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USUAL SUSPECTS

SWAPAN DASGUPTA

Bapu's disrespect in UK is insult to India

Among the many functions of the media, one that strikes me as being significant is its ability to give publicity to those who least deserve it. The media, thanks its innately competitive character, tends to highlight the bizarre and the weird. Increasingly, outlandishness is becoming a foolproof way of guaranteeing publicity.

Last Thursday's edition of *The Times* (London) – thanks to the online editions you no longer have to wait for the deliveries of the hard copy – contained a characteristically bizarre news item. It seems that there is a proposal to instal a statue of Mahatma Gandhi outside the Manchester Cathedral to both commemorate the Mahatma's 150th birth anniversary and the horrible terrorist incident that led to the deaths of 22 concert-goers in 2017. Gandhi was sought to be commemorated as the apostle of non-violence.

There may understandably be differences over the choice of the Mahatma as the most appropriate personification of peace and goodwill outside a Christian church. Some may have felt that something more abstract would fit the sensibilities of the 21st century. These debates can be never ending and differences of opinion are bound to persist.

In any case, the relevant people decided in their wisdom that in the multi-ethnic surroundings of Manchester, a statue of Gandhi would fit the bill. Consequently, and without too much fuss, the decision was taken to instal his statue and a donor was found to underwrite the costs.

Unfortunately, the story does not end here. A bunch of publicity seekers in the Manchester University Student's Union have initiated a "Gandhi must fall" campaign to prevent the Mahatma from having a prominent presence in the city. Taking their cue from the "Rhodes must fall" campaign that was waged in Oxford University to remove all traces of the adventurer and colonist who bequeathed a part of his massive fortune to his alma mater, the student activists decided that now was the turn of Gandhi. The problem with Mahatma it would seem was his inability to include black

Africans in his battle for civil rights in South Africa. Additionally, Gandhi had apparently made some disparaging comments about South African blacks.

How should we react if some people in Manchester become so frightened of causing offence that they withdraw the offer to instal a statue of the Mahatma outside Manchester Cathedral? It is the sovereign right of the civic authorities in that English city to either have the statue or not have it. However, I don't think we in India should let it rest it at that. We should make it very clear that any second thoughts on the statue would be construed as an act of insult to India

the removal of a Gandhi statue from the University of Ghana a year ago. Now the same thing is being attempted in Manchester.

Hopefully nothing more will come of this and having secured their five minutes of fame in the media the impetuous students will move to their next obsession. That may well happen but it is also time that the rest of society starts taking note of the rising level of absurdities that are defining public life all over the world.

The point to note is that there is a mad rush to detect behaviour that somehow or the other has caused offence. Prickliness has become the norm so that almost everything is being treated as offensive to someone or other. People have even begun determining their own gender status. For example, if a man decides he is actually a woman but someone describes him as a man, that is considered evidence of offensive behaviour. In some Western countries, even the police force is being sensitised to take into account such individual quirkiness on the ground that a man who chooses a self-image of being a woman may be scarred for life and suffer trauma in case he is referred to as 'he' rather than 'she'.

Frankly, all this is getting rather tiresome. While everyone recognises the importance of stopping gratuitous insults on individuals, it is becoming more and more difficult keeping pace with everything that is potentially offensive. Last week, a writer in a Kolkata daily berated Prime Minister Narendra Modi for Good Samaritan act of removing litter from a beach in Chennai. This obsession with tidiness, we were informed, was a characteristic of Adolf Hitler. The implication was clear: Swachhh Bharat was a fascist act. I guess sooner or later we will also be told that vegetarianism is inherently fascist because Hitler shunned meat.

The question is: How should we react if some people in Manchester become so frightened of causing offence that they withdraw the offer to instal a statue of the Mahatma outside Manchester Cathedral? It is the sovereign right of the civic authorities in that English city to either have the statue or not have it. However, I don't think we in India should let it rest it at that. We should make it very clear that any second thoughts on the statue would be construed as an act of insult to India. India did not ask for that statue to be installed. But once it was decided to instal it, any U-turn counts as a gratuitous insult to a man we revere. It should also be made clear that we will view any disrespect to Gandhi as an unfriendly act against India.

It is time to stop this great onslaught of rubbish.

Safe zones set up for apple dealers in J&K

RAHUL DATTA/MOHIT KANDHARI ■
NEW DELHI/JAMMU

Taking a serious note of the killing of three outsiders involved in apple trade in Kashmir earlier this week despite the large presence of security personnel, the security establishment has revisited its strategy by providing a safety umbrella in the hinterland dotted with apple orchards.

The Army and paramilitary forces have fanned out in such areas besides population centres to instill confidence among masses and deny terrorists time and space to move.

However, setting up of safe pickup points for collection of apple crops in the wake of the killings have created problems for the orchard owners located far away. While traders have been advised to use smaller vehicles for apple transportation from interiors of the district, they are finding it difficult to ferry their produce to these mandis due to lack of smaller vehicles. If this is cutting into their profit margins, it is also affecting the timely transport of the produce to markets outside Kashmir.

On an average, one truck carries 800 to 1,000 apple boxes. Transporters are charg-



A security person patrols as trucks stand parked at a safe zone for fruit dealers in Shopian on Saturday.

PTI

ing ₹135-140 per box compared to ₹80-90 earlier.

Kashmir produces over 20-24 lakh metric tonnes of apple worth ₹10,000 crore annually. The attacks on apple traders and truck drivers in Shopian have triggered a fresh wave of terror among the truck drivers and large number of non-local workers engaged in the laborious task of packing, loading and unloading of apple boxes.

Effort is to ensure that apple traders in the hinterland of major apple growing centre

of Sopore, which has Asia's biggest mandi for this fruit, Shopian, Pulwama and Anantnag in South Kashmir are able to continue with their routine economic activities.

In the meantime, a positive development has come in the way of the security forces as intelligence flow about militants has improved in the last few days. Explaining the significance of this factor, officials said since August 5, the local police and intelligence agencies were concentrating on main-

Forces revisit plan for secure trade in Valley after terrorists kill traders

5 detained for murder of UP Hindu leader

Inciting speech in 2015 led to Kamlesh's killing, claims UP DGP

PNS/AGENCIES ■ LUCKNOW

Denying any terror link behind the murder of Kamlesh Tiwari, leader of a little-known Hindu outfit, Uttar Pradesh's Director General of Police OP Singh on Saturday claimed to have made a breakthrough within 24 hours of the killing by arresting three accused, including the mastermind. All the three accused were taken into custody in Surat in Gujarat in a joint operation of the police forces of the two States.

Two more arrests were made in Bijnor district of UP where Muslim clerics Mohammed Mufti Naeem Kazmi and Imam Maulana Anwarul Haq were held after being named in an FIR lodged by Tiwari's wife Kiran.

The UP DGP claimed that the suspects were "radicalised"



UP DGP OP Singh addresses the media on the murder of Kamlesh Tewari, in Lucknow on Saturday

PTI

and appeared to have targeted Kamlesh for his inflammatory remarks made in 2015.

"So far, there is no terror angle associated with this incident," the DGP said at a Press conference here, a day after the Hindu Samaj Party chief was killed at his home in Lucknow's Khurshed Bagh.

Tiwari's wife named the two accused held in UP in her complaint alleging that the duo had announced a bounty of ₹1.5 crore on Kamlesh head in 2016. However, Tiwari's mother Kusuma alleged that he was killed by a "local BJP leader" due to a temple dispute in a village.

Bijepur by-election campaigning ends, voting on Oct 21

- Of 285 booths, 129 sensitive; CCTV at 14 stations
- Voters staying outside get holiday for 3 days

PNS ■ BARGARH

With the campaigning for the October 21 Bijepur Assembly by-election ending on Saturday, the district administration held a preparatory meeting for smooth conduct of the polling.

After presiding over the meeting, Bargarh district collector Jyoti Ranjan Pradhan said voting would be conducted at 285 polling stations, out of which 129 booths have been identified as sensitive. Security would be tightened at these sensitive booths, said the collector.

Six model booths would be set up in three blocks in Bijepur for the by-poll and 14 polling stations would be put under the CCTV surveillance.

The Election Commission has arranged for live webcast from 28 booths. While 16 booths will be videographed, micro-observers will be deployed at 77 booths.

A total of 2,32,264 voters comprising 1,12,114 women, 1,20,135 men and 10 transgenders have been enlisted for the election.

Special provisions will be made for 2,750 Divyang voters to exercise their franchise. A total of 2,321 vehicles will be engaged for the poll in Bijepur.

The poll will be conducted on from 7 am to 5 pm on October 21. Votes will be counted on October 24 at Padampur in Bargarh district. Meanwhile, the Chief Electoral Officer has declared a holiday of three days for the voters of Bijepur by-poll who are staying outside the Assembly constituency.

"Paid holiday for such voters has been declared for October 20, 21 and 22. This apart, poll officials, who will be engaged in election duty for more than three days, have been allowed to take optional holiday for one day," said the CEO.

Sarpanch's hubby held in VLW death case

Rupesh was in a relationship with Smitarani: Police



PNS ■ JAIPUR

Police on Saturday arrested Rupesh Bhadra, husband of Haridaspur Sarpanch Madhusmita Bhadra, for his alleged complicity in the death of Village Level Worker (VLW) Smitarani Biswal at a guesthouse at Baligari under Dharmasala block in Jaipur district on October 16.

Jaipur SP Charan Singh Meena said prima facie evidence shows Rupesh's involvement in abetment of the VLW's

suicide. "Smitarani and Rupesh were in a relationship. However, some disturbances erupted between them few days back which led to the death of Smitarani," said the SP. The postmortem report revealed that she died of asphyxia, informed Meena.

Earlier, the police had detained Rupesh and four others on Thursday for questioning in connection with the case. The VLW had gone to the guesthouse, owned by Rupesh, after disbursing pensions in

Bhadanga village on October 16.

While Rupesh and his four friends were busy preparing meals, Smitarani had gone to the first floor of the guesthouse to freshen up. Later, she was found hanging with her chunri from a ceiling fan in the guesthouse.

The father of the deceased had filed a complaint with police over the death of his daughter alleging foul play.

Related reports on Pages 3 and 4

Man falls for fake FB 'lover', loses ₹7 lakh

PNS ■ KORAPUT

Making friends with a stranger on social media platform proved a youth dear as the former disguised as a girl duped him of over ₹7 lakh.

The accused Pabitra Mohan Mohanty had befriended Jagadish Padhi of Semiliguda on Facebook in 2017. After chatting online, the duo shared nude pictures among themselves.

Later, Mohanty started blackmailing Padhi by threatening that he would reveal it to his uncle who is posted as DCP, Cuttack.

As per Padhi's uncle, his nephew had attempted to commit suicide thrice in the past over the matter

"The accused demanded money from the victim or else he would implicate him in cases," said Semiliguda PS IIC, Dhiren Kumar Behera.

The victim buckled under pressure and started transferring money to Mohanty's account. Over a period of two years, Padhi transferred ₹7.13 lakh, Behera added.

Mohanty demanded another ₹57,000. Padhi was financially drained by then. His uncle became highly suspicious of his activities and reported the matter to police. When grilled by his uncle, he spilled the beans.

Then, his uncle filed a complaint in the police station," the cop said.

Mohanty had created a fake profile on Facebook in the name of "Debasmita".

As per Padhi's uncle, his nephew had attempted to commit suicide thrice in the past over the matter.

Mohanty, working as an electrical engineer in Pune, hails from Damanjodi. Padhi runs a pharmacy shop in Semiliguda town. Mohanty was arrested and forwarded to court on Saturday.

Ex-MLAs have to leave quarters in three days Speaker gives ultimatum

PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

In an ultimatum to the former IMLAs who are yet to vacate Government residences, State Assembly Speaker Surjya Narayan Patro on Saturday directed them to leave the quarters within three days.

On August 16, Patro had issued notices to the former MLAs to vacate the quarters and asked the administration to cut water and electricity connections to the houses.

Notably, newly-elected legislators cannot get quarters as many former ones have not vacated the residences that had been allocated to them earlier.

Sources said Puspendra Singh Deo, Mahesh Sahu,



Sanjay Dasburma, Jhina Hikaka, Bibhuti Bhusan Harichandan, Saroj Samal, Sanjeev Sahu, Ramesh Majhi, Prabhat Tripathy and Bijayshree Routray are among the 26 former MLAs who are yet to surrender their Government quarters.

SHOW TIME

Powered by Saif Ali



LAAL KAPTAAN
*ing: Saif Ali Khan, Manav Vij, Zoya Hussain, Deepak Dobriyal, Simone Singh, Sonakshi Sinha
Rated: 6/10

There are a few problems that *Laal Kaptaan* has. First, the look that Saif Ali Khan supports. While the make-up artist who painstakingly worked on giving this look to the actor, there is need to understand that there is no need to copy. Some elements are familiar — inspired from Captain Jack Sparrow. We fell in love with that look but it doesn't mean we want it replicated.

Second, from the opening scene we understood that the film is about revenge and that the victim needs to meet his Maker in the manner that was avowed. What follows in the next 155 minutes leads to sheer boredom.

Third, the storyline is weak and is stretched out. Some slick editing could have taken *Laal Kaptaan* on a fasttrack.

Fourth, a big disappointment is

Manav Vij who spends the entire time grunting and nothing much even though he has so much screen presence.

Director Navdeep Singh may not have been to tell a compelling story of revenge by keeping it on a fasttrack with a backdrop in 18th Century but he does manage to redeem himself by keeping the audience guessing how a boy who was strung up on a tree and assumed dead managed to survive just to spend the next 25 years hunting for the man who betrayed the entire nation against a war with *firangis*.

Then there is the fact that there are no songs. While the story has been told a thousand times and we know that the hero will win, yet one is glued to the seat due to some great performance by Saif Ali who dons a new look and plays a Naga sadhu helms and powers this film.

Another person who needs a special mention here is Deepak Dobriyal who plays the mad-hatter tracker is absolutely brilliant.

— Shalini Saksena

Beautiful and full of colour

MALEFICENT: THE MISTRESS OF EVIL
*ing: Angelina Jolie, Michelle Pfeiffer, Harris Dickinson, Elle Fanning, Sam Riley, Ed Skrein, Imelda Staunton, Juno Temple, Lesley Manville
Rated: 7.5/10

Malificent is back; the evil witch is back; her wrath in full form against the human race. In the middle of all this is her Goddaughter — a human — whom she raised as her own. Those who watched Part 1 would have a fair idea of what is happening here. Familiar faces and certain references to what happened earlier, (*Maleficent*), make it a rad easier to follow the thread in thus one. However, fret not if one has not seen the earlier movie.

Malificent:Mistress of Evil can be enjoyed even otherwise such is the storytelling by director Robert Stromberg.

But that is not the only good thing about this film. It is full of colour, the brilliant, vibrant and wonderful hues that exist in Nature. Add the fairies, pixies and all creatures magical and there is a heady combination of wonder that keeps you in a story that is nothing new new but told excellently. It is a fight of good over evil. No guesses who wins and yet one watches with baited breath for what is to come.

Angelina Jolie as Malificent is brilliant. Her attempts and rehearsal to smile and be pleasant to her Goddaughter's would be in-laws is not only sweet but makes one smile as well. Her getting teary eyed at the climax is the icing on the cake. Michelle Pfeiffer as the Queen of Ulstead is just as good.

What makes this film a must for those who love Nature is that there is a message that this one has to convey — Man is the evil here, ruining Nature. But all is not lost here. There is time. Humans need to find a way to co-exist with Nature otherwise it is bound to destroy us.

— Shalini Saksena



‘Music is my soulmate’

ANU MALIK talks to MUSBA HASHMI about the latest season of Indian Idol and how reality shows open doors to opportunities for singers



■ This year the theme of Indian Idol is Ek Desh Ek Awaaz. Can you explain more?

In simple words, we are a radical country and we have a lot of talent in every nook and corner. The theme — *Ek Desh Ek Awaaz* — encapsulates the fact that we are only looking for talent irrespective of his background or race. We believe that the talent unites us through a musical manner. We welcome each and every voice in the show without focusing on a particular form of music.

■ What things do you keep in mind while judging?

All the three of us — Vishal Dadlani, Neha Kakkar and I are looking for out of the box talent that is realistic. In this world, you can't look for Lata Mangeshkar, Asha Bhosle or Mohammad Rafi, no one can beat them. They are the best. They are just one of a kind. And I had the chance to work with them when I was 18. Now I am 55; its time to move on and get fresh voices. If someone has something different to serve on the table, we are welcoming them with open hearts. I believe that we have found what we were looking for — magical singers.

A case in point is Azmat, who won a singing reality show when he was just 10-11 years old. Then he stopped singing and fell in bad company. But, he was brave enough to come up and accept that he lost the track at some point. We gave him a second chance. This is what *Indian Idol 11* is all about.

