide must reveal the entities who have bought the bonds and to what extent," Gowda said.

"We demand that the BJP government explain to the people of India what policy favours, including the selling of public assets to crony capitalists, have taken place as a result of electoral bond transactions," he said. The Congress also demands the immediate scrapping of the electoral bond scheme which even the RBI and the EC have questioned because it is opaque and is a "money laundering scheme", Gowda added.

"We demand an inquiry into how the finance ministry took decisions to overrule the RBI to establish this corruption-inducing scheme and we urge the government to come clean," he said.

Gowda alleged that electoral bonds worth at least Rs 6,000 crore have been sold since March 2018 and the BJP has garnered more than 95 per cent of the money.

Earlier, Congress' chief spokesperson Randeep Surjewala also cited a media report to allege that the government "overruled" the RBI on the issue of introducing electoral bonds.

"RTI reveals how 'electoral bonds' became instruments of anonymous donations bordering on opaque 'money laundering'," Surjewala said in a tweet.

"Will the Modi Govt answer — 1. How many thousand crores of bonds issued? 2. How many thousand crores received by BJP? 3. The 'Quid Pro Quo?' he asked.

Dalit's family ends protest after Punjab Govt offers ₹20 lakh, Govt job

PTI ■ CHANDIGARH

The family of a Dalit man, who was forced to drink urine and died after being mercilessly thrashed, ended its protest on Monday after the Punjab Government offered ₹20 lakh compensation, a Government job to his wife and free education to his three children.

The State Government also announced a probe into the case by an additional director general of police rank officer, besides ensuring filling of challan against the four accused in court within seven days, an official spokesperson said in a release.

The ADGP has also been mandated to probe lapses by officers, if any, to fix accountability. All efforts would be made to ensure stringent

punishment for the culprits within three months, the spokesperson said.

Director General of Police Dinkar Gupta deputed Additional Director General of Police Gurpreet Deo to undertake the inquiry and submit a list of recommendations to prevent unfortunate delays in the future in filing the case.

The DGP said the inquiry officer's responsibility should also be fixed to initiate disciplinary proceedings against the erring officers. Sandeep Sandhu, the political secretary to Punjab Chief Minister Amarinder Singh, said a compensation of Rs 20 lakh, including ₹8.25 lakh under the SC/ST (Prevention of Atrocities) Act, will be given to the next of kin of the 37-year-old man who was killed earlier this month.

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

JNU PROTESTERS...

road outside the Safdarjung Tomb. The students sat on road demanding the release of students detained by the police.

The students also alleged that the police used baton on them at Safdarjung Tomb while they were marching towards Parliament, however, the same was refuted by the Delhi Police. Mandeep Singh Randhawa, the Deputy Commissioner of Police (DCP), Central district and Public Relation Officer (PRO) of Delhi Police said that police will enquire about the lathi charge allegation.

"It could be possible that some of them sustained injuries when the barricades were broken by the students.

Even some police personnel got injured," the Randhawa added. However, Aishe Gosh said they took out a peaceful march from JNU. "The police thought they would detain students including two JNUSU office bearers and the movement would end, but every student is a leader. We are all fighting together. The Delhi Police is upset. Till the time there is not a complete rollback of the hike and of the IHA manual, we will continue our agitation."

"Students wanted to draw attention of Parliamentarians towards the issue following which a march was organized but the police lathi charged us and detained several students.

Several students are injured. We were just going to our representatives," said S Balaji, former president of JNUSU.

The protest by students also lead to the traffic jams at several areas in Central Delhi including Nelson Mandela Marg, Aurobindo Marg and Baba Gang Nath Marg where the traffic could be seen moving a snail's pace. The simmering discontent among the JNU students community against the university administration over the proposed fee hike took form of a massive protest on November 11 with students registering their protest in front of Union Human Resource Development (HRD) Minister on the day of the 'con-

vocation'. On November 13, JNU Executive Council (EC) in a meeting held outside the University campus decided to partially rollback the hike in hostel fees.

Following the meeting on November 13, the Executive Committee came up with the new proposal, which said the rent for a double-seater room which was raised from Rs 10 per month earlier to Rs 300 in the draft has been reduced to Rs 100 a month while the rent for the single-seater room, proposed at Rs 600 from Rs 200 per month earlier, has been reduced to Rs 200 per month.

The committee also proposed a new scheme for economic assistance to the

Economically Weaker Section (EWS) students. "The newly introduced service charges of Rs 1,700 for sanitation, maintenance, cook, mess helper has not been rolled back nor reduced," said a student.

MAHA PAWAR...

"Sharad Pawar met the Congress President today and briefed her on the situation in Maharashtra. It was decided that in a day or two, representatives from NCP and Congress will meet in Delhi to discuss the way forward," Congress spokesperson Randeep Surjewala said in a tweet after the 50-minute meeting between the two. Maharashtra was placed under the

President's rule on November 12 after no party or alliance staked claim to form government in the state.

Pawar's meeting with the Congress chief comes a day after the NCP's core committee held a meeting in Pune and resolved that the President's Rule should end and an "alternative government" be formed in Maharashtra.

In the October 21 Maharashtra polls, the BJP-Sena saffron alliance had secured a comfortable majority by winning 105 and 56 seats respectively in the 288-member Assembly. The Congress and the NCP, pre-poll allies, had won 44 and 54 seats respectively

250TH SESSION OF HOUSE

RS should have greater say in creating States, UTs: Manmohan

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Without mentioning J&K, which was recently bifurcated into Union Territories, Former Prime Minister Manmohan Singh on Monday said as a Council of States, the Rajya Sabha should have a greater say in legislations dealing with redrawing boundaries of States. Participating in the discussion on the "Role of Rajya Sabha in Indian Polity and Need for Reform" on the first day of the 250th session of the House, Singh said, "On some matters, this House should be given greater respect by the executive, that is not the case now. For example, important issues like redrawing the boundaries of a State. Converting them into Union territories, is such a far-reaching proposal or legislation, this House, a Council of States, should be given more powers to deal with these issues."



Senior Congress leader and former Prime Minister Manmohan Singh speaks in the Rajya Sabha on the first day of the Winter Session of Parliament, in New Delhi on Monday RSTV/PTI

In 16th Lok Sabha, only 25% of the Bills introduced were referred to committees, much lesser than 71% and 60% in 15th and 14th Lok Sabha respectively

"The Government should consult with the council of States much more effectively before such drastic measures can be considered by the House as a whole," he added.

On the issue of scrutiny of bills by parliamentary committees, Singh said, "For our chamber (Rajya Sabha) to fully function, it is required that we scrutinise the bills more thoroughly in (parliamentary) committees, where not only the members can apply their mind, even the opinion of stakeholders can be solicited."

He told the House that in the 16th Lok Sabha, only 25 per cent of the bills introduced

were referred to the committees, much lesser than the 71 per cent and the 60 per cent in the 15th and 14th Lok Sabha respectively.

"I would assert that regardless of what the other House does, it is crucial for our House to form select committees to ensure that the bills receive the detailed scrutiny that they deserve," the Congress leader said.

The Rajya Sabha committees had done a commendable job, he said, adding, "I would urge that we should follow this practice for all the bills which

come before this august House."

On the misuse of the provisions of money bills, Singh said, "Article 110 allows precedence of Lok Sabha over the matters in money bills. In the recent past, we have seen instances of misuse of money bills' provisions by the executive, leading to bypassing the Rajya Sabha."

"Today, as we celebrate the 250th session of the Rajya Sabha, it is appropriate for us to reflect on whether we lived up to the expectations of the framers of our Constitution," he said.

Opp terms Farooq's detention illegal, asks Centre to let him attend House

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Protesting over the continued detention of sitting National Conference MP Farooq Abdullah in J&K, Opposition members on Monday described it as illegal and demanded that he be allowed to attend the House even as the Congress raised the issue of removal of Special Protection Group (SPG) security cover for its president and his family.

Congress was upfront from the word go with its members in good strength moving to the well of the house and charging the Government with attacking the opposition and foisting false cases against it.

Their protests continued until end of the question hour when Speaker Om Birla allowed Congress leader in the Lok Sabha Adhir Ranjan Chowdhury to make his comments on the detention of Abdullah.

Opposition leaders also raised the issue of MPs not being allowed to visit Jammu and Kashmir after abrogation of its special status under article 370 whereas parliamentarians from Europe allowed to go there. Chowdhury described the EU delegation as "bhade ke tattu" (hirelings).

"Our leader Rahul Gandhi was not allowed to visit (J&K),

several MPs were sent back. Whereas bhade ke tattu from Europe were being taken there. Isn't it an insult to all MPs. I want to ask MPs of ruling alliance don't they think it was their insult," Chowdhury said. On the detention of Abdullah, he said the NC supremo has been under detention for 106 days and it is his constitutional right to attend the House.

Raising the issue during Zero Hour, Chowdhury said it was an "atrocious" not to allow the former J&K Chief Minister to attend Lok Sabha proceedings.

Giving an account of sequence of events, the Speaker said when Home Minister Amit Shah informed the House in the previous session that Abdullah was not under detention, he was then correct. The written information of his detention was received later by the Lok Sabha secretariat, he said.

He said now he has written information that Abdullah is under detention. DMK leader TR Baalu sought Birla's intervention in the matter, saying the speaker is the custodian of the House and should ensure that members are allowed to attend the House.

"What has happened with Farooq is illegal. You are custodian of the House. You have to make intervention," Baalu

said.

The DMK leader also said that same is the case with Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) leader and former J&K Chief Minister Mehbooba Mufti and noted that her daughter has said that the PDP leader has been manhandled.

National Conference MP Hasnain Masoodi said the former Chief Minister was under preventive custody not under judicial custody and it can be revoked by the Speaker's order.

"Farooq Sahab represents Srinagar and it is right of the 20 lakh people of Srinagar that their voice be heard in the House. I have proof that he is not in judicial custody, he is in preventive custody."

Your one order can revoke it," Masoodi said while addressing the Chair. Similar sentiments on Abdullah's arrest were made by TMC leaders as well. The issue was also raised by RSP leader N K Premachandran when he was given a chance to ask a supplementary question related to the Finance Ministry.

Chowdhury also raised the issue of withdrawal of SPG cover of Former Prime Minister Manmohan Singh and the Gandhi family. He said as Former Prime Minister, late Atal Bihari Vajpayee remained under SPG protection.

PM Modi praises NCP, BJD for adhering to parliamentary norms

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Monday utilised his address during the 250th session of the Rajya Sabha to call for a disruption-free House proceedings and also, perhaps, to reach out to NCP chief Sharad Pawar just ahead of the latter's meeting with Congress chief Sonia Gandhi over the issue of Govt formation in Maharashtra.

"Today, I want to appreciate two parties, NCP and BJD. These parties have wonderfully adhered to parliamentary norms. They have never gone into the well of the house (to protest). Yet, they have made their points very effectively. Every political party, including my party, should learn from them," Modi said.

His remarks came just hours before Pawar was scheduled to meet Sonia in view of the Maharashtra impasse, which has brought the ideologically-opposite Shiv Sena and Congress along with the NCP on one platform to explore the possibility of forming a Govt in Maha.

While efforts are on for the Shiv Sena, Congress and NCP to come together, there has been a buzz also about the BJP and the NCP exploring an alternative possibility for government formation.

As for disruptions in Rajya

Sabha in the past hindering passage of crucial legislations, Modi said a distinction needs to be drawn between checking and clogging. "The Rajya Sabha is about checks and balances. This is absolutely essential for our democracy. Debates have to be many and effective. But, there is also a difference between checking and clogging (and between) balance and blocking," he said.

With some within the ruling party questioning the effectiveness of Rajya Sabha as crucial legislative work got stalled because NDA lacked majority in the House, Modi recalled the then Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee's words that the Upper House "may be the second house but no one should think of it as a secondary house."

"Today, I echo the sentiments of Atal Ji and add that the Rajya Sabha must be a vibrant supportive House for national progress," he said, adding makers of the Constitution envisioned a bicameral legislative framework and this vision has enriched the democracy. He, however, wanted the House to function and not disrupt work. "Our Constitution inspires us to work for a Welfare State. It also motivates us to work for the welfare of states. The Rajya Sabha, as the Council of States, enables us to further the spirit of cooperative federalism," he said.

Curbing pollution in Delhi: Lax officials to face action

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Intensifying its steps to ensure clean air in smog-hit Delhi, the Government on Monday said concerned officials found guilty of any kind of deliberate omission or negligence in controlling pollution in Delhi will be held responsible and punished.

This was decided at a high-level meeting on air pollution chaired by Union Environment Ministry CK Mishra and attended by Chief Secretaries of Delhi, Punjab, Haryana and Uttar Pradesh besides representatives of Central Pollution Control Board and other stakeholders.

"We will act decisively. The officials found deliberately neglecting action to check the pollution will be held responsible and penalized. Also violators will be punished. In the next fifteen days we will intensify the crackdown on violators, illegal constructions and action will be taken to reduce emissions. New technology is also being worked upon," Mishra told reporters after the meeting.

The northern States have been witnessing severe air pollution since last month, with the air quality even touching the 'emergency' mark, triggering anger among citizens.

The air pollution in the national capital was so toxic after Diwali that the Environmental Pollution (Prevention and Control) Authority (EPCA) had declared a public health emergency in the Delhi-NCR and had advised people, especially chil-



Sprinkling of water has been advised in many parts of Delhi to ensure dust settles

dren and the aged, to refrain from venturing outside their homes.

Also, a meeting of a parliamentary standing committee to discuss the rising levels of air pollution in the national capital was postponed as most participants, including Member of Parliament from East Delhi, Gautam Gambhir, skipped the meeting.

The Delhi Government had urged the Centre numerous times to take steps to deal with the air pollution as it has blamed the stubble burning in

the neighbouring states for the deteriorating air quality here.

A few days ago, Prime Minister Narendra Modi's principal secretary PK Mishra had reviewed the air situation in Delhi and other parts of north India wherein it was decided that the chief secretaries of the affected States will monitor the situation round-the-clock and take steps to tackle the menace.

The Environment Ministry official said sprinkling of water has been advised in many parts of Delhi to ensure dust settles. Punitive action will be taken over construction activities and Delhi has been asked to stop all waste burning in industrial areas, he added.

Mishra said he will be personally monitoring the situation on the daily basis. We discussed accepted air pollution plan while within the next fortnight, we will intensify our anti-pollution measure and review the situation as directed by the Supreme Court.

Don't turn Lok Sabha into West Bengal Assembly: Birla

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Irked with the frequent face-off between the BJP and TMC MPs from West Bengal, Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla on Monday warned the members not to turn the Lok Sabha into West Bengal Assembly. The war of words between the MPs started during the debate on the Chit Fund (Amendment) Bill. "Don't turn the Lok Sabha into the West Bengal Assembly," warned Birla.

The war of words broke out when BJP member Locket Chatterjee alleged that the "entire TMC is involved in chit fund irregularities, duping gullible investors of their hard-earned money". She alleged that the West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee was protecting those who had run away with poor people's money. Chatterjee also alleged that 40 per cent of the money collected by the various chit funds in West Bengal had gone to agents, who were members of the TMC.

Hitting back at Chatterjee, Kalyan Banerjee of the TMC rejected her allegations and soon started again arguments and shouting by the MPs. This led to the Chair to intervene and urge them against making personal remarks.

The Bill was moved by MoS Finance Anurag Thakur. The Bill proposes to amend certain definitions to enable the increased investment in Chit Funds.

Shiv Sena raises farmers' plight, stage protest in Parliament

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Taking its new role as an 'Opposition party' seriously after its recent break-up with its NDA ally, the BJP, in Maharashtra, the Shiv Sena on Monday raised issues relating to farmers in the State in the Lok Sabha, staged protest inside Parliament premises and sought the 'Bharat Ratna' for social reformer Jyotiba Phule.

RSP MP Premchandran raised the death of an IIT-Chennai student in a suspicious circumstances and sought a judicial inquiry into it as he said name of professor was doing round for humiliating her.

While Congress-led opposition protested against the detention of the house member Farooq Abdullah in J&K, members of the Shiv Sena, the oldest ally of the BJP which has snapped its ties with the ruling party, also raised slogans and demanded relief for farmers in Maharashtra and later walked out of the House. Shiv Sena members were seen sitting in the opposition benches after their party broke ties with the BJP with one of its member in the Modi-Cabinet already putting-in his papers.

One of the Shiv Sena MPs during the zero hour sought 'Bharat Ratna' for famous social reformer Jyotiba Phule who had worked for the upliftment of dalits and did pioneering work for the girl education.

Shiv Sena MPs also

protested inside the Parliament premises demanding that the Government declare unseasonal rains in Maharashtra as natural calamity. MPs Sanjay Raut, Arvind Sawant and others were present at the protest which comes on the first day of the Parliament's Winter Session, which will end on December 13.

Unseasonal rains in Maharashtra have damaged crops on 70 lakh hectares of land, State Maharashtra Finance Minister Sudhir Mungantiwar had said a couple of days earlier.

According to Government officials, the loss could be to the tune of over ₹5,000 crore across 30 of the state's 36 districts.

Naveet Rana, an Independent MP from Maharashtra, however, went hammer and tong against Sena for what she said giving 'lip sympathy' to farmers while not allowing a stable Government in the state.

Four members -- Prince Raj (LJP), Himadri Singh (BJP), Shrinivas Dadasaheb Patil (NCP) and D M Kathir Anand (DMK) -- took oath as Lok Sabha commenced its proceedings for the day. The House paid tributes to 10 members, including from the Rajya Sabha, who passed away recently.

They included former Union ministers Arun Jaitley, Sushma Swaraj and Ram Jethmalani. The House also stood in silence as a mark of respect for the departed souls.

Chidambaram moves bail application in apex court

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Jailed Former Finance and Home Minister P Chidambaram on Monday moved a bail application in the Supreme Court. The matter was mentioned before a bench headed by Chief Justice of India (CJI) SA Bobde where senior advocate Kapil Sibal sought urgent listing of the plea. Sibal told the bench that Chidambaram has been in jail for around 90 days.

"We will see," the bench told Sibal, adding that the bail plea would come up for hearing either on Tuesday or Wednesday. Meanwhile in the afternoon the Delhi High Court clarified that the facts of another case mentioned in the order denying bail to Chidambaram are only for reference. Justice Suresh Kait said it was nowhere mentioned in the November 15 order that the observations made in a particular paragraph are of Chidambaram's case. The court's clarification came while taking up the matter suo motu (on its own) following news articles that there is 'cut and paste' work in the judgement. The High Court Ordered Chief Editors of 'Indian Express' and 'The Hindu' to publish clarification on Tuesday itself.

Earlier, the Enforcement Directorate approached the Delhi High Court seeking rectification of an "inadvertent" error in the order denying bail to Chidambaram in the INX Media money laundering case.

IN BRIEF

SHIV SENA MPS PROTEST INSIDE PARLIAMENT

New Delhi: Shiv Sena MPs protested inside the Parliament premises on Monday demanding that the Government declare unseasonal rains in Maharashtra as natural calamity. MPs Sanjay Raut, Arvind Sawant and others were present at the protest which comes on the first day of the Parliament's Winter Session, that will end on December 13. According to Government officials, the loss could be to the tune of over ₹5,000 crore across 30 of the State's 36 districts.

J&K MPS PROTEST AGAINST SCRAPPING OF ARTICLE 370

New Delhi: PDP Rajya Sabha members Mir Fayaz and Nazir Ahmed Laway held a protest inside the Parliament premises on Monday against scrapping of special status to the erstwhile State of J&K. "Bring back normalcy in Kashmir. UT status not acceptable," one of the placards read while another said "detentions are no solution".

950 CASES OF CFVS ALOC LOC BETWEEN AUG-OCT

New Delhi: There were 950 cases of ceasefire violations (CFVs) along the Line of Control (LoC) from August to October this year in which three security forces personnel lost their lives, Shripad Naik, Minister of State for Defence said on Monday.

R BANUMATHI NEW MEMBER OF SC COLLEGIUM

New Delhi: The Supreme Court collegium, which comprises five senior-most judges, will now have Justice R Banumathi as a new member after Justice Ranjan Gogoi demitted office as the CJI. Justice Banumathi will be the second-ever woman to be part of the collegium after Justice Ruma Pal in the last 13 years.

In a first, elders pay tributes to 5 late RS members

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

In a departure from convention, the Rajya Sabha on Monday allowed leaders of various political parties to speak and pay tributes to five late members, Arun Jaitley, Ram Jethmalani, Jagannath Mishra, Gurudas Dasgupta and Sukhdev Libra, instead of just the Chairman making obituary references.

Usually, the chair in the Upper House reads out obituary references before members rise as a mark of respect to the memory of the departed. The House adjourns proceedings if a sitting member passes away and takes up listed agenda soon after the mourning in case of former members.

But since the obituary was of Jaitley - a man who had per-

sonally touched political lives of many leaders across the political spectrum, Chairman M Venkaiah Naidu allowed members to speak.

Once leaders had spoken, Naidu adjourned the proceedings till 2 pm as a mark of respect to Jaitley and Ram Jethmalani, both sitting members.

In his obituary reference, Naidu described Jaitley as a "quintessential politician" and a "man of impeccable integrity" whose stellar contribution is a matter of record.

An advocate by profession and a member of the Upper House since April 2000, Jaitley passed away on August 24 at the age of 66, he said.

Jaitley, he said, left an indelible mark on all Ministries he headed and was the force behind

Naidu described Jaitley as a "quintessential politician" and a "man of impeccable integrity" whose stellar contribution is a matter of record

many landmark legislations including the Goods and Services Tax (GST), Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code, Benami Act and the merger of Rail Budget with General Budget.

Naidu also mentioned passing away of Jethmalani on September 8 at the age of 95 as well as former member

Jagannath Mishra (82) on August 19, Sukhdev Singh Libra (86) on September 6 and Gurudas Dasgupta (82) on October 31.

While Leader of the House Thaawarchand Gehlot said Jaitley's death was a personal loss to him, Leader of the Opposition and senior Congress leader Ghulam Nabi Azad said the personal relationship that the deceased member shared with other members turned political bitterness into sweetness on most tense issues.

"We haven't seen such a media savvy minister and leader," he said, adding Jaitley did not stop meeting media personnel and friends even when he was ill during his last days.

Derek O'Brien (TMC) said Jaitley was a mentor to many of the new entrants in Parliament despite having diagonally opposite political ideology. He recalled how Jaitley had taken positively his comment on him being a "plantation manager who planted stories" in media sitting in Parliament.

Azad described Jethmalani as perhaps the only practising lawyer and a player in his mid-90s.

Ram Gopal Yadav (SP) recalled the contribution of Dasgupta and termed him as "sharp leader".

Senior NCP leader Sharad Pawar recalled the contribution of Jaitley to sports. He said Jaitley often used to discuss issues related to cricket with him. The House observed silence as mark of respect to the late leaders.

Sharad Arvind Bobde takes oath as 47th CJI

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Justice Sharad Arvind Bobde, who was part of the historic Ayodhya verdict earlier this month, was on Monday administered oath as the 47th Chief Justice of India by President Ram Nath Kovind and started holding court at 11:30 am. Bobde, 63, succeeds Justice Ranjan Gogoi who demitted office on Sunday.

He took oath in English in the name of God at a brief ceremony held at the Durbar Hall of the Rashtrapati Bhavan.

Justice Bobde will have a tenure of over 17 months as the CJI and is due to retire on April 23, 2021. Soon after taking the oath, he sought the blessings of



President Ram Nath Kovind shakes hands with Justice Sharad Arvind Bobde after he takes oath as the 47th CJI at Rashtrapati Bhavan, in New Delhi on Monday PTI

his mother by touching her feet. She was brought to the president house on a stretcher.

VP M Venkaiah Naidu, Prime Minister Narendra Modi and several Senior Ministers were present at the oath-taking ceremony. Former Vice President Hamid Ansari and Former Prime Minister Manmohan Singh were also there.

CITIZENSHIP AMENDMENT BILL

BJP's trap to target Bengalis, cries Didi

SAUGAR SENGUPTA ■ KOLKATA



the list of legal citizens and make them refugees in their own country."

She asked, "Where is a need of granting new citizenship to people when there are enough documents like land deeds, voter cards, ration cards, driving license, birth certificates, Kanyashree and other government documents," asking the people to remain alert and united against the BJP's nefarious designs.

The Centre proposes to bring the CAB in the Winter Session of Parliament. The Bill proposes to grant citizenship to Hindus, Buddhists, Jains, Sikhs, Parsis and Christians who had migrated from Pakistan, Afghanistan and Bangladesh provided they have already spent seven years in India.

In the wake of alleged faulty implementation of NRC in Assam that omitted the names of more than 19 lakh people from citizenship register a possible implementation of NRC in Bengal had created a panic claiming 11 lives in the state during the past two months.

Though she would not name any Hyderabad leader openly Banerjee apparently opened a new battle front against All India Majlis-e-Ittehadul Muslimeen chief and MP Asauddin Owaisi calling his party an "agent" of the BJP that had conspired with the saffron outfit to destroy the healthy political climate of Bengal.

Aware that the MIM was expanding its activities in the State which has about 30 Muslim votes, Banerjee said, "some minority groups from Hyderabad are taking money from the BJP with an offer to protect them. But I ask you not to fall in their trap because they are coming here to divide you and help the BJP"

Stir in NE States, Modi's effigy burnt

PTI ■ GUWAHATI/SHILLONG/AIZAWL/ITANAGAR

Protests were held in the north-eastern States on Monday opposing the proposed Citizenship (Amendment) Bill and effigies of Prime Minister Narendra Modi were burnt in Assam.

The protest rallies coincided with the first day of the winter session of Parliament during which the bill is proposed to be introduced.

Sit-ins were also launched in various places of Guwahati and effigies of Assam Chief Minister Sarbananda Sonowal were burnt by youth organisation AJYCP in different parts of the state as a mark of protest against the CAB.

The protests were held by the North East Students Organisation (NESO), the region's umbrella organisation of students unions, its constituents, farmers' body Krishak Mukti Sangram Samiti, youth body Assam Jatiyatabadi Yuba Chatra Parishad (AJYCP) and Left-Democratic Mancha, Assam among others.

