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**USUAL SUSPECTS**
SWAPNA DASGUPTA

Diplomacy key to India-Lanka ties

By the time this column appears, the trends, if not the results, of Sri Lanka's presidential election should be known. It is always hazardous to anticipate the outcome of an election since voters are often – though not always – inclined to defy conventional wisdom and opinion polls. Not that the Sri Lankan election industry has evolved as much as India's where opinion polls and exit polls have acquired an independent life, sometimes quite distinct from the election itself. Yet, based on a brief visit to Sri Lanka last month and some previous experience of politics in that charming island, some forecasts are in order.

My reading of the polls suggest that the SLPP candidate Gotabaya Rajapaksha, the younger brother of former President Mahinda Rajapaksha, enjoys a distinct advantage over his UNP rival Sajith Premadasa, the son of former President Ranasinghe Premadasa. How clear that advantage is and whether the election will go into the counting of the second preference votes – where the first preference votes of the JVP and an independent candidate promoted by a few NGOs will matter and difficult to anticipate. However, barring the truly unexpected, it would seem that President Sirisena will be succeeded by another member of the family of the man who was defeated in 2014. My reading of the presidential election is based on three observations.

First, it was pretty apparent that Gotabaya ran a streamlined, professional campaign. This was in sharp contrast to the UNP campaign that suffered from a relative shortage of resources and internal cohesion. Initially the UNP nomination was supposed to go to Prime Minister Ranil Wickramsinghe. However, the party felt that rather than bear the entire burden of a strong anti-incumbency, it was preferable to go to Premadasa who, despite being a Minister in the Sirisena Government, was not too strongly identified with the regime. The desire to make a fresh start was understandable but Premadasa has not been able to rope in many of the traditional UNP voters.

Secondly, despite being very closely identified with his elder brother's presidency, Gotabaya has an image that is more technocrat than political. He is seen to attach a great deal of emphasis on governmental efficiency, education and technology. Moreover, his plans to slash personal and corporate taxes were quite radical. Indeed, going by the manifesto, Gotabaya seems to be making a big pitch to transform Sri Lanka into another Singapore – originally a dream of President JR Jayawardene that was scuttled by the civil war.

In electoral terms, this suggests that Gotabaya may be able to prevail in Colombo and some of the adjoining Sinhalese-dominated towns that had tilted the balance against Mahinda Rajapaksha in 2014.

Thirdly, the Islamist bombings last April had a devastating effect on Sri Lanka's economy and its tourism industry. The fear of terror attacks reviving once again has put national security back on the political agenda. As the architect of Sri Lanka's military victory over the LTTE in 2009, Gotabaya is seen to be a tough no-nonsense politician. It is an image that will stand him in good stead in this election.

In 2014, the loss of a chunk of the SLFP vote and the huge 80 per cent turnout in the Northern Province where Tamils predominate had contributed to Sirisena's victory by a narrow margin. This time there is no reason to suggest that Tamil regions are sufficiently motivated to turn up in such large numbers. The feedback suggests that there is a palpable mood of disappointment with the Sirisena Government over regional autonomy. This would mean that while Premadasa will win a majority of Tamil votes in the Northern Province, this might not be enough to offset the lead Gotabaya is likely to secure in the traditional Sinhalese area. Indeed, it is nothing short of curious that many of Colombo's left-liberalists have suddenly begun singing praises of the progressive credentials of the JVP candidate. Earlier, the JVP was debunked as the voice of extreme Sinhala nationalism.

The facile view is that India will be very upset with a Gotabaya victory in case it happens. This assumption is centred on the post-defeat comments of Mahinda Rajapaksa in 2014 when he accused RSAW of interfering to secure his defeat. Moreover, the Rajapaksas are seen to be pro-China, while the UNP is understood to have good relation with India.

This assumption forgets a few cruel truths. First, the civil war against the LTTE was won in 2009 by the Sri Lankan army thanks to some tacit support from India. Gotabaya was the man who maintained links with the national security establishment in India. Secondly, the generous contracts to China, particularly in Hambantota, followed India's own unwillingness to participate. Thirdly, the sale of the facilities in Colombo and Hambantota were negotiated by the UNP and not the Rajapaksas. In his manifesto, Gotabaya has promised an independent foreign policy that avoids being linked to any of the great powers.

How a relationship is negotiated depends ultimately on diplomacy rather than either the past or stated positions. If the Modi Government can reach out to the winner and persist with an economy-first approach and support for counter-terrorism, relations with Sri Lanka are bound to be healthy. It does not matter if Gotabaya or Sajith Premadasa wins. That is a choice for Sri Lanka's voters.

DELHIITES IN DEEP WATER

Capital flunks all 19 potable tests; safest Mumbai doesn't need ROs

RAJESH KUMAR ■ NEW DELHI

Delhiites have neither fresh air to breathe nor safe water to drink. The drinking water supplied to residents in the national Capital has failed on all the 19 parameters – odour, iron, calcium, ammonia, chloride, anionic detergent and coliform among others. In contrast, Mumbaiites may not even need to buy water purifiers or reverse osmosis (RO) units. The drinking water in India's commercial capital passed all the tests of quality standards set by the Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS). The other two metros, Chennai and Kolkata, too didn't fare well, and are at the 13th and 14th place respectively.

Of the 21 capital cities where water quality was tested, Delhi was at the bottom with all samples failing to meet the BIS norm. Hyderabad and Bhubaneswar topped the list, while Ranchi came in at third. Currently, it is mandatory for bottled water manufacturers to meet the BIS quality standard. However, the BIS norm for tap water is voluntary for the public agencies which supply piped water. Unlike Europe and other developed countries, India doesn't have any

certification for potable water. The BIS lifted samples from the Capital cities across the country to test water quality on several parameters. Announcing the findings, Union Food and Consumer Affairs Minister Ram Vilas Paswan said, "All the samples lifted in Delhi have failed, but all samples of Mumbai are clear and tap water of Mumbai is safe to drink."

In Delhi, the samples were taken randomly from 11 places like Krishi Bhawan, Jaihind Colony of Union Food Ministry, Ram Vilas Paswan, Pitampura, Ashok Nagar, Mukundpuri, Baruri, Karawali Nagar, Sonia Vihar, Seema Puri and Nand Nagari. In Krishi Bhawan, housing several Central Government offices, the sample failed to meet seven of the BIS norms, while water from Paswan's residence failed on three parameters.

All the 11 samples failed to



- In the 1st phase samples of piped drinking water supplied by municipal corporation/local authorities were drawn from various locations across Delhi
- In the 2nd phase, samples from 20 State capitals were drawn. These were Mumbai, Hyderabad, Bhubaneswar, Ranchi, Raipur, Amravati, Shimla, Chandigarh, Thiruvananthapuram, Patna, Bhopal, Guwahati, Bengaluru, Gandhinagar, Lucknow, Jaipur, Jammu, Dehradun,

- Kolkata and Chennai
- In the 3rd phase, samples from capital cities of the North Eastern States and from Smart Cities have been drawn and are under test
- In the 4th phase, it is proposed to test samples from all the district headquarters of the country by August 15, 2020.

- Unlike Europe and other developed countries, India doesn't have any certification for potable water

phenolic compounds and chloramines respectively. In Ranchi, the potable water test failed on four parameters, while in Shimla on aluminium and Chandigarh on two parameters, aluminium and coliform.

According to officials, testing was conducted for organoleptic and physical tests, chemical test, toxic substances and bacteriological tests in the first stage. In the next phase, they will also undergo virological and biological tests for major disease carriers. The study conducted by BIS with the Union Food and Consumer Affairs Ministry, tested 10 samples in 21 capital cities to see if they met the Indian Standard 10500/2012 (specification for drinking water).

Paswan said he has written to State Governments asking them to clarify what helps his Government can provide to make tap water drinkable.

Turn on Page 4

Sabarimala Day 1: 10 women in barred age group sent back

PTI ■ SABARIMALA

Amid tight security, thousands of devotees offered prayers at the Lord Ayyappa temple when it opened for the annual Mandala-Makaravilakku puja on Saturday, though police said ten women were sent back from Pamba base as they were in the "barred" age group.

The temple has reopened just days after a five-judge Bench of the Supreme Court referred to larger Bench the matter related to entry of women into the hill temple and other issues related to various fairs.

The State and temple precincts had witnessed protests by right-wing outfits and BJP workers last year after the LDF Government had decided to implement the Supreme Court verdict of September 28, 2018, allowing women of all age groups to offer prayers at the shrine.

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

Police on Saturday evening said at least ten women, who were part of a 30-member



Devotees arrive at the Lord Ayyappa temple that opened for two-month long Mandala-Makaravilakku pilgrimage season in Sabarimala on Saturday PTI

group from Vijayawada in Andhra Pradesh, were sent back from the shrine, five km from the temple, who have traditionally been barred from praying at the temple.

Turn on Page 4

10-50 years.

Females in this age group have traditionally been barred from praying at the temple.

Turn on Page 4

RCom chairman Anil Ambani, four directors resign

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Reliance Communications Chairman Anil Ambani and four other directors have resigned from the company, which is going through insolvency process, according to a regulatory filing.

The chief financial officer of the debt-ridden company, Manikantan V., too has resigned, the filing said.

Anil Ambani, Chhaya Virani, Manjari Kacker have tendered their resignation as Director of Company on November 15th, 2019*, the filing said.

Ryna Karani and Suresh Rangachar tendered their resignations on November 14 and November 13, 2019, respectively.

The development comes a day after RCom posted a consolidated loss of ₹30,142 crore for July-September 2019 due to provisioning for liabilities after the Supreme Court ruling on statutory dues.

This was the second highest loss posted by any Indian corporate till date.

Ambani was once in the world's top ten rich persons list but now the company is struggling to even sell assets for the recovery of dues.

The company, which is going through insolvency process, had made a profit of ₹1,141 crore in the corresponding three months a year ago.

During July-September 2019, the company set aside ₹28,314 crore on account of provisioning following the Supreme Court order of calculation of annual adjusted gross revenue (AGR) of telecommunication companies.

The apex court last month upheld the Government's position on including revenue from non-telecommunication businesses in calculating the annual AGR, a share of which has to be paid as licence and spectrum fee to the exchequer.

RCom's total liability includes ₹23,327 crore licence fee and ₹4,987 crore spectrum usage charges.

"The resignation of Shri Manikantan V and appointment of Shri D Vishwanath as

Turn on Page 4

CAPSULE

SHIVA SENA NOT TO ATTEND NDA MEETING

Mumbai: The Shiv Sena, which is holding talks with the Congress and NCP for Government formation in Maharashtra, said on Saturday that it would not attend a meeting of NDA constituents on the eve of the Winter Session of Parliament.

NZ WOMAN FOUND DEAD AT PAHARGANJ HOTEL

New Delhi: A 49-year-old woman from New Zealand, who had come to India to get married as per Indian traditions, was found dead in a hotel in Paharganj here on Saturday morning, police said. The victim has been identified as Tuhili Powalle.

RAJAT SHARMA RESIGNS AS DDCA PRESIDENT

New Delhi: Senior journalist Rajat Sharma on Saturday resigned from the post of president of Delhi & Districts Cricket Association, citing his inability to continue amidst "various pulls and pressures" within the organisation.

Just breather! Air quality to fall again

Delhi air improves from severe plus to very poor, relapse likely from Nov 20

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

helped air quality to recover?

The high surface winds in Delhi will continue for the next two days (till Nov 19) to consistently improve the air quality, the forecaster added.

Local factors — temperature and surface winds — play vital roles in dispersion process of suspended particulate matters (SPMs).

On Friday value of AQI on was above 500, which falls under severe plus category.

SAFAR said, "Strong surface winds are flushing out the accumulated pollutants. No drizzling last night greatly



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SHOW TIME

Boring & nothing new to offer


MARJAAVAAN
***ing: Riteish Deshmukh, Siddharth Malhotra, Tara Sutaria, Rakul Preet Kaur**
Rated: 5/10

It's sad that Bollywood has forgotten to make romantic movies. Gone are the days when a boy met a girl, a villain tried to separate them. But they conquered all and the hero and heroine were united in the end. Today, Bollywood is only taking a leaf out of some of the earlier romantic movies made and giving them a twist to fit the 21st Century mood.

Unfortunately, *Marjaavaan* doesn't even have that to offer to its viewers. It could be that director Milap Zaveri failed to see *Ek Villain* which had a similar starcast. The only difference was that instead of Tara Sutaria, the love interest was Shraddha Kapoor.

Those who have seen *Ek Villain* would see the similarity. Siddharth Malhotra is from the wrong side of the society — a goon who is all the bad work for his boss whom he is

indebted to. But falls in love with the girl and wants to turn good for her. In steps the villain. Again Riteish Deshmukh. The least Zaveri could have done is to not take the same starcast and make a movie on similar lines.

However, all is not lost here. Deshmukh instead of doing movies like *Haseen Dillag* that don't make any sense or those like to watch movies that have some content, should actually switch to doing roles where he plays the bad guy. Like in *Ek Villain*, Deshmukh excels here too as the bad guy somewhat with a twist in his character.

Siddharth Malhotra does what he does best. Play the baddies at the drop of a hat; all this with his bare hands, a tad difficult to digest given that the baddies that he is fighting are all armed with the latest machine guns. And yet, our hero is able to come out as the winner. A total disconnect with reality.

Overall, it is a movie that is not worth a watch.

— Shalini Saksena

No saving this disastrous affair

MOTICHOR CHAKNACHOOR
***ing: Nawazuddin Siddiqui, Athiya Shetty, Vibha Chibber, Navni Parihar, Vivek Mishra**
Rated: 5/10

I am unfortunate that an actor, the calibre of Nawazuddin Siddiqui, who has done films like *Sarfarosh*, *Badalpur* and *Manjhi - The Mountain Man* would actually agree to sign on the dotted line for *Motichoor Chaknachoor*. One doesn't understand the thought that went into him accepting the role. He can't be that desperate to play the lead.

Yes, here Siddiqui plays the hero with Athiya Shetty. There are a few things horribly wrong with this pairing at many levels. First, the two actors have no chemistry; they are awkward at best. Given that Shetty is doing the pursuing while Siddiqui just goes with the flow should have had some laugh out loud moments. The only time when a smile comes is where Siddiqui has been given some funny dialogues. '36 ke hain, kab tak brahmachari bankar batte rahi'. Naati, kaati, patali, takli, kisi se bhi bhya kar lenga. Hamko moudri hi chahiy bas' the dialogue reeks of desperation but at least it is funny given the context in which it is said.

Then there is the whole loud message that is staring at our faces that of dowry. If that was the intention of the director Debamitra Biswal, to highlight the problem of dowry in the country, she should ensure that the film walked that path and the content suited the purpose.

All that this film managed to do was to show that a 36-year-old man is desperate to get married. A strict no-no.

— Shalini Saksena



'Was never approached for Super 30'

MUSBA HASHMI speaks with **RITVIK SAHORE** about the latest season of TVF Play's web series *Flames* and how did *Ferrari Ki Sawaari* happened among other things

■What's your role in *Flames*?

I play Rajat. This is the second season of the web series and the story is of young romance unfolding. As it was shown in Season 1 that Rajat and Ishita are now in a relationship, this season will show what actually happens after two people come into a teenage relationship — attraction and romance, understanding, discovering the deep-rooted discomforts, trust and a gamut of emotions.

■What prompted you to play Rajat?

First, I found the storyline interesting and appealing. Second, I just completed shooting for *Laakhon Mein Ek* and it was an exhausting experience because I played a dark character. I wanted to take up something light-hearted that would be interesting to do. This series was the best option.

■You debuted with *Ferrari Ki Sawaari*, how did that happen?

It happened all of sudden.

I was in Class VI, and was preparing for my Mathematics exam. That's when my father asked me to take a break from study and we both went to a mall. After doing our shopping, while we were returning home a person came to us and asked if I would like to be a part of a film. He was Rohan Mathur, now a casting director who was assisting in the film back then.

At first, we thought it was a joke but then he took us into confidence and the next day I went for acting workshops. That's how I got the film.

■Were there any apprehensions in your family?

My parents have been very supportive throughout. I am here because of them. They always asked me of what I wanted to do before taking any decision themselves. Even when I was approached for the film, my father asked me *tumhe karna hai kya?* Knowing that I was so young still he asked for my decision whether I want to do it or not. They have always been understanding and


I NEVER THOUGHT
OF BECOMING AN ACTOR. I WAS A CONFUSED CHILD.
SOMETIMES I WANTED TO BE A
PILOT AND
SOMETIMES A DOCTOR. I TOOK PART IN SCHOOL
PLAYS AND
ALWAYS GOT TO PLAY THE LEAD, I STILL DON'T KNOW WHY

comforting.

■After doing the film, did your friends treat you any differently?

I had a small group of close friends and all of them were extremely happy. Vidhu Vinod Chopra sir even held a special screening of the film for my friends. There was no big difference in their behaviour towards me because we knew each other much before the film, so it was not a big deal. They are still the same.

■Was acting always on your cards?

No, I never thought becoming an actor. I was a confused child. Sometimes I wanted to be a pilot and sometimes a doctor. I took part in school plays and always got to play the lead, I still don't know why. Maybe because my teacher liked me very much. (laughs)

■There were reports that you were casted for a role in Super
30. Is it true?