■ You have been judging the show since a long time. How has the journey been?

The audience has started saying that this is the best trio of judges on *Indian Idol* so far. The reason being we get along very well. We do have difference of opinions sometimes but that's fine. The

journey has definitely been a great one.

■ Do you see any difference in the talent from five years ago and now?

Talent is talent. Music is ingrained in the DNA of Indians. But, when I look at the youngsters today, technology has made a lot of difference. The youngsters are doing a lot of *riyaaz* before coming for the auditions. They are well-prepared but they also know that there's a lot of competition. The youngsters know that technology is available for everyone and they are trying to walk an extra mile to make a difference. They are committed to their work much more than we ever were.

■ Do you think reality shows can be a turning point in a singer's career?

Yes. Today's generation is blessed to have reality shows. We never had this opportunity in our time. When you are talented and you are on a show, you come into everyone's radar. If you win the show or are in the top 10, you are suddenly in demand. You start getting work. I always joke about this on the show too that Salman Ali's (winner of *Indian Idol 10*) passport is thicker than mine.

■ What does music mean to you?

Music is everything to me. It is my soulmate and the only thing that has been with me through my highs and lows. Apart from my daughters, music is the only thing that has kept me alive all this while. It is a tool to remove any pain that a person is going through. When I made *Moh Moh Ke Dhaage*, people called me up and said that the song is healing them. That was a big compliment for me.

■ Do you have a favourite song?

It's yet to come. (laughs)

■ What was the most challenging project?

The *qawwali* from *Main Hoon Na* was quite challenging. I wanted to make a *qawwali* that would set a trend and after that many composers started making *qawwalis*. Before that there were no *qawwalis* and then suddenly *Kajra Re Kajra Re* came and many more followed.

■ An advice for the aspiring singers?

Just a simple one: Nothing can help anyone except for hard work and commitment towards your work. A lot of people ask me how have you survived in the industry for 42 years? I started when I was only 16 and I kept working since then. Also *riyaaz* is the key. I keep on making songs irrespective of the fact that whether it will be used in the film or not. And there has been not even a single day when I haven't made a song. Everyone is working hard so you have to work even harder. Nothing comes easy. It is tough, but it is worth it.

Meet Verma, the live wire

Bhabhi Ji Ghar Par Hain fame SAANAND VERMA speaks with MUSBA HASHMI about how acting happened to him and that he had to sell his car in the early days of his career

He is *anokha*, humorous and one of the most entertaining character in &TV's rib-tickling show *Bhabhi Ji Ghar Par Hain*. Meet Anokhe Lal Saxena aka Saaanand Verma, who have never feared challenges in his life.

Verma has been receiving immense love and appreciation for playing *Saxenaji*, however doing TV was not on his cards until he had an encounter with the show's director Shashank Bahl.

"I never wanted to do TV. My aim was to pave my way into Bollywood. Therefore, I didn't want to expose myself much at that time because then you get restricted to TV. One fine day, I came in contact with Shashank Bahl and I started doing *FIR*. The reason I chose the show was because it gave me space to hide my identity as I had to play different characters in disguise for different episodes. After the show got off-air, Shashank offered me to play *Saxenaji* in his new show. I wasn't sure of taking it up. But, once I read the script and got to know about my character, there was no reason to turn down the offer. It was the character which was never played on screen before and I was blessed to have gotten the opportunity to play such a character," he says.

Verma believes that a director is like the captain of the ship. If the director is good, the end results will definitely be good. "During the shoot, Shashank not only help us improvise our characters but he tries to bring out the best of the script. It is all about team work. If you see my character closely, the punch line is 'I like it'. The line and when Saxenaji rolls his eyes was Shashank's brainchild and I gave it the right tone. So, definitely a director's part is of immense importance but when you work together on a project, it all depends on team work. We all do new improvisations on our characters on a daily basis and the learning process is never ending," he tells you.

Verma is all praise for his



director and believes that he is the most funny person on the sets. "The atmosphere on the sets is very light-hearted and the credit goes to Shashank. He tries his best to make everyone feel comfortable on the sets. He gives the script a vision and almost 40 per cent of the comical elements are added by him in the final script. Apart from him, I am the most *mazakiya* person on the sets. I make sure that everyone is laughing and is in a happy mood during shooting," he tells you.

But, as everything comes with a price, to reach this stage in his life, Verma too had to make several sacrifices. "I come

from a humble background. There were times when my family didn't have money to eat. But as time passes, those time passed too. I went on to study and eventually got a job in a MNC. I worked with the company for nine years and there was a time when I had a package of ₹50 lakh per annum. But, I wasn't satisfied with my work. It felt like something is missing and that was acting. Since my childhood, I was always interested in performing arts. Then one fine day, I decided to quit my job and go on to pursue acting. I had a house in Mumbai, which in itself was a big thing. But I had to pay the

home loan, with the PF money that I got after quitting my job, I paid my house loan. I was left short on money. I had to sell my car because I wasn't in a position to pay the EMIs. I suffered from a financial crunch again during that time," he recalls.

Leaving behind a luxurious lifestyle and starting everything from the scratch was not a piece of cake. "I had never travelled in Mumbai's local trains. The first day when I was going for auditions, I tried to board a train, I was shocked to see the situation. I knew I couldn't do that. I thought of commuting by bus, which again was a tedious task. Affording a rickshaw or a taxi was not in my budget so I decided to walk to the audition venue. I used to walk almost 14 hours a day," he tells you.

Now, after 10 years, Verma feels blessed to have got the opportunity to play some of the best roles which people still cherish. Tharki Patel in *Pataakha* (his first film as lead), Satyanarayan Dubey in *Apharan* and the most recent hostel staff in *Chhichhore* where though the role was small but a prominent one, he believes.

His approach towards acting is to get into the skin of the characters.

"For me, there is no existence of Saaanand Verma. I am just the characters that I play. I am nothing apart from that. I believe in living and feeling my characters. Whenever you are playing intense characters for instance *Saxenaji*, you have to be careful enough to maintain the comical timings and to express your character without losing the essence of it," he tells you and adds that when not acting he is an unpredictable person. Some people think he is arrogant and others that he is a humble and down-to-earth person. And he loves to remain like this.

Verma, currently is in talks for some projects which are not yet finalised. But, definitely good things are waiting ahead for him which the audience will get to know about soon.

TELLYTALE

ADITI'S INSPIRATION IS MADHURI

It isn't just Bollywood actors who go the extra mile to prepare for their roles. Today, TV stars are also opting for a method-oriented preparation for their roles. We have numerous instances of movie stars learning and mastering a new language or sporting a different look or taking inspiration from veteran actors to get into the skin of their characters!

Yes, actor Aditi Sharma who has been roped in as Roshni the lead actor of the show, has recently done something similar to this. For her new show *Yehh Jadu Hain Jinn Ka*, she has taken inspiration from the gorgeous actor Madhuri Dixit's cult movies *Devdas* and *Kalank*.

Commenting on the same, beautiful Aditi said: "Roshni is a good-looking, happy go lucky girl with a dark past associated with her. I am extremely happy to play this character as for the first time, I would be playing such an audacious role which would be pivotal in delivering the show's core message. Therefore, I did in-depth research on the community which would help me portray my character convincingly. Madhuri Dixit has always been an inspiration to me. To adapt the language and gestures of the character, my biggest inspiration came from watching Madhuri Dixit's popular movies *Devdas* and *Kalank*. I tried to borrow some nuances from these two films."

SAMTA DONS CHEF'S HAT

One thing that binds everyone is good food. It is said that a family that eats together stays together and the cast of &TV's *Gudiya Humari Sabhi Pe Bhari* proudly and lovingly exhibits this saying in its truest form. And one person who brings the food and everyone together, is the actor and writer, Samta Sagar. She is not only the co-writer of *Gudiya Humari Sabhi Pe Bhari* but also essays the role of Sarla, Gudiya's mother in the show. Apart from being a fantastic actor and writer, she also a fabulous chef.

Being from a modest background with conservative upbringing has equipped Sagar with culinary skills that are par excellence. The actor who learned to cook at a very young age, always makes it a point to cook her own meals and known to be a wonderful host, despite her hectic work schedule. So much so, she often whips up some delicious dishes to pamper and feed her co-stars who love eating *ghar ka khana*. And one person who absolutely gobbles up all the food is our *chatori* Gudiya (Sarikha Bahroliya), who is an absolute foodie, and loves Indian delicacies. On many occasions Sagar has also gone out of her way to cook on sets with a small stove that is usually used to prepare tea/coffee for the crew. Sagar's *gatte ki sabzi* and *aloo puri* are an absolute hit amongst the crew.

Talking about the motherly love and the

delicious food that Sagar pampers her with Sarika Bahroliya aka Gudiya said: "With *Samta ji* around I rarely miss home (smiles) and my home-cooked meals. She isn't just the best cook but also the warmest soul on the set. She treats me like her daughter, and most of the time get me home-cooked food as I live alone in Mumbai. Her food is absolutely delicious, and the best part is that she is extremely quick, she can whip up a dish in a matter of minutes."

Sharing her love for cooking Sagar said: "Not many know that I am really passionate about cooking and I find it quite therapeutic. But apart from cooking and I also love being a good host and feeding people with delicious meals. It simply makes me happy to see people enjoying and relishing a good meal. Whenever I have some time on my hand, I try preparing some dishes and I prepare it in more quantity to take it on the sets. We always make it a point to eat our lunch together and most of the people on sets including my co-stars have become a part of my extended family."

PATHBREAKERS SEASON 4

After three successful seasons, MN+, the gold class of Hollywood movies, announced the 4th season of its marquee property, *Pathbreakers* that airs every Monday to Thursday at 9:00.

Work From Home

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AFFIDAVIT

By virtue of an affidavit before the Notary Public, Bhubaneswar, I, Mayadhar Parida, S/O - Late Arttabandhu Parida, aged 33 years, residing at Plot No.590, Lane No.-12, Ananda Nagar, Palaspalli, Bhubaneswar, Dist. - Khurda, do hereby state that, I was previously known as Mayadhar Parida, decided to change my name to Meera Parida and gender to Third Gender. This affidavit is certified that, I have complied with other legal requirements in this connection. Henceforth, I shall be known as Meera Parida for all purposes.

OFFICE OF THE NOTIFIED AREA COUNCIL, KHARIAR

Letter No. 3020 /NAC KHR

Dated 17-10-2019

NOTICE

In response to this office Tender Call Notice No.2826 Dated 23.09.2019 is hereby cancelled due to unavoidable technical error.

Sd/-
Executive Officer,
N.A.C., Khariar



A-311

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No. 2262
Date:- 14.10.2019

Bid documents consisting of works, estimated cost, cost of bid documents, time of completion, Class of contractor, terms and conditions of contract and other necessary documents can be seen in e-procurement portal <https://tendersodisha.gov.in>.

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1. Name of the work | -> Civil construction works. |
| 2. No of works | -> 11 (Eleven) Nos |
| 3. Estimated Cost | -> Varies Approximately from Rs. 5.87 Lakhs to Rs. 49.99 Lakhs |
| 4. Period of completion | -> 04 (Four) calendar months. |
| 5. Date and time of availability of bid documents in the portal | -> From 23.10.2019 (10.00 AM) to 04.11.2019 (5.00 PM) |
| 6. Last date/time for receipt of bids in the portal | -> 04.11.2019 (5.00 PM) |
| 7. Date of opening of Bid | -> On dated 05.11.2019 at 10.00 AM onwards in the Office of the Executive Engineer Minor Irrigation Division, Balangir. |
| 8. Date of receipt of Bid Cost and Bid Security | -> 23.10.2019 (10.00 AM) to 04.11.2019 (5.00 PM) |
| 9. Date of Lottery (if cases arise) for the works on dated 20.11.2019 at 11.00 AM onwards in the Office of the Executive Engineer Minor Irrigation Division, Balangir. | -> 23.10.2019 (10.00 AM) to 04.11.2019 (5.00 PM) |
| 10. Mode of Payment of Bid Cost & Bid Security | -> Online |
| 11. Name of the Officer inviting Tender | -> Executive Engineer, Minor Irrigation Division, Balangir. |
- Further details can be seen from the e-procurement portal <https://tendersodisha.gov.in>.

Sd/-
Executive Engineer,
Minor Irrigation Division, Balangir

32118/11/0001/1920

‘GOLDEN HOUR MANAGEMENT’

‘Give free, best treatment to victims for first 48 hrs’

CS asks to bring all ambulances under single call centre

PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

In a step towards saving life of the accident victims, Chief Secretary Asit Tripathy on Saturday directed the concerned authorities to strengthen the ‘Golden Hour Management’ system with a definite standard of procedure (SOP) for the first 48 hours of free treatment.

Tripathy gave the direction while reviewing the system at the Lokseva Bhawan here where Health and Family Welfare Secretary Pramod Kumar Meherda outlined the issues for discussion.

Tripathy also directed to bring all the private and Government ambulances under the umbrella of one common call center to provide earliest service to the victims.

He asked all hospitals to follow rules and provide the best quality life saving treatment to the accident victims for first 48 hours free of cost.

The Health and Family Welfare Department would soon issue a SOP in this regard. Guidelines for stabilising the patients in the ambulance itself on their way to trauma care centers would also be issued by the department.

It was revealed that presently 512 ‘108-Ambulances’ and 19 fire station ambulances are providing emergency service to accident victims during the ‘golden hour’.

Besides, the National Highway Authorities of India (NHAI) have also deployed one ambulance for a stretch of 50 km of NH.

Besides, a total of 1,562 private ambulances are being operated by the private hospi-

Youth thrashed for mobile snatching in city

PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

A youth was thrashed by locals at Srikhetra Vihar under the Khandagiri police station in the city on Saturday for allegedly attempting to snatch a mobile phone from a woman.

The accused was identified as Narendra Mohapatra.

The woman was on her way back home when Narendra along with his two associates on a scooter tried to snatch her phone and sped away. While they were trying to flee from the spot, their vehicle was hit by a car and the trio fell from the scooter.

When the woman raised an alarm, locals rushed to her rescue and cornered the accused and rained blows on one of them. His two aides managed to flee from the spot in the melee.

Later, the Khandagiri police reached the spot, arrested the youth and seized the scooter. Of late, the spurt in mobile snatching incidents in the city has become a matter of concern for residents. But what is alarming is the miscreants do not hesitate to snatch belongings in broad daylight.



Man shot dead over ‘past enmity’ in Cuttack district

PNS ■ CUTTACK

A man was shot dead by two bike-borne miscreants allegedly over past enmity near Madhupalli road under the Baideswar police station in Cuttack district on Friday night.

The deceased was identified as a native of Manipur village under the Fategarh police lim-

its in Nayagarh district.

According to reports, the criminals belong to the deceased's village. They fled from the village after committing the crime.

The Baideswar police reached the spot and recovered the body. A probe into the incident was initiated and a manhunt was launched to nab the killers.

Village level worker was gangraped, murdered: BJP

- ❑ College girls stage rally, seek culprits’ arrest
- ❑ BJP calls Jajpur Bandh on Monday

PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR/ JAJPUR

The alleged murder of Dharmasala block’s Haridashpur Village Level Worker (VLW) Smitarani Biswal has triggered outcry in different circles.

Alleging that the victim was gang-raped and murdered, the BJP on Saturday said police have not yet arrested the culprits under pressure from the ruling BJD.

BJP leaders Prakash Mishra and Dr Lekhasri Samantsinghar said a team of the party visited Haridaspur and conducted an on-the-spot investigation on Friday. After interacting with VLW’s family members and villagers, the team met the SP and urged him to take exemplary action against the culprits.

“The police are investigating the case on the statement of accused Rupesh Bhadra, husband of Haridashpur Sarpanch. Bhadra, two BJD Samiti members, a BJD ZP member and high-ranked officers of the Ramco Cement attended a feast



in the guesthouse on October 16 before she was found hanging. The VLW was gang-raped and then hanged,” alleged the BJP.

They wanted to know why the police have not sealed the guesthouse yet. Family members told the team that the victim was upset as leaders were putting pressure on her to include different people in the Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana.

“While family members have alleged that she was murdered, it is disappointing that police have termed it as a case of suicide,” said Samant singhar. She threatened that the BJP would take to the streets if family members of the victim don’t get justice at the earliest.

Meanwhile, students of the Dharmasala Women’s College

took out a rally near Jaraka Bazar in Jajpur district demanding arrest of the culprits in the murder case.

Meanwhile, an 11-member fact-finding team formed by the Pradesh Congress Committee visited the spot and met the family of the deceased on Friday.

