

OPINION 8
MISSING OUT ON
DELIVERABLES**WORLD 12**
GERMANY URGES TURKEY TO
IMMEDIATELY END SYRIA OFFENSIVE**SPORT 15**
RAMOS SETS SPAIN
RECORD WITH 168TH CAP

CHANDIGARH, MONDAY OCTOBER 14, 2019; PAGES 16 ₹2



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GREAT TIME
TO BE AN
ACTOR: LARA
13 VIVACITY

Modi dares Opp to bring back Art 370

Rahul says PM, Shah diverting attention from real issues

TN RAGHUNATHA ■ MUMBAI

The hither-to somewhat drab electioneering for the October 21 Maharashtra Assembly polls picked up the pace on Sunday, as Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Congress leader Rahul Gandhi hit the campaign trail and exchanged barbs on the annulment of Articles 370 and 35A on one hand and farmer-unemployment issues on the other, respectively.

Without naming Rahul, the Prime Minister dared the Opposition parties to declare in their respective manifestos that they would restore Articles 370 and 35A in the Constitution which gave special status to Jammu & Kashmir.

On the other hand, Rahul hit out at Modi and BJP national president Amit Shah for diverting the attention of the people from the real issues like the farmers' distress and unemployment which had reached highest-ever level during the 40 years. "What Modi and Shah are doing is to divert the attention of the people from the real issues and focus on Corbett Park, Moon, China, Pakistan, Japan, Korea and all other places," he said.

Addressing an election rally at Jalgaon in North Maharashtra, Modi picked up from where he had left at a public rally marking the conclusion of Chief Minister



Prime Minister Narendra Modi addresses a public meeting ahead of Maharashtra Assembly election at Sakoli village of Bhandara on Sunday

PTI

Devendra Fadnis's 4,000-kms long 'Mahajanadesh Yatra' that he had addressed at Nashik on September 19, to harp the issue of abrogation of Articles 370 and 35A of the Constitution.

Invoking the legacies of Maratha warrior Chhatrapati Shivaji, architect of the Constitution late BR Ambedkar and social reformer Mahatma Jyotiba Phule, Modi said: "From the land of Babasaheb Ambedkar, Mahatma Jyotiba Phule and Chhatrapati Shivaji, I dare the Opposition parties that if they have the courage to take a clear stand (on the annulment of Article 370 and 35A). Those Opposition parties

which are talking all kinds of bad things about Jammu, Kashmir and Ladakh should declare in their manifesto of this election as well as the next elections that they would restore Article 370 and 35A which the BJP-led NDA Government abrogated on August 5."

Charging that the Opposition parties were merely shedding "crocodile tears" and in the process making fool of the people, Modi asked: "Do these people have courage to restore Articles 370 and 35A? Will the people of the country allow them to restore these Articles? Even if they try to do, will they survive? Will

WAR OF WORDS

- What Modi and Shah are doing is to divert the attention of the people from the real issues and focus on Corbett Park, Moon, China, Pakistan, Japan, Korea and all other places, Rahul said
- We have taken such a big decision. We will restore normalcy in Kashmir in the next four months, the PM said

their political fate remain intact? Will the country accept it? When they know that they can not have their way, why are the Opposition parties shedding crocodile tears?

Modi said the decision to abrogate Article 370 mirrored the cultural of the BJP: "Our decision on Jammu & Kashmir is firm. The question of our going back on our decision does not arise."

Modi — who along with Shah have been meticulously making the move to scrap the special status of Jammu & Kashmir under Article 370 of the Constitution and bifurcate it into two Union Territories as one of the key themes — charged that the Opposition were speaking the same language as Pakistan on the issue of Article 370 abrogation.

"We have taken such a big decision. We will restore normalcy in Kashmir in the next four months," the Prime



Former Congress president Rahul Gandhi addresses a joint Congress-NCP rally at Dharavi Ground in Mumbai on Sunday

PTI

Minister said.

Addressing an election rally at Ausa in Latur district, Rahul said: "When the youth ask for jobs, the Government tells them to watch the moon. The Government speaks about (scrapping special provisions of) Article 370 and moon, but is silent on the problems plaguing the country."

Rahul charged that unemployment was at its highest level in the last 40 years. "Auto sector, textile sector, diamond industry is finished but you don't see anything in media. Modi doesn't speak about this at all. This is highest unemployment in 40 years," the former Congress president said.

"The Government is talking about 'Make In India', but only Chinese industries have swamped India, which is killing jobs in this country... The worried youth have no hopes of the future," Rahul said.

Alluding to Modi's meeting with Chinese President Xi Jinping, Rahul wanted to know: "When they were having tea and snacks the other day, did the PM ask him about the aggression in Doklam? No...!"

Rahul said that the current economic status of the nation is "just the beginning" and predicted dire consequences in the coming six-seven months for the economy.

Delhi air sinks to very poor

Stubble burning in neighbouring States of Punjab, Haryana sees upward trend

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

After cases of stubble burning in neighbouring States of Punjab and Haryana witnessed an upward trend, the overall 'Air Quality Index' (AQI) of the national Capital, deteriorated further and touched the 268 mark on Sunday, which falls in the 'poor category'.

Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal tweeted, "All the gains achieved so far on pollution front will be nullified. Whereas, we need to do a lot in Delhi and we are trying, however, all Governments and agencies need to work to stop crop burning also (sic)."

On Saturday, Kejriwal had said smoke from crop residue burning in neighbouring States has started reaching Delhi and the air quality has started deteriorating. "It has been widely reported that the smoke coming to Delhi is due to the burning of stubble in Karnal, Haryana," he had said.

The Air Quality Index (AQI) in Anand Vihar, Wazirpur, Vivek Vihar, Mundka, Bawana, Jahangirpuri was 327, 323, 317, 309, 302 and 300 was respectively, according



to Central Pollution Control Board data.

The air quality in neighbouring Ghaziabad (320) and Noida (310) in Uttar Pradesh and Haryana's Alipur Khalsa (351) and Panipat (339) also turned "very poor" by 4.30 pm. Faridabad, Greater Noida, Baghpat, Murlal recorded an AQI at 290, 233, 280, 259 and 245 respectively.

An AQI between 0 and 50 is considered 'good', 51 and 100 'satisfactory', 101 and 200 'moderate', 201 and 300 'poor', 301 and 400 'very poor', and 401 and 500 'severe'.

The Centre-run System of Air Quality and Weather Forecasting and Research said smoke from stubble burning will make up six per cent of Delhi's pollution by October 15, when GRAP comes into force in the Delhi-NCR region.

2 held for mugging Modi's niece, stolen items recovered

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

The Delhi Police has arrested two youths, including a 21-year-old and 22-year-old — for allegedly snatching the handbag of Prime Minister Narendra Modi's niece Damayanti Ben Modi.

Damayanti Ben's bag, containing cash of ₹56,000 and two mobile phones, was wrested from her grasp by two persons when she was alighting from an auto-rickshaw on Saturday morning.

Based on a complaint by her, police registered a case and later identified the two snatchers, one of whom Gaurav alias Nonu was arrested from Sonapat where he was staying at a relative's house, police said. Gaurav is a resident of Sadar Bazar in Delhi but sometimes stayed in Nabi Karim here, they said.

"Badal (22) was arrested from Sultanpuri here later in the evening, Deputy Commissioner of Police (North) Monika Bhardwaj, said.

The two persons, who were on a scooter, snatched her



Prime Minister Narendra Modi's niece Damayanti Ben Modi



wearing helmets.

During interrogation, Gaurav told police that he had spotted Damayanti Ben in an auto-rickshaw, a kilometre before targeting her, the officer said. Damayanti Ben is the daughter of the Prime Minister's brother Prahlad Modi. Police said Gaurav was previously involved in a fight and it is being checked if he has any other cases against him.

The incident occurred a few kilometres away from the residence of Lieutenant Governor Anil Bajaj and Chief minister Arvind Kejriwal.

Delhi-Meerut e-way limit at 120/100 kmph soon

NHAI to write to Delhi Police for raising speed limits

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

In a much needed relief for Meerut Expressway commuters, who often complain of being issued e-challans for speed driving, the National Highway Authority of India (NHAI) has decided to write to the Delhi Police for raising the speed limits up to 120/100 kmph.

Currently, the speed limit at the expressway is 70 kmph for Light Motor Vehicle and 40 kmph for goods carrier, according to the speed limit signboards. In view of the complaints being received from the general public, the traffic inspector of Kalyanpur Circle, Delhi Police, wrote a letter to the NHAI for installation of speed limit signboards with the maximum speed of 60 kmph in September and sent a reminder after a few days, according to an RTI reply by the NHAI.

The penalty for overspeeding has been raised from ₹400 to ₹5,000, according to the new Motor Vehicles Act which came into effect from September 1.

In reply to the traffic

- Currently, the speed limit at the expressway is 70 kmph for Light Motor Vehicle and 40 kmph for goods carrier, according to the speed limit signboards
- The penalty for overspeeding has been raised from ₹400 to ₹5,000, according to the new Motor Vehicles Act which came into effect from September 1



inspector's letter, the NHAI wrote a letter to the Delhi Police on September 13 for upgrading the speed limit to 120/100 kmph.

According to RP Singh, General Manager

(Tech)/Project Director at the NHAI Ghaziabad Project Implementation Unit (PIU) which looks after the expressway, a letter suggesting to upgrade the speed limits to 120/100 kmph for expressway

portion and 70/50 kmph for the National Highway on the Delhi-Meerut Expressway would be sent to the Delhi Police Commissioner soon.

"The letter would be sent from the NHAI headquarters

in Delhi. A decision to send the letter was taken during the inauguration of the Delhi-Meerut Expressway phase-3 last month," Singh told PTI.

"Currently, we have placed signboards limiting the maximum speed to 70/40. Since the stretch, which is 8.72 km long 6-lane expressway/8-lane NH 24 from Sarai Kale Khan in Delhi to Ghazipur border has already been completed in June 2018, the speed should be upgraded to 120/100 kmph on the expressway and 70/50 kmph on the NH as per Ministry of Road Transport and Highways (MoRT&H) guidelines," he said.

Previously, a letter to upgrade the speed on the expressway was sent to the Special Commissioner of Police (Traffic) on September 13 by the NHAI, according to the RTI reply.

In the letter, the NHAI said the Delhi-Meerut Expressway has been designed for a speed of 120/100 kmph as per the MoRT&H guidelines through a gazette notification dated April 6, 2018.

BJP issues manifesto

Mhare Sapno ka Haryana

PNS ■ CHANDIGARH

Aiming to retain power in Haryana, the Bharatiya Janata Party on Sunday released its election manifesto for October 21 State Assembly polls, promising a slew of measures, including easy loans for farmers and SC members, free education to girls from poor families and skill training to 25 lakh youths.

During the unveiling of the manifesto titled 'Mhare Sapne Ka Haryana', Chief Minister Manohar Lal Khattar said that while the opposition is using freebies to woo voters, his party focussed on realism and things that are doable.

Focusing on farmers, labourers, youth and industrialists, the manifesto pledged to

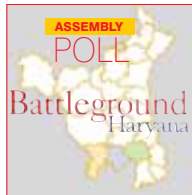
give an interest-free crop loan of up to Rs 3 lakh to farmers and announced to complete a target of Rs 5,000 crore interest and penalty waiver on crop loans taken from cooperative banks.

For women empowerment, the BJP promised to provide free education to two girls from families whose total annual income is less than Rs 1.8 lakh.

Manohar Lal said the manifesto was based on the philosophy of 'Sarve Bhavantu Sukhinah, Sarve Santu Niramayah', a mantra which means may all become happy and free from illnesses.

Notably, the BJP has set a target of winning over 75 seats in the 90-member Assembly.

Detail reports on P3



13K IT shakhas help RSS shed orthodox image

DEEPAK K UPRETI ■ NEW DELHI

At a time when the RSS is witnessing a 20 per cent annual increase in its number of regular shakhas, which at present stand at an impressive 60,000 across the country, another similar story is unfolding in another area of Sangh activity. It's the rapid increase in the number of Information and Technology Shakhas of the RSS.

These shakhas are popularly known as the IT Shakhas and are conducted weekly. Their numbers stand at around 13,000 and many top-notch IT professionals are connected with them, helping the Sangh to shed its 'orthodox and conservative' image.

The RSS is looking at the rapid urbanisation and growth of metropolises and the young professionals working with it, particularly in the IT industry. The Sangh which has 'opened up' itself to the outer world

under its present head Mohan Bhagwat seeks to cultivate the new-generation IT professionals in an apparent bid to embrace the modern technological changes which has not

been the strongpoint of the 94-year-old organisation.

"There are around 13,000 IT Shakhas in Pune, Bangalore and Hyderabad where IT professionals attend the evening

shakhas and exchange views on issues ranging from security to sanitation," said RSS sources.

The sessions tagged as 'IT milans' work out plans and programmes for the expansion of

such shakhas in the villages nearby the metropolises. The first IT 'shakhas' were started in 2006 in Pune and since then they are on the priority list of the organisation.

"Last year in Bangalore several IT professionals took eight-day holidays to be in the villages and engaged in contact programmes, discussing solutions to the issues like water conservation, environment and agriculture. Environment and water conservation are seemingly the focus areas of RSS outposts as recently spelled out by its chief.

"RSS is to soon open 'Ati Prabhat' Shakhas for the professionals first in Mumbai and then in Telangana," they said.

Claiming that the Nagpur outfit aims to increase the number of its 'shakhas' up to one lakh with "high growth States" like Kerala and West Bengal, RSS sources maintained that in the coming years the organisation would draw its substantial cadre from the large cities. "There are number of young working couples who have joined urban evening shakhas and working proactively during the week-ends," they claimed.



GURU NANAK’S 550TH BIRTH ANNIVERSARY

Politico-religious slugfest continues

PNS ■ CHANDIGARH

The politico-religious slugfest over Guru Nanak Dev’s 550th birth anniversary celebrations is far from over. A day after the Union Minister Harsimrat Kaur Badal slammed Punjab Chief Minister Capt Amarinder Singh for “challenging the supremacy of Akal Takht by deciding to hold a parallel event at Sultanpur Lodhi”, the senior Congress leader on Sunday reminded the SAD MP that it was the Akalis who had “humiliated” the Akal

Takht Jathedar. Capt Amarinder, in a stinging response to Harsimrat’s latest tirade against Punjab Government, reminded her that it was her own Shiromani Akali Dal (SAD) regime that had “shamelessly and willfully heaped humiliation” on the Akal Takht Jathedar in sharp contrast to his government, which had always treated the Sikh temporal seat with exemplary respect. “For 10 years, the Akalis, including Harsimrat, had been totally drunk on power, spar-

ing neither the Akal Takht nor the people of Punjab from their tyrannical control,” said the Chief Minister, asking the Union Minister to stop indulging in such blatant falsehoods for her petty political gains. “Everyone knows how you (Akalis) maliciously ill-treated Akal Takht Jathedars, out of sheer arrogance, and continue to abuse the Shiromani Gurdwara Prabandhak Committee (SGPC) by dictating terms on them,” said Capt Amarinder while reacting to Harsimrat’s allegations on his

government over the issue of joint celebrations of Guru Nanak Dev’s 550th birth anniversary. “She has no scruples, none of the Akalis have,” said the Chief Minister, pointing out that while Harsimrat was singing praises for Prime Minister Narendra Modi and his government, her husband, Sukhbir Badal, was going around appealing for forfeiture of the BJP candidates’ deposits in the campaign for the Haryana elections. He said: “Their obnoxious double standards had

long been exposed to the people of Punjab, who have outright rejected the Akali leadership time and again, since their absolute rout in the 2017 Assembly polls in the state.” Pointing out that he had, for months, been personally engaging with the SGPC and appealing for a joint celebration for the 550th prakash purb, as befitting of the occasion, Capt Amarinder said that it was the SAD which had been persistently scuttling his efforts in their game of upmanship. “While the Akalis had

always exploited religion for political gains, I had expected them to show some decency in the case of the historic 550th prakash purb celebrations,” said the Chief Minister, adding that “the Akalis evidently had no shame when it came to the promotion of their personal interests.” “The manner in which they had been going, on the side, to invite the Prime Minister and other central government leaders for the separate event of the SGPC clearly exposed their revoltingly true intent,” he said.

Punjab sees 45% hike in stubble burning

PPCB data says against 435 incidents recorded till October 11 in 2018, figure this year has shot up to 630

PNS ■ CHANDIGARH

The paddy harvesting season has started in Punjab and the state has already recorded a 45 percent increase in stubble burning incidents till October 11, but the administration hopes the farm fire counts will come down gradually as a result of intensive interventions made this year. The period between October 15 and November 15 is considered critical, as this is when most stubble burning incidents take place in Punjab and adjoining states. The stubble burning incidents are among the main reasons for the alarming spike in pollution in Delhi-NCR during this time. On Sunday, Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal tweeted: “All the gains achieved so far on pollution front will be nullified. Whereas, we need to do a lot in Delhi and we are trying, however, all governments and all agencies need to work to stop crop burning also (sic).” The National Green Tribunal (NGT) had also directed constitution of special cells in the office of chief secretary of Delhi and neighbouring states to monitor the problem of air pollution due to the burning of crop residue on a daily basis this month.

According to data from the Punjab Pollution Control Board (PPCB), the state had recorded 435 incidents of stubble burning till October 11 last year. This year, the figure has shot up to 630. Amritsar alone has reported 295 incidents of farm fires during the period. Tarn Taran and Patiala have recorded 126 and 57 cases, respectively. Punjab Agriculture Secretary Kahan Singh Pannu said that the fires detected by satellites don’t give a clear picture of the stubble burning incidents. “Satellites data also include fires at cremation grounds and dump yards. The number of farm fires in Punjab, at present, is almost negligible. The overall count this year will be less than last year,” he said. Pannu said that according to the Centre’s data, stubble burning incidents in Punjab

from October 1 to 10 reduced from 1,714 in 2016 to 430 in 2019. Punjab Government gave 28,000 farm implements, such as happy seeder, super straw management system, paddy straw chopper and mulcher, to farmers and cooperative societies on subsidised rates in 2018 and has sanctioned 23,000 more this year, he said, adding that of the 23,000 machines, 15,000 have already been distributed. Farmers claim that it was unimaginable for everyone to buy the expensive modern farm machinery to manage stubble. They say that they cannot afford to rent it as the rising diesel prices have increased the input cost manifold. Pannu said that a financial incentive of Rs 100 per quintal of paddy can resolve the problem once and for all. “On an average, a farmer reaps 28-30 quintals of rice in one acre. Rs 100 per quintal will mean Rs 2,800 to 3,000 per farmer per acre which is sufficient to cover the fuel cost for



using machines,” he said. “Punjab Government is also conducting a massive awareness drive which includes meetings with farmers, radio jingles, and public advertisements on TV and in the print media,” he said. The Punjab Pollution Control Board has also roped in around 1.2 lakh NSS volunteers from all government universities in the state for the awareness campaign against stubble burning. “We have formed around 6,000 teams, each comprising 20 members, which have been visiting every village in the state and persuading farmers against burning crop residue,” said PPCB chairman SS Marwah. Marwah said that Delhi itself is “responsible for its bad

air and Punjab’s contribution to its pollution is insignificant”. The Centre-run System of Air Quality and Weather Forecasting and Research, which noticed a spike in stubble burning incidents over the last few days, said that these will start affecting Delhi’s air quality now. “The stubble burning activity in Haryana, Punjab and nearby border regions are moderate but increasing,” it said. After oscillating between “satisfactory and moderate” categories till October 9, the national capital’s air quality turned “poor” for the first time on Thursday, two days after effigies of Ravana, Meghnad and Kumbhakarna were burnt on Dussehra.

STOP STUBBLE BURNING ON THEIR LEASED LANDS: PUNJAB TO ABSENTEE LANDLORDS

Chandigarh: Punjab Government on Sunday asked the Deputy Commissioners to direct the absentee land owners, who have leased out their agriculture land to tenants, to ensure that no paddy straw burning takes place on their lands. “About 25 percent farm land in Punjab is estimated to be leased out, mostly by the NRIs (Non-Resident Punjabis) or people living in urban areas, at yearly rent (thheka) of Rs 40,000- 55,000 per acre. Therefore, they are equally responsible to stop paddy residue burning in their fields,” said the State Agriculture Secretary KS Pannu. Pannu said that these land owners shall become liable for any action as per law in case crop residue is put to fire in their fields.

At the same time, he requested such land owners to give some rebate in rent to cultivators to encourage them to mix the straw in the land without burning which will help in improving soil health and save the environment. Notably, the State Government has already banned the stubble burning under section 19(5) of Air (Prevention of Pollution and Control) Act, 1981. Likewise, District Magistrates have already banned the burning of crop residue under section 144 of Code of Criminal procedure (CrPc) at the district level. Pannu said that the Deputy Commissioners have also been asked to get the list of land owners prepared through village level nodal officers. “These nodal officers have been asked

to contact such land owners for complying with the instructions. This exercise is aimed at persuading them to ensure no stubble burning takes place on fields leased out by them,” he said. The Secretary revealed that all revenue Patwaris had already been directed to mark red entry in the girdawari of agriculture land where paddy residue burning takes place. Considering that burning of paddy straw causes irreversible damage to soil health, environment and health of living beings, a resolution was passed by the State Cabinet unanimously appealing to the farmers to do away with the unhealthy practice of stubble burning in line with upholding the ideology Guru Nanak Dev to protect natural resources.

Punjab Govt duty-bound to implement 85th amendment to Constitution for benefit of Dalit

PNS ■ JALANDHAR

Punjab Government is committed to provide reservation in promotions to the officers or officials of the Schedule Caste community in Government jobs, and the same will be implemented soon. Announcing this while presiding over a state level function to mark Bhagwan Valmiki’s pargat diwas, Punjab Forest and Social Justice Minister Sadhu Singh Dharmots on Sunday said that the State Government was duty-bound to implement 85th amendment to the Constitution for the benefit of the Dalit community. “The Chief Minister had implemented the 85th amendment during his previous tenure for providing reservation in promotions to the officers or officials of the Schedule Caste community in Government jobs. Now, the Chief Minister is fully committed to implement this amendment in true letter and spirit, and the amendment would be soon implemented,” he said. At the same time, Dharmots asked the MPs and MLAs from the SC community to jointly flag this case again before the Chief Minister. He said that the State

Government was preparing a comprehensive plan for the further development of Sri Valmiki Tirath at Amritsar. “Water treatment plant would also be soon installed at the sacred sarovar at this place,” said Dharmots while announcing a grant of Rs 21 lakh for the construction of Valmiki Community Hall falling in Jalandhar West assembly segment of the city. Training his guns at the NDA Government at the Centre, the Minister said that the Union government was hell bent upon snatching the reservation, which was given by the Congress party, from the SC community. The entire community would have to unite to thwart any such attempt, he said while slamming the Union Government for its anti-dalit policies. Congress’ MP from Jalandhar Chaudhary Santokh Singh said that it was a rare honour that the State Government has organized this mega event here at Jalandhar to commemorate the pargat utsav of Bhagwan Valmiki. He also slammed the Modi Government for its anti-dalit stance adding that the Centre was discontinuing all welfare schemes started by the Congress government.

Preserve traditions of HP: CM

PNS ■ KULLU

The atmosphere in Kullu was filled with religious fervour and divinity when more than 2200 Bajantris (instrumentalists) congregated at the Atal Sadan ground in the presence of Chief Minister Jai Ram Thakur to play ‘Devdhun’ on the occasion of International Kullu Dussehra festival on Sunday. ‘Devdhun’ is the sound that resonates after playing different traditional instruments when deities move out of their temples to join local festivals. On the occasion, the Chief Minister was presented a medal and certificate by the representatives of India Book of Records as the ‘Devdhun’ has been entered as a record in the India Book of Records with 2200

Bajantries playing the musical instruments simultaneously. Speaking on the occasion, the Chief Minister said that it was a great honour for the people of the state in general and people of Kullu district in particular that the ‘Devdhun’ has entered the India Book of Records for being an event in which over 2200 musicians played traditional instruments together at one place to fill the whole atmosphere with divinity and traditional fervour. He said that the efforts of the musicians were indeed laudable. Thakur said that the State Government would ensure that this event not only become a regular event but also an added attraction of International Kullu Dussehra. He said that in the present

INBRIEF

LIFE OF MAHARAJA AGRASEN INSPIRES ALL: GUV Shimla: Himachal Governor Bandaru Dattatraya said that teachings of Maharaja Agrasen and his ideals still inspire us. He was the epitome of socialism, equality, non-violence and nationalism and his administrative skills were unparalleled, said the Governor while speaking on the occasion of 5143rd birth anniversary celebration of Maharaja Agrasen organized by Aggarwal Sabha Shimla. He said, Maharaja Agrasen had lofty concepts of kingship and the duties of the king towards his subjects and therefore, he stood supreme in the annals of Indian history as an ideal king.

NSCT CALLS ON GOVERNOR Shimla: Chairman of National Commission for Scheduled Tribes, Nand Kumar Sai along with members Harshad Bhai and Hari Krishan Damor called on Governor Bandaru Dattatraya at Raj Bhavan here. They had detailed discussion with the Governor regarding the development of tribal areas and issues related to them in the state which needs to be expedited. The Chairperson said that in the next visit, he would do the extensive visit of tribal areas of Himachal Pradesh. Joint Secretary, NSCT Sisir Kumar and Secretary to Governor Rakesh Kanwar were also present on the occasion.

PGI HOLDS CME ON INTERVENTION CARDIOLOGY Chandigarh: In a first of its kind, an interventional cardiology meet was organized by the Department of Cardiology, PGIMER in collaboration with US based Complex Cardiovascular Catheter (C3) Interventional Academy on Sunday where nearly 100 doctors of concerned field participated. Professor Dr. Rajesh Vijayvergiya from Department of Cardiology, PGIMER who was the organizing secretary of the meet said that the purpose of the meeting was to share the knowledge, challenges and achievement among the cardiologist of the region. Dr Raj Dave, Chairman, C3 International Academy, USA commented that such collaborative and interactive meeting will help to spread the advanced treatment and technology in the region.

STUNT SHOW ORGANISED AT IIT ROPAR Ropar: Local students witnessed a KTM stunt show organized at IIT, Ropar. The stunt-show was organized in order to showcase the mind-blowing stunt rides and tricks from the professional stunt riders. Sumeet Narang, Vice President- Probiking, Bajaj Auto Ltd said, “The event was open to all and the spectacular stunts took the city by a storm. Till now, the KTM Stunt shows have been organized in Surat, Ahmedabad, Kanchipuram, Coimbatore, Chennai, Vijayapur, Lucknow, Aurangabad, Jammu, Jalandhar, Jodhpur, Haridwar, Bhopal, Solan and many other cities.”