No, I was never a part of the film. I don't know why such reports were doing rounds on the internet, but I was never approached for any role in the film.

■What things do you keep in mind before signing a project?

I try to choose strong scripts with good content. If the story is good your role will definitely stand out and people will definitely love it. My focus never lies in playing only lead roles, the character and the story should be good and that's all I look out for.

■Any actor or director that you would like to work with?

I would like to work with Ranbir Kapoor as he is a fabulous actor and I love the vibe that one gets to see in his films. As for the director, I would love to work with Rajkumar Hirani sir and Srikar Raghavan, I love the kind of films they make.

TELLYTALE
HIMANSHU FOLLOWS SATTVIC DIET


Himanshu Soni, who is currently seen playing the role of Lord Ram in Colors' *Ram Siya Ke Luv Kush* has been winning hearts across the nation. Playing Ram has helped him in more ways than one. The actor, who is praised for his craft as Lord Ram, reveals the secret behind his gleaming and poised personality. Himanshu follows a strict sattvic diet which is restricted to bowls of fruit and dada and measured the amount of vegetables completing his day's meal and helping him stay fit and bright. Talking about his special diet Himanshu says, "I have been very conscious about what I eat and drink.

After 30's the diet reverses their function, hence it is very important that care is taken for long and healthy life. I am a pure vegetarian and follow a sattvic diet and my character of Lord Ram is also a major inspiration behind this routine. Ramji has a very noisy and calm personality, and when I was reading and preparing for my character I learnt about his lifestyle which I wanted to imbibe to personify Lord Ram with conviction on screen."

CENTURY OF CELEBRATIONS

Celebrating their teamwork, dedication and the immense success, Colors' *Choti Sardar* completes a milestone of 100 episodes on the auspicious occasion of Guru Nanak Jayanti. The cast and crew, presently shooting in the scenic locales of Serbia has a small party organised on the auspicious day of Gurupurab. The celebration started with a group prayer meeting and was followed by a feast, making it a truly special one.

Away from India, local tour guides of Serbia helped Nimmrit Kaur and Avneesh Rekhi arrange a special feast, comprising of various local delicacies that gave them all a larger feel. Missing celebrations back home, Avneesh and Nimmrit ensured that Gurupurab was celebrated with much fanfare and also brought in a massive cake for the successful completion of 100 episodes.

CHILDREN'S DAY SPECIAL

Deforestation is a big problem around the world and the responsibility lies upon all of us to save our planet from the looming disaster. Giving out a shout out to the little ones to come forward and take a pledge to protect our nature. Saumya aka Rubina Dilak of *Shakti... Astuti Ke Ehsaas Ki* gave a tearjerking performance at the Colors' Children's Day Special event.

While the show will have lots of fun and performances in-store by Arjun Bijlani, Surbhi Chandna, Jasmine Bhasin, Tejaswini Prakash, and many others, Rubina's performance to *Bezaabun Kab Se* along with Neerja Tiwari and Dipali Borkar, will be an eye-opener for everyone. Dedicated to the disastrous situation that the entire world is going through as a result of climate change, Rubina and the kids will depict the repercussions of deforestation and its impact on our nature.

Speaking about her performance, Rubina said, "It's shocking to see how people do not understand the catastrophic effects deforestation can have on our ecosystem and I want to communicate it through my act at this very special Children's Day event. It's important for us to teach the young generation to value our green cover and to make sure it's preserved for their future and I am glad that could contribute towards it in a small way."

SHRUTI LOVES SOLO BIKE RIDES

Star Bharat's show *Niruki Vidhayak* parallel lead actress Shruti Ulfat, who is

with its tongue-in-cheek humour and eccentric drama ever since it was launched. The inimitable host Maniesh Paul unravelled the unseen and 'awful' some side of Bollywood's hottest celebrities every week and during the grand finale, he paid the gorgeous Sara Ali Khan and the maverick Rohit Shetty an ultimate road test.

During this Saturday's grand final episode, Sara Ali Khan revealed her unconventional ways of convincing people. She took us down memory lane and revealed how she got admission into her school by singing *Dandam Mast Kalandar* during the interview.

Talking about the incident Sara mentioned: "I have always been this crazy, since I was a kid." Rohit cracked a joke in between and said: "And when exactly did you grow up?" Sara started laughing but continued: "When I was young, I remember that my mother and father were trying to get me into Montessori School. So, they got a call from the principal, who wanted to talk to me. Before they gave me the phone they told me to talk properly. I snatched the phone from them and started singing *Dandam mast kalandar, all da pebla number* and I thought I had done a great job. My mother on the other hand, thought I had lost the chance at the admission. However, I got in because the principal thought I was very confident."

VARUN GAINED 12 KG FOR A ROLE

A lot of times we see television actors go an extra mile to portray their character perfectly. From picking up nuances from relatable stories, to changing their lifestyle to fit in their character's shoes, Varun Badola has already been inspired by his real-life incidences for his role as a father. But for a method actor like Varun, who boils the ocean for his characters, it again raised the bar. In a recent conversation, Varun revealed that he gained 12 kilos for his character as Amber Sharma in Sony TV's *Mere Dad Ki Dulhan*. Essaying the character of a grumpy father in his 50s, Varun even coaxed the makers to opt for the salt and pepper look for Amber Sharma's role.

Plan Your Sunday

Rider Mania
Venue: Goa
When: November 22 to November 24, 2019

Rider Mania is an annual motocycling festival where Royal Enfield owners and enthusiasts come together in Goa. It is the largest gathering of Royal Enfield motorcycles and riders in Goa to celebrate the spirit of motorcycling. More than 8,000 riders have already registered to be in Goa for this festival. Attendees will also participate in competitions, expert sessions, art and a series of symphonic concerts. This year's Rider Mania is going to be yet another feather in Royal Enfield's passionate endeavour to bring together the perfect mixture of experience and youthful vigor.

Some of the main highlights of the festival include motocycling events and competitions (trials, slow race, arm wrestling and others), dirt track racing, custom motorcycles, motorcycle gear stalls, music and entertainment, art and garage cafe special workshops. Interested participants can register online: <https://onlinenbooking.royalenfield.com/ridermania/register/>.


Wine & Cocktail festival
Venue: BOA (Best of Asia) Village, 13, Exchange Store Building, 1st floor, Alipur Road, Civil Lines, New Delhi, Delhi 110054
When: Ongoing
Time: 11:30 am to 12:30 pm

BOA Village (Best of Asia Village) is offering special B menu in its quirky Wine and Beer festival to take you on a high along with Winter Special Cocktails like Coffee, Hot Toddy and Sparkling Wines- Dom Perignon Brut French, Chandon Rose and many more. The drinks will surprise and tantalise your palate with extensive food menu. The décor takes its cues from traditional elements of Asian iconography with every small detail meticulously thought of in order to reflect the best facets of Asian art and culture in three levels known earth, sky and heaven.


World Movie Festival
Venue: Siri Fort Auditorium, New Delhi
When: November 17, 2019
Cost: ₹2000 for two

Navrasa Drama World Movie Festival (Fourth Edition) is a rare and rich ensemble of movies by directors from around the world. The festival aims to bring back 100 years of world movies from Sweden, Iran, China, Poland, Germany, Russia, Italy, France, USA, Japan, India and others. This year *Navrasa* Duende plans to screen classics from all over the world including *Apocalypse Now* directed by Francis Ford Coppola's (English); *Tokyo Story* directed by Yasujiro Ozu's (Japanese); *The Marriage of Maria Braun* directed by Rainer Werner Fassbinder's (Germany); *Charulata* directed by Satyajit Ray (India); *The Passion of Joan of Arc* directed by Carl Theodor Dreyer (French); *Pulp Fiction* directed by Quentin Tarantino (America).



son for my trip to Ladakh but he is still very young. I am very close to my son and always believe in spending quality time with him. So every evening I take him for an evening walk so we hang out and spend time together."

SARA'S UNCONVENTIONAL TALENT

Zee TV's show, *Movie Masti* with Maniesh Pau has captivated its audience

with its tongue-in-cheek humour and eccentric drama ever since it was launched. The inimitable host Maniesh Paul unravelled the unseen and 'awful' some side of Bollywood's hottest celebrities every week and during the grand finale, he paid the gorgeous Sara Ali Khan and the maverick Rohit Shetty an ultimate road test.

During this Saturday's grand final episode, Sara Ali Khan revealed her unconventional ways of convincing people. She took us down memory lane and revealed how she got admission into her school by singing *Dandam mast kalandar, all da pebla number* and I thought I had done a great job. My mother on the other hand, thought I had lost the chance at the admission. However, I got in because the principal thought I was very confident."

Varun Gained 12 kg for a Role

A lot of times we see television actors go an extra mile to portray their character perfectly. From picking up nuances from relatable stories, to changing their lifestyle to fit in their character's shoes, Varun Badola has already been inspired by his real-life incidences for his role as a father. But for a method actor like Varun, who boils the ocean for his characters, it again raised the bar. In a recent conversation, Varun revealed that he gained 12 kilos for his character as Amber Sharma in Sony TV's *Mere Dad Ki Dulhan*. Essaying the character of a grumpy father in his 50s, Varun even coaxed the makers to opt for the salt and pepper look for Amber Sharma's role.



currently playing Gangadevi in the show, is not only an actress but a bike rider too. Shruti Ulfat shares: "Acting has always been close to my heart, but I am also fond of other activities like going to the gym, yoga and jogging. I believe in keeping myself fit. Along with this, bike riding is my other hobby. I have visited several places in solo bike trips. But one place which is still in my bucket list is Ladakh. I will surely fulfill this one day." Shruti further adds: "I want to take my

C'garh adjudged best state in better and innovative health care system

STAFF REPORTER ■ RAIPUR

Chhattisgarh won first place in high-focus states category for better public health care systems, innovative and exemplary work for the year 2018-19 at 6th National Health Summit at Gandhinagar, Gujarat.

Union minister for health and family welfare Dr Harsh Vardhan gave away the award. State health secretary Niharika Barik Singh and Mission Director, National Health Mission Dr Priyanka Shukla received the award. Health minister T. S. Singhdeo has extended greetings to health department officials for the achievement.

The selection was based on seven standards, mainly Niti Aayog ranking, district hospital operation, medical health and wellness centre, combating



non-communicable diseases, mental health programme, human resources, information technology and effective vaccination programme.

Based on the ranking, additional budget allocation will be made for Chhattisgarh in health sector.

Secy inspects CM nutrition programme

STAFF REPORTER ■ RAIPUR

Secretary, women and child welfare department, Government of Chhattisgarh, Siddharth Kumar Pardeshi inspected the Congress-led government's flagship programme, 'Chief Minister Suposhan Abhiyan' (CM Nutrition Drive) at Bhanpur and Sankara villages of Raipur district on Tuesday.

He inspected the anganbadi centre, 'Mahatari jatan yojana' and quality of 'ready to eat' foods. He found that in Bhanpur sector, out of total 29 critically malnourished affected children two have reached normal category while eight have reached in middle category. He directed to make the toilet with more facilities in Bhanpur anganbadi centre.

As per data, in Raipur, 819 malnutrition affected critical children were identified out of which within a month 12 have



been brought to normal category while 173 are still in middle category while remaining children have gained weight in the

range of 300-500 grams. Similarly, at village Sankara, mainly anaemic and malnutrition affected children and women are being served fresh food. In the village 50 women have less than 10 gram hemoglobin count, falling under anaemic condition.

The women appreciated the scheme terming it beneficial. Secretary also sat with them to share the food being served to the women.

Raipur district collector S Bharatidasan and Chief Executive Officer, Zila Panchayat Gaurav Singh said at present in Raipur district the nutritional programme is being implemented in 397 panchayats, out of 408, since October 2, when it was launched. Health department survey conducted after a month has found that out of 8535 anaemic women 2604 have recorded increase in hemoglobin level.

Option of online nomination for urban bodies' election

C'garh among a few states that have online nomination facility



STAFF REPORTER ■ RAIPUR

Chhattisgarh is now among a few states that has online nomination facility. The candidates vying for the posts of corporators in municipal corporations and municipal councils can now file nominations online with the help of ONNO online software.

The elections for urban bodies in the state are expected to be held in December.

Official sources informed about the facility said that a review meeting for the master trainers was held where they were trained about the ONNO software and its applications.

To avoid any inconvenience to the candidates, the State Election Commissioner

Thakur Ram Singh instructed in the meeting for making arrangements of date entry operators at zonal offices of municipal corporations and municipal councils and other easily accessible locations.

Singh and other experts also apprised the trainees about the recent amendment in the urban bodies act and instructions were given for taking actions accordingly.

STAFF REPORTER ■ RAIPUR

What could be seen as a sign of relief for Raipurians, the capital city has been ranked fifth in a survey of tap water quality across the country and the drinking water supplied here was far better than many metropolitan cities of the country.

Samples of all the state capitals were taken by Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS) to test the water quality of tap water under drinking water specification.

According to a Bureau of

Seven dreaded Naxals surrender in Bijapur

STAFF REPORTER ■ RAIPUR

Seven Naxals, including three women, surrendered before the police in Chhattisgarh's restive Bijapur district on Saturday.

The rebels who laid down the arms were carrying rewards between ₹1 lakh and ₹3 lakh on their heads, police said. They surrendered before Inspector General of Police (Bastar range) Sundarraj P.

Police sources said that the rebels cited 'disappointment with the Maoist ideol-

ogy and exploitation of lower-rung cadres by senior Naxal leaders' as reasons for leaving the organisation. The surrendered rebels include Ramji alias Bichem Karan (24), deputy commander of Odanti LOS (local organisation) squad; and Lakshmi Modiyam (32), deputy commander of platoon no.2 of Maoists. They were carrying a reward of ₹3 lakh each. Sundarraj P.

He added that Lakshmi Telam (28) and Suganya Modiyami (25), members of platoon no.2 under National Park area committee of

The rebels were allegedly involved in several deadly attacks on security forces, including Ranibodi police outpost incident in which over 55 policemen were killed in 2007. Sundarraj said, adding that they were also involved in Murkinar attack in which 11 policemen laid down their lives.

Maoists, were carrying reward of ₹2 lakh each. The three others identified as Ranjeeta Oyam (23), Rajkumari Yadav and Hunga Podiyani (24) were carrying reward of ₹1 lakh each.

The rebels were allegedly involved in several deadly attacks on security forces, including Ranibodi police outpost incident in which over 55 policemen were killed in 2007. Sundarraj said, adding that they were also involved in Murkinar attack in which 11 policemen laid down their lives.

Clubbing of health schemes will not serve purpose: Raman

STAFF REPORTER ■ RAIPUR

BJP national vice president and former chief Minister Raman Singh said the recent cabinet decision of the Congress-led government for convergence of all health schemes into one and utilization of funds under 'trust' model will not achieve the purpose as the state government kept a rider that the treatment should be done in government hospital facilities.

Addressing the media at BJP's state headquarters on Saturday, Raman Singh said under BJP government the facilities were extended even for treatment in private hospitals as per the choice and requirement of the patient. The facility was needed even for complicated operations done outside and within the state, he added.

The rider will create problems for patients undergoing treatment for critical problems as the state does not have facilities to deal with such complexities. On the five questions raised by the state Congress party chief, Raman Singh said Congress forgot their rule of party is right to raise question. Now that the BJP is in opposition, it will raise queries while the Congress will have to give answer to the

people, he added.

Citing data of paddy procurement, he said information received from Raigarh, Bhatpara and Bilaspur showed farmers there have sold their paddy at ₹1300 per quintal in Mandi.

The data from other areas are being collected.

He said that instead of indulging in politics, the ruling party should begin procurements of paddy from farmers before December 1.

Attacking the ruling Congress, Raman Singh said within 11 months it has undered all that was built in 15 years of BJP rule.

Chief Minister should not indulge in war of words instead should concentrate on fulfilling the promises made to the people, he said. He should also refrain from using abusive words against BJP and its leaders, the former chief minister advised his successor.

Raipur ranks fifth across the country in drinking water quality

As per BIS study of tap water samples collected from 20 state capitals across the country

STAFF REPORTER ■ RAIPUR

Indian Standards (BIS) study, Mumbai ranks the highest in the quality of water among capital cities in the country where samples of tap water were tested. In Mumbai, all 10 samples of tap water passed the BIS test. Surprisingly the national capital finishes at bottom and the samples collected from there failed in all the 19 parameters.

Second in the list is Hyderabad, where only one sample failed. However, at the bottom of the list is Delhi, where all 11 samples failed the BIS test — thereby reaffirming that the capital city has the poorest water quality,

the BIS study said.

The Union Minister of Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution, Ram Vilas Paswan, on Saturday said, "Mumbai tops the rating released by the Bureau of Indian Standards for quality of tap water. Delhi at the bottom, with 11 out of 11 samples failed on 19 parameters."

The Minister later released the much-awaited investigation report of samples of drinking water taken from capitals of 20 states across the country.

Notably, the IS 10500:2012 prescribes 48

parameters including radioactive substance but radioactive substance has been excluded from this exercise.

Test reports of virological and biological parameters (three parameters) have been received for Delhi only. All samples tested to conform to these three parameters. Test reports for other 20 cities for virological and biological are awaited. Test reports of microbiological and chemical tests have been received.