Meanwhile, the BJP Jajpur district unit called a Jajpur Bandh on Monday alleging that police have been shielding many accused in the murder case. “The woman was murdered, but the police have booked the accused under Section 306 of IPC,” said district BJP leader Gautam Ray.

No docs, equipment at VSS Nagar hosp

BHUBANESWAR: The VSS Nagar Unayan Parishad has demanded that the Government appoint doctors and provide medical equipments for the Veera Surendra Sai (VSS) Nagar hospital, which was inaugurated on March 8 this year.

Parishad general secretary Dillip Dashsharma said that even after six months of running of the hospital, no medical equipments are provided; and later on September 9, local MLA Sushant Kumar Rout had taken stock of the situation.

But just after a week of the MLA’s visit to the hospital, i.e., September 17, no doctors have been posted at the hospital as yet. On asking the authorities, they said that Dr Ethri Noyal Ishaya, who had been appointed there, has left the job, he added. *PNS*



Youth dies after falling off train in Sambalpur

SAMBALPUR: A 25-year-old man died when he fell off a moving train in Sambalpur district on Saturday. His body was recovered from a drain beside the Sambalpur-Angul railway track near the Jujumura fire station.

The deceased Sushanta Pradhan belonged to Torai village in Keonjhar district. Police recovered a train ticket from his pocket dated October 17 from Surat to Angul. He was probably heading for his home from Surat. “The reason of his falling down from the train is still unknown,” said a police officer. The body has been kept in the mortuary for its claimants, he added. *PNS*

IN MAYURBHANJ 1 killed, 2 hurt while assembling bombs

A bomb exploded while Tudu along with his associates was assembling bombs at the backyard of Saren’s house with a purpose for poaching a wild boar

PNS ■ BARIPADADA

Assembling bombs to poach a wild boar turned fatal as a person was killed and two others sustained critical injuries in an explosion at Jatiasola village under the Jharpokharia police station in Mayurbhanj district on Saturday.

The deceased was identified as Das Tudu and the injured persons were Bhaka Saren and Jagar Murmu.

A bomb exploded while Tudu along with his associates was assembling bombs at the backyard of Saren’s house with a purpose for poaching a wild boar. After hearing the blast, villagers and relatives of the victims rushed to the spot. They rushed the victims to the Pandit Raghunath Murmu Medical College Hospital at Baripada. But Tudu succumbed to his injuries on way to the hospital.

B’pur Childline rescues newborn from Aska

PNS ■ BRAHMAPUR

A team of the Brahmapur Childline under leadership of Centre Coordinator Sai Prasad Samal rescued a newborn baby from Aska on Friday after getting information from the Aska Child Development Project Officer (CDPO) that the child was found abandoned at the bay of river Rushikulya, back side of Suna Aamba Street in Aska on Thursday.

The CDPO had asked Samal to rescue the baby from a lady, who kept the child in her custody.



The Childline team comprising Pranati Kaur and Balamram Mallick went to the spot; and, after observing the situation, they requested the Aska police station IIC for support to rescue the baby.

With the help of police, the

team went to the women’s house, but she refused to hand over the baby after getting community support. However, after interference of the Aska PS IIC the baby was rescued by the team and brought to the Aska hospital and later was referred to the MKCG Medical College Hospital.

Samal said the child, after being discharged from the medical, would be produced before the Child Welfare Committee, Ganjam for shelter. Until produced before the CWC, the baby would be under the Childline’s supervision, he added.

Jeweller looted of silver ornaments in Baleswar

PNS ■ BALESWAR

Unidentified motorbike-borne miscreants looted silver ornaments from a jeweller in a busy market of Soro in the district on Friday night.

The victim was identified as Ashok Kumar Patra.

Reports said the miscreants looted two kg silver ornaments from the jeweller while he was returning home after closing his shop at Machha Haat.

“Two miscreants on a motorcycle snatched my bag from my shoulder while I was

Reports said the miscreants looted two kg silver ornaments from the jeweller while he was returning home after closing his shop at Machha Haat

returning to home at night. During the loot bid, my bag was torn and silver ornaments fell off. The looters fled with those ornaments from the spot,” said the jeweller.

Later, he lodged a complaint with the Soro police regarding the loot, who have registered a case and investigating into the incident.

TENSION CONTINUES AT GM COLLEGE 2 students injured in police lathicharge

PNS ■ SAMBALPUR

Tension continued to prevail in the Gangadhar Meher Junior College premises here for a third consecutive day on Saturday when students had a faceoff with police. The students were staging agitation reiterating their protest against the transfer of several college Lecturers.

Two students were injured when police resorted to a mild lathicharge to maintain law and order in the college premises.

During the students’ protest at Church Chhak, an ambulance got stuck for around



10 minutes. Besides, commuters faced difficulties near the Chhak. To disperse the agitators, police made the lathicharge in which the two students sustained injuries.

Later, members of the Koshli Ekta Manch and Rengali MLA Nauri Nayak along with students marched towards the Collector’s office opposing the transfer of teachers.

As per the latest reports, students were having discussions with Assistant District Magistrate Lingaraj Panda, Sub-Collector Aniruddha Padhan, SP Dr Kanwar Vishal Singh and the college authorities to resolve the issue.

Girl raped, killed in S’pur; 3 detained

PNS ■ SAMBALPUR

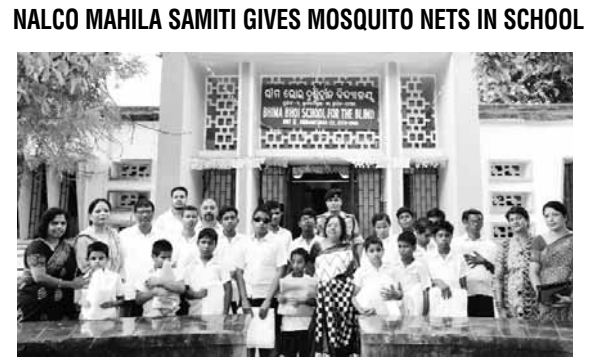
A body of an unidentified girl was found at the Nadikhandi forest under the Kisinnda police station in the district on Friday evening.

It was suspected that the girl was raped and murdered. Police recovered her body and started investigation into the incident.

The exact reason behind the death of the girl could be ascertained only after getting postmortem report, police said.

It is alleged that the girl was raped and murdered, following which her body was dumped at the forest. Police have detained three youths of Fatamunda village for questioning in this connection.

INBRIEF



NALCO MAHILA SAMITI GIVES MOSQUITO NETS IN SCHOOL

Bhubaneswar: As a noble gesture, members of the Nalco Mahila Samiti, led by its president Preeti Roy Chand, recently distributed mosquito nets to all the inmates of the Bhima Bhoi School for the Blind in Bhubaneswar. This will ensure health and safety of the children.

LIZARD IN MIDDAY MEAL IN JAJPUR; 18 KIDS ILL

Jajpur: Eighteen students of the Phulupura Primary School in Bari block of Jajpur district were taken ill after taking their midday meal on Saturday. A student found a lizard from his plate. The students who had taken meal complained of uneasiness and sickness. With the help of some locals, the school authorities admitted the students to the Bari Community Health Centre. The latest reports said conditions of the students were stable following primary treatment.



CROCODILE CAUGHT IN FISHING NET IN JAJPUR

Jajpur: A saltwater crocodile got caught in a fishing net in river Kharasrota near Rajaghat village in the district on Saturday. The frightened fisherman and other locals released the crocodile in a small pond and informed forest officials, who arrived and roped the reptile after netting it from the pond. “Later we released the crocodile in river Patasala within the Bhitarkanika National Park. The crocodile had strayed into the Kharasrota from the water bodies of the park,” said Cuttack DFO Sudrashan Patra.

Cracker units raided at Jagatpur Huge caches of explosives seized

PNS ■ CUTTACK

Police launched a midnight crackdown on illegal firecracker manufacturing units in the Jagatpur near here.

A team of 10 senior police officials along with four platoons of forces raided the illegal cracker factories operating at Trilochanpur and Mahajanpur under the Jagatpur police limits late on Friday night.

The police team conducted the raids following information about illegal operation of cracker units. They seized huge caches of explosives and firecrackers worth over Rs 50 lakh. As many as 12 persons were detained in this connection.

This was said to be a major crackdown on illegal firecracker units ahead of Diwali celebrations this month.

State to have policy on retail trade soon As retail biz flourishing

PNS ■ SAMBALPUR

The State Government will formulate a retail trade policy soon as the retail business in the State has picked up in a big way.

The new policy will facilitate a favourable environment for promotion of retail trade and look after the welfare of the traders engaged in the sector.

The policy will take care of ease of doing business, access to credit, adoption of technology, simplification of acts and rules, welfare of traders and creation of organised retail market infrastructure, etc.

Now, major players in the retail trade have made inroads to the State and players like Future Group, Reliance Trade, Food Court, NEXUS and several others are making inroads.

Esplanade One, DN Regalia and Utkal Galleria to name a few have opened mega malls in Bhubaneswar. Such malls are also coming up in Cuttack, Sambalpur, Rourkela, Brahmapur and other towns.

While shops and business establishments are registered under the Labor and ESI Department, the MSME Department looks after the listing of the Micro and Small Business and Tax Collection is on the shoulders of Commercial Tax Commissioner (CCT).

Sources said only Future Group, market leader in retail sector, is eyeing for a business of Rs 1,000 crore only in Odisha.

So one can imagine the level of business growing in

Now, major players in the retail trade have made inroads to the State and players like Future Group, Reliance Trade, Food Court, NEXUS and several others are making inroads

retail trade, said a senior official in CCT.

As the Government of India is taking the matter seriously with formulating National Retail Trade Policy, taking a cue, the State Government has moved to prepare a State policy on retail trade, said official sources.

Apart from these big players, there are hundreds of small shop owners doing retail trade. Large numbers of street hawkers are engaged in retail business also.

Retail traders are facing GST problems and there is hardly anyone to guide them. So the State Government will have to take a holistic approach towards the retail trade in the State, while formulating the policy, said a senior officer in Department of MSME.

With Union Government in Department of Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade is looking after retail trade while the State Government is also making serious efforts to ensure a conducive environment for retail trade.

The policy will provide a framework for the growing retail market in the State and it will help out the welfare of the traders and employees for the social benefits also.

BALANGIR LABOUR OFFICE

Clerk caught on camera taking bribe; suspended

DLC also caught seeking bribe; probe ordered

PNS ■ BALANGIR

A Clerk of the district labour office here was placed under suspension on Saturday after he was caught on camera while demanding and accepting bribe from a person for issuing a labour migration licence challan to the latter. Clerk Ballabh Nag was suspended from service by the State Labour Commissioner after the video of the incident went viral.

In the video, Nag was seen demanding a bribe of Rs 5,000. Then, the person offered Rs 1,000 to him which he accepted.

The person had applied for



a licence to legally send labourers outside the State. Despite submitting all the necessary documents to obtain the licence, the clerk told him that it would take minimum one week for the entire procedure.

Subsequently, he allegedly said no work is done without bribes. Hours after the video of the clerk went viral, another video came to light where the Divisional Labour Commissioner (DLC) of the same office was seen demanding bribe. The video of DLC Saroj Kumar Ranjito asking for bribe also went viral on social media. In the video, Ranjito was heard saying, “We have no demands. You can give according to your wish.” He was also seen trying to hide the bribe money by placing a paper on it. The State Labour Commissioner said necessary action would also be taken against Ranjito after a probe.

TOWN PLANNERS EAST ZONE CONF

‘Focus on safety of multistoried high-density buildings’ Recommendations made on TOD, Sports City

PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

The Institute of Town Planners, India, State Chapter, organised an East Zone Conference on “Transit Oriented Development” and “Future Sports City, Bhubaneswar” here on Saturday.

Minister for Panchayati Raj, Drinking Water, Law, Housing and Urban Development Pratap Jena inaugurated the event while, among others, Commissioner, BMC and VC, BDA, Prem Chandra Chaudhary, president, Institute of Town Planners, India Prof DS Meshram spoke.

After detailed discussions and deliberations, it was recommended that Transit Oriented Development (TOD) be enforced at micro level by following the bottom up



approach. While permitting multistoried high-density buildings near transport nodes, safety aspects need to be given high priority. TOD should focus on pedestrians and cyclists as well. Parking needs to be provided near high density mixed land use zones/

buildings. Preference be given to EWS, LIG and MIG who will be in fact using public transport and not to the HIG who will be using the personal transport. The participation of private sector in providing infrastructure both physical and social, in Sports City be encouraged by

giving them certain incentives. The sports complex should focus on integrated sports theme, so that sporting events catalyse activities like tourism, conventions and festivals. Sport City should provide for a wide range of sport activities.

2 labourers die in wall collapse in Angul

ANGUL: Two labourers were killed after a wall of an under-construction house collapsed near Banarpal Chhak in the district while they were laying a water supply pipeline on Saturday.

The deceased were identified as Dipak Parida (34) of Angul district and Tapan Kumar Nayak (33) of Dhenkanal district. Sources said the two labourers were busy connecting a pipe for the supply of water of a house when the portion of the house of one Gopinath Sahoo collapsed on them.

Both labourers died on the spot. On being informed, police along with Fire Services personnel reached the spot and carried out a rescue operation. Later, police detained the house owner for interrogation. **PNS**

‘Issues for KV principals’ meet from tomorrow

PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

The Zonal Institute of Education and Training (ZIET), Bhubaneswar is organising a three-day training workshop on “Emergent Issues for Principals of Kendriya Vidyalayas” here from October 21 to 23.

About 45 participants from six KVS Regions spread over 10 States which include Odisha, Jharkhand, West Bengal and seven North-Eastern States will participate in the workshop.

ZIET Bhubaneswar DC and Director C Neelap expects a high-level interactive workshop, to which guest lecturers have been invited from KVS (HQ) New Delhi, KVS RO Bhubaneswar, OSCPCR Bhubaneswar, and speakers from Kolkata, Ranchi etc.

The ZIET is one of the five training Institutes of Kendriya Vidyalaya Sangathan and is presently functioning in the campus of Kendriya Vidyalaya No.4 Neeladri Vihar.

IIT BBS holds medical camp for students

PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

The Indian Institute of Technology (IIT), Bhubaneswar Medical Unit in collaboration with the KIMS Hospital, Bhubaneswar organised a health camp at the Community Centre in its campus here on Saturday.

IIT BBS Director Prof RV Raja Kumar inaugurated the camp and stressed that students often owing to their immersive study schedules and paucity of time often neglect their health.

He also said that the camp was organised in the best interest of our student community and appreciated the initiative by the medical unit headed by Dr M A Khan, in collaboration



with KIMS Hospital. A total of 247 students were checked by a team of medicine specialists, gynae-

cologists, physiotherapist, ophthalmologist and dental surgeon from the KIMS Hospital. A series of tests, viz.,

free blood sugar test, ECG (on doctor's advice), eye check-up were also undertaken.

Crorepati Baleswar EE arrested

PNS ■ CUTTACK

The Vigilance police on Saturday arrested Baleswar Drainage Division Executive Engineer (EE) Basanta Kumar Panda after detecting disproportionate assets worth Rs 2, 08,81,669 to his known sources of income.

The Vigilance sleuths on Friday conducted simultaneous raids at his residential triple storied building at Bagbrundaban, Azimabad in Baleswar town, flat in Kailash Apartment in Bhubaneswar, single-storied building of relative at Sahadevkhunta in Baleswar town, single-storied building at native village Sarisha, Amarda Road in Baleswar, office room at Baleswar, office room of his wife at Sunahat, Baleswar and house of a relative at Angul.

Panda was arrested and forwarded to the Court of Special Judge, Vigilance, Baleswar and remanded to judicial custody till November 1. In another case, Vigilance officers searched houses of Benudhar Chhachhan, Head Clerk in the office of the Jharsuguda District Panchayat Officer and assessed assets worth 1,13,57,771 in his and his family members' names.

The detected assets include a triple-storied building at Jharsuguda town worth Rs 81,91,815 and gold and silver ornaments of Rs 10,83,859.

Jagannath mine expand likely as encroachment lifted

Balram OCP closure on 10th day

PNS ■ SAMBALPUR

Action taken by the Angul district administration to clear encroachments from a Government land acquired long back by the Mahanadi Coalfields Limited (MCL) for coal mining has given a new lease of life to the 6 MTY capacity Jagannath open cast mine in Talcher coalfields.

For about last one year, Jagannath mine under MCL's Jagannath Area was unable to advance due to illegal obstructions caused by illegal occupants of Government land, causing loss of coal production and off-take to the tune of 2 million tonne during current financial year.

With the active help of police under the supervision of the SP Angul, at least 15 families illegally occupying the Government land near Rakas village were shifted to the temporary accommodations at the Central Colony, before clearing about 15 acre Government land which was acquired by the MCL.