PGIMER TO CONDUCT TRAINING Chandigarh: The Department of Community Medicine and School of Public Health, PGIMER with National Institute of Health and Family Welfare (NIHFW), New Delhi will conduct a training on Management of Public Health Emergencies for the District Health Officers (DHOs) of Himachal Pradesh, Jammu & Kashmir and Chandigarh. First batch will include DHOs of Punjab and Himachal Pradesh from October 14 to 26. The objective of this training is to enhance the knowledge and skills of the DHOs for preparedness of public health emergencies.

178 DEVOTEES DONATE BLOOD Manimajra: Sant Nirankari Charitable Foundation, with the blessings of Nirankari Satguru Mata Sudiksha Ji Maharaj, on Sunday organised 17th Blood Donation Camp at Sant Nirankari Bhawan at Mauli Jagran wherein 178 devotees, including 25 women, contributed to the noble cause by donating blood. The camp was inaugurated by Chandigarh Mayor Rajesh Kalra. The camp was organised with the assistance of 18-member team from PGIMER’s Blood Transfusion Medicine Department along with a team from Government Multispecialty Hospital, Sector 16, Blood Bank.

IIM ROHTAK ORGANIZED SUMMIT Chandigarh: IIM Rohtak organized a Management Summit on “Marketing Analytics: From measurement to insight” on October 12 in Delhi. The theme focused on the change in the ways how brands and organisations reach out to their target audience and connect with them through various channels. The panels discussed about the marketing opportunities and problems that can leverage analytics for solutions and insights. Leaders from top corporate houses of the world attended the summit.

Diabetes and obesity catching young in Punjab

MONIKA MALIK ■ CHANDIGARH

Diabetes and obesity is catching the people young in Punjab. A national level nutrition survey has revealed that almost one-eighth of Punjab’s youngsters are suffering from the two ailments. Besides, the survey laid bare the high level of micronutrient deficiency among the Punjab’s younger population. Take this: 8.9 percent children, in the age group of five to nine years, are pre-diabetic, while the number increases to 9.7 percent pre-diabetics and 0.2 diabetic patients in the age group of 10-19 years. A total of 9.1 percent adolescents, in the age group of 10-19 years, are overweight or obese (calculated according to the body mass index for age),

including 11.3 percent males and 6.6 percent females. In another indicator of micronutrient deficiencies among Punjabi kids, an average of 39.7 percent prevalence of anaemia was found in the children between the age group of one and four years, 12.4 percent in five to nine years, and 25.9 percent in 10-15 years. The startling revelations were made in the Comprehensive National Nutrition Survey (CNNS), a cross-sectional, household survey covering more than 1.20 lakh children and adolescents (between 0-19 years) in both urban and rural areas across all 30 states of India. The survey is being conducted by the Union Ministry of Health and Family Welfare (MoHFW) in partnership with the UNICEF.



The first-ever nationally representative nutrition survey of children and adolescents in India pointed that the prevalence of anaemia was more in females in Punjab as compared to their male counterparts.

In the age group of one to four years, 43.1 percent females and 36.6 percent males are affected, 12.7 females and 12.2 percent males are affected in the age group of five-nine years, and 36.9 percent females and 15.1 percent males are

affected by the same in the age group of 10 to 15 years. “It is due to these deficiencies that the growth is affected among the children, like less height, body weight. The main reason for this is that children are not getting the

right amount of balanced food. The survey also indicated that two-thirds of children’s deaths across India is because of lack of proper and balanced diet,” a senior official of the Punjab Health Department told The Pioneer. The health official said that breastfeeding is must for the newborn for the first six months after his birth. If the mother is breastfeeding properly, the children will be healthy. At the same time, their physical and mental development would be proper. The survey has also found that 24.3 percent of children under five were stunted, while eight percent were severely stunted. Besides, 6.7 percent of children under five years are wasted (weight-for height), while 2.3 percent were severe-

ly wasted. About 20 percent children, under five years, are underweight (weight for age), while five percent are severely underweight. The percentage is higher in rural kids (21.9 percent underweight and 5.2 severely underweight), as compared to their urban counterparts (15.8 percent and 4.1 percent). As far as stunting was concerned, 12.3 percent children, aged 5-9 years, are stunted (height-for-age), while 2.5 percent are severely stunted. In all, 12 percent children, aged 5-9 years, are moderate or severely thin (BMI for age), while 2.2 percent are severely thin. About eight percent children, aged 5-9 years, are overweight or obese (BMI for age) as per WHO standards (of more than 1 standard deviation).

against three percent obese as per WHO standards (of more than 2 standard deviations). The official said that CNNS-India for the period 2016-18 is the largest micronutrient survey ever conducted. To provide robust data on the shifting conditions of both under-nutrition and overweight and obesity, the Ministry of Health conducted the survey to collect a comprehensive set of data on nutritional status of Indian children from zero to 19 years of age. This survey was the largest micronutrient survey ever implemented. Also, the survey used gold standard methods to assess anaemia, micronutrient deficiencies and biomarkers of NCDs for the first time in India.

HARYANA ASSEMBLY POLL: BJP releases manifesto

PNS ■ CHANDIGARH

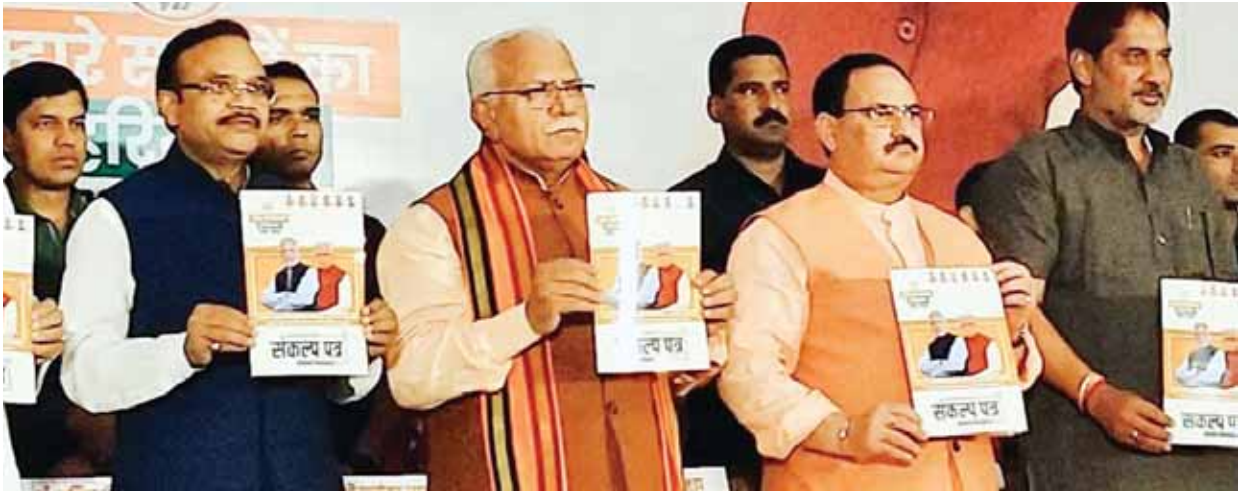
The Bharatiya Janata Party on Sunday released its election manifesto for the October 21 Haryana Assembly polls, making a host of promises including interest-free crop loan of up to Rs 3 lakh to farmers and providing skill development training to 25 lakh youths.

The manifesto titled 'Mhare Sapne Ka Haryana', which the party described as 'Sankalp Patra', was released in the presence of BJP working President JP Nadda, Chief Minister Manohar Lal Khattar, state party president Subhash Barala and other senior party leaders here.

"It is a commitment paper and it is a serious and studied document. This is a pragmatic and practical paper that represents all sections of the society," said JP Nadda while talking to the mediapersons here.

The BJP has promised to give collateral free loan of up to Rs 3 lakh to people belonging to the scheduled caste community, if voted to power again. The saffron party has also pledged to give interest-free crop loan of up to Rs 3 lakh to farmers.

For skill development of youth, the party has said that it will form a Ministry of Youth Development and Self Employment in Haryana.



Along with this, the government will also impart skills to 25 lakh youths by spending Rs 500 crore.

JP Nadda said that this commitment paper focuses on addressing a person sitting on the last pedestal. There will be old age pension of Rs 3,000. Haryana will be made tuberculosis free and farmers' income will be doubled by 2022, he said.

He said 1,000 'khel' (sports) nurseries will also be set up in the state.

The focus will also be on comprehensive healthcare, said

Nadda, adding that 2,000 health and wellness centre will be set up in the state.

The manifesto said, the party will make a legal provision to ensure farmers don't have to mortgage more than 1.25 times land of the loan amount. It promised to make women and children anaemia-free in the next five years.

The saffron party has pledged that it will ensure free education in government educational institutes up to post-graduate level for two girls per family having income less than Rs 1.80 lakh per annum or land

holdings up to five acres. The party has also mentioned the starting of pink bus service for girl students. Along with this, self-defence training will be given to the students and special centres to help women will be established in the state.

In its manifesto, the BJP has also promised a task force to clean Yamuna, Ghaggar and other rivers. It also said, it will try to make Haryana the first state in the country to be free of single-use plastic.

The party has further promised to remove the salary discrepancies of all the employ-

ees of the state.

Other promises included farmers coming to sell produce to get Rs 10 'Kisan Thali' in every 'Mandi' and sugar mill, Kisan Kalyan Pradhikaran to be set up with Rs 1,000 crore budget, alternative Crop Mission to be established, livestock to be tagged and collection centres to be set up for cow dung and urine, a Rs 500-crore fund will be kept for agri marketing, branding and packaging.

EMPHASIS ON YOUTH,

FARMERS AND POOR: CM

Releasing the manifesto, Chief Minister Manohar Lal Khattar said that the BJP's 'Sankalp Patra' is based on the principles of 'Ram Rajya'.

He said, "We have delivered on our promise of zero tolerance for corruption and transparency and would continue to do so."

The resolution paper has taken care of every class. Special importance has been given to sportspersons, youth, farmers and poor class, he said.

HIGHLIGHTS

- Procurement of every crop of farmers at MSP
- Budget of Rs 1000 crore for farmers welfare body
- Pucca houses to all by 2022
- Setting up of 2,000 health and wellness centre
- ₹3,000 as old age pension
- ₹3 lakh collateral free loans for people belonging to SC community
- Skill training with an outlay of Rs 500 crore to 25 lakh youth
- Special benefits to industries providing 95 pc job to local people
- Setting up of 1,000 'khel' (sports) nurseries
- Pink Bus service for girl students
- MSMEs to be facilitated to secure loan up to Rs 10 lakh in just an hour
- Legislation to ban entry of humans inside sewers to clean them

The Chief Minister said that the DC rate will be strictly enforced in all outsourcing jobs in Haryana. Special benefits will be given to industries providing more than 95 per cent employment to the local people of Haryana, he announced.

"We have promised to make a provision to increase the amount of all pensions according to annual inflation," he added.

The Chief Minister claimed, the manifesto of the Congress with focus on loan waiver to farmers and job reservations to women was unrealistic as it

needed Rs 1,26,000 crore to fulfil the poll promise.

"It is totally unrealistic with no budgetary provisions. Our manifesto needs a budget allocation of Rs 32,000 crore that can be easily meted out through state funds," he said.

Manohar Lal added, his government would give benefits to farmers in the form of better prices for their produce.

Manifesto committee chief OP Dhankar informed that the party has given attention to every section in the 32-page resolution. 1.70 lakh suggestions were received for preparing the party's resolution letter, he added.

Tough fight for wrestler Babita in Dadri, banking on PM's charisma

MANOJ KUMAR ■ CHANDIGARH

The political challenge for the International wrestler Babita Phogat, whom BJP has fielded in Dadri Vidhan Sabha constituency, will be no less than what she faced in the sporting arena.

A total of 27 candidates are in fray in Charkhi Dadri district.

Major contestants in this constituency are Satpal Sangwan of Jannayak Janata Party (JJP), Major Nirdender Sangwan of Congress, Babita Phogat of BJP and Somvir Sangwan earlier of BJP, now contesting as an independent candidate.

Exactly three years ago, on 28 September in 2016, BJP-led government in the State had declared Dadri as district. Dadri and Badhra assembly constituencies came in the district.

Dadri is Jat-dominated Assembly segment, which the BJP has never been able to win ever since the inception of the State. Caste, as always, remains the single biggest factor in this constituency. BJP candidate was runners-up in 2014 Assembly elections in Dadri. It was earlier a part of Bhiwani district, but now falls in Charkhi Dadri district. The Assembly constituency, a part of Bhiwani-Mahendragarh Lok Sabha constituency, was won by INLD's Rajdeep Phogat in 2014.

Somvir Sangwan, who contested the 2014 Assembly election for Dadri seat on the BJP ticket, had lost by a narrow margin of 1,610 votes to INLD's Rajdeep Phogat. Rajdeep later joined the JJP, but decided not to contest the election this time due to personal reasons.

In 2014, the BJP had come to power in Haryana for the first time while contesting on its own strength. BJP has never won Dadri Vidhan Sabha seat but Prime Minister Narendra Modi's firepower and rally in this seat may well tilt the scales in the favour of the party candidate. Modi would himself do the heavy-lifting for Commonwealth Games Gold medalist wrestler Babita contesting from Dadri. Modi's rally is slotted in Dadri on October 15.

Denied ticket by national political parties, including the BJP and the Congress, the unsuccessful applicants of these parties have jumped into the poll fight, making the contest for the Dadri Assembly seat multi-cornered.

In the given circumstances, Somvir was being considered a frontrunner for the saffron ticket in the 2019 Assembly poll. BJP leadership fielded Babita from the constituency instead of Somvir Sangwan. Stung by the party's decision, Somvir Sangwan has jumped into the poll fray as an independent candidate.

On the other hand, former Haryana minister and prominent local Congress leader Satpal Sangwan was hopeful of getting the Congress ticket in these elections, but the party leadership decided to field former MLA Major Nirdender Sangwan instead. Angry over being rejected by the Congress, Satpal Sangwan joined the JJP and got ticket for the election. Surendra Parmar, who earlier contested on HJC ticket from here, is also contesting as an independent on not getting Congress ticket.

At the same time, Congress Secretary Ajit Phogat also called a meeting of his supporters, in which the discussion was finalised to work against the Congress candidate.

However, pieces are being fitted by rebels in Dadri to defeat each other at the internal level. In such a situation, there will be a tough fight in Dadri and there are chances of losing and winning by a small margin.

While the BJP candidate Babita is banking upon the Prime Minister's rally slated at Dadri on October 15, Congress nominee Major Sangwan attacked the Manohar Lal Khattar-led BJP government over its alleged



Babita Phogat



Nirdender Sangwan



Somvir Sangwan



Satpal Sangwan

failure to provide the basis civic amenities to the people of the constituency. "Dadri has been crying for a sound public transport system, but to no avail," said Major Sangwan.

He further attacked the BJP strategy to invite Modi for a rally. "People have seen through the BJP agenda and won't get swayed. This is one of the most backward areas of Haryana and needs development impetus. Why don't the BJP talk about their manifesto? Whipping nationalism won't help every time," the former MLA said.

Two-time MLA Satpal Sangwan of the JJP, a known party hopper who invokes arch-rivals, Bansi Lal and Devi Lal in the same breath during canvassing, says "What's Modi going to do here? Modi will talk about national and international issues. What does he know about the problems of the local people? A government college and augmentation of resources for the government hospital are the kind of issues that need immediate attention. The BJP during its five-year rule ignored Dadri," he said.

BJP rebel Somvir, who was denied a ticket this time said, "Babita is a kid, a novice in politics. She has been given ticket by the BJP in Dadri. She is a good sportsperson and I myself have honoured her on at least three occasions. But does she qualify to become a public representative?" He further said that his agenda is very clear. "I have been wronged and people of Dadri cheated by denial of a ticket to me."

Rajdeep Phogat, current MLA, Dadri said, "Charkhi Dadri has been made a district, fulfilling a longstanding demand of the local residents. I have opted out of the contest due to personal reasons."

Babita had won the gold medal in 2014 Commonwealth Games and 2018 Commonwealth Games. She also won silver medals at the 2010 Commonwealth Games and a bronze medal at the 2012 World Wrestling Championships.

Babita (29) has overcome many tough challenges on the mat during her international sporting career. But for the debutante BJP nominee from Dadri assembly constituency in southern Haryana, this is no hand-to-hand combat. The rookie is still learning the manoeuvres of the new craft she has thrust upon herself. The Dargal girl locked in a four-cornered all-Jat electoral contest with battle-scarred competitors.

Modi finds mention in every second sentence Babita, an Arjuna awardee, speaks during her public addresses. The Olympian also makes repeated references to Modi's "brave" move to abrogate Article 370, the sacrifice of soldiers on our borders and his commitment to make Kashmir a paradise once again. It is almost as if she is reading from a script. She promises to turn Dadri into a paradise.

BJP candidate Babita said, "I had to face many difficulties during my initial days as a wrestler. Things have changed under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Chief Minister Manohar Lal Khattar. I have joined the BJP as I was impressed by its ideology and policies." Babita further said, "Both wrestling and politics were equally tough, 'only only difference is tactics and technique'." My father Mahabir Phogat taught me wrestling, while I learnt the lessons of politics from my mother Sobha who had served as village Sarpanch for two

terms. I am the voice of the young and the women here."

Mahendra Singh, resident of Dadri and student of Panjab University said, "Babita Phogat is a great sporting icon. We respect her and wish her well in her sporting endeavours. But will she be able to take time out from sporting activities to address the issues of people of Dadri. There is a big difference between sports and politics."

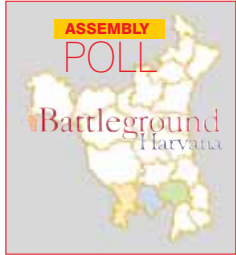
Dr Anand Kumar, Associated Professor, Institute of Integrated and Honours Studies, Kurukshetra University said that Charkhi Dadri, after the formation of the district, Dadri assembly seat has become hot seat. After the declaration of candidates by all the parties, rebellions have started and most of the rebels are pushing the independent rhythm. There will be a tough fight this time in this seat the margin of defeat and victory is expected to be very less, he said, adding Dadri is the Jat-dominated Assembly segments of the State, which the BJP has never been able to win ever since the inception of the State. But Prime Minister Narendra Modi's firepower and rally in this seat may well tilt the scales in the favour of candidate.

PNS ■ CHANDIGARH

Terming Bharatiya Janata Party's 'Sankalp Patra' as a new bundle of lies, Haryana Pradesh Congress Committee (HPCC) president Kumari Selja on Sunday asked the Chief Minister Manohar Lal Khattar to present report card of his five years government to the people of the state.

"There is nothing concrete in the BJP's manifesto but a bundle of lies, she said, adding as there is nothing to reveal in its report card, so once again BJP has brought a new resolution letter with new jumalas.

She said that as Khattar-led Government has not fulfilled the promises of its previous manifesto so as to how BJP is making new promises. It is not a manifesto but a false letter, a



jumla letter..., she added.

While addressing people in Faridabad, Selja alleged that BJP-led government has cheat-



ed the people in the name of smart city.

The state Congress chief said that in the name of Swachh Bharat, while someone is being photographed while sweeping, others are posing cleaning the garbage. But in reality, there is no sign of cleanliness. There are piles of garbage everywhere, she said.

Selja said that this government calls cows as Gaumata, but when this Gaumata falls ill after eating polythene from the garbage, the BJP does not see it. What kind of clean India do they want to make? she asked.

The Congress leader also said that the Khattar-led gov-

ernment had promised to double the income of the farmers, but here the farmers are neither getting compensation nor reasonable price of their crops.

This government talks about 'Beti Bachao Beti Padhao', but crime rate is increasing in the state. Businesses are shut down in Faridabad. Boys and girls are traveling 250 km for government jobs..., she claimed.

"If the government had provided jobs, our children would not have to travel like this. Educated youth are forced to do fourth-class jobs. Which parents teach the child to become a peon?" the Congress

leader asked.

She promised that the Congress government will give at least one government job in every household. We will give allowance to the unemployed. Women will be given reservation in jobs. A 'Kitchen bhat' of Rs 2,000 per month will be given to women for running their home, she said.

The state party president further said that Dalits should not forget what BJP has done to them. Scavengers are dying in the sewer every day. The Congress government will insure all the scavengers and secure security for them, she added.

Those thinking of forming Govt will sit in Opposition: Sukhbir Singh Badal

PNS ■ CHANDIGARH

The relations between the decades-old alliance partners — Shiromani Akali Dal (SAD) and the Bharatiya Janta Party (BJP) hit a new low in Haryana on Sunday with the Akali chief Sukhbir Badal virtually declaring that the saffron party would not win even a single seat in Sirsa and Fatehabad, while Haryana Chief Minister Manohar Lal Khattar challenged the Akalis to ensure SYL (Satlu Yamuna Link) canal to Haryana.

The ties between SAD and BJP went sour after the saffron party inducted the Akali Dal's lone MLA in the party at the time when the two were holding talks to decode the seat share. Accusing the BJP of betraying it, the SAD went on to announce its alliance with the Indian National Lok Dal (INLD) on three Assembly seats.

Taking a strong exception to the induction of Akali MLA Balkaur Singh into BJP, Sukhbir had described it as "unethical". Notably, SAD has an alliance with the BJP in Punjab and is part of the country's ruling National Democratic Alliance (NDA). In a veiled attack on the BJP, Sukhbir said: "The situation is changing too fast in Haryana. Those who are thinking of forming Government will sit in opposition."

Campaigning for SAD candidate Kulwinder Singh Kunal from Ratia seat in Fatehabad district, Sukhbir said that it was a "misconception" that there was a pro-BJP wave in Haryana. "There is a misconception that there is a wave in favour of BJP today. It (BJP) will not win a single seat in Sirsa and Fatehabad," he claimed.

Sukhbir also sought votes for joint SAD-INLD candidates, claiming that the parties belong to villages. He said that the former Deputy Prime Minister Chaudhary Devi Lal and former Chief Minister Parkash Singh Badal always worked for the welfare of farmers and labourers.

"A lot of other political parties are contesting this election. We need to check what is their background. Do they know your problems? They are not connected with you and villages," he said.

"You know Dev Lal ji and he used to meet villagers regularly and hear them out. This is the difference. Now, does the current CM (Manohar Lal Khattar) of Haryana have any connection with you and villages?" he asked.

"Ch Devi Lal was a people person despite rising to dizzy heights...In stark contrast, today's chief ministers are elected on a wave and this is the reason why they did not think it fit to visit the villages and address the grievances

of villagers. But I am telling you that the wave has stopped. I don't see the BJP or the Congress winning a single seat in Sirsa district. People have realized who is their own and are extending wholehearted support to the INLD-SAD candidates," he said.

He urged the people to unite and elect the parties of the villages, SAD and the INLD, to power in Haryana as they were the true representatives of the poor, farmers and labourers.

"The Chautala family was known for developing rural areas. It is well known that the rural areas got maximum attention when the INLD was in power. We should again extend support to the INLD-SAD alliance to ensure we have a government which fulfils the aspirations of people of the villages," he said.

On the other hand, Khattar minced no words to attack its rivals in Haryana. He said: "Many Akali Dal leaders had reached out to us to forge an alliance and reach a consensus, but we could not negotiate with the Akalis. In fact, I asked them to give the SYL water to Haryana, we would give not one, but two-three seats for free."

Khattar, campaigning for BJP candidate from Kalanwali constituency Balkaur Singh who was earlier SAD leader, had addressed people in Punjabi.

POLL BUZZ

RAJNATH LAUDS CENTRE FOR ABROGATION OF ART 370

Karnal: Union Defence Minister Rajnath Singh on Sunday lauded the Central Government for the abrogation of Articles 370 and 35-A in Jammu and Kashmir. Singh was speaking here at the Anandh grain market, while campaigning for Bakshish Singh Virk, BJP candidate from the constituency in the upcoming Assembly elections. The Defence Minister said the BJP had "brought one nation, one constitution and one law, fulfilling the dreams of Shyama Prasad Mukherjee." "We have done what we have promised," said Singh. Singh said the BJP government had given "all rights" to the people of Jammu and Kashmir, adding that India had given a "befitting" reply to Pakistan.



GOVT POLICIES RUINED FARMERS: HOODA



Yamunanagar: Former Chief Minister Bhupinder Singh Hooda alleged that Manohar Lal Khattar-led government ruined farmers in five years by raising the production cost of crops instead of increasing their income. "This government has taxed fertilisers, pesticides, tractor parts and other items used to produce crops leading to an increase in the production cost. No effort was made to increase the income of farmers," Hooda said. He said when he became the Chief Minister in 2004, the rate of sugarcane was only Rs 110 per quintal. When he left the post of the Chief Minister in 2014, the rate of sugarcane had reached Rs 310 per quintal but the present BJP government made an increase of only Rs 30 in sugarcane rate in the past five years..., he added.

8 dead, 5 hurt in road accident in Chamoli

Vehicle reported to be overloaded at time of mishap

PNS ■ DEHRADUN

At least eight people have died, one is missing and five are reported to be injured following a road accident in Chamoli district on Sunday. They were reportedly going for the last rites of a person from their village — Balaan, when the driver lost control of the vehicle causing it to fall off the mountainside into a deep gorge.

According to the local officials, the vehicle was overloaded. The investigation in the case is still ongoing.

The accident took place near Deval in the Tharali Tehsil of Chamoli district.

Along with police and other officials, the Chamoli district magistrate Swati Bhaduriya went to the incident site to check the progress of the rescue mission.

She said, "As of now there are at least eight people dead and five injured. The teams of local police and local unit of State Disaster Response Force (SDRF) are working on the

- According to the local officials, the vehicle was overloaded. The investigation in the case is still ongoing
- Accident took place near Deval in the Tharali Tehsil of Chamoli district
- There were total 14 passengers in the vehicle

According to the local officials, the vehicle was overloaded. The investigation in the case is still ongoing

rescue mission."

According to the information provided by the local police, there were total 14 passengers in the vehicle.

The deceased have been identified as Jasbeer Singh (32), Surendra Singh (30), Madan Singh (60), Darban Singh (48), Madan Singh (38), Kailash Singh (40), Gopal Singh (35), Dharam Singh and (55) while the injured are driver Gopal Singh (35), who has been referred to a higher centre, Mahaveer Singh (53), Himmat Singh (60), Mohan Singh (39) and Aalam Singh (40).

According to police, Jai Singh Danu (48) was still

missing. The search operation for him was still ongoing till the time of this report being filed.

Meanwhile, Governor Baby Rani Maurya and Chief Minister Trivendra Singh Rawat have expressed deep grief at the loss of lives and injury caused in the mishap.

The Chief Minister directed officials concerned to provide immediate assistance to the accident victims and ensure proper treatment for the injured. The Chief Minister has also ordered a magisterial probe into the mishap.