NESO submitted a memorandum to Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Union Home Minister Amit Shah against CAB through the governors of the north eastern States.



Activists of North East Students Organisation (NESO), along with All Assam Students' Union (AASU), hold placards as they take out a protest rally against Citizenship Amendment Bill, in Guwahati on Monday PTI

ards against the CAB. "Assam and the north east are not dumping grounds for illegal Bangladeshis. As per the Assam Accord we have already accepted all Bangladeshis - both Hindu and Muslims who entered Assam illegally upto 1971. We will not accept those who entered Assam after that year," NESO and AASU chief advisor Samujjal Bhattacharyya said.

"The Central Government is trying to impose on Assam all the illegal Bangladeshis who entered the country in the next 43 years by fixing the cut off year as 2014. We won't accept that. We

oppose it," he iterated. "This movement in Assam and the north east region will continue", he asserted. Commenting on the contention of Assam Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma and other BJP leaders that a lot of problems will be solved if the CAB is enacted, Bhattacharyya said "The Bill will safeguard the vote bank of BJP. They (BJP) want the votes of illegal Bangladeshis. They have the numbers in Delhi (Parliament) and they will impose the CAB on us. "We will not accept CAB and that is why we have launched our agitation against the Bill," he added.

AASU president Dipanka Nath said, "The CAB is the death knell for the Assamese community. It will make the Assamese people extinct. It will open the door for more Bangladeshis to enter Assam."

Claiming that Assam has rejected the CAB, Nath said "We will oppose till our death this Bill, which is harmful to the existence of the Assamese community".

AASU general secretary Lurinjyoti Gogoi said that Assam and Tripura have taken the largest burden of illegal Bangladeshis.

"Imposition of CAB in the north east is unacceptable to its people as their sentiments have been ignored despite the public rejecting the bill," he added.

In neighbouring Meghalaya Khasi Students Union, an influential students body in the State, held a sit-in near the third secretariat here protesting against the contentious bill, which it said, will have a negative impact on the people of the entire region.

A group of anti-CAB protesters will launch a stay off the road protest from 7 pm on Monday till 6 am Tuesday.

State Chief Minister Conrad Sangma had met Shah last week and urged the Centre to consider withholding passing of the CAB in its current form.

A rally was taken out in Aizawl by the Mizoram apex students body Mizo Zirlai Pawl (MZP) on Monday in protest against the CAB.

NITI mulls healthcare system for middle class

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The healthcare system would exclude those covered under the newly-launched Ayushman Bharat scheme that mainly caters to the bottom 40 per cent population of the country

NITI Aayog is mulling building up a healthcare system for the middle class which is still not covered under any public healthcare system, the Government think-tank said on Monday.

The healthcare system would exclude those covered under the newly-launched Ayushman Bharat scheme that mainly caters to the bottom 40 per cent population of the country.

India has low level and very fragmented risk pooling, with household out-of-pocket funding at 64 per cent of total expenses dominating the overall system financing, NITI Aayog said at the launch 'Health System for a New India: Building Blocks — Potential Pathways to Reform' report.

The report was released by NITI Aayog Vice-Chairman Rajiv Kumar in the presence of Bill Gates, the co-chairman of Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation.

NITI Aayog Adviser (Health) Alok Kumar said the report intends to prepare the

road-map to build a health system in the medium — to long-term for those belonging to middle class as the poor have been taken care of now through Ayushman Bharat while those in the top have the capacity to bear their medical exigencies.

"So nearly 50 per cent are still not covered under any public healthcare system and

the idea is to pool their risk assets which will cater to the health care needs of the middle class," Kumar said.

Kumar opined that people falling under the middle class will not bother if they have to pay nominal ₹200 or ₹300 towards building a good public healthcare system in the country and the plan looks feasible.

Bill Gates said India's future is very bright because of its young population, and highlighted that human capital of any country is the sum total of its healthcare, educational and nutritional investment for its citizens.

"Our vision for a healthy India and quality health for all requires us to holistically transform the delivery of healthcare services in both the public and private sectors across all levels of care," said Rajiv Kumar, Vice Chairman, NITI Aayog. Under the PM Jan Arogya Yojana (PM-JAY), the bottom 40 per cent of the population gets ₹5 lakh cover for secondary and tertiary care against nearly 1,350 disease conditions.

AIADMK hits out at Rajini for remarks on TN CM

PTI ■ CHENNAI

Superstar Rajinikanth has said Tamil Nadu Chief Minister K Palaniswami "would not even have dreamt" of coming to the top post and described the AIADMK leader's elevation as "wonder and marvel." The actor, who has announced entering politics and facing the next Assembly polls, scheduled in 2021, said "wonder and marvel" could happen "tomorrow also", apparently hinting at his political entry. The ruling AIADMK hit out at Rajinikanth, saying the chief minister had not come to the post by chance, "but by sheer hard work" of around 45 years.

Rajinikanth should not make such comments as an actor but do so only after launching his own political outfit or party, AIADMK Spokesperson RM Babu Murugavel said. Speaking at an event to mark the 60 years of

his contemporary and Makkal Needhi Maiam founder Kamal Haasan in the cinema industry on Sunday, Rajinikanth also said Palaniswami had belied all claims of his government being a short-lived one. "Two years ago, Honourable Edappadi (Palaniswami) would not have even dreamt of becoming Tamil Nadu Chief Minister... marvel and wonder—it happened," he said. Recalling the initial days of the Palaniswami-led dispensation, Rajinikanth said everybody had predicted it will be a short-lived one.

Among others, DMK chief President MK Stalin had initially often predicted the government could fall any time. "There was no one in Tamil Nadu who did not say the government will last for only 20 days, a month or that it will fall in about four to five months...99 per cent of people said that...a wonder happened, a marvel happened... the government did not fall, and is



continuing overcoming all obstacles," he said. "A wonder and miracle had happened yesterday, is continuing today and tomorrow also it will happen," he said to loud cheers, apparently over his political journey. Rajinikanth's remarks come in the wake of Palaniswami recently hitting out at the actor for his comment that there was a leadership vacuum in Tamil Nadu, saying he was just an actor and not a political leader.

Palaniswami was elected chief minister in 2017 in the wake of the internal rumblings in the ruling AIADMK post then CM J Jayalitha's demise in December 2016. Though initially incumbent deputy chief minister O Panneerselvam helmed the government after Jayalitha's death, he later fell out of favour with jailed party leader VK Sasikala and rebelled against her, after she was made AIADMK legislature party leader, paving way for her elevation as CM. Sasikala was Jayalitha's confidante.

However, she was later convicted in a graft case and prior to her being jailed, Palaniswami was elected AIADMK legislature party leader. Responding to Rajinikanth's comments, the AIADMK said Palaniswami has risen through the party ranks to achieve this height and "did not become chief minister by chance."

Party spokesperson Babu Murugavel said according to the Constitution of India, elected MLAs pick their chief minister. "Party workers have to decide who is CM and who will rule...MGR (party founder the late MG Ramachandran) and Amma became Chief Ministers like this. The same party worker also wants him (Palaniswami) to be CM and therefore he is so," he told PTI. The AIADMK was a people's movement and showed the country that even a simple party worker can reach the pinnacle, he added. He said Palaniswami had worked for the party for nearly 45 years "and has grown steadily to reach this level."

"Rajinikanth has made these remarks as an actor. If he has to say something (on such matters), he has to start his own movement. Time will tell whether that organisation will create a marvel," Murugavel added.

Gehlot: Centre must control deteriorating economy

Jaipur: Rajasthan Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot on Monday asked the Centre to take steps to control the "deteriorating economic condition" in the country.

He alleged that the Union Government did not implement the Goods and Services Tax (GST) properly, resulting in reduction in revenue collection of the Centre and States were facing its repercussions.

"The economic condition of the country is deteriorating. Both the Centre and States are heading towards a crisis situation. The Centre should take steps to control this in time," Gehlot told reporters in Ajmer.

"They are being arrogant that everything is going well. Their thought is that when people are travelling by air, in cars, paying toll tax, where is the economic slowdown. But our thought is that the economy is suffering.

"Economists are saying this too. Even the husband of the Union finance minister is saying that the Government has no understanding of the economy," the Chief Minister said. He reiterated that the Government should follow the economic policies of former prime ministers PV Narasimha Rao and Manmohan Singh.

Expressing concern over the issue of adulteration in the State, he assured that his Government will look into what can be done.

"This is very dangerous... Such people (involved in adulteration) should get death penalty," he said. Gehlot also urged the Centre to enact a law for right to health on the lines of the Right to Information Act and Food Security Act brought in by the UPA government. PTI

J-K DGP: Desperate militants trying various tactics to provoke people

PTI ■ SRINAGAR

Pakistan and militant handlers have become desperate and are trying various tactics to provoke and scare people, Jammu and Kashmir DGP Dilbag Singh has said.

"Pakistan and terrorist handlers have become desperate and tried various tactics and violence to provoke and scare people. The police should remain alert to thwart their attempts," a police spokesperson quoted Singh as having said during a function here on Sunday. The Director General of Police (DGP) inaugurated the Zonal Cyber police station at the District Police Office here and reviewed security and law and order in the district, the spokesperson said on Monday.

The state police chief asked officers to identify the saboteurs



and elements who might disturb the peace in the Union territory, he added. Complimenting the officers for maintaining peace and public order, the DGP asked them to remain alert and fully prepared to thwart any act of the saboteurs. "The challenges of militancy have been faced effectively in the past and more needs to be done on this front to curb it completely. The cases of militancy and violence by terrorists and mischief mongers

should be taken to a logical conclusion by carrying out appropriate investigations. Mischief mongers should be booked under stringent laws," Singh said.

During his interaction with senior officers, the DGP sought individual briefings on important subjects of law and order, security of vital installations, the preventive measures taken and surveillance through different methods, the spokesperson said.

OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDING ENGINEER, LUCKNOW CIRCLE P.W.D. LUCKNOW
No.: 7032/2523-C (P.D.)/LKO.CIR/2019-20, Dated: 13.11.2019
Corrigendum
Tenders mentioned on serial number-3 (Renewal, Repair & Painting of Footpath, Railing and divider at Delhi Bareilly road NH-24 KM 489 to 498 (500) in Lucknow city) in the tenders invited by this office's tender notice number 6910 / 523-C (P.D.)/LKO.CIR/2019-20 Dated 06/11/2019 tender is hereby cancelled for an unavoidable reasons. The remaining terms of the tender will remain the same.
(Arvind Kumar) Executive Engineer Provincial Division, P.W.D. Lucknow
(Jitendra Kumar Banga) Superintending Engineer Lucknow Circle, P.W.D. Lucknow
U.P.: 145598, Date: 15.11.2019, विज्ञापन वेबसाइट www.up.gov.in पर उपलब्ध है।

Botulism kills 17K migratory birds in Raj's Sambhar Lake
Jaipur: Nearly 17,000 migratory birds have died so far at the country's largest inland water saltwater lake near Jaipur due to botulism, a serious and fatal illness that affects the nerves, a forest official said on Monday. The deaths were reported in Jaipur, Nagaur and Ajmer districts of Rajasthan, he said.
"The death toll has increased to nearly 17,000," Chief Wildlife Warden of the Forest Department, Arindam Tomar, said.
Jaipur collector Jagroop Singh Yadav informed that carcasses have been disposed. Nearly 8,500 birds have died so far in Jaipur itself, Yadav said. Initially, it was suspected that the birds died due to avian flu but the report from a laboratory in Bhopal has ruled this out.
On November 10, thousands of birds, including Northern Shoveler, Ruddy Shelduck, Plovers, Avocets, were found dead in the 5-7 km area around Sambhar Lake.

Shrine receives ₹3.30 cr as revenue on opening day

PTI ■ SABARIMALA

The Lord Ayyappa temple here received over ₹ 3.30 crore as revenue on the first day when it opened on Saturday as compared to the ₹ 2.04 crore last season which was marred by protests by a section of devotees and right-wing outfits over the women's entry issue.

Over 70,000 devotees have offered prayers at the hill shrine since the temple opened on November 16 evening for the two-month long Mandala-Makkarvilakku puja. Travancore Devaswom Board President N Vasu on Monday said there was an increase of over 50 per cent in the revenue when compared to last year and the pilgrimage season this year has been going well.



"There is a huge increase in the number of devotees this year. We got ₹ 3.32 crore revenue on the first day compared to ₹ 2.04 crore last

media. Unlike last year when the temple complex witnessed violent protests after the State Government decided to implement the September 28, 2018 verdict of the apex court allowing women of all ages to enter the shrine, this year the devotees expressed happiness as there were no restrictions. Vasu also said 'Annadanam' for around 40,000 people have been arranged. Annadanam is offering of food for the devotees. "We have stored enough drinking water to cater to the needs of the devotees. We aim to make Sabarimala plastic free pilgrim centre. We have started a campaign to avoid plastic from the irumudikettu (sacred bundle containing offerings to Ayyappa)," Vasu said.

Though the apex court did not stay its September 2018 order allowing entry of women into the Ayyappa temple, the LDF Government in Kerala this time said the shrine was not a ground for activism and made it clear it would not encourage women who want to visit the temple for publicity.

A five-judge Constitution bench of the Supreme Court had on November 14 in a 3:2 verdict decided to refer to a larger bench to re-examine religious issues including those arising out of its 2018 verdict lifting a centuries-old ban on women of menstruating age visiting the shrine.

The TDB, which administers the shrine, and the temple itself suffered huge loss last season due to the protests by the right-wing outfits.

OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDING ENGINEER KANPUR CIRCLE, P.W.D., KANPUR
No.: M/39M-KV/2019 Dated: .11.2019
SHORT TERM E-TENDER NOTICE
The Superintending Engineer, Kanpur Circle, P.W.D., Kanpur on behalf of Hon'ble Governor of Uttar Pradesh invites the percentage rate bids from the eligible and approved Contractors registered with UP PWD Road Work for following works:-
SL. No. District Name of Work Estimated cost (Lacs) Bid Security (Lacs) Cost of Bid Document (Rs.) Time of Completion (with rainy season)
1 Kanpur Dehat Surface Correction work of Mankighat road from Mushanagar in Km. 1 & 2 (800) 65.00 5.25 2500.00 + 450.00 (GST) = 2950.00 2 Month
Bid document/Tender details is available on website <http://etender.up.nic.in>, from 20.11.2019 to 26.11.2019 (upto 12:00 Noon) which can be downloaded from website. Filled Bid documents submitted/ uploaded online on the above website on dated 26.11.2019 (upto 12:00 Noon). Technical bid will be opened on 27.11.2019 at 12.30 p.m.
All terms & Conditions are available on website <http://etender.up.nic.in>.
(Bhagwan Das) Executive Engineer Construction Division-1, PWD Kanpur Dehat
(Jai Singh) Superintending Engineer Kanpur Circle, PWD Kanpur
U.P.: 145583, Date: 15.11.2019, विज्ञापन वेबसाइट www.up.gov.in पर उपलब्ध है।

AMMK weakens as workers on leaving spree

KUMAR CHELLAPPAN ■ CHENNAI

Dynamics of Tamil Nadu politics are undergoing changes on a weekly basis with homecomings and deserts by one time loyalists of party supremos. The last to join the bandwagon of cadre deserting the Anna Makkal Munnetra Kazhagam (AMMK) an outfit launched by TTV Dhinakaran, nephew of the jailed V K Sasikala, is V Pugazhendhi, a close associate of the former.



Pugazhendhi declared on Sunday that he would join the AIADMK, his parent organization, once deputy Chief Minister O Panneerselvam returns from a foreign tour.

Last week saw Former Minister Patchaiah and loyalists who were with the AMMK staging a homecoming by rejoining the AIADMK.

But what has surprised political commentators in Tamil Nadu is his announcement that Sasikala, who is serving a jail term in Parappana Agrahara Central Jail in Bangalore in connection with

the Disproportionate Asset Case too would re-join the AIADMK once she completes her imprisonment which is expected to end in 2020.

“Having been part of the AIADMK for more than 30 years, Sasikala will take a decision on rejoining the party herself,” Pugazhendhi told reporters at Thanjavur. He was all praise for Chief Minister Edappadi Palaniswami whom he described as “Hero of Tamil Nadu”.

The AMMK has been jolted by the number of senior leaders ditching the party to join the parent body. Only one leader, Thanga Tamilchelvan,

has joined the DMK much against the wish of the cadre belonging to the Dravida major. The weakening of the AMMK because of the switching over of party leaders to the AIADMK is being seen as a setback for Dhinakaran.

“Things are not moving as per the expectation of Dhinakaran. Over the last two years, Edappadi Palaniswami has consolidated his position in the party as well as in the Government. Panneerselvam, the one-time challenger to the chief minister too has fallen in line and as on date, Dhinakaran is not in a comfortable position,” said T Ramakrishnan,

Pugazhendhi declared on Sunday that he would join the AIADMK, his parent organisation, once deputy Chief Minister O Panneerselvam returns from a foreign tour

author and columnist. Ramakrishnan, who has been a keen observer and analyst of the Dravidian politics for more than three decades said it was difficult to say something about the future of the AIADMK. “It all depends on how OPS and EPS handle the situations as they unfold,” he said.

Though he said that Tamil Nadu is doing well in economy, particularly in agriculture, tax mobilization and realization, and inviting investment for rapid industrialisation, it was not an indication that the AIADMK would win the next Assembly election due in May 2021.

“That depends on how the AIADMK succeeds in patching up an effective electoral alliance

at the time of the Assembly election. We may be able to say something only after the local body polls due next month,” he said.

Veteran commentators are of the view that any kind of cohesion and unity seen in the AIADMK will not be in the interest of the DMK, which is having a dream run by winning the Lok Sabha polls and majority of the by-polls held in April 2019. “There is no doubt that the AIADMK Government is doing some good work for the farmers in the State by helping them with the Prime Minister’s Crop Insurance Scheme and strengthening of irrigation projects. But that need not lead them to an electoral victory,” said Kattumannarkoil Kannan, farmers leader and author. Ramakrishnan said the possibilities of Dhinakaran joining hands with the DMK could not be ruled out. “Vaiko who was the number one enemy of Stalin had no qualms in joining hands with the latter. A similar situation may emerge in course of time,” he said.

Kaiga Nuclear power plant expansion sparks stir

KESTUR VASUKI ■ BENGALURU

Hundreds of people have thronged in Mallapura, a tiny town on the river Kali valley in Uttara Kannada district in Karnataka to protest against the expansion of Kaiga Nuclear power plant in the sensitive western ghats on Sunday. Mallapura is an adjacent town near the nuclear plant.

The protest was led by powerful religious pontiffs in the area which include Vishwesha Theertha Swamiji of the pejawar mutt in Udupi. Addressing the huge gathering he called on the people to resist the expansion plans of the Kaiga Nuclear plant. He said “Scientists have explained what will happen here and we must resist the expansion of this power station.”

Environmental activists, religious leaders, community leaders, political activists have demanded government to stop its expansion of Kaiga nuclear plant on the banks of river Kali which flows in the eco sensitive

region of the Western Ghats.

The Kaiga plant had started commercial operations in November 2000, after being commissioned in 1989. The plant set up 56 km away from Karwar, currently has four functional units generating 220 MW of power. 33% of the power generated is reserved for Karnataka. This protest was organised after the authorities got all environmental regulatory hurdles were cleared at the state and Centre level on August 29. Kaiga Nuclear plant currently has four units but the Nuclear Power Corporation Ltd. under the Department of Atomic Energy has proposed a fifth and sixth unit.

The protesters argue that expanding the Kaiga plant will take up 54 hectares of forests in the eco-sensitive Western Ghats in the buffer zone of Kali Tiger Reserve. They urged the Government to consider replacing it with other safer and cheaper power generating options like solar and wind energy. They also fear with lack



of safety protocol the project will put the lives of the people surrounding villages in danger.

According to Shankar Sharma a power policy expert this would lead to over dependency on water and has always the danger of contamination. According to him these units once commissioned will consume 7500 cubic metres of water per hour which is sufficient for the livelihood of 15 lakh people.

The protesters refer a Tata Memorial Centre report in 2010 had said there was a spurt in cases of cancer over the past two decades in Kaiga. Experts insist that this is because of the radioactive pol-

lution caused by the nuclear power plant.

The Government has neither acknowledged such reports, nor has it carried out any assessment on its own.

TV Ramachandra, an expert in water management from IISc, a premier Scientific research Institute in Bengaluru, who took part in the protest said “Today, science, spirituality and the culture of this region has come together because we have not received a response from the Indian government.”

In December 2018, local environmental groups — Uttara Kannada Zilla Prsira Samrakshana Samiti, Bedti Aghanashini Kolla Samiti and Vruksha Laksha and residents of the area — had also opposed the expansion of the power plant during the mandated public consultation process. Recently, even Gangadharendra Saraswati Swamiji, the seer of Sonda Swarnavalli Mutt, had also opposed the nuclear plant’s

expansion.

The Kaiga nuclear power plant located in Kaiga, Karnataka, is being expanded by two additional units of 700MW each to increase its capacity to 2.28GW. Nuclear Power Corporation of India (NPCIL), administered by Department of Atomic Energy (DAE), will develop and operate the new units. Construction on the expansion is expected to be started in 2020 and anticipated to be completed in 2026. The establishment of two new units 5 and 6, and expansion of the existing township, is estimated to cost Rs210bn (£2.35bn).

NPCIL secured wildlife clearance for the Kaiga nuclear power plant expansion from the State Board for Wildlife (Karnataka) in January 2019. An expert wildlife panel led by the environment minister also approved the project.

Pak violates ceasefire along LoC in Rajouri & Poonch



PNS ■ JAMMU

Despite suffering heavy losses in strong retaliatory firing from the Indian side, Pakistan is bent upon escalating tensions along the line of control in Jammu & Kashmir.

A day after, an Indian soldier lost his life in a suspected IED blast along the LoC in Akhnour sector, the Pakistan Army on Monday targeted several forward areas of Rajouri and Poonch districts with mortar shelling.

The Pakistan Army may have provided cover firing to the

heavily armed group of infiltrators to sneak inside the Indian territory, official sources said.

In Jammu, Defence PRO Lt-Col Devender Anand said, “The Pakistan Army initiated ‘unprovoked’ ceasefire violation in Sunderbani sector of Rajouri around 4.15 p.m.” He said, “The Pakistan Army fired mortar shells in the forward areas.” “The Indian Army retaliated strongly and effectively”, he added.

Late evening, the Pakistan Army also targeted forward areas of Shahpur and Kirni in Poonch sector.

According to ground reports, Pakistan army was indulging in intense mortar shelling in the area till the time last reports came in.

Search op launched to track down suspected ultras in Poonch

Jammu: Security forces have launched a search operation on the basis of a tip-off about the movement of suspected militants in Jammu and Kashmir’s Poonch district, officials said on Monday.

The Army and police launched a search operation on Sunday following the information provided by some villagers about the suspicious movement in a forest area of Surankote, they said.

The operation is on to track down the suspected militants, they added. **PTI**

Bypoll outcome will not bring stability to BJP Govt in K’taka: KPCC chief

Bengaluru: Asserting that Congress would win two-thirds of the 15 Assembly seats going to bypolls on December 5, state party President Dinesh Gundu Rao on Monday claimed the outcome would not bring stability to the BJP Government in the State.

He also said the Congress was prepared to face a mid-term poll if the situation arose, adding none of the parties, however, wanted a snap election to the Assembly.

Rao claimed BJP would get only lesser number of seats in the bypolls and the outcome would make the Government unstable while expressing confidence that Congress would win 10-12 seats. “You (BJP) destabilise a Government and then you want to form a stable Government, it is not going to be possible. There will be no stability in this Government,” he told **PTI**.

The Congress and JDS have accused the BJP of engi-

neering the rebellion by 17 of their MLAs that led to the fall of the Government headed by H D Kumaraswamy in July.

The BJP, which came to power following the fall of the Congress-JDS coalition Ministry, needs to win at least six of the 15 Assembly seats in the bypolls, necessitated by the disqualification of the 17 MLAs, to keep its majority in tact. In a democracy, when no stable government can be formed, ultimately we will have to go back to the people. Let us see what happens after the bypoll results, how things work, what all happens, Rao added.

On possibilities of a mid-term election, he said: Nobody wants election, BJP does not want mid-term poll, neither do Congress MLAs want, neither do J(D/S) MLAs, no MLAs want mid-term polls. If it happens, it happens, and at that time everybody will have to face it, Rao said. **PTI**

Sena set to retain Mayor’s post, BJP opts out

TN RAGHUNATHA ■ MUMBAI

With the BJP backing out of the contest, the Shiv Sena was on Monday poised to retain power in the Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation (BMC), the country’s richest civic body, after its victory in the mayoral and deputy mayoral elections became a foregone conclusion.

While Shiv Sena’s Kishori Pednekar was set to get elected unopposed as the Mumbai Mayor at the elections scheduled for November 22, while the election of Sena’s Suhās Wadkar as the Mumbai’s deputy Mayor became a mere formality.

Pednekar and Wadkar were the only candidates who had filed nominations for the November 22 Mayoral and deputy Mayoral elections respectively, when the deadline for nominations ended on Monday.

The BJP, which has a



Shiv Sena’s Kishori Pedekar set to be Mumbai’s new Mayor

strength of 83 corporators as against the Shiv Sena strength of 94 corporators in the 227-member BMC, pulled out of the prestigious mayoral race, saying that it did not have the sufficient numbers to bag the prestigious post. Similarly, the BJP did not put up any candidate for the deputy mayoral poll.

Interestingly, the changed political equations in the state

have had a fallout on the BMC Mayoral elections. In the previous polls to the posts of Mayor and deputy Mayor held in 2017, the BJP had thrown its weight behind the Shiv Sena, the Raj Thackeray-led MNS (with then seven members) had boycotted the polls and 16 corporators — including 15 of those belonging to NCP and Samajwadi Party had chosen to remain neutral in the polls.