The MCL also arranged for transportation and fooding for the evicted families.

MCL, in March 2019, had sanctioned ex-gratia in favour of these landless families as per provisions of R&R policy of the State at Rs 1.2 lakh per family equivalent to the prevalent rate of Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana/Biju Pucca Ghar. In addition, the MCL has also provided Rs 1 lakh to each family for relocation.

However, a local political activist namely Murlidhar Sahu along with his few supporters launched protest at the site and created obstruction in the work of the Government authorities, following an eviction notice under Section (12) of CBA Act, 1957, served to the illegal occupants in July this year.

After police detained the protesters to complete the eviction work, all coal mines in Talcher coalfields were forcibly closed by local political affiliates. Meanwhile, the stalling of mining operations in the Balram opencast project due to stalemate between Danara and Solada villages entered the 10th day on Saturday. Due to this, coal supply of about 15,000 tonne to various consumers was affected daily from the Balram OCP.

Praja Samiti seeks action against Dhekanal Tehsildar

In college land scam

DHENKANAL: Odisha Bhumihina Praja Samiti State president Er Debashisha Hota has alleged that there is rampant corruption in the Dhenkanal Tehsil and Tahasildar Laxman Dalei is not afraid of Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik's “5T” principles.

Dalei also does not care about the direction of his higher authorities like the Collector and the Sub-Collector, Hota alleged.

Citing an inquiry report by Sub-Collector Saphalya Mandit Pradhan, Hota demanded action against Tehsildar Dalei and threatened to gherao the Collector's office if Dalei is spared.

Hota further alleged that Tehsildar Dalei and Sagarbala, secretary of E-tech Residential College and Vidyaniketan Charitable Trust are hand in glove in land scam. Besides, Sagarbala is behind several irregularities committed by her educational institution, including cheating, he alleged. **PNS**

NAT'L FINANCE CONCLAVE AT KIIT ‘Revive demand, initiate structural reforms’



PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

The KIIT School of Management (KSOM) organised its 10th National Finance Conclave with the theme ‘Getting to \$5 Trillion: Navigating the Financial Landscape’ here on Saturday.

Distinguished Fellow, NCEAR and Emeritus Professor, National Institute of Public Finance and Policy, New Delhi, Prof Sudipto Mundle delivered the keynote address titled, ‘An inclusive strategy for reviving growth in India’.

“What is required now is a macroeconomic strategy to quickly revive aggregate

demand in the short run, while initiating structural reforms over the long run. The strategy has to take into account a very challenging external economic environment,” Prof Mundle remarked.

Rahul Bajoria, Chief Economist, Barclays Investment Bank laid focus on demand-supply management perspective. Piyus Garg, EVP and CIO, ICICI Securities said consumption has slowed down while saving went down.

Chief Economist, Axis Bank Sougato Bhattacharya elucidated how GDP growth rate has been stunted. Pramod Kasat from Ex-Indusland

Investment Banking said that having the largest number of young people in the world, India boasts of huge opportunities.

The second panel discussion was on the topic ‘Known Terrain yet Uncertain Path: Challenges in Financing the Growth’. The panellist were Madhavi Arora, Lead Economist, Edelweiss Securities; Amit Tripathi, CIO, Fixed Income, Nippon India Mutual Fund; Prof Arun Kumar, Chair Professor, Institute of Social Science; Sandeep Bagla, Associate Director, Trust Capital and R Kannan, Head, CPM, Hinduja Group.

Star athletes from KIIT honoured

PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

Star athletes from the KIIT University, Dutee Chand, Amiya Mallick and Jauna Murmu were felicitated at the KIIT at a special programme on Saturday.

They have achieved Gold Medals at the 59th National Open Athletics Championships 2019 held at Ranchi, Jharkhand recently.

Founder, KIIT and KISS and MP Dr Achyuta Samanta felicitated them for their achievement.

Dutee clinched two gold medals in women's 100m and 200m respectively, while ace sprinter Amiya Mallick bagged Gold Medal in the men's 100m



final. Jauna Murmu bagged Gold in 400m hurdles.

Dutee completed the 200 metres sprint in 23.17 sec. In 100m, she broke her own national record, clocking 11.22 seconds in the semi-finals.

Dutee later clocked 11.25 seconds in the final to claim the gold. Amiya Mallick clocked 10.46 seconds to triumph in the event.

VLW death: Cong submits memo to OHRC, SWC

PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

The Congress on Saturday alleged that the Jaipur SP has taken very calculative steps to derail the investigation into the ‘killing’ of Dharماسala block's Haridashpur VLW Smitarani Biswal by terming the incident as a case of suicide and saying that main accused Rupesh Bhadra had a relationship with the victim.

Members of a fact-finding team led Cuttack-Barabati MLA Mohammad Muquim made this allegation here on Saturday.

Mouquim said the team team submitted a memorandum to the Odisha State Huma Rights Commission and the State Commission for Women urging them to direct the



Government and the police to conduct a fair probe and punish all culprits soon.

The team demanded that the scientific team inspects the hard disc of

the CCTV to know how the CCTV was broken and by whom it was damaged. The team wanted to know why the woman went to the first floor and why the husband of the Haridashpur Sarpanch along with others took him to the hospital without informing

police.

“We will take to the streets across the State if family members of VLW don't get justice soon,” said the team members.

K’handi forester held taking bribe

Boudh Treasury Office Accountant also arrested

PNS ■ CUTTACK

The Vigilance police on Saturday caught Kalahandi district's M Rampur Range Mohangiri Section Forester Rudraprasad Gahir red-handed for demanding and accepting illegal gratification of Rs 10,000.

He was caught taking the bribe from complainant Sudhana Bhoi of Tentuliguda village in Kalahandi district in order to influence the Range

Officer for re-engagement of the complainant as contractual employee in IPCA (Intensive Protection of Critically Endangered Area) squad, who had been disengaged from his service in September 2019.

His rented residential house at M Rampur town and house at Bhawanipatna were searched. He was arrested and forwarded to court.

In another case, the Vigilance arrested Narayan Mallick, Accountant, District Treasury Office, Boudh for demanding and accepting illegal gratification of Rs 5,000 from Brajabihari Meher, retired Progress Assistant, to process and pass bill of Rs 5,79,813 towards his unutilised leave salary.

Home Guard found hanging in Puri

PNS ■ PURI

A body of a Home Guard was found hanging from a ceiling fan in the IPS Officers' guesthouse (Hirak Bhawan) at Charatirtha Road under the Sea Beach police station here on Saturday.

The deceased was identified as Saroj Behera, a resident of Gualipada village under Delang block in the district.

Though the cause of death was yet to be ascertained, it was suspected that Behera committed suicide. Police recovered the body and sent it for post-mortem.

The deceased was identified as Saroj Behera, a resident of Gualipada village under Delang block in the district

The cops are investigating into the other angles like whether there was involvement of other staffs in Behera's death or he ended his life due to family problems.

PM only remembers Art 370: Sibal

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

With the Prime Minister Narendra Modi espousing the nationalism cause by highlighting the abrogation of Article 370 from Jammu & Kashmir during the campaigning for Haryana and Maharashtra Assembly polls scheduled for October 21, the Congress on Saturday sought to counter it by projecting its own tough image by pointing out how India under it split Pakistan and created Bangladesh.

Modi ji only remembers (Article) 370. He does not know when Pakistan split and who did it. It was we (Congress) who split Pakistan's integral part from it... Where were you (Modi) then?" senior Congress leader Kapil Sibal asked.

"Tell the people of Haryana that it was because of the Congress that Pakistan's integral part was split from it. This happened under the Congress rule. Praise the Congress, but you don't have the guts to do that," he said.

Training his guns at Modi, the Congress leader asked what has the BJP Government under him done for implementation of Article 47 of the

Constitution which states that raising the level of nutrition and the standard of living and improving public health is the duty of the state.

"You only remember Article 370 but you do not keep in mind your constitutional duties. Around 93 per cent children are not getting proper nutrition and your entire focus is on Article 370," he said. "You are doing this because of the Assembly polls... You do not know about the people who are suffering," Sibal said.

He further attacked Modi and Home Minister Amit Shah over their remarks that Jammu and Kashmir lagged in development because of Article 370.

Citing poverty, infant mortality and unemployment rates, along with gross enrolment ratio in higher education and human development index rank of Haryana, Maharashtra, Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh and Gujarat to Sibal said, "These states did not have Article 370, but most of the corresponding figures of Jammu and Kashmir were way better."

Referring to data from a US Customs and Border Protection report, Sibal claimed that in the last three years the

number of Indians arrested for trying to enter the US illegally has "tripled".

This means a lot of poor Indians are leaving the country in search of employment opportunities, the Congress leader said, adding, "Modi ji please respond why is this happening as you have been running the country for the last five-and-half years."

He also took potshots at the Prime Minister over India ranking 102 in the Global Hunger Index, saying Modi should concentrate less on politics and more on the people of the country.

Citing the latest GDP growth projections by international agencies, Sibal said, "Despite India's GDP growth rate slipping to a six-year low of 5 per cent in the April-June quarter, the Modi Government

still insists that all is well with the country's economy and that it remains among the fastest growing in the world."

"But revised projections for India's GDP growth rates this year alone indicate otherwise. In fact, some analysts have dropped growth projections for 2019-20 from 7.5 per cent all the way to just 6 per cent," he said.

Improve economy, do not run circus: Priyanka to Centre

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Congress on Saturday hit out at Union Minister Piyush Goyal for his remarks on Nobel laureate Abhijit Banerjee with its leader Priyanka Gandhi Vadra saying the Government's job is to improve the "collapsing" economy and not to run a "comedy circus".

Goyal on Friday said Banerjee supported 'NYAY', a minimum income scheme proposed by the Congress, which was rejected by the Indian voters and there was no need to "accept what he thinks".

The 'NYAY' scheme was one of the highlights of the Congress manifesto for the April-May Lok Sabha polls.

The Union commerce and industry minister, at a media briefing in Pune, also described Banerjee as a "Left-leaning" person. Lashing out at Goyal for his remarks, Priyanka Gandhi said instead of doing their work, BJP leaders are try-



ing to belie the achievements of others. The Nobel laureate did his work honestly and won the Nobel Prize, she said in a tweet in Hindi.

"The economy is collapsing. Your job is to improve it, not to run a comedy circus," the Congress general secretary said.

She also tagged a media report which claimed that the slowdown in the auto sector continued in September.

Banerjee, an Indian-American who has been critical of the Narendra Modi government's economic policies, won the 2019 Nobel Prize for Economic Sciences.

Raids on 'Kalki' Bhagwan's properties yield ₹93 crore

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Searches in multiple premises of firms and trusts founded by spiritual guru 'Kalki' Bhagwan — whose original name is Vijay Kumar Naidu — have led to the detection of undisclosed income of nearly ₹500 crore including unaccounted cash receipts of about ₹409 crore.

A total of ₹43.9 crore in cash and US currency worth ₹18 crore were seized. The total value of the seizure is about ₹93 crore, which includes gold and diamonds, a tax department official release said. About 88 kg of undeclared gold jewellery, valued at ₹26 crore, diamonds amount to 1,271 carats worth about ₹5 crore, have also been seized.

The raids were conducted after a tip-off from the Intelligence Bureau that Kalki's son Krishna is suspected to have made huge investments in several ventures of his associates including real estate with the use of illegal finance.

Besides the sprawling headquarters of Kalki Bhagwan near Chittoor bordering Tamil Nadu, searches were also on at 20 places in Chennai and other

premises in Andhra Pradesh and Telangana.

Around 300 personnel of Income Tax (IT) department are involved in the searches which commenced early on Wednesday morning continued through Thursday and are expected to last till Friday, officials familiar with the development maintained. According to IT officials, besides cash, IT officers also seized incriminating documents about shady investments and purchase of vast tracts of land in Tamil Nadu and even in Kenya in violation of rules.

During IT raids, it was found that Krishna also runs a few construction firms in the name of White Lotus, Golden Lotus, Blue Water and Dream View among others. Krishna, resides in Chennai, is said to have invested heavily in the business ventures of his associates, which too have come under the scanner. According to sources, nearly 20 of Krishna's business associates are under investigation.

The 70-year-old Naidu started his career in 1971 as a clerk at Life Insurance of India and then joined J

Krishnamurthy Foundation during the '80s. But he was expelled from the foundation and later set up his own trust.

He had gone into hiding following a business failure in 1989 and later emerged as Lord Vishnu's 10th avatar 'Kalki' in Chittoor district of Andhra Pradesh. He also claimed that his wife was the incarnation of the lord's consort. He got name and fame after many top brass politicians, industrialists and celebrities started coming to his ashram. The Chittoor ashram also hit the headlines in 2008 when five people died and many were injured in a stampede.

At the ashram, an ordinary darshan of the couple is priced at ₹5000 and special darshan at ₹50000. Similarly, the meditation classes offered at Oneness Temple starts from ₹50,000 onwards and these sessions attract a huge number of foreigners.

During the late '90s, the self-proclaimed spiritual leader set up a campus in Chennai called Somamangalam, and also started 'Oneness University' in Chennai's Varadaiahpalem.

India invites heads of foreign missions to visit Golden Temple

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

As the Government prepares to celebrate the 550th Birth Anniversary of Guru Nanak, India has invited the heads of foreign missions based in New Delhi to visit the Golden Temple in Amritsar.

"Over 90 Resident Heads of Missions in New Delhi are expected to travel to Amritsar on 22 October. The visit is being organized by the ICCR (Indian Council of Cultural Relations) in collaboration with the state

Government of Punjab and the Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee," the Ministry of External Affairs said in a statement.

The committee is responsible for the management of Gurudwaras in the states of Punjab, Haryana and Himachal Pradesh, besides the Golden temple in Amritsar.

Hardeep Singh Puri, minister of state for civil aviation, housing and urban affairs and minister of state for commerce and industry and Vinay

Sahasrabuddhe, president, ICCR, will accompany the heads of missions, the statement said.

Guru Nanak Dev's teachings of love, peace, equality and brotherhood have universal appeal and convey the message of spirituality, humanity, devotion and truth," the statement added. India and Pakistan are also working on opening the Kartarpur corridor to facilitate pilgrims visit Kartarpur Sahib Gurdwara in the Narowal district of Pakistan's Punjab province.

Govt rules out separate flag, Constitution for Nagas

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Ruling out a separate flag and Constitution for the Nagas as demanded by the NSCN-IM, the Centre has made it clear that the endless negotiations with the insurgent group under the shadow of guns were not acceptable.

The Central Government is also determined to conclude the 220-year-long peace process without delay, interlocutor for the Nagas talks and Nagaland Governor RN Ravi said in a statement.

Ravi said a mutually

agreed draft comprehensive settlement, including all the substantive issues and competencies, is ready for inking the final agreement. "Unfortunately at this auspicious juncture, the NSCN-IM has adopted a procrastinating attitude to delay the settlement raising the contentious symbolic issues of separate Naga national flag and constitution on which they are fully aware of the Government of India's position," the statement, issued on Friday night, read.

Ravi's statement bears sig-

nificance as the central government on August 5 announced abrogation of special status given to Jammu and Kashmir under Article 370 and bifurcated the state into Union territories.

With the annulment of the special status, the separate flag and the Constitution of Jammu and Kashmir cease to exist. The ruling BJP, Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Union Home Minister Amit Shah on many occasions had made it clear that they believe in only one flag and one Constitution for whole India.

Ravi said the NSCN-IM has "mischievously" dragged in the Framework Agreement and began inputting imaginary contents to it.

The framework agreement was signed on August 3, 2015 by NSCN-IM general secretary Thuingaleng Muivah and the government's interlocutor Ravi in presence of Prime Minister Modi.

Some NSCN-IM leaders through various media platforms are misleading the people with "absurd assumptions and presumptions" over what they have already agreed with

the Government of India, he said.

In view of such unfortunate attitude of some NSCN-IM leaders, Ravi held a detailed consultation meeting with the primary stakeholders of the Naga society on October 18 in Kohima.

The meeting was attended by the apex leadership of all the 14 Naga tribes of Nagaland, all the minority non-Naga tribes of Nagaland, the Nagaland Gaon Burha Federation, the Nagaland Tribes Council, church leaders and civil society organisations.

PM meets Bollywood stars, discusses ways to mark Gandhi's 150th birth anniversary

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Saturday met Bollywood actors and filmmakers, including Shah Rukh Khan and Aamir Khan, to discuss initiatives to mark the 150th birth anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi.

In an interaction with them at his official residence here, the prime minister said several people from the world of films and television have been doing great work when it comes to popularising the ideals of Gandhi. Referring to Gandhi, he said the power of creativity is immense and it is essential to harness this spirit of creativity for the nation.