Despite Motor Vehicles (Amendment) Act coming into force, violations like overloading are still common especially in the mountainous regions due to lack of adequate public transport and other factors.



Centre’s plan to privatise THDC is unacceptable, says Upadhyaya

PNS ■ DEHRADUN

Alleging that the Centre is planning to privatise Tehri-Hydro Development Corporation (THDC) India Limited, former chief of Pradesh Congress Committee (PCC) Kishore Upadhyaya said that the decision will not only raise concern for the national security of India, but will also end up with more number of unemployed people in the State.

Addressing the mediapersons at the Press Club on Sunday he said giving Tehri dam into private hands will be like giving sacred rivers to one individual, which is not acceptable. He also said that they will be speaking with the Chief Minister of Uttarakhand, Trivendra Singh Rawat about the issue and will fight against the decision.

He added, "This is a matter of great concern not only for Uttarakhand, but for the entire country. The Central Government is planning to give THDC into private hands. They are giving our biggest

assets — water into private hands. This is too great a resource for just one individual to have. In addition to that, we have international borders with China so the privatisation of THDC could also affect the level of our national security as well."

Stating the norms in Reorganisation Act of Uttarakhand (2000) he said, as per the Act after a period of 25 years, all these dams whether private or in some other hands were supposed to come under the jurisdiction of the state government, but now with this decision the State will have nothing in its hands.

Senior Congress leader, Jot Singh Bisht said, "During the construction of Tehri dam, about 125 villages were submerged. Now, the centre is planning to put the agency which made Tehri dam possible into private hands. It is obvious that the private body will place their people to replace the local people who are presently employed at THDC. This is absolutely unacceptable, and we will fight against it."

Classifieds

LOST AND FOUND

It is notified for the information that my Original statement of Marks Sheet of main Sr. Secondary Examination bearing Roll No 2219083 of year 1993 issued by the CBSE have actually been lost Name: Gursharanjit Singh S/o Sardar Tarsem Singh Address: # 1253 Sector 42-B, Chandigarh. 62801-51052

I, Somwati W/o Khattan R/o Village Jaffarpur, Tehsil Ganaur, Distt. Sonapat declare that i have lost my original registry no.1939 dated 20-09-2016 are lost on dated 28/03/2019

I, Sukhrabjir Singh S/o Sarbjit Singh R/o 38-A, Greater Kailash Colony, Batala, Distt. Gurdaspur declare that my Matriculation CBSE Certificate No.0561269 And Roll No.2235960 has been lost somewhere Please issue me duplicate Certificate.

PUBLIC NOTICE

It is to inform the General Public that We Mary Singh, Meera Rose Sunder Singh and Nicholas Romreen Lampen Sunder Singh have not given any authorization to anybody to sell our property H.NO 17 Sector 5 Chandigarh . Thereby any body dealing with anyone claiming to do is doing so at his own risk.

I, JaiBhagwan S/o Titak Raj R/o Village Mukarpur, Tehsil Thanesar, Distt. Kurukshetra, have disown my son Rahul and his wife Sunita Kapoor from all my moveable immovable properties, as they are out of our control. Anybody dealing with them at their own risk.

CHANGE OF NAME

I, Harpreet Singh S/O Harkewal Singh, R/O Village Jalalwal, Tehsil Raikot, Distt. Luchiana Have Changed The Name Of My Minor Daughter Mumtaj Mirahar To Mumtaj Kaur Mrahar.

I, Gurinder Kumar S/O Kamal Parkash, R/O Green City, Raikot, Distt. Ludhiana, Have Changed My Name To Gurinder Kumar Vashist.

I, Gurmali Singh S/O Jagir Singh, R/O Vpo. Jhorran, Tehsil Raikot, Distt. Ludhiana, Have Changed My Name Gurmali Singh To Harmali Singh.

I, Surinderpal Kaur W/O Harmali Singh R/O Vpo. Jhorran, Tehsil Raikot, Distt. Ludhiana, Have Changed My Name Surinderpal Kaur To Surinder Kaur.

I, Ishu W/O Abhijit Bhatia Resident Of 61-A City Enclave Ichhe Wala Road Ferozepur City Have Changed My Name To Ishu Bhatia.

I, Hazara Ram S/o Sadhu Singh R/o Vill. Sherpur Dona Teh-Sultanpur Lodhi (Kapurthala) changed my name to Hazara Singh.

I, Anil Kumar Sharma S/o Jagdish Chand R/o # 1879A, W/No 7 Randhawa Road, Kharar (S.A.S. Nagar) changed my name Anil Kumar.

I Hitherto Known As Balwinder Ram S/O Munshi Ram R/O Village Cnak Mander, P.O. Kultham Tehsil Nawanshahr, District S.B.S. Nagar, Punjab Have Changed My Name And Shall Hereafter Be Known As Balwinder Kumar.

It Is For General Information That I Bharat Bhushan Son Of Gurmeet Chand Resident Of Village Lallian P.O. Garhshankar Tehsil Garhshankar District Hoshiarpur Punjab 144527 India Declare That On Behalf Of My Minor Daughter Harleen Have Changed Her Name Harleen To Harleen Kaur And Shall Hereafter Be Known As Harleen Kaur

I Hitherto Known As Sahil Thaper Son Of Naresh Chandar Resident Of Village Bajaha Kalan Tehsil Nakodar District Jalandhar Punjab 144033 India Have Changed My Name And Shall Hereafter Be Known As Sahil Thapar.

I Hitherto Known As Kundan Singh Son Of Surjit Singh Resident Of Vpo. Ghurka Tehsil Phillaur District Jalandhar Punjab India Have Changed My Name And Shall Hereafter Be Known As Surinder Singh Alias Kundan Singh.

I Hitherto Known As Sunita W/O Of Parminderjit Singh R/O H.No-43, Gali No-3, Ravdass Gurdwara, Mohalla Prempura, Phagwara, Distt. Kapurthala, 144401 Punjab India Have Changed My Name And Shall Hereafter Be Known As To Sunita Rani.

I Hitherto Known As Usha Kalucha W/O Of Sudesh Kumar Kalucha Resident Of 70-G New Model Town, Phagwara District Kapurthala Punjab, 144401 India, Have Changed My Name And Shall Hereafter Be Known As To Kamini Devi.

I Hitherto Known As Harsha Rani W/O Of Pardeep Kumar Ohri Resident Of House No.763-A Street No.2 Ward No.48, Nai Basti Bathinda Punjab India Have Changed My Name And Shall Hereafter Be Known As Geeta Ohri.

I Hitherto Known As Sukhpreet Singh Son Of Gurtej Singh Resident Of Village Mehma Sarja District Bathinda Punjab India Have Changed My Name And Shall Hereafter Be Known As Sukhpreet Singh Brar.

I Naveen S/O Kishan Lal R/O Village Khunde P.O. Bhekhawal District Hoshiarpur Have Changed My Name To Naveen Kumar.

I Priya W/O Natwar Khanna R/O H.No.325 St.No.3 Parladh Nagar Hoshiarpur Punjab Have Changed My Name To Priya Khanna.

I Joginder Lal S/O Amar Nath R/O H.No.5 Radha Swami Colony Tehsil Dasuya District Hoshiarpur Punjab Have Changed My Name To Joginder Pal.

I Sarabjit S/O Jaswinder Singh R/O Vpo. Chabbewal District Hoshiarpur Punjab Have Changed My Name To Sarabjit Singh.

I Sonia D/O Mohinder Singh R/O Vpo. Rakran Dhahan, Tehsil Balachaur, District S.B.S. Nagar Have Changed My Name From Sonia To Sonia Dhir.

I Gursharan Singh S/O Late Mohinder Singh R/O Gali No.6, H.No.161 Guru Harkrishan Nagar Phagwara District Kapurthala Have Changed My Name To Gursharan Singh Saini.

I Sher Singh Alias Shamsher Singh S/O Pala Singh R/O Vpo. Mahima District Ferozepur Have Changed My Name To Shamsher Singh.

I Deepa Chawla W/O Late Rajesh Kumar R/O Ward No.12 Musalmana Wali Street Guruharsahai Distt. Ferozpur Have Changed My Name Deepa Chawla To Deepa Chhabra.

I Hardeep Singh S/O Jagdev Singh R/O Vpo. Kokri Behniwal, Distt. Moga Have Changed My Name To Hardeep Singh Cheema.

I Krishna Devi W/O Amrik Raj R/O H.No.329/334-B Jallowal Abadi Jalandhar Have Changed My Name To Krishna Rani.

I Saroj Kumari W/O Darshan Singh R/O Vpo. Kaliewala, Distt. Moga Have Changed My Name To Saroj.

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Birth anniversary of ‘Adi Kavi’ Valmiki observed

PNS ■ HARIDWAR

Most of those born in a Hindu family grow up listening to the Ramayana which narrates the struggle of lord Rama to rescue his wife Sita from the demon king Ravana of Lanka.

Estimated from the earliest available records from the 7th to 4th centuries BCE, Ramayana was written by ‘Adi Kavi’ Valmiki whose birth anniversary was observed on Sunday.

The birth anniversary of sage Valmiki revered as the first poet of Sanskrit literature is celebrated on Ashwin Poornima as per Hindu lunar calendar.

He wrote the Ramayana, depicting the story of Lord Rama in 24,000 verses that are divided in seven ‘Kandas’ (cantos). Kusha and Lava, the twin sons of lord Rama were born in Rishi Valmiki’s hermitage. Valmiki taught Ramayana to his disciples — the twins.

The epic narrates the life of Rama who went on a fourteen-year exile to the forest following the command of his father king Dashratha as sought by his second wife Kaikeyi.

The epic is still sung by famous religious personalities and devotees in discourses and has a life giving message.

The biggest temple of Rishi Valmiki is in Thiruvannmiyur in Chennai in southern part of India. The temple is believed to be 1,300-year-old and it is believed that after writing epic Ramayana, Maharishi Valmiki rested at the spot and later the temple was built. Every year ‘Brahmotsavam’ festival is held on the temple site.

There is a legend behind how Valmiki turned into a poet. Valmiki was going to the river Ganga for his daily ablutions along with his disciple who carried his clothes. On the way, they came across the Tamasa river stream. Valmiki decided to have bath in the crystal clear waters of the river but as soon as he was about to get down into the stream, he spotted a pair of mating cranes.

Seeing the happy birds he also felt pleased but suddenly, the male bird was hit by an arrow and he died on the spot. Unable to bear the shock, the female bird also died in no time. Looking around to find out who had shot the bird, Valmiki saw a hunter with a bow and arrows.

Venting his fury on him, he cried out a verse — “Thou will find no rest for the long years of eternity/For you killed a bird couple in love and unsuspecting”. He later composed the

The birth anniversary of sage Valmiki revered as the first poet of Sanskrit literature is celebrated on Ashwin Poornima as per Hindu lunar calendar

entire Ramayana in the same meter that issued forth from him in the verse form.

V Kulwant, the president of Dayanand Vedic Mission said, “The epics Ramayana and Srimad Bhagwat are based on the tenets of Sanatan Dharma. Ramayana motivates the inner soul of a person. Listening to these epics, all the differences based on religion, caste and colour vanish and these epics have global appeal. Not only Hindus but people from other religions also rever Ramayana.”

A professor of Rishikul Ayurvedic College, VK Agnihotri said, “A simple verse ‘Durlabham hi sadaa sukham’ from second canto of Valmiki Ramayana states a universal truth that to be happy always, is something which is difficult to achieve. So happiness and sorrow keep coming in one’s life in turns, nothing is permanent.”

Valmiki had given shelter to Sita in his hermitage when Rama, her husband banished her and it was later when twins of lord Rama sang the story in Ayodhya during the



palace. Rama confirmed that whatever had been sung by them was entirely true. Such is the power of the narrative stories and they go on for ages sung by people.

Speaking on the popularity of the epic, a scholar of scriptures, Swami Sharad Puri said, “Originally Ramayana was

written by sage Valmiki and later over 40 Ramayanas came in common languages by different scholars.

In North India, Tulsidas Ramayana is popular while in south India, Kamba Ramayana is popular which is derived from Valmiki Ramayana.”

VIRASAT 2019

Heritage walk, Kathak and Sufi Music enthral audience

PNS ■ DEHRADUN

The third day of Virasat, the arts and heritage festival saw a number of people participating in a heritage walk from Khalanga Smarak to Khalanga top on Sunday morning. Later in the evening, Kathak dancer Shinjini Kulkarni, the granddaughter of Pandit Birju Maharaj, enthralled the gathering with her performance.

Sufi singers Jyoti and Sultana — the Nooran sisters also performed during the evening. Chief Minister of Nagaland Neiphiu Rio was the chief guest on the occasion.

Earlier, the heritage walk headed by Sargam Mehra lasted about three hours and was joined by about 90

people.

The walk talked about the battles fought in Khalanga and Nalapani.

In the evening, Shinjini Kulkarni began her performance with Hari Vandana composed and written by Pandit Birju Maharaj and proceeded to show the traditional Toda, Paran and Tihai in Teen Taal and Dhamar. Her next presentation was Dadra, “*Kaise main jaoon sham roke dagariya*”, composed by her great grandfather Pandit Bindadeen Maharaj.

She was accompanied on Tabla by Yogesh Gangani, Gayaki by Zoeb Hassan and on Sarangi by Ghulam Mohammad.

The day’s programme concluded with performance by the Nooran sisters.



Woman found dead near under construction building in Dehradun

PNS ■ DEHRADUN

A 27-year-old woman was found dead near an under-construction building at Vijay Park, Vasant Vihar on Sunday. The Dehradun Police have arrested two men, with whom she was reportedly drinking till late night on Saturday.

The deceased has been identified as Arti Kanaujia while the accused arrested are Deepak Chauhan (28) alias Abhishek Chauhan resident of Chandan Nagar and Durgesh Kumar (22) alias Sunny resident of Balbeer Road.

According to the information provided by the police, Arti and her husband Shyam Kanaujia had a rift, because of which since the past six months she was living with her parents. They have a nine-year old daughter. She was working at a store along with accused Deepak and Durgesh. Arti’s parents did not approve of her friendship with both Deepak and Durgesh. She was used to drinking also.

During interrogation accused Deepak said he knew Arti since last two years and wanted to marry her, but Arti started ignoring him after Durgesh joined the same store. Due to which he and Durgesh also had some argument.

On Saturday night when Deepak went to drop Arti at her maternal residence, her parents scolded her for being drunk and coming home late night.

U’khand CM discusses plans for Bharat Bharati festival

PNS ■ DEHRADUN

Chief Minister Trivendra Singh Rawat held a meeting with representatives of private higher educational institutions at the CM residence to discuss Bharat Bharati Utsav to be held to propagate the message of unity in diversity.

Addressing representatives of the institutions, Rawat said youngsters from across India are studying in higher education institutions in Uttarakhand.

He said, “If a Bharat Bharati festival is held at one place in the state every year, it will enable to students to get to know the cultural diversity of India. This will also enable the youngsters to communicate better with each other even as the event will spread of message of national unity.

Cong on talent hunt in UP to revitalise organisation

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

With the change in organisational structure in Uttar Pradesh, the Congress is looking forward to rope in 'fresh talents' to revitalise the organisation.

Based on the suggestions by party general secretary Priyanka Gandhi, who had been travelling across the Hindi heartland at regular intervals, the party will initiate talent hunt at block level and give opportunity to people who could not make it into politics due to family background or financial constraints.

Congress appointed Ajay Kumar Lallu as its Uttar Pradesh president, replacing Raj Babbar, and revamped the state unit, bringing in four vice presidents, 12 general secretaries and 24 secretaries. The party has set up an advisory council to the general secretary comprising senior leaders such as Mohsina Kidwai, P L Punia and R P N Singh. It also named an eight-member working group for strategy and planning.

Lallu on Sunday said he is banking on 'Sampark' (contact), 'Samvaad' (dialogue) and 'Sangharsh' (struggle) to strengthen his party and exude confidence that it will form



the government in the State after linking more students and youth with itself.

"The biggest challenge is to make the Congress the only alternative to the BJP. For this, we have to infuse enthusiasm and self-confidence among the party workers, and work closely with them. For emerging as the only alternative to the BJP, the path is struggle. If we stand up to the expectations of the people and win their trust, we will not only become the only alternative to the BJP, but also form the Government in the state," Lallu said.

Senior Congress leader Jitin Prasad said the road ahead for the Congress in UP was very "long and tough", but the party would remain unfazed by "short-term" setbacks as it was confident of winning back the people's con-

fidence eventually. Prasad however also mentioned the revamp of the State unit will be a "mix of the old and new". Prasad, who was named as a member of the working group for strategy and planning, said Priyanka Gandhi as General Secretary is giving direction to the party cadre which is determined to expose the forces who have gained people's support due to a false narrative.

"This has already begun and the Congress has gone ahead with the change in its Uttar Pradesh president and a new team that has been put in place," Prasad said. As part of the strategy under Priyanka Gandhi, the grand old party's platform will be for the people who have not been given a chance — be it in decision-making, politics and elections.

Netherlands King, Queen on five-day India visit from Sun

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Netherlands King Willem-Alexander and Queen Máxima will arrive here on Sunday for a five-day visit during which they will hold meetings with the top Indian leadership to boost bilateral economic and political cooperation.

King Willem-Alexander's trip would be his first State visit to India, following his ascension to the throne in 2013. King Willem-Alexander and Queen Máxima will arrive here on Sunday night for the visit at the invitation of President Ram Nath Kovind, according to the Ministry of External Affairs.

The King and Queen will visit New Delhi, Mumbai, and Kerala during their visit. On Monday, the Dutch royals will meet President Kovind and Prime Minister Narendra Modi, while External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar will call on them. The King and Queen will be accompanied on their visit by a senior ministerial delegation. After the official programme in Delhi, King Willem-Alexander and Queen Máxima will also visit Mumbai from Wednesday and reach Kerala on Thursday. The royal couple will head home on Friday.

India and the Netherlands have a bilateral trade turnover of USD 12.87 billion (2018-2019). The Netherlands is the fifth largest investor in India with a cumulative investment of USD 23 billion for the period 2000 to Dec 2017, the MEA said.

The Dutch Royal couple will also attend the Inaugural Session of 25th Technology Summit in New Delhi on Tuesday. The Netherlands is the partner country for this Summit.

The Royal couple would be accompanied by about 140 business houses for this technology and innovation fair, representing various sectors, including agriculture, water, health-care and climate change. The visit is expected to boost economic and political cooperation between India and the Netherlands, the MEA said.

From Mumbai, on October 17, they will visit Mattancherry palace and Dutch company Ned Spice in Kochi in Kerala. Kerala Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan will host a dinner for the royal couple.

On October 18, the Royal couple will enjoy a boat ride at Alappuzha and address the media before their return in the afternoon.

RAJIV GANDHI'S ASSASSINATION CASE — TN Cong: We will oppose moves to release convicts

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Tamil Nadu unit of the Congress on Sunday said it would strongly oppose any move to release any of the seven convicts, held guilty in former Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi's assassination case.

"There are so many prisoners including convicts in prisons of Tamil Nadu. Why is there a motivated demand for releasing Rajiv's killers only?" Tamil Nadu Congress Committee president K S Alagiri said. He said any decision to release the convicts would set a "bad precedent" and "highly disturb the social order and peace in Tamil Nadu".

Alagiri was reacting to a recent meeting that NDA-ally PMK's founder president S Ramadoss and his son and Rajya Sabha member R Anbumani had with Prime Minister Narendra Modi here for his intervention for the release of Rajiv Gandhi's killers.

Questioning the bids of "intervention in the justice system", Alagiri said the law of the land should be allowed take its own course. It is for the court to decide the matter, he added.

Rajiv Gandhi was assassinated on May 21, 1991 during an election meeting at



Sriperumbudur near Chennai by a suicide bomber of the banned LTTE. In a memorandum to Prime Minister Modi, Ramadoss had argued that the Supreme Court last year had allowed the Tamil Nadu Government to decide on the release of seven convicts — Murugan, Santhan, Perarivalan, Robert Payas, Ravichandran, Jayakumar and Nalini.

The Tamil Nadu Government later on September 9, 2018 had passed a Cabinet resolution recommending to Governor Banwarilal Purohit for the release of convicts, but his office has been delaying the matter, he said.

"Tamils all over the world expected that the Governor

would take a decision shortly. But even after one year and one month after receiving the letter, the office of Tamil Nadu Governor has not taken any decision and is procrastinating this matter. This has disappointed and distressed millions of Tamils all over the world," Ramadoss said.

"It is rather unfair," he said, adding the seven convicts were in prison for the last 28 years and keeping them in jail any further without any strong reason would be a serious violation of the human rights. Rajiv Gandhi's widow Sonia and son Rahul have "categorically said they have no objections to the release of seven Tamils," the PMK had said.

Was carrying acupressure roller while plogging at Mamallapuram beach: PM

PNS ■ NEW DELHI



PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Ending the curiosity of people over the stick-like object he was holding while plogging at the Mamallapuram beach, Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Sunday said it was an acupressure roller that he often uses. "Since yesterday, many of you have been asking - what is it that I was carrying in my hands when I went plogging at a beach in Mamallapuram. It is an acupressure roller that I often use. I have found it to be very helpful," Modi tweeted.

He also posted pictures of the acupressure roller he was

holding at the beach.

Modi was in the coastal town for a two-day informal summit with Chinese President Xi Jinping. On Saturday, the last day of the summit, the prime minister was seen cleaning up a beach by picking up plastic litter and other waste during his morning walk.

Modi on Saturday had released a three-minute video of his plog on the beach where he was seen collecting waste and urged the people to ensure that public places are clean and tidy. Picking litter while jogging is referred to as plogging.

Amit Shah to address ATS officials today

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Union Home Minister Amit Shah will on Monday address top officials of the Anti Terrorism Squads (ATS) from various States. The conference, also to be addressed by National Security Advisor (NSA) Ajit Doval, is expected to formulate a comprehensive counter-terrorism action plan and how to enhance cooperation among ATS of different States.

"The Home Minister will deliver the inaugural address where he is likely to highlight the central government's outlines for the emerging terror threats," a Home Ministry official said. The top officials of ATS of the states will give presentation on their own anti-terror strategies and the action plans put in place to deal with any kind of emergencies.

The conference is being organised by the National Investigation Agency (NIA).

Prasad withdraws comments on economic slump after facing flak

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Facing flak after he cited ₹120 crore business done by three movies on a single day to rebut suggestions of an economic slump in the country, Union Minister Ravi Shankar Prasad on Sunday withdrew his comments.

Prasad's comments in Mumbai on Saturday coupled with his criticism of an NSSO report on high unemployment rate and IMF's report of a slowdown in India had attracted flak and the senior BJP leader was also trolled online.

In a statement issued on Sunday, Prasad claimed that one part of his statement had been "completely twisted out of context", and said "being a sensitive person, I withdraw this comment".

"My comments made yesterday in Mumbai about three films making ₹120 crore in a single day - the highest ever, was a factually correct statement. I had stated this as I was in Mumbai — the film capital of India. We are very proud of our



film industry which provided employment to lakhs of people and contributes significantly by way of taxes.

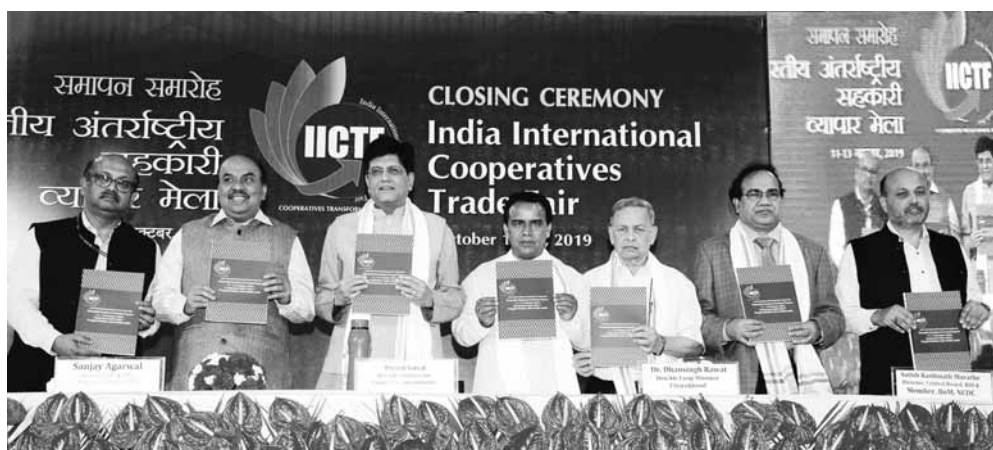
"I had also explained in detail about the various measures the Government has taken as pro-people move to strengthen our economy. Government of PM Narendra Modi always cares for the sensitivity of common people. Entire video of my media interaction is available on my social media. Yet I regret to note that one part of my statement has been completely twisted out of context. Being

a sensitive person, I withdraw this comment," Prasad said.

Prasad on Saturday said three Bollywood movies generating business of ₹120 crore on the October 2 holiday suggested a "sound economy" even as he dubbed "wrong" the NSSO report which had reportedly pegged unemployment rate at 45-year high in 2017.

Days after the International Monetary Fund (IMF) said the economic slowdown is more pronounced this year in India and Brazil, Prasad said the measurement was incomplete.

Comment he alleged that some people were misleading people over the unemployment scenario. "I was also told that on October 2, which is observed as one of the national holidays, three Hindi movies garnered ₹120 crore business. Unless the economy is sound in the country how can three movies alone collect so much business in a single day?" Prasad asked, while speaking to reporters.



Union Minister for Railways and Commerce & Industry Piyush Goyal releases a publication at the closing ceremony of the 'India International Cooperatives Trade Fair' at Pragati Maidan in New Delhi on Sunday

Ayodhya case to enter crucial final leg as SC to resume hearings today



New Delhi: The protracted hearing in the politically sensitive Ram Janmabhoomi-Babri Masjid land dispute at Ayodhya will enter into the crucial final leg on Monday when the Supreme Court resumes proceedings on the 38th day after the week-long Dussehra break.

A five-judge Constitution bench headed by Chief Justice of India Ranjan Gogoi, which started the day-to-day proceedings on August 6 after mediation proceedings failed to find an amicable solution to the vexatious dispute, has revised the deadline for wrapping up the proceedings and has fixed it on October 17.

Fourteen appeals have been filed in the apex court against the 2010 Allahabad High Court judgment, delivered in four civil suits, that the 2.77-acre land in Ayodhya be partitioned equally among the three parties — the Sunni Waqf Board, the Nirmohi Akhara and Ram Lalla.

Initially, as many as five lawsuits were filed in the lower court. The first one was filed by Gopal Singh Visharad, a devotee of 'Ram Lalla', in 1950 to seek enforcement of the right to worship of Hindus at the disputed site.