However, this time around, the BJP — with having snapped its ties with its oldest ally at the state level — is not supporting the Shiv Sena in the BMC’s Mayoral and deputy mayoral polls. The Congress — which had put up candidates against the Shiv Sena nominees in the mayoral and deputy mayoral polls in 2017 — has chosen not to field candidates for the twin polls, thus making matters easy for the Shiv Sena.

The Congress, which has a

strength of 29 corporators in the BMC, will be indirectly supporting the Shiv Sena in the twin polls of November 22. The Congress’ decision to extend covert support to the Shiv Sena stems from its growing proximity with the Congress at the state-level.

Ahead of the expiry of the deadline for the filing of nominations to the November 22 polls, BJP’s former Mumbai unit president and minister Ashish Shelar said: “We don’t have the required numbers in the BMC. We do not enter into an illegitimate alliance with opposing ideologies. But, in 2022, we shall win the Mumbai Mayor post on our strength and numbers.”

It may be recalled that the BMC polls held in 2017 had thrown up a hung house. The Shiv Sena had emerged as the single largest party with 84 seats in the 227-member BMC, followed by BJP- 82, Congress- 31, NCP-

9, MNS- 7 and others-- 14. During the last two and a half years in power, the Shiv Sena increased its strength to 94, by inducting among others seven corporators from the Raj Thackeray-led NCP.

Kishori Pednekar (56), who is set to replace Vishwanath Pandurang Mahadeshwar (also of the Shiv Sena) as the next Mayor of Mumbai, is the senior-most corporator in the BMC. She will hold the post for the next two and half years.

Given that the Mayor’s post was put in the open category in the run up to the polls, there were several contenders for the post within the Shiv Sena. Among those who were lobbying with the Shiv Sena leadership for the nomination candidate for the Mayoral polls were Ashish Chemburkar, Yeshwant Jadhav, Mangesh Satamkar, Vishaka Raut and Shekar Waigankar.

Leh freezes at minus 6.7 C, rain likely in J&K

Jammu (PTI): Light to moderate snow and rain are likely to hit the Union territories of Jammu & Kashmir, and Ladakh on Thursday evening, the meteorological department said. The mercury marked a decline in Jammu and Ladakh regions, while it continued an upward trend in the Kashmir Valley, a weather department official said. Leh township of Ladakh recorded a low of minus 6.7 degrees Celsius, making it the coldest place in the two Union territories, the

spokesperson said. In Kashmir, Srinagar recorded a maximum of 16.3 degrees Celsius and a minimum of 5.8 degrees Celsius.

The day temperature in the city was 1.2 degrees above normal, while the night temperature is 5.2 degrees above normal, the spokesperson said. The official added that it is for the first time in almost two weeks that the mercury has settled above normal in Srinagar.

National Health Authority

S-12012/185/2019

National Health Authority
Government of India

National Health Authority invites applications for engagement of Consultants on contract basis in following disciplines :

S.No.	Position	No. of positions	Age Limit
1	Consultant (Information Security Officer)	01	35-55 years
2	Consultant (Research & Evaluation)	01	35-55 Years
3	Consultant (Capacity Building)	01	35-55 years
4	Consultant(Information, Education & Communication)	01	35-55 years 25-45 years

Applicants may visit National Health Authority website viz. www.pnjam.gov.in, for further details and to apply. The applications are open from 9th November 2019 onwards and up to 30th November, 2019.

Place: New Delhi
Date: 9th November 2019
davn 17180 / 11 / 0007 / 1920

General Manager (Admn.)
National Health Authority
Tower-I, Jeevan Bharati Building.

NORTH CENTRAL RAILWAY, ALLAHABAD

E-Tendering Tender Notice

Allahabad Division
Dated 11.11.2019

Tender Notice No. 6920192020

Divisional Railway Manager (Engineering)/North Central Railway/Allahabad, for and on behalf of the President of India, invites E-TENDERS on prescribed form for the following work up to 13.30 hrs. on 11.12.2019. The details of the Tender are as under:-

SN	Tender No.	Name of work	Approximate Cost of work (₹)	Earnest Money (₹)	Cost of Tender Form (₹)	Completion Period	Eligibility Criteria for similar work
1	189	Manual Deep Screening of Track & other activities in the section of Sr.DEN/V/ALD.	9099834.00	182000/-	5000.00	06 months	P. Way Work
2	190	Post BGM work of Main Line in the section of Sr.DEN/V/ALD. Maintenance of Lawns, Nursery	12851267.00	214260/-	10000.00	12 months	P. Way Work
3	191	and park in the section of SSE/ W/ALJIN under ADEN/ALJIN.	2041310.00	40830.-	3000.00	12 months	Nil

Date of Opening of tender for Sr.No. 1 to 3 is 11.12.2019; Note: (1) The complete information along with tender document of above E-TENDER is available on Website www.ireps.gov.in up to 13:30 hrs. on the due date of tender opening i.e. 11.12.2019. (2) Bids other than in the form of E-Bids shall not be accepted against above tenders. For this purpose, vendors are required to get themselves registered with IREPS website alongwith Digital Signature Certificate issued by CCA under IT Act -2000. (3) The tenderers shall submit a notarified affidavit on a non judicial stamp paper ₹ 100/- as given in tender document in standard format, without which their tender may not be considered and shall be summarily reject. (4) In case of any difficulty helpdesk available on the website of IREPS may be approached. 1639/19 FA

E-Tendering Tender Notice

Allahabad Division
Dated 15.11.2019

Tender Notice No.7320192020

Divisional Railway Manager (Engineering)/North Central Railway/Allahabad, for and on behalf of the President of India, invites the following E-TENDERS on prescribed form for the following work up to 13.30 hrs. on 26.12.2019. The Details of the Tender are as under:-

S	Tender N	Name of work	Approx Cost (₹)	Earnest Money (₹)	Cost of Tender Form (₹)	Completion Period	Eligibility Criteria for similar work
1	201	Repair to central hospital and Rain Basera at Allahabad.	49,68,591.00	99,400/-	3,000/-	04 Months	Not applicable
2	202	Provision of one, deep tube well for DSA/Leader Road colony in lieu of DSA old pumps no.1	29,16,629.00	58,400/-	3,000/-	06 Months	Not applicable
3	203	Provision of one Type IV quarter at Naini.	20,55,055.61	41,100/-	3,000.00	06 Months	Not applicable
4	204	Combined Tender for Repairs of road in colony No. 1,2,3 Zero Colony & Chauhatata colony and Repairing of road in Railgaon Colony along with the Type-I to Type-V Quarters under ADEN/HQ-II/ALD.	1,36,79,831/-	2,18,400/-	5,000/-	06 Months	Any Civil Engineering Work.
5	205	Combined Tender for installation of 10 NOS & 09 NOS automatic bacteriological treatment plant & treatment of drinking water at various pumps at Allahabad for five years under ADEN/HQ-I/ALD & ADEN/HQ-II/ALD.	1,16,42,446/-	2,08,300/-	5,000/-	63 Months	Installation/ Operation Maintenance of water treatment plant for disinfection of drinking water.

For All Tenders Date of Opening is 26.12.2019; Note:- 1. The complete information along with tender document of above E-Tenders is available on Website www.ireps.gov.in up to 13:30 hrs. on the due date of tender opening i.e. 26.12.2019. 2. Bids other than in the form of E-Bids shall not be accepted against above tenders. For this purpose, vendors are required to get themselves registered with IREPS website alongwith Digital Signature Certificate issued by CCA under IT Act -2000. 3. Rates entered into Financial Rate page and duly signed digitally shall be considered. Rates and any other financial entry in any other form / letter head if attached by vendors shall be straightway ignored and shall not be considered. 4. The tenderers shall submit a notarified affidavit on a non judicial stamp paper of Rs. 100/- as given in tender document in standard format without which their tender may not be considered and shall summarily rejected. 5. The supplier / contractor of goods and / or services would be subject to GST Act and Rules as applicable from time to time. 6. Document being attached should be signed by the tenderer on its body. 7. This tender notice have also been uploaded on www.ncr.indianrailways.gov.in. 8. Payment of Earnest Money Deposit (EMD) and Tender Document Cost (TDC) in respect of e-Tendering shall be accepted through net banking or payment gateway only. 9. In case of any difficulty helpdesk available on the website of IREPS may be approached. 10. Tender on line can be submitted up to 13.30 hrs. on 26.12.2019. 1659/19 FA

Tender Notice

Allahabad Division
Dated 14.11.2019

Tender Notice No. 7120192020

Divisional Railway Manager (Engineering)/North Central Railway/Allahabad, for and on behalf of the President of India, invites the following E-TENDERS on prescribed form for the following work up to 13.30 hrs. on 11.12.2019. The Details of the Tender are as under:-

S	Tender N	Name of work	Approx Cost (₹)	Earnest Money (₹)	Cost of Tender Form (₹)	Completion Period	Similar work for Eligibility Criteria
1	194	Shallow screening of ballast in the section of SSE/PW/III/CNB, SSE/PW/East/CNB & SSE/PW/ West/CNB under ADEN/Line/CNB.	35,29,800.00	70,600/-	3000/-	06 Months	Nil
2	195	Manual Deep screening of ballast in the section of SSE/ PW/HQ/East/CNB under ADEN/Line/CNB.	49,06,152.35	98,100/-	3000/-	06 Months	Nil
3	196	Hiring of 01 No. Non AC Vehicle Tavera, Chvrolet, Xylo, Tata Safari, Scorpio, Innova etc. in perfect good condition for Sr. DEN/III/ALD.	6,11,106.58	12,200/-	2000/-	21 Months	Nil
4	197	Track works in Connection with Doubling Between NCC to Kanpur Central and Provision of Crossover at Kanpur Central Station for Simultaneous movement of 3rd & 4th Line.	67,09,840.17	1,34,200/-	5000/-	05 Months	P.Way work
5	198	Rebuilding, Replacement and miscellaneous bridge rehabilitation work of various bridges in the section of ADEN/Line/CNB.	41042311.87	3,55,200/-	10,000/-	08 Months	Construction of any Type of Bridge
6	199	Repairs to Cess & Other Miscellaneous work from Km 1019 to Km. 1066 in CNB-TDL section under ADEN/L/CNB.	15097433.42	2,25,500/-	5000/-	06 Months	Earth work in formation and /or Cess repair

For All Tenders Date of Opening of tender is 11.12.2019; Note:- 1. The complete information along with tender document of above E-Tenders is available on Website www.ireps.gov.in up to 13:30 hrs. on the due date of tender opening i.e. 11.12.2019. 2. Bids other than in the form of E-Bids shall not be accepted against above tenders. For this purpose, vendors are required to get themselves registered with IREPS website alongwith Digital Signature Certificate issued by CCA under IT Act -2000. 3. Rates entered into Financial Rate page and duly signed digitally shall be considered. Rates and any other financial entry in any other form / letter head if attached by vendors shall be straightway ignored and shall not be considered. 4. The tenderers shall submit a notarified affidavit on a non judicial stamp paper of Rs. 100/- as given in tender document in standard format without which their tender may not be considered and shall summarily rejected. 5. The supplier / contractor of goods and / or services would be subject to GST Act and Rules as applicable from time to time. 6. Document being attached should be signed by the tenderer on its body. 7. This tender notice have also been uploaded on www.ncr.indianrailways.gov.in. 8. Payment of Earnest Money Deposit (EMD) and Tender Document Cost (TDC) in respect of e-Tendering shall be accepted through net banking or payment gateway only. 9. In case of any difficulty helpdesk available on the website of IREPS may be approached. 10. Tender on line can be submitted up to 13.30 hrs. on 11.12.2019. 1657/19 FA

North central railways www.ncr.indianrailways.gov.in railway.northcentral@CPRONCR

Dealing with a new Lanka

India has to amp up its strategic engagement and economic presence to neutralise Gotabaya's pro-China tilt



In a multi-polar world that's grunting through protectionism and a slow economy and where every nation is trying to steer its course, each has been unanimously electing a muscular leadership to helm its destiny. In that sense, the victory of Gotabaya Rajapaksa, the nationalist strongman of the Sri Lankan People's Party (SLPP) and the brother of former President Mahinda Rajapaksa, in the island nation's elections does not come as a surprise. Particularly in the aftermath of the Easter bombings, which showed how scattered IS modules were choosing virgin targets, the Sinhalese Buddhist majority consolidation has been complete. And from the citizens' perspective, they elected a militarist who was responsible for the clean-up of the Tamil movement and its fighters earlier and whom they believe can tackle terrorism as well as execute what's best for them. At the same time in a revisionist throwback, they have entrusted their collective fate to the Rajapaksa clan. For with Gotabaya as President, he is sure to bring in brother Mahinda as Prime Minister (he has been President before but can still be PM) and as is their wont, the power structures are expected to be concentrated in a family that has been punishing to Tamils, worrying for India and benevolent to Chinese strategic interests and investment. Going by India's troubled relationship with Mahinda and the Tamil wipeout, there are stressors no doubt and apprehensions about Gotabaya. Apart from taking down Tamils, Mahinda sought to reduce dependence on India by aggressively pursuing the Chinese, accusing New Delhi of intervening in the internal affairs of Sri Lanka by propping up his own protege Maithripala Sirisena against him and ensuring he lost the elections. Sirisena's SLFP and ally UNP, whose leader Ranil Wickremesinghe became Prime Minister, formed a coalition Government which was pro-India. The Indian establishment was also too overt rather than being covert about its interventions. So a hurt Mahinda never settled down, his party scoring in local elections till he forced a coup last October, subduing Sirisena, getting him to sack Wickremesinghe and becoming Prime Minister for 51 days. Gotabaya took charge of Defence and Security, kept the Tamil-majority areas under strict military vigil and put Indian diplomats under surveillance. It is this distrust that needs to be healed now for geo-strategic reasons if we don't want China to run far ahead.

Of course, India's latest diplomacy in the neighbourhood has factored in the pragmatism by smaller neighbours, who have successfully played on its anxieties with China and are negotiating the best of both worlds given the competitive muscle-flexing by two Asian majors. Bangladesh, Nepal and Sri Lanka are all happily walking the trajectory of "trade ties" with China and "historical linkage" with India to buttonhole both nations into giving concessions. Gotabaya, too, has seized the PR advantage by calling India "our relative" soon after his win and holding his oath ceremony at Anuradhapura, the city born out of our historical linkages. The Modi Government has changed tack over the last year and is pushing proactive participation over historical assumptions in its Lanka policy. The Chinese are way ahead here and we cannot be immune to their growing footprints. They have a 99-year lease on the Hambantota port after Sri Lanka's failure to repay loans and are using it to enhance their military arc in the Indian Ocean region all the way to east Africa. The Chinese have even created an island off Colombo, a new financial hotspot and a key conduit to east Africa, besides securing hold of the island nation's infrastructure sector, hospitality and supply chains. And while we may be debating about the adoption of Huawei's 5G technology in the country, Sri Lanka has made it abundantly clear that it has no security fears about the new-generation mobile telephony technology. India has, therefore, got to do a very tightrope act with Lanka if it wants to protect its strategic interests amid a Chinese swamp. That, too, without compromising too much on Tamil and minority interests. Economics is a good starting point. We need to work on investment and project partnerships, encourage soft diplomacy via people-to-people contacts and strengthen an institution like BIMSTEC to ensure a more multi-layered communication. Thankfully, Gotabaya has good personal equations in the power corridors of Delhi and will be amenable to negotiations. But for a win-win, India has to be a respected stakeholder, not appear like an exploitative neighbour.

On the basis of evidence. It said in deciding title to a disputed property, it applies principles of evidence. After weighing the evidence, it held that "on the balance of probabilities, there is clear evidence to indicate that the worship by the Hindus in the outer courtyard continued unimpeded in spite of the setting up of a grill-brick wall in 1857. Their possession of the outer courtyard stands established together with the incidents attaching to their control over it." Further, the court held that in the inner courtyard, "there is evidence on the preponderance of probabilities to establish worship by the Hindus prior to the annexation of Oudh by the British in 1857."

These two conclusions of the court, coupled with the fact that the Muslims offered "no evidence" to indicate that they were in exclusive possession of the inner structure prior to 1857 since the date of the construction of the mosque in the 16th century, weighed heavily in determining the outcome of this litigation.

While holding that the suit filed on behalf of the deity was maintainable, the court directed that a trust be constituted for the construction of a temple and to deal with related issues and the allotment of an alternate land to the Muslims for the

A SURYA PRAKASH

The unanimous verdict of the Supreme Court in the Ram Janmabhoomi case, which has brought conclusion to a vexed issue that has disturbed communal harmony for early five centuries, as also the responsibility and Constitutional correctness displayed by Hindu and Muslim leaders in the aftermath of the judgment, will certainly make November 2019 a memorable month in the history of democratic India. That all of this is happening at a time when the nation gears itself up to celebrate the 70th anniversary of its Constitution this month, is indeed a happy coincidence and augurs well for our democracy.

The judgment has been well-received across the country in a spirit of harmony and universal brotherhood. In fact, while both sides were apprehensive before the verdict was delivered, they committed themselves to accepting the order, whatever the outcome. Prime Minister Narendra Modi appealed to the people to accept the apex court's verdict, irrespective of which way it went. Union Home Minister Amit Shah sent out a similar appeal and supervised the extensive preparatory work to ensure peace after the verdict. A day after the judgment, National Security Advisor Ajit Doval invited the top leaders of both communities for a discussion at his residence and secured their unflinching commitment to the maintenance of peace and communal harmony. All of them swore by the Constitution and said that the November 9 verdict of the apex court must lay the foundations for a new India built on harmony and universal brotherhood.

Though the one billion-strong Hindu community finally got the plot of land, which it so deeply reveres as the birthplace of Lord Ram, it conducted itself with utmost sensibility and level-headedness. Similarly, although the Muslims lost their case, they remained committed to the pre-judgment resolve that they would accept the outcome, whichever way it went.

There can be no doubt that this was the result of a close coordination between the Union Government and the leaders of the two communities in the weeks before the order. Can there be a better example of good governance in the most diverse nation in the world? In fact, India's response to the Ayodhya verdict should be a lesson in democracy for nations around the world.

The post-verdict scenario has left the doom-sayers — especially the international media and some of their cousins in our country — totally flummoxed.

The general acceptance of the verdict had a lot to do with the way the Constitution Bench of the Supreme Court examined the issues before it and its reasoning *vis-a-vis* its verdict. For example, while the Hindus have been asserting that it is a matter of faith, the court made it clear that this was a dispute over immovable property and that it does not decide title on the basis of faith or belief but

Drowning cacophony

It's unfortunate that while key players in the Ayodhya case are keen for closure, Asaduddin Owaisi has struck a discordant note by saying that Muslims don't need charity



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These two conclusions of the court, coupled with the fact that the Muslims offered "no evidence" to indicate that they were in exclusive possession of the inner structure prior to 1857 since the date of the construction of the mosque in the 16th century, weighed heavily in determining the outcome of this litigation.

While holding that the suit filed on behalf of the deity was maintainable, the court directed that a trust be constituted for the construction of a temple and to deal with related issues and the allotment of an alternate land to the Muslims for the

“**IN ORDER TO PROVIDE RESTITUTION TO THE MUSLIM COMMUNITY, THE COURT USED ITS POWERS UNDER ARTICLE 142 AND DIRECTED THAT THEY BE GRANTED FIVE ACRES OF LAND WITHIN AYODHYA. THIS IS A POWER THAT IS USED SPARINGLY AND IS INDICATIVE OF THE COURT'S DESIRE TO GO THE EXTRA MILE TO ENSURE BALANCE**”

construction of a mosque and associated activities.

Significantly, it observed that the allotment of the land to the Muslims was necessary because "though on a balance of probabilities, the evidence of the possessory claim of the Hindus to the composite whole of the disputed property stands on a better footing than the evidence adduced by the Muslims", the fact remained that the Muslims were dispossessed following desecration of the mosque in December 1949, and later because it was destroyed on December 6, 1992. In other words, the court noted that there was no abandonment of the mosque by the Muslims.

In view of these facts, the court said it would exercise its powers under Article 142 of the Constitution to ensure that a wrong committed is remedied. It said, "Justice would not prevail if the court were to overlook the entitlement of the Muslims who have been deprived of the structure of the mosque through means which should not have been employed in a secular nation committed to the rule of law. The Constitution postulates the equality of all faiths. Tolerance and mutual co-existence nourish the secular commitment of our nation and its people."

Therefore, in order to provide restitution to the Muslim

community, the court used its powers under Article 142 and directed that they be granted five acres of land within the city of Ayodhya. This Article empowers the court to pass a decree or order "for doing complete justice" in any cause or matter pending before it. It can provide relief where there is "palpable injustice." In fact, the court has held in the past that it is advisable to leave the power undefined so that it has the elasticity to mould the relief.

This is a power that is used sparingly and is indicative of the court's desire to go the extra mile to ensure balance. While several key players in this litigation are keen to apply the closure, the All India Muslim Personal Law Board (AIMPLB) has decided to file a review petition. This is a legitimate move because the court's procedure provides for it.

However, it is unfortunate to hear Asaduddin Owaisi, AIMIM chief and MP from Hyderabad say that the Muslims do not want this "charity" of five acres of land. Fortunately, such discordant notes in the post-judgment phase are far and few. That is why the symphony of democracy and constitutionalism across the country has completely drowned the attempts at cacophony by a few disruptors.

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

Perilous for pedestrians

The number of walkers killed on India's roads has nearly doubled in four years. What can be done to reduce that?



According to statistics released by the Union Ministry of Road Transport and Highways, the number of pedestrians killed on India's roads climbed from 12,330 in 2014 to 22,656 in 2018 — an increase of 84 per cent in just four years. Many things can be extrapolated from these numbers. The first, of course, is the dramatic expansion in the country's road network. The other quite obviously is the total lack of pedestrian safety in the country. There are no pavements or sidewalks left beyond central Delhi and select other

Government zones in other cities, which have not been occupied by hawkers and parked cars. There are a few crosswalks or an alternative method to cross major thoroughfares. The traffic police and transport authorities, in their desperation to make traffic flows smoother, have also done little to chalk out a plan for pedestrians, who come last in their scheme of things.

However, blaming the authorities and the rash driving habits of Indian drivers is a valid criticism. While studying pedestrian deaths, there should be far more planning to ensure their safety, including in vehicle and road design. Pedestrians themselves should share a lot of the blame. Even when there are overpasses, underpasses and traffic lights to cross roads safely, they blithely ignore these and cross the roads in the face of oncoming traffic just sticking their hands out. With little or no understanding about how much faster vehicles have become, pedestrians often take their lives into their own hands. Crossing a road, even at a traffic light in one's favour while staring down at a phone, is downright dangerous. Driving down any of the new high-speed expressways, you will find pedestrians without a care in the world crossing the road while cars zoom by at speeds well over 100 km per hour. With such blatant disregard of road use and behaviour, no matter what is done, pedestrians will still die. And the number of deaths can easily be brought down. One method is to teach schoolchildren the basics of road safety, both as pedestrians and drivers. The other is to build proper methods for people to cross the roads and stop encroaching them. India's roads are horribly bloody as it is and far too many people die on our roads every single day. In any other country this would be a national emergency. In India, this is barely given a second thought. That needs to change urgently.

SOUNDBITE

Our patriotic Government will not allow anybody to encroach on even an inch of Nepal's territory. India should withdraw its forces from Kalapani area.



Nepal Prime Minister — KP Sharma Oli

There is no other actor in the history of world cinema who is as accomplished as Kamal. That's why he's *Utaga Nayagan* (Universal Hero).



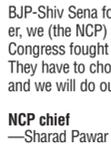
Actor — Rajinikanth

Improvements in the Indian health system have been significant. There are specific disease programmes and vaccine coverage has improved.



Microsoft co-founder — Bill Gates

BJP-Shiv Sena fought together, we (the NCP) and the Congress fought together. They have to choose their path and we will do our politics.



NCP chief — Sharad Pawar

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Task cut out

Sir — Gotabaya Rajapaksa's presidential win was pretty convincing. As for Sajith Premadasa's defeat, it is no doubt painful for him as it would be for any presidential hopeful. But there may be some consolation for him with the fact that he can now forget about his election promises, which he would have been required to fulfil if had he been elected.

Gotabaya played his cards well. In times when Sri Lanka is faced with several problems, including the state of the economy, fears set off by the Easter Sunday bombings and not to forget the revulsion towards corruption, he refrained from taking on his opponents, especially Premadasa, and conducted himself in a business-like manner. This approach came as a breath of fresh air in the electoral politics that is generally vitiated by effrontery and name-calling. Thus, he must have endeared himself to the voters, who were fed up with the present state of affairs.

Finally, winning the executive presidency is one thing and living up to the expectations of

The quest for equality continues

The Supreme Court's decision to refer the review pleas made in the Sabarimala case to a larger seven-judge Bench elicited a mixed reaction. One is inevitably led to ask if the apex court lost its earlier conviction to look kindly on the review petitions and not dismiss them even in the face of no "apparent error" in its original historic judgment. Nevertheless, it was some solace that it did not reverse or stay its judgment allowing the entry of women of all ages into the Sabarimala temple.

Even though women in the 10-50 age group can still legally enter the temple, the prospect of them being allowed to have Ayyappa *darshan* looks bleak. Belligerent opponents of women's entry seem to be determined to put blockades to prevent women in the menstruating age from entering the temple "to preserve the sanctity" of the temple. Last time, frenzied attacks and "purification rituals" made headlines. It is not clear when the original ruling stands, why the State Government now deems it right to ask women to get Supreme Court's order for "protection." The Left Government seems to have developed cold feet for fear that it will have to face a political backlash from "true Ayyappa devotees."

The top court's decision to bracket women's entry



with other issues of gender inequality and refer it to a larger Bench "to consider all issues" pertaining to faith *vis-a-vis* women's rights and gender equality is certainly amenable to be interpreted as a dilution from its earlier position. Parsi and Muslim women, too, should be able to enter their places of worship; it is not clear why the present case should be mixed up with the denial of rights to those women.