Among others present in the meeting were Sonam Kapoor, Kangana Ranaut, directors Rajkumar Hirani, Rajkumar Santoshi, Ashwini Iyer Tiwari, Nitesh Tiwari and



producers Ekta Kapoor, Boney Kapoor and Jayantilal Gada.

The prime minister pointed out that members of the film industry had come with a lot of suggestions.

"I am happy to share that we have addressed them to ensure more people can see the brilliant work done by our film personalities," the prime minister's office said in a series of tweets quoting him.

During the course of inter-

action, the prime minister urged those present to encourage tourism in the country.

The prime minister told the gathering that they do great work but perhaps they are not aware of its global influence. "Your work has reached all corners of the world. On the part of the government, I am happy to help in anyway to ensure maximum impact of your creative initiatives," Modi said.

DNA Technology Regulation Bill referred to Parliamentary Standing Committee

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The DNA Technology Regulation Bill, which seeks to control the use of DNA technology for establishing the identity of a person, has been referred to a Parliamentary Standing Committee for examination, the Lok Sabha Secretariat has said.

The bill that seeks to control the use and application of the deoxyribonucleic acid (DNA) technology for establishing the identity of certain categories of persons, including offenders, victims, suspects and undertrials, was passed by the Lok Sabha in July.

The bill has been referred to the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Science and Technology, Environment and Forests by Rajya Sabha Chairman M Venkaiah Naidu.

"Members are informed that the Chairman, Rajya Sabha in consultation with the Speaker, Lok Sabha has referred the DNA Technology (Use and Application) Regulation Bill, 2019, as introduced in Lok Sabha, to the Standing Committee on Science and Technology, Environment and Forests for examination and report within three months," the Lok Sabha secretariat said in a bulletin on Friday.

The chairman of the committee, Congress leader Jairam Ramesh, has invited suggestions from the public on the Bill. A similar bill was passed in the Lok Sabha in January last year but it could not be cleared in the Rajya Sabha. The bill had then lapsed with the dissolution of the previous Lok Sabha. The bill provides for establishment of a national DNA data bank and regional DNA data banks.

India to host 91st Interpol General Assembly in 2022

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

India will host the 91st Interpol General Assembly in 2022 after a proposal in this regard was cleared with "overwhelming support" from members countries of the international police cooperation body. According to an Ministry of Home Affairs press note, voting in this regard took place today at the 88th General Assembly of the Interpol at Santiago Chile with India winning with an overwhelming majority. The Interpol is an international organisation with 194 member-states and has 100 years of experience of international cooperation in Policing.

Home Minister Amit Shah had proposed to host the General Assembly in India to Interpol Secretary General Jurgen Stock when the two met here on August 30. The biggest

congregation of law enforcement officers will coincide with country's 75th Independence anniversary celebrations, they said.

The officials said that the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) Director Rishi Kumar Shukla moved this proposal before the 88th General Assembly in Santiago, Chile which got over Friday, they said.

The CBI represents the Interpol in India as the country's National Central Bureau.

India will get a chance to host the General Assembly of International Criminal Police Organisation (Interpol) after 25 years since 1997 when it was hosted here, the officials said.

Delhi Police commissioner Amulya Patnaik and Madhya Pradesh Police chief V K Singh also accompanied the CBI director at the general assembly, which got over on

Friday.

The general assembly of Interpol is an annual exercise hosted by member countries. All major decisions affecting general policy, the resources needed for international cooperation, working methods and finances are deliberated and discussed by representatives.

Based in Lyon, France, Interpol is an international police cooperation organisation with 194 member states and 100 years of experience of international cooperation in policing.

The organisation has 90-million records spread across 17 database.

Equipped with secure global data communication channel I-24/7, incident response teams, command and control centre, a worldwide network of NCBs, the organisation assists law enforcement agencies of member countries.

Reconstructing mosque against justice: Hindu group in Ayodhya land case

AGENCIES ■ NEW DELHI

Lawyers representing "Ram Lalla Virajman", or the infant Lord Ram, in the politically sensitive Ram Jannbhoomi - Babri Masjid case filed a relief affidavit with the Supreme Court on Saturday, asking that the disputed land be handed over for the construction of a Ram Temple.

The group's lawyers argued the Muslim petitioners were entitled to neither land nor equitable relief as the Babri Masjid no longer exists. The lawyers also said the Nirmohi Akhara should not be awarded the land because it had questioned whether Ram Janmasthan - the birthplace of Lord Ram - could be considered a juristic entity.

"Ayodhya is a sacred place and it is a place of pilgrimage. It is the faith of the Hindus that Ayodhya has divine and spiritual significance even in the absence of temple or idol,"

the Hindu group said in its affidavit.

"Reconstructing the mosque at the disputed site is inequitable, unjust and contrary to Hindu Dharma, Islamic Law and all principles of justice. The area which is under dispute is one integral unit and is indivisible, so the whole area should be given to offer worship at Ram Janmasthan," the affidavit read.

Muslim parties also submitted a relief to the Supreme Court today but did done so in a sealed cover after divisions within the Sunni Waqf Board were exposed this week. However, lawyers for the Hindu group objected.

"Moulding of Relief" given in sealed cover by Muslim petitioners is not permissible. This encourages address to the court in secrecy and keeps other parties in the dark. It prejudices the rights of other petitioners," the lawyers said today.

Delhi Cabinet approves ₹36 crore expenditure for anti-pollution drives

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

The Delhi Cabinet on Saturday has cleared a proposal of its environment department to carry out a mass awareness campaign on pollution and pollution-control measures. The Cabinet has approved an expenditure of ₹36 crore from the Budget of the Directorate of Information and Publicity (DIP) towards the mass awareness campaigns mentioned above.

"One of the challenges faced by any government in such a situation is regarding compliance and participation of the citizens in such emergency measures as these often intrude upon the regular day-to-day life of people and hence mass awareness campaign is necessary," Delhi Government said.

It is pertinent to mention here that level of harmful pollutants have recorded three times higher than their prescribed standards. Center run pollution monitoring agency SAFAR advised masses to keep door and windows closed of homes and office to avoid



exposure. Central pollution Control Board (CPCB) also recommends corporate employees to work from home. "Air pollution is one of the most serious public health concerns faced by the citizens of Delhi. Rising pollution levels, especially in the winter months, affects the health of all citizens but especially that of children and senior citizens," Delhi Government said in a statement.

While Delhi government has claimed 25 percent reduction in air pollution but due to unfavorable Meteorological conditions and stubble burning, Delhi has recorded higher levels of PM 2.5 in city

atmosphere.

"One of the major reasons behind this increase in pollution levels is the stubble burning that happens in the neighbouring states of Delhi, something over which the Government of NCT of Delhi has no control. Therefore, the only option available to the people of Delhi are emergency measures to severely cut down on any sources of pollution emanating from Delhi, as well as to find mechanisms by which people can cope with the rising pollution levels," Delhi government said in a statement.

To encourage people not to fire crackers on Diwali, AAP Government is arranging a laser show as a community Diwali celebration in Central Park. "Various measures being taken by the Government of NCT of Delhi include Odd-Even rule from 4th-15th November, distribution of free masks to citizens of Delhi via school children, as well as encouraging a cracker-free Diwali by organising a laser show," Delhi government said in an official statement.

More than 250 Delhiites participate in Walk for Freedom

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Over 250 people participated in the Delhi edition of the global Walk for Freedom to raise awareness against human trafficking. The event is happening for the first time in the national Capital.

According to a statement released by an NGO, Delhi and nine other Indian cities, along with 450 locations across 50 countries, simultaneously hosted the global, silent Walk for Freedom in public spaces on Saturday.

More than 4,600 people participated in the walk in 10 Indian cities, it said.

Over 250 citizens from corporates, colleges and NGOs participated to raise awareness about human trafficking at Delhi, Mumbai, Shillong, Kolkata, Bengaluru, Kochi, Chennai, Hyderabad, Panjim and Pune, the statement added.

Security stepped up along city border ahead of Haryana Assembly polls

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

In view of Assembly polls on Monday in neighbouring State Haryana, Delhi Police on Saturday has increased vigilance along the city borders.

According to a senior police official, police teams have started checking of vehicles along the Delhi-Haryana border in order to prevent the transportation of illicit liquor during dry days in the poll-bound State.

"Generally in elections, the borders are sealed 24 hours before the conduct of polls but this time Delhi Police have started it early and intensified the checking," said Shalini Singh, Joint Commissioner of Police, Western Range.

The polls to the 90-member assembly will be held on October 21 and the results will be declared on October 24.

On October 18 night, Police Control Room (PCR) van patrolling near Delhi Hirankundna area, adjacent to Haryana border nabbed a 20

year-old bootlegger with 444 quarters of illicit liquor in his possession.

The man identified as Saurabh, a resident of Delhi's Budh Vihar area, was nabbed at around 9:40 PM on Friday.

"PCR vans deputed on the borders areas are keeping eye on each and every vehicles passing through the border. On Friday night PCR van in the area observed that an auto-rickshaw coming from Tikri Border, seeing police took a u-turn and sped away. Finding activity suspicious police team on PCR followed the auto-rickshaw and stopped it," said Sharat Kumar Sinha, the Deputy Commissioner of Police (DCP), PCR.

"On checking of the vehicle police team recovered nine boxes of illicit liquor containing 444 quarters. The man was handed over to Mundka police station and a case under section 33/38/58 of Delhi Excise Act was also registered against the accused," the DCP added.

MANAGING DIRECTOR

Trump backs Turkey ceasefire even as it appears shaky

AP ■ WASHINGTON

President Donald Trump is pushing back at criticism that his Syria withdrawal is damaging US credibility, betraying Kurdish allies and opening the door for a possible resurgence of the Islamic State.

He touted a cease-fire agreement that seemed at risk as Turkey and Kurdish fighters differed over what it required and whether combat had halted.

“We’ve had tremendous success I think over the last couple of days,” Trump declared Friday. He added that “we’ve taken control of the oil in the Middle East” — a claim that seemed disconnected from any known development there.

He made the assertion twice Friday, but other U.S. Officials were unable to explain what he meant.

Calling his Syria approach “a little bit unconventional,” the President contended that Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan as well as the Syrian Kurdish fighters the Turks are battling agree that the U.S. brokered cease-fire was the right step and were complying with it.

“There is good will on both sides & a really good chance for success,” he wrote on Twitter.

That optimism seemed at odds with Erdogan’s own words. He told reporters in Istanbul that Turkish forces would resume their offensive in four days unless Kurdish-led

fighters withdraw “without exception” from a so-called safe zone 20 miles (30 kilometers) deep in Syria running the entire 260-mile (440-kilometer) length of the border with Turkey.

There was no sign of any pull-out by the Kurdish—led forces, who accused Turkey of violating the cease-fire with continued fighting at a key border town.

They also said the accord covers a much smaller section of the border. And some fighters have vowed not to withdraw at all, dismissing the deal as a betrayal by the U.S., whose soldiers they have fought alongside against the IS.

Eric Edelman, a former U.S. Ambassador to Turkey who served as the Pentagon’s top policy official during the George W. Bush administration, said he doubts Turkey and its Syrian proxies could control the entire border area from the Euphrates to Iraq without help from Russia or others.

“That’s a very big expanse of territory to hold, albeit a lot of it is uninhabited,” Edelman said. “It probably means they’ve cut already some deal with the Russians and the Iranians.” Even so, Trump insisted peace was at hand.

“There is a cease-fire or a pause or whatever you want to call it,” he said. “There was some sniper fire this morning,” as well as mortar fire, but that was quickly halted and the



area had returned to a “full pause,” he said.

Trump also asserted that some European nations are now willing to take responsibility for detained IS fighters who are from their countries.

“Anyway, big progress being made!!!!” he exclaimed on Twitter. Trump said nothing further about the European nations he now contends have agreed to take some of the IS fighters, a demand he has repeated often.

No European Government announced an intent to take control of IS prisoners.

Speaking in Brussels after briefing NATO ambassadors on the Syria situation, Secretary of State Mike Pompeo said, “We’ve seen comments today from a number of countries who said they may well be

prepared to take back these fighters.” He, too, identified no such countries.

At the Pentagon, Defense Secretary Mark Esper said U.S. Troops are continuing their withdrawal from northern Syria. He also said no U.S. Ground troops will participate in enforcing or monitoring the cease-fire.

“The force protection of our service members remains our top priority and, as always, U.S. Forces will defend themselves from any threat as we complete our withdrawal from the area,” Esper told reporters. One important unknown in the wake of Turkey’s military incursion, which began Oct. 9, is whether IS fighters who have been held by U.S.-allied Kurdish fighters known as the Syrian Democratic Forces will escape in large numbers.

Syrian Kurds accuse Turkey of scuppering US-brokered deal

AFP ■ BEIRUT

The commander of Kurdish forces in Syria accused Turkey of sabotaging a US-brokered truce on Saturday by blocking the withdrawal of his forces from a flashpoint border town in northeastern Syria.

In a wide-ranging interview with AFP, Mazloum Abdi, head of the Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF), said he still wished to see a role for the US in Syria to counterbalance Russian influence, while recommitting his forces to countering the Islamic State group.

“The Turks are preventing the withdrawal from the Ras al-Ain area, preventing the exit of our forces, the wounded and civilians,” Abdi said in a phone interview from Syria.

Under a US-brokered ceasefire announced Thursday evening, SDF forces are meant to withdraw from a key strategic area near the Syrian-Turkish border within five days.

But Abdi said he could not abandon his forces in the town, which is besieged by Turkish troops and their Syrian allies.

The US had been allied with SDF forces in northern Syria until President Donald Trump announced last week he would withdraw American troops ahead of a Turkish offensive.

Critics have accused him of abandoning the Kurds, with whom the US fought a bloody campaign to destroy the Islamic State in Syria.

Abdi said he was disappointed by the withdrawal, which prompted his forces to make a deal with Syrian President Bashar al-Assad to help protect Kurdish-controlled territory, but still wanted the US to have an influence in Syria.

Turkey accuses Syrian Kurd forces of violating ceasefire

AFP ■ ISTANBUL

Turkey on Saturday accused Kurdish forces of violating an agreement to suspend its Syria offensive if they withdraw from a “safe zone” along the border.

“The Turkish armed forces fully abide by the agreement” reached on Thursday with the United States, the defence ministry said in a statement. “Despite this, terrorists... Carried out a total of 14 attacks in the last 36 hours.” The ministry said 12 of the attacks came from the border town of Ras al-Ain in northeastern Syria, one from Tal Abyad and another from Tal Tamr region, adding that various light and heavy weaponry including rockets were used.

Turkey had agreed to suspend its Syria offensive for five days but President Recep Tayyip Erdogan warned on Friday he would resume a full-scale operation against Kurdish forces if they do not withdraw from a border “safe zone.” “If the promises are kept until Tuesday evening, the safe zone issue will be resolved. If it fails, the operation... Will start the minute 120 hours are over,” Erdogan said.

But he added the agreement was holding and that had been no issues so far. The defence ministry said “for the agreement to hold soundly and to keep the calm with exception of self-defence”, Turkey was coordinating with the United States.

Hong Kong anti-Gov protesters vow to hold ‘unauthorised’ rally

AP ■ HONG KONG

Hong Kong anti-Government protesters are set for another weekend of civil disobedience as they prepare to hold an unauthorised protest march to press their demands.

Supporters held a prayer rally on Saturday night to call for international help for their cause. The protest march is planned for Sunday, with organisers vowing to hold the event even though it failed to win approval from police, who cited risks to public order.

As the semi-autonomous Chinese territory’s political crisis extends into a fifth month, protesters are trying to keep the pressure on the Government to respond to their demands,

including full democracy and an independent inquiry into alleged police brutality.

They’re also using Sunday’s rally to raise a more recent demand for the government to scrap a ban installed this month on face masks at public gatherings. Organisers said demonstrators would defy the police because Hong Kong’s constitution guarantees the right to protest. “We don’t think that because police haven’t given their approval we shouldn’t demonstrate,” Figo Chan, vice-convenor of the Civil Human Rights Front, told reporters.

“Even though they have rejected our appeal, there will surely be many residents taking to the streets.”

Meanwhile, a bipartisan group of US lawmakers including Republican Sen. Ted Cruz and Democratic Rep. Alexandra Ocasio Cortez wrote to tech company Apple and video game studio Activision Blizzard to condemn what they called protest-related censorship on behalf of China.

Hong Kong says Murder suspect wants to surrender to Taiwan

AP ■ HONG KONG

Hong Kong’s leader says the murder suspect whose case inadvertently helped ignite the city’s protest movement wants to surrender to authorities in Taiwan.

Carrie Lam told reporters Saturday that she had received a letter from Chan Tong-kai requesting help to give himself up.