In the same year, the Paramahansa Ramachandra Das had also filed the lawsuit for continuation of worship and keeping the idols under the central dome of the now-demolished disputed structure.

The plea was later withdrawn. Later, the Nirmohi Akhara also moved the trial court in 1959 seeking management and 'shebaiti' (devotee) rights over the 2.77 acre disputed land.

Then came the lawsuit of the Uttar Pradesh Sunni Central Wakf Board which moved the court in 1961, claiming title right over the disputed property.

The deity, 'Ram Lalla Virajman' through next friend and former Allahabad High Court judge Deoki Nandan Agrawal, and the Janambhoomi (the birthplace) moved the lawsuit in 1989,

seeking title right over the entire disputed property on the key ground that the land itself has the character of the deity and of a 'Juristic entity'.

Later, all the lawsuits were transferred to the Allahabad High Court for adjudication following the demolition of the disputed Ram Janambhoomi-Babri masjid structure on December 6, 1992, sparking communal riots in the country.

Earlier, the bench, also comprising justices S A Bobde, D Y Chandrachud, Ashok Bhushan and S A Nazeer, had said it would wrap up the hearing by October 17, a day sooner than the earlier schedule.

Fixing the schedule for the final leg of the lengthy arguments, it had said that the Muslim side would complete the arguments on October 14 and thereafter, two days would be granted to the Hindu parties to sum up their rejoinders by October 16.

October 17 would be the last day for wrapping up the hearing when the parties will have to make the final arguments about the relief they are seeking, the court had said. The bench had earlier fixed the deadline of October 18 to conclude the hearing.

The judgment in the matter is to be pronounced by November 17, the day the Chief Justice of India will demit the office.

The apex court had on August 6 commenced day-to-day proceedings in the case as the mediation proceedings initiated to find the amicable resolution had failed.

It had taken note of the report of the three-member panel, comprising Justice FMI Kallifulla, spiritual guru and founder of the Art of Living foundation Sri Sri Ravishankar and senior advocate and renowned mediator Sriram Panchu, that mediation proceedings, which went on for about four months, did not result in any final settlement and it had to decide the matter pending before it. **PTI**

Sena free to express views but Assembly polls under Fadnavis' leadership: Bhupender Yadav

New Delhi: Shiv Sena is free to express its views and the desire of having its own Chief Minister but Maharashtra election is being fought under the leadership of Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis and it has been conveyed to the allies, BJP General Secretary and in-charge for the Assembly polls Bhupender Yadav said.

Responding to questions about Shiv Sena leaders' remarks that there will be a Maharashtra Chief Minister from their party in the future, Yadav said political parties are free to talk about their desires.

"Every party can talk about its future and express its desires. But this election is being fought

under the leadership of Maharashtra Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis. It has been cleared to the entire alliance," Yadav told PTI.

On the issue of seat sharing, he said the BJP believes in a politics "where there is role and space for its allies". And this is visible in the Government at the Centre where despite getting a thumping majority, the BJP has given representation to its allies, Yadav said underlining that Shiv Sena is a very old and natural ally of the party.

He expressed confidence that the BJP-led alliance which includes Shiv Sena and some small parties will come back to power with a thumping



majority.

"The BJP-led alliance in Maharashtra is in a very strong position and will get three-fourths majority in the State

Assembly elections," he said.

Talking about Maratha reservation, Yadav said the party believes in all round development of the society,

unlike the opposition parties in the State which aimed for growth of one specific segment of society or region.

"The BJP has always supported reservation under the ambit of the Constitution. The reservation was required as there was inequality in the State, which happened as the state was ruled by the Congress for so many years," Yadav said.

On the question of leaders from other parties joining the BJP, Yadav said those who come into the party without compromising its ideology help in "social and geographical expansion" of the organisation.

He claimed that continuing

with the same chief minister for the full term, which is rare in case of Maharashtra, is also working in favour of the party and there is a "wave" in favour of the BJP-led alliance.

Yadav, a key strategist of the party, has been its in-charge in various assembly elections which the party won including in Rajasthan in 2013 and Gujarat and Jharkhand in 2014.

He had also played a role in party's massive victory in Uttar Pradesh Assembly polls. However, in Bihar the party lost the 2015 Assembly elections to the alliance of JD(U), RJD and the Congress when he was the in-charge. **PTI**

MAHARASHTRA POLLS

Shah: PM Modi united J&K with mainstream

PTI ■ KOLHAPUR

Further sharpening the BJP's narrative for Maharashtra Assembly polls on nationalism, BJP president Amit Shah on Sunday praised the "man with 56-inch chest" in Prime Minister Narendra Modi for nullifying Article 370 and integrating Jammu & Kashmir with the mainstream.

Addressing an election rally in Maharashtra's Kolhapur district, he said the previous Governments never had the courage shown by Modi.

He appealed to people to ask Congress and NCP leaders, when they come to seek votes, whether they support the NDA Government's decision to abrogate the provisions that gave special status to Jammu & Kashmir.

He targeted Congress leader Rahul Gandhi and NCP chief Sharad Pawar for questioning the Government's move to abrogate Article 370.

"After people of the country and Maharashtra voted



him for the second term, Modiji did something for which the entire country was waiting for 70 years...He abrogated Article 370 on August 5 and joined Jammu & Kashmir with the country's mainstream," Shah said.

Shah said since the days of Jan Sangh, they have been hearing that there cannot be two prime ministers, there cannot be two symbols and two constitutions, but "it was the Congress which, by imposing Article 370, stopped the process of integrating Jammu & Kashmir with India for several years".

"As a result, thousands of our people lost their lives due

to terrorism, but still there was no intention of any party to remove Article 370," he said.

"Several Governments came and went, several prime ministers came and went, no one had the courage to abrogate Article 370. But, the man with the 56-inch chest scrapped it in one go," Shah said.

He said during the UPA rule, terrorists from Pakistan used to infiltrate and kill Indian soldiers.

"They used to decapitate our soldiers, but the then Prime Minister 'Mouni baba' Manmohan Singh never used to utter a single word. But after the Uri and Pulwama attacks, Modiji showed the courage of killing terrorists in their den through surgical strike and air strikes," he said.

He further hit out at the opposition over the Government's decision to ban the practice of triple talaq.

Our schemes are for people's welfare: Yogi

PTI ■ AURANGABAD

Initiatives of BJP-Shiv Sena Government in Maharashtra are about people's welfare while those of previous Governments were about grabbing public money for the benefit of a few, Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath said at a poll rally in Maharashtra's Hingoli district on Sunday.

Maharashtra Assembly polls are slated for October 21 and results will be announced on October 24.

"Funds allocated for schemes and farmers were grabbed. Deals were cut while providing jobs. Development was limited to development of a family," Adityanath said attacking the opposition.

Speaking on the revocation of provisions of Article 370 in Jammu and Kashmir, he said the move by Prime Minister Narendra Modi was a tribute to icons like Babasaheb Ambedkar and Chhatrapati Shivaji who fought for justice.

"The Congress included Article 370 in the Constitution in 1952 despite opposition from Dr Ambedkar. Its abrogation is a tribute to Babasaheb Ambedkar and Chhatrapati Shivaji



'Funds allocated for schemes and farmers were grabbed. Deals were cut while providing jobs. Development was limited to development of a family,' Adityanath said attacking the opposition

Maharaj who always fought for justice," he said.

Adityanath praised the Devendra Fadnavis Government over the state's law and order situation and said it, along with the Centre, had taken strong steps to curb terrorism.

The UP CM was campaigning for BJP's Tanaji Mutkule who is seeking re-election from Hingoli Assembly seat.

PM, Shah roaming in Maha as BJP senses defeat: Pawar

PTI ■ NJALGAON

NCP president Sharad Pawar on Sunday asked why Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Union Home Minister Amit Shah and Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis were holding a large number of rallies if they saw "no fight" from the Opposition in the Assembly poll.

Addressing a poll rally in Chalisgaon, Pawar said the BJP has lost sleep as the youngsters were gearing up to defeat the ruling party.

Pawar congratulated the BJP-led Central Government for abrogating Article 370, which gave special status to Jammu & Kashmir, but also asked whether it had the courage to scrap Article 371 which gives special rights to some north-eastern states.

"The Chief Minister said he could not see an opponent for the BJP's wrestler in this poll battle. I am the president of Maharashtra grapplers association. Our grappler fights with another grappler and not others," Pawar said at a poll rally in Jamner.

"Why is the Prime Minister holding 9 rallies, Union Home Minister 20 rallies and Chief Minister 50 rallies if they think there is no fight? They have lost sleep as youngsters are up for defeating them. Hence, they are roaming in Maharashtra," he asked.

On Shah asking him to list what he



has done for Maharashtra, Pawar said he strived to make the State number one in all areas, and took steps for growth of industries and, thereby, employment.

"I was Chief Minister when the employment guarantee scheme was implemented in Maharashtra in 1978," Pawar said.

Among others, Pawar also said the women were given reservation in local governing bodies when he led the State.

Pawar reiterated he was named in a money laundering case by the Enforcement Directorate in connection with the alleged Maharashtra State Cooperative Bank scam despite not being a member of the bank.

Pawar alleged that factories and business have shut down on the BJP's watch. The former Union agriculture minister claimed 16,000 farmers committed suicide during the BJP-Shiv Sena's rule.

Raj targets BJP for not raising 'relevant' issues

PTI ■ THANE

Criticising BJP leaders for highlighting abrogation of Article 370 during their campaigns for the upcoming Maharashtra polls, MNS chief Raj Thackeray has questioned the saffron party's silence on issues like farmer suicides and bad condition of roads in the State.

Addressing election rallies on Saturday night in Thane district's Bhiwandi and Kalyan towns for the MNS candidates, he said leaders of the ruling BJP have been raising issues that have no relevance to the State polls.

The BJP leaders, specially Union Home Minister Amit Shah, repeatedly highlighted the scrapping of Article 370 in Jammu and Kashmir, in their rallies in Maharashtra, he noted. "When Maharashtra is facing problems

like farmer suicides and bad condition of roads, they are highlighting issues that have no relevance to the state polls...They conveniently divert the attention of people," Thackeray said.

He said this was the right time for voters to show such leaders their place and make non-performers sit at home.

Urging people to vote for a strong opposition, he said, "There is no strong Opposition in the State to challenge the BJP-led Government, hence the Maharashtra Navnirman Sena (MNS) is the right choice for it." Further criticising the Devendra Fadnavis-led state Government, he sought to know why the memorial of warrior king Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj, proposed at an island in the Arabian Sea off Mumbai coast,

Polls being held because Cong saved democracy, says Kharge

PTI ■ AURANGABAD

Senior Congress leader and former Lok Sabha MP Mallikarjun Kharge on Sunday claimed people were able to vote and fight polls because his party saved democracy.

Addressing a rally in Ausa in Latur, he lashed out at the ruling BJP for questioning the contribution of the Congress in the country's progress. "The BJP is asking what has Congress done till now. We can answer it. We saved democracy. Hence people are contesting elections today. And we can see Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Amit Shah campaigning in Maharashtra," he

said. "We have saved the country and Constitution. The BJP should tell the country what it has done in the past five years and we will tell them what we did in five decades," he added.

Hitting out at the Maharashtra government, Kharge said it promised to waive off Rs 35,000 crore loans of 90 lakh farmers but had not managed to reach even half the target. He said the BJP was projecting Prime Minister Narendra Modi and asking votes in the name of national issues as it had nothing to show by way of performance in Maharashtra.

Farmer hangs self wearing BJP poll t-shirt in Maha's Buldhana

PTI ■ BULDHANA

In an incident that is likely to embarrass the Devendra Fadnavis Government, a farmer allegedly committed suicide on Sunday morning in Maharashtra's Buldhana district while wearing a BJP promotional T-shirt.

Incidentally, Fadnavis is in the east Maharashtra city where he is scheduled to address three rallies during the day for the October 21 Assembly polls.

Police said 38-year-old farmer, Raju Talware, was found hanging at

around 11 am at his residence in Khatkhed in Shegaon taluka, part of Jalgaon (Jamod) Assembly seat.

"He was wearing a BJP T-shirt with the caption 'punha aaluya aaple sarkar' (let's bring our government to power again)," said an official.

Maharashtra labour minister Sanjay Kutte is the BJP candidate and sitting MLA from Jalgaon (Jamod) Assembly seat.

"It is believed that Talware had run up debts. The truth will be known after a detailed probe. We have registered a case," said an official from Shegaon rural police station.

BJP to launch Gandhi Sankalp Yatra in Bengal

SAUGAR SENGUPTA ■ KOLKATA

In sync with its shifting tack on Gandhism and apparently with a view to expand base ahead of the next year's civic elections the Bengal BJP on Sunday announced a 12-day yatra christened after Mahatma Gandhi even as the ruling Trinamool Congress pooh-poohed the saffron outfit for its "hypocritical" ways.

The march called "Gandhi Sankalp Yatra" is also projected as a protest against rising violence in Bengal, State BJP president Dilip Ghosh said.

"Keeping in view the rising violence and falling law and order situation in the State we have decided to conduct a 12-day Gandhi Sankalp Yatra so as to hammer home the basic tenets of Gandhism that hinges on non-violence and not what the TMC does in Bengal," Ghosh said.

"Given the present political



condition in Bengal Gandhi's non-violence has become all the more relevant. Not only the people, but the State Government will also get a message through the Yatra about its duties," he said.

The Yatra will commence on October 15 and continue till October 26, he said adding, "we will cover all the 42 Lok Sabha constituencies and almost all the villages and blocks in all the 12 days. Every day we will cover 15 km in each district and every such daily yatra will culminate into a public meeting. In this way we will cover more than 7,000 km."

The Yatra will be held also as a part of 150 anniversary celebrations of Mahatma Gandhi,

he maintained.

Pooh-poohing BJP's Yatra named after Mahatma Gandhi senior Trinamool leader and State Minister Tapas Roy said, "This Yatra or whatever they call it marks height of BJP's hypocrisy because it is the same saffron party that worships Gandhi's killer Nathuram Godse."

On the one hand "they worship Godse and on the other they worship Gandhi ... who are they trying to make fool of ... the people of Bengal are politically conscious enough to read through their political cunning and hypocrisy," Roy said asking the BJP to "first condemn Godse and then adopt Gandhism."

Reminding how "their senior leader and Home Minister had once called Gandhi a cunning businessman," Roy said "the people of Bengal will never accept their political duplicity."

MURSHIDABAD MURDER CASE BJP wants probe by Central agency

PNS ■ KOLKATA

The Bengal police is working on the "personal grudge" angle behind the brutal murder of Bandhu Paul and his family members even as the State BJP on Sunday demanded investigation by a central agency to crack the murder case in which they find a political angle.

The killers of the alleged RSS worker and his family members were still at large while the police were questioning one of his close associates on suspicion "some kind financial transaction as the main reason behind the murder."

A 35-year-old school teacher Bondhu Paul, his wife Beauty and an eight-year-old son Arya were found dead on Vijaya Dushmi Day inside their house at Jaganj in Murshidabad some 250 km

'It is the question of three persons of a family including a small child getting brutally killed by some assassins'

north of Kolkata. Soon the RSS claimed that Paul was one of their workers who had joined the organisation about a year ago. All the three victims were repeatedly stabbed, sources said.

Once again demanding probe by some central agency State BJP president Dilip Ghosh on Sunday said "it is not the question whether it is apolitical or non-political murder. It is the question of three persons of a family including a small child getting brutally killed by some assassins. The State police already has proved its worthlessness. So now we want the Government to get the probe be conducted by some central agency."

BJP creating 'talent pool' for 2021 Bengal polls

PTI ■ KOLKATA

Looking to consolidate the gains made in West Bengal in the Lok Sabha polls earlier this year, the BJP's State unit is creating a "talent pool" to identify candidates from among its cadre for the crucial 2021 Assembly polls.

According to party sources, the exercise is aimed at grooming BJP cadre as strong ground-level leaders and is expected to be completed by year end or early 2020.

The saffron party won 18 of the 42 Lok Sabha seats in West Bengal in the April-May parliamentary polls, only four less than the Mamata Banerjee-led Trinamool Congress's (TMC) 22.

This was a significant

improvement for the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) compared to just two seats that it bagged in the state in the 2014 Lok Sabha polls.

"We have started the process of identifying four members of our party from each constituency for the talent pool. The chosen partymen will be groomed as future organisational leaders and probable candidates for the 2021 Assembly polls," West Bengal BJP president Dilip Ghosh told PTI.

The exercise is aimed at grooming party cadre as both organisational and mass leaders and making them the party's face in their respective areas, said a senior party leader who did not wish to be named.

DMK claims 30 EVMs for bypoll in TN shifted suddenly



PTI ■ CHENNAI

The DMK on Sunday alleged 30 Electronic Voting Machines (EVMs) meant for the October 21 Nanguneri Assembly bypoll in Tamil Nadu have been "suddenly shifted" for "unknown reasons."

DMK Organisation Secretary and party's Rajya Sabha member RS Bharathi wrote to Chief Election Commissioner Sunil Arora and Tamil Nadu Chief Electoral Officer Satyabrata Sahoo seeking an enquiry into the matter.

He urged the EC that the EVMs be restored back to their original place and be kept under adequate protection without giving room "for any suspicious activities."

Restoring postpaid services to help return of normalcy in Kashmir: Guv advisor

PTI ■ JAMMU

With the postpaid mobile telephony set to be restored in Kashmir from Monday, Jammu & Kashmir administration has expressed hope that it would help achieve normalisation in the Valley.

Normal day-to-day activities has been disrupted across Kashmir since August 5, the day the Centre revoked the state's special status after negating the Article 370 of the Constitution and providing for reorganisation of the State into two Union territories of J&K and Ladakh from October 31.

The State administration announced on Saturday that about 40 lakh postpaid mobile phones will become operational from Monday noon.

Over 20 lakh prepaid mobile phones, besides the mobile and other internet services, however, will remain suspended for now.

"When the curbs on the



cell phones have been taken away, we are expecting large number of tourists to come there (Kashmir). We are also expecting that people, if they are somehow not able to do normal activities, have no more excuse not to do that," Governor Satya Pal Malik's advisor Farooq Khan told reporters on the sidelines of a function here.

Asserting that radicalisation does not have any place in Jammu & Kashmir, he said the Valley youths have given a go-by to the radicalisation despite the best possible efforts by Pakistan which has left no stone unturned to destroy the beautiful State.

Security beefed up in Srinagar after grenade attack

PTI ■ SRINAGAR

Security was beefed up in several areas of Srinagar - the summer capital of Jammu and Kashmir - on Sunday following a grenade attack by suspected militants in a city market that left seven people injured, police said.

More security personnel, along with the flying squad, were deployed in Lal Chowk, Jehangir Chowk, Hari Singh High Street, Regal Chowk, TRC Chowk, Polo View and the areas around the city centre, a police official said.

He said random checking of vehicles and frisking of people was being done as part of the security drill.

The deployment of more security personnel was done in the wake of a grenade attack in Hari Singh High Street market - a few hundred metres from the city centre - on Saturday in which seven people were injured, the official said.

'Message politics' won't last for long: Ashok Gehlot's swipe at Modi

PTI ■ JAIPUR

Rajasthan Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot on Sunday said people were too sensible to fall for the "message politics" of Prime Minister Narendra Modi whom he accused of "trampling democracy", a day after his party claimed AICC employees were targeted in Income Tax raids.

Gehlot also reacted to PM Modi plogging at a beach in Tamil Nadu's Mamallapuram.

He said there is no problem if Modi wants to give a message through plogging. "Everybody is inspired if someone does a good job. But under the garb of all this, if you trample democracy through 'message politics', then the people of the country are sensible enough," Gehlot told reporters in Jodhpur.

Plogging means picking up trash such as used plastic bottles while jogging or running. Modi had released a video in which he was seen collecting the waste at the beach as he walked barefoot on the sand, and urged the people to ensure that public places are clean and tidy.

The Congress leader said "such kind of politics" does not last for long. He alleged that AICC employees were being targeted through IT raids and government agencies are under pressure today.



Angry with waterlogging, people gherao Deputy CM Sushil Modi's house

PTI ■ PATNA

Trked over the problems of waterlogging and accumulation of trash in some areas of the city, a group of people on Sunday gheraoed Bihar Deputy Chief Minister Sushil Kumar Modi's residence here.

The State capital was pounded by heavy rain late last month leading to waterlogging in areas such as Rajendra Nagar, Kankar Bagh and Pataliputra Colony.

Even after a fortnight, water has not fully receded in some low-lying localities and garbage has not been cleared in some pockets.

"Around 50-60 people took out a march to Sushil Modi's house (in Rajendra Nagar area) and returned after some time," City Superintendent of Police (Central) Vinay Tiwari told PTI.

On September 30, Modi and his family members were rescued by an SDRF team from his flooded residence in Rajendra Nagar. However, they returned later to the house.

The BJP leader, however, was not present during the protest, official sources said adding that security has been beefed up at Modi's residence.

Modi could not be contacted for his comment despite several attempts. Angry people, carrying placards, shouted anti-Modi slogans and demanded action against officials who failed to flush out water fully in Rajendra Nagar area, making their lives difficult.

Modi has time to campaign for US President but not for flood-hit Karnataka: Sidda

PTI ■ BENGALURU

Senior Congress leader Siddaramaiah on Sunday hit out at Prime Minister Narendra Modi, alleging he had time to campaign for US President Donald Trump, seeking a second term in the general elections there in 2020, but not to visit flood-ravaged Karnataka.

Terming the BJP as "fascist" and "dictatorial", the former Chief Minister accused the state government of 'colluding' with the Assembly Speaker in restricting the media from covering the proceedings of the House.

"This time it was unprecedented floods in the state along with drought in some parts. Central Government gave aid only after 60 days that too ₹1,200 crore. According to me damage suffered is more than ₹1 lakh crore," Siddaramaiah said.

Speaking to reporters in Chikkamagaluru, he said, "Modi did not visit Karnataka, he instead was touring foreign



countries and had gone to campaign for US President Donald Trump."

"Narendra Modi tweets as soon as there were floods in Bihar, expressing sympathy.

In Karnataka when there were about 90 deaths and four to five people are still missing due to floods, he did not express sympathy," he added.

As many as 2,798 villages in 103 taluks of 22 districts in the state were affected by floods, in which around seven lakh people were shifted to safe areas.

About 3400 cattle and 91 people died during rains and floods in August.

‘DMK banks on false promises for survival’

PTI ■ TIRUNELVELI (TN)

Tamil Nadu Chief Minister K Palaniswami on Sunday accused the DMK of banking on false promises for its survival and remembering about people's problems only at the time of elections.

Addressing a campaign meeting at nearby Reddiarpatti village in Nanguneri Assembly constituency which goes to byelection on October 21, he also attacked DMK's ally Congress and said its leaders let down people for their "selfish ends".

Palaniswami, who is the ruling AIADMK's joint coordinator, alleged the DMK always banked on false promises for its political survival.

In the last parliamentary elections, DMK president MK



Stalin falsely assured the people that all jewellery loans will be written off once their party won the mandate. But it was not fulfilled as their alliance lost to BJP at the Centre.

Now in the by-election campaign also, Stalin is cheating the voters by holding 'thinai' (porch) meetings in every village and receiving petitions. Only when polls come, Stalin remembers 'thinai' he said.

Stalin should handover the

petitions to the Government for redressal, but he would not do so and instead "dump them in garbage bin", the chief minister alleged.

Targeting the Congress, he said the bypoll was thrust on the people by its "power hungry" H N Vasanthkumar, elected from the segment in 2016 but resigned after becoming a Lok Sabha member from Kanyakumari.

"Vasanthakumar wanted to become an MP because he is power hungry. Congressmen never bother about people. For their selfish ends, they let down the people who elected them," he charged. Listing out the welfare measures implemented by the AIADMK government, he asked the people to vote for the party nominee V Narayanan in the byelection.



Buddhist devotees from Thailand participate in a candlelight procession on the occasion of Sharad Pournima at Mahabodhi Temple in Bodhgaya on Sunday

Jammu-Srinagar highway reopens for traffic after two days

PTI ■ JAMMU

The strategic Jammu-Srinagar national highway reopened for traffic on Sunday after remaining closed for the past two days due to a massive landslide in Ramban district, traffic department officials said.

Light motor vehicles (LMVs) were allowed to ply on the highway from both Jammu and Srinagar around 9.30 am after getting clearance from the agencies responsible for its maintenance, they said.

The 270-km highway, the only all-weather road linking Kashmir with the rest of the country, was closed late on

Thursday following the landslide, which was triggered during widening of the road at Nihard — two kms from Ramban towards Jammu.

Thousands of vehicles were left stranded on either side of the highway due to the blockade. No passenger vehicle from Jammu or Srinagar was allowed on the highway on Friday and Saturday as the focus was on clearing the stranded vehicles, mostly trucks, the officials said.

Clearing the trucks took time due to continuous landslides and shooting stones from hills overlooking the highway, they said.

Debt-ridden farmer commits suicide over crop damage in UP

PTI ■ BANDA

A 55-year-old debt-ridden farmer allegedly committed suicide in Uttar Pradesh's Mahoba district after his crops were damaged due to excessive rains, an official said on Sunday.

Sureshchandra Tiwari consumed a poisonous substance in his agricultural field in Kulpahar area on Saturday, Tehsildar Subodhmani Sharma said.

Tiwari was rushed to a primary health centre, where he was declared dead, the official said.

The farmer's family told officials that Tiwari took the extreme step as he could not repay the loans after his crops suffered damage due to excess rains, Sharma said.

The body has been sent for post-mortem, the official added.

Gzb: Separate Magistrate appointed to ensure Hindon river cleaning

PTI ■ GHAZIABAD (UP)

The Ghaziabad administration has appointed a separate Magistrate to ensure the cleaning of the Hindon river and supervise the ongoing renovation and beautification work of its banks, an official said on Sunday.

Additional City Magistrate Satyendra Kumar Singh has been designated as 'Hindon Magistrate' to ensure quick cleaning of water hyacinth from the river and renovation of its 'dilapidated banks' before Chhath Puja, said Ghaziabad District Magistrate Ajay Shankar Pandey.

He said Singh will monitor the work of irrigation depart-

A stretch of the Hindon river between railway over-bridge and NH-58 has been clogged by water hyacinths and its banks, which had been renovated earlier, are in a dilapidated condition, the DM had said

ment, municipal corporation and the recently constituted Hindon sanitation force. A stretch of the Hindon river between railway over-bridge and NH-58 has been clogged by water hyacinths and its banks, which had been renovated earlier, are in a dilapidated condition, the DM had said. The 400 km-long Hindon, a tributary of Yamuna, originates in Saharanpur and passes through six districts in western Uttar Pradesh.