G David Milton Maruthancode

the people is another. Politics in Sri Lanka is characterised by the lack of military precision. The biggest challenge before Gotabaya or for that matter any politician — be it in Sri Lanka or India — is to bring order out of

chaos in the public sector if they have to carry out their plans. Gotabaya is known for his China tilt and hardline views. He should allay India's fears here. JS Acharya Hyderabad

Politics of convenience

Sir — This refers to the editorial, "Three men in a boat" (November 18). The editorial lucidly lays bare the dire exist-

tial needs of the three parties — Shiv Sena, Congress and Nationalist Congress Party (NCP) — who have come together to forge a strange, new alliance.

Anybody will agree with the fact that between the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) and the Shiv Sena, it was the latter which had shown a greater and stronger commitment to the concept of Hindutva and Hindu nationalism.

Meanwhile, the Congress had always been critical of the Sena's ideology, dubbing it as "extremist", "fascist" and "chauvinist." The Shiv Sena on its part treated the grand old party as its most serious opponent. Yet, both parties have instantly shed every inhibition, resentment, repugnance and ideologies to form a Government.

Such forsaking of whatever they stood for to share power and pelf is business as usual for political parties. But the least one expects is that they do not loftily pretend that it is all *pro bono publico* (for public good). This will be tantamount to "hypocrisy."

NS Rajan Kolkata

Send your feedback to: letterstopioneer@gmail.com

FIRST COLUMN

Equal education, equal chances

Stakeholders really need to understand the essence of the National Education Policy, 2019 and the challenges connected with it



MADHURI DHARIWAL

“We are our choices,” said Jean-Paul Sartre, the French philosopher, political activist and literary critic. Most people don’t realise how big a privilege it is to have the freedom of choice. I teach students ranging from five to 26 years, none of whom got to choose whether to work or study in a regular school. Eight-year-old Preiti is always hungry and 17-year-old Vijay seeks to escape a drunken father’s beatings, while fending for his siblings. Both were at a standard one learning level. However, I also had students who were receiving quality education, free of cost and guaranteed until class VIII and this was possible due to the Right to Education Act (RTE), 2009.

The Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act, 2009, is the legislation which provides free schooling to kids aged 6-14 years. A section of the Act, linked to the aspect of school “choice”, is Section 12(1)(c), which made it mandatory for all private, unaided, non-minority schools to reserve 25 per cent seats for children from a socially and/or economically disadvantaged background. This gives parents an opportunity to apply to schools they had hitherto lacked access to. The spirit of the Act, was to foster an environment of social inclusion, along with developing empathy for marginalised communities. However, there were many challenges, including clarity on the letter of the policy that had to be addressed first. Across the country, over 20 lakh seats must be reserved per year in private schools, according to the provision of the Act and there have been over 41 lakh admissions until 2018. The Draft National Education Policy (NEP), 2019, presents certain recommendations and challenges with respect to Section 12(1)(c). The recommendations are mainly centred around uniform technology usage for transparency and accountability; funding to be received on time; correct reporting of numbers; no discrimination in schools and extra support to students falling behind. An NGO working in this space, has come up with a Sustainability Benchmark, based on its experience of operations over the last six years. If implemented, it would address the recommendations/challenges mentioned in the NEP Draft, 2019 as well. States can be classified into three categories, based on their implementation standards — Mature, Maturing, and Nascent. This is not an attempt to rank States in an order, rather, a self-evaluation for them, to seek areas of improvement. Another motive of the benchmark is to highlight the bright spots in implementation in States that are doing well, in different aspects of the policy. The current scenario in the country and criticism around this policy is linked to multiple factors: A competition between Government and private schools; perceived discriminatory behaviour in private schools; low self-confidence among children enrolling through RTE due to the vast socio-economic differences; schools wrongfully claiming minority status to avoid 12(1)(c) admissions and delays in private schools receiving reimbursements, among others. However, there are many studies that highlight factors such as high self-efficacy in girls, more pro-social, generous and egalitarian behaviour in “richer” students with “poorer” classmates and also, how a lack of integrated classrooms will lead to a further segregated society. There needs to be a better system of monitoring and regulation of private schools, as there are concerns being raised about their quality. This is linked to parents making less-informed choices while selecting schools. However, a Bright Spots Report, 2019, based on its survey, shows that the top five factors affecting school choice are proximity to home; quality; transportation provision; board of education; results — in that order, thus showing that school quality is an important factor in parents’ choice.

Another current issue raging in the country, with respect to 12(1)(c) is the judgment by the Karnataka High Court in May, which accepted the petition, to read down the provision, thereby making admissions in private schools conditional upon the non-existence of Government or Government-aided schools in the neighborhood (i.e. Government schools be filled before parents can choose to send their wards to private ones). With over 6.5 lakh children studying under the provision in the State in 2018-19 and having received around 88 per cent of its reimbursement for the same year, as claimed from the Centre, it is a massive setback to the State and by extension to the nation, to see a State like Karnataka reduce the number of 12(1)(c) seats from 1.52 lakh to about 17,000 per year. The judgment was challenged in the Supreme Court (SC), through a Special Leave Petition. The SC has issued a notice to the Karnataka Government to reply and the verdict is pending. With the current version of the NEP 2019, which was released at the end of October, the stance on 12(1)(c) is lacking clarity. There are no details on implementation of the policy and hopefully the Winter Session of the Parliament will provide more lucidity. Stakeholders really need to understand the essence of the policy and the challenges connected with it, by engaging in constructive dialogue about the practical implications of the policy and how it affects lives and giving fact-based rationale for the same. It is for stakeholders to think about the choices they are making, as it impacts the right to choose, for millions of children in our country.

(The writer is Lead-Operation at a social organisation working on the implementation of the RTE Act.)

POINTCOUNTERPOINT

KEJRIWAL IS GIVING POISON TO DELHIITES IN THE NAME OF FREE WATER. DELHI WATER WAS FOUND TO BE THE MOST POISONOUS IN A SURVEY OF 20 CITIES.

—UNION HEALTH MINISTER
HARSH VARDHAN



SIR, YOU ARE A DOCTOR. YOU KNOW THIS REPORT IS FALSE AND POLITICALLY MOTIVATED. A PERSON LIKE YOU SHOULD NOT BECOME A PART OF DIRTY POLITICS.

—DELHI CHIEF MINISTER
ARVIND KEJRIWAL

Hello minister! Can you hear me?

One parameter in India’s Ease of Doing Business that requires improvement is dispute resolution, particularly in the crippled telecom industry



BINDU DALMIA

When the big boys of India Inc. are pushed to the wall in a market slugfest of the kind that’s playing out in the telecom sector since three years, it’s an area angels fear to tread. And, only a collective call by the Government comprising a cross-section of stakeholders from the Department of Telecommunications (DoT), Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) and the high-powered Committee of Secretaries (CoS) has the power to intervene in a timely and judicious way. Because it is already a case of “too little, too late” to salvage the near-collapse of an erstwhile profitable sector, now laden with debt of over ₹7 lakh crore.

Telecom as a sector is “too big to (let) fail”, a theory that asserted when certain behemoths that comprise a sector “are so large and interconnected, their failure would be disastrous to the greater economic system and that they therefore must be supported by the Government when faced with potential failure.”

With increasing teledensity and internet penetration, telecom services are today consumer essentials, much like FMCG or pharma goods, and are consumed by every section of society. And like power, telecom and internet are deemed essential utilities and the vehicles forwarding the digital revolution.

India is currently the world’s second-largest telecommunications market with a subscriber base of 1.20 billion and is amongst the top five employment generators in the country. Which is why there is cause for alarm with the second quarter losses posted by listed telecom companies after the October Supreme Court (SC) order crossing unsustainable levels of ₹1 lakh crore in debt, with Vodafone-Idea, RComm, Airtel and TATA Tele being the worst-hit in a descending order.

One shares the Prime Minister’s optimism to aim for a \$5 trillion economy, as much as one lauds the Finance Minister’s interactive-resolution modus, which is a refreshing departure from her predecessors in not procrastinating decision-making till the annual Budget to address the industry’s pain points. And pain points abound, from the beleaguered banking, automobile, realty, power and aviation sectors, with the latest crisis in telecom having overtaken all others.

While India’s improved ranking in the World Bank’s Ease of Doing Business index (EODB) is an outcome of the Modi regime’s commitment to reforms, one parameter in the EODB that requires improvement is dispute resolution, particularly in the crippled telecom industry. Resolution and relief are very much within the Centre’s discretion, as they are the winners in this case and need to make concessions in the overall interests of the sector. Regulatory uncertainties in the distressed sector are casting negative ripple effects on the already subdued business sentiments within the country. While Indian business has been reluctant to commit to fresh capital expenditure (CapEx) investments, we can ill-afford a negative perception amongst foreign direct investors. The National Digital Communications Policy 2018 envisaged attracting investments worth \$100 billion in the telecommunications sector by 2022, which is only possible in an enabling environment, where time is spent on growth instead of fighting fires. Given that the beneficiaries of the trade diversion from the US-China trade wars have been Vietnam and

“WHILE NO COUNTRY HAS STRUCK THE PERFECT BALANCE BETWEEN REGULATION AND FREE ENTERPRISE, IT IS IMPERATIVE TO FIND A WAY OUT OF THE IMPASSE, AS ALL INTERLINKAGES IN THE MODERN INDUSTRIAL SUPPLY CHAIN GET AFFECTED AND RISKS THAT BESET ONE SECTOR CASCADE THROUGH THE REST OF THE ECONOMY. AND IF UNRESOLVED, THE DISRUPTIONS COULD EXTEND FOR YEARS, DESTROYING VALUE FOR ALL INVOLVED”



Taiwan in preference to India, for the country to make a global impact, we need a more facilitatory approach so that multinational corporations (MNCs) view it as a potential centre for making profits.

To attract Foreign Direct Investment (FDI), “India needs to salvage even the recent entrants like Flipkarts from making losses that are giving nightmares to Walmart, the Paytms to Alibaba and the Vodafones giving nightmares to its UK parent.”

Vodafone is the largest foreign direct investor in the country and its year-old joint venture with Idea Cellular is the worst hit, with net losses at ₹50,922 crore. This is unfairly the second setback for Vodafone after the UPA-2 had amended its tax laws with retrospective effect with claims of \$2 billion in taxes. The entire sector is today at risk of lowered credit ratings, jeopardising the asset quality of banks that have an exposure of ₹1 lakh crore. This will further deepen the existing Non-Performing Assets (NPA) crisis, as borrowers become unable to service debt due to contingent liabilities.

The distress in telecom is largely attributed to Reliance Jio’s entry three years ago that disrupted the economics of the sector. Jio’s hyper-competitive pricing triggered massive consumer attrition, giving it a vantage particularly in rural areas and eroding average revenue per user and user-counts of competitors. The problems of the industry have been compounded by the SC judgment that favoured the Government in the dispute between DoT and telcos. The Government’s demand to include non-core items while computing Adjusted Gross Revenue (AGR) has had a crippling effect on 15 telcos asked to shell out a staggering ₹1.3 lakh crore.

Let’s remember that “the Supreme Court is fair, but not infallible.”

Besides, the Indian telecom market which is the second-largest in the world in terms of data consumption, is too large to be held hostage by either erstwhile cartels, or the likely emergence of a duopolistic scenario, or the eventuality of allowing single-player dominance. Which is where we are headed if the Government fails to salvage existential issues facing two out of the three private players, Vodafone-Idea and Bharti Airtel.

Ideally, the Government aims at three non-State players, plus one public sector telco in the market, because India needs multiple carriers to ride the digital revolution forward. That the Government is not in favour of a monopoly is a decision in the right direction. But to avert monopolistic conditions, or even a duopoly, intent must be followed through by supportive action.

So what are the relief measures sought by the industry? They hope for positive recommendations from the CoS committee to restore the health of the sector by the regulator setting minimum floor tariffs for mobile calls and data; a moratorium on spectrum payments/a longer tenure to pay up spectrum liabilities through staggered payments; a waiver on interest and penalties on the AGR-related dues; lowering of taxes and levies; freeing up of ₹7,000 crore of blocked Goods and Services Tax (GST) input credits; a favourable review of the SC ruling, failing which they plan a curative petition before a five-judge Bench that may deliver a better judgment than the one on October 24, and lastly that TRAI restore its credibility by playing neutral.

Empirical evidence in economic

history points to signs of distress showing up much before a cancer turns full blown and incurable. Even the global economic crisis of 2008 was preceded by symptoms like bubbles in asset value of stocks and real estate. Nations, sectors or corporates don’t collapse overnight but show symptoms of malaise much ahead of an impending crisis.

Governments play an important role in gauging the declining health of sectors ahead of time by assessing risks, whether they are caused due to corporate misgovernance, faulty policies, or bought on by cyclical market conditions, or a slowdown caused by de-globalisation. A case in point is the timely intervention by the Union Minister for Commerce when he recently chided e-commerce companies indulging in predatory pricing which adversely impacted small retailers, a regulatory role TRAI should have played three years ago by setting a floor price. Because predatory pricing is as damaging as surge-pricing.

India’s private sector players are capable of delivering quantum “Winning Leap solutions” if regulators, courts and Government policies make it easy to do business. While no country has struck the perfect balance between regulation and free enterprise, it is imperative to find a way out of the impasse, as all interlinkages in the modern industrial supply chain get affected and risks that beset one sector cascade through the rest of the economy. And if unresolved, the disruptions could extend for years, destroying value for all involved.

(The writer is an author, columnist, Chairperson for the National Committee of Financial Inclusion at Niti Aayog and member of RSS Ladies Intellectual cell.)

Big ticket privatisation move welcome

With a Government that is looking at the sale of PSU assets including under-utilised plants and land, it makes sense to look at rapid denationalisation, thereby creating a vibrant space for the private sector



KARAN BHASIN

The Finance Minister has indicated that BPCL (Bharat Petroleum Corporation Limited) and Air India are likely to be privatised by March 2020. This is an extremely significant development as India hasn’t seen big ticket privatisation since the Atal Bihari Vajpayee Government between 1999-2004. Although, there were attempts to privatise Air India in the previous tenure of the Narendra Modi Government, however, the terms didn’t generate adequate interest. Things have changed since then and we’ve seen many investors express interest in acquiring Air India. Privatisation of Air India is not just

about freeing critical taxpayer resources that are deployed to keep the debt-ridden airline alive but it is more about a signal to the world, that the Indian Government is finally back on track to gradually move out from businesses. This implies a greater role for the private sector in the Indian economy — a welcome sign for the rest of the world that is looking at India as the next driver of global growth.

The fact that we’re looking at privatisation should not come as a surprise given that Modi himself mentioned to be in business. Therefore, a mandate of 303 gives him the necessary political capital to denationalise many of our public sector assets. The sale of BPCL is perhaps more significant as unlike other Public Sector Undertakings (PSUs), it is not exactly a loss-making enterprise funded by taxpayer largesse.

However, its operations in an oligopolistic setting and yet is one of the

least-efficient companies in the sector. Therefore, clearly, the new rule for privatisation is not just about getting rid of loss-making PSUs but instead, getting rid of any inefficient unit that can be better operationalised in the hands of the private sector.

This renewed approach towards privatisation is indeed required in order to transform the Indian economy and therefore, while political opposition may persist to the move, the potential benefits from such a move will overshadow any such resistance. It is important to recognise that a major share of wealth created in India happened post-1991 reforms where the Indian Government removed the policy of licensing.

In fact, ever since such requirements began to be muted in the 1980s, we see a sharp increase in India’s growth rates. All of this reveals an undeniable fact that India’s growth has accelerated ever since we embraced private capital. Therefore,

getting rid of these companies will result in an overall value creation, not just for these firms but also for the rest of the economy.

The biggest advantage of privatisation over disinvestment is that it facilitates the change in management of these PSUs. A major reason why the PSUs are not as efficient as the private sector is their management and the lack of an incentive structure that focuses on economic efficiency and generation of private profits.

Therefore, while disinvestments would result in non-tax revenues for the Government, the management remains largely the same. Therefore, there are limited implications for broader wealth creation for these companies through disinvestment.

The timing of privatisation is also critical as it comes at a juncture when our growth has slowed down. Therefore, privatisation will have two positive implications for the economy. First, it will revive the sentiment and since economics is about

self-fulfilling prophecies, a positive sentiment is critical towards accelerating the process of growth recovery. The second aspect is more transactional as it is to do with public finances.

During an economic slowdown, a Government’s tax revenues don’t grow as per expectation. We see some of this in the current financial year as there’s a major revenue shortfall which is likely to affect the financials of the Government. The other aspect is that since deficit is reported as a percentage of the Gross Domestic Product (GDP), slow growth will amplify the amount of deficit during slow growth years.

However, privatisation can bridge the deficit through non-tax revenues and its positive impact on sentiment will also have a muted, yet important second order effect on growth rates.

However, just as the Government is looking to privatise Air India and BPCL, it is also looking to revive BSNL (Bharat Sanchar Nigam

Limited) and MTNL (Mahanagar Telephone Nigam Limited). The plan to introduce a voluntary retirement scheme and to merge these two enterprises is good. However, it will succeed only if we scale down their operations significantly.

That is, the Government should downsize the merged entity and retain only the strategic operations of the company while the rest of it and its assets can be sold off to private players.

With a Government that is looking at the sale of PSU assets including under-utilised plants and land, it makes sense to look at rapid privatisation, thereby creating a vibrant space for the private sector.

The exit of the Government from production will free up critical resources that it can then devote to enhancing State capacity and provisioning of the public goods and services.

(The writer is a New Delhi-based public policy researcher)



FOREIGN EYE



POLITICIANS MUST WAKE UP TO CRISIS

Germany’s economic pre-eminence means that its response carries a special weight within Europe. It has narrowly avoided going into recession. Its economy remains strong but the boom has ended and German politics will have to respond with more expansionary strategies. Stability has long been the dogma in Berlin, but 60 years after the legacy of Marx and Engels was discreetly put to one side by the SPD, revisionism is in the air again.

(The Guardian editorial)

BlameGene

Researchers have identified new mutations in a gene commonly associated with non-ischemic dilated cardiomyopathy, a disease that weakens the heart muscle, making it more difficult to adequately circulate blood to meet the body's needs



DOCYARD

DR SMIT SRIVASTAVA

DM Cardiology, HOD

CARDIOLOGY ADVANCEMENT CARDIAC
INSTITUTE MEDICAL COLLEGE RAIPUR



Take care of
irregular beat

If you have an irregular pulse, experience palpitations, shortness of breath, chest pain, fatigue, and weakness, you could be suffering from a heart disease called atrial fibrillation (AF). Studies have reported AF is a growing epidemic with an expected doubling of its prevalence in India by 2030.

It is a condition that involves irregular beating of the left atrium (upper chamber) of the heart that increases a person's risk for stroke by four to five times when compared with the people who do not suffer from it. As stroke remains one of the leading causes of death and disability in India, scientists have introduced new methods of evaluating irregular heart beats that have outperformed the approach that has been used conventionally in stroke units.

Therapies like patent foramen ovale (PFO) and left atrial appendage (LAA) closure are performed to close the hole or defect in the heart of patients suffering from cryptogenic & non-valvular atrial fibrillation respectively. The therapies are a breakthrough that could lead to better treatment and outcomes for patients with cryptogenic and non-valvular atrial fibrillation.

Digital innovations are revolutionising healthcare and technology in medicine is paving the way for better treatment. When suffering from this condition, blood clots are most commonly formed in LAA. Closing the LAA is an effective way of reducing stroke risk in people with atrial fibrillation and that is what the new technology does. A nail like device called occluder is implanted inside the heart that permanently closes LAA and keeps blood clots from escaping.

LAA and PFO implants have proven to reduce strokes in patients. It can also reduce the risk of bleeding associated with long term use of blood thinners

The AF causes 15 to 20 per cent of ischemic strokes, which occur when blood flow to the brain is blocked by a clot or by fatty deposits called plaque. Within a few hours atrial fibrillation there onset of a stroke, treatment with drugs or devices that dissolve or break up the clot, can restore blood flow to the brain and lead to a better recovery. Taking a blood thinner, such as warfarin reduces the risk of stroke in patients with atrial fibrillation.

If you take a blood thinner for AF, you are probably aware of the bleeding risks that come with it. Most people can take blood thinner for years without a risk. But because they help prevent blood clots by thinning the blood, even tiny cuts or bruises will bleed a lot more because of the daily consumption of these drugs. Also, there is a need of getting frequent blood tests done to make sure the patient takes the right amount of medication.

PFO and LAA closure therapies are performed to close the hole or defect in the heart. These procedures do not require open-heart surgery. A permanent device that doesn't have to be replaced and can't be seen outside the body is used. To implant the device, the doctor makes a small cut in the upper leg and inserts a needle stick, as done in a standard stent procedure. The doctor then guides the device into the LAA or PFO as per the treatment area. They are done under general anesthesia and take about an hour. Patients stay in the hospital overnight and leave the next day.

LAA and PFO implants have proven to reduce strokes in patients. It can also reduce the risk of bleeding associated with long term use of blood thinners that have been used conventionally.

Stroke is becoming a major cause of death in low-income and middle-income countries like India. To prevent AF and stroke, there should be a focus on early diagnoses, public awareness and capacity building at different levels of health care. It's important to live a heart-healthy lifestyle — eating a healthy diet, increasing physical activity, avoiding smoking, limiting or avoiding alcohol and reducing stress.

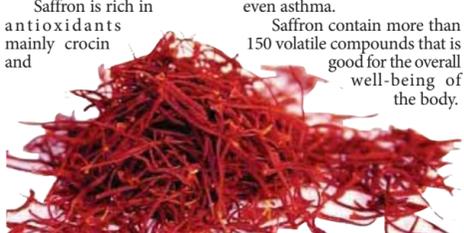
WARMFOODS

SAFFRON: The saffron is a spice derived from the flower saffron crocus. The vivid crimson stigma and styles, called threads, are collected and dried to be used mainly as a seasoning and colouring agent in food. Saffron has long been the world's most costly spice by weight.

Saffron is rich in antioxidants mainly crocin and picrocrocin that help fight against oxidative stress and free radicals in the body.

It is also hailed for its anti-inflammatory properties. Take a pinch of saffron add it to a cup of warm milk and drink. You may also add turmeric. This will help in reducing muscle cramps and body aches. It also helps in fighting common cold, flu and even asthma.

Saffron contain more than 150 volatile compounds that is good for the overall well-being of the body.



EYE SUGAR LEVELS

According to the International Diabetes Federation, people with Diabetes are expected to develop some form of eye disease, leading to reduced vision or blindness. DR ARINDAM DEY tells you how to keep the disease at bay

The risks associated with Diabetes are becoming increasingly evident. Consistently high blood sugar levels can lead to serious health problems, such as negative effect on heart and blood vessels, kidneys, nerves, coupled with higher risk of developing infections. While many of these are traditional complications associated with diabetes, a serious complication is blindness, as a result of Diabetic retinopathy formation.

It is critical to increase the level of awareness of Diabetic retinopathy amongst individuals with diabetes mellitus for early diagnosis and management.

Evidently, Diabetes is the primary cause of blindness in adults between the ages of 20 to 74 worldwide. With approximately 72 million of people in India suffering with diabetes, it accounts for nearly 7.1 per cent of the country's adult population. According to International Diabetes Federation, people with diabetes are expected to develop some form of eye disease (retinopathy), leading to reduced vision or blindness. Consistently high levels of blood glucose, blood pressure and high cholesterol, are the main causes of retinopathy.

All Diabetes patients — both Type I and Type II — are at risk of Diabetic retinopathy. The longer someone has Diabetes, the more likely they are to develop Diabetic retinopathy. People with Diabetic retinopathy have damaged blood vessels in their retinal layer; a light-sensitive layer at the back of the eye.

WHILE THERE IS NO CURE FOR DIABETIC RETINOPATHY; EARLY DETECTION AND TIMELY TREATMENT IS OFTEN EFFECTIVE IN PREVENTING, DELAYING OR REDUCING VISION LOSS

Prolonged high blood sugar levels in Diabetics can cause damage or swelling to the small blood vessels in the retina. Retina is the light-sensitive tissue at the back of your eye and one needs a healthy retina to have a clear vision. Diabetic retinopathy damages the tiny blood vessels inside the retina that might lead to complete loss of vision if left untreated.

Diabetic retinopathy can be managed through regular eye check-ups. Many Diabetics are unaware that



chronically high blood sugar may result in eye damage. Diabetes is still majorly associated with kidney failure and cardiovascular problems. It is time to raise the awareness levels and encourage diabetes patients to go for periodic eye consultations.

Symptoms: Ideally, Diabetic retinopathy does not cause noticeable symptoms until significant damage has occurred. It usually affects both eyes and complications that indicate the onset of Diabetic retinopathy. Few symptoms are:

- Blurred or distorted vision, or difficulty in reading
- Floaters, which are dark objects that float across the field of vision
- Distorted colour vision
- Partial or total loss of vision

Prevention: While there is no

cure for diabetic retinopathy; early detection and timely treatment is often effective in preventing, delaying or reducing vision loss. Further, Diabetic patients should make dietary changes to control their glucose and lipid levels.

Diabetic retinopathy can be a big problem for pregnant women who have Diabetes. To protect vision, women at risk should have a comprehensive dilated eye examination upon confirmation of pregnancy, as well as additional medical tests as recommended by the doctor.

Adolescent Diabetics must have their eyes examined at least once a year after the age of 12 years, as diabetic retinopathy is rarely known to occur before puberty.

The writer is Head-CDMA, Alcon India

SAY NO TO DULL HAIR



It feels great to run fingers through soft hair but due to various factors, our hair aren't as silky and smooth as we want them to be. DR

NIRANJANA RAJ shares tips that can help to maintain the tresses

Shiny, healthy, and tangle free strands are what everyone desire. On the other hand if you like to style your hair with hot tools, experiment different products, and also color it regularly; then silkiness seems only a dream. It feels great to run fingers through soft hair but due to factors like hair type, hair damage and environmental factors, at times our hair aren't as silky and smooth as we'd like them to be. Fortunately, with the some tips and tricks, we can improve the quality of our hair in just few weeks. The condition of our hair depends mainly on our health and condition of the cuticle which is the outside layer of our hair.