Chan is wanted by Taiwan authorities for allegedly killing his girlfriend during a trip to the self-ruled island. He was not sent back to face charges because of the lack of an extradition agreement.

He was however jailed in Hong Kong on money laundering charges and is due to be released this week.

In an attempt to close the loophole, Lam proposed extradition amendments.

But that sparked massive protests over fears it would put residents at risk of being sent into mainland China’s Communist Party-controlled judicial system.

UK in historic Super Saturday Parl session to vote on new Brexit deal



PTI ■ LONDON

In a historic weekend Parliament session, the first in 37 years, British MPs on Saturday began debating British Prime Minister Boris Johnson’s Brexit deal struck with the European Union (EU).

The debate is set to be followed by what has been characterised as a knife-edge vote in the House of Commons on the so-called divorce arrangements between the UK and the 27 remaining members of the economic bloc.

Johnson opened the session with a plea for all sides of the House to come together behind the “great deal.”

“Let us come together as democrats to end this debilitating feud. Let us come together as democrats behind this deal, the one proposition that fulfils the verdict of the majority but which also allows us to bring together the two halves of our hearts, to bring together the two halves of our nation,” said Johnson in his statement to the Commons.

In reference to the 52 per cent versus 48 per cent vote in favour of Brexit in the June 2016 referendum, he said: “Let’s speak now both for the 52 and the 48. Let us go for a deal that can heal this country, let’s go for a deal that can heal this country and allow us all to express our legitimate desires for the deepest possible friendship and partnership with our neighbours.”

UK Brexit vote amendment would allow fresh delay

AFP ■ LONDON

The British Parliament may end up forcing Prime Minister Boris Johnson to request another Brexit delay on Saturday and give only provisional support to his divorce deal with the EU.

An amendment penned by former Government Minister Oliver Letwin would have the effect of forcing Johnson to write a letter to Brussels requesting an extension of the Brexit deadline until January 31 of next year.

Johnson is currently required to ask for an extension if parliament votes down the revised withdrawal agreement he struck with EU leaders in Brussels this week. But Letwin’s amendment, which was selected by House of Commons Speaker John Bercow for a vote, would decline to approve Johnson’s deal in full “unless and until” every other part of the formal Withdrawal Agreement Bill is passed.

Anti-Brexit activists march to Parliament as MPs debate deal

AFP ■ LONDON

Tens of thousands of pro-EU protesters from across Britain wielding banners, placards and flags converged on parliament on Saturday, as MPs debated the Government’s Brexit deal.

Beneath largely clear blue skies, demonstrators rallied near Hyde Park in central London before marching to Westminster to call for a second referendum on Britain’s planned EU departure.

Walking behind a pink banner proclaiming “together for the final say”, they chanted: “What do we want? People’s vote! When do we want it? Now.” “The first referendum was jumping on a train without a destination,” said Douglas Hill, 35, from Oxford, south central England, with his Estonian wife and their baby daughter.

“Now that we have a destination, we need to have a second referendum.” Another attendee, Theodor Howe, a 20-year-old student in Dundee, eastern Scotland, conceded another poll could be divisive but insisted it was still necessary.

“People should have a say in what is going to happen,” he told AFP, expressing hope that MPs reject Johnson’s deal and that he is forced to ask Brussels for another delay.

Politicians including John McDonnell, from the main opposition Labour party, and London Mayor Sadiq Khan, were due to address the crowds.

Organisers from the People’s Vote pressure group laid on 172 buses to bring people to the British capital, with the cost covered by supporters from sport, business and entertainment, it said.

Former prime ministers John Major, a Conservative, and Tony Blair, of Labour, feature in a film set to be broadcast to the crowds once they arrive in Parliament Square.

“Whatever is the outcome, no deal or bad deal, it should not pass without the final say resting with the people,” they said in a statement on Friday.

PUBLIC NOTICE

This is for general information of public that: **Mr. Rajinder Kumar Oberai**, S/o Late Shri Sohan Lal Oberai, Present Address:- WZ-22 Ram Garh Colony, Moh Nagar, Delhi-110015 & Permanent Address:- A-80, Vihar Colony, Civil Lines, Moradabad, Uttar Pradesh-244001 who was earlier working with **M/s. Ascent Group of Companies** is absconding from the organization Since Sep 2019 and now he is not associated with the Group, in any manner, whatsoever. Further he has no right and authority to deal with anybody or any organization, on behalf of the Group. Any individual, person, firm, company or its agents, nominees, successors dealing with **Mr. Rajinder Kumar Oberai** well do so at his one's its own risk and cost without fastening any liability whatsoever upon **M/s. Ascent Group of Companies**.
For **M/s. Ascent Group of Companies** Authorized Signatory

DEBT RECOVERY TRIBUNAL
IN DELHI

4TH FLOOR, JEEVAN TARA BUILDING, PARLIAMENT STREET, NEW DELHI- 110001
PROCLAMATION OF SALE NOTICE

The under mentioned Property will be sold through auction on "AS IS WHERE IS BASIS" and "AS IS WHAT IS BASIS" for recovery of dues, in the matter of **ICICI BANK LTD v/s ANKUSH PUNDER O.A.No. 552/2018 & I.A. No: 1059/19**

1. Description of Property:
Make: TOYOTA INNOVA GX 7 SEATER
Reg No: UP16BN4019
Manuf Year: 2017
Reserve Price: Rs. 10, 80,000
EMD- Rs. 1,08,000

2. Date and Time of Auction: Nov 08, 2019

3. Auction Venue: Ridhi Godara Vard, Katatia Chowk Sector 17, Sukhrai Gaon Behind Air Force Station, Gurgaon

4. Manager: Shankar Kapoor Mob No: 9650193259

Terms of Sale

The particulars of the said asset specified herein above have been stated to the best of the information and knowledge of the undersigned, who shall however not be responsible for any error, misstatement or omission in the said particulars. The interested participant/s are therefore requested, in their own interest, to satisfy himself / themselves/ itself with regard to the said asset and other relevant details pertaining to it before submitting the bids.

Interested bidders shall be required to deposit an Earnest Amount mentioned above against the respective vehicle by way of pay order/Demand Draft payable at Delhi and in favour of ICICI Bank Ltd., Delhi. Successful highest bidder shall have to deposit balance amount within 5 days from the approval shared with them.

In Case of failure to deposit the amount as mentioned above, the amount of Earnest Money deposited shall be forfeited.

Interested participant/s are requested to participate Nov 08, 2019 for physical auction or call Bank Manager Shankar Kapoor.

Shifting explanations from White House alarm Republicans

AP ■ WASHINGTON

The shifting White House explanation for President Donald Trump’s decision to withhold military aid from Ukraine drew alarm on Friday from Republicans as the impeachment inquiry brought a new test of their alliance.

Trump, in remarks at the White House, stood by his acting chief of staff, Mick Mulvaney, whose earlier comments undermined the administration’s defense in the impeachment probe.

Speaking Thursday at a news conference, Mulvaney essentially acknowledged a quid pro quo with Ukraine that Trump has long denied, saying U.S. Aid was withheld from Kyiv to push for an investigation of the Democratic National Committee and the 2016 election. He later clarified his remarks.

Trump appeared satisfied with Mulvaney’s clarification and the president dismissed the entire House inquiry as “a terrible witch hunt. This is so bad for our country.”

But former Ohio Gov. John Kasich, who ran against Trump in the 2016 Republican primary, said he now supports impeaching the president. Mulvaney’s admission, he said, was the “final straw.” “The last 24 hours has really forced me to review all of this,” Kasich said on CNN.

In Congress, at least one Republican, Rep. Francis Rooney of Florida, spoke out publicly, telling reporters that he and others were concerned by Mulvaney’s remarks.

Rooney said he’s open to considering all sides in the impeachment inquiry. He also said Mulvaney’s comments cannot simply be undone by a follow-up statement.

“It’s not an Etch-A-Sketch,” said Rooney, a former ambassador to the Holy See under President George W. Bush.

“The only thing I can assume is, he meant what he had to say — that there was a quid pro quo on this stuff,” he said.

The tumult over Mulvaney’s remarks capped a momentous week in the impeachment investigation as the admission, from highest levels of the administration, undercut the White House defense and pushed more evidence into the inquiry.

GOP leaders tried to contain the fallout. But four weeks into the inquiry, the events around Trump’s interaction with the Ukraine president, which are at the heart of impeachment, have upended Washington.

A beloved House chairman, Rep. Elijah Cummings, D-Md., a leading figure in the investigation, died amid ongoing health challenges.

Sri Lanka removed from FATF’s Grey List

PTI ■ COLOMBO

Sri Lanka has been removed from the “Grey List” of the international terror financing watchdog FATF, according to a media report.

The island nati on will no longer be subject to the Financial Action Task Force’s monitoring under its on-going global anti-money laundering and countering the financing of terrorism (AML/CFT) compliance process, the Colombo Gazette reported on Saturday.

The FATF, whose five-day plenary concluded in Paris on Friday, said Sri Lanka made significant progress in addressing the strategic AML/CFT deficiencies identified earlier, the daily said.

In October 2016, the FATF announced that Sri Lanka will be subjected to a review of the International Cooperation Review Group (ICRG) of the terror financing watchdog to assess the progress of AML/CFT effectiveness in the country.

The Paris based organisation indicated Sri Lanka had

not made sufficient progress in four parameters — international cooperation, supervision, legal persons and arrangements and targeted financial sanctions on proliferations (North Korea and Iran), the daily said.

At its meeting at Buenos Aires, Argentina in October 2017, the FATF listed Sri Lanka as a jurisdiction with strategic AML/CFT deficiencies which is more commonly identified as “Grey List” and provided a time-bound action plan, the report said.



A Catalan pro-independence protestor throws a stone during clashes with police in Barcelona, Spain on Friday

Catalan leaders demand talks with Madrid after violent clashes

AFP ■ BARCELONA

Separatist Catalan leaders on Saturday called on the Spanish Government to enter into talks as Barcelona braced for fresh violence after days of clashes between police and protesters.

Nearly 200 people were hurt in another night of clashes with radical separatists hurling rocks and fireworks at police who responded with tear gas and rubber bullets.

A hardcore movement of young separatists, Arran, called for a new demonstration “against repression” for 1600 GMT in central Barcelona.

“We exhort the head of the government to fix today a day and hour to sit with us for unconditional talks,” regional president Quim Torra said in a speech.

His demand for “unconditional” negotiations, addressed to Spanish Prime Minister Pedro Sanchez, appeared to be aimed at ensuring that a referendum on independence, currently a non-starter for Madrid, is up for discussion.

Barcelona has been rocked all week by protests against a Spanish court’s jailing of nine separatist leaders on seditious charges over a failed independence bid.

Emergency services said Saturday that 152 people were injured in overnight clashes in Barcelona, and dozens more hurt elsewhere in Catalonia, taking the total to 182.

Authorities had already reported 500 injured since protests started on Monday even before the latest clashes erupted.

The interior Ministry said 83 people were detained in the overnight violence, in addition to 128 arrests police had reported previously.

“This can’t go on, Barcelona does not deserve this,” said Ada Colau, the city’s leftist mayor on Saturday, condemning “all kinds of violence.”

Air in the Catalan capital was heavy with a burning stench as municipal workers cleared the streets of broken glass, rocks and rubber bullets, and repaired pavements where bricks had been ripped out.

“All this is very sad, and is not helping our cause,” said Assumpcio Segui, a 75-year old pro-independence pensioner.

Torra urged demonstrators to remain calm, saying “the defense of rights and freedoms must always be expressed peacefully.”

Around half a million people had rallied in Barcelona on Friday in the biggest gathering since Monday’s court ruling as separatists also called a general strike in the major tourist destination.

While most marchers appeared peaceful, hordes of young protesters went on the rampage near the police headquarters, igniting a huge blaze that sent black smoke into the air as police fired teargas to disperse them, an AFP correspondent said.

Rohit, Rahane, Ranchi & Rain

Sharma (117*) scores third hundred in his fourth innings as Test opener & adds unbeaten 185-run for 4th wicket with Ajinkya (83*) to put India front after top-order failure

PTI ■ RANCHI

Rohit Sharma continued his sensational run as a Test opener with his third hundred of the series, allowing India to regain control of the proceedings after a top-order collapse in the third and final game against South Africa at Jharkhand State Cricket Association (JSCA) stadium on Saturday.

With India reduced to 39 for three, Rohit (117 batting off 164 balls) and Ajinkya Rahane (83 batting off 135) shared an unbeaten 185-run stand to stage the home team's remarkable recovery.

India were 224 for three before bad light, followed by rain, forced an early end to play on day one with only six overs possible in the final session.

With his stellar effort, Rohit, who hammered 14 boundaries and four sixes, became the first Indian opener since Sunil Gavaskar to score more than two centuries in a Test series. Gavaskar had achieved the feat way back in 1970.

Rohit's Test century number six came with a massive six off spinner Dane Piedt. It was a typical knock from India's limited overs vice-captain as he exercised caution when Kagiso Rabada was steaming in the morning before going for his strokes.

If that was not enough, Rahane matched him at the other end and brought up his 21st half-century off just 70 balls.

Piedt, who was included in place of Senuran Muthusamy, cut a sorry figure against Rohit's fury, giving away 43 runs in his six overs.

Debutant left-arm spinner George Linde, who replaced an injured Keshav Maharaj, ended the day with tidy figures of 11-1-40-0. Such was the Indian duo's dominance after lunch that Rabada, who had a fiery opening spell of 7-4-15-2, looked listless in the second spell that read 4-0-30-0.

Rahane matched Sharma shot for shot and at one point even had

Rain forecast today

PTI ■ RANCHI

Rain may affect the second day's proceedings as well in the final India-South Africa Test, the local weatherman predicted on Saturday.

"There is a possibility of thundershowers and lightning at isolated places in Ranchi. Chances are less by Monday onwards," an official of the Indian Meteorological Department, Ranchi, said.

a better strike rate than his explosive Mumbai partner as he notched up his fastest half-century in India.

Sharma, however, had a testing opening session as he survived on seven after reviewing an LBW successfully.

He also survived a run out chance when he was out of crease but Zubayr Hamza's throw from point missed the stumps.

Uneven bounce with a few staying really low greeted the Indian openers in the morning as Rabada and Lungi Ngidi made full use of the conditions to give the visitors their best start of the series.

Rabada got rid of opener Mayank Agarwal (10) and Cheteshwar Pujara (0) inside the first-hour of play.

The first breakthrough came in Rabada's third over when the pacer swung it away with Agarwal edging it to Dean Elgar at third slip.

Rabada went on to dismiss Pujara for a duck in his fifth over following a successful review by the South Africans after the on-field umpire Richard Illingworth turned down an lbw appeal.

But it was Nortje who earned the biggest wicket as he sent back Pune Test's double centurion Kohli after the skipper failed to read one that came back in sharply.

Kohli took the review but only to be turned down with an umpire's call and the skipper went back to the pavillion frustrated.



Ajinkya Rahane, right, pats on the helmet of teammate Rohit Sharma to congratulate him on scoring century

Mental adjustments key to Hitman's success

RANCHI: India's batting coach Vikram Rathour on Saturday attributed Rohit Sharma's success as Test opener, in the ongoing series, to mental adjustments.

"He is such an experienced player. I don't think you need to change anything with his technique. The only adjustment I think he had to make was his game plans," Rathour told reporters after the first day's proceedings.

"I always believed he is too good a player not to be playing in any format. It was a good call to make him to open. With the amount of runs he has scored, he has settled the issue for the time being," Rathour added.

"Somebody of his experience and the kind of cricket he plays, if he starts coming good top of the order, it changes everything for the Indian team, even when you're touring."

Rohit looked tentative early on and was given LBW on seven by umpire Richard Illingworth, but survived following a successful review, which showed a faint inside-edge.

"In Tests, you need to play through those tough spells that you will get. I think he's doing that well in this series. Once he's set, he's a phenomenal player, we all know that he can really punish you."

Rohit started to break

free towards the end of first session when he pulled Anrich Nortje for the first of his four sixes, while Ajinkya Rahane too came on his own in a difficult second session for the visitors.

"Ajinkya showed great intent today. Whenever he bats with this intent, he looks a really good player. As I said earlier also, they bowled in good areas initially and there was help in the wicket, so Rohit had some problem early on.

"Of course, as a batsman, you need to survive that time, which Rohit did really well. Anybody will look uncomfortable because those were tough conditions." **PTI**

‘Not now’ Proxy captain

FIANS ■ KOLKATA

A video of unbeaten Acenturion Rohit Sharma shouting 'not now' as the skies turned grey just before he smashed a six to reach his third hundred of the series took social media by storm.