10 arrested for 'cow slaughter' in UP's Gonda

PTI ■ GONDA

Police have arrested 10 people for alleged cow slaughter in Uttar Pradesh's Gonda district and seized around 50 kg meat from their possession, an official said on Sunday.

The accused were nabbed from agricultural fields in Sisai Joga village under Katra Bazar police station limits on Saturday night, said Superintendent of Police Raj Karan Nayyar.

Acting on a tip-off, police reached the spot and arrested Hamid, Abdul Wajid, Abdul

Kahlique, Abdul Majeed, Abdul Shahid, Raheen Ahmed, Qadir, Shabir Khan, Bihari Lal and Lallan Pandey, the SP said.

Around 50 kg meat, a knife, a weighing balance and measuring weights were also recovered from them, he said.

Police suspect the seized meat includes beef.

A case has been registered against the 10 accused under the UP Prevention of Cow Slaughter Act and an investigation is underway, the SP said.

Expulsion of 6 Mahvarsity students who wrote to PM revoked

PTI ■ NAGPUR

The expulsion of six students of a Wardha-based university for organising a function without permission on campus and writing to Prime Minister Narendra Modi over contentious issues like mob-lynching and rape cases against political leaders was revoked on Sunday. The students, from Mahatma Gandhi Antarrashtriya Hindi Vishwavidyalaya (MGAHV), were expelled on October 9 after varsity officials accused them of violating the code of conduct in force statewide for the October 21 Assembly polls.

The students had planned a gathering at Gandhi Hill in the university

campus on October 9 to mark BSP founder Kanshi Ram's death anniversary.

However, they went head with the programme despite being denied permission by university officials and were later that night given expulsion orders after being accused of violating the poll code, one of the six students said. In its order on Sunday, MGAHV Acting Registrar Kadar Nawaz Khan said the expulsion was cancelled due to "technical anomalies" and in the view of natural justice to students.

On October 10, a day after they were expelled, the six posted a letter to PM Modi, one of the students said.



Folk artists perform at the 12th edition of Rajasthani International Folk Festival at Jaswant Thada in Jodhpur on Saturday

Suicide of Parameshwara's PA should not be politicised: K'taka Minister

PTI ■ BENGALURU

Karnataka Home Minister Basavaraj Bommai on Sunday said the alleged suicide of senior Congress leader G Parameshwara's personal assistant should not be "politicised" and investigation is on into the case.

He also said a case of "unnatural death" has been registered based on phone calls and post mortem of Ramesh, the assistant, who was found hanging from a tree here on Saturday, days after Income-Tax sleuths conducted raids against Parameshwara.

"The DCP there will take

necessary action... It should not be politicised, because everything has come in media. Parmeshwara also has said everything. There is no politics in it," Bommai told reporters in Hubballi.

The Congress in Karnataka has described Ramesh's suicide as an outcome of "targeted harassment" of their rank and cadre to keep them away from the party. The I-T sleuths, who raided the residence, office and Siddharth Group of institutions belonging to Parameshwara three days ago, had questioned Ramesh too, party sources have claimed.

An alleged suicide note

found from the spot where Ramesh's body was found hanging, read, "I am rattled with the I-T raids in my house and have decided to commit suicide to protect honour."

Anguished with the culture that the poor should remain poor forever, I arrived at this decision," Police had said the note appealed to I-T officials not to trouble his wife and children. Speaking to reporters in Chikkamagaluru, former Chief Minister Siddaramaiah said, the suicide must be investigated and those who harassed him, as claimed in the death note should be brought to justice.

Kolkata students learn about career in hospitality at edu expo

PTI ■ KOLKATA

Twenty-year-old Amartya Roy can't wait to fly to Switzerland, where he is all set to enrol in a hospitality course before trying his luck in the hotel industry.

A student of a hotel management institute here, Roy nurtures a dream to own a restaurant chain some day. Priyangi Ghosh, who is in her early 20s, is equally determined to make it in the baking industry, with outlets of her own venture spread across the globe.

The Sreerampore resident is keen on taking up a course at an institute of international repute, which would prepare her for the "business of baking industry".

Coming to the aid of such young aspirants striving to make a mark in the sector, a Mumbai-based education consultant recently organised a global hospitality education expo in the city, which brought together top hotel management schools and industry leaders.

Students keen to explore world-class hospitality education need quality, first-hand information and those undecided require the right exposure, said Mitali Rawool, Assistant Director, Zista Education, the expo organisers.

"The hospitality industry has evolved over the years, giving rise to a wide spectrum of career options. If we can showcase the opportunities that are available in the broader hospitality domain, more students will be attracted to join our dynamic industry," she said.

Bela Brahmabhatt, the area manager of Blue Mountains International Hotel Management School in Australia, feels that acceptability of hospitality and tourism management as a career option has increased among parents in India. "Students not just get to learn about the culinary industry, its nitty-gritty, they also get to know about menu engineering, something that would help them turn their ventures profitable."

"Parents have also warmed up to the idea of sending their children to hotel management schools. I think counselling sessions and education expos play an important role in clearing misconceptions," she said.

Different view doesn't make me your adversary, says WB Guv

PTI ■ KOLKATA

West Bengal Governor Jagdeep Dhankhar on Sunday said it is not essential that one should always agree to the point of view of another and that does not turn them into adversaries of each other.

The Governor's statement came three days after his comment that a triple murder in Murshidabad district reflects the 'worrisome' law and order situation of the state had not gone down well with the ruling Trinamool Congress. "It is not essential that I should agree to your views and that does not turn me to your adversary, your opponent," Dhankhar said at a function held in Howrah district.

Two individuals have the right to have different viewpoints on an issue, he said without naming anyone.

"I am entitled to my judgement, you are entitled to yours. But we can cope with such differences of opinions," the governor said. A primary school teacher, his wife and 8-year-old son were hacked to death by unidentified miscreants inside their residence at Jagannaj in Murshidabad district on Tuesday. The RSS claimed that the teacher was its supporter. "The incident is a reflection of intolerance and worrisome law and order situation," a Raj Bhavan statement had said on Thursday. Reacting to the statement, Trinamool Congress Secretary General and minister Partha Chatterjee had accused the governor of "making political statements every day" and reminded him of his "constitutional limits".

Demand for making Sriramulu Deputy CM to be taken up with CM: Soamasekhar Reddy

PTI ■ BENGALURU

The demand for making senior BJP leader and Karnataka Minister B Sriramulu a Deputy Chief Minister has resurfaced with key Ballari MLA Somashekar Reddy on Sunday saying a delegation of party legislators from the mine-rich district would take up the matter with Chief Minister BS Yediyurappa.

Currently a Health Minister in the state cabinet, Sriramulu too expressed hope that the party leadership would "recognise" him in the days to come.

Reddy is the brother of mining baron and former state minister G Janardhan Reddy, who once had "complete hold" on Ballari district's politics, while Sriramulu is his close confidant.

(BJP President) Amit Shah had announced (ahead of assembly elections) that Sriramulu will be made Deputy Chief Minister once the party came to power, dont know why he did not become (DyCM). We are all pained Sriramulu did not become Deputy Chief Minister, Somashekar Reddy said in Ballari.

Speaking to reporters, he said all BJP MLAs from the district planned to meet the Chief

Minister and take up their plea for making Sriramulu the DyCM and also the district in-charge Minister of Ballari.

Some Valmiki (a Scheduled Tribe) community leaders and various seers had also voiced support for Sriramulu, who hails from the community.

Sriramulu, who was also present, said various seers, including the Valmiki community pontiff wanted him to be made deputy chief minister.

"People and MLAs also have this feeling that I should get... In the days to come our government and leaders will recognise me, he said.

Sriramulu was seen as a possible DyCM candidate during the 2018 assembly poll campaign itself and the hopes were revived when the BJP came to power in July this year after the collapse of the JDS-Congress coalition government.

However, he was not chosen for the post though he had been inducted into the cabinet.

To Sriramulu's disappointment, he also did not get the district in-charge of Ballari, which had been given to Laxman Savadi.

The Yediyurappa Ministry currently has three Deputy Chief Ministers Govind Karjol (SC), Ashwath Narayan (Vokkaliga) and Laxman Savadi (Lingayat).

Over 2,000 take literacy exam in Kerala captial

PTI ■ THIRUVANANTHAPURAM

Over 2,050 candidates, including five in their 80s, on Sunday appeared for the Aksharashree literacy exam conducted here, the State literacy mission authority said.

Sumathi Ammal and Dharani, both aged 85, were the senior-most candidates in the exam, conducted as part of the 'Aksharashree' project which is envisaged to find illiterates in the capital city and make them part of the Mission's continuing education programme or equivalency courses.

Five people above the age of 80 appeared for the examination for the Aksharashree literacy programme, being implemented by the Kerala State Literacy Mission Authority and the city Corporation.

Besides Sumathi Ammal from Panchakkari and Dharani, from Kulathur, Kamalamma from Thiruvallam and Subhadramma of Thrikkanapuram, both aged 83, and Sarada (82) of Aarannoor participated in the exam, the Literacy Mission Authority said in a release.



President Ram Nath Kovind garlands a statue of a deity on his visit to Mahaveer Jain Aradhana Kendra at Koba in Gandhinagar on Sunday

TSRTC driver succumbs to burns; strike enters ninth day

PTI ■ HYDERABAD

A 55-year-old TSRTC driver died on Sunday, a day after he set himself ablaze, even as the strike by the transport employees in Telangana entered the ninth day.

D Srinivas Reddy, who was part of the group of employees on a state-wide strike for the last nine days, died of burn injuries, hospital sources here told PTI.

The driver had doused himself with kerosene and set himself ablaze near his house in Khammam, about 190 km from here, reportedly in protest against the government not acceding to the demands of striking employees.

As news about Reddy's death spread, a large number of striking employees of TSRTC

gathered near the hospital, but police at the spot whisked them away in police vehicles.

Protests also broke out in different parts of the city and other places, with employees raising slogans and holding the state government responsible for Reddy's death.

Meanwhile, another TSRTC driver doused himself with petrol at Narsampet depot in Warangal district on Sunday, however, police foiled his alleged self-immolation bid.

The employees, who have been on strike since October 5, demanding merger of RTC with the government among others also organised 'Vanta Varpu' (mass cooking) besides forming human chains as part of the stir at many places in the state.

Finding an old connect

Modi and Xi have settled down on a new grammar of negotiation despite trust issues over historical baggage

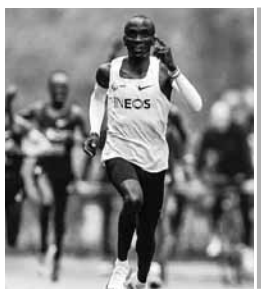


There were optics aplenty, of sipping coconut water, sightseeing tours of heritage sites, lavish local dinner, culture shows, long walks and an umbrella swamp of Indian hospitality. But Chinese President Xi Jinping, a hard-boiled supreme leader of his nation with aspirations to be the hegemonic anchor of an Asian century, is hardly expected to find India incredible enough. However, he does realise its materiality in the Chinese design and its bridge value with the rest of the world. Yes the informal summit in Mamallapuram, as it did in Wuhan, did enable both him and Prime Minister Narendra Modi to use their personal equation as a showpiece of neighbourhood understanding and co-existence. It did help in simmering down tension, then over Doklam and now Kashmir, but this relationship hereon will be one based on realism rather than expectation, need-based practicality rather than high-sounding hyperbole. To that extent, there's a new "connect" as Modi said and a "heart-to-heart" candour as Xi admitted. India cannot expect China to abandon Pakistan on its terms. Xi has to stand by his all-weather ally and cannot de-couple Kashmir to the extent that its changed status and talk of reoccupying lost territories in Pakistan-occupied Kashmir (PoK) have left it worried about Shaksgam Valley, which Pakistan ceded, and Aksai Chin. But now that India has the larger world opinion on Kashmir as its internal matter, including that of the US, China realises its strategic heft. It further realises that pushing the People's Liberation Army (PLA) mischievously for border incursions won't work anymore. Which is why Modi, too, confidently announced that there would be no further escalation of disputes. India has now stared back at that threat to its territorial integrity and even resisted all attempts to be encircled by China's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI). Not only that, by engaging with multi-lateral fora like the Quad and even Southeast Asian nations bilaterally, India has subtly but determinedly challenged China's diplomatic sway in the region. Besides, Xi had watched the "Howdy Modi" event in the US closely and wanted a counter-optics, if not a counterweight. Given its trade tussle with the US, China also needs India's absorptive market to keep its momentum. Besides, it is itself under international scanner on its rights issues with the Uighur Muslims, Hong Kong and Tibet and does not want to face a counter-charge of violating UN resolutions, considering that the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) in Gilgit-Baltistan is in disputed territory, too. No wonder Xi kept away from mentioning Kashmir. While China realises that Pakistan can only be Kashmir-centric, forcing it into embarrassing posturing, he has figured out larger issues for the bilateral arc. Without mentioning Pakistan, Modi and Xi did discuss combatting terrorism and radicalisation. This is a small but forward-looking tweak.

Trade is the biggest takeaway despite China's simultaneous breakthrough with the US on the subject. The mutual deficit there is nearly \$400 billion and President Donald Trump would want to appear tough in an election year. So China would still need a big market like ours. Xi seems ready for sincere action to address our trade deficit, which stands at \$53.56 billion out of a two-way trade of \$87 billion. In its desperation to make India sign the mega free-trade pact, Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP), China has agreed to a high-level, trade-facilitator mechanism. From China, it will be led by the Vice Premier, Hu Chunhua, and from India it will be Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman. At least now, there is a seriousness about a give-and-take rather than just a dump-your-goods formula. There will also be an attempt to fatten up the import basket from India. Besides defence cooperation is what China is looking for as a lucrative option. Of course, New Delhi has to look into byproducts like a glut of Chinese goods in an open market scenario, issues of security and spying if allowing Huawei and so on. Much depends on the volume and nature of Indian goods and services that China allows in its home market. Still, there is a consensus on both sides that confrontation between the two economies could only harm both. Also, by citing historical trade routes, both nations feel that they can together command the world economy like they did in the past. What is good about Mamallapuram is that there is an open acceptance of wrinkles in the silk that Modi gifted and also a solution offered in the form of "strategic communication" which both sides want to continue. Of course, they must be implemented, too. Trust may not be easy to earn given the baggage of boundary issues but surely there is a new grammar of negotiation.

Superhuman feat

Kenya's Kipchoge broke a marathon record by running 42.195 km in less than two hours. This is remarkable



A relatively healthy adult human can keep up a pace of around a kilometre every 10 minutes for half-an-hour. Those with a degree of physical training can go faster and for a longer duration. Yet, normal human beings tire out — the build-up of lactic acid in our muscles makes them ache and pain — but some, particularly long-distance runners, manage to fight this. A physically fit person, who can traverse 42.195 km of a marathon in around four hours, would be considered very fit indeed. Athletes, particularly those primed for long-distance running, usually complete marathons in just over two hours. Even the best long-distance runners from East Africa clock that time, which is why what the Kenyan runner Eliud Kipchoge has achieved in Vienna is the "four-minute mile" of our era — he ran the marathon in less than two hours. Sure, it was a race specifically designed for him to break the record. Kipchoge had no competitors to worry about and other runners in the field were there to ensure he kept his pace up. Even they melted away as the kilometres piled on but Kipchoge carried on and on, relentlessly, never seeming to run out of energy like a long-lasting human battery. This superhuman achievement was cheered on by the crowds in Vienna, who realised the magnitude of what was happening. This was indeed heartening to see. And thankfully, the organisers did not have plans for the event to happen behind closed doors with the public and a worldwide audience giving Kipchoge wings.

It was 75 years ago when Roger Bannister broke the four-minute barrier for running one mile. Kipchoge's pace was only slightly slower than Bannister's but he maintained it over 26 times the distance and still managed to crack a smile and give interviews afterwards. Several physiological experts believed that two hours were an unbreakable mark and many had predicted that Kipchoge would never achieve his vision. But through his willpower and sheer physical determination, he did break the record. May be one day, someone will shatter his mark of 1 hour 59 minutes and 40 seconds but until that day comes, all of humanity should celebrate this superhuman feat. One that will become as legendary as the breaking of the "four-minute mile." Kipchoge's name will be remembered much like Bannister's is to this day.

opinion

Missing out on deliverables

Despite informal summits like Mamallapuram, both India and China will have to live with certain realities, which are seemingly irrevocable even though they breed mistrust



VIVEK MISHRA

It wasn't surprising that the just-concluded informal summit between Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Chinese President Xi Jinping was high on optics and low on concrete deliverables, which is why it holds the potential to remarkably transform the bilateral relationship between both nations. Given the choice of the locale in the picturesque, the ancient heritage and coastal city of Mamallapuram, India's historical connect with China, together with the UNESCO recognition to the southern city, provided a fitting landscape for overwhelming optics. On the other hand, the meeting was expectedly low on deliverables, owing to the fraught nature of bilateral issues like trade, border dispute and now China's open support to Pakistan on the internal reorganisation of the former State of Jammu & Kashmir — all of which require more than a quick-paced informal meeting to be resolved.

As such, the Mamallapuram summit builds on the tradition of informal engagements between the two countries after the Wuhan summit in 2018 and can be seen as an overarching framework to further Confidence-Building Measures (CBMs). The eased setting of such summits has the potential to create grounds for discussions on issues that could otherwise irk the other nation. The decision to issue separate statements on the summit defends its "informal" nature and, therefore, calls for both nations to not make every minute details of the meet public.

Even though the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA), India, described the visit of the Chinese President as "highly productive", doubts remain regarding countable deliverables specific to this visit. In his brief to the media, Foreign Secretary Vijay Gokhale said that from the Wuhan summit in 2018 to the Mamallapuram summit in 2019, India and China have made "visible progress." If one were to deconstruct the ambiguous reference to "progress", the only visible stride appears in the area of trade through a "mechanism" proposed by President Xi. Joint assurances to fighting terrorism and radicalism, which were part of the discussion, have been referred to in the past, too, through forums such as BRICS and the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO). Therefore, they do not necessarily qualify as "progress."

India's need for greater market access from China and lowering its trade deficit found traction in this summit mainly because the Middle Kingdom is already under pressure on the trade front, owing to its ongoing trade dispute with the US. The Trump administration in no mood to step back. As such, granting larger market access to India could be the prominent and possibly the only countable deliverable in the near term from this summit. Progress on issues such as India joining the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP), 5G technology involving Huawei and Kashmir, even if discussed, is hard to imagine.

During the Wuhan summit, both nations



agreed to jointly cooperate on projects in third countries. Although cooperation between the two sides in Afghanistan has shown potential, little progress has been made. The lack of substantial progress in Afghanistan from the last agreement must have prevented any further discussion on this issue.

Resolution of disputes and big-ticket outcomes were not expected in this summit as in matters concerning bilateral issues of Indian concern, China is either at an advantageous position *vis-a-vis* India or has a clearly different position than us. In trade, too, numbers are highly favourable to China, leaving India to seek balance. On the issue of border dispute, Beijing has little appetite for resolution, which was very much evident by the progress made in the talks held by the Special Representatives of both nations.

The lack of any joint communication also signals a conscious projection of optics over substance. It is evident that China's projected intentions in Mamallapuram can be seen as distinct from an otherwise different Chinese State behaviour. This was on display hours even before the Modi-Xi meeting took place, especially apropos China's stand and steps on the Kashmir issue. This strand in the Chinese behaviour is also evident in the

nuanced dichotomy between its stated positions and actions on ground *vis-a-vis* India. For instance, there is a clear disjuncture in its projections at the border — in subtle ways through certain elements of the Chinese military — which is in variance with Beijing's stated position. This allows China to either deny or distance itself from the activities of such actors, with the State itself having tacitly approved such behaviour.

While the Mamallapuram summit gracefully displayed India's cultural diplomacy girded up by elements of *Astiti Devo Bhava* (the guest is equivalent to god), it tacitly legitimised the acceptance of China's flip-flopping positions on issues sensitive to India, especially Kashmir. This is important both in the context of China's recent steps and rhetoric on Kashmir as well as from the point of view of current geopolitics, where diplomacy, to a great extent, is also about symbolism, optics and messaging. China's growing relations with Pakistan are increasingly dragging India in bilateral dynamics. The summit could have been used to send a subtle message to China *vis-a-vis* the latter's relations with Pakistan.

As such, when dealing with China, India should continue to assert the principles that it stands for and unflinchingly project its

standard positions on issues that are of global concern. To be sure, for China, Pakistan is a strategic leverage point, bound as they are by economics and not an iron-clad alliance. That China had to finally relent on its move to block the listing for Masood Azhar as a terrorist at the UN, shows that the China-Pakistan relationship has scope for tweaks when there is enough international pressure and criticism.

The short history of China's relations with Pakistan has shown that when India puts its foot down on an issue, China is likely liberal in its relations with Pakistan, to the disadvantage of Islamabad. This is exactly how most relations of dependence between affluent and manipulative major powers and developing economies have shaped themselves through history.

The pros and cons of such relationships get affected by the extent of separation between major powers' affluence and their manipulative intentions and the state of economic, political and military clout of the dependent State. China's investments in the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) and their consequences have blurred the line that separates strategic intentions and economic goals for China in Pakistan. For the latter, the state of its economy, which lies in an uncertain zone —

between that of a Least Developed Economy and a developing economy — has made the terms of engagement with China more unfavourable for itself.

Despite informal summits like Mamallapuram, both India and China will have to live with certain realities, which are seemingly irrevocable, even though they breed mistrust. Just as India's decision to internally reorganise the former State of Jammu & Kashmir has become China's concern but cannot be rescinded, so have China's investments in the CPEC for India, parts of which pass through the Pakistan-occupied Kashmir (PoK) region. India's relations with China will have to factor in a continued tenuous relationship on the one hand and sustained bilateral trade on the other. These dynamics will continue to have substantive scope of scepticism from either side.

What has also come to the fore is the need for an uplift in India's international diplomacy with regards to China. While Beijing has upped the ante against us and has taken unprecedented steps, India remains painstakingly accommodating of such criticism. It is time India's regional and global aspirations and role match its pitch in international diplomacy.

(The writer is Research Fellow, Indian Council of World Affairs)

SOUNDBITE

If you say anything to an establishment or a person, will they like it? I cannot think of an establishment which, when criticised, feels happy about it.

Lyricist-writer
—Javed Akhtar



Both streaming and cinema can happily co-exist. It's ultimately what the viewers want and what we know is that they want both.

Actor
—Ajay Devgn



Pakistan has an important role to play in stabilising Afghanistan, engaging in robust counter-terrorism efforts and strengthening the global economy.

US Senator
—Maggie Hassan



India's meaningful engagement with China started with (former) Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi's visit in 1988 and his dialogue with then Chinese leader.

Congress spokesperson
—Anand Sharma



LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Draining public money

Sir — That the State Bank of India (SBI) has written off bad loans amounting to ₹76,600 crore is not so welcoming for the simple reason that a sizeable amount of taxpayers' money has been pocketed by 220 defaulters. Likewise, there may be many other banks, which have their share of bad loans to write off.

Political meddling in the lending policy is one of the main causes of bad loans. How come banks lend money without adequate collateral security? A startling revelation is that 980 borrowers have been listed by the Reserve Bank of India, whose debts of more than ₹100 crore each have to be written off. Of these, 220 accounts — more than one-fifth of the total number — belonged to the SBI.

Taxpayers would feel cheated if the Government uses the tax collected for loan waivers and bad loan write-offs at a later date. The Government should use the taxpayers' money to create infrastructure and strengthen national security.

KV Seetharamaiah
Hassan

The Kashmir conundrum is far from over

This refers to the editorial, "Polls to what end?" (October 11). No doubt, our security forces have done well to maintain peace post the abrogation of Article 370 in Jammu & Kashmir but the clampdown in the Valley, the arrest of political leaders and grass-root workers and the alleged rights violations have undermined the core values of Indian democracy. The moot point is not that the detention of top leaders in Kashmir discredits Indian democracy but that the Abdullahs and others of their ilk considered Jammu & Kashmir as their fiefdom with loyalty to India subject to enjoying power.

However, for the restoration of normalcy, the Centre should let political activism take wings and hold elections to the Assembly. But winning locals round to back New Delhi once again may now be difficult. Pakistan is all out to disturb India's hold on the Valley. Entrusting the task of restoration of tranquility to novices has its own pros and cons. Under such circumstances, usher-



ing competitive politics is indeed imperative to restore peace. Meanwhile, the common man can only pray that good sense prevails all around...hoping the Centre is on the right track and the "change" will be tangible, paving the way for people's rule.

J Akshobhya
Mysuru

Low-key affair

Sir — The atmosphere for the Modi-Xi informal meet in Mamallapuram was far from ideal. China's support for Pakistan on the Kashmir issue has put a big strain on New Delhi-Beijing ties. The long shadow of Pakistan continues to disrupt India-China ties. Despite going ahead with the

second informal summit, Pakistan will be the elephant in the room.

China and Pakistan have been close strategic allies since independence. Now, with the construction of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), the centre-piece of Xi's ambitious Belt and Road Initiative, and China's comments on Jammu & Kashmir, the

relationship has grown even stronger.

Unlike in Wuhan where the Modi-Xi meeting led to de-escalation in Doklam, this time nothing dramatic happened. At best, both Prime Minister Modi and Chinese Premier Xi Jinping remained focussed on improving ties in areas such as trade.

K S Jayatheertha
Hassan

Respect the elderly

Sir — President Ram Nath Kovind was right when he said that elderly citizens symbolise our legacy. Speaking at an event marking the International Day of Older Persons, Kovind said that only by respecting senior citizens can the younger generation and the nation progress.

The President's words provide a valuable lesson. Whatever we are today is because of the love, care and sacrifices of our elders. It is, therefore, our duty to make sure that they are cared for.

It is unfortunate that nowadays many old people have to find a place in old age homes owing to the nuclear family system and the lack of time among youngsters, who are busy chasing greener pastures. Let the old Indian tradition of respecting the elderly not die out. Let us make them feel that their contributions to the family, the society and the nation have indeed been very useful.

M Pradyu
Kannur

Send your feedback to:
letterstopioneer@gmail.com

FIRST COLUMN

Fight professional fatigue

There is a dire need to restore the passion and purpose in jobs supporting strategy formulation for the country



VINAYSHIL GAUTAM

Methods of calculation of the Gross Domestic Product (GDP), developmental indicators and chartered accountancy are again in focus and suggestions on how to make them more reliable are few. Auditing itself often serves as a threat held out by the powerful in running an organisation. It is often used to keep the recalcitrant at bay rather than creating new organisational or developmental patterns. A discussion with policy analysts is in many ways enlightening on the differing psyche of finance and accounting experts. In an era where the corporate world feels extremely stressed, chartered accountancy breeds monotony. It is, therefore, understandable that a lot of chartered accountants feel depleted. In a dualism of the order enumerated above, it's very difficult to be a strategist with a role in driving business or development forward.