Cities have been first categorized on the number of conforming samples out of those tested. Cities which

have the same number of conforming samples have been further categorized on the basis of individual parameters in which samples have been non-conforming.

Free residual chlorine has been excluded from this exercise since it is applicable only when water is chlorinated and a minimum limit has been prescribed for it. The BIS study was titled 'Categorization of Cities on the basis of Reports of Samples of IS 10500: 2012 (Drinking Water Specification) Drawn from Capital of States'.



The draft committee headed by Justice Aftab Alam on proposed Journalist Security Act in its meeting at state guest house Pahuna on Saturday took suggestions from journalists and Pioneer Photo

BJP flays govt for 'rising crime' after chemical attack on cine artiste

STAFF REPORTER ■ RAIPUR

Reacting to the chemical attack on a budding cine artiste of Chhattisgarh at Bhilai on Saturday, the BJP alleged that morale of criminals is high in the state as the state government has failed to maintain law and order.

BJP state spokesperson Sachidanand Upasane said loot, murder, dacoity and other heinous crimes are reported practically every hour and the state home minister miserably failed to check them. The chemical attack has been reported in the home town of home minister himself, he added.

Upasane said Chhattisgarh was known as island of peace but

now it has been shattered by ever increasing incidents of crime creating a sense of fear among the residents. He urged Chief Minister Bhupesh Baghel to take stern action against the criminals.

The gravity of the situation can be gauged from the fact that when in state capital in front of public a businessman had to cough up ₹26 lakh, Congress workers creates ruckus inside the police station, he said. Atrocities against women too are on the rise, says BJP spokesperson. Winning awards is easy but maintaining law and order is a tough task, said BJP leader taking dig at the Home Minister, who was recently awarded as one of best performing ministers at the national level.



BATTLEGROUNDS

JHARKHAND

BJP releases another list, AJSU stands firm

PRANAV PRATYUSH ■ RANCHI

The Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) on Saturday announced three more candidates in its fourth list for the elections in Jharkhand, thereby taking the total count of its candidates to 72 — an indication that the ruling party is unwilling to entertain the demands of its long-term ally AJSU Party. The latter, however, has still kept a wait and watch stance after announcing candidates for 19 seats.

The BJP announced names of Mochrai Bauri for Jugsalai (SC) seat, Sudhir Sunda for Jagannathpur (ST) seat and Reeta Devi Munda for Tamar (ST) seat, from where sitting MLA Vikas Singh Munda, who recently joined the JMM after leaving AJSU Party, is contesting the poll. The Tamar seat also becomes important because former Minister, Raja Peter alias Gopal Krishna Patra and former naxal commander Kundan Pahan, who are incarcerated as chums of minister Vika Munda, are former minister Ranesh Singh Munda.

The AJSU official said Saturday did not release any statement over alliance issue. However, the party, which is almost set to go alone in the poll battle, is ready with its manifesto to be released by party

State Food, Civic Supplies and Consumer Affairs Minister Saru Roy in Jharsuguda on Saturday
Pioneer photo

chief Sudesh Mahto on Sunday.

Meanwhile, the delay in announcement of his name for Jharsuguda (west) constituency has irked senior BJP leader and incumbent Minister Saru Roy, who today announced that he is not interested to contest from the seat on party ticket.

Holding a Press conference in Jharsuguda on Saturday, Roy said, "I decided to bring out the party senior leaders from the state of confusion. I have told them not to consider my name for the constituency as I have no interest left to contest election on party

ticket. I have asked them to find a suitable candidate for the seat and I will accept it happily. I am feeling relieved now," he said.

"Tomorrow I will have a discussion with the party workers, who have supported me for over 15 years and then take a decision on contesting the election. I need to thank them also for their support," said the

Opposition alliance consists of the JMM, Congress and the RJD.

Yadav, former Janata Dal

leader, did not disclose what talks he had with Prasad saying they had talked on several issues.

To a query on Hindustani Awam Morcha chief Jitan Ram Manjhi's stand, Yadav expressed optimism that Manjhi would come along with the Opposition.

The first of the five-phase

voting begins on November 30 and the exercise will conclude on December 20. The counting will take place on December 23.

PTI

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PTI

challenge Das contesting as an independent candidate from the seat.

Roy has been frequently raising issues against the working style of the government and has written several letters to BJP Central leadership expressing his discontent.

189 candidates in fray in 1st phase

PTI ■ RANCHI

Just breather...

From Page 1

While overall AQI improved but a few places in Delhi - Dwarka Sector 8, Anand Vihar, Mundka - recorded values of primary pollutant Particulate Matter (PM) 10 very high - 438, 336, 338 respectively.

However, areas like Mandir Marg, Karni Stadium, Punjabi Bagh recorded AQI better with PM 10 values between 100-200 $\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$.

"The AQI is likely to enter the poor category on Monday. However, pollution is likely to increase November 20 onwards as another western disturbance will result in a dip in wind

said" SAFAQ said further.

According to Real Time Ambient Air Quality database of US embassy, New Delhi, at Shaheed Sukhdev Singh College, Rohini, AQI was 151, Wazirpur - 272, Vasundhara, Ghaziabad - 280, Sector 62 - 161, Sanjay Nagar - 171, Srinivaspuri - 200 and Narela AQI was recorded 206.

US embassy marked 10 places of Delhi under unhealthy category while two places marked as hazardous zone - Wazirpur and Ghaziabad.

Meanwhile, Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal may announce APAC decision on extending car rationing Odd-Even Scheme to tackle air pollution problem.

Amnesty India got foreign funds in FCRA violation

RAKESH K SINGH ■ NEW DELHI

Amnesty International India Pvt Ltd, booked by the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) for alleged violation of Foreign Contribution (Regulation) Act (FCRA), used commercial methods and circuitous funding, including FDI, to circumvent the head of FDI to circumvent the provisions of FCRA after being prohibited from receiving such funding, sources said here on Saturday.

The revelation has come after scrutiny of the Amnesty account books by the agency investigators a day after it conducted searches at three locations in Bengaluru and the national Capital on the premises of Amnesty International India Pvt Ltd and Indians for Amnesty International Trust (AITAT), Indians for Amnesty International Trust (AITFT), Indians for Amnesty International South Asia Foundation (AISAF) and unknown others.

These entities allegedly contravened the provision of the FCRA and the Indian Penal Code by receiving foreign contributions from Amnesty International UK through AIPL even though prior registration or permissions were denied to Amnesty International India Foundation Trust (AIIFT) and other Trusts under FCRA.

Last week, the Home Ministry had barred over 1,800 NGOs from receiving foreign contribution for not complying with the provisions of FCRA.

Accumulated evidence, painstaking examination of background and intelligence reports on funding patterns show Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) turning into sleeper cells working and plotting against the Government in potential collusion with the foreign powers, according to an intelligence dossier.

The dossier had flagged the tricky roles played by voluntary organisations such as IVY Pax Christi (Netherlands), Islamic Research Foundation (IRF) and Compassion International (USA) in taking circuitous route for funding local NGOs in a bid to create and run sleeper cells for future onslaught against the Government.

Scrutiny of the account books of Amnesty has revealed that it indulged in activities that were both prohibited and reg-

ulated under the FCRA. Entries in Amnesty's account books were not commensurate with the activities postulated for not-for-profit organizations under the Indian laws, the sources further said.

The CBI had registered a case on November 5 following a complaint from the Union Home Ministry against Amnesty International India Pvt Ltd (AIPL), Indians for Amnesty International Trust (AITAT), Indians for Amnesty International India Foundation Trust (AIIFT), Indians for Amnesty International South Asia Foundation (AISAF) and unknown others.

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According to the dossier, the civet created a quite stir after making a brief appearance in Sarojini House branch of the bank. "The morning turned out to be quite unexpected for the employees and customers at the bank after a brief

Kanakadurga — had trekked the holy hills and offered prayers at the shrine, scripting history on January 2.

However, Devaswom Minister Kadakkampudi Surendran has said those who want to visit the temple can procure a court order to enter the temple. At 5 pm on Saturday,

Kandarudu Mahesh Mohanarao opened the sanctum sanctorum of the temple, located in a forest reserve of the Western Ghats in Pathanamthitta district of the state, and performed the pooja.

The devotees from Kerala, Tamil Nadu, and other neighbouring States, who were allowed to trek

the hill from 2 pm, climbed the sacred 18 steps to the temple with the "irumudikutti" (sacred bag containing the offerings to the Lord) after the priests performed the "padippooja".

While AK Sudher Namboodiri took charge as Sabarimala melanthi (chief priest), SM Parameswaran Namboodiri who was to take charge as priest of the Malikkappuram Devi Temple could not do so following a death in his family.



DELHIITES IN DEEP WATER

Categorisation	Capital	No of Samples failing	No of Parameters in which samples failing	Parameter in which failing
1	Mumbai	0/10	0	—
2	Hyderabad	1/10	1	Phenolic Compounds
3	Bhubaneswar	1/10	1	Chloramines
4	Ranchi	1/10	4	TDS, Manganese, Total hardness, Nickel
5	Raipur	5/10	3	Aluminum, Total Alkalinity, Total Hardness
6	Amravati	6/10	7	TDS, Total Alkalinity, Total Hardness, Calcium, Magnesium, Manganese, Chlorides
7	Shimla	9/10	1	Aluminum
8	Chandigarh	10/10	2	Aluminum , Coliform
9	Thiruvananthapuram	10/10	3	Turbidity, Aluminum, Coliform
10	Patna	10/10	4	Total Hardness, Total Alkalinity, Coliform and E. Coli
11	Bhopal	10/10	4	Turbidity, Coliform, E. Coli , Colour
12	Guwahati	10/10	5	Colour, Taste, Total Alkalinity, E. Coli , Coliform
13	Bengaluru	10/10	5	Turbidity, Aluminium, Calcium, Bromo-trichloromethane, Coliform
14	Gandhinagar	10/10	5	Colour, Turbidity, TDS, Coliform, E. Coli
15	Lucknow	10/10	6	TDS, Total Alkalinity, Total Hardness, Magnesium, Coliform, E. Coli
	Jammu	10/10	6	TDS, Total Hardness, Total Alkalinity, Magnesium, Calcium, Coliform
	Jaipur	10/10	7	Turbidity, TDS, Calcium, Magnesium, Total Alkalinity, Coliform
	Dehradun	10/10	7	TDS, Calcium, Magnesium, Total Alkalinity, Total Hardness, Coliform, E. Coli
	Chennai	10/10	9	Turbidity, Odour, Total Hardness, TDS, Chloride, Fluoride, Ammonia, Boron, Coliform
	Kolkata	9/9	10	Colour, Turbidity, TDS, Magnesium, Barium, Total Hardness, Total Alkalinity, Aluminium, Coliform, E. Coli
	Delhi	11/11	19	Odour, TDS, PH, Turbidity, Colour, Total Hardness, Total Alkalinity, Aluminium, Magnesium, Iron, Calcium, Nitrate, Phenolic Compounds, Anionic Detergent, Ammonia, Chloride, Sulphide, Coliform, E. Coli

From Page 1

The Centre also plans to include Capitals of the northeastern States and smart cities under the testing regime by January 15, 2020, while all district headquarters are expected to be tested by August 15, 2020.

Samples from Jaipur, Dehradun and Amravati too failed on seven parameters which include total alkalinity, coliform, calcium, turbidity, magnesium and

aluminum. The sample in Ranchi failed on TDS,nickel,manganese and total hardness while Raipur failed on total alkalinity and hardness.

The sample from Patna and Bhopal failed to four parameters like coliform, colour, total hardness and total alkalinity. The samples of Guwahati, Gandhi Nagar and Bengaluru failed on five parameters. The sample of Thiruvananthapuram failed on three para-

meters.

The Indian Standard prescribes 48 parameters including radioactive substance but in the current study, radioactive substance test was excluded. Also free residual chlorine has been excluded from this exercise since it is applicable only when water is chlorinated and a minimum limit has been prescribed for it.

RCom...

From Page 1

Executive Director and Chief Financial Officer has been put up to the COC for their approval. Upon approval by the Committee of Creditors, further disclosures will be made to stock exchanges," the filing said.

Ambani got the charge of RCom after property division between him and his elder brother Mukesh Ambani in 2005.

The company is undergoing through insolvency proceedings following an application filed by Swedish telecom gear maker Ericsson. The National Company Law Tribunal has handed over control of the company to an insolvency resolution professional.

Sources estimate that RCom Group's total secured debt is around ₹33,000 crore. Lenders have submitted claim of around ₹49,000 crore in August.

RCom has put its all assets for sale which include spectrum holding of 122 MHz that the company before insolvency proceedings estimated to be around ₹14,000 crore, towers and optical fibre network ₹3,000 crore and data centres worth ₹4,000 crore.

The Committee of Creditors looking after asset sale of RCom will open bids received for the assets on November 24.

Wasim Akram, Deputy Director-Special Projects, Wildlife SOS said,

"The civet was initially stressed and agitated but eventually calmed down once it was safe inside the transport carrier. Often the plight of urban wildlife is dismissed because city dwellers consider them to be a nuisance and they are often met with hostility. We are glad to see that people are becoming more sensitised to their presence."

Asian Palm Civet visits bank; staff, customers taken aback

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI



As per the Wildlife SOS officials, the animal was found healthy and later released back into its natural habitat.

As per the Wildlife SOS officials, the animal was found healthy and later released back into its natural habitat.

It took the team almost 30 minutes to carry out the rescue operation as it had to be careful not to cause the animal any further stress. The civet was subsequently released in the Asola Wildlife Sanctuary.

During the rescue operation, a number of customers were present at the bank, and if the civet had escaped from the room, the situation would have escalated," member of rescue team said further.

The civet was initially stressed and agitated but eventually calmed down once it was safe inside the transport carrier. Often the plight of urban wildlife is dismissed because city dwellers consider them to be a nuisance and they are often met with hostility. We are glad to see that people are becoming more sensitised to their presence."

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The civet was initially stressed and agitated but eventually calmed down once it was safe inside the transport carrier. Often the plight of urban wildlife is dismissed because city dwellers consider them to be a nuisance and they are often met with hostility. We are glad to see that people are becoming more sensitised to their presence."

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Speaker chairs all-party meeting

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Ahead of Parliament's Winter Session, Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla on Saturday appealed to all political parties for cooperation for ensuring smooth functioning of the House and add to the legislative productivity of the session.

After an all-party meeting, which was also attended by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, the Speaker said floor leaders of different parties mentioned various issues that they wished to be discussed during the Winter Session, beginning November 18. "I told them that after discussing these issues in the business advisory committee, we will try to take up as many as possible," he said.

"Appealed to floor leaders of all parties for their cooperation in smooth functioning of the House. As the House is answerable to the people and I hope parties will raise issues of public interest. There should be debate in the House, and for that it should function," he



Prime Minister Narendra Modi with Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla, Union Minister for Parliamentary Affairs Prahlad Joshi, MoS Parliamentary Affairs Arjun Ram Meghwal, TMC's Sudip Bandyopadhyay and others leave after an all-party meeting at Parliament in New Delhi on Saturday

Cong's 'Bharat Bachao' against BJP Govt at Ramlila Maidan on Nov 30

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Congress on Saturday announced that its district-level and State-level agitations against the Centre's "anti-people policies" would culminate in a "massive rally" at Ramlila Maidan on November 30. It also hit out at the Government over a BJP Minister's remark that economy is doing fine with people getting married and trains full, saying that such statements were being made in a planned manner to divert attention from reality.

The Congress held a meeting of its general secretaries, chiefs of its frontal organisations, department heads, State unit chiefs and Congress Legislative Party leaders on Saturday. "The meeting was called to discuss the agitation programme... Against the Central Government's anti-people policies, especially economic slowdown, farmers distress, huge unemployment and other issues," Congress General Secretary KC Venugopal said.

He said that the party has decided to hold a mega rally against the anti-people policies of the Central government on November 30, in Delhi's Ramlila Maidan. The meeting has decided to name it as "Bharat Bachao Rally" because people are suffering very much. Venugopal said that the party has planned to hold agi-



tations in various parts of the country from November 5 to 15, during which it would take out protests to highlight the failures of the BJP-led Government. "We decided that the agitations at district and state levels will be completed before November 25," he said.

The Congress also lashed out at the Government. Union Minister Sushil Angadi's statement on Friday dismissing the Opposition's criticism over the state of economy, asserting that "airports and trains are full" and people are getting married" and this indicates that the country's economy is "doing fine".

Noting that the economy slows down every three years but it will pick up soon, the minister of state for railways said "some people" were trying to malign the image of Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

Hitting out at the minister, Congress chief spokesperson Randeep Surjewala in a tweet said that such bizarre statements are made or are prompted to be made in a planned manner to divert attention from the reality and prevailing circumstances.

"Airports are full, trains are full, people are getting married. Some people are doing this for maligning the image of Narendra Modi," Angadi had told reporters during an inspection of the soon to be commissioned Tunda Khurja eastern dedicated freight corridor.

"Every three years there is fall in demand in economy. It is a cycle. Then the economy picks up also," he had said.

BJP holds nationwide protest, demands apology from Rahul

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Armed with the Supreme Court's clean chit to the Modi Government on the Rafale deal, the BJP on Saturday held countrywide protests against the Congress, demanding an apology from its leader Rahul Gandhi for making "baseless" allegations.