Rohit reached the three-figure mark with a six as he was batting on 95 in the 45th over. The limited overs vice-captain brought up his third century of the series, his sixth overall, off Dane Piedt's bowling. Just before that, Rohit shouted 'not now' when it started to drizzle and the groundsmen set

themselves up to bring the covers.

He took the single off the second ball of the over to reach 95 and at the same time, the rain started coming down.

Batting as an opener for the first time in this series, Rohit added yet another feather to his cap by becoming the batsman to hit the most number of sixes in a Test series.

During the ongoing three-Test series, he has so far hit 17 sixes and has surpassed Shimron Hetmyer's tally of 15 which came during the two-match series between West Indies and Bangladesh in 2018/19.

RANCHI: In a bid to end his losing streak at the toss, South Africa skipper Faf du Plessis on Saturday brought Temba Bavuma as proxy captain for the third and final Test.

However, luck did not favour South Africa as the coin landed in favour of India skipper Virat Kohli who chose to bat for the third time in the three-match series.

After winning the toss, even Kohli couldn't help but laugh at Faf's helplessness.

"It shows that it isn't meant to be (win the toss with a proxy captain)," du Plessis said after losing his 10th consecutive toss in Asia.

Graeme Smith, however, didn't seem impressed with du Plessis' idea of coming out with a proxy captain and said it reflected the mindset of the visitors who have been struggling to get going in the ongoing series. **PTI**



PTI ■ RANCHI

South African pacer Anrich Nortje on Saturday rued letting India off the hook after reducing them to 39 for three on the opening day.

Hoping to avoid a 3-0 whitewash, South African bowlers gave a good account of themselves by taking three wickets quickly, but Rohit Sharma and Ajinkya Rahane shared an unbeaten 185-run partnership to take India to

224/3 in 58 overs when bad weather forced an early stumps.

"We were definitely better as in the previous Test. We just tried to control the game little bit better. Unfortunately, we couldn't get another wicket... It would have been nice to have them four-five down," Nortje said after the first day's play.

"We had one or two overs where we went on top, later on we just pulled it back again. So, maybe, here and there we lost but, in general, a good effort by

everyone.

"Overall, it was a good effort by the bowlers. There was little bit in it this morning, tried to utilise as much but one or two overs didn't go our way," Kagiso Rabada was the pick of the attack with 2/54 in 14 overs, while Nortje (1/50 from 16 overs) picked up the wicket of India skipper Virat Kohli.

"I was hoping for a wicket somewhere and to get him was unbelievable, but just try

and come with a plan. I try and put as much pressure as possible and finally got the wicket."

He said there's still hope in the side as they look to bounce back.

"I think there were quite a lot of opportunities right through the series. Lots of nicks going through the gaps or falling short. Something happened today here there, that's normal to cricket. We have to take it forward going from here. Just keep on asking those questions and control the controllables, I guess."

Kohli could be rested from B'desh T20s

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

India skipper Virat Kohli could be rested from the three-match T20 series against Bangladesh, beginning here on November 3.

Kohli has been playing almost non-stop, featuring in 48 of India's 56 games

since October last year. The squad for the Bangladesh series will be picked in Mumbai on October 24.

"There is a possibility that Virat could be rested keeping the workload management programme in mind. But the selectors will only speak to Virat once the Test match (against

South Africa) ends," a source close to the selection committee said.

"It will also depend on how the skipper himself feels. He knows his body the best and if need be he can himself ask the selectors for rest," the source added.

After the first T20 in Delhi, Rajkot and Nagpur will host the second and third game on November 7 and 10 respectively.

Selection consistency led to better understanding: Rani

PTI ■ BHUBANESWAR

Indian women's hockey team captain Rani said on Saturday that consistency in selection has helped her team members in understanding each other better ahead of the Olympic Qualifiers.

She said that home support will be a huge boost for them when they compete in the upcoming FIH Olympic Qualifiers.

An 18-member women's team was announced here on Friday by chief coach Sjoerd Marijne, which saw the Dutchman retain the players who represented India in their preparatory tour of England earlier this month.

"We have a group of players who have played together for a good period of time, and that obviously helps in building a good understanding between all the team members."

"We know each other in and out, and all of us understand each other both on and off the field, so I believe it has also helped us a lot. We are now preparing to be at our best when we take on USA in the Qualifiers here," said Rani.

Looking back at her experience of representing the national team in front of home support, Rani said the support in the

city will be a huge boost for her side.

"Some members from this team have played in India before but that was way back in the FIH World League Round 2 in 2013, but the crowd that comes out to watch hockey in Bhubaneswar is nothing like that."

"We know we will be cheered on from the first minute of the match, and we are all looking forward to playing at home. It is a good moment in your life when you play such a huge match in front of your home crowd, and the team is looking forward to producing a great performance and enjoying it on the field," she said.

Rani said there is pressure, but her team members have huge belief in themselves, and are focusing on doing the basics right in both the matches.

"We all know how important these matches are, but we cannot let them get to us. We have played in huge matches before and we now have the experience of coping up with the pressure. "We will play our own game, and focus on the basics. If we can continue with the way we have been playing, and play according to our plans, we will be able to produce good results."



Indian athletes eye course record bonus

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Top Indian elite athletes, including women's course record holder L Suriya, on Saturday said they would look to break the course record in the Airtel Delhi Half Marathon here today.

Suresh Kumar Patel, Srinu Bugatha, Pradeep Chaudhary in the men's category and Suriya, Parul Chaudhary and Priti Lamba in the women's category are the top domestic athletes vying for honours in the prestigious IAAF Gold Label race. There will be 23 women and 22 men Indian elite athletes taking part in the race.

Suriya, who created the course record in 2017 with a time of 1 hour 10 minutes 31 seconds, said she enjoys running in ADHM.

break the course record again," said Suriya.

The runners of the Airtel Delhi Half Marathon will be awarded ₹1 lakh as a bonus prize if they break the course record this year.

Parul Chaudhary, who is keen to make an impression this year, was delighted about the bonus cash prize on offer. "It's great that the runners will be rewarded with a bonus cash prize for breaking the course record. We are very happy and I will definitely give it my all to achieve a bonus prize this year," said Parul.

Speaking about the conditions, Pradeep Chaudhary said that the weather has changed for the better since Friday and hopefully the conditions will suit the runners today.

"The weather suddenly changed on Friday. It was very windy making the conditions very cool and suitable for runners. I am looking forward to a great run and good weather on a beautiful track will be an added bonus," said Chaudhary.

AFFP ■ ANTWERP

Former world number one Andy Murray reached his first semi-final since the 2017 French Open with a battling three-set win over Romania's Marius Copil in Antwerp on Friday.

The 32-year-old British star, steadily rebuilding his career after major hip surgery earlier this year, defeated qualifier Copil 6-3, 6-7 (7/9), 6-4.

"I feel OK, it's more how you pull up the following day," said Murray, who is two wins away from a first title since Dubai in March 2017.

"The good thing about the indoor matches is that the points are fairly short so it doesn't take as much out of you as on some of the slower courts outside."

Murray, now ranked a lowly



Andy Murray plays a return shot during Antwerp Open quarterfinal match

AFFP

243 in the world, had the chance to wrap up the quarter-final when he had a match point in the second set tiebreak.

He eventually sealed victory after more than two and a half

hours on court with an ace for his third win in three meetings against the 92nd-ranked Copil.

Murray goes on to face France's world number 70 Ugo Humbert who put out

Argentine fifth seed Guido Pella 5-7, 6-4, 6-4.

Italian teenager Jannik Sinner became the youngest ATP semi-finalist in five years when he defeated Frances Tiafoe of the United States 6-4, 3-6, 6-3.

Sinner, 18, is the youngest to make the last four on tour since 17-year-old Borna Coric at Basel in 2014.

However, he faces a daunting semi-final against three-time major winner Stan Wawrinka after the former world number three got past fellow 34-year-old Gilles Simon of France 6-3, 6-7 (6/8), 6-2 in his quarter-final.

Sinner, who lost to Wawrinka at the US Open this year, will become the youngest ATP finalist since Kei Nishikori at Delray Beach in 2008 if he downs the experienced Swiss.

Not scared to fight Zareen in trials: Mary

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

"I am not scared to face Nikhat Zareen," Lavowed celebrated boxer MC Mary Kom, saying it would just be a "formality" to beat her in the trials for the Olympic qualifiers.

Mary Kom (51kg) found herself embroiled in a controversy with Zareen demanding a trial bout against her before the Indian squad for next year's Olympic qualifiers is decided.

This was after the Boxing Federation of India (BFI) stated that it intends to pick six-time world champion Mary Kom (51kg) for the event in China on the back of her recent Bronze medal winning performance at the World Championships in Russia.

"The decision has been taken by BFI. I can't change the rule. I can just perform. Whatever they decide, I will go with that.

I'm not scared to face her, I am fine with the trials," said Mary Kom on the sidelines of a felicitation program.

"I have defeated her many times since SAF Games but she keeps challenging me. I mean, what is the point? It is just a formality. BFI also knows who can win a medal at Olympics."

Mary Kom said "people are jealous of me".

"It has happened with me in the past also. Perform on the ring, that is the real thing. BFI sends us for exposure trips so comeback with a Gold, prove yourself," she said.

"I am not against her. She might be good in

future, let her have the experience and focus on preparation for the highest level. I have been fighting for last 20 years. To challenge is easy but to perform is difficult."

In women's competition, BFI had said in August that only the Gold and Silver winners at the World Championships in Russia would be selected directly for the Olympic qualifiers in February.

However, BFI now has decided to call a selection committee meeting next week to discuss Zareen's plea.

Mary Kom said there should be gender quality in the selection criteria.

"I don't care about all this. Let BFI take the decision. There should be gender equality, can't have separate rules for men and women."





The Historian's Eye

A photographic record of William Dalrymple's travels across the country over the last two years

2



4

Watch your thought pattern

Our perception has a role to play in how intelligently, or otherwise, we deal with contrarian forces

My life is good because I am not passive about it. I invest in what is real. Like real people, to do real things, for the real me
— Gwyneth Paltrow



FROM THE INSIDE

Rich in fibre, protein, B vitamins and other nutrients, Millets are making a big comeback in urban diets as an extremely versatile and sustainable food choice, writes KAVITA DEVGAN, as she makes a case for these forgotten superfoods

MIGHTY MILLETS

What's old is new again. And this is great news. Suddenly, whole grains with ancient pedigrees are being embraced by home cooks and restaurants and are widely available in the supermarkets. And, leading the pack are millets.

As a nutritionist, I have always believed that millets duly deserve space on your plates. Rich in fibre, protein, B vitamins and other nutrients, these ancient grains are extremely versatile and can be swapped for pasta or rice in dishes, added to salads and power bowls, and cooked like oatmeal for a warm breakfast bowl topped with fruit and nuts. Plus, for the environmentally conscious people, the feel good factor is that millets require little water, grow well in arid and semi-arid regions of the world and thus, consuming them amounts to you leaving a lower carbon print in the world. This could be your contribution to ensuring that we leave behind some food for the future generations as well.

THE HEALTH BONUS

For the starters, the dense, earthy flavour takes some getting used to, especially since our palate is more used to the bland softness of wheat and white rice. But, there's a lot going for them. Millets are gluten-free grains and that makes them a boon for those who are gluten resistant and even for those who wish to reduce the gluten load in their diet. Additionally, it is now a well-proven fact that consuming millets on a regular basis can help you lose weight, owing to the rich content of fibre and bioactive compounds in them.

MY TOP FIVE PICKS

Sorghum (*jowar*)

Our grandmothers preferred *jowar rotis* over regular wheat *rotis*. There was a reason for that. While the calcium content found in *jowar* is very close to the content in wheat and rice, it packs in a neat punch of iron, protein, and fiber. *Jowar* is also rich in policosanols, which help in reducing bad cholesterol in the body.

Pearl millet (*bajra*)

There's lots going for this millet. *Bajra* is an excellent detoxing agent and contains catechins like quercetin that help the kidney and liver function properly by excreting the toxins from the body.

It's particularly great for monsoon season when digestion gets a little sluggish. It's high fibre, gluten free properties help kick the digestive process into action. In fact, this millet is particularly loaded with insoluble fibre that provides bulk to the stool and keeps constipation, a common problem during this season, at bay.

It is also a friend of the heart. *Bajra* works on three fronts: It is rich in magnesium (that helps keep the heart healthy); has lots of potassium (which makes it a good vasodilator and helps reduce the overall blood pressure); and fibre rich (helps reduce the LDL or bad cholesterol). Magnesium present in *bajra* also helps

control the glucose receptors in the body and keeps diabetes away.

Finger millet (*Ragi*)

This underrated gluten-free grain has a lot going for it. It is a rich source of calcium and iron and its main protein fraction eleusin, has a high biological value, meaning it is easily absorbed and used in the body.

It helps the digestion immensely and is packed with cellulose, a type of dietary fibre that helps keep our digestion humming along, constipation away and cholesterol levels in check.

Plus, like barley, *ragi* is an ideal food for diabetics, and overweight people as its digestion is slow and glucose is released from the intestines very slowly into the blood.

Foxtail millet (*kangini* or *thinnai*)

It is loaded with smart carbohydrates, the kind which don't increase the blood sugar levels immediately, but slowly release glucose into the bloodstream. Additionally, it is rich in dietary fibre, and minerals like iron and copper. These help reduce the levels of bad cholesterol and keep the immune system strong as well

Barnyard millets (*jhagora*)

It tastes similar to broken rice when cooked and is called *samak ke chawal*. This nutrient dense millet has high fibre content, which can effectively help in losing weight.

It is a rich source of calcium and phosphorous, which helps in bone building, and has more fibre than most other grains and delivers both soluble and insoluble fibre that helps in preventing constipation, excess gas, bloating and cramping. It also has the highest amount of iron compared to other grains.

BOOST THEIR SUPERPOWER: SPROUT THEM

To make the most of the millet goodness, sprout them and consume. Sprouts have been the buzzword for healthy eating for a long time now. But somehow sprouting is limited to lentils — *moong dal*, *chana*, *lobia*,... And even though other grain sprouts have been around for a while, they really have not become mainstream yet. It's now time to change that.

Sprouting increases the nutritional value by leaps and bounds as the process boosts vitamins, minerals and antioxidants of the food. There is an increase the concentration of a key nutrients like B vitamins, vitamin C, and folate. Plus, these nutrients become more bio-accessible (more easily assimilated and absorbed by the body) too. This is extremely helpful in the case of iron in particular, a mineral that is difficult to absorb from vegetarian sources.

A study conducted at the Central Food Technological Research Institute in Mysore, India, measured the changes caused by sprouting finger millet (*ragi*), wheat and barley. They found that sprouting millets increased the bioaccessibility of iron (> 300%) and manganese (17%), and calcium ("marginally"). The food also becomes of lower GI



BE CAREFUL THOUGH

There is no doubt about millets are one of the superfoods in our diet and nutrition chain but those who are suffering from thyroid need to go easy on them. "While millet is gluten free, it contains goitrogens, compounds in the food that suppress or reduce the thyroid activity. Goitrogens are usually reduced by the cooking process. Whereas, in millets, the cooking actually increases the goitrogenic effect. Thus, if one switched over completely to millets, the thyroid suppressing effects can be profound. If gluten is an issue then it is recommended, one shifts to another grain that is free of gluten and is non goitrogenic such as amaranth, buckwheat or cassava," points out Noida based nutritionist Himanshu Kapoor, founder of C.Green Organic Future Foods.

Plus, millets also contain certain enzyme inhibitors and phytic acid, which binds important minerals, not allowing the body to absorb the nutrients and minerals. So the rule to follow is to make them a part of your diet, but no to over do them.

RECIPES

● Ragi Kuzhu (Porridge)

Boil water. Slowly add 30 gm *ragi* powder to the boiling water and stir constantly to avoid forming lumps. Keep it boiling until it forms a medium thick fluid. Add salt (to taste), stir and put off the flame. Add lemon juice (1 lemon) and salt to 250 ml butter milk. Add butter milk to the thick *ragi* fluid and have it with lime pickle. You can even cook *ragi* at night and leave overnight in the fridge; in the morning add buttermilk to it and have.

● Bajra Pongal

Slightly dry roast the broken *bajra* till a bit hot. Pressure cook the green gram dal, roasted broken *bajra* (*bajra:dal* should be 70:30 ratio), and salt with 3 cups of water till soft. Heat some *ghee* and add cashews. When slightly golden brown, add cumin seeds, pepper, curry leaves and ginger paste and add it to the *pongali*. Have with *Chach* (buttermilk).