There is a need to restore the passion and purpose in professions supporting strategy formulation. How deep the tedium runs can be gauged by the fact that there is a three-day summit in Sri Lanka, starting today and ending on October 16, on the theme of "Finding your mojo: A journey of self-discovery." This is meant for chartered accountants. Mojo is widely understood to indicate internal magic that translates to external success. Nothing would move without mojo. On October 18, the Institute of Internal Auditors, Delhi chapter, is holding a conference on strategic risk management and the topic is: "Enhancing strategy selection through risk management." The outcome will show the worth of the effort but the effort itself is worth it. Passion is the biggest source of energy but like everything else, it has a price. Those who are not passionate about their work deeply resent the style of those who are. Those who are passionate are often intolerant of the sluggishness of the routine approaches. The catch 22 here, of course, is how does one save oneself from becoming a victim of professional sluggishness?

At the end of the day, much of strategy formulation is a political process. Those who reject the approach of the leader (if not the chief himself) will resent the idea of the head being carried through. The ability to conspire to prevent is often higher than the ability to plan for strategic optimisation.

The times also call for unorthodox methodologies. Audit as a profession is known to work on algorithms to find the delicate balance between creating breakthroughs and pulling formula. This is a complicated one. It is heartening to see that sometimes people get together to create a passion for attempting it, nevertheless. The number of accountants and auditors is rising and so is the doubt, at times, in their ability to deliver.

It is obvious, that in the current context, financial analysts and chartered accountants are facing multiple challenges in performing their roles in and outside policy confabulations/board rooms. The need to update knowledge is universal and financial analysts and gatekeepers are no exception. At the end of the day, the individual often feels left out in observing the mandate of the so-called directives of the "institute."

It is obvious that business prosperity cannot be made surrogate to outdated principles. Similarly, reliability and conviction must continue to call the shots. The possible direction of the financial analysts and auditors is often far beyond the broadband of auditing principles. There are sectoral imperatives and nuances of functionality. Consider for example plantation management. The initiatives by top management dealing with the agro business must build into it, on behalf of the owners, considerations of climate. An assessment of internal and external productive environment — rooted in time tested principles of achieving of goals — has some strange touchstones of success. In an era where goals themselves become variable, the enunciation of strategy becomes sticky. It does not just remain a science but becomes an art. Business execution and administration become the wheels on which strategy rolls and would impact operations in marketing and finance.

This has to be leavened by competencies, which alone can formulate winning strategies. Among them, the prominent ones would include pattern recognition and isolation of exceptions using machine learning. This would include all relevant patterns to be examined for root cause; continuous elimination of root causes using continuous auditing; regular reporting of "unusual" transactions and in all things keeping the Chief Finance Officer (CFO) apprised of the developments. This is unlikely to happen unless preventive action, continuous monitoring, discipline and continuous forward planning are in sync. Not strangely, all this gets ensconced in the calculation and rollout of GDPs and strategy formulation at the national policy level. The impact of regional and national policy on specialised, sectoral performance is immense. The price of misguidance can be huge and it often becomes the cause of ill-founded doubts at the policy level.

(The writer is a well-known management consultant)

POINTCOUNTERPOINT

SANDEEP SENT ME A LETTER AND I FORWARDED IT TO THE CONGRESS PRESIDENT. THERE IS NOTHING PERSONAL. IT'S A POLITICAL CONVERSATION.

—AICC IN-CHARGE
PC CHACKO



THIS IS A BETRAYAL OF FAITH. WE WERE AGHAST TO SEE THE LETTER BEING DISCUSSED. WE HAD ASKED HIM NOT TO PASS COMMENTS ON SHEILA/JI.

—DELHI CONGRESS LEADER
KIRAN WALIA

China's Himalayan ploy

Though the bonhomie between Nepal and China may seem minimal compared to India's age-old ties, the message to the global community is not in our favour



RISHI GUPTA

Chinese President Xi Jinping's two-day trip to Nepal, coming on the heels of the informal summit with Prime Minister Narendra Modi in India, reflects the priority Beijing accords to the little Himalayan kingdom. The visit, which was closely watched by New Delhi, too, was the first by a Chinese President in 23 years since Jiang Zemin landed in Kathmandu in 1996.

Nestled between India and China, Nepal is a strategically critical neighbour for the two big nations and in the last 60 years, New Delhi and Beijing have interacted with it differently.

Geographically, Nepal has worked as a safeguard for India from any aggression that could possibly come from the north. During the brutal expedition launched by China in Tibet in 1950, there were fears that Chinese aggression might reach Nepal, too. However, India asserted that any offensive against the Himalayan neighbour would be treated as an aggression against it. With Tibet falling into Chinese clutches, Nepal had approached India for help in training the Royal Nepal Army as well as for arms and ammunition. Though the two nations did not forge a formal defence relationship, an informal security umbrella from India to Nepal was agreed upon with the signing of the Treaty of Peace and Friendship in 1950.

Prior to the Tibet saga, the two century-long reign of the ruling Shah family was threatened by the control of the Rana Prime Minister. As a result, King Prithvi Narayan Shah had escaped to India and sought help. With India's assistance, a new political order was established in the Himalayan country. Though India was at the forefront of re-establishing the Shah dynasty, it had ensured respect for the sovereignty of Nepal, leading to the "special relationship" between the two nations.

On the other hand, China from day one of its arrival in Tibet, has been attempting to gain political and strategic clout in Nepal. While Prithvi Shah was wary of Chinese intentions, his successor King Mahendra began to change the course of Nepal's diplomatic ties and formalised relations with China in 1955. After the demise of King Mahendra, his son Birendra, too, had tried to alter Nepal's equation with India.

Advised by China to review the Treaty of Peace and Friendship with India, Birendra had invited global leaders to recognise Nepal as a "Zone of Peace" (ZoP). Despite it being endorsed by more than 50 countries, India had declined to accept the ZoP citing the 1950 treaty because an endorsement of the ZoP would have threatened India's security, especially from the north.

Having battled for more than 15 years to bring India on board, Birendra had to shelve the plan. Again in 1988, China supplied arms to Nepal in complete violation of India's security concerns that had been accommodated in the 1950 treaty. During this time India-Nepal diplomatic ties touched a low and from 1955 to 1990, Chinese leaders intensified efforts to marginalise New Delhi's "special relations" with Kathmandu.

In the post-Cold War era, significant economic reforms were carried out in India and a broader regional economic integration also took place. After the South Asian Association

“THE CHINESE APPROACH IN NEPAL HAS BEEN BASED ON GAINING STRATEGIC DEPTH BY OPENING UP ITS DEEP POCKETS AND ALSO SUBVERTING INDIA'S RELATIONS WITH KATHMANDU. CLEARLY, THESE ACTS BY CHINA ARE INTENDED TO ENSURE ITS STRONG POSITION IN NEPAL, PRECISELY TO KEEP A CLOSE VIGIL ON SOUTH ASIAN COUNTRIES, INCLUDING INDIA”



for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) was established in 1985, India reiterated its responsibilities towards the region. This was reflected in the "Gujral Doctrine" based on the principles of unconditional cooperation to neighbours without expecting reciprocity. The doctrine considerably is one of the most significant milestones in India's approach towards its neighbours, which is being continued by the present Government in its "Neighbourhood First Policy." The deep India-Nepal relations have been based on close cultural, religious, people-to-people ties and respect for democratic values and non-aggression towards each other.

But over the last 30 years, political developments in Nepal have been marred by instability in governance. The introduction of the first democratic system in Nepal in the 1990s had opened the gateway for greater public participation. However, Maoist insurgency from 1994 to 2006 led the country into more profound political instability. In 2008, Nepal emerged as a democratic country, marking a complete end of the monarchical system and India was one of the few countries to have played a crucial role in supporting this transition.

However, a chain of events in the last five years damaged India's image in the Himalayan kingdom. While India was the first country to have provided help during the 2015 earthquake in Nepal, it was in the same year that a blockade at the Indo-Nepal border had affected emergency supplies, leading to an anti-India movement on social media like #GoBackIndia.

Kathmandu had also accused India of causing delay in the implementation

of a new Constitution. As soon as the draft of the Constitution was tabled in the Constituent Assembly, people belonging to Nepal's southern belt, the Madhesis, had led a violent movement against the Government on grounds of poor representation and alleged human rights violations. Fearing an exodus to Bihar and Uttar Pradesh, due to the Madhesi movement, India had sent the then Foreign Secretary S Jaishankar to raise India's security concerns in Kathmandu. However, this did not go down well with the people of Nepal. Ever since then, Kathmandu has been attempting to shift from its "special relations" with India to "new relations" with China. The Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) and joint military exercises between Chinese and the Nepal Army are the latest examples of this shift.

Though the recent bonhomie between Nepal and China may seem minimal compared to India's age-old ties, the message to the global community is not in our favour and New Delhi needs to be cautious in this regard. On the other hand, the Chinese approach in Nepal has been based on gaining strategic depth by opening up its deep pockets and also subverting India's relations with Kathmandu. Clearly, these acts by China are intended to ensure its strong position in Nepal, precisely to keep a close vigil on South Asian countries, including India.

To do so, it has exploited every low phase in India-Nepal relations, including by supplying arms to Nepal in 1987 and providing \$1 million military assistance along with truckloads of weapons to King Gyanendra in 2005 for suppressing people's demand to introduce full democracy.

At present, amid global criticism of its alleged neo-colonialist \$60 billion BRI, China is leaving no stone unturned to ensure its success globally and in the region. Other than India and Bhutan, every South Asian country has joined the BRI. In fact, India has made it amply clear that the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) is in complete violation of its sovereignty as it passes through disputed areas with Pakistan; hence, it cannot be part of any such initiatives.

In Nepal, the proposal to construct the trans-Himalayan corridor, connecting Kathmandu with Tibet has been in discussion for the last two years. However, considering the high terrain of the two countries, implementation of the project will be a litmus test for the economy of Nepal.

The leadership in Nepal needs to carefully look at the Chinese master plan on its soil and consider the viability and mood of the people as Chinese assistance is a debt-trap rather than being a grant-in-aid.

A key example of this strategy is the Hambantota Port that was built with Chinese assistance in Sri Lanka. The port is now under Chinese control after Sri Lanka failed to pay off loans that were taken from Beijing for building it.

Xi's recent visit to Nepal came at a critical hour to ensure the success of the BRI and its other strategic interests there. Hence, Nepal needs to put the aspirations and well-being of its people at the forefront instead of going by interests of individuals and political parties. It also has a responsibility to ensure regional balance and harmony.

(The writer is doctoral candidate, Centre for South Asian Studies, Jawaharlal Nehru University)

Pak must go beyond banter about extremism

Imran Khan's rhetoric against extremism abroad can only find traction if it is balanced by taking initiatives towards ending the harassment and violence that minority communities face at the hands of radicalised elements within the country's majority religious community



NADEEM PARACHA

Many moons ago, when I was a kid living with my parents and grandparents in a house in Karachi's Bath Island area, we had a neighbour who everyone called "Kachra chacha" (Garbage uncle). Of course, no one called him that to his face but I am sure he knew. This middle-aged man had this curious habit of scolding everyone he would come across about the manner in which they disposed their garbage. It was actually an admirable trait but strangely enough, in his own house, he was not practising what he preached.

I remember when my cousins and I would visit his house to play with his nephews, there would be lit-

ter strewn all over his garden and piles of trash in the large round balcony which stood just above the garage. I have no idea why this was so but the memory of this gentleman came to mind immediately after watching Prime Minister Imran Khan's impassioned speech at the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) on September 27. I must admit, I was impressed by the way the Prime Minister addressed the issue of State repression being faced by Muslims living in Kashmir. But I'm afraid, a lot else about the same speech triggered that obscure memory of "Kachra Chacha."

It is rather easy to negate and contradict much of what Khan said in his speech and in the interviews he gave to the media in the US. His critics have already done that, questioning the current state of repression being faced by the Pakistani media and against Khan's political opponents in the country.

They have also called him out for doing precious little to address the harassment and violence that the

country's various minority communities continue to face at the hands of radicalised elements within the country's majority religious community.

Therefore, his detractors believe that Khan's pleas against hate speech, racial and religious bigotry and especially, Islamophobia in Western societies ring hollow.

They fear that such views will never be able to find any worthwhile traction in the West or from outside his excitable constituencies in Pakistan. How can one point at garbage outside his home when he cannot (or refuses to) do much about the garbage piled up inside his own house?

Nevertheless, as I mentioned above, the way the Prime Minister sweepingly condemns issues such as Islamophobia in the West and repression on the basis of ideology and faith against Muslims outside Pakistan, it is rather easy to counter such condemnations by simply putting forth the many episodes of violence against members of minor-

ity groups in Pakistan and also between Muslim sects that have been reported for decades now.

It is a fact that even when a Pakistani Prime Minister or President was willing to actually do something about this, he or she could not (and cannot), because the nature of certain laws and clauses within the country's constitution — mostly penned in the document between 1974 and 1986 — is such that initiating effective reform in this context is next to impossible.

This is why, even while one can argue that certain Western countries, infested with problems such as Islamophobia and racial bigotry, do not have the right to point fingers at Muslim countries such as Pakistan for failing to curb religious violence and harassment against minorities, one can always stress the fact that, unlike Pakistan, their constitutions do not have laws that can encourage and even shield acts and actors hell bent on inflicting violence in the name of faith.

Khan has been diluting his oth-

erwise impactful narrative on Kashmir and the Narendra Modi regime's "fascism" by coupling it with rhetorical spiels about Islamophobia. Apart from being riddled by the inherent contradictions discussed above, this is largely woven from a hodgepodge understanding of Edward Said's idea of post-colonialism, which is now struggling to stay relevant in a rapidly changing world.

More disconcerting is the possibility that the narrative being erected by Khan may as well be the result of either the complete failure and discarding of a narrative which the State and Government was trying to build (to counter radicalisation and the spread of extremism) through the National Action Plan (NAP); or Khan was never really on board when the plan was authored and approved by the military and political parties in January 2015.

Indeed, it is clear that the Modi regime's arrogance towards Pakistan has generated the need within the State and Government of Pakistan

to intensify their rhetoric on the issues of Kashmir and Hindu nationalism. But this can only be effective if it is balanced by initiatives which would show Pakistan as doing more to curb extremism in its own backyard compared to India, where Hindu extremism has been allowed to infiltrate mainstream politics and society.

Otherwise, it will only end up being nothing more than a bantering game between two countries infested by extremism, with one labelling the other "a terrorist State," and the other responding by calling it "fascist."

It is surprising that, despite the fact that the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) dedicated a lot of space to the NAP in its manifesto for the 2018 election, Khan has frequently negated the nature of reforms suggested in that document. First, by continuously claiming that the war which the Pakistan military fought against religious extremist groups was "not our war," Khan is undermining the chaos and destruction

created by the extremists.

This sentiment is also dismissive of the manner in which the extremists were tackled by the military.

There is absolutely nothing new or insightful about lecturing the US about how it had helped Pakistan create Islamic militants in the 1980s (before dumping them). The US Government itself has repeatedly admitted this ever since former US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton visited Pakistan in 2011.

Most of Khan's ideas are still cemented in the many apologetics that emerged from a muddled potpourri of anti-West narratives developed during the last three decades. These were narratives that aided those who were unwilling to recognise their own incompetence, complacencies and mistakes, by putting the blame on others regarding extremism. This can be a popular way of explaining things on Twitter, but it can certainly not — and should not — become part of the State and Government policy.

(Courtesy: The Dawn)

World Bank cuts India's growth projection to 6%

PTI ■ WASHINGTON

After a broad-based deceleration in the initial quarters of this fiscal year, India's growth rate is projected to fall to 6 per cent, the World Bank said on Sunday.

In 2018-19, the growth rate of the country stood at 6.9 per cent.

However, the bank in its latest edition of the South Asia Economic Focus said the country was expected to gradually recover to 6.9 per cent in 2021 and 7.2 per cent in 2022 as it assumed that the monetary stance would remain accommodative, given benign price dynamics.

The report, which has been released ahead of the annual meeting of the World Bank with the International Monetary Fund, noted India's economic growth decelerated for the second consecutive year.

In 2018-19, it stood at 6.8 per cent, down from 7.2 per cent in the 2017-18 financial year.

While industrial output growth increased to 6.9 per cent due to a pick-up in manufacturing and construction activities, the growth in agriculture and the services sector moderated to 2.9 and 7.5 per cent, respectively.

In the first quarter of 2019-20, the economy experienced a significant and broad-based growth deceleration with a sharp decline in private consumption on the demand side

and the weakening of growth in both industry and services on the supply side, the report said.

Reflecting on the below-trend economic momentum and persistently low food prices, the headline inflation averaged 3.4 per cent in 2018-19 and remained well below the RBI's mid-range target of 4 per cent in the first half of 2019-2020. This allowed the RBI to ease monetary policy via a cumulative 135 basis point cut in the repo rate since January 2019 and shift the policy stance from "neutral" to "accommodative", it said.

The World Bank report also noted that the current account deficit had widened to 2.1 per cent of the GDP in 2018-19 from 1.8 per cent a year before, mostly reflecting a deteriorating trade balance. On the financing side, significant capital outflows in the first half of the current year were followed by a sharp reversal from October 2018 onwards and a build-up of international reserves to USD 411.9 billion at the end of the fiscal year.

Likewise, while the rupee initially lost ground against the USD (12.1 per cent depreciation between March and October 2018), it appreciated by about seven per cent up to March 2019, the report said.

"The general Government deficit is estimated to have widened by 0.2 percentage points to 5.9 per cent of the GDP in 2018-19. This is despite the Central Government



improving its balance by 0.2 percentage points over the previous year. The general government debt remained stable and sustainable — being largely domestic and long term — at around 67 per cent of GDP, the report said.

According to the World Bank, poverty has continued to decline, albeit possibly at a slower pace than earlier. Between 2011-12 and 2015-16, the poverty rate declined from 21.6 to 13.4 per cent (\$1.90 PPP/day).

The report, however, said disruptions brought about by the introduction of the GST and demonetisation, combined with the stress in the rural economy and a high youth unemployment rate in urban areas may have heightened the risks for the poorest households.

cent in 2021-22 as the cycle bottoms-out, rural demand benefits from effects of income support schemes, investment responds to tax incentives and credit growth resumes. However, exports growth is expected to remain modest, as trade wars and slow global growth depresses external demand," the report said.

The main policy challenge for India is to address the sources of softening private consumption and the structural factors behind weak investment, the bank said.

"This will require restoring the health of the financial sector through reforms of public sector banks' governance and a gradual strengthening of the regulatory framework for NBFCs, while ensuring that solvent NBFCs retain access to adequate liquidity.

"It will also require efforts to contain fiscal slippages, as higher-than-expected public borrowings could put upward pressure on interest rates and potentially crowd-out the private sector," it said.

According to the bank, the main sources of risk included external shocks that result in tighter global financing conditions, and new NBFC defaults triggering a fresh round of financial sector stress.

To mitigate these risks, the authorities would need to ensure that there was adequate liquidity in the financial system while strengthening the regulatory framework for the NBFCs, the bank added.

B'desh, Nepal ahead of India as growth in South Asia slows down: WB report

PTI ■ WASHINGTON

Bangladesh and Nepal are estimated to grow faster than India in 2019, according to the World Bank, which said that overall growth in South Asia is projected to slow down this fiscal in line with a global downward trend.

Pakistan's growth rate is projected to deteriorate further to a mere 2.4 per cent this fiscal year, as monetary policy remains tight, and the planned fiscal consolidation will compress domestic demand, it said.

Growth in South Asia is projected to fall to 5.9 per cent in 2019, down 1.1 percentage points from April 2019 estimates, casting uncertainty about a rebound in the short term, the World Bank said in its latest report.

The latest edition of the South Asia Economic Focus, Making (De)centralization Work, finds that strong domestic demand, which propped high growth in the past, has weakened, driving a slowdown across the region.

Imports have declined severely across South Asia, contracting between 15 and 20 per cent in Pakistan and Sri Lanka.



In India, domestic demand has slipped, with private consumption growing 3.1 per cent in the last quarter from 7.3 per cent a year ago, while manufacturing growth plummeted to below 1 per cent in the second quarter of 2019 compared to over 10 per cent a year ago.

"Declining industrial production and imports, as well as tensions in the financial markets reveal a sharp economic slowdown in South Asia," said Hartwig Schafer, World Bank Vice President for the South Asia Region.

"As global and domestic uncertainties cloud the region's economic outlook, South Asian countries should pursue stimulating economic policies to boost private consumption

and beef up investments," he said.

The report noted that South Asia's current economic slowdown echoes the decelerating growth and trade slumps of 2008 and 2012.

With that context in mind, the report remains cautiously optimistic that a slight rebound in investment and private consumption could jumpstart South Asia's growth up to 6.3 per cent in 2020, slightly above East Asia and the Pacific and 6.7 per cent in 2021.

In a focus section, the report highlights how, as their economies become more sophisticated, South Asian countries have made decentralisation a priority to improve the delivery of public services.

FM to meet CEOs of PSU banks today

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman will hold a review meeting with CEOs of public sector banks (PSBs) on Monday to discuss various issues, including progress on credit offtake, as part of efforts to prop up the economy.

The meeting is expected to review fund flow to stressed NBFC and MSME (micro, small and medium enterprises) sectors, sources said.

Banks are expected to present report card on partial credit guarantee scheme and fund raising from market to enhance their capital base.

The Centre in August issued guidelines on operationalising Rs 1 lakh crore partial guarantee scheme under which PSBs can purchase high-rated pooled assets of financially sound non-banking finance companies (NBFCs). NBFCs, including housing finance companies (HFCs), came under stress following a series of defaults by the group companies of IL&FS in September last year.

Besides, the meeting will also assess the progress of first phase of outreach programme held across 226 districts across the country.

This will be the second meeting of Sitharaman with CEOs of PSU banks in less than a month.

The first phase of 'Loan Mela' for providing credit to agriculture, vehicle, home, MSME, education and personal categories ended on October 7.

During the annual performance review earlier this



month, PSBs decided to undertake outreach exercise in 400 identified districts. Later, the private sector too expressed willingness to join the initiative.

The second phase will be held in 209 districts between October 21 and October 25, just before Diwali.

Additionally, the Centre will also review loan delivery through 'psbloansin5minutes' portal.

The platform has helped reduce turnaround time for loan processes in such a way that MSMEs can get an eligibility letter and in-principle approval in 59 minutes and can choose the bank of their choice.

After the approval letter is received, the loan is expected to be disbursed in 7-8 working days.

Touted as the country's largest online lending platform, the portal was launched by Prime Minister Narendra Modi in November 2018 with an aim to make credit access and banking for MSMEs transparent and hassle-free.

The portal sanctioned loans worth over Rs 35,000 crore in less than four months from its launch.

As on March 31, 2019, more than 50,706 proposals had got in-principle approval and 27,893 proposals had been sanctioned.

Cooperative sector needs regulatory mechanism: Goyal

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Leaders of cooperative sector should think of a self regulatory mechanism to strengthen it and prevent recurrence of scams like Punjab and Maharashtra Cooperative Bank case, Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal said on Sunday.

He said that whistleblowers should come forward whenever such things are happening, as several people must have been involved in such a scam. "I do not think that such a scam can happen without involvement of hundreds of people. Several accounts must have been opened, funds must have been diverted. Branches and some employees must have been involved in this," Goyal said.

It would not be possible for the government to look at every institution and issues, the minister said here at India International Cooperative Trade Fair.

India still fast-growing economy with lot of potential: Economist

PTI ■ WASHINGTON

India has been relatively hit hard by the recent global slowdown resulting in its projected growth dropping to 6.0 per cent in 2019, but it's still a fast-growing economy with a lot of potential, a top World Bank economist said on Sunday.

"It's still a fast-growing economy. So even with the recent slowdown, it has growth numbers that are higher than in most countries of the world. It's still a fast-growing economy with a lot of potential," World Bank's Chief Economist said for South Asia Hans Timmer told PTI.

In its latest edition of the South Asia Economic Focus, the World Bank said that India's growth rate is projected to fall to 6 per cent this fiscal. However, it said the country was expected to gradually recover to 6.9 per cent in 2021 and 7.2 per cent in 2022.

"It has been hit relatively hard by the recent global slowdown in their investments in durable consumption. And so that means that they have to deal with severe problems," Timmer said in response to a question on India's economy, whose growth rate in 2016 was 8.2 per cent and in the next two years it dropped by 2.2 percentage points.

"No, it's not the biggest (drop), but it is comparable to what we saw in 2012 where there was also a slowdown. It's somewhat less than what we saw in 2009. But it's a serious slowdown. That is true," Timmer said.

There are many signs of a sharp slowing of the Indian economy, recently, he noted. "We saw that with the last numbers on quarterly GDP, but it's even stronger when you look at the components of GDP. If you look at the investment then the annual growth

now is 9 per cent below what it was a year ago. There was a sharp decline in consumption. And so that's mainly durable consumption," he said.

"If you look at the growth of domestic demands that's slowing much faster than the growth of GDP because imports are slowing fast also. It's a typical case where investors both in companies and in households are cautious to invest.

"In our view, that is very much in line with what is happening in the world, because everywhere in the world you see that investments very quickly are coming down and debt is driven by a sentiment that spreads across the world driven by uncertainty in global markets," he said.

Timmer said that, the World Bank in its estimates, has found that "80 per cent of the slowdown" in India could be coming from the international causes.

\$60 bn investment coming in gas infrastructure: Pradhan

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

India is investing over \$60 billion in developing natural supply and distribution infrastructure as it chases the target of more than doubling the share of natural gas in its energy base to 15 per cent by 2030, Oil Minister Dharmendra Pradhan said on Sunday.

Natural gas currently constitutes 6.2 per cent of all energy consumption in the country. Stating that the government has laid emphasis on developing a gas-based economy, he said natural gas is gradually becoming a bridging fuel for low carbon economy in India.

The Government is giving special impetus to develop gas

infrastructure across the length and breadth of the country connecting north to south and east to west parts of India, he said.

"I am happy to inform you that as we speak, an estimated investment of 60 billion US dollars is underway in building gas pipeline and terminal infrastructure that are nearing or in advanced stages of completion," he said in his opening remarks at the third International Think Tank Meeting (ITT) here.

City gas distribution network will soon cover 70 per cent of India's population, he said. "Our Government is exploring strategic partnerships for overall development of oil & gas sector.

Iran discovers gas field near Gulf: State media

Tehran: Iran has discovered a gas field near the Gulf with enough reserves to supply the capital for 16 years, state media reported on Sunday. The Eram field contained 19 trillion cubic feet (538 billion cubic metres) of natural gas, the National Iranian Oil Company said, cited by official news agency IRNA.