The BJP said in a statement that its workers held protests in district headquarters across the country while its national general secretary Arun Singh led the stir in Bhubaneswar, Maharashtra party chief Chandrakant Patil in Mumbai and Bihar unit president Sanjay Jaiswal in Patna, among other places.

It also organised demonstrations in Lucknow,



Delhi BJP workers stage a protest seeking an apology from Congress leader Rahul Gandhi after SC ruling on the Rafale issue in New Delhi on Saturday PTI

Chandigarh, Shimla, Jaipur, Varanasi and Thiruvananthapuram, the statement said.

The BJP has also referred to the Supreme Court's deci-

CONGRESS

In July last year, the Income Tax department asked the YI to pay tax of around ₹145 crore.

"In ₹50 lakh, you became the owner of property worth ₹2,000 crore. What kind of model is this? This should be investigated," Prasad said.

When BJP used to discuss Robert Vadra and his doings earlier, it used to say that there are various models of development - one of it is Vadra model of development," Prasad said.

Under it (Vadra model of development), you invest ₹20-₹25 lakh, and you become the owner of big real estate properties in Bangalore," he said.

The minister said that after Vadra model of development, he used to think that a new model of development would not come.

When this (Young Indian matter) is family model of development, Parivar model of development. Invest ₹50 lakh and become the owner of property worth ₹2,000 crore," Prasad said.

Naidu also urged journalists to exercise caution in the time of sensationalism.

reporters that he raised the matter of the West Bengal Governor running a "parallel administration", which should not be allowed to function.

"Issues of unemployment and economic conditions should be discussed. Opposition should be given space," he said.

BSP leader Kunwar Danish Ali said the House should discuss the issue of air pollution in north India, including Uttar Pradesh.

The session, beginning Monday, is taking place in the backdrop of a spate of Supreme Court decisions on key issues,

including Ram temple and Rafale deal as also major decision of the government to do away with the autonomy provision of article 370 relating to Jammu and Kashmir and hence expected to figure prominently in the month-long proceedings of the two houses.

Besides the Constitutional amendment bill for Citizenship, the other key bills which may be tabled during the session include regularization of 1728 unauthorised colonies in Delhi. Government will also bring bills to replace two ordinances on corporate tax rate cuts and ban on e-cigarettes.

BY STARTING THEIR OWN NEWSPAPERS

Parties, Business groups promoting their vested interests: V-P Naidu

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Vice President M Venkaiah Naidu on Saturday said political parties and business groups are promoting their vested interests and compromising the values of journalism by starting their own newspapers.

Highlighting the perils of fake news, he said it may be time for media bodies to come up with a code of conduct for journalists.

Naidu was speaking at an event organised by the Press Council of India to observe the National Press Day and confer National Awards for Excellence in Journalism. Union Minister for Information and Broadcasting Prakash Javadekar also attended the event.

With business groups and even political parties setting up newspapers and TV channels to further their interests, the core values of journalism are getting eroded, the vice president said.

Instead of giving expression to the popular feeling, some newspapers these days are giving expression to coloured and partisan views, he added.

Naidu said times have changed in such a way that one has to now read a minimum of four to five major newspapers to get a complete sense of the current developments.

"That is an undesirable trend that has crept into our system. To protect and promote your business interest, to paint your rivals in a negative manner, you are using it (media)," he said.

Naidu also urged journalists to exercise caution in the time of sensationalism.

"Sensationalism has become order of the day, sensational news means senseless news," he said.

The cardinal principle of journalism is to present fair, objective, accurate and balanced information to the readers and viewers without journalists assuming the role of gatekeepers, he said.

With the electronic and social media providing news by the minute with alerts and flashes on smartphones, journalists will have to exercise greater caution and guard against fake news, disinformation and misinformation, he said.

Sensationalism, biased coverage and paid news have become the modern-day afflictions of the media, he said.

Javadekar said fake news is a bigger crisis than paid news. This is the way for the press to understand its freedom as well as its responsibility. Today there is a crisis of fake news more than paid news," he said.

"A fake news was circulated about child-lifers and it claimed 20 lives. When there is discussion about lynching, only one lynching is talked about but these 20 people also died due to lynching. That is not talked about," he said.

"This has become all the

more critical in the present times after the advent of the fake news' phenomenon and the huge impact social media is creating.

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Govt leading country to starvation-like situation: Congress on NSO data

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

A day after an official survey reportedly pointed to a fall in consumer spending for the first time in four decades in 2017-18, the Congress on Saturday said there is a perception that the Government is leading the country towards a "starvation-like situation".

On Friday morning, a media report cited the latest consumption expenditure survey by the National Statistical Office (NSO) to claim that consumer spending fell for the first time in more than four decades in 2017-18, primarily driven by slackening rural demand.

On Friday evening, the Statistics and Programme Implementation Ministry said it

has decided to not release the Consumer Expenditure Survey results of 2017-18 due to "data quality" issues.

"Can you cover up onset of poverty and penury by hiding data, Mr Modi? Should you have come forward, released the data and told the nation, these are the steps we propose to take, but this government only seeks to hide employment data, farmer's suicide data, poverty data, slowdown data, consumption data, export and import slow-down data," Congress general secretary KC Venugopal said.

"Hiding data is not a solution, finding a solution is the way forward, but the government refuses to do so," he added.

NAVY MIG TRAINER CRASHES IN GOA VILLAGE, BOTH PILOTS SAFE

PNS/PTI ■ NEW DELHI/PANAJI

area, he said.

The aircraft is attached to INS Hansa located near Dabolim in Goa.

Taking to Twitter, the Indian Navy spokesperson said, "During a routine mission, after take off from INS Hansa at Dabolim a MiG-29K trainer aircraft suffered an engine fire. The pilots Capt. M Sheekh and Lt. Cmdr. Deepak Yadav ejected safely."

The pilots were provided first-aid and shifted to hospital in Vasco.

The Indian Navy and the Goa Police have cordoned off the site of the mishap and are in the process of clearing the wreckage.

BJP attacks Congress over I-T tribunal order on Young Indian

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The BJP on Saturday hit out at the Congress alleging that family and commerce run hand-in-hand and are integrally linked for the party after the Income Tax Appellate Tribunal rejected Congress leader Rahul Gandhi's plea to consider Young Indian (YI) as a charitable institution.

Briefing media, Union Minister and senior party leader Ravi Shankar Prasad said that ₹90 crores were given to the National Herald paper and Government properties worth ₹2,000 crores were handed to the Associated Journals Limited which used to run the paper, even after the newspaper ceased operations in 2008.

Prasad said, in 2010, Young India Limited was formed and was exempted from Income Tax in the name of a charitable trust. He alleged the Congress has hidden the facts for tax exemption. "There is a judicial affirmation... That family and



commerce go hand in hand and you (family) invoke dubious methods for enrichment," he added.

The Law Minister said, the BJP condemns this palpable, dubious transaction of undue enrichment which is corruption.

There was no immediate reaction from the Congress but it has demanded a similar charge by the BJP and termed the probe as a case of political vendetta.

Congress president Sonia Gandhi, Rahul Gandhi and others have been accused of paying just ₹50 lakh through which YI, a not-for-profit organisation, had obtained the right to recover ₹90.25 crore that the AII owed to the

Nafed apple procurement in Kashmir failed miserably: Farmers body

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Centre's initiative to procure apples in Kashmir through cooperative Nafed has failed miserably" as only 0.01 per cent (1.36 lakh boxes) of 11 crore boxes have been purchased directly from growers so far.

Returning from a field visit to the valley, the All India Kisan Sangharsh Coordination Committee (AIKSCC) demanded that the Centre should provide compensation to apple and other horticulture crop growers in Kashmir who have incurred losses due to unusual heavy snowfall as well as from lack of transport and cold storage assistance due to the political turmoil in the newly formed union territory.

"It (pollution) affects all of us. And it does not have a diplomatic solution nor is the MERA the responsible one to solve it. This is a problem of major proportions to be solved by city and federal government, not the MEA (Ministry of External Affairs). The odd-even road rationing scheme is a good start, but working closely with the farmers in Punjab on the issue of crop residue burning should also be strongly considered."

Delhi was blanketed by a thick smog for four consecutive days till Friday as unfavourable weather hampered dispersion of pollutants. The national Capital witnessed a dip in pollution levels on Saturday morning even as

status given to Jammu and Kashmir under Article 370 and bifurcation of the state into two Union Territories.

"The Government authorised Nafed to carry out procurement but this operation failed miserably. Lack of experience and infrastructure meant that Nafed has procured 0.01 per cent of the estimated produce (1.36 lakh boxes) out of more

than 11 crore boxes," the AIKSCC said in a statement. Farmers have complained that the Nafed procurement had disruptive effect since it has sold apple in the sale market at lower prices that brought down the wholesale apple prices in the procurement market, it noted.

Kashmir produces 75 per cent of the country's total apple production and the horticulture

industry of Kashmir has a turnover of Rs 10,000 crore annually.

"If 70 per cent loss (as is being claimed by the growers and representatives of commerce and industry) is true, then this will devastate the livelihood of the people of Kashmir for years to come," the farmers' body said.

Highlighting the plight of

farmers, the AIKSCC said its delegation which visited the valley witnessed extensive damage to the apple crop in the valley due to untimely and heavy snowfall, it said and added growers were unable to move out and harvest the crop and store it because of heavy snowfall. The impact on saffron crop was much worse and yields are expected to remain lower this year.

Besides heavy snowfall, the farmers body said crops like pear, cherry and grapes which were harvested in August were stranded due to complete shutdown in the valley and could not be marketed, leading to near total loss for the farmers.

Apple harvesting was to begin in September but was delayed as farmers could not go out for picking. Once harvesting began, non-availability of telephones for first 60 days and non-access to internet even now meant that the communication

between apple growers, transporters and traders was snapped, causing a disruption in the demand-supply chain, it said.

Further, farmers could not apply to the procurement markets since trucks were not allowed to go to the villages and farmers were forced to bring their produce to the Highways. This caused delays, inconvenience and additional costs, it added.

As a result, transport cost almost doubled due to prevailing security threat and unavailability of trucks. Frequent transport blockades and closure of highways resulted in further delays and loss of quantity and quality of apples during transportation, the AIKSCC noted.

AIKSCC, a nationwide platform of 250 farmers' organisations, urged the government to assess the actual loss and provide relief to apple growers as well as growers of saffron, pear, grape, cherry and sheep breeders.

Work on to push MSME exports: Gadkari

PTI ■ NAGPUR

The Government is working on two policies to increase MSME exports and bring down imports by encouraging local production, Union MSME and Road Transport Minister Nitin Gadkari said on Saturday.

While addressing the gathering at Small Micro Enterprise (SME) conference at Nagpur, Gadkari mentioned that the

MSME sector has 29 per cent contribution in country's growth and 48 per cent of export is done through MSMEs. Similarly, about 10-11 crore jobs have been created in MSMEs.

"The Government is working on two policies. Firstly on the industries which are into export business — how to support and increase their export," the minister said.

The leather industry has a total turnover of ₹1,40,000 crore of which ₹80,000 crore to ₹90,000 crore is domestic and around ₹45,000-50,000 crore is from export.

"I have suggested them on working on modernisation, upgradation, product designing and how to reduce the cost of production and improve quality, so that our share increases in the international market. We are

working on a policy on how to strengthen export business," Gadkari said.

He added secondly, the government is working on policy to increase indigenous production of products that are being imported. "The products that being particularly imported should get manufactured in the country itself. We are in talks with the commerce ministry on these two policies and

it is in the final stages," said Gadkari. Gadkari emphasized on three important factors — reducing capital cost, power cost and logistic cost — to become competitive in international market and these factors have also been discussed while making the new policy.

Gadkari also spoke about contribution of MSMEs in the defence sector.

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PUBLIC NOTICE FOR SALE

In terms of The Securitisation and Reconstruction of the Financial Assets & Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002, and Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002, and in exercise of the powers conferred under Section 13(2) & 13(4) thereof, the Bank has taken over the possession of the under mentioned property.

The Bank intends to sell the property "KANTH TENDULKAR TENDULKAR" located at periphery of Jagbir Singh Soh. Jee Ram Rd, R/o H No 11/15/25 Top Floor, Right Side, Govind Pur, New Delhi-110019, as per the particulars given hereunder: Name of the Borrower: Mr. S. Manohar Karan, Shop No.30, Mini Market, ODA Flats Kalkaji, New Delhi-110019. (Borrower & Mortgagor) (Government Building) Amount Recoverable: ₹10,30,120/- Date of Sale: 15/02/2019. The sale will commence from time to time, from 20.02.2019 till the date of payment. Description of Property: Right side terrace of ninth floor (16th floor), consisting of two bed rooms, dining/kitchen, one kitchen, two toilet/bathrooms and balcony of built up property no 1125, gali no 11, out of khasra 93, measuring 75 sq.yds (62.7 sq.mts). Total area 150 sq.yds. situated at Govind Pur, Kalkaji, New Delhi-110019. Price: Twenty Lakh Twenty Five Thousand Rupees Only (₹ 2,25,000/-) Earnest Money Deposit: 10% of the Reserve price i.e. Rupees Two Lakh Two Thousand Five hundred Only (₹ 2,25,000/-).

* The above mentioned property shall be sold on "as is where it is" basis; except, all the costs and expenses relating to pending electricity, water and house tax bills regarding the above mentioned property shall be paid by the concerned borrower(s) and the same will be deducted from the amount to be received by the Bank, shall be borne by the Bank, the aforementioned cost and expenses before the date of possession shall be borne by the concerned borrower(s) mortgage(s).

* The successful bidder/lender shall deposit 25% of the amount of sale price, adjusting the Earnest Money Deposit paid earlier, immediately after the acceptance of Bid/ tender to the account of the Bank. In case of non-payment of earnest money deposit given/paid already shall be forfeited and in default of such deposit, the aforesaid property(s) shall forthwith be sold again.

* The balance 75% of the sale price shall be payable on or before 15th day of confirmation of the sale by the Bank or such extended period may be agreed upon in writing by the parties. In case of failure to deposit this amount within 15th day of confirmation of the sale, the concerned bidder/lender whose property(s) shall be resold and the defaulting purchaser shall forfeit all claims towards the aforesaid property(s) or to any part of the sum for which it may be subsequently sold.

* The provisions of Private Treaty as provided in Law may be resorted to in case of need or if willing buyer/seller is found.

* The Authorised Officer is not bound to accept the highest offer or any of all offers and reserves the right to accept or reject any or all the tenders/bids/offers without assigning any reasons thereof.

* The successful purchaser would bear Professional charges/fee payable, such as drawing up documents, stamp duty, registration fee and any other incidental expenses thereon as applicable.

* The above named borrowers/mortgagors attention is also invited to provision of Sub-Section (e) of Section 13 of the ESIA Act, in view of time available, to redeem the above mentioned property.

* The publication is also 30 days' notice to the above named borrower/lender/surety, Bidder/lender/surety and the Draw/Pay order of the Estate, Money Deposit amount as mentioned in this Notice, are invited in sealed copies by the undersigned from the intending buyer(s) for purchase of the above mentioned property(ies), at the Head Office, C-28, Community Centre, Pankha Road, Janakpur, New Delhi-110058. The last date for submission of the bidders/tenders is 30-12-2019 which shall be opened on 31-12-2019 at 4.05 P.M. at the Office of the AGM/Authorised Officer or Manager at the Head Office, C-28, Community Centre, Pankha Road, Janakpur, New Delhi-110058.

The intending buyers/sureties may inspect the property(ies) on 20.12.2019 between 11:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m., Bank Draft/Pay order for EDM should be in favour of "The Kangra Co-operative Bank Ltd, account Sh. Jagbir Singh Soh. Jee Ram GR/19/67, Membership No.33170".

The terms & conditions of the sale can be obtained from the AGM/Authorised Officer or the Manager (Legal) of the Bank, Head Office at C-28, Community Centre, Pankha Road, Janakpur, New Delhi-110058.

RAMESH CHAND KASANA
MANAGING DIRECTOR
THE KANGRA CO-OPERATIVE BANK LTD
HEAD OFFICE AT C-28, COMMUNITY CENTRE,
PANKHA ROAD, JANAKPUR, NEW DELHI-110058.
PHONE NO. 8920404076, 9213588402

FM holds
meet on GST
simplification

New Delhi: Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman on Saturday held meeting with chartered accountants, traders and other stakeholders as part of efforts to further simplify Goods and Services Tax (GST) forms and make the filling process more user friendly.

To highlight the problems faced by GST filers, the stakeholders attempted to file specific

returns on a real-time basis in the meeting and tried to show where they were dissatisfied.

The Finance Minister assured stakeholders that their suggestions on simplification of GST filing will be implemented soon. Revenue Secretary Ajay Bhushan Pandey said after the meeting. New GST return is available on the portal for trial and consultations will be held across the country on December 7 to get feedback on the new system, he said.

eration may be bottoming out or not, we will know in next two weeks based on the Q2 growth figures of the Government. However, the current poor growth is mainly due to a demand problem. It can be addressed through fiscal measures," NCAER Distinguished Fellow Sudipto Mukherjee told PTI on the sidelines of its event on Mid-year review of the economy. Emphasising that the focus should be on fiscal measures, Mukherjee said there is a need to pump up expenditure without pushing up inflation.