Be mindful when shampooing
When shampooing, we usually pile our hair on top of our head and wash the entire length of the hair. This method not only forms tangles but also dry the ends of the hair which already lack moisture especially in curly hair. In naturally straight hair the oil goes from scalp to the end of the roots very quickly because gravity pulls it down but when it comes to curly hair, the oil travels around the coiled shaft and therefore the oil doesn't go to the roots as quickly.

This means that people with curly hair do not need to shampoo their hair as often. While washing curly hair consider using cleansing conditioner than the regular shampoo which strips the hair of its necessary natural oils.

Comb when wet, brush when dry
It has been observed that most people do not brush their hair gently, which impedes hair from looking its best. The best way to detangle hair is using a wide toothed comb when your hair is wet or can use a brush specially designed for wet hair or to brush when hair completely get dry. Detangling of hair is best done from ends to root of hair rather than root to tip.

Use T-shirt instead of a towel to dry your hair

We always knew the basic method to dry our hair was rough drying that is by rubbing a towel back and forth; touching it but the fact is that we have wrongly learned it. This method generates friction which fluffs up the outer cellular layer of the hair. And then they catch on one another which are the reason of breakage and knots, and result in frizz. The key to have smooth and silky hair is no friction. Super tangly hair is the result of the open cuticle. The snigger the outer cellular layer of the hair, the more unaffected is the openings and the smoother the hair will be. So, switch your towel with a smoother cotton T-shirt. Also, try not to rub your head and instead wrap the ends of the hair in the shirt and squeeze out all the water.

Always finish blow dry with a blast of cold air

It sounds little time taking step, but the fact is after the hair is dry the key for locking the amount of volume, movement of your hair and direction of your style is finishing a blow out with cold air. It also helps close the outer cellular layer of the hair. Always make sure to use a concentrator or nozzle as it directs the air to go from roots to the ends and helps in closing the outer cellular layer of the hair rather than roughing it up. Use your fingers to comb your hair.

The writer is Dermatologist, Dermatologist, Joint Managing Director-YCDC

DadiKaKehna

It is time for important exams like CAT, end semester and Classes X and XII Boards. ROSHANI DEVI shares home remedies that can help students to stay sharp and focused

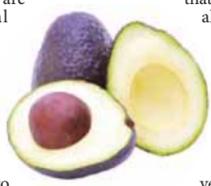


With many important exams to take place in the coming months, it is necessary to stay sharp and focused. One also has to remember what one has studied. There are several natural ways in which one can increase one's concentration. Eat foods that don't have sugar. A diet that has lots of sugar can lead to poor memory and reduced brain volume. Also, avoid eating cakes, cereal, cookies, white rice and white bread. While drinking coffee may keep many people awake the whole night, the fact is that certain compounds in coffee stimulate the brain's anti-oxidant

system. Eat dark chocolate. Not milk chocolate since dark chocolate has less sugar. Eat avocados. They are one of the healthiest fruits that you can eat. It is also considered as one of the foods that improve brain function.

While most people don't like to eat broccoli, the truth is that this vegetable is one of the best power foods for the brain. Certain essential nutrients and Vitamin K helps in keeping your memory sharp and make it one of the best foods for brain health.

Eat eggs as they are rich in Vitamin D, which help improve the brain's cognitive skills.



TIPTOP

If you are taking Omega-3 pills or relish two-three servings of Omega-3 rich fish a week, you can continue with those, without worrying about its potential prostate cancer risk that some previous research with preliminary findings have reported in the past.

The researchers at the Intermountain Healthcare Heart Institute in Salt Lake City, Utah, US who continue to research the potential benefits and risks of this popular fish oil supplement especially when it comes to prostate cancer risk and heart health have found no link between the two.

Viet T Le from Intermountain Healthcare Heart Institute said they undertook this study in light of findings from a 2013 paper from the journal of the *National Cancer Institute* that suggested a possible link between higher Omega-3 plasma levels and the development of prostate cancer, one that has been debated since publication. "If I'm recommending Omega-3 for my patients to save their hearts, I want to make sure I'm not putting them at risk for prostate cancer. Our study found no evidence of a link between the two," Lee said.

"This study is important because we looked at how omega-3 helps patients who have already developed disease, and its effects on survival - both in getting to the first angiography to be diagnosed (vs. having a heart attack or worse before even knowing they have heart disease) and thereafter," Le elaborated. While a seeming association between higher plasma Omega-3 levels and the findings of severe heart disease upon initial angiogram might raise alarms that Omega-3 isn't beneficial, "they did live to see a doctor and get diagnosed," Le added. — IANS

The Himalaya Drug Company brings its flagship initiative — Muskaan to West Bengal. Championing the cause of treating cleft for children in need, Himalaya Lip Care launched its campaign 'Ek Mutho Hanshi' in Kolkata on November 18, 2019 in collaboration with Smile Train, the world's largest cleft charity, to provide free life-saving cleft surgeries to children. Rajesh Krishnamurthy, Business Director-Consumer Products Division, The Himalaya

Drug Company, kickstarted the event with great fervor. "This year, with our campaign we are committed to raising awareness in West Bengal about cleft and the importance of early intervention to help children with clefts lead a happy and fulfilling life. Through this initiative, more than 550 children have received cleft surgery till date. Our endeavour is to continue transforming the lives of many more children with clefts and help them achieve their dreams," he said.

STUDYCENTRE

Telling the difference between a teen's normal ups and downs or something bigger is among the top challenges parents face while identifying depression among the youth, says a new study. Forty per cent of parents struggle to differentiate between normal mood swings and signs of depression, while 30 per cent are tricked as their child hides his feelings well, according to a new national poll in the US.

According to the researchers, some parents might be overestimating their ability to recognise depression in the mood and behaviour of their own child. An overconfident parent may fail to pick up on the subtle signals that something is amiss. The poll also suggests that the topic of depression is all too familiar for middle and high school students.

One in four parents say their child knows a peer or classmate with depression, and one in 10 say their child knows a peer or classmate who has died by suicide. This level of familiarity with depression and suicide is consistent with recent statistics showing a dramatic increase in suicide among US youth over the past decade.

Rising rates of suicide highlight the importance of recognising depression in youth. Compared to the ratings of their own ability, parents polled were also less confident that their preteens or teens would recognise depression in themselves. — IANS

Sensex ends 72 pts lower; Yes Bank drops 4 pc

Market benchmark Sensex dropped by 72 points to close at 40,284.19 on Monday due to losses in private banks, IT and energy stocks amid concerns over the economic slowdown.

The 30-share index had opened on a firm note but turned negative in afternoon session due to profit booking in IT, banking and oil and gas stocks.

Similarly, the broader NSE Nifty slipped 10.95 points, or 0.09 per cent, to end at 11,884.50. As many as 29 of its constituents advanced while 20 dropped.

Yes Bank was among the top losers in the Sensex pack, falling up to 4.08 per cent, followed by Bajaj Auto, M&M, Hero MotoCorp, HDFC Bank, ONGC and TCS which declined up to 2.05 per cent.

On the other hand, Bharti Airtel, Tata Steel, Sun Pharma, PowerGrid, IndusInd Bank, Axis Bank, SBI, Vedanta and Tata Motors rose up to 4.60 per cent.

Broader BSE midcap and smallcap indices outperformed benchmarks, rising up to 0.44 per cent.

Despite positive cues from global markets, sentiment in

Gold prices fall on weak global trend

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Gold fell by ₹ 85 to Rs 38,775 per 10 gram on Monday, tracking weak international prices, according to HDFC Securities.

On Saturday, the yellow metal had closed at ₹ 38,860 per 10 gram.

“Spot gold prices for 24 Karat in Delhi were trading lower by ₹ 85 on strangled spot demand and weak international prices. The weakness in rupee, which fell around 7 paise against the dollar during the day, limited the down side in gold prices,” HDFC Securities Senior Analyst (Commodities) Tapan Patel said.

Silver prices also tumbled by ₹ 290 to ₹ 45,250 per kg from ₹ 45,540 per kg. In the international market, gold prices were trading lower at USD 1,464 an ounce, while silver was quoting at USD 16.88 per ounce.

the domestic market was subdued on account of multiple reports suggesting that the pace of India's economic growth may falter further, traders said.

“Post Q2 results, market seems to have entered an indecisive period of trade having rallied well in the last two months and lack of major data releases this week. Globally, investors are awaiting triggers on resolution of US-China trade tension and future inter-

est rate trajectory of US central bank. In the short-term volatility may stay but banks are expected to do well given a new life to distressed asset,” Vinod Nair, Head of Research, Geojit Financial Services said.

Markets remained flat throughout the day as investors were cautious, Paras Bothra, President of Equity Research, Ashika Stock Broking said.

Sectorally, BSE capital goods, auto, energy, FMCG, IT and industrials indices fell up

to 0.68 per cent. While BSE telecom, metal, basic materials, healthcare and utilities indices rose up to 3.42 per cent.

Metal stocks closed higher as the sentiment turned positive for base metals with the news that US and China are progressing gradually and in a more constructive manner on trade tariff front, Kotak Securities Senior Vice-President, Equity Technical Research, Shrikant Chouhan said.

NSE Metal index rose by 1.79 per cent, led by gains in Tata Steel (4.41 per cent), Hindalco (3.33 per cent) and SAIL (2.75 per cent).

Market breadth was negative as 1,404 stocks declined while 1,154 gained on BSE.

Bourses in Hong Kong, Tokyo and Shanghai settled on a positive note amid optimism about US-China trade talks while those in Seoul ended in the red. European equities were trading on a mixed note in their respective early deals.

Meanwhile, the Indian rupee depreciated marginally to 71.79 against the US dollar intra-day.

Brent crude futures, the global oil benchmark, rose 0.09 per cent to USD 63.36 per barrel.

Grant 3-year moratorium, extended timelines for payment of all dues: COAI to govt

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The government should grant telecom companies a three-year moratorium followed by an extended timeline for payment of all statutory dues at easier interest rates, as the telecom sector is reeling under massive losses after the Supreme Court ruling on AGR liabilities, COAI said on Monday.

Cellular Operators Association of India (COAI) Director General Rajan Mathews told PTI that operators need “oxygen” and urged the government to take a call on debt restructuring of all the dues that telecom operators owe to the government.

Mathews said most 4G licences have 11-year validity left, and that the government

could pack in another 10 years, thus allowing operators to pay back all the outstanding dues spread over the entire licence period.

“It is also time to redefine AGR (adjusted gross revenue) prospectively,” Mathews said.

The telecom industry has been haemorrhaging, with combined losses of listed mobile network firms surpassing Rs 1 lakh crore in the September-ended quarter.

Last week, India's two leading telecom operators Vodafone Idea and Bharti Airtel reported a combined loss of Rs 74,000 crore for the second quarter ended September 2019, mainly on account of statutory dues arising from the recent Supreme Court order on AGR.

The apex court upheld the

government's position of including revenue from non-telecommunication businesses in calculating the annual AGR of telecom companies, a share of which has to be paid as licence and spectrum fee to the exchequer. The ruling over statutory liabilities has triggered a rush for provisioning by telecom companies.

While Vodafone Idea posted a loss of Rs 50,921 crore, the highest-ever quarterly loss by any company in India, Airtel reported a loss of Rs 23,045 crore.

On Friday, Reliance Communication posted a consolidated loss of Rs 30,142 crore for the July-September 2019 period due to provisioning for liabilities after the Supreme Court ruling on statutory dues — marking second-

highest loss posted by any Indian company till date.

Airtel, Vodafone Idea and other telecom operators have to pay the government a whopping Rs 1.4 lakh crore following the Supreme Court order that has sent shock waves through an industry already grappling with past losses and billions of dollars in debt.

According to latest estimates by the telecom department, Bharti Airtel faces a liability of around Rs 62,187 crore (including share of Tata Group of companies and Telenor India), while Vodafone Idea may have to pay about Rs 54,184 crore. The remaining liability is with state-owned BSNL and MTNL and some of the shut or bankrupt telecom companies.

Tata Motors ties up with Lithium Urban for EV segment

New Delhi (PTI): Tata Motors on Monday said it has inked a pact with commercial EV fleet provider Lithium Urban Technologies to address mobility solutions across passenger, mass transit and freight segments.

As part of the agreement, the auto major will supply 400 Tiger EV units to Lithium Urban by the end of the current fiscal. Tata Motors said in a

statement.

The partnership also entails supply of 100 more electric vehicles, like the upcoming Nexon EV, from the company's stable, it added.

“This is not just the most significant milestone for Tata Motors' e-mobility business, but also a big turning point in the EV market, which is now likely to see fleets electrify faster than ever before,” Tata

Motors President - Electric Mobility Business & Corporate Strategy Shailesh Chandra said.

The company is committed to nurturing this valued partnership as it addresses the evolving mobility needs of customers through various disruptive business models, he added.

“The induction of new extended range Tiger EVs (213 km) and future EVs into our

portfolio will add further differentiation to our service offerings for passenger services,” Lithium Urban Technologies Founder Sanjay Krishnan said.

This partnership with Tata Motors will ensure availability of new form factors and enable viability of new market segments across passenger, mass transit and freight, he added.

NIFTY 50

Table with columns: SCRIP, OPEN, HIGH, LOW, LTP, CHANGE. Lists various stocks like BHARTIARTL, TATASTEEL, UPL, HINDALCO, BPCL, SUNPHARMA, JSWSTEEL, ZEE, GRASIM, POWERGRID, VEDL, INDUSINDBK, AXISBANK, ULTRACEMCO, TATAMOTORS, SBIN, INFY, ECHERMOT, HDPC, IOFC, IFRATEL, BAJAJFINSV, NTPC, GAIL, KOTAKBANK, DREDDY, TECHM, HINDUNILVR, ANDANPORTS, TITAN, ITC, HCLTECH, ICICIBANK, COALINDIA, MARUTI, RELIANCE, BAJFINANCE, CIPLA, WIPRO, LT, ASIANPAINT, TCS, HDFCBANK, NESTLEIND, ONGC, HEROMOTOCO, M&M, BRITANNIA, BAJAJ-AUTO, YESBANK.

BSE 500

Table with columns: Script, Open, High, Low, LTP. Lists various stocks like MARUTI, YESBANK, TCS, BHARTIARTL, SBIN, IBULHSGFIN, HINDUNILVR, JUBLANT, GLENMARK, TATASTEEL, RELIANCE, BPCL, IDEA, BAJFINANCE, RBLBANK, HT, LINDPETRO, JINDALSTEEL, TATAMOTORS, DMART, ICICIBANK, ULTRACEMCO, MUTHOOTFIN, WOCKPHARMA, JUSTDIAL, INFY, BAJAJ-AUTO, HDFCBANK, CROMPTON, ASHOKA, ZEE, IFRATEL, DREDDY, HINDALCO, ECHERMOT, SBILIFE, AUROPHARMA, HDFCAMEC, BANKBARODA, ASHOKLEY, SUNPHARMA, GRASIM, COLPAL, INDUSINDBK, APOLLUHOSP, HDPC, KOTAKBANK, IOC, AXISBANK, SIEMENS, VEDL, PFIZER, DISHTV, L&FHT, ITC, ACC, HEROMOTOCO, NTPC, BANGKINDIA, PNB, NESTLEIND, ASIAPAINTE, PFC, MGL, BHEL, UPL, JSWSTEEL, FEDERALBNK, NCC, MCX, WIPRO, CEATLTD, HDCLFICE, CIPLA, TATAGLOBAL, CANBK, MOTHERSUMI, LTI, INDIGO, FORTIS, MRF, PVR, POLYCAB, DABUR, PETRONET, COLPAL, AMBUJACEM, BANDHANBNK, HINDPETRO, SRTANSFIN, MARICO, SBILIFE, CONCOR, PGH, ICICIPRULI, INDIGO, LINDPETRO, HAVELLS, DIVISLAB, PEL, HDCLFICE, PAGEIND, SIEMENS, HDFCAMC, DABUR, PETRONET, TATAGLOBAL, MCDOWELL-N, ICICIGI, DMART, NIACL, GICRE.

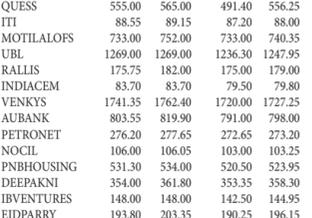
NIFTY NEXT 50

Table with columns: SCRIP, OPEN, HIGH, LOW, LTP, CHANGE. Lists various stocks like IDEA, PFC, AUROPHARMA, ASHOKLEY, CADILAH, DLF, IBULHSGFIN, BANKBARODA, SHREEMC, BIOCON, HINDZINC, GODREJCP, PNB, NMDC, BERGEPAINT, LUPIN, MOTHERSUMI, OFFS, BAJAHLNDG, NHP, BOSCHLTD, L&FHT, AMBUJACEM, BANDHANBNK, HINDPETRO, SRTANSFIN, MARICO, SBILIFE, CONCOR, PGH, ICICIPRULI, INDIGO, LINDPETRO, HAVELLS, DIVISLAB, PEL, HDCLFICE, PAGEIND, SIEMENS, HDFCAMC, DABUR, PETRONET, TATAGLOBAL, MCDOWELL-N, ICICIGI, DMART, NIACL, GICRE.

BSE Sensex NOV 18



NSE Nifty NOV 18



TOP GAINERS TOP LOSERS

Table with columns: Script, Open, High, Low, LTP. Lists top gainers like Yes Bank, Tata Steel, Sun Pharma, Power Grid, Hindalco, SAIL, Asian Paints.

TOP GAINERS TOP LOSERS

Table with columns: Script, Open, High, Low, LTP. Lists top losers like Bharti Airtel, Tata Steel, Sun Pharma, Power Grid, Hindalco, SAIL, Asian Paints.

AMARAJABAT, BBTCC, QUESA, ITI, MOTILALOFS, UBL, RALLIS, INDIACEM, VENKYS, AUBANK, PETRONET, NIOCIN, DPBANKING, PENHOSKI, INVENTURES, EIDPARRY, GLAXO, SWANENERGY, BALRAMCHANDR, EDLWEISS, IDBI, HFCL, AMANGREEN, MINDTREE, ANADIRTRANS, RADICO, FSL, CHAMBLFERT, RVNL, RAVINFLOOR, CASTROLIND, PININD, CRISIL, INDIANB, BAJAJELX, RPPOWER, MPHASIS, FINEORG, GICRE, AVANTI, DEPAK, ESCORTS, WELCORP, HINDZINC, NIAEL, FARGESVOCOT, NCLINDIA, HEXAWARE, RAIN, COMUMINSIND, ENGINEERSIN, BIOCON, AJANTPHARM, CUB, GNFC, PRESTIGE, IIFL, JPMFINANCIL, BOSCHLTD, PERSENT, SHRECEM, ABFRL, YUGUARD, KJTBRE, NESCO, AAVAS, HUDCO, INDHOTEL, ORIENTBANK, TV18BRCST, MOIL, FDC, ALKEM, SHANKARA, CENTRUM, RCF, JBCHEPHARM, LALPATHLAB, ADANIGAS, SUDARSCHEM, KTKBANK, PGHIL, ASTRAZEA, VINATIRZON, AYUDUSWELL, BAJAJCON, SCHAEFFLER, LAXMIMACH, TNPL, FRETAL, BIRRO, CAPPL, ITDC, SOUTHBANK, CROMBANDEL, FILF, GALAXYSURF, JYOTHYLAB, CANDINHOM, GILLETTE, HONAUT, MEGH, BALICO, COCHINSHIP, 746.70, 754.00, 742.35, 749.00, 1166.05, 1184.25, 1142.00, 1146.65, 555.00, 565.00, 491.40, 556.25, 88.55, 89.15, 87.20, 88.00, 733.00, 752.00, 733.00, 740.35, 1269.00, 1269.00, 1236.30, 1247.95, 175.75, 182.00, 175.00, 179.00, 83.70, 87.70, 79.50, 79.80, 1741.35, 1762.40, 1720.00, 1727.25, 803.55, 819.90, 791.00, 798.00, 276.20, 277.65, 272.65, 273.20, 106.00, 106.05, 103.25, 103.25, 531.30, 534.00, 520.52, 528.90, 803.55, 361.80, 353.35, 358.30, 148.00, 148.00, 142.50, 144.95, 193.80, 203.35, 190.25, 196.15, 1603.75, 1631.20, 1594.00, 1626.95, 101.00, 103.25, 100.45, 102.40, 148.70, 149.00, 142.65, 143.10, 40.05, 40.90, 40.00, 40.30, 131.20, 133.75, 126.80, 128.65, 33.50, 33.50, 32.55, 32.85, 17.25, 17.25, 17.00, 17.00, 96.00, 96.00, 97.00, 97.00, 693.65, 705.75, 687.00, 703.70, 49.50, 51.30, 46.00, 50.30, 268.95, 276.00, 265.85, 269.15, 314.85, 318.45, 303.60, 304.35, 42.00, 42.00, 40.50, 40.75, 24.55, 24.70, 24.20, 24.50, 919.00, 926.75, 894.60, 918.85, 145.20, 145.75, 143.10, 144.50, 48.60, 45.60, 46.00, 45.25, 148.90, 151.65, 142.85, 150.60, 117.10, 120.05, 116.90, 119.00, 323.00, 323.00, 312.00, 318.35, 3.80, 3.90, 3.80, 3.80, 915.00, 930.00, 909.90, 922.10, 1953.40, 2047.00, 1953.40, 2021.00, 259.80, 261.00, 244.60, 245.30, 351.50, 378.00, 350.00, 370.00, 42.00, 42.00, 40.00, 41.10, 9.00, 10.30, 9.90, 10.30, 968.00, 984.00, 967.05, 973.90, 21.50, 21.50, 21.50, 21.50, 196.70, 196.70, 191.05, 193.25, 289.65, 294.45, 287.20, 290.25, 156.80, 159.00, 152.00, 155.45, 94.95, 95.20, 92.75, 94.60, 666.20, 676.85, 638.60, 650.10, 15076.80, 15148.90, 14966.40, 15046.20, 57.00, 57.15, 55.00, 56.65, 1929.20, 2006.99, 1965.00, 1985.85, 212.85, 215.40, 208.30, 213.15, 230.50, 232.75, 228.00, 230.25, 614.35, 629.55, 612.00, 624.75, 1634.50, 1648.00, 1620.00, 1642.10, 43.50, 43.50, 42.50, 42.65, 155.60, 155.60, 152.60, 153.85, 52.20, 53.15, 52.00, 52.25, 23.85, 23.85, 21.95, 22.10, 142.00, 143.00, 140.10, 141.65, 185.55, 198.90, 184.45, 194.15, 2066.00, 2111.95, 2059.80, 2099.55, 331.40, 332.00, 315.00, 318.00, 21.50, 22.20, 21.00, 22.00, 48.40, 49.90, 48.35, 49.65, 40.60, 40.60, 39.70, 39.60, 101.00, 102.00, 157.80, 159.05, 14.00, 14.00, 14.00, 14.25, 304.45, 304.45, 297.00, 299.70, 614.35, 629.55, 612.00, 624.75, 141.50, 142.60, 138.65, 139.30, 24.65, 24.85, 24.45, 24.60, 25.50, 25.90, 25.20, 25.30, 101.00, 102.50, 99.40, 100.50, 61.00, 61.00, 58.10, 58.25, 24.00, 24.00, 2.12, 2.15, 2.10, 2.12, 1400.00, 1401.60, 1387.00, 1391.20, 153.00, 156.00, 148.25, 151.90, 60.35, 60.45, 59.00, 59.45, 146.50, 146.80, 141.45, 143.95, 23.10, 23.50, 22.75, 22.90, 9.95, 10.08, 9.90, 9.94, 141.50, 142.60, 138.65, 139.30, 24.65, 24.85, 24.45, 24.60, 25.50, 25.90, 25.20, 25.30, 97.00, 97.00, 99.40, 100.50, 101.00, 61.00, 58.10, 58.25, 24.00, 24.00, 2.12, 2.15, 2.10, 2.12, 898.00, 907.00, 891.00, 893.35, 141.95, 144.85, 141.45, 142.90, 304.45, 304.45, 297.00, 299.70, 342.00, 345.00, 336.25, 337.25, 67.00, 68.00, 65.80, 66.25, 294.55, 294.55, 292.70, 292.85, 81.05, 79.50, 79.75, 79.75, 35.30, 34.45, 34.45, 34.50, 27.45, 26.60, 27.10, 27.10, 292.15, 293.45, 300.75, 300.75