From *Ultimate Grandmother Hacks* by Kavita Devgan (Rupa Publications)

(Glycemic Index) and is better digestible due to the enzyme activity that peaks during sprouting, and the starchy carbs in the seed on sprouting get converted into energy. So the resulting sprouted food has a higher ratio of protein and fibre to carbs. Proteins also become more digestible when the food is sprouted. And the biggest benefits is that sprouting helps decrease the presence of anti-nutrients (like physics acid, enzyme inhibitors, lectins, saponins etc), the naturally occurring compounds that are found in plant seeds that interfere with our ability to digest vitamins and minerals within the plants.

In fact, one big benefit of sprouting grains is that studies have found that there are widespread changes in gluten concentrations of the grains when they are sprouted. Looking at how much grains we consume today (a big chunk of our diet is made of these), it is a good idea to naturally reduce gluten consumption this way.

So which grains can be sprouted? You can sprout any kind of whole grains — the important thing is that the grain should be a whole grain, with the germ and bran intact. Refined grain cannot be sprouted.

Sprouted grains can be eaten raw, lightly cooked, ground into flour or made into a bread. So throw in a handful of sprouted grains like sprouted quinoa in your salad, add some sprouted rice to your stir fry or soup, or simmer sprouted buckwheat, quinoa, or millet in your milk to make a porridge, they hold a lot of good for your system.

CHEFS' FAVOURITE

Chef Anahita N. Dhondy, Chef Partner, SodaBottleOpenerwala CyberHub says she loves using millets in her recipes because she finds them versatile, easy to cook and add value to all dishes. "They are yummy as a salad where you can add crunch. In a soup, or even make a main course," she says. In the restaurant, she serves okra millet salad, millet soup, *ragi* bread and at home she keeps boiled millets (particularly *ragi* (finger millet) and barnyard millet (*samak ke chawal*)) in her fridge. Easy to toss and use. According to her they might be becoming popular as a culinary trend in restaurants today all over again, but they've been cooked in Indian homes forever. She herself discovered them at her grandmom's home ages ago.

THE MARKET FORCES

Millets in India have always enjoyed prime importance, as we are one of their largest producers in the world, but somehow the market forces recognised its potential only recently. Over the last few years, new age entrepreneurs decided to revive the culture, and are getting a good response too from the consumers. When

Delhi based Meghana Narayan and Shauravi Malik decided to become entrepreneurs, they conducted extensive market research, product research and development, put in a lot of thinking and then decided to follow their heart and focus on millets. This is how they launched Slurrp Farms in 2015. Realising that the answers to healthy cooking lay in our own grandmother's kitchens, they dug out old recipes to make their brand cookies using millets. Today, besides cookies, they offer cereals (for toddlers), dosa and pancake mixes, and munch — all made from millets.

Bengaluru based snacks brand Soulfull is another success story. Inspired by the the rising popularity of quinoa, during his stay in the US, Prashant Parameswaran, CEO and MD of the brand, struck upon the idea to come back to India and promote the humble Indian grains — Millets. He decided to make this enriching and nutritious lineage palatable for the daily consumption needs of the modern consumer. Today the band offers multiple millet-based options like millet Muesli and Smoothix including *ragi*, *jowar*, foxtail millet and *bajra*. They also combine the power of millets with a healthy mix of various grains, such as *ragi* with Bengal gram.

Definitely, there is an increased awareness of the importance of millets for our well-being. A lot of nutrition experts are talking about them. There is an increased impetus by the government too to educate people on how millets are not only nutritious but how they help the environment and farmers, thereby creating a sustainable ecosystem.

According to Parameswaran the biggest marketing challenge in making millets 'hot' with the millennials is to position millets right to meet their lifestyle needs. That is a tall order, but entirely doable as these brands are proving. The need of the hour is to use unorthodox, creative measures to boost the popularity of millets via education, and by making them an appealing proposition for people (and the planet). This can be done by making fun foods with millets that appeal to today's generation. Millet noodles anyone? Minus the preservatives, of course!

The writer is a Delhi-based weight management consultant, nutritionist and author of Don't Diet! 50 Habits of Thin People and Ultimate Grandmother Hacks



BLACK AND WHITE IS ABSTRACT; COLOR IS NOT. LOOKING AT A BLACK AND WHITE PHOTOGRAPH, YOU ARE ALREADY LOOKING AT A STRANGE WORLD
—JOEL STERNFELD



The swing, Mehrauli Archaeological Park, Delhi; Archival Pigment Print

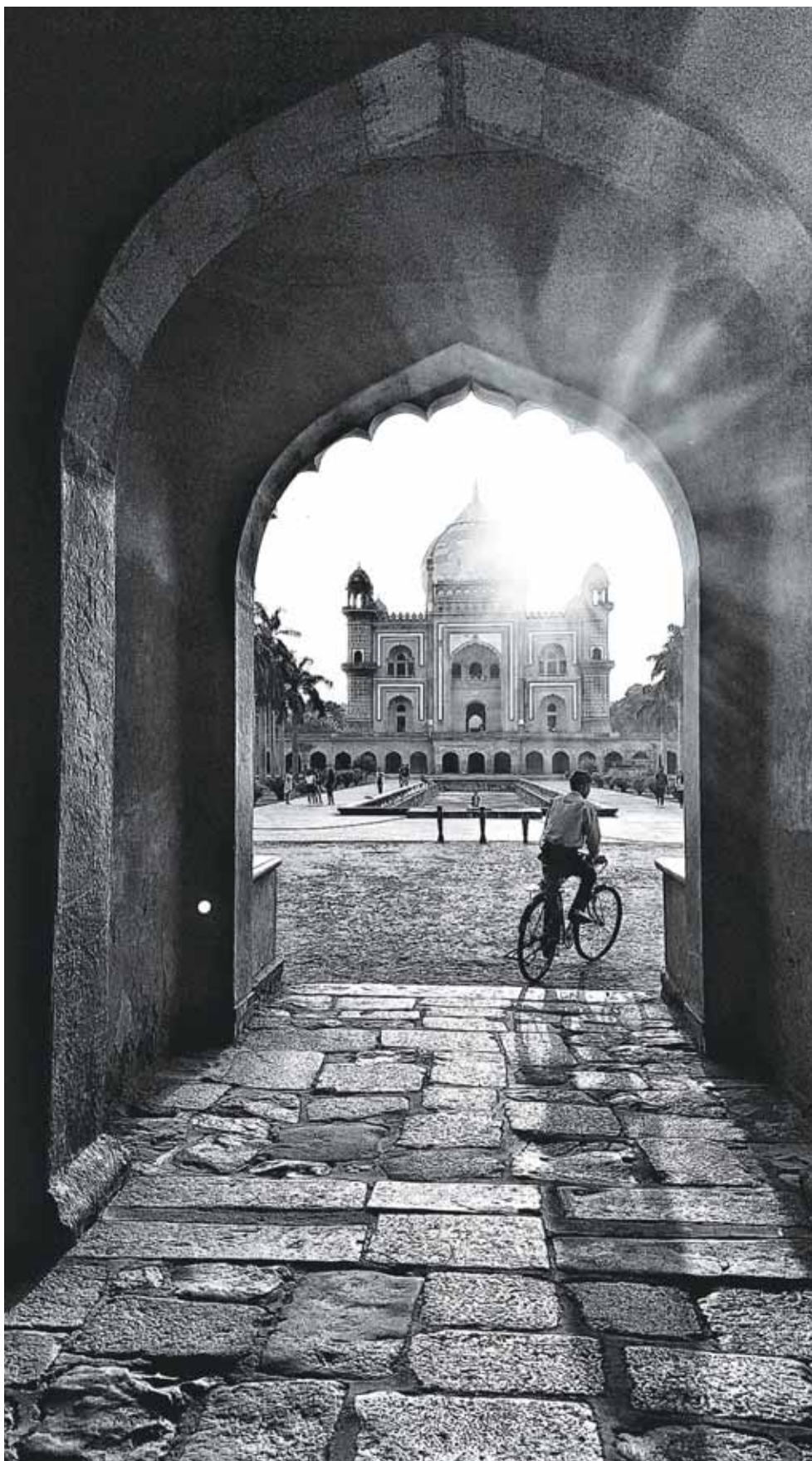
THE HISTORIAN'S EYE

WILLIAM DALRYMPLE is well-known and recognised for his writing, but photography, he claims, is his first love. An exhibition at Vadehra Art Gallery, New Delhi presents a photographic record of Dalrymple's travels across the country over the last two years while researching his latest book titled, *The Anarchy* (published by Bloomsbury in September 2019). This exhibition of black-and-white photographs, chronicles people and places, and the inter-relationships among them.

"I've been visiting all the places where this history took place — the battlefields and ruins, the mosques, sufi shrines and temples, the paradise gardens and pleasure grounds, the barrack blocks and townhouses, the crumbling Mughal *havelis*, the palaces and forts," he says. For sure, each photograph captured by Dalrymple reveals a narrative tension within itself, between stillness and movement, history and reality, creating a wrinkle in time that highlights an intermingling of the monumental past and fleeting present. A Photofeature.



Untitled; Digital print on photorag bright white paper



Monsoon afternoon, Safdar Jung's Tomb, Delhi; Archival Pigment Print



Early morning, Mehrangarh Fort, Jodhpur I; Archival Pigment Print



Jantar Mantar, Delhi; Archival Pigment Print



Jantar Mantar, Jaipur; Archival Pigment Print

Killing off Kurds to resurrect ISIS?



In this October 17, 2019 file photo, Syrians who were displaced by the Turkish military operation in northeastern Syria, carry their belongings as they walk to receive a tent at the Bardarash refugee camp, north of Mosul, Iraq.

AP

The recent happenings in Iraq and Syria have given the ISIS a new lease of life. The US pullback, leaving Kurds fighters — thousands of whom laid their lives to crush the Islamic terrorists — in the lurch and thus paving the way for Turkey's long-wished assault on Kurds, is set to turn the safest part of Syria into a war zone



SWARN KUMAR ANAND

Ten days after launching a long-anticipated military assault on the Kurdish People's Protection Units (YPG) militia in northeastern Syria, Turkey on October 18 agreed to the US-brokered five-day ceasefire on the condition that the Kurdish-led Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF) would withdraw from the proposed "safe zone" within the stipulated period. However, the terms and conditions, set by Turkey, hint at an ominous future for the region. Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan has threatened to escalate Operation Peace Spring if the SDF fails to leave the safe zone buffer along the Turkish border. "If the promises are kept until Tuesday evening, the safe zone issue will be resolved. If it fails, the operation will start the minute 120 hours are over," he said. However, claims and counterclaims about the ceasefire conditions have already doomed the agreement. Soon after the truce declaration, the SDF claimed the deal covers only a 12-km stretch, disputing Erdogan's announcement that the "safe zone" would spread 30 km deep inside Syria and 440 km along the border with Turkey. Moreover, the sanctity of the agreement has been disrespected with both the sides accusing each other of violating the ceasefire agreement. European countries, particularly France, which condemned Turkey's invasion, are sceptical of the intention of the Erdogan Government. According to European Council President Donald Tusk, the ceasefire "is a demand (for the) capitulation of the Kurds", and the world community must not abandon the Kurdish partners. In fact, Turkey-Kurds conflict has a long history and the

root of the present crisis lies in the regional power dynamics in Turkey. Though the immediate trigger for the Turkish invasion of northeastern Syria was Erdogan's long-cherished desire to fill the vacuum created by the US pullback from Syria, Ankara admitted that its goal was "to destroy the terror (YPG) corridor" being established by Kurdish forces in Syria along Turkey's southern border. However, the real aim of Turkey's involvement in Syria is to "crush the heads" of the Kurdish fighters who aspire to form an autonomous state for the Kurds in south-eastern part of Turkey. Kurds — the biggest stateless nation primarily spread across Iraq, Turkey, Syria and Iran, and the fourth-largest ethnic group in the West Asia & North African (WANA) region — have been given false promises by vested interests at various treaties for over a century for the creation of a Kurdistan. In the recent years, Kurds' successful military campaigns against Islamic terrorists and enemies of the US paid dividends and raised its stature as a trusted partner in the fight against terror. However, the rise of the might of the Kurds has threatened the Turkey Government which fears it might be forced to meet the demand for a Kurdish autonomous State. This is why Ankara had opposed Kurdish independence in Iraq in anticipation that their success in northern Iraq would encourage the Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK) — which has strong ties with the Kurdish People's Protection Units (YPG) that was internationally acclaimed for being instrumental in wresting large stretches from the ISIS in Syria and Iraq — to strive for independence in the

neighbouring Turkey. However, the present crisis in Syria is caused by Trump's hasty decision to withdraw military from Syria, thus triggering the Turkish assault on America's Kurdish partners in Syria and jeopardising the efforts to contain the ISIS. In fact, Kurds have almost always failed to read the intentions of America that has been espousing contradictory goals in the WANA region. While the successive US administrations have maintained that the States' boundaries in the WANA region must not be changed, they have sought support of the Kurds in fight against the erstwhile USSR, Saddam Hussein in Iraq, and currently the ISIS in Iraq and Syria. But, when the Kurds were pinning their hopes on the Donald Trump administration to help them keep the part of Syria in their safe hands, they have been left in the lurch. It has also caused the Trump administration loss of credibility as a reliable partner in fight against terror. Reports have come that Israel is apprehensive and keeping tabs on the situation. No matter how much Trump defends his decision on Syria, he is being criticised by Americans and others for abandoning their Kurdish allies in fight against the ISIS. Slamming the US administration, French President Emmanuel Macron said the US decision to withdraw and abandon the Kurdish forces "weakens our credibility to find partners in the field who will fight with us, thinking that they are protected". Now the moot question is whether the ceasefire will sustain. The northeastern region of Syria was considered by the locals the safest place to live in the country till the Turkey

invasion turned it into a full war zone, forcing mass exodus in Iraq. Despite agreement to pause fighting, it is doubtful that Turkey will leave the region any soon. As per the plan, once the safe zone buffer is established, Turkey's military will set up 12 observations posts to ensure that Kurdish forces don't make a comeback. In this situation, the expectation from the stateless Kurds to bear Turkish highhandedness for long is unrealistic. Therefore, the edgy calm in the northeastern Syria is replete with severe repercussions. First, there is no plan to handle the ISIS prisoners who were under control of the Kurdish forces till the Turkish invasion. It has been reported that several of them have already fled the makeshift jails in prisonbreaks. There is no agreement on the transfer of the custody of the terrorists from the SDF to the Turkish forces. Moreover, ironically the US President seems least concerned about the ISIS prisoners' custody and many a time he called fugitive prisoners "least dangerous". The Syrian territory, now in Turkish control, may fall into the hands of the ISIS which has been emboldened by the US withdrawal and SDF's scheduled departure. Moreover, if Turkey leaves northeastern Syria without giving control to an able force, it can only lead to further destabilisation in the region. While, the military pullout is Trump's gift to the ISIS, the Turkish invasion, and the so-called five-day ceasefire are a win-win situation for Ankara and the terrorist force. Erdogan's sole focus is to "crush the heads" of the Kurdish fighters.

(The writer Associate Editor & News Editor, The Pioneer)

Syria pullback strategic nightmare, says US Senate majority leader

US Senate majority leader Mitch McConnell on Friday attacked President Donald Trump's decision to pull troops from Syria as "a strategic nightmare" that will help Washington's foes and hurt its allies. "Withdrawing US forces from Syria is a grave strategic mistake," McConnell, the top Republican in Congress, wrote in an op-ed published in *The Washington Post*. "It will leave the American people and homeland less safe, embolden our enemies, and weaken important alliances." His comments come after Trump on Wednesday defended his decision to pull US troops out of Syria as "strategically brilliant." McConnell, usually a staunch supporter of the President, had earlier in the month condemned Trump's withdrawal of troops from northeast Syria, which sparked a week-long Turkish offensive against the Kurds who were allied with the US in the fight against Islamic State. Fighting has continued despite a temporary ceasefire Vice President Mike Pence bro-

kered with Ankara. "The combination of a US pullback and the escalating Turkish-Kurdish hostilities is creating a strategic nightmare for our country," McConnell wrote in his opinion piece. "Even if the five-day ceasefire announced on Thursday holds, events of the past week have set back the US' campaign against the Islamic State and other terrorists," he said. McConnell did not mention Trump by name, though he did liken the Syria withdrawal to the foreign policy of Trump's Democratic predecessor Barack Obama. "We saw the Islamic State flourish in Iraq after President Barack Obama's retreat. We will see these things anew in Syria and Afghanistan if we abandon our partners and retreat from these conflicts before they are won," McConnell wrote. "America's wars will be 'endless' only if America refuses to win them," he added in an apparent jab at Trump's insistence that the withdrawal was necessary "to get out of these ridiculous Endless Wars." AFP



In this image provided by Turkish Red Crescent, a woman carries aid being distributed by Turkish Red Crescent in Ras Al-Ayn, Syria on October 19, 2019

AP