The oil ministry's Shana website said the field was located in Fars province, about 200 kilometres south of Shiraz.

"Given the volume of 19 trillion cubic feet reserves of in-situ gas and 385 million barrels of gas condensate in Eram field, the revenue from this field will be \$40 billion," IRNA quoted an NIOC official as saying. **AFP**

NPCI sees WhatsApp meeting data localisation norms in two months

PTI ■ MUMBAI

Facebook-owned instant messaging giant WhatsApp will be compliant with data localisation norms over the next two months, post which it can roll out its much-delayed payments service here, says the National Payments Corporation.

Even after the launch of WhatsApp's payments service, it will take at least two years to reduce the cash dominance in the economy as the user base of digital payments must at least treble to 300 million to have any tangible impact on paring cash usage, the RBI-created NPCI's chief executive

Dilip Asbe told *PTI* in an interview.

WhatsApp has been running a beta version of its payments service since last year in the country, and its official launch is being keenly watched by stakeholders, including its over 300 million users. Many think WhatsApp can help India emulate China's WeChat story, and help achieve the cashless payments objectives.

"There are still a couple of intermediaries where work is in progress. One is Google, second is WhatsApp. We believe WhatsApp will be fully compliant in the next two months' time," Asbe said.

WhatsApp has capped the

number of payment service users at 1 million now as it is yet to fully meet RBI's data localisation norms which require foreign companies to store transaction and user data within the country and delete the same from foreign servers within 24 hours.

According to Asbe, a third-party audit by a firm empaneled by the RBI is currently underway to ascertain WhatsApp's compliance. "Once the auditors complete their probe, we will review the same and will see how to go ahead," he said.

Asbe also clarified that he did not meet the WhatsApp leadership team when they visited the city recently.

California walnut growers hope US-India trade deal will reduce tariffs

PTI ■ TIBURON (US)

California walnut growers are hopeful that the US and India will soon strike a trade deal that will reduce the retaliatory tariffs imposed by New Delhi on American walnuts, a top industry official said.

India imposed retaliatory tariffs on 28 US products, including walnuts, almonds and apples from June 5, after the Trump administration revoked its preferential trade privileges.

California Walnut Commission's (CWC) Senior Marketing Director, International, Pamela Graviet said that tariff change definitely made a difference and it's very

expensive for the importer. "Twenty per cent retaliatory tariff is an issue," she said.

"We are hopeful that the two countries will come to some kind of a trade agreement and the 20 per cent retaliatory tariffs then goes away. Trade negotiations are still on," she told *PTI* here.

"We are looking for fair trade and are not expecting all countries to drop their tariff rate to zero," she added.

The US terminated India's designation as beneficiary developing country under Generalised System of Preferences (GSP) programme.

India has been the single biggest beneficiary of the GSP programme, allowing the coun-

try to export \$5.7 billion worth of duty-free goods in 2017, according to figures from US Congress.

The US walnuts entered Indian market nearly four years ago and the industry in India has grown ever since to meet the growing demand. With this current tariff, it's challenging to meet the demand, she said.

The retaliatory tariffs imposed by India are causing deep concern among the nut growers in California, which produces 99 per cent of the crop.

"Trade negotiations are complex process... We were hopeful of an announcement when Prime Minister Narendra



Modi was here (in the US in September) but they have not reached any agreement that is best for both the parties. So, we know they are still into discussions that is very positive for both the countries," Graviet

said. "There will be eventually some kind of agreement, it's just a matter of when and what that trade agreement will look like," she added.

The US is the second



largest producer of walnuts in the world.

India ranked 10th as an export destination in 2016-17. However, it fell to 11th position in 2017-18 crop year when the tariff rate was increased to 100 per cent, she said.

But, during last crop year (2018-2019) India dropped to

16th position due to retaliatory tariffs, she added.

Given the size of the population, and the love of nuts and dried fruit in India, the California walnut growers anticipate that over the next few years, India would climb up and regain its position.

The overall demand for walnuts in India is growing steadily. The CWC has exported 10468.43 tonnes in 2017-18. The top export markets for the CWC are Germany, Turkey, Spain, China and the UK, she said.

The California walnut industry, California Walnut Commission (CWC), is made up of over 4,800 walnut growers and 88 walnut handlers

processors.

The walnut crop year is from September-August. India produces around 30,000-35,000 tonnes of walnuts in Jammu and Kashmir, according to official data.

For India, which has very high proportion of vegetarian people, walnut is a good nutritional choice and also it helps in managing health issues like diabetes, hypertension, obesity among others, Graviet said.

Indian importers prefer in-shell walnuts. They hire people within India to remove the shells, which in a way creates jobs... So when imports drop, those people doing their jobs will also lose their source of income, she added.

Scheme	NAV	1Yr%			
DSP World Gold Fund-Reg(G)	13.87	27.93	Kotak Equity Opp Fund(G)	116.37	11.89
Tata Banking & Financial Services Fund-Reg(G)	19.39	26.54	HDFC Nifty 50 ETF	1184.5	11.84
Sundaram Fin Serv Opp Fund(G)	42.71	23.81	Axis Nifty ETF	1163.78	11.8
Axis Bluechip Fund(G)	30.85	23.35	DSP 3Y Close Ended Equity Fund-Reg(G)	15.49	11.8
BNP Paribas India Consumption Fund-Reg(G)	12.03	22.82	Tata Value Fund-Sr-1-Reg(G)	9.84	11.74
Axis Multicap Fund-Reg(G)	12.31	22.49	IDFC Nifty ETF	116.84	11.67
SBI Tax Advantage Fund-III-Reg(G)	25.97	22.2	Baroda Large Cap Fund(G)	14.36	11.66
JM Multicap Fund(G)	33.35	20.68	Edelweiss Large Cap Fund(G)	35.46	11.61
SBI Banking & Financial Services Fund-Reg(G)	17.87	20.45	UTI Nifty Index Fund-Reg(G)	74.1	11.61
BNP Paribas Large Cap Fund(G)	93.06	20.17			
JM Tax Gain Fund(G)	17.63	20.16			
Canara Rob Consumer Trends Fund-Reg(G)	40.23	19.84			
Baroda Banking & Fin Serv Fund(G)	23.15	19.7			
DSP Equity Fund-Reg(G)	40.31	19.49			
Axis Long Term Equity Fund(G)	46.7	18.58			
Invesco India Financial Services Fund(G)	56.68	17.94			
Kotak World Gold Fund(G)	9.89	17.79			
Aditya Birla SL India GenNext Fund(G)	85.22	17.74			
SBI Tax advantage Fund-II(G)	37.34	17.25			
Motilal Oswal Focused 25 Fund-Reg(G)	22.48	17.17			
BNP Paribas Long Term Equity Fund(G)	38.99	17			
Tata Large & Mid Cap Fund(G)	204.25	16.94			
SBI Focused Equity Fund-Reg(G)	142.41	16.64			
Axis Midcap Fund(G)	37.83	16.54			
SBI Magnum Equity ESG Fund-Reg(G)	106.4	16.45			
JM Core 11 Fund(G)	9.09	16.45			
DSP Tax Saver Fund-Reg(G)	48.38	16.22			
Axis Focused 25 Fund(G)	29.07	15.91			
SBI Infrastructure Fund-Reg(G)	15.07	15.83			
Canara Rob Bluechip Equity Fund-Reg(G)	25.36	15.59			
Tata India Tax Savings Fund-Reg(G)	17.91	15.55			
Nippon India Consumption Fund(G)	66.07	15.34			
ICICI Pru Banking & Fin Serv Fund(G)	61.45	15.18			
DSP Focus Fund-Reg(G)	23.37	15			
Sundaram Multi Cap Fund-Sr II-Reg(G)	10.23	14.94			
Sundaram Services Fund-Reg(G)	11.53	14.94			
SBI LT Advantage Fund-V-Reg(G)	10.11	14.9			
Sundaram Multi Cap Fund-Sr I-Reg(G)	10.25	14.78			
Sundaram Select Small Cap Series-VI-Reg(G)	9.66	14.62			
IDBI India Top 100 Equity Fund(G)	24.37	14.57			
SBI Magnum Multicap Fund-Reg(G)	48.97	14.45			
Sundaram Select Small Cap Series-III-Reg(G)	14.18	14.39			
Sundaram Large and Mid Cap Fund(G)	34.7	14.26			
DSP Top 100 Equity Fund-Reg(G)	207.14	14.09			
Sundaram Select Small Cap Series-V-Reg(G)	9.86	14.04			
Sundaram Select Small Cap Series-IV-Reg(G)	14.2	14.03			
Tata Mid Cap Growth Fund(G)	133.76	14			
Axis Capital Builder Fund-1-Reg(G)	10.4	13.91			
Mirae Asset Great Consumer Fund-Reg(G)	34.85	13.79			
SBI BlueChip Fund-Reg(G)	39.15	13.79			
ICICI Pru FMCG Fund(G)	245.99	13.68			
Edelweiss ETF - Nifty Bank	2858.42	13.66			
L&T India Large Cap Fund-Reg(G)	27.29	13.66			
Aditya Birla SL Banking & Financial Services Fund-Reg(G)	28.01	13.63			
JM Value Fund(G)	32.11	13.57			
Invesco India PSU Equity Fund(G)	17.28	13.53			
HDFC Sensex ETF	4009.07	13.51			
Sundaram Select Focus(G)	180.37	13.49			
BNP Paribas Focused 25 Equity Fund-Reg(G)	9.63	13.49			
SBI LT Advantage Fund-II-Reg(G)	13.52	13.48			
Tata Infrastructure Fund-Reg(G)	54.01	13.42			
IDFC Sensex ETF	393.57	13.41			
SBI LT Advantage Fund-IV-Reg(G)	13.25	13.32			
Canara Rob Equity Diver Fund-Reg(G)	132.65	13.28			
Tata Large Cap Fund(G)	216.97	13.12			
Mirae Asset Emerging Bluechip-Reg(G)	51.98	13			
HDFC Index Fund-Sensex(G)	339.09	12.99			
Tata Index Fund-Sensex Plan(G)	94.17	12.97			
Canara Rob Equity Tax Saver Fund-Reg(G)	64.32	12.96			
Motilal Oswal Long Term Equity Fund-Reg(G)	17.35	12.86			
Kotak Bluechip Fund(G)	232.69	12.76			
ICICI Pru LT Wealth Enhancement Fund(G)	10.64	12.71			
DSP A.C.E. Fund-Sr 2-Reg(G)	10.33	12.69			
Motilal Oswal Multicap 35 Fund-Reg(G)	25.84	12.59			
Kotak Standard Multicap Fund(G)	34.81	12.57			
ICICI Pru Sensex Index Fund(G)	11.86	12.51			
DSP Equity Opportunities Fund-Reg(G)	219.46	12.34			
Kotak Tax Saver Scheme(G)	43.2	12.26			
SBI LT Advantage Fund-VI-Reg(G)	10.33	12.14			
Nippon India Index Fund - Sensex Plan(G)	18.77	12.08			
DSP India T.I.G.E.R	88.49	12.06			
DSP A.C.E. Fund-Sr 1-Reg(G)	10.3	11.93			
Principal Focused Multicap Fund(G)	63.24	11.89			



Consumption Fund(G)					
ICICI Pru Nifty Low Vol 30 ETF	89.52	8.4	Fund-1-(G)		
ICICI Pru NV20 ETF	55.17	8.39	ICICI Pru Large & Mid Cap Fund(G)	310.65	4.48
Canara Rob Infrastructure Fund-Reg(G)	42.82	8.38	Nippon India India Opp Fund-Sr-A(G)	9.99	4.46
IDBI Banking & Financial Services Fund-Reg(G)	10.17	8.31	JM Large Cap Fund(G)	66.21	4.38
SBI Equity Opp Fund-Sr I-Reg(G)	15.73	8.17	Principal Dividend Yield Fund(G)	50.95	4.28
IDFC Multi Cap Fund-Reg(G)	91.73	8.15	UTI-Nifty Next 50 ETF	272.85	4.25
IDFC Large Cap Fund-Reg(G)	31.89	8.14	L&T Large and Midcap Fund-Reg(G)	45.05	4.23
Tata Ethical Fund-Reg(G)	156.53	8.1	Franklin India Equity Advantage Fund(G)	75.47	4.18
Edelweiss Tax Advantage Fund-Reg(G)	39.01	8.03	IDFC Core Equity Fund-Reg(G)	42.56	4.03
Franklin Build India Fund(G)	38.96	8.01	SBI PSU Fund-Reg(G)	9.68	3.97
PGIM India Large Cap Fund-2-Reg(G)	12.13	7.99	Nippon India Capital Builder Fund-3-(G)	9.37	3.82
Invesco India Tax Plan(G)	49.9	7.99	IDFC Core Equity Fund-Reg(G)	42.56	4.03
Nippon India Growth Fund(G)	1059.37	7.93	SBI PSU Fund-Reg(G)	9.68	3.97
ICICI Pru S&P BSE 500 ETF	148.16	7.89	Nippon India Capital Builder Fund-4-A(G)	10.12	3.79
Parag Parikh Long Term Equity Fund-Reg(G)	24.93	7.88	ICICI Pru Bharat Consumption Fund-3-(G)	10.12	3.79
Aditya Birla SL Equity Fund(G)	698.2	7.83	Baroda Mid-cap Fund(G)	8.57	3.75
Sundaram TOP 100-Sr VI-Reg(G)	12.2	7.77	ICICI Pru Multicap Fund(G)	277.75	3.75
Sundaram World Brand Fund-Sr II-Reg(G)	15.93	7.75	ICICI Pru Growth Fund-3(DP)	9.84	3.69
Sundaram World Brand Fund-Sr III-Reg(G)	16.12	7.7	ICICI Pru Value Fund-15(G)	10.16	3.57
SBI Magnum Comma Fund-Reg(G)	35.62	7.69	Aditya Birla SL Resurgent India Fund-5-Reg(G)	9.37	3.54
Nippon India Quant Fund(G)	25.22	7.67	ICICI Pru Nifty Next 50 ETF	26.81	3.52
UTI MEPUS	104.43	7.65	L&T India Value Fund-Reg(G)	33.68	3.52
Tata Resources & Energy Fund-Reg(G)	13.98	7.64	Franklin India Equity Fund(G)	557.14	3.48
ICICI Pru Growth Fund-2(DP)	11.85	7.63	UTI MNC Fund-Reg(G)	190.47	3.46
Canara Rob Emerg Equities Fund-Reg(G)	88.93	7.59	UTI LT Adv Fund-IV(G)	9.6	3.36
Sundaram Diversified Equity(G)	97.23	7.58	Aditya Birla SL Tax Relief '96(G)	29.87	3.28
Nippon India Multi Cap Fund(G)	90.77	7.5	Aditya Birla SL Tax Relief '96(ELSS U/S 80C of IT ACT)(G)	29.87	3.28
Sundaram TOP 100-Sr VII-Reg(G)	11.98	7.46	UTI Nifty Next 50 Index Fund-Reg(G)	9.47	3.15
HDFC Top 100 Fund(G)	466.49	7.46	ICICI Pru Value Fund-16(G)	10.84	3.14
UTI LT Equity Fund (Tax Saving)-Reg(G)	83.65	7.4	IDBI Nifty Junior Index Fund(G)	20.09	3.05
SBI Large & Midcap Fund-Reg(G)	213.03	7.36	SBI Magnum Midcap Fund-Reg(G)	66.92	2.99
HDFC Equity Fund(G)	625.38	7.2	ICICI Pru Nifty Next 50 Index Fund(G)	23.58	2.98
UTI Focussed Equity Fund-IV(G)	9.21	7.17	ICICI Pru Technology Fund(G)	59.29	2.97
Nippon India Large Cap Fund(G)	32.83	7.16	ICICI Pru Midcap Fund(G)	89.42	2.89
Aditya Birla SL Frontline Equity Fund(G)	216	7.1	ICICI Pru Value Fund-13(D)	10.34	2.89
Aditya Birla SL Resurgent India Fund-2-Reg(G)	11.5	7.08	UTI LT Adv Fund-III(G)	12.62	2.84
Templeton India Equity Income Fund(G)	44.81	7.02	Franklin India Bluechip Fund(G)	435.89	2.83
ICICI Pru Growth Fund-1(DP)	10.84	7.01	Aditya Birla SL Resurgent India Fund-3-Reg(G)	10.94	2.53
Aditya Birla SL MNC Fund(G)	735.46	6.98	Principal Multi Cap Growth Fund(G)	133.27	2.37
Aditya Birla SL Equity Advantage Fund(G)	391.13	6.84	Principal Tax Savings Fund	193.88	2.26
Tata Equity P/E Fund(G)	130.44	6.81	ICICI Pru Value Fund-10(G)	10.86	2.26
ICICI Pru Value Fund-9(G)	11.85	6.76	HDFC TaxSaver(G)	488.69	2.15
IDFC Equity Opportunity-6-Reg(G)	10.13	6.74	Aditya Birla SL Resurgent India Fund-4-Reg(G)	9.53	2.14
UTI Focussed Equity Fund-I(G)	12.77	6.74	PGIM India Global Equity Opp Fund(G)	18.41	2.11
Franklin India Taxshield(G)	547.82	6.71	IDFC Equity Opportunity-5-Reg(G)	9.53	2.03
Franklin India Feeder - Franklin U.S. Opportunities Fund(G)	31.9	6.7	Aditya Birla SL Intl. Equity Fund-B(G)	17.6	2.03
Sundaram Infra Advantage Fund(G)	30.19	6.56	Sundaram Mid Cap Fund(G)	432.43	1.79
Kotak India Growth Fund-Sr 5(G)	9.42	6.53	UTI LT Adv Fund-V(G)	8.88	1.69
Nippon India Vision Fund(G)	502.82	6.5	PGIM India Midcap Opp Fund-Reg(G)	16.87	1.69
Principal Emerging Bluechip Fund(G)	100.15	6.46			
Nippon India Banking Fund(G)	254.15	6.42			
Tata Digital India Fund-Reg(G)	15.01	6.35			
UTI Value Opp Fund-Reg(G)	58.95	6.32			
Edelweiss Mid Cap Fund-Reg(G)	25.55	6.24			
SBI Small Cap Fund-Reg(G)	50.86	6.22			
Nippon India Focused Equity Fund(G)	43.68	6.18			
ICICI Pru LT Equity Fund (Tax Saving)(G)	358.65	6			
Franklin India Opportunities Fund(G)	70.38	5.95			
Kotak Global Emerging Mkt Fund(G)	15.83	5.89			
Franklin India Prima Fund(G)	910.1	5.86			
Sundaram LT Tax Adv Fund-Sr II-Reg(G)	14.06	5.82			
HDFC Growth Opp Fund-Reg(G)	107.55	5.77			
Sundaram Value Fund-III-Reg(G)	15.94	5.72			
BNP Paribas Mid Cap Fund(G)	30.51	5.65			
Kotak India Growth Fund-Sr 4(G)	9.2	5.59			
UTI Banking and Financial Services Fund-Reg(G)	90.08	5.59			
IDBI Focused 30 Equity Fund-Reg(G)	9.7	5.55			
ICICI Pru Value Fund-11(G)	12.02	5.53			
Baroda ELSS 96(G)	42.6	5.39			
Edelweiss Emerging Markets Opp Eq. Offshore Fund-Reg(G)	12.7	5.39			
Invesco India Midcap Fund(G)	46.71	5.3			
L&T Equity Fund-Reg(G)	78.58	5.27			
Sundaram LT Tax Adv Fund-Sr I-Reg(G)	12.97	5.2			
UTI Focussed Equity Fund-V(G)	9	5.2			
Invesco India Contra Fund(G)	45.81	5.17			
HDFC Focused 30 Fund(G)	74.08	5.15			
Sundaram Value Fund-II-Reg(G)	15.31	5.14			
ICICI Pru Infrastructure Fund(G)	47.47	5.14			
Kotak Small Cap Fund(G)	68.51	5.12			
Tata India Consumer Fund-Reg(G)	16.9	5.07			
UTI Dividend Yield Fund-Reg(G)	63.54	5			
Invesco India Multicap Fund(G)	45.93	4.98			
SBI Consumption Opp Fund-Reg(G)	113.1	4.89			
L&T Emerging Opp Fund-II-Reg(D)	9.63	4.87			
Nippon India Power & Infra Fund(G)	92	4.86			
ICICI Pru Value Fund-17(G)	10.28	4.79			
Franklin India Technology Fund(G)	159.89	4.77			
UTI Focussed Equity Fund-VI(G)	9.39	4.72			
SBI Magnum TaxGain'93-Reg(G)	134.21	4.64			
ICICI Pru Bharat Consumption	10.07	4.57			

Fund-1-(G)		
ICICI Pru Large & Mid Cap Fund(G)	310.65	4.48
Nippon India India Opp Fund-Sr-A(G)	9.99	4.46
JM Large Cap Fund(G)	66.21	4.38
Principal Dividend Yield Fund(G)	50.95	4.28
UTI-Nifty Next 50 ETF	272.85	4.25
L&T Large and Midcap Fund-Reg(G)	45.05	4.23
Franklin India Equity Advantage Fund(G)	75.47	4.18
IDFC Core Equity Fund-Reg(G)	42.56	4.03
SBI PSU Fund-Reg(G)	9.68	3.97
Nippon India Capital Builder Fund-IV-A(G)	9.37	3.82
ICICI Pru Bharat Consumption Fund-3-(G)	10.12	3.79
Baroda Mid-cap Fund(G)	8.57	3.75
ICICI Pru Multicap Fund(G)	277.75	3.75
ICICI Pru Growth Fund-3(DP)	9.84	3.69
ICICI Pru Value Fund-15(G)	10.16	3.57
Aditya Birla SL Resurgent India Fund-5-Reg(G)	9.37	3.54
ICICI Pru Nifty Next 50 ETF	26.81	3.52
L&T India Value Fund-Reg(G)	33.68	3.52
Franklin India Equity Fund(G)	557.14	3.48
UTI MNC Fund-Reg(G)	190.47	3.46
UTI LT Adv Fund-IV(G)	9.6	3.36
Aditya Birla SL Tax Relief '96(G)	29.87	3.28
Aditya Birla SL Tax Relief '96(ELSS U/S 80C of IT ACT)(G)	29.87	3.28
UTI Nifty Next 50 Index Fund-Reg(G)	9.47	3.15
ICICI Pru Value Fund-16(G)	10.84	3.14
IDBI Nifty Junior Index Fund(G)	20.09	3.05
SBI Magnum Midcap Fund-Reg(G)	66.92	2.99
ICICI Pru Nifty Next 50 Index Fund(G)	23.58	2.98
ICICI Pru Technology Fund(G)	59.29	2.97
ICICI Pru Midcap Fund(G)	89.42	2.89
ICICI Pru Value Fund-13(D)	10.34	2.89
UTI LT Adv Fund-III(G)	10.34	2.89
Franklin India Bluechip Fund(G)	436.89	2.83
Aditya Birla SL Resurgent India Fund-3-Reg(G)	10.94	2.53
Principal Multi Cap Growth Fund(G)	133.27	2.37
Principal Tax Savings Fund	193.88	2.26
ICICI Pru Value Fund-10(G)	10.86	2.26
HDFC TaxSaver(G)	488.69	2.15
Aditya Birla SL Resurgent India Fund-4-Reg(G)	9.53	2.14
PGIM India Global Equity Opp Fund(G)	18.41	2.11
IDFC Equity Opportunity-5-Reg(G)	9.53	2.03
Aditya Birla SL Intl. Equity Fund-B(G)	17.6	2.03
Sundaram Mid Cap Fund(G)	432.43	1.79
UTI LT Adv Fund-V(G)	8.88	1.69
PGIM India Midcap Opp Fund-Reg(G)	16.87	1.69

Consumption of

DIESEL

AUG 2019

Jul

Jun

May

Apr

Mar

Feb

Jan

Dec

Nov

Oct

Sep

Aug 2018

6,826

7,446

7,781

7,314

7,451

6,719

7,069

7,372

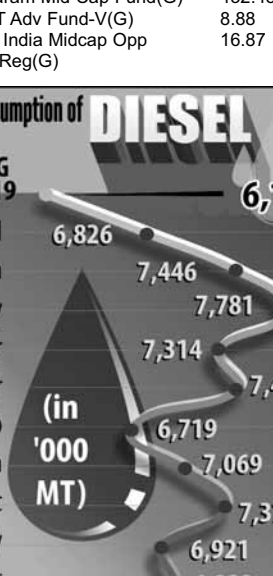
6,921

6,988


6,030

6,186

(in '000 MT)



6,116



Source: Ministry of Petroleum & Natural Gas

PTI GRAPHICS

IDFC Tax Advt(ELSS) Fund-Reg(G)	51.43	1.6
UTI Mid Cap Fund-Reg(G)	93.57	1.59
Principal Nifty 100 Equal Weight Fund(G)	67.18	1.58
Principal Personal Tax saver Fund	181.26	1.58
ICICI Pru Value Fund-14(G)	10.21	1.49
Aditya Birla SL Intl. Equity Fund-A(G)	21.86	1.45
Sundaram Smart NIFTY 100 Eq Weight Fund-Reg(G)	11.06	1.45
L&T Tax Advt Fund-Reg(G)	51.3	1.41
DSP Equal Nifty 50 Fund-Reg(G)	9.26	0.99
HDFC Mid-Cap Opportunities Fund(G)	49.96	0.96
UTI Core Equity Fund-Reg(G)	57.18	0.88
SBI-ETF Sensex Next 50	302.83	0.82
IDFC Focused Equity Fund-Reg(G)	34.77	0.55
DSP Global Allocation Fund-Reg(G)	12.72	0.32
L&T Midcap Fund-Reg(G)	124.13	0.27
Aditya Birla SL Mfg. Equity Fund-Reg(G)	12.44	0.24
Sundaram Global Advt(G)	16.69	0.13
ICICI Pru Bharat Consumption Fund-2-(G)	9.56	0.1
Kotak US Equity Fund(G)	16.97	0.08
Aditya Birla SL Dividend Yield Fund(G)	150.37	-0.08
L&T Emerging Opp Fund-I-Reg(D)	8.94	-0.11
Sundaram Emerging Small Cap-Sr-VI-Reg(G)	10	-0.16
Nippon India Japan Equity Fund(G)	13.33	-0.17
ICICI Pru Exports & Services Fund(G)	54.24	-0.29

Germany urges Turkey to immediately end Syria offensive

Berlin: German Chancellor Angela Merkel on Sunday urged Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan to halt Turkey's offensive in northern Syria immediately, warning it could spark further destabilisation of the region and a resurgence of the IS jihadist group.

In a phone call with Erdogan, Merkel "spoke in favour for an immediate end to the military operation", the chancellor's office said in a statement.