INTELLECT, KEC, APLIITD, BAJAJHLNDG, ASTRAL, PHOENIXLTD, TEAMLEASE, NETWORK18, HIMATSEIDE, TATAINVEST, EMAMILTD, JKCEMENT, HAL, TCNSBRANDS, BLUEARND, BLUEARND, OBEROIRLTY, ADVENZYME, MRPL, TINDIA, MMTC, SHK, SMINDIA, DHANUKA, FINOLEXIND, MINDXIND, REDINGTON, AKZOINDIA, SHRIDWELL, SHRIDWELL, CHOLAHLDNG, MAGMA, ALLCARGO, EIHRLD, ALLCARGO, EIHRLD, UDHIRABANK, GEPIL, NBVENTURES, GUYALKALI, DHFL, GAYAPRO, TIMECTECHO, RELCAPITAL, BASF, APARIND, MHRIIL, VSTIND, THYRCARE, WABCOINDIA, TTKPRESTIG, SREINFRA, GPPL, UNITEBANK, SYMPHONY, UNIMCORP, JSIJALQFN, GICHGFIN, CCL, MAHSEAMLES, CARBORUNIV, KPRMIL, VARROC, ALEANG, ORIENTCEM, MAHLOG, JCHAC, FINCABLES, SHILPAM, APALPOLLO, MAHSCOOTER, REPCHOOME, VMART, ZENSARTECH, MAHLIFE, MAXINDIA, ENDURANCE, ORIENTELEC, PRSMJOHNS, GHCL, INOXWIND, SUPRAJIT, SOMANYCHRA, TVSINDIA, INDOSTAR, HATHWAY, SOLARINDIA, TEJASNET, IFRIND, KALPATPOWR, GETRD, MAHABANK, ECLERX, GULFOILLUB, SIS, CERA, SFL, EVEREADY, RATNAMIND, SADBHAV, SHOPERSTOP, CHALET, HERTTFOOD, 146.00, 146.00, 142.00, 142.55, 282.90, 283.40, 276.75, 278.55, 534.15, 532.25, 523.50, 526.20, 80.90, 82.00, 79.95, 80.10, 176.50, 178.55, 173.65, 175.20, 45.95, 46.00, 44.00, 44.30, 840.45, 841.95, 828.80, 833.15, 36.00, 38.50, 35.25, 37.15, 52.70, 53.30, 51.70, 51.90, 93.95, 93.95, 85.50, 87.50, 195.50, 195.50, 193.00, 193.70, 565.00, 574.00, 552.00, 557.90, 818.75, 818.75, 792.65, 797.30, 504.60, 504.60, 497.00, 498.20, 319.95, 319.95, 305.25, 306.50, 1349.95, 1354.25, 1311.00, 1313.80, 8800.00, 8841.15, 8757.85, 8812.75, 1460.35, 1476.45, 1447.20, 1454.80, 402.35, 404.10, 395.00, 399.80, 140.25, 140.25, 136.00, 136.90, 334.00, 336.50, 321.20, 323.65, 191.95, 191.95, 188.25, 188.70, 53.15, 54.90, 51.65, 54.90, 22.50, 22.50, 20.85, 20.95, 319.95, 331.70, 319.00, 324.70, 3062.00, 3077.00, 3040.05, 3056.05, 64.45, 65.10, 63.25, 63.65, 15.50, 15.80, 14.73, 14.94, 200.20, 202.00, 193.55, 195.05, 11178.55, 11262.10, 11000.00, 11104.95, 37.60, 38.15, 37.20, 37.30, 550.00, 556.05, 540.00, 543.60, 872.20, 889.20, 862.00, 868.30, 69.50, 72.55, 69.05, 71.50, 105.80, 106.70, 102.40, 103.05, 2130.10, 2143.65, 2113.00, 2133.75, 445.00, 450.00, 439.80, 441.10, 800.80, 800.80, 782.20, 799.10, 304.60, 305.30, 300.50, 302.75, 519.55, 521.20, 512.10, 514.50, 71.80, 71.80, 70.30, 70.50, 469.55, 475.00, 465.00, 472.40, 173.45, 177.75, 170.25, 171.45, 134.30, 140.00, 133.00, 136.50, 141.70, 141.70, 136.00, 139.50, 549.50, 555.00, 545.00, 551.00, 196.80, 196.80, 186.80, 187.05, 223.40, 223.40, 219.25, 220.75, 3363.00, 3607.10, 3345.00, 3593.20, 1320.00, 1331.55, 1278.05, 1302.25, 23.30, 23.50, 23.20, 23.35, 30.35, 31.85, 30.65, 31.60, 397.00, 398.60, 392.40, 396.20, 53.80, 53.80, 48.50, 49.05, 573.05, 607.75, 573.05, 592.55, 1050.00, 1052.25, 1026.55, 1030.75, 170.00, 172.00, 167.00, 168.10, 189.70, 190.25, 186.55, 187.40, 1138.55, 1141.50, 1123.00, 1134.45, 246.85, 246.85, 245.00, 246.35, 359.95, 362.50, 358.10, 359.35, 207.90, 212.00, 204.10, 204.95, 153.00, 156.00, 148.25, 151.90, 60.35, 60.45, 59.00, 59.45, 146.50, 146.80, 141.45, 143.95, 23.10, 23.50, 22.75, 22.90, 9.95, 10.08, 9.90, 9.94, 141.50, 142.60, 138.65, 139.30, 24.65, 24.85, 24.45, 24.60, 25.50, 25.90, 25.20, 25.30, 97.00, 97.00, 99.40, 100.50, 61.00, 61.00, 58.10, 58.25, 24.00, 24.00, 2.12, 2.15, 2.10, 2.12, 1400.00, 1401.60, 1387.00, 1391.20, 153.00, 156.00, 148.25, 151.90, 60.35, 60.45, 59.00, 59.45, 146.50, 146.80, 141.45, 143.95, 23.10, 23.50, 22.75, 22.90, 9.95, 10.08, 9.90, 9.94, 141.50, 142.60, 138.65, 139.30, 24.65, 24.85, 24.45, 24.60, 25.50, 25.90, 25.20, 25.30, 97.00, 97.00, 99.40, 100.50, 61.00, 61.00, 58.10, 58.25, 24.00, 24.00, 2.12, 2.15, 2.10, 2.12, 898.00, 907.00, 891.00, 893.35, 141.95, 144.85, 141.45, 142.90, 304.45, 304.45, 297.00, 299.70, 342.00, 345.00, 336.25, 337.25, 67.00, 68.00, 65.80, 66.25, 294.55, 294.55, 292.70, 292.85, 81.05, 79.50, 79.75, 79.75, 35.30, 34.45, 34.45, 34.50, 27.45, 26.60, 27.1

Rajapaksa sworn in as Sri Lanka's President

PTI ■ COLOMBO

Gotabaya Rajapaksa was on Monday sworn in as Sri Lanka's seventh President at an ancient Buddhist temple, a venue chosen to reflect the massive mandate he got from the Sinhalese majority, as he vowed to protect all communities while giving foremost priority to Buddhism.

The swearing-in ceremony took place at the Ruwanweli Seya, a stupa and a hemispherical structure containing relics and considered sacred to Buddhists all over the world, in the ancient north central town of Anuradhapura, around 200 kms from the national capital Colombo. Rajapaksa is the first president to be sworn in outside Colombo.

Clad in immaculate white, Rajapaksa, 70, signed the official document in the presence of Chief Justice Jayantha Jayasuriya at the auspicious

time of 11:49 am after being administered the oath by the president's secretary Udaya R Seneviratne.

In a short speech, he thanked the powerful Buddhist clergy in the country for backing his presidential bid.

He also thanked the Sinhala-majority people for electing him.

"I knew I would win the presidency with support coming only from the Sinhala majority. I told the minorities to join me. I did not receive their support. But I will make sure that I will be president for everyone," he said.

Rajapaksa said he would protect all communities while giving foremost position to Buddhism.

His selection of the venue, the Ruwanwelisaya stupa and a hemispherical structure containing relics, is one of the eight most prominent Buddhist shrines and in line with the

massive mandate he won from the island's Buddhist majority.

The stupa which is considered sacred to Buddhists all over the world was built by King Dutugemunu in the 140 B.C., who reigned over the country after defeating Tamil King Elara.

Rajapaksa was credited for ending the military campaign of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) who ran a 30-year war to create a separate Tamil homeland in the north and east of the island.

Rajapaksa is the younger brother of the former President Mahinda Rajapaksa who was a special guest at the ceremony.

Later today, he is expected to appoint Mahinda the new prime minister.

He was a colonel in the Sri Lankan Army before leaving it to migrate to the US in 1992. He was until then in the battlefield against the LTTE in the north. Rajapaksa returned to

Sri Lanka when older brother Mahinda was named the presidential candidate in 2005. With his brother's victory he was appointed to the powerful position of Secretary to the Defense Ministry.

His sharp leadership skills and incisive decision makings were largely responsible for ending the LTTE's armed campaign. In 2006, he survived an assassination attempt carried out by the LTTE with minor injuries.

Rajapaksa is also the first civil servant to become president, only the first sibling of a president to win presidency, the first president in the history to be inducted in office without even spending a day as a parliamentarian.

Analysts said his large mandate on Saturday with over 1.3 million votes reflected the public confidence in his strong leadership and his ability for precise decision making.



Sri Lanka's newly elected president Gotabaya Rajapaksa, centre, greets people as he leaves after the swearing in ceremony held at the 140 B.C Ruwanweli Seya Buddhist temple in ancient kingdom of Anuradhapura in north central Sri Lanka on Monday. AP

Lanka may face a snap parliamentary poll after Rajapaksa win

PTI ■ COLOMBO

Sri Lanka faces the prospect of a snap parliamentary poll after Gotabaya Rajapaksa took over as the country's president on Monday, sources in the ruling United National Party (UNP) said. Rajapaksa was sworn in as the country's President at the Ruwanweli Seya precincts in the ancient north central town of Anuradhapura. The outgoing government's parliamentary group is to meet on Monday to discuss the way forward.

"This would mean opting for a fresh parliamentary election," a source in the UNP said.

The next parliamentary poll is scheduled only after August 2020.

However, after Rajapaksa's win in Saturday's presidential

election, the position of Prime Minister Ranil Wickremesinghe and his government has become untenable, analysts noted.

Constitutionally, a sitting prime minister cannot be removed unless he resigns. But Wickremesinghe is under pressure to quit.

Rajapaksa, 70, of the Sri Lanka Podujana Peramuna (SLPP) defeated Sajith Premadasa, 52, of the UNP by more than 13 lakh votes.

"As a party which honours democracy, we will discuss with parliamentary group, the Speaker and party leaders about parliamentary elections," a statement from Wickremesinghe's office said.

The UNP has been hit by the unexpected defeat and the scale of it. Several ministers

offered resignations, including the minister of finance Mangala Samaraweera.

Significantly, the resignations have come from the main backers of the candidature of Premadasa. They defied the party leadership to run a public campaign to force Wickremesinghe to name Premadasa as the party candidate. "This is meaningless. They should have come to a collective decision to resign," Lakshman Kirielia, a senior minister said.

Since his defeat, Premadasa resigned from his party position as deputy leader and has even hinted he may quit politics altogether.

Rajapaksa's political party sources said that government has no moral right now to continue in office after such a loss.

"It is only logical that we face a new election to appoint a fresh parliament in line with the big mandate on Saturday," a SLPP spokesman said.

To declare a snap poll, parliament will have to pass a resolution with two-third support. With the UNP now in crisis and the Rajapaksa camp which is buoyant after presidential election win, a resolution for dissolution appears a likelihood, analysts noted.

A snap poll at this stage, rather than later would strengthen Rajapaksa's hold on power with a clear working majority, they said.

President Rajapaksa can dismiss the parliament to order fresh polls after February next year which will be ahead of the scheduled end of term in August, they said.

Former Malaysian PM Najib's third corruption trial opens

AP ■ KUALA LUMPUR

Former Malaysian leader Najib Razak's third corruption trial opened Monday, with prosecutors saying Najib had tampered with a government audit of the 1MDB state investment fund in a bid to avoid civil and criminal proceedings.

Najib, 66, faces multiple corruption charges linked to the looting of the 1MDB fund, a scandal that contributed to his election defeat last year.

Prosecutor Gopal Sri Ram said Najib was the "supreme power" in 1MDB and had sought to cover up his tracks when the scandal first broke out in public in mid-2015. Sri Ram said his team will show how Najib had abused his power to alter or remove mate-

rial information from the Auditor-General's report on 1MDB before it was presented to the Public Accounts Committee in parliament.

Sri Ram said the meddling was to cover up the extent of his role and that of fugitive Malaysian financier Low Taek Jho, better known as Jho Low, in the affairs of the fund. He described Low as Najib's "mirror image or alter ego." "There were passages in the report that caused concern to Najib, though they were true in fact. He became non-plussed, if not agitated. He took positive steps to have these passages altered or removed," Sri Ram said in his opening remarks.

He said Najib knew "if the truth emerged, he would be exposed to civil and criminal liabilities." Najib denies any

wrongdoing and accuses Malaysia's new government of seeking political vengeance. The former leader, whose father and uncle were the country's second and third prime ministers respectively, could face years in prison if convicted. His lawyers say he was misled by rogue bankers led by Jho Low, identified by the United States as the mastermind behind the scandal and wanted in both countries.

Najib is being jointly tried with Arul Kanda Kandasamy, 1MDB ex-CEO, who is accused of abetting him. Monday's trial opened just days after another court ordered Najib to enter his defense in his first corruption case linked to money entering his account from a former 1MDB unit.

His ongoing second trial

started in August.

In all, Najib faces 42 charges of criminal breach of trust, graft, abuse of power and money laundering in five criminal cases over 1MDB corruption that led to investigations in the US and several countries. His wife and stepson, several officials from his government, and the US firm Goldman Sachs also face charges related to the scandal. US investigators say at least USD 4.5 billion was stolen from 1MDB by Najib's associates and laundered through layers of bank accounts in the US and other countries to finance Hollywood films and buy hotels, a luxury yacht, art works, jewelry and other extravagances. More than USD 700 million from the fund allegedly landed in Najib's bank account.

China defends troop deployment in HK

AFP ■ BANGKOK

China's military on Monday defended a brief deployment of soldiers onto Hong Kong's streets, as it warned ending violence was the "most pressing task" in the city.

Dozens of soldiers emerged from their barracks in Hong Kong on Saturday to help clean up nearby streets of debris and barricades strewn out by pro-democracy protesters.

The brief clean-up operation came at the end of a week of particularly intense clashes between police and protesters that had caused chaos across Hong Kong.

"There were some Hong Kong citizens clearing roadblocks near the PLA Hong Kong garrison," Chinese defence ministry spokesman Wu Qian told reporters at a security event in Bangkok when asked about the brief deployment.

"The soldiers from the PLA Hong Kong garrison joined these citizens in clearing these roadblocks and their efforts were welcomed by Hong Kong citizens." Throughout the crisis, China has repeatedly warned that it will not give in to any of the protesters' demands, and that it will not tolerate enduring violence in the city.



demands, and that it will not tolerate enduring violence in the city.

After another weekend of violence and protesters setting fire to the entrance of a university

entrance on Monday morning to defend themselves from police, Wu issued another

warning. "Ending violence and restoring order is the most pressing task we have in Hong Kong," Wu said after China's defence minister Wei Fenghe met his US counterpart, Mark Esper, in Bangkok.

China's People Liberation Army has maintained a garrison in Hong Kong since the former British colony was returned to China in 1997.

But its troops rarely leave their barracks. The last time soldiers were seen on Hong Kong's streets was in 2018 to clean up after a typhoon.

According to Hong Kong's Basic Law, troops from mainland China can operate in the city if local authorities request it. Hong Kong authorities may "when necessary", ask the central government for assistance from the garrison "in the maintenance of public order and in disaster relief", according to Article 14.

Article 18 of the Basic Law allows the central government to effectively suspend Hong Kong's laws if there is a "state of war" or "turmoil" which "endangers national security or unity". Hong Kong's government said on Saturday that it did not request the Chinese troops to clean up the streets.

Protesters set fire to hold off police at HK campus

PTI ■ HONG KONG

Pro-democracy demonstrators holed up in a Hong Kong university campus set the main entrance ablaze Monday to prevent surrounding police moving in, after officers warned they may use live rounds if confronted by deadly weapons.

The police warning, which came after one officer was struck by an arrow, marked a further escalation of the near six-month crisis engulfing the city.

China has repeatedly warned that it will not tolerate dissent, and there are growing concerns that Beijing could intervene directly to end the spiralling unrest.

Several loud blasts were heard around dawn on Monday before a wall of fire lit up an entrance to the Hong Kong Polytechnic University (PolyU), AFP reporters said, as what appeared to be a police attempt to enter the campus was repelled by protesters determined to hold their ground.

Police said they had fired three live rounds in the early hours of Monday at a protest site near the university but that no one appeared to have been hit.

Intense clashes throughout Sunday, which saw a police officer hit in the leg by an arrow and protesters meet police tear gas with volleys of petrol bombs, rolled overnight across the Kowloon district, as a call went out to defend the besieged campus. There, protesters had hunkered down under umbrellas from occasional fire from police water cannon and hurled Molotov cocktails at an armoured vehicle, leaving it ablaze on a flyover near the campus.

Police declared the campus a "riot" scene — rioting is punishable by up to 10 years in jail — and blocked exits as spokesman Louis Lau issued a stark warning in a Facebook live broadcast. "I hereby warn rioters not



to use petrol bombs, arrows, cars or any deadly weapons to attack police officers," he said.

"If they continue such dangerous actions, we would have no choice but to use the minimum force necessary, including live rounds, to fire back."

Three protesters have been shot by police in the unrelenting months of protests, but all in scuffles as chaotic street clashes played out — and without a sweeping warning being given by a force that overwhelmingly depends on tear gas, water cannon and rubber bullets.

Fear gripped protesters still trapped inside the campus — whose occupation is a twist in tactics by a leaderless movement so far defined by its fluid, unpredictable nature.

"I feel scared. There's no way out. All I can do is fight to the end," one protester joining the barricade in front of the university building said early Monday.

Owen Li, a PolyU council member and student, said panic had taken hold of the few hundred protesters believed to be holed up.

"Many friends feel helpless... we appeal to all of society to come out and help us." Throughout Sunday, activists parried attempts by police to break through into the campus, firing rocks using a homemade catapult from the university roof, while an AFP

reporter saw a team of masked archers — several carrying sports bows — patrolling the site.

Violence has worsened in recent days, with two men killed in separate incidents linked to the protests this month.

Chinese President Xi Jinping this week issued his most strident comments on the crisis, saying it threatened the "one country, two systems" model under which Hong Kong has been ruled since the 1997 handover from Britain.

Demonstrators last week engineered a "Blossom Everywhere" campaign of blockades and vandalism, which forced the police to draft in prison officers as reinforcements, shut down large chunks of Hong Kong's transport network and closed schools and shopping malls.

The protests started against a now-shelved bill to allow extradition to China but have billowed to encompass wider issues such as perceived police brutality and calls for fully free elections in the former British colony.

The financial hub has been nudged into a recession by the unrelenting turmoil. A poster circulating on social media called for the "dawn action" to continue on Monday. "Squeeze the economy to increase pressure," it said.

China lashes out at NY Times report on Xinjiang documents

AP ■ BEIJING

China's foreign ministry lashed out at The New York Times on Monday over its release of leaked documents portraying the inner workings of Beijing's campaign to detain more than a million Muslims in reeducation camps.

Spokesman Geng Shuang accused the newspaper of ignoring the true reasons behind and success of what China terms a campaign to end poverty, separatism and religious extremism. He said the fact Xinjiang hasn't suffered a terrorist attack in three years — about the length of the time the internments have been carried out in earnest — demon-

strates the correctness of the policy.

Geng told reporters at a daily briefing that the article is a "clumsy patchwork" based on "selected interpretation" of the documents.

"It is hyping up these so-called internal documents to smear China's efforts in Xinjiang. What is the agenda?" he said.

Geng said China would continue "to do a good job" in implementing policies in Xinjiang aimed at expanding development and prosperity.

"Xinjiang's continuing prosperity, stability, ethnic unity and social harmony are the strongest refutation to the allegations by certain media

and individuals," he said.

Geng did not question the validity of the documents, which detail among other things the pivotal role played by President and Communist Party leader Xi Jinping in demanding a harsh crackdown in Xinjiang.

Xi is quoted as warning that economic development alone will not extinguish demands for independence among Xinjiang's Uighurs and other Muslim groups, who are linguistically, culturally and religiously distinct from China's majority Han people and make up about half of the vast, resource-rich region's population of 25 million. Xi is also quoted as endors-

ing a more forceful indoctrination campaign among Muslims, seen as leading to the establishment of the sprawling network of camps.

"There must be effective educational remodeling and transformation of criminals," he told officials in heavily Uighur south Xinjiang during a 2014 trip.

"And even after these people are released, their education and transformation must continue." China first denied the existence of the camps, then described them as de-radicalization centers aimed at providing job training to raise living standards and make Muslims less susceptible to religious extremism and sepa-

ratism.

Those released from the camps describe them as virtual prisons where conditions are difficult and punishments harsh. They say they are forced to renounce Islam and Uighur culture as backward and swear loyalty to Xi and the Communist Party in what some call a campaign of cultural genocide.

The camp network is the lynchpin of a systematic attack on Muslim culture that has seen families torn apart and forced to host party workers in their homes to spy on them, mosques demolished and young Muslims forced to return from studying abroad.

Democrats invite Trump to testify in impeachment inquiry

AP ■ WASHINGTON

Democratic House Speaker Nancy Pelosi invited President Donald Trump to testify in front of investigators in the House impeachment inquiry ahead of a week that will see several key witnesses appear publicly.

Pushing back against accusations from the president that the process has been stacked against him, Pelosi said Trump is welcome to appear or answer questions in writing, if he chooses.

"If he has information that is exculpatory, that means ex, taking away, culpable, blame, then we look forward to seeing it," she said in an interview that aired Sunday on CBS's "Face the Nation."

Trump "could come right

before the committee and talk, speak all the truth that he wants if he wants," she said.

Senate Democratic leader Chuck Schumer echoed that suggestion.

"If Donald Trump doesn't agree with what he's hearing, doesn't like what he's hearing, he shouldn't tweet. He should come to the committee and testify under oath. And he should allow all those around him to come to the committee and testify under oath," Schumer told reporters.

He said the White House's insistence on blocking witnesses from cooperating begs the question: "What is he hiding?" The comments come as the House Intelligence Committee prepares for a second week of public hearings as part of its inquiry, including

with the man who is arguably the most important witness.

Gordon Sondland, Trump's ambassador to the European Union, is among the only people interviewed to date who had direct conversations with the president about the situation because the White House has blocked others from cooperating with what they dismiss as a sham investigation. And testimony suggests he was intimately involved in discussions that are at the heart of the investigation into whether Trump held up US military aid to Ukraine to try to pressure the country's president to announce an investigation into Democrats, including former Vice President Joe Biden, a leading 2020 candidate, and his son, Hunter.

Multiple witnesses over-

heard a phone call in which Trump and Sondland reportedly discussed efforts to push for the investigations. In private testimony to impeachment investigators made public Saturday, Tim Morrison, a former National Security Council aide and longtime Republican defense hawk, said Sondland told him he was discussing Ukraine matters directly with Trump.

Morrison said Sondland and Trump had spoken approximately five times between July 15 and Sept. 11 — the weeks that \$391 million in U.S. assistance was withheld from Ukraine before it was released.

And he recounted that Sondland told a top Ukrainian official in a meeting that the vital US military assistance

might be freed up if the country's top prosecutor "would go to the mike and announce that he was opening the Burisma investigation." Burisma is the gas company that hired Hunter Biden.

Morrison's testimony contradicted much of what Sondland told congressional investigators during his own closed-door deposition, which the ambassador later amended.

Trump has said he has no recollection of the overheard call and has suggested he barely knew Sondland, a wealthy donor to his 2016 campaign. But Democrats are hoping he sheds new light on the discussions.

"I'm not going to try to pre-judge his testimony," Rep. Jim Himes, D-Conn., said on "Fox News Sunday." But he suggest-

ed, "it was not lost on Ambassador Sondland what happened to the president's close associate Roger Stone for lying to Congress, to Michael Cohen for lying to Congress. My guess is that Ambassador Sondland is going to do his level best to tell the truth, because otherwise he may have a very unpleasant legal future in front of him."

The committee will also be interviewing a long list of others. On Tuesday, they'll hear from Morrison along with Jennifer Williams, an aide to Vice President Mike Pence, Alexander Vindman, the director for European affairs at the National Security Council, and Kurt Volker, the former US special envoy to Ukraine.

On Wednesday the com-

mittee will hear from Sondland in addition to Laura Cooper, a deputy assistant secretary of defense, and David Hale, a State Department official. And on Thursday, Fiona Hill, a former top NSC staffer for Europe and Russia, will appear.

Trump, meanwhile, continued to tweet and retweet a steady stream of commentary from supporters as he bashed "The Crazed, Do Nothing Democrats" for "turning Impeachment into a routine partisan weapon." "That is very bad for our Country, and not what the Founders had in mind!!!" he wrote.

He also tweeted a doctored video exchange between Rep. Adam Schiff, the Democratic chairman of the Intelligence Committee, and Republican Rep. Jim Jordan, in

which Schiff said he did not know the identity of the whistleblower whose complaint triggered the inquiry.

The clip has been altered to show Schiff wearing a referee's uniform and loudly blowing a whistle.

In her CBS interview, Pelosi vowed to protect the whistleblower, whom Trump has said should be forced to come forward despite longstanding whistleblower protections.

"I will make sure he does not intimidate the whistleblower," Pelosi said.

Trump has been under fire for his treatment of one of the witnesses, the former ambassador to Ukraine, Marie Yovanovitch, whom Trump criticized by tweet as she was testifying last week.

Labour Party hammering out election platform

AP ■ LONDON

Labour Party leaders are meeting Saturday to hammer out the details of their platform for next month's UK election amid tensions over immigration, which has been central to the debate over Britain's withdrawal from the European Union.

Party leader Jeremy Corbyn refused to answer questions about the issue as he arrived for the meeting in central London, saying only that the final policy statement would be "transformative to the lives of people all over this country."

Party officials in September backed a radical policy of expanding the rights of people to live and work in the UK, including granting all residents the right to vote. But some Labour members suggest putting such language in the party's election manifesto would be politically damaging because many people voted for Brexit because they were uneasy about uncontrolled

immigration from the EU.

"I think the public voted for change in the way the immigration arrangements work with Europe," Greater Manchester Mayor Andy Burnham told Sky News on Saturday.

"To deny that, I think, would be to deny what many people were saying when they went to vote in 2016, and that's just, in my view, a fact. It doesn't help politicians, it doesn't help Parliament, if they look like they're kind of cooed away from that public view."

As a European Union member, the UK is required to permit the free movement of labor within the bloc, meaning all citizens of other EU countries have the right to live and work in the country. The same rights apply for British citizens to live and work elsewhere in the EU.

Immigration has been a central issue in the debate over EU membership. While Brexit supporters argue that Britain needs to regain control of its



boundaries to protect jobs and communities, supporters of continued ties with Europe contend that immigrants are essential to the country's economic health and vitality.

It isn't clear exactly when Labour will release its manifesto, with party leaders trying to control the release of any details until they are formally unveiled.

Meanwhile, London's Metropolitan Police Service said Saturday that it is investigating "two allegations of electoral fraud and malpractice."