There are ways of doing it, he said, adding, "We have a bold leader. There is a huge fiscal space which has not been used.

It is myth that some say there is no fiscal space." Mukherjee said revenue forecast is 5 per cent of the country's GDP and about 1.5 per cent of GDP is locked up as excess appropriation of the budget which has not been spent, he said.

—With the growth decel-

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TRUMP IMPEACHMENT

POTUS: Double standard never seen in US history

PTI ■ WASHINGTON

President Donald Trump on Friday dubbed the impeachment proceedings against him as a 'double standard never seen' in US history as former US Ambassador to Ukraine Marie Yovanovitch deposed before a Democrats-controlled Congressional panel on the second day of public hearings against him.

"A double standard like never seen before in the history of our country?" Trump tweeted as Democrat lawmaker members of the House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence grilled Yovanovitch on president's interaction with Ukrainians.

Ahead of the hearing, Trump also released transcripts of his first phone to Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky after his electoral victory, which, the US president said, is reflective of his stand that he has done no wrong.

Yovanovitch deposed before the committee about the big "threat" she felt on suddenly hearing she had been sacked from the ambassadorial position and after coming to know how the president had denounced her in his July phone call with Zelensky.



'I have right to speak, freedom of speech'

"I would say when you go into a meeting with somebody and they ask, are you going to be leaving, that is concerning. So that probably—I don't know exactly when that started happening—but it was in that timeframe," the former US envoy to Ukraine said.

During the hearing, she said Trump's tweet about her diplomatic performance is very intimidating. "I can't speak to what the president is trying to do, but I think the effect is to be intimidating," she said when she was shown the presidential tweet.

Everywhere Marie Yovanovitch went turned bad. She started off in Somalia, how did that go? Then fast forward to Ukraine, where the new Ukrainian president spoke unfavorably about her in my second phone call with him. It is a US President's absolute right to appoint ambassadors," Trump asserted.

Washington: Amid the ongoing impeachment hearings against him by a Democratically dominated Congressional panel, US President Donald Trump has asserted that he has the right to speak and the freedom of speech.

Trump made the assertion while accusing the opposition Democratic party of denying the Republicans the due process in the House-initiated impeachment proceedings against him.

In the history of our country, there has never been a disgrace like what's going on now. So, you know what, I have the right to speak. I have the freedom of speech just like everybody else does have," But they [Democrats] have taken away the Republicans rights [to ask questions]," Trump told reporters in a media interaction at the White House.

PTT

Washington: The White House on Friday said "zero evidence" of any wrongdoing by President Donald Trump was presented at the impeachment hearing by a Congressional panel, asserting that the former US envoy to Ukraine deposed she was unaware of any criminal activity involving the President.

The second public hearing of Speaker Pelosi and Congressman Schiff's impeachment charade was as useless and inconsequential as the first. Zero evidence of any wrongdoing by the President was presented," White House Press Secretary Stephanie Grisham said after the conclusion of the second public hearing on impeachment against Trump.

Former US Ambassador to Ukraine Marie Yovanovitch testified before the House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence as part of the House-initiated impeachment hearing against Trump.

Referring to her testimony, Grisham said Yovanovitch deposed under oath that she was unaware of any criminal activity involving President Trump.

"She was not on the July 25 phone call and had no knowledge about the pause on aid to

Ukraine. It is difficult to imagine a greater waste of time than today's hearing, and yet unfortunately, we expect more of the same partisan political theater next week from House Democrats," Grisham said.

On Friday, Yovanovitch was the third witness to appear before the House Committee headed by Congressman Adam Schiff in the Democrat's impeachment against Trump.

The public hearing of the probe kicked off on Wednesday as William Taylor, the acting ambassador to Ukraine and George Kent, the deputy assistant secretary of State for European and Eurasian affairs, testified for more than five hours before the House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence.

Yovanovitch told lawmakers that she advocated the US position that the rule of law should prevail, and Ukrainian law enforcement prosecutors and judges should stop wielding their power selectively as a political weapon against their adversaries and start dealing with all consistently and lawfully.

"Untrue are unsourced allegations that I told unidentified embassy employees or Ukrainian officials that

President's Trump's orders should be ignored because he was going to be impeached or for any other reason. I did not and I would not say such a thing. Such statements would be inconsistent with my training and my role as an ambassador," she said.

The previous Obama administration, she said, did not ask her to help the Trump campaign or harm the Trump campaign, she said.

"Nor had I taken any such steps if they had. Partisanship if this type is not compatible with the role of a career foreign service officer," she said.

The former diplomat said she never met Hunter Biden, the son of former Vice President Joe Biden, nor she had any direct or indirect conversations with him.

"And although I have met former Vice President Biden several times over the course of our many years in government service, neither he nor the previous administration raised the issue of either Biden or Hunter Biden with me," she said.

Responding to questions, Yovanovitch said fighting corruption in Ukraine was a key element of US policy. PTI

Diplomat says he overheard Trump call about investigations

Washington:

A State Department official told impeachment investigators Friday that he overheard President Donald Trump talking with a US ambassador about "investigations" in Ukraine, according to people familiar with the testimony.

The previous Obama administration, she said, did not ask her to help the Trump campaign or harm the Trump campaign, she said.

David Holmes, the political counsel at the US Embassy in Ukraine, said Trump was talking so loudly that Ambassador Gordon Sondland had to hold the phone from his ear.

Holmes said that allowed others at a restaurant in Kyiv to overhear the call that's now part of the impeachment inquiry, according to one of the people, who were unauthorized to publicly discuss the testimony and were granted anonymity.

The conversation at the Kyiv restaurant came the day after Trump's July 25 phone call with newly elected Ukraine President Volodymyr Zelenskiy, in which the US President pressed his counterpart to investigate corruption in Ukraine and 2020 rival Joe Biden. A whistleblower's complaint about that call sparked the impeachment inquiry.

Sondland opened the July 26 conversation by telling Trump that the Zelenskiy "loves your ass." Trump responded, "So, he's gonna do it," Sondland replied.

The Associated Press has viewed key excerpts of Holmes' 10-page statement and a person familiar with the document confirmed its authenticity. The remarks were first obtained by CNN.

Holmes, a career foreign service officer, told investigators he did not seek the opportunity to testify. Like others in the inquiry, he was issued a subpoena to appear. He spent nearly seven hours with lawmakers.

Rep Ted Lieu, D-Calif, said Holmes is a key witness to the impeachment investigation because he heard directly from Trump. That counters Republican claims that the inquiry is based on hearsay from other officials testifying.

"He has firsthand knowledge of the conversation between Ambassador Sondland and the president of the United States," Lieu said. "He overheard the conversation." AP

HONG KONG PROTEST

Protesters defy Xi with pro-democracy rallies

Hong Kong: Hong Kong pro-democracy protesters defied a warning by China's President Xi Jinping and took to the streets again Friday, as the political turmoil seeped out to London, where a territorial minister was confronted by masked demonstrators.

Protests have swept Hong Kong since June as many in the city of 7.5 million people have vented fury at eroding freedoms under Chinese rule.

Violence has escalated, and tensions have spread overseas, sparking friction between China and Britain, which governed Hong Kong until 1997.

Hong Kong Justice Secretary Teresa Cheng fell in London Thursday after being surrounded by pro-democracy protesters, in the most physical confrontation involving a minister since the unrest began.

Former colonial power Britain has urged Beijing and Hong Kong to seek a political solution to the crisis and has condemned escalating violence on both sides.

In Beijing, Chinese foreign ministry spokesman Geng Shuang said if Britain continues to add fuel to the fire...



A woman tries to hold back riot police from approaching the Hong Kong University in Hong Kong on Saturday

as an "appalling attack" and accused Britain of fuelling the protest movement. Police in London said they were investigating.

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Govt supporters march after week of chaos

Hong Kong: Government supporters took to the streets of downtown Hong Kong on Saturday after a chaotic working week saw hardcore pro-democracy activists cause widespread disruption in the city and stretch police resources.

A "Blossom Everywhere"

campaign of roadblocks, vandalism and protests across the semi-autonomous financial hub shut down large chunks of the train network, forced schools and shopping malls to close and stretched police resources.

The tactic blocked major

intersections and highways

with barricades made from

bricks, furniture, bins and steel

barriers, while university

campuses became bases for stockpiling petrol bombs and supplies.

On Saturday, hundreds of

Government supporters began

knocking down improvised

walls concreted into the road by

Clean-up begins after week of chaos, destruction

Hong Kong: A clean-up began across Hong Kong Saturday with pro-government groups removing bricks and debris from roads after a week of widespread disruption and violence as pro-democracy protesters changed tactics to sink the city deeper into chaos.

Their "Blossom

Everywhere" campaign of roadblocks, vandalism and protests across the semi-autonomous financial hub shut down large chunks of the train network, forced schools and shopping malls to close and stretched police resources.

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On Saturday, hundreds of

Government supporters began

knocking down improvised

walls concreted into the road by

pro-democracy protesters,

whose demonstrations have rocked Hong Kong for more than five months.

AP

China deploys PLA troops

Beijing: China on Saturday deployed its troops in Hong Kong for the first time since the unprecedented pro-democracy protests began in the former British colony more than five months ago over a proposed extradition law, with soldiers in plain clothes clearing the road-blocks.

Soldiers from the Hong Kong Garrison of People's Liberation Army (PLA) — the world's largest military — have been deployed for the first time in more than five months of civil unrest in Hong Kong.

PTT

Israel strikes Hamas targets in Gaza after rocket fire

Bolivia's growing crisis turns deadly as 5 killed in clash



Mourners gather around coffins of backers of ex-President Evo Morales in Sacaba near the city of Cochabamba.

Lanka votes for new Prez

Coloombo: Sri Lankans voted Saturday to choose a new president amid multiple poll-related incidents, including an attack on the minority Muslim voter, in an election that will decide the future of the country that struggles with security challenges after the Easter Sunday bombings and increasing political polarisation.

A record 35 candidates are vying for the top post at the election, with the main contenders being former wartime defence secretary Gotabaya Rajapaksa, 70, and the ruling party candidate Sajith Premadasa, 52. Anura Kumara Dissanayake of the National People's Power (NPP) coalition is also a strong candidate.

Polls opened at 7 am local time and would close at 5 pm with some 12,845 polling stations being set up throughout the country for 15.9 million voters, who will choose a successor to President Maithripala Sirisena.

This election will make record as the election with the largest number of polling stations and the longest 26-inch ballot paper.

The counting will start soon after the end of voting. The first results are expected after mid night, officials said. The final results will come on Monday.

The election is taking place nearly seven months after homegrown radicals pledging loyalty to the Islamic State terrorist group detonated suicide bombs at three churches and three posh hotels, killing 269 people, seriously hitting the tourism industry, one of the main foreign earning sectors of Colombo said.

AP

Colombo: Gunmen opened fire on a convoy of buses carrying minority Muslim voters in northwest Sri Lanka on Saturday, hours before polling in presidential elections got under way, police said.

There were no immediate reports of casualties, but a police official said the attackers had burnt tyres on the road and set up makeshift road blocks to ambush the convoy of more than 100 vehicles. "The gunmen opened fire and also pelted stones," a police official of Colombo said.

Executive Engineer C-2 (DUSIB) Govt. of N.C.T. Delhi invited on behalf of DUSIB online Percentage rate bid on two bid system for the under mentioned work. Nit No.: 28-C/2-DUSIB/2019-20 Tender ID No. 2019_DUSIB_183750 - 1 Dated 13.11.2019

Name of work: C/o 7620 (G+4) Five Storey low cost houses for Slum Dwellers (under

JNNR) at Sardha Ghewra PH-II.

Sub-Head: Making connection of Internal drains into the existing main drain at Sardha Ghewra PH-II.

Estimated Cost:-Rs.32,11,811.00.

Time allowed 60 days

The tender forms & other details can be obtained from ([https://govtprocurement.delhi.gov.in](http://govtprocurement.delhi.gov.in)) 20.11.2019, 15.00 PM. To. 30.11.2019, 15.00 PM.

Note:- Any amendment/change/clearification (if any) will be uploaded only on ([https://govtprocurement.delhi.gov.in](http://govtprocurement.delhi.gov.in)). therefore, intending tenderers may inspect the website regularly.

Executive Engineer C-2/DUSIB KAMAL SINGH Executive Engineer C-2, DUSIB Raja Garden, New Delhi-110027

DIP/SHABDARTH/1010/19-20

Delhi Urban Shelter Improvement Board Office Of The Executive Engineer C-3 GOVT. OF NEW DELHI 2nd Floor, Circle Office Bldg., Road No.-28, Shivali Plaza, Raja Garden, New Delhi 110027. E-Mail ID : cccs.dusib@noidainitiative.com Tel. No. : +91-11-25417491

SD/- Authorized Officer, Axis Bank Ltd.

Delhi Urban Shelter Improvement Board Office Of The Executive Engineer C-3 GOVT. OF NEW DELHI

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For GIRNAR SPINTEX INDUSTRIES LIMITED

Regd. Off : E-431, Okhla Industrial Area Phase II, New Delhi-110 020

Works : Got No 47 & 48, Sangwadee Village, Kothapu-Huipan Road, Tal. Karveer, Dist. Kolhapur-416202

STATEMENT OF UNAUDITED FINANCIAL RESULTS FOR THE QUARTER AND HALF YEAR ENDED 30TH SEPTEMBER, 2019 (Rs. In Lacs)

Sr. Particulars Quarter ended 30.09.2019 Unaudited

Quarter ended 30.09.2019 Unaudited

Quarter ended 30.09.2018 Unaudited

Revenue from operations 974.72 1,336.24

Net Profit/(loss) for the period before tax (before and after extraordinary items) (222.57) (556.52)

Net Profit/(loss) for the period after tax (after exceptional and extraordinary items) (222.57) (556.52)

Total comprehensive income (Face Value Rs. 5/- each) (222.57) (556.52)

Paid up Equity Share Capital (Face Value Rs. 5/- each) 2,058.48 2,058.48

Basic and diluted EPS before & after Extraordinary Items (0.54) (1.35) (0.25)

Note : The above is an extract of the detailed format of quarterly Financial Results filed with the Stock Exchanges under Regulation 33 of SEBI ("Listing Obligations and Disclosure Requirements"), Regulations , 2015. The full format of the said results are available on the website of BSE (www.bseindia.com) as well as on the company's website (www.amitspinningindustries.com)

For GIRNAR SPINTEX INDUSTRIES LIMITED

Sd/- Jitendra Kumar Chopra Managing Director

Sd/- Deepak Choudhary Chairman

THE PANIPAT CO-OP. SUGAR MILLS LTD., PANIPAT

Email ID : pansugarpanipat@gmail.com Contact No. : 0180-2651269, 26515164

TENDER NOTICE*

No. Name of the Department Name of Work/ Notice/ Tender Opening Date Closing Date Amount (Rs. in lac) Website of the department https://tenders.ytrc.in

The Panipat Coop. Sugar Mills Ltd., Panipat 16-11-2019 21/11/2019 4:20:00 PM

Item for Sugar Mill 5.00 —

2. Export of Sugar 1300 11.00

3. Purchase of Bagasse 35.00 —

Job Works for Sugar Mill 5.00 —

4. Rewinding of Motors 5.00 —

Item for Distillery Unit 52.75 —

5. Purchase of P.P. Seal 52.75 —

The detailed tender have already been uploaded on the website <https://tenders.ytrc.in>. The tender should be filed on the above website on or before 21-11-2019 up to 02:00 PM. The TECHNICAL BID* will be opened on 21-11-2019 at 02:30 PM. If a tender qualifies in "TECHNICAL BID" then only FINANCIAL BID* will be opened. The Negotiation, if necessary will be held in the presence of lowest tenderer or his representative who be present at that time 21-11-2019 at 11:00 AM.

Managing Director

Mr. C.K. Jha (Advocate)

Office No: UB-53, Antrik Building, 22, K.G. Marg, New Delhi, Mob. No. 981295674

*Note : The tender documents will be available on the website of BSE (www.bseindia.com) as well as on the company's website (www.amitspinningindustries.com)

Place : Kolhapur Date : 16 / 11 / 2019

For additional information contact us on 0180-2651269, 26515164

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Pacers engineer another innings win

India demolish Bangladesh for sixth successive Test win

PTI ■ INDORE

India annihilated Bangladesh inside three days for a resounding innings and 130 run-victory in the first Test, riding on one of the most hostile fast bowling performances in recent times.

The quick victory was on predicted lines.

Having bowled Bangladesh out for 150 in the first innings, India binned them out for 213 in the second essay after declaring their first innings on their overnight score of 493 for six.

The victory also gave India 60 points, and they strengthened their position in the World Test Championship table with 300 points in their kitty.

The thrashing also completed a hat-trick of wins for them, having beaten South Africa in the second and third Test in the previous series.

The gulf was huge between the two teams and it could only get worse for Bangladesh from here onwards as the Indian pace attack, in the upcoming Day/Night Test with pink ball, is expected to cause more damage to their batsmen.

It was a game where Mohammed Shami (match haul of 7 wickets), Umesh Yadav (4 wickets overall) and Ishant Sharma (3 wickets) scared the hell out of an opposition that showed little stomach for a fight, save senior player, Mashruq Rahim (64, 150 balls, 754), who delayed the inevitable.