The investigation follows a request from a senior Labour Party figure, Charlie Falconer, who asked authorities to look into allegations that Brexit Party candidates were offered jobs or peerages if they would

agree not to run against members of the governing Conservative Party in the election on Dec. 12.

Brexit Party candidate Ann Widdecombe told the BBC she had been offered a role in the next stage of Brexit negotiations if she would step aside. Party leader Nigel Farage alleges that people working for Prime Minister Boris Johnson told senior party members they could be made peers if they persuaded him to withdraw more of his candidates.

The Brexit Party's performance in the election could be pivotal to the result because the Brexit debate cuts across traditional party lines. By running against Conservative candidates, the Brexit Party risks splitting the pro-Brexit vote and helping candidates that want Britain to remain in the EU.

That could potentially deny the Conservatives a majority in the House of Commons, hampering Johnson's effort to push his withdrawal deal through Parliament.

Pope to visit Hiroshima on anti-nuclear weapon mission

AFP ■ VATICAN CITY

Pope Francis, who years ago hoped to be a missionary in Japan, travels to the sites of the world's only atomic attacks this week seeking a ban on nuclear weapons.

The Argentine pontiff, 82, flies to Asia on Tuesday, where he will first visit Thailand and then Japan, including the two cities destroyed by devastating US nuclear attacks during the Second World War.

Despite both countries having less than 0.6 percent Catholic populations, Francis is thirsty for interreligious dialogue with them.

He will arrive in Thailand on Wednesday before flying on to Japan on Saturday, where he will stay until November 26.

Sunday is set to be a marathon day with visits to Nagasaki and Hiroshima, where at least 74,000 people and 140,000 people respectively were killed by the atomic bombs attacks.

The August 6, 1945 bombing of Hiroshima and of Nagasaki three days later contributed to Japan's surrender and the end of the Second World War on August 15, months after Nazi Germany capitulated.

Father Yoshio Kajiyama, director of the Jesuit social centre in Tokyo, was born in Hiroshima shortly after the war and is eagerly awaiting the pope's anti-nuclear speech.

"My grandfather died the day of the bomb in Hiroshima, I never knew him. Four days later my aunt died when she was 15 years old," said the 64-year-old. "If you grow up in Hiroshima, you can't forget the bomb." The pope will make "as vigorous an appeal as possible in favour of concerted measures to completely

eliminate nuclear weapons," Vatican number two Cardinal Pietro Parolin told the United Nations in September.

"Using atomic energy to wage war is immoral," the head of the world's 1.3 billion Catholics told Japanese television in September.

A previous member of Japan's diplomatic mission to the Vatican, Shigeru Tokuyasu, said he hopes the visit will pull the world back from "the globalisation of indifference" over nuclear weapons.

But, said Tokuyasu, the pope should avoid discussing the politically sensitive issue of nuclear energy.

Francis is also to meet victims of the devastating 2011 earthquake that struck north-eastern Japan and the subsequent tsunami that between them killed 18,500 people and sparked the nuclear power catastrophe at Fukushima.

Francis is used to railing against countries that make money from weapons and has already voiced his fear of a nuclear war.

In January last year, he printed cards with a photo of a Nagasaki bomb victim, inscribing the words "the fruit of war" above his signature.

The 1945 photo, captured by American photographer Joe O'Donnell, showed a small boy standing ramrod straight carrying his dead younger brother on his back while waiting for his turn at a cremation site. The late pope John Paul II visited Japan in 1981, where at Hiroshima's peace monument he pointed to war as "the work of man". In August, the city of Hiroshima called on Japan to sign the UN treaty calling for a ban on nuclear weapons, something that all the world's nuclear powers have refused to do.

N Korea says it won't give Trump a summit for free

AP ■ SEOUL

North Korea on Monday responded to a tweet by US President Donald Trump that hinted at another summit with North Korean leader Kim Jong Un, saying it has no interest in giving Trump further meetings to brag about unless it gets something substantial in return.

The statement by Foreign Ministry adviser Kim Kye Gwan is the latest call by North Korea for US concessions ahead of an end-of-year deadline set by Kim Jong Un for the Trump administration to offer mutually acceptable terms for a deal to salvage nuclear diplomacy.

Following a US decision over the weekend to call off joint military exercises with South Korea to create space for diplomacy with the North, Trump in a tweet urged Kim Jong Un to "act quickly, get the deal done" and hinted at another summit between them, saying "See you soon!"

But Kim Kye Gwan reiterated his government's stance that Washington must discard what North Korea sees as "hostile" policies to keep the negotiations alive.

"Three rounds of DPRK-US summit meetings and talks were held since June last year, but no particular improvement

has been achieved in the DPRK-US relations ... the US only seeks to earn time, pretending it has made progress in settling the issue of the Korean Peninsula," he said in a statement carried by the official Korean Central News Agency, referring to North Korea by the initials of its formal name, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea.

"We are no longer interested in such talks that bring nothing to us. As we have got nothing in return, we will no longer gift the US president with something he can boast of, but get compensation for the successes that President Trump is proud of as his administrative achievements."

Kim Kye Gwan is a veteran diplomat who led the North Korean delegation at much of the now-dormant six-nation nuclear disarmament talks held in Beijing in 2003-2008.

His statement came hours after KCNA reported that Kim Jong Un supervised a parachuting drill by military sharpshooters and vowed to build an "invincible army," displaying more defiance despite the decision by the U.S. and South Korea to shelve their drills.

It was North Korea's second publicized military drill in three days. A report Saturday said Kim urged combat pilots to prepare

against enemies "armed to the teeth" while attending a flight demonstration.

North Korea has been ramping up missile tests and other military demonstrations in recent months in an apparent pressure tactic over the talks.

Negotiations have faltered since a February summit between Kim and Trump in Vietnam which broke down after the US rejected North Korean demands for broad sanctions relief in exchange for a partial surrender of its nuclear capabilities.

Kim later issued his end-of-year deadline and has also said the North would seek a "new path" if the United States persists with sanctions and pressure.

Working-level talks last month in Sweden broke down over what the North Koreans described as the Americans' "old stance and attitude."

North Korea last week said the United States has proposed a resumption of negotiations in December. Kim Myong Gil, who was the North's main negotiator for the Stockholm talks, didn't clearly say whether the North would accept the supposed U.S. offer and said the country has no interest in talks if they are aimed at buying time without discussing solutions.

Loyalists sweep Belarus vote as opp gets no seats

AFP ■ MINSK

Candidates loyal to Belarus's authoritarian President Alexander Lukashenko have swept to victory in parliamentary elections, results showed Monday, with the opposition failing to take a single seat.

Critics had already denounced Sunday's vote as a fraud and said it was rife with violations, despite Lukashenko's recent efforts to reach out to the West.

Official results released Monday showed parties loyal to Lukashenko taking all 110 seats in the House of Representatives, the lower chamber of a parliament dubbed a rubber stamp by critics. The opposition had previously held two seats in the chamber.

The 65-year-old Lukashenko—who has been dubbed "Europe's last dictator"—has ruled the ex-Soviet nation since 1994 and overseen a series of elections that international observers have deemed unfair.

The country is set to hold a presidential election next year and as he cast his ballot on Sunday Lukashenko confirmed he would again be a candidate.

He said he understood that Western countries would be watching the parliamentary vote but that it was Belarusians who would have the last word.

"We hold this vote in our country for our people, to make things better, and we hold it in the way we understand." Those critical of Lukashenko faced little choice at the ballot box, with the main opposition leaders and the only two current opposition MPs barred from standing. An election monitoring campaign organised by opposition parties reported multiple violations on voting day, including officials inflating voter numbers. Rights activists monitoring the vote complained observers were thrown out, banned from taking photographs and had their view blocked.

According to the authorities, more than 35 per cent of the 6.8 million electorate voted ahead of polling day. Turnout reached 77 per cent, according to the official results.

In recent months Lukashenko has been making renewed attempts to reach out to Western nations, which have been critical of his record on human rights and democ-

racy. He made a rare visit to western Europe this month, meeting Austrian leaders in Vienna and saying he wanted the European Union to be "an important political and business partner" for his country.

He also hosted then White House national security advisor John Bolton for rare talks in Minsk in August, saying a "new chapter" was opening in ties with Washington.

Lukashenko is seeking a counterweight in relations with giant neighbour Russia, which is keen to ensure Belarus remains in its sphere of influence.

The countries have formed a nominal "union", with close trade and military cooperation, but Lukashenko has opposed outright unification. EU spokeswoman Maja Kocijancic has said the bloc was watching Sunday's election closely. But there was little optimism among foreign observers for a more democratic vote.

People did not expect polls to be "genuinely competitive" and "had little confidence in the process", the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe, an international election and war monitor, said in a preliminary report.

'Indian sent over 202k students to US in 2018-19'

PTI ■ WASHINGTON

India sent more than 202,000 students to the US in 2018-19, the second largest after China which for the tenth consecutive year remained the largest source of foreign students in America, according to a report released on Monday.

The "2019 Open Doors Report on International Educational Exchange" said the number of foreign students in the US set an all-time high in the 2018-19 academic year, the fourth consecutive year with more than one million international students.

The data from the US Department of Commerce

stated that international students contributed USD 44.7 billion to the US economy in 2018, an increase of 5.5 per cent from the previous year.

For the tenth consecutive year, China has remained the largest source of international students in the US in 2018-19 with 369,548 students and India with 202,014 students sends second largest number of foreign students to the United States, the report said.

The total number of international students was 1,095,299, a 0.05 per cent increase over last year, it said, adding that international students make up 5.5 per cent of the total US higher education population.

Students from India and

China account for more than 50 per cent of international students, said the report that was released by Institute of International Education (IIE) and US Department of State's Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs.

"We are happy to see the continued growth in the number of international students in the United States and US students studying abroad," said Marie Royce, Assistant Secretary of State for Educational and Cultural Affairs.

"Promoting international student mobility remains a top priority for the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs and we want even more students in the future to

see the United States as the best destination to earn their degrees," she said.

According to the report, China remained the largest source of international students in the United States in 2018/19 with 369,548 students in undergraduate, graduate, non-degree, and optional practical training (OPT) programs, a 1.7 per cent increase from 2017/18.

India (202,014, +2.9 per cent), South Korea (52,250), Saudi Arabia (37,080), and Canada (26,122, +0.8 per cent) round out the top five, the report said.

Emerging market countries showed some of the strongest growth year over year, especially Bangladesh

(+10.0 per cent), Brazil (+9.8 per cent), Nigeria (+5.8 per cent), and Pakistan (+5.6 per cent), the report said.

As many as 51.6 per cent of international students in the US pursued STEM fields in 2018/19 and the number of international students in Math and Computer Science programs grew by 9.4 per cent, surpassing Business and Management to become the second largest field of study for international students, it said.

Engineering remained the largest academic field for international students in 2018/19, with 21.1 per cent of all international students.

The number of students enrolling for the first time at

a US institution in 2018/19 declined by 0.9 per cent, recovering from sharper declines the year before, it said.

According to the report, in the 2017/18 academic year, 341,751 US students participated in study abroad programmes for academic credit, a 2.7 per cent increase over the previous year.

European countries remain the most popular destinations for US study abroad students with 54.9 per cent of study abroad students going to Europe in 2017/18.

The United Kingdom, Italy, Spain, France, and Germany hosted the most US study abroad students, it said.

PTI ■ ISLAMABAD

Pakistan on Monday conducted a successful test launch of a surface-to-surface ballistic missile capable of delivering all types of warheads up to 650 kilometres, the military announced.

According to a press release issued by the media wing of Pakistani military, the launch of Shaheen-1 missile was held as part of a training exercise "aimed at testing the operational readiness of Army Strategic Forces Command".

The Shaheen-1 missile is capable of delivering all types of warheads up to range of 650 KMs, the Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR) tweeted.

"The launch was aimed at testing operational readiness of Army Strategic Forces Command (ASFC) ensuring Pakistan's credible minimum deterrence," it said.

The Pakistani missile test came days after India con-

ducted the first night trial of 'Agni-II', its versatile surface-to-surface medium range nuclear-capable missile.

The 'Agni-II' missile has a strike range of 2,000 km and is an intermediate range ballistic missile. It has already been inducted into the armed forces.

The Pakistani missile test took place amid bilateral tensions between India and Pakistan after New Delhi abrogated the provisions of Article 370 of the Constitution to revoke Jammu and Kashmir's special status and bifurcated it into two union territories.

Pakistan reacted strongly to India's decision and downgraded bilateral ties and expelled the Indian envoy.

India has categorically told the international community that the scrapping of Article 370 was an internal matter. It has also advised Pakistan to accept the reality and stop all anti-India propaganda.

Trend Slazer

Aamir unveils his new look

Superstar **AAMIR KHAN** unveiled his look from *Laal Singh Chaddha*. He shared his look on Twitter while introducing himself as, "Sat Sri Akaal ji, myself Laal Singh Chaddha."

The actor wears a pink and grey-checked shirt and grey trousers with a powder pink turban. He can also be seen sporting a long beard.

The film is an adaptation of *Forrest Gump*, Robert Zemeckis' multiple Oscar-winning film which was released in 1994 and starred Tom Hanks with Robin Wright.

The actor is set to co-produce the Hindi adaptation along with Viacom18 Motion Pictures.

Aamir has lost 20 kg to play the younger version of his role.



'Nowadays, there is a trend of taking steroids but it's a very wrong thing to do. I feel

no one should use steroids. In fact, a lot of people misuse them, which could be bad for one's body as it can damage the liver and kidney. There are a lot of people who have died doing exercises in the gym because of heart failure. A body made from steroids cannot last long.'

—Salman Khan



Actor **NEHA DHUPIA** has an adorable birthday wish for her daughter Mehr, who turned one on Monday.

The actor took to Twitter to share a couple of photos. Neha wrote, "Happy first birthday our little angel. My heart is so full of love. I don't know what I am capable of giving you but you gave me the best gift of my life, the gift of motherhood. May god bless you. *Guru 'Mehr' Karein.*"

Kylie sells stake in beauty brand

Reality TV star **KYLIE JENNER** is selling a stake of her beauty brand to Coty, the owner of CoverGirl makeup.

Coty Inc. will pay \$600 million for a 51 per cent stake in Kylie Cosmetics, valuing it at about \$1.2 billion. Coty says it plans to launch more products under the Kylie brand and sell them in more countries around the world.

Jenner, part of the *Keeping Up with the Kardashians* reality show family, founded her company four years ago, relying on her hundreds of millions of social media followers to promote the brand, which includes her popular lip liner. Last year she struck a deal to sell her goods in 1,100 Ulta Beauty stores.

Coty says Jenner will still be the face of the brand and be involved in creating new products.



What makes one a true gentleman? Do the likes of a certain Mr Darcy or Rhett Butler come to your mind? Or is it the more contemporary take by actor Ayushmann Khurrana who points out the gender stereotypes that men are bogged down by even today? In the latest ad by the grooming brand, The Man Company, the actor makes the point that in recent times, being called a 'gentleman' has less to do with the last name or profession and more with the mindset and attitude. The narration of the video goes on like... *Mard ka ek stereotype hai. Woh ghar chalayega, woh ladki ko bi bachayega, woh royega nahi, weak nahi hoga... Lekin jisko dard hota hai asal mein vahi mard hota hai* (Man has been stereotyped with cliches like he runs the house, saves the girl, doesn't cry or fall weak... But the one who feels the pain is the actual man.) He then breaks this mould through his own life and aspirations by saying that he wanted to be a man who is true, one who could sing and cry and if he could, save someone too. He mentions that a man can like anything from the colour pink to the rock band Pink Floyd. The ad breaks the age-old notions about masculinity in a patriarchal society and conveys a message that being 'soft' doesn't necessarily stand in contradiction to masculinity rather strengthens it. He believes that men and women are different but that should not form the basis of differentiating between the two.

Advertisements in India have increasingly become focussed on gender roles, family hierarchy and traditional marriage practices now. International Men's Day is a good occasion to analyse how ads are evolving with time and normalising men breaking gender stereotypes now.

The Ariel ad made one question the assumption that household chores are a woman's domain. It opened with an older man sitting and observing his daughter performing all the household tasks along with a call from work while her husband sits and watches the television, asking her to prepare his evening tea. Her father's off-screen voice reads a 'Dear Daughter' letter in Hindi as he is stunned to see the pressure his 'girl' is facing. He admits later that he is sorry for having provided her with a wrong role model. It simply talks about how we are conditioned into believing that some chores are only for women, while



Better half

Advertisements are increasingly turning gender roles on their head and projecting a man who is not defined by stereotypes. **AYUSHI SHARMA** maps changing perspectives on International Men's Day



others are confined to men.

Remember the Airtel ad where a strict and stern female boss ordered two male colleagues to get an assignment done, with one of them protesting its feasibility? The boss still demands that they should manage. Later, in the evening, only one man is seen working over-time. He receives a call from his wife (who also happens to be his boss) asking what he wants to have for dinner and requesting him to come early. The ad clearly portrays the strong female boss at work, on one hand, and a caring wife on the other. The roles have been reversed and yet the man seems to be comfortable with it. No display of affronted



male egos here.

Next comes the Havel's #HawaBadlegi advertisement where a couple goes to a marriage

registrar's office. The husband chooses to take the wife's last name, making the official do a double take. A brilliant yet another

simple take to shatter the ceilings. The campaign portrays how men are changing their attitude towards the women in their lives.

A commercial of Biba too normalises how men could be on the other side of the so-called gender divide. The ad showcases the father of a girl who demands that the boy should also learn to cook for his wife to take care of his daughter in the future. He asks, *'Beta, khaana bana lete ho?'* (Can you cook?), presenting a situation, where usually the opposite happens. The boy responds by inviting his in-laws to come over for dinner for 10 days. It projects the man who is more accommodating and not helmed in by watertight ideas of gender roles

while making the arranged marriage set-up fair to both genders.

With more marketers and advertisers understanding the importance of gender equality today, brands are understanding the responsibility that they have towards the public in how they choose to market their products. It works for the cash registers as well as 65 per cent of youth, who are more likely to purchase products on how they perceive the brand, as per Vice Media. A Nielsen report also shows that 65 per cent of total sales of consumer goods measured globally are generated by "brands whose marketing conveyed commitment to social or environmental value." Cheers to a more progressive advertising!

THE FAUX EFFECT

Blending materials on a single tile makes for interesting floor layouts

People have been surfacing floors and walls in tile for hundreds of years. It's one of our oldest materials but the industry keeps reinventing the product. Digital printing and fabricating advances can now realistically replicate wood, metal, textile, leather, brick and paper in a sustainably made, durable tile form.

"Tile companies have made great strides in suspending my disbelief that these aren't actual stone or other real materials," says New York-based designer Daniel VanHall. "A lot of the really imaginative designs are like theatre in tile form. It's pretty exciting."

MATERIALS MATCH-UP

The blending of materials on a single tile makes for interesting floor layouts. Today's iterations of wood-look tile are almost indistinguishable from the real deal, since realistic hues and textures can be printed onto slab, plank or square tiles.

The tech is also being used to marry disparate materials into cool new versions: pieces of wood paired with slivers of metal, say, or wood embedded in stone. The juxtapositions are intriguing and easier both to install and walk on than if real wood, real metal and concrete were fused together. Sant-Agostino's Timewood has a geometric pattern of wood-look strips in a cement-look matrix; Provenza's Alter takes the look of shards and panels of reclaimed oak and blends it seamlessly with a ceramic base to create a kicky, midcentury modern design.

Antique silks were the inspiration for Florim's Filati di Rex collection, comprised of floral, jacquard, baroque and geometric patterns drawn from the renowned Italian fabric house Rubelli. Tile designers are also using antique rugs and tapestries as inspiration.

VINTAGE MODERN

Nancy Epstein of Artistic Tile sees a resurgence in age-old techniques like encaustic tile, where the



pattern is made with pigmented cement rather than painted on.

"We're finding that people are much more open to colour and pattern than they've been for years," she says.

This year, at both Cersaie, Italy's international tile fair held in Bologna, and Cevisama, Spain's version held in Valencia, there were nostalgic nods to both countries' renowned ceramic history. Matte-finish tiles were printed with motifs referencing centuries-old intarsia and majolica patterns, and designers liked the idea of using them in contemporary spaces.

Cle Tile, based in San Rafael, California, has several artists' collections of handmade encaustic tile, ranging from modern takes on Old West patterns, to midcentury graphics. Erica Tanov has translated some of her vintage textile archive into cool cement tile

designs, in on-trend hues of cream, charcoal, federal blue and soft pink. Los Angeles-based graphic designer Joy Cho has created a playful collection inspired by bubbles, streamers and confetti.

BOLD BOTANICALS

Katie Michael-Battaglia, design director for Nemo Tile and Stone in New York, says another trend builds on a kind of pattern that's been growing for the past few seasons: flower, leaf and tree motifs.

"What's interesting now is to see the explosion of botanicals, typically seen on fabrics and wallpapers, but now moved to porcelain tile," he says.

And again, the wow factor is how accurately new printing techniques can reproduce leaves, grass or even pebbles. With some of the exceptional versions, like Casalgrande's Padana Limpha ivy-look tile slabs, there's an almost 3-

D effect of a 'living wall.' The Casalgrande tiles are even treated so when they're exposed to sunlight, air pollutants and dirt don't adhere as readily, making them easier to clean.

But the hand of the artisan can also be appealing. At Artistic Tile, Michael Aram's Orchid collection features carefully crafted 3-D flowers on a black or white background; a panel of the tiles would make striking wall art. And at Tilebar, there are copper-glazed tiles that look like embossed or braided leather.

Michael-Battaglia mentions one other major tile trend, which is also capitalizing on fabricating advancements. "Designs are pushing the boundaries on imitating natural stone," he says. "Terrazzo is a great example of this; companies are playing with scale and color with almost cartoonish liberties. Manufacturers have started elevating designs to mimic exotic stone like onyx and gemstones. They've moved away from just the imitation of classic stone — marbles, lime-stones and quartzes — and are creating their own mashups, a stone you don't see in nature."

Giant slabs of onyx-look tile are cladding bathrooms from floor to ceiling, including vanities and tub aprons. Companies are offering marble-look tile in unexpected hues like magenta and green, or with veining in gold or copper. And there are imaginative takes on terrazzo with pink, blue or green backgrounds and exploded, oversize patterns.

As VanHall says, "I can do a whole room in porcelain tile, yet it can all look different."

'UPSET ABOUT HOW government treats artists'

Bollywood veteran Rishi Kapoor is upset because he feels the government does not treat the artistes' community well. He feels artistes are not honoured enough in India, the way it happens abroad.

"I really am upset when I think about how our government treats our artistes. We are the nation that is known worldwide for cinema, music and culture. But look at how our icons are treated. Does the government recognise our icons as much as other nations? All the new roads, flyovers, airports are so far named after politicians. Why not name these after artistes?" Rishi said. He added, "We have icons like Pandit Ravi Shankar, Ustad Allah Rakhha, Lata (Mangeshkar) ji. I am not saying this because they are my family but can you overlook the contribution of Raj Kapoor and Prithviraj Kapoor in the business of entertainment? They are celebrated worldwide but not in my country. Why so?"

Kapoor, who came back from the US after a year, observed how artistes are getting recognition abroad and the young generation is well versed with their cultural history. "In the US, there are places named after Elvis Presley, Michael Jackson and many more artistes and young generation is

well aware of their contribution. Here, everything is named after politicians. We have achievers like astronaut Kalpana Chawla. She is an inspiration for many youngsters. How well versed are our kids about her? Politicians are only changing names with an agenda. Our artistes are not honoured enough in their lifetime," said the actor, who has received several awards including the National Award as Best Child Actor for his debut role in *Mera Naam Joker* (1970). He was also conferred an award by the Union Ministry of Culture of the Russian Federation for his contribution to the Hindi film industry.

"Unless we make these names popular and put them on public places like airport, roads, school, colleges, how will the next generation understand the contribution of these icons in their respective filed?" questioned the icon who is known for roles in films like *Bobby*, *Karz*, *Kapoor & Sons*, *102 Not Out*, and *Mulk* to name a few.

Currently, he is gearing up for his forthcoming film *The Body*, directed by Jeethu Joseph and co-starring Emraan Hashmi and Vedhika. The film releases on December 13.

—IANS



PTI ■ MUSCAT

Winless in four games so far in an increasingly disappointing campaign, the Indian football team faces higher-ranked Oman in a do-or-die World Cup qualifying round match here today.

A first half strike from Sunil Chhetri gave India hopes of beating Oman in the first leg in Guwahati in September but it ultimately turned out to be so-near-yet-so-far as the Gulf nation struck twice in the final 10 minutes to outwit the home side.

Oman are coming into this match after an emphatic (4-1) win over Bangladesh on November 14.

India, on the other hand, are struggling after an impressive goal-less draw against Asian champions Qatar as they needed late equalisers in their identical 1-1 draws against lower-ranked Bangladesh and Afghanistan.

After three draws and a defeat, India are fourth in the Group E table with three points while Oman are second with nine points from four matches. Qatar are on top with 10 points from four matches.

An upset win over Oman will certainly keep Igor Stimac's side in the hunt for a next round berth but a loss will virtually send India out of reckoning as far as the 2022 World Cup qualification is concerned.

If India lose, they will trail Oman by nine points and have only three matches — maximum nine points — left to play in this second round of the qualifiers.

Even the runner-up sides from the eight groups are not guaranteed an automatic spot in the third round of the qualifiers.

A draw against Oman will also make it difficult for India to qualify for the next round. Their last three matches — all to be played next year — are against Qatar (at home on March 26), Bangladesh (away, June 4) and Afghanistan (at home, June 9).

But getting a least a point against Oman may prove crucial as it will make it easier for India to get an automatic third round berth for the 2023 Asian Cup qualifiers.

This campaign is also a joint qualifying round for the 2023 Asian Cup and the third-placed teams and the best four fourth placed teams from the eight groups automatically get a spot in the third round of the qualifiers of the continental championships.

Stimac's side has struggled not just in defence but four matches into this campaign, it is also clear that its offence is also not in the best of form.

India is no longer dependent on only Chhetri to score the goals but the inability to convert the chances has cost the team dear.

Stimac has no illusion about who is the favourite today but he is also hoping that his players will convert the chances which

Now is the time

Struggling India face Oman in do-or-die World Cup qualifying round away match



Indian coach Igor Stimac shake hands with his Oman counterpart before the start of pre-match press conference in Muscat on Monday

Indian Football/Twitter

come their way and score goals.

"Oman are much better now than the team we played against in Guwahati. They are the favourites. We know for a fact that match is going to be very difficult for us," the high profile Croatian coach said.

Historically too, India are the underdogs, having not won any of the 11 matches they have played against Oman who have emerged victorious on eight occasions.

Before the Guwahati match in September, the two sides played out a 0-0 draw in the run-up to the 2019 Asian Cup in the UAE. In the two legs of the 2018 World Cup qualifiers played in 2015, India had lost to Oman 0-3 in Muscat before a 1-2 defeat in Bangalore.

India will still be without senior central defender Anas Edathodika as he returned home before the Afghanistan match due to a family emergency, dealing a further blow to a team which has lost the services of Sandesh Jhingan, Rowling Borges and Amarjit Singh due to injuries.

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Oman vs India
Live from 8:30pm IST
STAR SPORTS 1 NETWORK



Indian coach Igor Stimac during team's practice session

Indian Football/Twitter

Points not revenge on Chhetri's mind

MUSCAT: India are not looking at revenge but full points against Oman, skipper Sunil Chhetri said on Monday as they gear up to take on the hosts.

Oman had beaten India 2-1 in Guwahati in September but Chhetri dismissed talks about India gunning for a revenge.

"We won't think about revenge or anything closer to that, absolutely not. At the end of the day, the points matter. It's not a derby as they are not our neighbours," Chhetri said during a training session.

"These are the qualifiers and we have only one thing in our mind, to go out and give everything that we have and take the result. I mean the important point is to go and play well, especially in the away matches."

Oman striker Al Mandhar has already scored four goals in four matches during the qualifiers but Pritam Kotal felt everyone should be dealt with equally to come out with a favourable result.

"It's not only Al Mandhar, other attackers like Al Alwai, Al Ghassani everyone can impose equal danger to a defence line. They are quick, they switch positions fast and can score from long. We have to be extra cautious of their long-range shots," Kotal opined.

Custodian Gurpreet Singh Sandhu picked that staying unbeaten on the road is the priority now and Oman is going to be a difficult opponent to play against.

"It's always difficult playing away from home and we recognise the threats (from Oman) given their ability and strength. We have to make sure we deal with them well." PTI

SINGLES

INDIA TO MEET PAKISTAN IN SEMIFINAL

SAVAR: Chinmay Sutar and Shubham Sharma starred in India's comprehensive 120-run win over Hong Kong in the ACC Emerging Teams Cup on Monday. India will now clash with arch-rivals Pakistan in the semifinals. Sutar smashed an unbeaten 104 off 85 balls and Sharma an unbeaten 65 off 55 balls as India amassed 322 for five in 50 overs. Opener and wicketkeeper B R Sharath too made a valuable contribution with 90 off 93 balls. Sharma also contributed with the ball taking four wickets for 32 runs in 10 overs as India bowled out Hong Kong for 202 in 47.3 overs. Shahid Wasif top-scored for Hong Kong with 68 off 84 balls. India take on Pakistan in Dhaka tomorrow while other semifinal will be played between hosts Bangladesh and Afghanistan. The final too will be played in Dhaka on November 23.

BOPANNA PULLS OUT OF DAVIS CUP TIE

NEW DELHI: Senior player Rohan Bopanna pulled out of India's upcoming tie against Pakistan due to a shoulder injury, paving the way for Jeevan Nedunchezhiyan's inclusion in the playing squad. Bopanna, who underwent an MRI scan on Monday, communicated his unavailability to non-playing captain Rohit Rajpal. The 39-year-old was expected to be paired with veteran Leander Paes for the doubles rubber of the November 29-30 tie. "It's disappointing not to have Rohan in the side. But we want him to protect his shoulder. He needs shots (injection) for treatment. We have an able replacement in Jeevan. He has done well on the Tour and we will have a good left-right combination," Rajpal said.

MURALI VIJAY OUT OF MUSHTAQ ALI

CHENNAI: Experienced opener Murali Vijay will miss the Super League and Knockout matches of the Syed Mushtaq Ali Trophy T20 tournament to be played in Surat from November 21 due to an ankle injury. Vijay has done well in the recent Vijay Hazare Trophy (50 overs) and Mushtaq Ali Trophy making 284 runs (8 matches, 1 century) and 127 runs (from 6 matches) respectively. He will be replaced by left-arm spinner M Siddharth in the squad, a press release from Tamil Nadu Cricket Association said. Tamil Nadu chief selector M Senthilnathan said Siddharth was picked as it was felt there were enough batsmen in the squad and as a back-up spinner.

VIJENDER TO FACE ADAMU IN DUBAI

DUBAI: Indian boxing star Vijender Singh will square off against two-time former Commonwealth super middle-weight champion Charles Adamu of Ghana in his next professional bout here on November 22. Vijender, managed by Top Rank Promotions and IOS Boxing, made his US debut earlier this year in July, recording an 11th successive win, beating Mike Snider. WBO Asia Pacific & Oriental super middleweight champion, will take on the 42-year-old Adamu in a 10-round fight. Adamu is a veteran of 47 fights with a record of 33-14-0, including 26 knockouts. He competed most recently in Feb this year, winning via a Technical Knockout to end losing streak. AGENCIES



Cristiano Ronaldo, left, celebrates with his teammate Diogo Jota after he scored Portugal's second goal

AFP ■ PARIS

Cristiano Ronaldo scored his 99th international goal as reigning champions Portugal secured their place at the Euro 2020 finals with a 2-0 victory away to Luxembourg, while France ended their qualifying campaign with victory.

Bruno Fernandes struck the opening goal on 39 minutes on Sunday before Ronaldo tapped in a scrappy second late on to clinch second place in Group B behind winners Ukraine, who drew 2-2 in Serbia.

Iranian striker Ali Daei holds the world record with 109 international goals scored in 149 appearances between 1993 and 2006.

"All records must be broken and I will beat that record," said Ronaldo.

Portugal became the 17th nation to qualify for next year's multi-host tournament, which kicks off in Rome on June 12, joining the likes of world champions France, Spain, Italy and England.

"We can't give the match high marks for style," said Portugal coach Fernando Santos, who admitted the heavy pitch made life challenging for his team.

"I'm very happy for my players because the qualifying campaign has been more difficult than we expected.



99 not out

Ronaldo scores 99th Portugal goal as holders seal Euro 2020 spot

"We're through to the finals of a major tournament for an 11th straight time. You've got to believe in these players."

Portugal knew they would book their place at Euro 2020 with a win or by matching Serbia's result from their game in Belgrade.

But they were made to work hard by a Luxembourg team ranked 96th in the world that notably held France to a 0-0 draw in 2018 World Cup qualifying.

Sporting Lisbon midfielder Fernandes broke the deadlock before half-time, controlling Bernardo Silva's pinpoint pass expertly before lashing in from 20 yards.

Ronaldo, who smacked in a hat-trick in Thursday's 6-0 thrashing of Lithuania, moved to the brink of his international century four minutes from time.

Silva's far-post cross was forced towards goal by Diogo Jota, with Luxembourg goalkeeper Anthony Moris getting a hand to the ball before Ronaldo turned in from the goalline.

FRANCE SIGN OFF

Later on Sunday, world champions France wrapped up top spot in Group H as goals from Corentin Tolisso and Antoine Griezmann sealed a 2-0 win over Albania in Tirana.

"I'm very dependent on the players," French World Cup-winning coach Didier Deschamps said after his 100th game in charge.

"It's a personal pride. But it's good to see what the players do together. At times, it can be a bit more difficult with changes to the players, injured players, but the spirit is there."

The visitors made a quick start on the pitch, though, as Bayern Munich midfielder Tolisso headed Griezmann's free-kick into the bottom corner.

The Barcelona star slotted in the second himself on the half-hour mark, before the dead rubber petered out in the second period, with Olivier Giroud going closest to a third by striking the post.

AFP ■ SAO PAULO

Max Verstappen underlined his potential as a champion of the future on Sunday with a commanding victory for Red Bull in an astonishing and crash-hit Brazilian Grand Prix at Interlagos.

The 22-year-old Dutchman twice passed newly-crowned six-time world champion Lewis Hamilton in a thrilling contest that had two safety car interventions and saw the Ferraris of Sebastian Vettel and Charles Leclerc clash and retire, before clinching the eighth victory of his career.

His third win this season also made up for his disappointment in last year's race in Brazil when he looked certain to win before a late accident wrecked his hopes of victory.

He made the most of pole position and finished a dominant winner ahead of his former Red Bull teammate Pierre Gasly, now with Toro Rosso, as they delivered a Honda-powered one-two for the Japanese company for the first time since the heyday of local hero Ayrton Senna.

Frenchman Gasly came home 0.062 seconds ahead of Mercedes but was demoted to seventh following a post-race stewards' investigation after crashing with luckless Thai driver Alexander Albon, the man who replaced Gasly at Red Bull, in the final laps.

Hamilton's demotion gifted McLaren's Carlos Sainz his first Formula One podium, subject to several other stewards' inquiries.

"Lewis was very quick," said Verstappen. "So I had to keep pushing all the time. He pitted early so we had to be on top of our pit-stops and

MAX BENEFIT

Verstappen wins crazy Brazilian GP as both Ferraris crash out



Red Bull driver Max Verstappen celebrates on the podium after winning the Brazilian GP

we had a good move on him.

"I could control the race with the tyres I had, so, for me, it was unbelievable. It was a lot of fun out there and great to win the race."

VETTEL, LECLERC

SUMMONED

Ferrari team boss Mattia Binotto has called drivers Sebastian Vettel and Charles Leclerc to a clear-the-air meeting after their collision wrecked the team's hopes in Sao Paulo.

The pair, who collided while fighting for fourth place, were forced to retire from the race, leaving Ferrari embarrassed and pointless and the drivers arguing about who was to blame. "There will be time (for us all) together at Maranello to understand what happened," said Binotto.

"It's not for me to blame them, it's for them to recognise it."

Both cars were damaged and forced to retire in the incident, which came after a Safety Car restart when Vettel 'closed the door' on a challenging Leclerc.

It resulted in Ferrari's first scoreless race since the 2017 Singapore Grand Prix and refocused criticism on the team's habit of generating self-inflicted damage — and the fractious relationship between their drivers.

"I have not reviewed yet, I don't want to do it yet," insisted Binotto. "I think doing things in the heat of the moment, we may have the wrong conclusion."

"I heard both drivers, but they will come as well together to discuss again what happened and there will be time for the team to analyse all the video and the data."

"Whatever will be the judgement, more important is we are disappointed and sorry for the team."

"But first, the two drivers should be sorry for the team — as it has been a very small crash with big consequences..."

"They are silly things that should not happen."

Reid to focus on individual improvement

PTI ■ BHUBANESWAR

With no international assignment till next year, the Indian men's hockey side will focus on individual improvement rather than team tactics during the ongoing national camp, chief coach Graham Reid said on Monday.

After securing a 2020 Olympics berth in the qualifiers against Russia, the team is currently undergoing a three-week training and conditioning camp which will conclude on December 8.

"Given there is no tournament immediately following the three-week camp in



Bhubaneswar, it is a perfect opportunity for us to change focus from team tactics to more about individual improvement," Reid said as

the national camp of 33 core probables which began at the Kalinga Stadium here on Monday. "We will do this through

detailed analysis and review from our performances last season including the FIH Hockey Olympic Qualifiers in Odisha. This will provide a good road-map for us in our quest to squeeze as much improvement as we can in the next nine months," the 53-year-old Australian added.

The Indian team recently secured its place at the 2020 Olympic Games by defeating Russia 11-3 on aggregate at the FIH Hockey Olympic Qualifiers here.

India's next assignment will be the twin home leg matches of the FIH Pro League against the Netherlands in January next

year. Meanwhile, Bhubaneswar will host India's home matches during the 2020 Hockey Pro League, the sport's governing body announced on Monday.

The first team that India will host is the Netherlands on January 18. The Pro League will feature 144 matches in the coming season.

Australia's home matches will be played in Perth and Sydney, while England will be playing its share in London.

The first match will feature the Netherlands and China on January 11, 2020 at the Wujin Hockey Stadium in Changzhou.

NEW KING OF LONDON

Tsitsipas topples Thiem to become first Greek player to win ATP Finals title

AFP ■ LONDON

Stefanos Tsitsipas battled back from a set down against Dominic Thiem to win the ATP Finals title on Sunday night, emphatically staking his claim as the leader of the next generation of aspiring global superstars.

The Greek 21-year-old, who won, 6-7 (6/8), 6-2, 7-6 (7/4) is the youngest champion since Lleyton Hewitt in 2001 and the fourth first-time champion at the season-ending event in as many years.

It is Tsitsipas's third title of the season and comes a year after he was crowned champion at the Next Gen ATP Finals in Milan.

He has charmed the crowd at London's O2 Arena all week and earned his place in the final with an impressive straight-sets win against six-time champion Roger Federer.

"I can't sum up my emotions right now," said Tsitsipas. "It's amazing to be remembered as the 2019 champion. It is a dream come true and the best way to end this match."

"I did get nervous at some points in the match but I managed to forget about how I felt and I had momentum in the tie-break which was really tight."

"My fighting spirit and me constantly trying to push myself to do better got me there in the end."

Defeat is a bitter disappointment for Thiem, who won five titles this year, including the Indian Wells Masters, and reached a second successive French Open final.

There was little to choose between sixth-seed Tsitsipas and Austria's world number five Thiem in the first set as a total of five break points went begging.

Both players had impressed on serve during the tournament, with Tsitsipas's figures especially striking — 44 service games won out of 47 leading into the final.

In an inevitable tie-break Tsitsipas saved a set point at 5/6 but



Stefanos Tsitsipas, right, and Dominic Thiem pose for the media with their trophies after the final of the ATP World Finals match

Thiem clinched his second set point with a powerful serve that the Greek returned into the net.

TSITSIPAS BREAKS

But Tsitsipas regrouped and within minutes Thiem, who beat his opponent in three sets in the Beijing final last month, was under pressure, spraying a forehand wide to concede first break of the match.

Tsitsipas held with ease and then produced a forehand down the line to break again, with Thiem threatening to unravel. Tsitsipas had won 12 out of 14 points in the set.

Thiem, who like Tsitsipas plays with a single-handed backhand, stemmed the tide but could make little impression on his opponent's serve and lost the set 6-2.

Thiem was rocking again at the start of the deciding set. He saved two break points in the first game but looked increasingly shaky and was broken to trail 1-2.

The Greek was now well on top but out of nowhere Thiem was level at 3-3 after Tsitsipas put a backhand wide.

The Austrian was now playing with much more confidence, unleashing a series of blistering winners and edged ahead 5-4 after another service hold but the rest of the set went with serve.

In the deciding set tie-break Tsitsipas took a 4-2 lead but was pegged back to 4/4.

But on the next point Tsitsipas earned a mini-break, giving him the chance to serve out for the

match and he made no mistake, closing out the biggest victory of his career.

Tsitsipas has competition among his peers as the new generation attempt to dislodge Federer, Novak Djokovic and Rafael Nadal, who have dominated the men's game for the past 15 years.

World number four Daniil Medvedev won two Masters titles this year and reached the US Open final while Alexander Zverev was in London defending the title he won last year.

But Tsitsipas, who has beaten every member of the "Big Three" in 2019, will go into the new season with the belief he can take the next step towards the apex of the men's game.

Murray will do 'great job' at Davis Cup



AFP ■ LONDON

Andy Murray will do a "great job" when he continues his comeback from injury at next week's inaugural Davis Cup Finals in Madrid, British captain Leon Smith said on Sunday.

Murray, who inspired Britain to the 2015 Davis Cup title, will line up alongside his older brother Jamie, Dan Evans, Kyle Edmund and Neal Skupski at the Caja Magica.

"Andy feels great," said Smith. "He's obviously extremely happy to be back in tennis."

"His training unbelievably hard to get back to his best position, with great focus."

"If he's picked to play, then I know he will do a great job on the court. That's not ego, that's confidence of course."

"He's still a very good tennis player, he's pushing (the other) guys ahead. And at the same time, you realise what he's gone through."

Britain, who were handed a wildcard for the first tournament since the old World Group was scrapped, will be favourites to progress from a Group E.

Nadal ends as No 1

AFP ■ LONDON

TOP 10 PLAYERS

Rank	Player (Country)	Points
1.	Rafael Nadal (ESP)	9,985 pts
2.	Novak Djokovic (SRB)	9,145
3.	Roger Federer (SUI)	6,590
4.	Dominic Thiem (AUT)	5,825 (+1)
5.	Daniil Medvedev (RUS)	5,705 (-1)
6.	Stefanos Tsitsipas (GRE)	5,300
7.	Alexander Zverev (GER)	3,345
8.	Matteo Berrettini (ITA)	2,870
9.	Roberto Bautista (ESP)	2,540
10.	Gaël Monfils (FRA)	2,530
126.	Andy Murray (GBR)	442

Rafael Nadal was confirmed as the year-end world number one for the fifth time after the ATP released its season-closing rankings on Monday.

The Spaniard did not make it beyond the group stage of last week's ATP Finals in London but Novak Djokovic's failure to reach the semi-finals meant Nadal closed the year with 9,985 points, 840 clear of the Serb.

Nadal draws level with rivals Djokovic and Roger Federer, who have also finished the year in top spot five times, and moves one behind six-time end-of-year number one Pete Sampras.

Nadal and Djokovic have been this year's two dominant players after winning two Majors each.

Djokovic won the Australian Open and Wimbledon with Nadal cleaning up at Roland Garros and the US Open.

Federer ends the season at number three for the second year running. The Swiss, who turned 38 in August, has cut down his Tour commitments to focus on events around Grand Slams.

He reached the semi-finals of the French Open where he lost to Nadal

and the last eight at Flushing Meadows where he lost in five sets to world number 20 Gregor Dimitrov.

In between he lost an epic Wimbledon final against Djokovic, the first to be decided by a tie-break in the fifth set, suggesting that he still has hopes of a 21st major title in 2020.

Dominic Thiem, who took a set off Nadal in the final of the French Open, moves up to number four.

The 21-year-old Greek Stefanos Tsitsipas closes the year at number six, just behind Daniil Medvedev, after his triumph in London.

Former world number one Andy Murray began the year ranked at 240 and the prospect of retirement.

As he struggled with surgery on a hip injury and the subsequent recuperation he had slipped to 503 in September before a dramatic return to the courts, which produced a remarkable victory at the European Open in Antwerp, lifted him to a year-end 126.



Eves continue to dominate WI

Spinners shine as India win 4th T20 by 5 runs

PTI ■ PROVIDENCE

The series already in their pocket, India women continued their domination over the West Indies

by notching up a five-run win in the rain-truncated fourth T20 International in Guyana.

India women now lead the five-match series 4-0 after sealing the series in the third game here.

In the rain-marred fourth T20 International which was reduced to a nine-over-a-side affair, India women made 50 for the loss of seven wickets after being sent into bat.

Pooja Vastrakar (10) was the lone

Indian to reach double digit score.

Hayley Mathews (3/13) scalped three wickets for the hosts, while Afy Fletcher (2/2) and Sheneta Grimmond (2/10) picked up two wickets apiece.

The Indians then bowled and fielded with discipline to restrict the West Indies women to 45 for five in their nine overs.

India skipper Harmanpreet Kaur completely relied on her spinners and they did not disappoint her as off-spinner Anuja Patil (2/8), Deepti Sharma (1/8) and Radha Yadav (1/8) kept the Windies on a tight leash throughout to ensure the win.

Mathews (11) and Chinelle Henry (11) top-scored for the home team.

The fifth and final T20 of the series will be played here on Thursday.

Kidambi eyes good show in Korea



Kidambi Srikanth in action during Denmark Open tournament

PTI ■ GWANGJU

Back in form after a string of below-par performances, Kidambi Srikanth would look for another good outing while Saina Nehwal pulled out of the Korea Masters World Tour Super 300 tournament, which starts with the qualifiers here today.

After going through a tough

phase since his final finish at India Open this year, Srikanth boosted his confidence with a semifinal appearance at the Hong Kong Open last week.

It was his first appearance at the last four stage since the India Open and the Indian ace would look to continue the good run when he opens against Hong Kong's Wong Wing Ki Vincent in the men's singles.

The wicketkeeper-batsman was removed as captain and dropped from

Paine drops retirement hint

Test skipper says that he's not sure, but Australian summer could be his last

IANS ■ BRISBANE

Australia captain Tim Paine on Monday said the upcoming Test series against Pakistan and New Zealand could be the last time he leads the side at home.

"It might be (my last summer), I'm not too sure," Paine told reporters. "But... I'm enjoying doing it. I feel good physically (and) mentally. So while that continues, I'm scoring enough runs and keeping well enough, then I'd like to continue."

"I know when you get to my age that can change really quickly. I'm really looking forward to this summer, beyond that I haven't looked too far. I know what I want to do and what I want to achieve."

Wicketkeeper Paine, 34, took over the reins after former skipper Steve Smith was handed a one-year suspension last year for his role in the ball tampering



Tim Paine celebrates with Aus teammates

scandal.

There have been talks of restoring Smith as captain as his exceptional performance at the Ashes where he amassed 774 runs.

Asked about his aim as skipper, Paine said Australia's top priority is to reclaim top spot in ICC test rankings and win the World Test Championship (WTC) where they are right now placed fifth in the points table.

"Our goal is to get back to that number one ranking and we want to win that Test Championship," he added. "To do that we're going to have to be good enough to win in India and we're going to have to be good enough to beat everyone, everywhere."

"It's the only way we're going to get to where we want to get to. It's an exciting period and I'm looking forward to being part of the start of that and there is no end point at the moment."

Delhi qualify for Super League



Harshal Patel in action during Syed Mushtaq Ali T20 tournament

PTI ■ SURAT

All-rounder Lalit Yadav claimed three wickets with his off-breaks as Delhi notched up a comprehensive 20-run win over Odisha in their final Group E match to qualify for the Super League of the Syed Mushtaq Ali Trophy here on Monday.

Electing to bat, Delhi posted 149 for six and then returned to dismiss Odisha for 129 in 18.1 overs to complete the win and top Group E with 22 points from seven matches.

Going through a rough patch, Shikhar Dhawan top-scored with a 33-ball 35 which comprised three fours and a six. However his struggle was apparent against an unfancied Odisha attack. He failed to get going.

Earlier, Delhi batsmen, including opener Hiten Dalal (20) and first-down Dhruv Shorey (26), got starts but none could convert them into big scores but they did enough to help the team post a decent score on board.

For Odisha, Abhishek Raut (2/21) took two wickets, while Govinda Poddar (1/18), Suryakant Pradhan (1/31), Pappu Roy (1/35) and Subham Nayak (1/29) accounted for one wicket each.

Defending the total, Yadav returned with impressive figures of 3.1-1-10-3 and he was ably supported by Pawan Negi (2/38) and Nitish Rana (2/6) as the trio derailed Odisha's chase.

Odisha had a disastrous start and were looking down the barrel at 36 for 5 in 7.2 overs.

Down the order, Suryakant Pradhan smashed a 20-ball 48 laced with six hits to the fence but it was not enough.

In another Group E match, Chintan Gaja (4/15) snapped four wickets before Kshitij Patel blasted a 36-ball 44 as Gujarat thrashed Jammu and Kashmir by 8 wickets.

Sent to bat, J & K folded for a paltry 101 in 18.3 overs, thanks to Gaja and Hardik Patel (3/17), who shared seven wickets between them.

Piyush Chawla (2/19) and Axar Patel (1/23) also contributed with the ball.

Chasing the total, Kshitij top-scored with an unbeaten 44 off 36 balls, while Chirag Gandhi (32) and Urvil Patel (22) chipped in with useful contributions as Gujarat scored 102 for 2 in 13.3 overs.

HARYANA MAUL MEGHALAYA

MUMBAI: Powered by an all-round show by Harshal Patel, Haryana ended their league stage campaign on a high with a 99-run win against Meghalaya in a Group D match.

Put into bat at the Bandra-Kurla Complex (BKC) in the suburbs, Haryana rode on a quick fire 82 off 40 balls by opener Patel to amass a competitive 202/6.

The chase was an uphill task for Meghalaya, who struggled to get going and were restricted to 103/9.

Patel, a right-arm medium pacer, then shone with the ball to return with fine figures of 3/22.

Sarfraz should focus on domestic cricket: Pak PM

KARACHI: Prime Minister Imran Khan has advised sacked Pakistan captain Sarfraz Ahmed to focus on domestic cricket to get back to the national team.

Khan, the patron-in-chief of Pakistan Cricket Board and a former captain, also backed the appointment of Misbah-ul-Haq as head coach and chief selector.

"I don't think the performance and form of a player should be judged by T20 cricket but through Test and One-day cricket. He can come back to the national team, he should focus on domestic cricket," Khan said when asked about Sarfraz.

The wicketkeeper-batsman was removed as captain and dropped from

the team in all three formats by the PCB last month after Pakistan were white-washed 0-3 in a T20 series at home.

Regarding the appointment of Misbah as head coach and chief selector, Khan said, "It is a constructive move to appoint Misbah as he is an honest and unbiased personality who has loads of experience behind him."

"I think Misbah will turn out to be a good choice and Pakistan will improve and do well in Test and ODI cricket under him. He has this talent in him that he can groom the players and also improve their performance," he added.

Khan also supported the new domestic first-class season in which only six provincial teams are compet-

ing on home and away basis and said eventually this will lead to a better cricket system in the country.

He noted that there was already some improvement in domestic cricket and hoped it will get better.

"If our domestic cricket improves, then Pakistan cricket will also move forward."

PTI