Ravichandran Ashwin (match haul of 5 wickets) complemented the pacers, chipping in with wickets at regular intervals.

Bangladesh may have lost a lot of Test matches but the one in Indore has left them with scars that will remain for a long time. An international team looked frightened in the face of relentless hostility.

There were no angry gestures or over-the-top celebrations but scorch-



India's Ravichandran Ashwin, center, and teammates celebrate the dismissal of Bangladesh's Mashruq Rahim during the third day of first cricket test match

Arun lauds Indian pace unit

PTI ■ INDORE

got the wicket, he was very happy that he could do that.

"Each time you try to explore new avenues in your bowling, you constantly look to improve. And this would give him the much-needed filip to experiment more and try out," he added.

It's Ishant's experience that has made him the bowler that he is.

"Ishant is probably the most experienced bowler we have. He has played over 90 Test matches. He felt that he needs the batsmen to play a lot more."

It was about him trying to experiment with different angles. When he's doing well, suits his bowling best," the bowling coach said.

"When asked about Umesh, the bowling coach lavished praise on the 'character' that he has shown despite being cut out of the side due to specific team combinations.

"Umesh showed a lot of character in coming back. But then that's also an embarrassment of riches (with Umesh on his way to recovery)," the former India bowler said.

"India's most successful bowling coach Arun then spoke about each of the three pacers.

On Ishant coming round the wicket to left-hander (Shadman Islam dismissal), Arun said: "Actually started working on that variation from yesterday. So if you look at the way he signalled after he

turned bowled one fuller on the off-stump channel. The ball held its line and all the veteran did was to offer a training session slip catch to Rohit Sharma.

Amid the ruins, Rahim, after get-

ting him on his chest and then tickling the stump. It was pure intimidation as the batsman looked in physical pain as he left.

Ditto for Imrul Kayes, who got a perfect outswinger (inswinger for a left-hander) from Umesh in the first session. The ball failed in and uprooted the leg-stump. Kayes had given up on the fight from the start as he looked nervous while facing each and every delivery.

Shammi's guile again came to the fore when he hurried Mohammed Mithun with a bouncer and his mistimed pull was easily taken at mid-wicket by Mayank Agarwal.

Bangladesh's best bat, Mominal Haque (7) was jittery from the start and survived a DRS call while trying to leave a delivery pitched on the off-stump.

However, when Shami angled one into the opposition skipper, he was adjudged plumb in-front even though Virat Kohli had to take a review, which

turned out to be successful.

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For the team's oldest player (in terms of age) Mahmudullah Riyad, the issue was technical as well as experimental.

A fluent player in white ball format, not for once during the two innings did he look comfortable fit against the pacers or spinners.

In the post-lunch session, Shami

just bowled one fuller on the off-stump channel. The ball held its line and all the veteran did was to offer a training session slip catch to Rohit Sharma.

Amid the ruins, Rahim, after get-

ting reprimed in the first session, showed his will to fight that was missing in younger colleague Liton Das (35 off 39 balls), who showed T20 skills when something else was required.



We feed on each other's success: Ishant

PTI ■ INDORE

Feeding off each other's success over attaching importance to hierarchy within the fast bowling department has helped in Indian pacers recent success, the experienced Ishant Sharma said here on Saturday.

The trio of Ishant, Mohammed Shami and Umesh Yadav shared 14 wickets between them to annihilate Bangladesh by an innings and 130 runs in the first Test here, helping India go 1-0 up in the two-match series.

"I am not treated as a senior, we don't have anything like that (junior/senior mindset). We always enjoy each other's success, speak with each other and try and share our plans. It's healthy competition," Ishant said after the match.

To this Shami added: "The more we get tired, the better fun we have. We push each other. We try to enjoy each other's success. There are certain things I cannot even say.

"I bowl alongside Ishant and Umesh, that makes it easier for me. I focus on my length and have been able to execute it well."

Ishant said it's difficult for him to explain his recent purple patch.

"I have played quite a lot. I am only 31 but having played almost 100 games, the body does feel old. The bowling is taking a toll on my body, but I'm enjoying it, trying out different variations."

Umesh said the incentive for the fast bowlers at home is that they get more overs when they take more wickets.

"Earlier, the new ball was doing a lot for pacers. We know our strengths. We try to take wickets with the new ball and make it easier for spinners."

Shami said he's looking forward to playing the pink-ball Test in Kolkata.

"What I try to do is to pitch it on a good spot, nothing special. I just try to execute good line and length. That will be the same with the pink ball also," he said.

He said given Umesh's power with the bat, all the boundaries in India looked small.

"We don't have restrictions as batters. The team management has given us freedom. We try to bat sensibly, though, when there is a batter at the other end. I have been empowered by the skipper and the coach."

'We now have dream combination of fast bowlers'

PTI ■ INDORE

Indian captain Virat Kohli on Saturday termed his fast bowling arsenal as a 'dream combination' that can torment any opposition on any kind of surface.

Riding on one of the most hostile fast bowling performances in recent times, India thrashed Bangladesh by an innings and 130 runs inside three days in the first Test.

Asked about India's current fast bowling resources, Kohli reminded that the team is without Jasprit Bumrah, who is undergoing treatment for an injury.

These guys (fast bowlers) are on top of their game, when they bowl, it looks like any pitch is a good pitch. Jasprit is not a part of

the attack and when he comes back, it will be a one heck of an attack to counter (by opposition teams)," Kohli said at the post-match presentation.

"They can take wickets in every spell. The slip fielders are ready as they know the ball can come any over. This is a dream combination for any captain. Having strong bowlers is the most important thing in any team," he added.

Talking about the fast bowlers, he said, "Don't know what to say, it's another clinical performance. It was very professional with the bat, playing five batters with one guy taking responsibility is what we want with overseas tours coming up. Hats off to the boys."

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Kohli's performance

home is now comparable with the Australians of the early 2000s but Kohli said the team was not playing for everyone to see, that'll remain in the books, we haven't focused on it. We're looking at keeping the standards up, motivating the next lot of players. In that process, we're pushing up the standard of

one to see, that'll remain in the books, we haven't focused on it. We're looking at keeping the standards up, motivating the next lot of players. In that process, we're pushing up the standard of

Indian cricket. We don't care about numbers at all as a team," the skipper said.

Asked about Mayank Agarwal's superlative performance, Kohli said, "The mindset is simple, when you see a young guy coming in to bat in Tests I know how much time it took me to get those big hundreds, so I know the importance of getting big runs.

"It's important as a senior batter to let them know to keep going. I want them to not make the mistakes I made as a youngster to make them world class cricketers."

The Indian team will play its first ever Day/Night Test in the second and final match against Bangladesh in Kolkata, and Kohli said the

players are excited about it.

"The pink-ball Test is going to be exciting, will be a challenge for the batters. With the older ball, it doesn't swing that much so the bowlers will have a challenge. We're just happy to be among the first to play pink-ball cricket for India."

Man of the Match Agarwal said it was a dream come true for him to play for India and produce this kind of performance.

"It's dream come true to play for India, grateful for the start I've got. Hope I can continue. I do practice my six-hitting but not during the Tests, but I do try and hit a few in domestic cricket," said Agarwal who made 243 in India's only innings.

"It's great to have somebody who motivates you. When I got my first 150,

Kohli was at the non-strikers end and he said 'nothing short of 200 for you next.'

About the Day/Night Test in Kolkata, he said, "We've had three pink-ball sessions under lights, Rahul Dravid arranged those in Bangalore. Looking forward to the game now. It's going to be a landmark game for us."

Bangladesh captain Mominal Haque said the toss impacted the outcome of the match.

"It has been difficult. We won (the toss) and decided to bat, it was a difficult decision. But I have a lot of positives, especially Abu jayed who picked four wickets. Mashruq was superb with the bat in both innings, Liton did well too," he said.

Twilight Training Indian team to stay in Indore for nets under lights

PTI ■ INDORE

India have extended their stay here by two days and will have a full-fledged training under lights from Sunday, aiming to get used to the 'twilight zone' ahead of the country's first pink-ball Test.

Even the Bangladeshi team has also decided to stay back and utilise the time, which they have got because of an early finish to the opening Test, training under lights.

It has been learnt that

for the next two days, the Indian team's focus will be on what is being called as 'twilight zone', something that cricketers who have played with the pink ball, have acknowledged to be very challenging.

"We will specifically train during the twilight because we still don't know what the ball will

do during that particular phase," a source close to the team management told PTI on conditions of anonymity.

Many players who have played the Duleep Trophy, including Cheteshwar Pujara, has said that sighting the pink ball at twilight is a challenge as the crimson

colour of the sky and the pink colour of the ball makes it look more like orange.

"In the twilight period, I feel that maybe sighting the ball could be a little challenging. (But) the more you play, the more you get used to it. It's always about experience and knowing how the ball is

challenge to play with the pink ball. The ball has a lot more lacquer. I haven't even bowled a single ball with the pink ball. Obviously I just saw it. Sometimes I don't understand if its orange or pink, still coming to terms with that," Ashwin had said.

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the pioneer

agenda

FROM THE INSIDE

Mystic pillars of a great King

The two pillars with edicts near Bihar-Nepal border tell the tale of Ashoka and his conquest through Buddhism

2

Leading a virtuous life

Guru Nanak's spiritual beliefs and practices were transformational and cut across the lines of religion

4

Don't take yourself too seriously. Know when to laugh at yourself, and find a way to laugh at obstacles that inevitably present themselves — Halle Berry



FROM THE KEHWA KHANAS TO THE SOCIALS

What do millennials want from restaurants in India? Do they appreciate quality, instead of chatpata, "buzzing" flavours? The answers lie in the history of restaurant retail in India and cultural habits of how people eat different foods at home and in restaurants, writes ANOOTHI VISHAL in her book, *Business on a Platter: What Makes Restaurants Sizzle or Fizzle Out*. But first, a taste of history... An edited excerpt:

If professional chefs run restaurants today, history has come a full circle. In medieval India, the moneyed nobility employed the highest-paid chefs and not the bazaar chefs who cooked the common man's *chat*, kebabs and breads. Several accounts of Lucknow, including the early 20th-century *Guizista Lucknow* by Abdul Halim Sharar, talk of highly paid *rikabdaras*, or professional cooks, who specialised in unique dishes that left their diners amazed.

Shaikh Fida Ali was a *rikabdar* during the reign of Wajid Ali Shah, the last nawab of Awadh. He once placed a transparent lampshade on a table before a British dignitary. He placed a lit candle inside the lampshade, then blew it out, broke what appeared to be the glass of the shade and started eating it. It was later learnt that the entire lampshade was made out of sugar candy, wrote Aslam Mahmud, an old Lucknowiwallah and bureaucrat, in his superbly researched *Awadh Symphony*, which talks about life under the nawabs. Centuries before molecular gastronomy began to bewilder us with its presentations, the *rikabdaras* were already practising food as an art form.

Restaurant cooks, on the other hand, traditionally didn't know how to cook these nuanced dishes, and restaurant cooking has therefore always been distinct from home cooking in India. This fact is crucial to understanding of the country's food- and restaurant-scape. For the first time, really, in the history of food retail in India, we are at a point where at least some restaurant food cooked by chefs is being considered more evolved and more desirable than home food. Experience-led dining that was confined to moneyed homes (as opposed to restaurants that were more functional and catered to mass needs) has only recently shifted away from that private zone and into a public, social one.

After the British assumed power in India and Mughal might was lost, cooks who had till then laboured in the kitchens of aristocrats found themselves out of work. Some of them found work with new employers but discovered that these new sahibs and brown sahibs of the Raj did not understand the elite art. Chef Muejeb-ur-Rehman, a well-known chef from Lucknow popular for his high-end wedding catering, tells me this delicious story behind the popular Lucknow idiom, 'Yeh moom aur masoor ki dal', used to be dismissive about someone.

According to him, a chef who found employment after having served a nawab for a long time asked his new employer what he would like to eat that day. The employer told him to make something simple like *masoor dal*. The chef in turn handed the employer a long list of ingredients to be bought for the preparation, looking at which the employer's face fell and he complained of the expense. The cook walked out, scoffing, 'Yeh moom aur masoor ki dal' (loosely translated as 'How can you, with this face, appreciate my *masoor dal*?')

Used to a lavish, no-expense-spared way of cooking, the talented cooks must have been at a loose end. Some of them and their descendants set up small restaurants where they refashioned the elaborate and exquisite foods of their former masters as bites for common men. *Qormas* (hitherto cooked only within homes, *nihari* being the street dish), *dal* and *puttas* were thus tweaked to become part of Mughlai menus at a few restaurants in cities such as Delhi, Calcutta, Lahore and Lucknow.

We find an example of this kind of shift in the story of Karim's, the iconic Mughlai restaurant in Delhi. According to his descendants' retelling of their restaurant's history, in 1913, Haji Karimuddin set up Karim Hotel in Gali Kababian near Jama Masjid, contending he was serving the 'food of royalty to the common man'. Haji Karimuddin traced his ancestry to a family of Mughal cooks in Shahjahanabad that had to flee the capital after the last Mughal emperor, Bahadur Shah Zafar II, was exiled. The family relocated to Meerut. However, when India came under the British crown and the Delhi Durbar was being held in 1911, Karimuddin moved back to the city with the idea of opening a small restaurant to take advantage of the crowd that would be descending on the city for the *durbar*. Karim Hotel in the beginning served just *aloos gosht*, a home-style gravy of meat and potatoes, and *dal* to its patrons. The food was meant to be a substitute for home food.

In Calcutta, another cosmopolitan melting pot, dishes of Mughal origin were reinvented by small restaurants to cater to the needs of workers and daily-wage earners. Anadi Cabin on Esplanade is reputed to be almost a hundred years old. It has been around most certainly since before Partition, and remains unchanged till today, including in its use of the same iron *tawa* on which the cook shallow-fries Mughlai *potoras* (the Bengali term for *paranthas*), a beloved Calcutta street snack and Anadi's signature dish.



MANY OF THESE EARLY RESTAURANTS THUS CAME UP AS BUSINESSES THAT WERE SEEKING NOT TO PROVIDE RECREATION BUT INSTEAD TO CATER TO A NEED FOR CHEAP, FILLING MEALS FROM VILLAGES AND SMALLER TOWNS TO THE CITIES TO WORK FOR THEIR COLONIAL MASTERS

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The tiny restaurant turns out 400 *porotas* from 20 kg of flour daily in a kitchen visible to all. The *porotas* could be covered in duck egg (which were considered vegetarian by traditional meat-eating Hindus) or chicken egg, filled with *keema*, folded and shallow-fried. These *keema porotas* are an innovation often credited to this restaurant. Mughlai *paranthas* almost certainly existed in Lucknow and Awadh homes before Wajid Ali's exile to Calcutta along with cooks who brought Nawabi dishes to the City of Joy. The simple egg-coated Mughlai *parantha* of Awadh, made with many layers or *parat*, underwent a metamorphosis to become the *keema*-filled substantial snack of Calcutta, which could be picked up easily and eaten on the go by daily-wage earners in the new city.

Many of these early restaurants thus came up as businesses that were seeking not to provide recreation but instead to cater to a need for cheap, filling meals as people moved from villages and smaller towns to the cities to work for their colonial masters. However, colonialism in India brought with it more upscale restaurant and leisurely experiences, catering to the elite.

The first passenger train in India started running between Bombay and Thane in April 1853, pulled by three steam engines Sahib, Sindh and Sultan on a 34 km broad-gauge line. As British India's rail network grew and the railways began to cover longer distances (Bombay to the capital in Calcutta was a much publicised route for first-class tourists), there was need for refreshments and restaurants en route.

Several British or Anglo-Indian travellers' accounts speak of impeccable crockery, turbaned waiters and formal service, and food that was fairly similar all across the railways — thick soups, cutlets and bread and butter. It was, however, only Europeans or Anglo-Indian travellers who were entitled to travel in first-class carriages, and who could enjoy the catering in the dining cars. Conditions in the third class, in which the bulk of Indians travelled, were terrible. A 1929 *Times of India* report said that the Great Indian Peninsular Railways was trying out a separate dining car for Indians: 'It would probably not have allowed the third class passengers who made up the bulk of travellers, and who had to either eat food they had brought or buy at station halts on the way.'

Since the catering was primarily for Europeans, European-inspired dishes started

appearing on the menus in these restaurants along the rail network — things like chops, cutlets, omelettes, tea and custard. These dishes would eventually get absorbed as restaurant and club food in India, and we continue to eat some of this 'continental' food even today. The crockery and cutlery used were of the highest quality and the service by liveried waiters was impeccable in keeping with the expectations of the sahibs of the Raj. Even after India became independent, upscale dining would imitate this pattern of deferential service.

While the dining cars were available only to first-class European travellers, from 1901, separate refreshment rooms for Indians started appearing at a few stations. This resulted in the emergence of other dishes that are now part of old-fashioned or nostalgic restaurant food centred around the Raj — for instance, the railway mutton curry (which clearly was never a single recipe) or the egg curry.

Till much after Independence, railway refreshment rooms were thought to be fairly high-standard restaurants, and railway catering would be relied upon for banqueting needs when dignitaries visited. My grandfather, who was in the catering division of the Northern Railways for some time in the 1970s, had amusing stories of catering to the Nehru-Gandhis — delicious anecdotes that we savoured as all restaurateuring tales must be.

But not all history is appetizing. The history of restaurants in India is fraught with caste and religious segregation — one reason that may have prevented a food retail boom earlier in the country's history. Once they started catering to Indians, railway refreshment rooms were segregated not just as those meant only for Hindus but also as those meant for Hindus versus Muslims. Even water fountains in the railway stations was marked Hindu or Muslim in British India. There were 'pure' Hindu meals cooked by brahmans, and those offering Muslim food like *gorma*, *kebab* and *pulao*.

In the south, similarly, vegetarian brahmin hotels and 'military hotels' serving meat (with the suffix 'Hindu' added to signify that no beef or pork was served, though mutton was) came up as well as Udupi restaurants serving pure veg food run by brahmans from the region, to cater to students and officers who worked in the Madras Presidency.



Lauriya Nandangarh and Araraj Ashoka:

THE MYSTIC PILLARS THAT UNVEILED A GREAT KING

The decoding of the two Ashokan pillars with edicts near Bihar-Nepal border in the 18th century tells the tale of how India first came to know of the existence of Ashoka and his conquest through Buddhism, writes SOMEN SENGUPTA

A major unpardonable pitfall of India's pre-Islamic era was its apathy of recording political chronology in a systematic way. On top of that, non-stop destruction of its monuments, architecture, literature and centre of cultures thereafter in the hands of Islamic invaders from 12th century, a major part of Indian history was once deleted, fragmented, obscured and finally fictionalised with legend and folklore.

From 18th century onward, when European traders started exploring the country, they were astonished to see several archaeological ruins prevailing under massive dilapidation in isolated places, attracting no attention from common people.

India of that time was a country with little sense of heritage of its pre-Islamic era, though the country's civilization dates back 5000 years. This was a matter of great perplexity to Europeans who were clearly excited to find amazing archaeological relics, one after another, with mind boggling engineering marvel and excellent craftsmanship. However, none of those seemed to connect with any ready reference of written history.

For instance, in 1616, an Englishman named Thomas Coryat found an eccentric monolithic stone pillar at Delhi's Firoz Shah Kotla. The pillar had some mystic inscription written in an unknown language. The thrill of this discovery was extended when on July 30, 1670, inside a pestilential jungle frequented by wild animals in Bihar near the Nepal border, John Marshal (not to be confused by famous John Marshal of ASI) found a similar circular sand stone pillar with mysterious edicts on its body. The pillar had a beautiful stone lion seated on an abacus crowned on its top as capital.

From the local people, John came to understand that this amazing engineering marvel was called 'Bhim kai lathe' or the walking stick of Bhima, a character of Hindu epic *Mahabharata*. The place, where this pillar was found, was 23 km from Bettiah town.

The place was then known as Mathia and today is known as Lauriya Nandangarh. *Lauriya* in local language means stick.

The two major victories against two Indian rulers — one in 1757 in Bengal and another in 1799 in Mysore — cemented the position on East India Company in political theatre of India. They become the ruler in almost every sense over a vast geography. This attracted many Europeans to India in the next 200 years. Many of them were ordinary office bearers and yet they proved to be extra ordinary researchers with an acute interest in India's history. In next 100 years or so, some of them gave Indian history a new insight with their exceptional hard work and outstanding academic brilliance.

By the end of 18th century, many such mysterious stone pillars and rock stones with edict written on them in an unknown language were found from Peshawar to Mysore. European officials working in India, and having keen interest in historical orientation, were excited to discover a new light of wisdom in these mystic pillars. Groping in the dark, many of them speculated these as conquests of some victorious king, or boundary pillars of dominions, or edicts of religious nature. The widest speculation was that these were secret codes of Greek treasures once owned by Alexander. However, these were soon discarded with the logic that the pillars were found in places like Delhi, Allahabad and Bihar, where Greek never could invade.

In November of 1780, Charles Wilkins sent a report to the Asiatic Society of Bengal about a finding of another mysterious decapitated pillar with similar alphabets carved on its surface at Buddal in north Bihar. This place was 28 km from Bettiah town, now known as Lauriya Araraj. This pillar, though not found with a capital, created more excitement as its edicts were more prominent and bold.

In 1783, Thomas Law, collector of Gaya district drew sketches of both the pillars and sent a report to William Jones in Calcutta. After years of hard work, in 1837,



The report heading read: "A short Account of Two Pillars to the North of Patna". In March 1814, while marching with 34th Regiment of East India Company to take part in Anglo-Nepal war, Lieutenant J Horris saw Lauriya Araraj pillar and drew it in October 1814, he sent him an eye copy of Lauriya Araraj pillar edict.

Now armed with the information pertaining to all the four edicts, Prinsep managed to decode a name — "Devanampiyata Piyadasi" — that seemed to appear in all edicts. Meanwhile, a discovery of an ancient book by someone in Sri Lanka almost the same time revealed that "Devanampiyata Piyadasi" meant — "The beloved to God and his name was Ashoka". Overnight, India got a colossal king whose transformation to a human after accepting Buddhism was known and the name Ashoka became a cult chapter of history.

Once the language was decoded, it was easy to understand that these pillars were not victory monuments, but a new and effective way of communication. Much to their astonishment, it was found that these were a public declaration of a king to come forward in acceptance of Buddhism and his transformation.

At the beginning of 19th century, James Prinsep, a young man came to Calcutta to join Calcutta mint. Out of sheer passion, he started serving Asiatic Society of Bengal as journal editor. The journal was a class by itself and very popular across the world. Soon Prinsep built a fantastic network with people across India who started sharing information and documents with him on every single archaeological findings. Prinsep was confident enough to think that a new chapter of history would be uncovered if the edicts written on the pillar could be decoded.

After years of hard work, in 1837,

Prinsep managed to decode the script of the edict and opened the doors of knowledge to India's glorious past that remained hidden for so long.

In 1820, Brian Hodgson, a British resident in the royal court of Kathmandu, sent a copy of the inscription on Lauriya Nandangarh pillar edict to Calcutta. This document was reported lost. Prinsep and Hodgson started frequent correspondence and soon became good friends, though it is assumed that they never met. Hodgson again sent him the copy of the inscription that he once found in Lauriya Nandangarh and in October 1834, he sent him an eye

copy of Lauriya Araraj pillar edict.

The pillar at Lauriya Nandangarh is majestic and perhaps the second best specimen of Mauryan architecture with animal capital after Rampurva's grounded pillars.

The pillar at Lauriya Nandangarh is a single block polished sandstone with an excellent lion capital built in black stone. The lion built in a seated position on a circular abacus of arched bell is covered with lotus petals.

The circular abacus of Lauriya Nandangarh lion is again decorated with image of geese. The face of the lion is broken due to vandalism. In design, it is very similar to that of the lion capital which was later found in Rampurva in 1876 by Archibald Carlyle, inside the deep forest of Tarai. Rampurva lion capital is now preserved in Indian Museum of Calcutta.

The six edicts in a single block found on the pillar of Lauriya Araraj, revealed Ashoka's belief of the God's declaration of Buddhist teachings of morality through kindness shown to all subjects and animals. It also talks about the restriction of animal slaughter. However, in both the pillars found in Bihar, nowhere do the edicts talk about Ashoka's conquest of Kalinga and his report. This is very interesting to note.

The lion capital found on Ashoka pillar of Lauriya Nandangarh is one of the oldest samples of Indian stone sculptures influenced by Persian archaeology, whereas the discovery of Ashoka Bramhi is the first tangible evidence of Buddhism that finally cemented the existence of Shakyanami Buddha as a human being and discarded the theory of him being a mythological figure as per many Hindu legends.

Two kilometres from Nandangarh Ashoka pillar, another archaeological wonder was discovered in 1862 by Alexander Cunningham — a huge mound of 15 stu-

pas made of mud, yellow clay and brick in three levels in the shape of polygonal with three flights of stairs. The 26 metre high structure has a circumference of 460 metres and the dome is missing. It is imagined that when intact, this would be one of the biggest stupas of India built in 300 BC.

Cunningham did very little excavation and later, Henry Garnick did a great job of excavating more mounds. In 1905, T Block did further excavation and found a gold leaf, a female statue and a small deposit of burnt human bones with charcoal. These findings are common with Buddhist stupa where bone remains of Buddha are said to be found. However, till now, no solid evidence has been found that tells us who these remains belonged to. Many think that this was a pre-Mauryan structure and may be a vedic burial ground. Nani Gorak Majumdar and Amalendu Ghosh, who excavated the site from 1935 to 1939, are of an opinion that this stupa is very similar to the Buddhist stupa found at Piprahawali on UP-Nepal border.

Cut to present, it is sad to note that two hundred years ago, when this site lay undiscovered inside a dense forest with no human habitation around, a group of Europeans risked their lives to uncover the hidden treasures of India, uncovering a glorious part of our history, our present generation attaches no value to these findings. Today, Bettiah is a town, situated very close to the Nepal border, its levels held pride in its rich history. Marks of vandals are clear on the pillars and unrestricted entry is palpable. Bettiah now has Americanised pizza restaurants, which get over crowded every evening, whereas it's a struggle to get the auto drivers to take you, or for that matter even seek directions, to Lauriya Nandangarh or Araraj.

It is sad indeed that we never knew our heritage back then two centuries ago, and today, it seems we still haven't learnt the lesson to protect it.

FROM PAGE 1

From the Kehwa Khanas to the Socials

Restaurants like The New Woodland Hotel came up in the Madras Presidency, and can be credited as popularising the Updi-style food that continues to thrive today. Woodland, as it was popularly called, was set up in 1938 by K. Krishn Rao, a man from a poor family of priests from near Mangalore. Its customers then were primarily brahmmins who worked for the government, or upper-caste religious travellers who were vegetarians. As we can see, for so much of their history, restaurants in India were not the inclusive businesses we see them as today.

Partition changed much of that. It rent India's social fabric in more ways than we can imagine. It unleashed bloody, religious violence, but with the old order being torn apart, space for the new was created. For the first time, as I argued in a 2017 article, we got eateries that catered newly invented restaurant food to all manners of people — rich and poor, Hindu and Muslim. Butter chicken, *dal makhani* and *naan* became the first restaurant foods to escape the

tag of religious identity.

Refugees from Punjab had arrived with less than nothing in Delhi. They brought with them a hardy spirit of survival and enterprise, but also one very important tool — the *tandoor*. A clay oven used to bake bread in villages, the *tandoor* made its foray into Delhi with refugees carrying memories of the *sanjha chulha* (the common village oven used to bake bread for all households) into this harsh city where they had to fashion life afresh.

In 1947, an enterprising refugee from Peshawar, Kundan Lal Gujral, opened a restaurant called Moti Mahal in Delhi's Daryaganj area, in a building that had suffered badly during the rioting. Here, he set up a *tandoor*, in which the restaurant baked *naan*, a bread popular in old Peshawar eateries, and eventually chicken. The fowl was not a meat



that Delhi was familiar with or fond of. 'Neither Hindus nor Muslims ate it, and initially there was some resistance to *tandoori chicken*', says Anil Chandra, one of Moti Mahal's early patrons.

As food historian K.T. Achaya notes in his authoritative *Indian Food: A Historical Companion*, the chicken, as a scavenger, was thought to be 'unclean, and since the oldest of times, there has been resistance among brahmmins and other upper-caste Hindus to eating its meat. Delhi and Uttar Pradesh's composite culture meant that these biases were ingrained in upper-class Muslim culinary cultures too.'

Goat meat was prized and Mughlai dishes like *shabdegh*, *silken qormas*, *gola* and *dal (heart)* ke kebab, that required much dexterity, were made of goat meat with in homes by specialist cooks for weddings and special functions.

Specialist cooks like Hakim in old Delhi, whom old-timers told me about for my article for the Wire, and restaurants like Flora cooked these and catered to *shawkeen*, gastronomically indulgent *Dilliwallas*, both Muslims and meat-eating Hindus like the Kayasths. This country culture, however, waned after Partition as the Muslim elite moved away and refugees poured in.

The new *tandoori* chicken was India's original fast food. Simply done and fresh. Moti Mahal also takes the credit for inventing butter chicken: *tandoori* chicken pieces dunked in a tomato, yoghurt and butter laden sauce, and perhaps Kangra's most famous restaurant creation.

The advent of this new kind of food served by Punjabi restaurateurs was to have a big impact on restaurant food everywhere in the

country. In Delhi, restaurants such as Kwality, which had come up around the time of World War II and served ice cream and simple continental eats to American soldiers posted in Delhi, gradually incorporated this new Punjabi food into their menus. Other similar restaurants came up, also run by migrants, serving bold Punjabi flavours with tomato and cream, dishes that had been concocted within restaurants, and dishes such as *pindi chana* (a style of dry chickpeas popular in Rawalpindi) that came to Delhi and have been part of the city's most famous street dish since then — *chole bhature*.

Excerpted with permission from *Business on a Platter: What Makes Restaurants Sizzle or Fizzle Out*, Anoothi Vishal, Hachette India, ₹550

It's time to wrap up Naga peace process



In this October 30, 2019 photo, a poster with a Naga flag is seen on the entrance of a shop in Kohima

AP

A fortnight has already gone by since the deadline, fixed by the Union Government, for the Nagaland peace pact lapsed on October 31, 2019. Even as the peace talks are inconclusive, the good news is that the both sides — Union Government's interlocutor and Nagaland Governor RN Ravi and Naga groups, including the NSCN factions — have not stopped negotiations for a peace pact.

The ongoing Naga peace process, which was started in 1997, turned 22 this year. It could happen only after a ceasefire agreement was signed between the National Socialist Council of Nagalim-Isak-Muivah (NSCN-IM) and the Government of India.

Interestingly, the Naga insurgency has its roots in 1918. Against the backdrop of the First World War, the Nagas had decided to form Naga Club to bring Naga tribes under a single umbrella. The seed for the unique identity was germinated outside India when various members of the scattered Naga tribes, recruited in the British Labour Corps, thought of forming a group of their own. And this Club approached the Simon Commission and informed it in 1929 "to leave us alone to determine for ourselves as we did in ancient times".

It simply indicated that the Nagas did not want to surrender themselves either to then British imperial regime in India or any future Government of India. Also it showed its desire to live as they want. All these indicate that the Nagas never wanted themselves to be subservient to any non-native "foreign" domination. This precisely demonstrates the very idea of "Naga self-determination", alive for a century now.

Later, when the struggle for India's independence moved towards its final stage, the Nagas under the leadership of charismatic AZ Phizo formed the Naga National Council (NNC). And eventually, the NNC declared independence for the Nagas on August 14, 1947, just one day before India achieved hers. The NNC conducted a referendum in May 1951 which it claimed to have the backing of almost 99.9 per

cent of the Nagas for full independence.

On record, the peace process with the Nagas started before independence in June 1947. Then Assam Governor Sir Akbar Hydari signed a Nine Point Agreement with the moderate leaders in the NNC, but the hard-core leaders like Phizo refused to accept the agreement. Almost a year later, Phizo, not seeing any further cooperation from the Government of India, formed an underground Naga Federal Government (NFG) and the Naga Federal Army (NFA).

But then the Government responded with armed power and enacted the Armed Forces (Special Powers) Act in 1958. In July 1960, the basis of a Sixteen Point Agreement led to the creation of a separate State in the Union of India for the Nagas. This actually came into existence on December 1, 1963. Here it must be noted that the peace agreement was signed between the Naga Peace Convention, a group of moderate Naga leaders, and the Government of India. The NNC refrained from signing and agreeing to form a separate State under the Indian Union.

After the formation of the State of Nagaland, a Peace Mission was constituted in 1964 to advance talks with the NNC, but this could not produce any result despite a series of six rounds of historic negotiations. Finally, the mission was cancelled in the year 1967.

In the midst of this turmoil, the NNC split in 1975 during the heyday of the Indira regime. And the breakaway group from the NNC formed the NSCN. Unfortunately, this happened during the period of a peace deal between the Government and the NNC in Shillong. The NNC leadership agreed to give up arms. But then, many of its front-line leaders, including Isak Chishi Suu, Thuingaleng Muivah and SS Khaplang did not accept the terms and conditions of the peace deal and hence they together established the NSCN in 1980. But after more than a decade of the formation of the NSCN, differences cropped up among the leaders. As a result, the NSCN broke into two factions in the year 1988, one led

by Isak and Muivah, named as NSCN-IM and other led by Khaplang, known as NSCN-K.

Later on these two groups fought fiercely, even killing their own cadre and damaging the chances of coming together.

In fact this schism between the NSCN factions helped different political establishments at the Centre to deal with them separately. Further,

NSCN-K made its operational area mainly restricted to Arunachal Pradesh and the NSCN-IM based its activities in Nagaland and Manipur. In later years, the NSCN-IM took the centre stage and held the centre of the "Naga sovereignty" movement.

In the year 1997, the NSCN-IM leadership signed a ceasefire agreement with the Government, preceding rounds of talks since 1995. The key principle of the agreement was that there would be no counter-insurgency operations against the NSCN-IM and in turn it would not attack Indian security forces. And this truce has survived for long.

Finally, the historic Nagaland Framework Agreement, popularly known as Nagaland Peace Accord, was signed between the NSCN-IM and the Narendra Modi Government in August 2015. The accord was inked after over 80 rounds of talks between the Government and various stakeholders of the Nagaland movement. The deal is simply delaying the ink of the deal. It is because the organisation is now insisting on the last remaining details of the truce.

Today, Centre's interlocutor and Governor of Nagaland RN Ravi, who has been handling the Naga peace process for long, says that the protracted attitude of the NSCN-IM is simply delaying the ink of the deal. It is because the organisation is now insisting on a separate flag and a constitution for Nagaland.

Surely, the Union Government will not accept it and the NSCN-IM may handle such controversial issues too carefully. If NSCN-IM is sidelined at this moment and other groups take the centre stage, its efforts of nearly half a century will result in fiasco.

Since the Naga issue has been regarded as the oldest insurgency in the country, it is worth noting the thorny problems that may unfold violence in the North East.

First of all, the Naga National Political Groups (NNPGs) are advocating a solution for the Nagas within the State of Nagaland, whereas the NSCN-IM wanted to include all the Naga-inhabited areas across the region in the Nagaland or Greater Nagaland wherein it thought their problems could be addressed.

Second critical aspect of the truce between the Nagas and the Government is the territorial issue in regard to the Greater Nagaland. As the Naga groups desire and demand to include all Naga-inhabited areas into the Greater Nagaland, it has been increasingly making some of the States such as Assam, Arunachal Pradesh and Manipur restive.

Already Arunachal Pradesh Chief Minister Pema Khandu has welcomed the Centre's initiative to solve the decades-old Naga problem, but categorically stated that there will be no compromise on the territorial integrity of the State.

"We are clear in our stand and we want that Naga peace process should not affect the State at any cost," Khandu said on November 16.

Also the Union Home Ministry has assured that before any settlement is arrived at with Naga groups, all stakeholders, including the States of Assam, Manipur and Arunachal Pradesh will be duly consulted and their concerns will be taken into consideration.

Easier during a "lengthy discussion" with Union Home Minister Amit Shah, Assam Chief Minister Sarbananda Sonowal had urged the Centre to take into consideration the interests of the people of Assam while going for any accord.

The core issue is that a future Nagaland could redraw the boundaries of these three Naga-inhabited States. It is reported that the proposed Nagaland includes 1,20,000 sq kilometre area which expands beyond the territorial limits of the North East into Myanmar. Even before the signing of the Framework Agreement in 2015, the Nagaland State Assembly itself endorsed the demand of the "integration of all Naga-inhabited areas of five occasions: December 1964, 1970, September 1994, December 2003 and July 2015".

This shows how the popularly elected Nagaland Assembly is in full support of the demand for a shared sovereignty.

However, the Union Government should take utmost caution to ensure the patience the Nagas have shown towards a amicable solution should not go in vain.

Today, most of the ultras of the region have either laid down their arms or some of them are in talks with the Government for the peaceful solution. That's why a region which was encountering fierce violence accompanied by anti-India sentiment has witnessed relatively calm and quiet

finalising such imaginary deadlines would not help bringing various Naga groups to agree to some watertight solutions.

Already differences are emerging between the NSCN-IM and the NNPGs.

Today, the Nagas are on a roller-coaster ride. Whatever may be the outcome of the current peace process, it would certainly not satisfy all the stakeholders involved in the process, particularly, the

atmosphere recently. But, with globalisation and proliferation of global terrorism widening the net wide, the Government must not take any chance with the NSCN-IM and other Naga terror groups.

Much beyond external financial support and arms supply from our neighbouring countries, the global jehadi elements such as the ISIS and the al-Qaeda may pitch into such troubled spots to recreate disturbances for the country. Considering the favourable geopolitical scenario for Delhi at the moment, a global consensus to fight the menace of terrorism, and friendly neighbouring regimes on India's eastern front, the Modi Government has an absolute advantage to deal with the NNPGs and the NSCN-IM. It's time to wrap up the Naga peace process.

The moot point is whether the Government can accept the Naga demand for a separate flag and a Constitution? Is it possible to say "yes" to a shared notion of "sovereignty" as the NSCN-IM has been demanding for a long time?

Precisely, looking at the

current political strength of the

Union Government, Prime Minister Modi will definitely

make it clear that these demands are not acceptable.

Considering the Modi Government's resolute decision to abrogate Article 370 — which had long guaranteed a special status, flag and a separate Constitution to the State of Jammu & Kashmir — the NSCN-IM and the NNPGs should not be too hopeful about their demand for a shared sovereignty.

However, the Union Government should take utmost caution to ensure the patience the Nagas have shown towards a amicable solution should not go in vain.

Today, most of the ultras of the region have either laid down their arms or some of them are in talks with the Government for the peaceful solution. That's why a region which was encountering fierce violence accompanied by anti-India sentiment has witnessed relatively calm and quiet

It is over a fortnight since the deadline, fixed by the Union Government, for the Nagaland peace pact lapsed on October 31, 2019. However amid hopes and apprehension, the good news is that the peace talks have not stopped



MAKHAN SAIKIA

(The writer is an expert on international affairs)



THE REAL SPIRITUAL PROGRESS OF
THE ASPIRANT IS MEASURED BY THE
EXTENT TO WHICH HE ACHIEVES
INNER TRANQUILLITY
— SWAMI SIVANANDA



YOUR WEEK AHEAD

MADHU KOTIYA



ARIES March 21-April 19

It is advisable to start the week with a resolution to live a healthy and enjoyable life. This is possible through regularising your routine and disciplining your senses. Yoga, exercise, and nutritious diet will be important for you. Your career shows a good indication this week, and you will experience a sudden financial gain out of the blue. The change is positive, the business will grow and those with jobs can expect promotions, increment or the desired transfer. Some of you may travel abroad for project work. Relationship wise, some of you may receive a message of love or a marriage proposal. Singles, chances of finding someone special is indicated for you. Married couples may go on a pleasure trip and their bonding will become stronger.

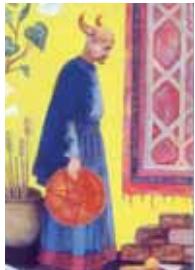
Lucky number 39
Lucky colour Red
Lucky day Wednesday



TAURUS April 20-May 20

Healthwise, this week is good. You will feel an abundant flow of energy and creativity. A female influence, either your mother or spouse, will help you meet the needs of your health and be the motivating factor to maintain a balance between physical and mental levels. You may slow down in your career as you are under the constant scrutiny of competitors and rivals. You will feel restricted. Your addiction to alcohol, overspending or unhealthy relationships may cause you to have a set back in the path of success. Shield yourself from all these negative influences. In love, you need to accept and surrender to your present circumstances. It is advisable to leave instant gratification for the higher cause. Singles wait for some time before committing to a relationship.

Lucky number 18
Lucky colour Indigo
Lucky day Friday



GEMINI May 21-June 20

In order to maintain good health, you need to derive positive energy from the five elements. You will feel highly-gifted and need to adopt a balanced approach to life. Control your cravings and keep your anger in check. At work, you are meticulous and hard-working. You are willing to learn new skills and techniques. Your dedication and focus will work in your favour. Financially, there is a need to bring change in your lifestyle to increase overall gratification. The best part is that you are committed to getting those changes done. You will be lucky in love and have a high level of emotional contentment. You will see the perfection all around you and experience the emotionally fulfilling situation. Joy and happiness are within your reach.

Lucky number 21
Lucky colour Grey
Lucky day Saturday



CANCER June 21-July 22

This week, it is important that you look after your health. A visit to a doctor is a must. Be open and discuss all matters because appropriate medical advice and treatment is the need of the hour. Your spirituality and faith in God is good and will help you have a peaceful personality. You have good news waiting on the career front. This can either be a promotion or a salary hike. Due to a sudden change, you may get transferred to a desiring place. Your perseverance and hard work will pay you well. In love, you may be deceived or feel disheartened. You are forced to sacrifice or surrender to be with your partner. This is not the right time to start a relationship or have high expectations from an existing relationship.

Lucky number 28
Lucky colour Peach
Lucky day Saturday



LEO July 23-Aug 22

You will do anything to achieve good health. You should decide whether you want to follow your mind or your heart. The first approach would be to scrutinise your innermost needs and expectations. Your career may be at a standstill and you may feel stagnated. This is the time to make cordial relations with your senior authorities. Your positive outlook towards life will keep you motivated and open doors to new opportunities. In terms of wealth, the result will be discouraging. Hard-earned money will be spent on expenses and you will be left with no money in hand. Relationship wise, you are trustworthy and reliable. Singles will get a message of love. Romance with a desired partner is on the cards. Your commitment and loyalty will strengthen your relationship.

Lucky number 12
Lucky colour Black
Lucky day Tuesday



SAGITTARIUS Nov 22-Dec 21

You need to find a positive environment where you can relax. You are likely to encounter mental conflict and nervousness that may cause your BP to fluctuate. Focus on balancing your untamed energy. A disciplined lifestyle, balanced diet, regular medical checkup and exercise are unavoidable. Stay away from arguments and aggression. In career, you will prove yourself trustworthy. Those who have their own business will enjoy financial gains. For those in a job, favour of a senior will boost their confidence. Your amicable behaviour and communication will work in your favour. In the matters of love and emotions, you may feel blessed. People will like you for your affectionate and romantic nature. You will be concerned about the feelings of others around you.

Lucky number 17
Lucky colour Golden
Lucky day Sunday



VIRGO Aug 23-Sep 22

This week you are full of energy, creativity and positive energy. Your health will be good. You need to utilise this energy in constructive pursuits. Make sure you maintain balance within yourself. On the career front, you will prove to be a genuine leader. You will win hearts with your kind and honest nature. Support from someone from opposite sex will help you achieve your desired goals. Those who are appearing for an interview or competitive exams will be successful. Success is assured. In matters of love, you have to be a little careful. You should respect and understand the feelings of your partner. You can achieve success in a relationship by showing generosity. Presenting a gift to your partner may create the magic and strengthen your love.

Lucky number 11
Lucky colour Orange
Lucky day Tuesday



CAPRICORN Dec 22-Jan 19

This week you are filled with positive energy. Recovery from illness and leading a healthy life are indicated. An emotional issue concerning the care or treatment of someone close will be discussed. Follow a healthy routine like physical exercise and a balanced diet to stay fit. Career-wise, this is the best week. You will get an opportunity to change your destiny. You need to be positive and spontaneous. You will win the trust of your seniors. Promotion is likely. There could be a new beginning such as a new job, or a new residence. In terms of love life, a manifestation of desire, good fortune, and contentment are on the cards. Some of you might plan for a date or a romantic trip. Married couples may have a mutual understanding.

Lucky number 14
Lucky colour Pastel Green
Lucky day Friday



LIBRA Sep 23-Oct 22

This week you will enjoy good health, vigour and stamina. You will not only be able to care for yourself but for your family as well. You will take a rock-solid resolution for a healthy family, and will leave no stone unturned to achieve your goal. On the career front, you must maintain a practical approach and need to take some important decisions in regards to your work. There are high chances of you being emotionally blackmailed at the workplace. A female counterpart, may play a significant role in enhancing your career. You will experience one-sided love. Have a lot of patience and strength. Otherwise, you will lose your mental peace. Those in a committed relationship may have to stay apart on account of important responsibilities. Married couples, you will have a mutual understanding.

Lucky number 13
Lucky colour Navy Blue
Lucky day Tuesday



AQUARIUS Jan 20-Feb 18

This week you will be surrounded by anxiety and tension. You are extremely worried about the future. This will cause tension. Health issues like headache, insomnia, or BP may trouble you. You should not allow negative emotions like fear, frustration and uncertainty to immobilise you. Focus on your present. On the career front, stay away from flatters as they may be deceived by inaccurate information. You may face frequent mood swings and insecurity. Hidden forces at play may unravel your success. The good part is that you are positive and know how to control the situation. In your love life, you will feel strong and established. You are balanced and caring towards your partner. Love relations may turn into a marriage.

Lucky number 31
Lucky colour Turquoise
Lucky day Thursday



SCORPIO Oct 23-Nov 21

In the matters of health, the change is for good. Your positive outlook will bring further improvement. Mental tension and fatigue due to the fast moving life will go away and you will feel relaxed. Physical exercise and being with nature will be best for you. In your career, you are likely to find new job opportunities with better prospects. Those who have appeared for competitive exams, success is assured. A good news in terms of promotion or salary hike is on the cards. Your hard working and goal-oriented attitude will pay you well. Friendship with juniors will bring you benefits. In love, your orthodox nature will lead to separation and leave you disheartened. Leave the old school thinking and form a modern outlook towards your partner.

Lucky number 19
Lucky colour White
Lucky day Friday



PISCES Feb 19-March 20

This week you will be moody and irritated. This may cause concern for your physical health. You need to control the wild aspect of your mind and trust your instincts. Walk the path of enlightenment and stay focused. In career, you need to take action towards developing your greater good. You will be able to confront any unfinished business in your life, clear up any misunderstanding. Extra hard work is needed before you see results. Give your best efforts, the rewards are assured. The abundance of happiness is in store for you in terms of a relationship. Balance and stability in love are on the cards. Unmarried people may get marriage proposals. You will be soulful, passionate, and romantic and will leave no stone to make your partner happy.

Lucky number 29
Lucky colour Sky Blue
Lucky day Tuesday

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Guru Nanak's guide to leading a virtuous life

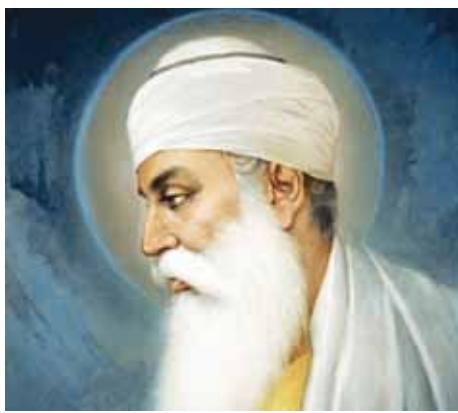
Guru Nanak's spiritual beliefs and practices were profoundly transformational and cut across the lines of religion, writes DALER AASHNA DEOL in her book, *A Gift of Grace*. The world celebrated the 550th birth anniversary of the first Sikh guru on November 12. An excerpt:

Guru Nanak divides our spiritual path into five distinct stages: moral living and righteous actions, search for divine knowledge, spiritual unfoldment, divine grace, and the final entry into the realm of Eternal Truth. Each stage is unique and vital. These stages appear as part of a sequence, and it is not possible for us to bypass any of these steps. For example, moral living is a precondition for the search of divine knowledge. A person who leads a morally decadent life will inevitably see no need to search for experiences of any kind, let alone spiritual knowledge. Also, our spirit cannot unfold unless we have accumulated sufficient spiritual energy during the first two stages. Any movement from this point onward is possible only when we receive divine grace, which is not our right but a 'reward' for good deeds. Leading a virtuous life is the very foundation of our spiritual quest. To go on the spiritual path, we need to make truthful and moral living an essential part of our life. It is only through such living that we make ourselves worthy of God's compassion and grace.

Growing up in a world where money can buy more comforts than it was possible at any other time in human history, how can we agree on a set of values and behaviours that would provide a reliable guide to a virtuous life? We need to acknowledge that there are some things which are moral, ethical, doable, and right under any circumstances. We may have a difference of opinion on whether it is moral to charge interest. But there should be no controversy on things like violence, falsehood, and exploitation of the poor and helpless. We need to identify some core values based on themes that cut across societal and cultural boundaries. The seven core values, based on Guru Nanak's teachings, are:

Non-violence Avoiding violence that hurts the innocent, kills, or insults (in the form of rape or other degrading actions) the victim, mass killings of innocent people in a war or a political conflict.

Truth Letting reality appear in its purest form, separating facts from opinions, not using falsehood of any kind to deceive other people, treating honest living as a sacred obligation.



Love
Showing sympathy and compassion for a victim of oppression, keeping a charitable spirit, sharing one's wealth and good fortune with the poor and the needy.

Virtue The pursuit of highest personal morality in one's daily life, respecting the honour and integrity of one's partner, taking responsibility for one's children, catering to their material, emotional, and intellectual needs, caring for the needs of elders in the family.

Community Being a good citizen, participating in electoral processes, raising voice against misdeeds of those in authority, using public office for public good, protecting the natural environment, giving one's employer a fair share of one's time, talent, and ability.

Equality Treating all people as equal

despite differences of colour, race, gender, or ethnic origins, respecting cultural and spiritual traditions of other people.

Theism Having faith in the unbounded love, mercy, and compassion of the Creator for all things and all beings. It is not an attempt to define a new morality. It has not been easy for moral philosophers, who have struggled with these issues over the ages.

We can look at various opinions, or what our belief system has to say about these matters, but, in the end, we need to have an objective look at how we are coping with difficult moral and ethical choices in our life. This freedom for self-evaluation is not a blank cheque, meaning whatever serves our needs or purposes is acceptable. We need to cultivate, in the words of Albert Einstein, a moral attitude in and towards life based on the totality of our being—body, mind, and soul. Not doing this self-evaluation in a seriously mindful way would indicate our reluctance to follow a spiritual path.

A Gift of Grace: The Essence of Guru Nanak's Spirituality, written by Daler Aashna Deol is published by Nyogi Books