The operation threatens to drive large parts of the population from their homes, she said, noting that it would also risk "destabilisation of the region and lead to a resurgence of the ISIS".

Germany and France on Saturday said they were suspending arms exports to Turkey over its offensive in Syria against the Kurdish People's Protection Units (YPG).

Turkey sees the YPG as a terrorist off-shoot of Kurdish rebels in its own territory, but Western powers used the Kurds as the main ground force against the ISIS group in Syria. **AFP**

Arms embargoes won't stop Turkey's Syria operation: Erdogan

Istanbul: President Recep Tayyip Erdogan said Sunday that threats of sanctions and arms embargoes by Western powers would not stop Turkey's military offensive against Kurdish militants in Syria.

"After we launched our operation, we have faced threats like economic sanctions and embargoes on weapons sales. Those who think they can make Turkey turn back with these threats are gravely mistaken," Erdogan said in a televised speech.

France and Germany said Saturday that they were suspending arms exports to Turkey over its offensive in Syria against the Kurdish People's Protection Units (YPG).

Turkey sees the YPG as a



terrorist off-shoot of Kurdish rebels in its own territory, but Western powers used the Kurdish forces as the main ground force against the Islamic State group.

Erdogan said the Turkish military and its Syrian proxies now controlled the border town of Ras al-Ain while Tal Abyad was being besieged from two directions. **AFP**

Turkey and proxies advance deep into Syria

Qamishli (Syria): Turkish forces and their proxies pushed deep into Syria on Sunday, moving closer to completing their assault's initial phase, while Washington announced it was pulling out 1,000 troops from the country's north.

The Kurdish administration in northern Syria said that Turkish bombardment near a camp for the displaced led to nearly 800 relatives of IS members fleeing.

Fighting raged but Turkish-backed forces made significant progress along the border on the fifth day of an offensive that has provoked an international outcry and left dozens of civilians and fighters dead.

Kurdish authorities and foreign powers have warned repeatedly that the hostilities could undermine the fight against the Islamic State group (IS) and allow jihadists to break out of captivity.

Fighting has engulfed the area since Wednesday when Ankara launched a long-threatened offensive against the Kurdish-led Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF), who it considers "terrorists" linked to insurgents inside Turkey.

US Defence Secretary Mark Esper said Sunday that President Donald Trump had ordered the withdrawal of up to 1,000 troops from northern Syria.

"I can't give a timeline because it changes hourly. We want to make sure that we do so in a very safe, deliberate manner," he told the CBS network.

Trump has been accused of abandoning a loyal ally in the fight against IS after ordering American troops to pull back from the border, which Ankara took as a green light to move in.

The Syrian Observatory for Human Rights war monitor



Turkish-backed Syrian opposition fighters advance in Tal Abyad, Syria on Sunday

AP

reported on Sunday that 19 more civilians had been killed in fighting.

More than 50 civilians have now died on the Syrian side, with Turkish reports putting the number of civilians dead from Kurdish shelling inside Turkey at 18.

The Observatory said pro-Ankara fighters "executed" at least nine civilians on Saturday near the Syrian town of Tal Abyad. The Kurds said a female Kurdish party official and her driver were among those killed.

Aid groups have warned of another humanitarian disaster in Syria's eight-year-old war if the offensive is not halted.

The UN humanitarian agency OCHA said the exodus sparked by the fighting had grown to 1,300,000 people and it was preparing for that figure to more than triple.

"We have moved into a planning scenario where up to

4,00,000 people could be displaced within and across the affected areas," spokesman Jens Laerke told AFP.

Some 12,000 IS fighters — Syrians, Iraqis as well as foreigners from 54 countries — are detained in Kurdish prisons, according to official Kurdish statistics.

Displacement camps meanwhile host some 12,000 foreigners — 8,000 children and 4,000 women.

"The brutal military assault led by Turkey and its mercenaries is now taking place near a camp in Ain Issa, where there are thousands (of people) from families of IS," a Kurdish administration statement said.

"Some were able to escape after bombardments that targeted" the camp.

It said the Ain Issa camp was "now without guards" and 785 relatives of IS jihadists had fled.

According to Turkish media, Ankara aims to take control of a territory 120 kilometres (75 miles) long and 30 kilometres into Syria, up to the towns of Tal Abyad and Ras al-Ain.

Turkish forces and their proxies captured Tal Abyad on Friday afternoon, which left Ras al-Ain, further east, as the last major target in the offensive.

The fighting was intense in and around the town and the Observatory reported that a convoy, which included journalists and civilians, was hit by artillery.

Nine people were killed, five of them civilians, the monitoring organisation said.

Turkey announced it had seized the key M4 highway, which looks like it might mark the southern limit of its advance in this initial phase of the invasion. It lies 30 to 35 kilometres deep in Syrian territory.

SDF fighters have taken mounting losses against the vastly superior military firepower of Turkey, which has defied mounting international protests and the threat of US sanctions in pressing on with its offensive. **AFP**

TRUMP RELEASES \$50 MILLION IN STABILISATION ASSISTANCE FOR SYRIA

Washington: US President Donald Trump on Saturday released \$50 million in stabilisation assistance for Syria to protect persecuted ethnic and religious minorities and advance human rights, the White House said.

This funding will provide emergency financial assistance to Syrian human rights defenders, civil society organisations and reconciliation efforts directly supporting eth-

nic and religious minority victims of the conflict, White House Press Secretary Stephanie Grisham said.

It will also go towards increasing accountability, removal of explosive remnants of war, community security, documenting human rights abuses and international humanitarian law violations and support for survivors of gender-based violence and torture, she said. **PTI**



Hundreds of protesters from the Kurdish community in Lebanon hold their party flags, one with a portrait of the jailed Kurdish guerrilla leader Abdullah Ocalan, as they chant slogans, during a demonstration against Turkey's military operation in northeastern Syria, at Martyrs' Square in downtown Beirut, Lebanon on Sunday

AP

Trump backs Giuliani, but some aides wish he would cut ties

Washington: President Donald Trump on Saturday stood behind personal attorney Rudy Giuliani, one of his highest-profile and most vocal defenders, amid reports that federal prosecutors in the city Giuliani led as mayor are eyeing him for possible lobbying violations.

Behind the scenes, however, many of Trump's closest aides and advisers, inside and outside the White House, quietly wish the president would cut ties with Giuliani, whose leadership of New York after the September 11, 2001, terrorist attacks earned him worldwide admiration and the moniker of "America's mayor."

Giuliani was a force in Trump's defense during the lengthy Russia investigation by the special counsel.

Yet the effort to undermine special counsel Robert Mueller led Giuliani to Ukraine, which now entangles the former federal prosecutor and mayor in legal jeopardy and is central to the danger threatening the presidency he labored to protect.

The New York Times reported Friday, citing a pair of anonymous sources familiar with the matter, that the investigation is linked to Giuliani's efforts to undermine Marie Yovanovitch, formerly the US ambassador to Ukraine.

The US attorney's office in Manhattan has declined to comment on the Times report.

Two Florida businessmen with ties to Giuliani were charged Thursday with federal campaign finance violations.

Both played key roles in



Giuliani's efforts to get Ukraine to launch a corruption investigation into Democratic presidential contender Joe Biden and his son Hunter, who sat on the board of a gas company there.

On Saturday, Trump deployed in Giuliani's defense the same two-word phrase — "Witch Hunt!" — he repeatedly used to attack the legitimacy of the special counsel investigation into Russian interference in the 2016 presidential election and now the House impeachment inquiry against him. "So now they are after the legendary 'crime buster' and greatest Mayor in the history of NYC, Rudy Giuliani," Trump tweeted while on the way to his northern Virginia golf club.

"He may seem a little rough around the edges sometimes, but he is also a great guy and wonderful lawyer." Later Saturday, he told Jeanine Pirro during a telephone interview broadcast on her Fox News Channel program that Giuliani continues as his lawyer.

"He's a great gentleman. He was a great mayor, one of the greatest, maybe the greatest mayor in the history of New

York," the president said.

"He was a fantastic prosecutor. I know nothing about him being under investigation ... I can't imagine it."

"He's a man that looks for corruption and whatever he does I really believe he's a totally, I mean, I know he's an honorable man," Trump added.

A whistleblower complaint about Trump's dealings with Ukraine led Democratic House Speaker Nancy Pelosi to open an impeachment inquiry into the president.

Three House committees taking depositions in the impeachment probe heard Friday from Yovanovitch.

The former ambassador has said she was fired from her post in May after insisting that Giuliani's requests to Ukrainian officials for investigations be relayed through official channels, according to a former diplomat who has spoken with her. The former diplomat spoke on condition of anonymity to discuss the private conversation. Trump seemed to try to create space between himself and Giuliani on Friday when reporters asked if Giuliani was still representing him.

"Well, I don't know. I haven't spoken to Rudy," Trump said as he left the White House for a trip to Louisiana, adding that the two spoke briefly on Thursday.

"He's a very good attorney, and he has been my attorney. Yeah, sure." Asked if he still represented Trump, Giuliani replied to The Associated Press with a one-word text message: "Yes." **AP**

Typhoon leaves 33 dead as Japan continues rescue

Tokyo: Helicopters, boats and thousands of troops were deployed across Japan to rescue people stranded in flooded homes Sunday, as the death toll from a ferocious typhoon climbed to as high as 33.

One woman fell to her death as she was being placed inside a rescue helicopter.

Typhoon Hagibis made landfall south of Tokyo on Saturday evening and battered central and northern Japan with torrents of rain and powerful gusts of wind. The

typhoon was downgraded to a tropical storm on Sunday.

Public broadcaster NHK said 14 rivers across the nation had flooded, some spilling out in more than one spot.

The Tokyo Fire Department said a woman in her 70s was accidentally dropped 40 meters (131 feet) to the ground while being transported into a rescue helicopter in Iwaki city in Fukushima prefecture, a northern area devastated by the typhoon. **AFP**

Britain's Johnson pushes for last-ditch Brexit deal

London (United Kingdom): Prime Minister Boris Johnson was to brief his Ministers on Sunday on progress in Britain's last-ditch efforts to strike a new Brexit agreement with the EU.

Negotiators went behind closed doors for intensive talks in Brussels after Johnson outlined a new set of divorce terms to Irish Prime Minister Leo Varadkar on Thursday.

But they have very little time to left succeed.

EU leaders will meet in Brussels on Thursday and Friday for a summit held under the pressures of the October 31 Brexit deadline just two weeks

away. They would ideally like to have a full proposal to vote on by then.

But the sides are trying to achieve in a few days what they had failed to in the more than three years since Britons first voted to leave the European Union after nearly 50 years.

German Chancellor Angela Merkel will discuss the available options with French President Emmanuel Macron late Sunday and Johnson is to brief his cabinet at lunchtime.

European officials said the bloc's Brexit negotiator Michel Barnier will also brief EU

ambassadors on the state of play on Sunday evening.

The few details that have leaked out suggest a compromise around the contentious Irish border issue that keeps Britain's Northern Ireland partially aligned with EU customs rules.

Whether such a fudge suits both Brussels and the more ardent Brexit backers in parliament who must still approve a deal should become clearer in the coming days.

Johnson rose to power in July on a promise not to extend Brexit for a third time — even for a few weeks. **AFP**

XI JINPING WARNS DURING MAIDEN VISIT TO NEPAL

Any attempt to split China will be 'crushed'

Kathmandu: President Xi Jinping warned on Sunday that anyone attempting to "split" China will be "crushed" as he held wide-ranging talks with Nepal's top leadership here and the two countries elevated their bilateral ties to strategic partnership and signed a slew of agreements, including a plan to build a trans-Himalayan railway line.

During his meeting with Nepalese counterpart Bidya Devi Bhandari on Saturday, President Xi announced a support of 3.5 billion RMB equivalent to Nepalese Rs 56 billion to Nepal over the next two years to help the development pro-

grammes, officials said.

Xi, the first Chinese president to visit Nepal in 23 years, also pledged to upgrade the Arniko Highway linking Kathmandu with Tatopani transit point - which was shut down following the devastating earthquake of 2015 - and open more customs points facilitating connectivity.

He said a feasibility study of trans-Himalayan railway will soon start and China will also support construction of the Kerung-Kathmandu tunnel road.

During his meeting with Nepal Prime Minister KP Sharma Oli on Sunday, Xi said



that "anyone attempting to split China will be crushed and any external force backing such attempts will be deemed by the Chinese people as pipe-dreaming." China's official Xinhua news agency reported.

Xi's comments came as

Beijing is putting pressure on Kathmandu to rein-in pro-Dalai Lama Tibetans in Nepal.

Nepal shares a long border with Tibet and is home to around 20,000 Tibetan exiles. Every year some 2,500 Tibetans illegally enter Nepal crossing Tibetan border on their way to Dharamshala to meet the 84-year-old Dalai Lama.

Beijing views the India-based Dalai Lama, the spiritual leader of the Tibetan people, as a separatist trying to split the Himalayan region from China.

Oli said Nepal firmly supports China in safeguarding its sovereignty and territorial integrity and stands firm in

upholding the one-China policy. Nepal, added Oli, will never allow any force to use its territory for separatist activities against China, the Xinhua report said. Xi stressed that his country appreciates Nepal for its firm adherence to the one-China policy and its staunch support for China on issues concerning China's core interests.

Calling Nepal and China true friends and partners, Oli said the two countries have always respected each other, supported each other and never interfered in the internal affairs of the other, adding that their traditional friendship is unbreakable. **PTI**

GLOBE TROTTER

9 KILLED, 10 INJURED IN GAS EXPLOSION IN CHINA

Beijing: At least nine people were killed and 10 others injured on Sunday in a gas explosion at a street food restaurant in eastern China, official media here reported.

74 MIGRANTS RESCUED OFF LIBYAN COAST

Rome: Humanitarian groups on Sunday said they have rescued 74 migrants on a rubber boat in the Mediterranean Sea off the coast of Libya while Tunisian authorities reported blocking a smuggling boat carrying 110 migrants from setting off for Italy. The groups said six children were among those rescued.

Hong Kong: Riot police clashed with anti-government protesters across Hong Kong Sunday as masked activists vandalised businesses deemed sympathetic to Beijing in another weekend of chaos in the financial hub.

Rallies erupted in multiple neighbourhoods, with some protesters blocking roads, sabotaging train tracks, and trashing pro-China businesses.

Police said an officer was taken to hospital after his neck was slashed. Local television networks also broadcast footage of a man beaten bloody by protesters after they found a baton in his bag and suspected him of being an undercover officer.

Police have increasingly posed as protesters, scoring some tactical suc-

cesses and sparking widespread paranoia among frontline demonstrators.

During cat-and-mouse encounters on Sunday officers made dozens of arrests, but there were fewer protesters than have taken to the streets more recently during the four-month long protest movement.

In Mongkok, a bustling shopping district on the Kowloon peninsula, officers burst from an unmarked van over a blockade of bamboo scaffolding and quickly chased down multiple protesters.

Later, an AFP reporter in the neighbourhood saw protesters beat a woman earlier accused of helping police clear barricades.

The woman was struck with fists and umbrellas, and also had her face

smear with mud.

Protesters have increasingly turned on their ideological opponents in recent weeks, while Beijing loyalists have attacked democracy activists throughout the summer.

Online forums used to organise the largely leaderless movement advertised Sunday as a "blossom everywhere" day, encouraging activists to gather in malls across the city.

Protests and clashes were reported in half a dozen neighbourhoods, with police saying they fired tear gas during two incidents.

While the crowds were thinner, the flashmob tactics stretched police resources and still brought chaos to parts of the city for a 19th consecutive weekend. Throughout the day, police found themselves berated and heck-

led by bystanders as they made arrests, highlighting how the force has become loathed and pilloried by large parts of the population. "I'm furious," a female protester, who gave her surname as Chan, told AFP. "I want the government to disband the entire police force."

Hong Kong has been shaken by four months of massive democracy protests which have seen increasingly violent clashes between hardcore demonstrators and police, as well as regular transport disruptions.

The protests were sparked by opposition to a now-scrapped proposal to allow extraditions to mainland China, but have since morphed into a larger movement for democracy and police accountability. **AFP**



Police chase a protester in Hong Kong on Sunday

AP

Trend Slazer

Exciting time to be an actor: Lara

Actor **LARA DUTTA BHUPATHI** is all set to make her OTT debut in an untitled web series and she feels right now is a very exciting time to be an actor because there are work offers in films as well as the digital platform.

"OTT platforms are providing great content to the audience. Now, all the mainstream actors are working in web series. The lines are blurring and now an actor doesn't think in terms of whether he or she wants to concentrate only on films or on digital platform. There is so much content happening. It's a very exciting time to be in the business," said Lara.

The forthcoming Hotstar web series also features **Karan Wahi**.

'I am excited about Abhinandan's biopic. I think the story of Balakot and Indian Air Force needs to be told. When a film like Top Gun gets released in America, an entire generation there gets inspired seeing the strength of their Forces. I feel this is an opportunity for us and also a responsibility to show the amazing work the Indian Air Force has been doing.

—Vivek Oberoi

The season 13 of the reality show **Bigg Boss** has been mired in controversies right from its launch. Many organisations, including Confederation Of All India Traders (CAIT) have sought ban on the show, raising objection over the concept of "Bed Friends Forever." Many have alleged the show is obscene and it maligns Indian culture.

In the wake of the complaint, the Mumbai police has tightened the security outside the show host Salman Khan's house.

According to online portal Bollywood Hungama, 20 people were arrested for protesting outside **SALMAN KHAN**'s house.

Being Cruella was fun: Emma

Actor **EMMA STONE** says her take on the infamous villain in the forthcoming *Cruella* film will be very distinctive. Set in 1970, Disney's forthcoming live-action *Cruella* will delve into the backstory of 101 Dalmatians villain Cruella de Vil, and try to find an answer to the question, "How did she get here?"

There will be comparisons with Glenn Close's avatar as the iconic Cruella de Vil in 1996's *101 Dalmatians*, but Stone says the time-line of both the films is different. She says, "It comes long before her

UK-based storyteller **EMILY HENNESSEY**'s narration of the goddess was a joyfully told tale of a powerful woman and her journey of transformation, transcendence and rebirth, says **CHAHAK MITTAL**

She is naked and intoxicated — dark and dishevelled yet terrifyingly beautiful — wearing nothing but a garland and a waistband of demon heads and a girdle of human hands, holding several weapons. With her tongue rolled out, she stomps on the prostrate body of Shiva, who is also her husband. She is the redeemer of both nature and humankind. And amid all this, even though goddess Kali's image, with skulls and corpses, represents all symbols of death and destruction, her femininity is incomparable. She presents an answer to the question — what happens when a woman says enough to all the injustice around her?

When UK-based storyteller Emily Hennessey single-handedly began narrating Kali's story and her victory against demon Raktabhija on the stage at the Kathakar Storytelling Festival, there was a surge of electric energy around, swaying across the Sunder Nursery. It touched each one present in the audience and had them in awe of the goddess' grotesque yet subdued aura. It looked as though she was very much present. She made sure all the eyes were glued to her bewitching narration till she was done. And when I tell Emily that the performance was electrifying, she exclaimed, "Well, it's Kali! Isn't it?"

She began her act by questioning — How is it possible for a mother to both create and destroy? When she watches young Kartikeya fighting alone in the battlefield against Raktabhija, who doesn't seem to be getting easily defeated as his name translates to 'blood-seed', she questions the gods above — Brahma, Vishnu, Indra and Shiva. And they all seem to have been "too busy" in their respective chores as Emily passes a contemporary joke at the right moment. Her story, though drawn from the colourful and ancient Hindu mythology, presented a melange of modern humour and took digs at the contemporary lifestyle.

She also showcased the demon asking the gods to make him more powerful by saying, "The world needs demons just like feast needs hunger." And hence, a new demon emerges with every drop of blood that falls off Raktabhija's body after Kartikeya finally slits his throat. At last, when nobody comes to

The Kali trance



his rescue, Parvati steps up and enters the battlefield. With the right mix of both reverence and mischief, she says, "I only have to go and kill the demon now." Emily said, "Kali is quite a well-known goddess for her vehement strength. But I was very much interested to explore her softer side. I have heard of many different manifestations of the goddess like Parvati, Sati, Uma, who showcase their journey traversing from creation to destruction. I wanted to show how out of a motherly concern, she steps in the battlefield in the avatar of the powerful goddess, and at the same time, how a woman can destroy the world and its cruelty when the time comes."

Emily's understanding of Kali itself made it evident of how overwhelmed she is of her style. So how did she begin telling the ancient Indian tales and how did she get fascinated by them? Well, she was 18 when she went to Nepal for a few months to work as a volunteer. "I sold the images of all the gods and goddesses for the first time then. And somehow, these stayed with me. I was curious to know what are their stories," she said and added that it grew further when she started working with storyteller Dr Vayu Naidu, who narrated stories from Indian epics. She said, "I saw her tell the *Ramayana*, the birth of Ganesh, and a lot of epics and stories about different Indian gods and goddesses. And that really fed my fascination. Then there were a lot of trips to India too."

She said that her fascination with Indian mythology also grew when she looked at the number of gods and goddesses present. "There are over a million of them. It's extraordinary! And they all have different manifestations of each other. They are very three-dimensional and human because even we have all these different energies within us. I found these stories so colourful, bright and cosmic and yet full of universal truths. Some of these are even love stories, which are so beautiful. These stories are very close to my heart because they are full of love and colour," said she.

Even as though Kali triumphs over Raktabhija, the gods and Shiva ponder that Parvati has drunk a demon's blood, which is making her energy omnipresent and she trembles with outrage. Shiva, after a number of tricks to bring back her warmth, finally lies beneath her feet to reduce her angst.

Seeing her consort beneath her foot, Kali realises that she had gone too far. To showcase this, Emily, hitting the right note, uttered, "Oh! What happened to you husband? Why are you lying there?" and acted like nothing had happened. She also questioned the destruction around and when she asked Shiva, he said, "Oh honey! It's a long story."

So how is it that she brings such intricate emotions so deeply and aptly? Emily said, "Before the performance, giving space for the story to be alive is very important. By not learning the script, the story would come out differently every time. For me, it just has to be alive within me. Hence, I need some time and space before bubbling over. Then, the story takes over and I don't know what's happening. It is the story that's in charge."

The storyteller said that she reads as many versions of the same folktale as possible to gain a broader perspective. She said, "Apart from reading various versions, I also ask from people on my visits to India, especially in the temples of Kolkata. I go around asking people to tell me their versions of the same stories and then, piece together the bits of stories that I like the most to make my own version."

Emily recalled the Kathakar festival in 2016, when she saw a performance based on Kali for the first time, which immensely inspired her. "I got instantly interested in the performer's amazing energy. When the goddess Kali came to life on stage, she was absolutely present! There was a huge and powerful fire that they lit up. The performer had seemed to completely go into a trance. His eyes were shaking as though he was completely possessed with the goddess. It was so powerful. I wanted to know what is this power that she has?" she told us.

As her narration ended, after Kali goes back to being Parvati again, Emily questioned, "And Kali? What happened to her? Where is she?" Later, she answered, "Kali is omnipresent. Time and again, she will come when the moment is right and fight off a thousand Raktabhija-like demons in the world."

There are various versions of the same epics but they have all been told through a general perspective or mostly by the men in it. However, recently, there have been authors who have penned the *Mahabharata* and the *Ramayana* through the perspectives of Draupadi and Kunti, and Sita. However, Kali seems new. She has often been misunderstood and not been explored much. Emily said, "It is always important to tell the story of a woman and be aware of the gender inequality that we have had for centuries. Telling the story through a woman's perspective also fights this very patriarchal way of collecting, writing or telling stories. So this is a challenge. I just open my heart and do it. I just let them speak for themselves as humans and as women."

Well, Emily's performance certainly seemed like a joyfully told tale of a woman and her journey of transformation, transcendence and rebirth.

Runway of the millennials

Young Guns, an initiative to empower the young designers, enabled them to showcase their diverse collection at IFW day 4

They are young yet old in the experiences that they shoulder. They are technologically savvy yet emotionally distant. Their gadgets often last longer than their relationships. Whatever you say about the millennials, the opposite is also equally true. And it is this band of people and their spirit of achieving a sense of balance in their lives that formed the inspiration for FDCI's India Fashion Week 2019 day 4. 'Young Guns' an initiative to encourage young designers gave them a free run of the ramp.

Designer Niharika Gupta often raided her brother's wardrobe as a child, drawn to the comfortable fabrics and functionality of menswear silhouettes. Her label, Notebook, gave contemporary update by re-engineering shirting fabrics and tailoring techniques into a line of polished urban uniforms. Her workwear and casuals were inspired by Indian and Middle-East. The collection was a balance of sophisticated formal cuts and utilitarian details with pops of colour and comfort.

Whereas fashion designer Sameer Madan's collection encapsulated or rather entrapped a periodic transition. He said, "This spring/summer, we make the old meet the new, concocting a melange of renaissance with the cosmopolitan. An emotion as timeless as each individual design. The renegade of fusion folklore as we embark upon this reminiscent journey and contribute our a lit-

tle token to the time capsule." His collection aimed to metamorphose basic into boisterous, simple into sophisticated. Madan's agenda was to transform beauty into simplicity by engulfing complexity in a way which looks subtle.

From using handwoven fabrics to natural dyes, right down to circular textiles derived from recycled PET bottles, designer Aman Singh fused Indian craft techniques with sustainable materials to create modern wardrobe mainstays. Singh's Bareek amalgamated two distinct craft elements, namely *Jamdhani* from West Bengal and *Ikat* from Telangana. The zany yet sharp collection propelled itself straight out of a self-written graphic sci-fi novel titled *Intergalactic Luum*. Inspired by the motifs reminiscent of old-school arcade games, the collection featured distant star clusters, exacting aerial battles, mysterious nebulas and a certain lone ranger named LUUM, all of which find place in this space saga. He said, "Intergalactic Luum will be a prêt-à-porter line that is a distinct sub-label and will be placed in a segment above the label's 'Bareek Essentials' line that focusses on menswear quality basics, made of natural fabrics ranging from Khadi to GOTSTM certified organic cotton."

His team works with under-utilised craft clusters, value-adding to their dead stock and also joins hands with societies/groups that are known for mastering a particular craft.

Another collection, *Beyond the Clouds* by Countrymade drew inspiration from nature in the designs and motifs.

Photo: Pankaj Kumar



WEBBED



MODERN LOVE

An unlikely friendship. A lost love resurfaced. A marriage at its turning point. An uncertain date. An unconventional new family. These are unique stories about joys and tribulations of love, each inspired by a real-life personal essay from the beloved New York Times column. Starring Anne Hathaway, the series releases on October 18 on Amazon Prime Video.



LIVING WITH YOURSELF

Burned out on life, Miles undergoes a strange procedure at a strip mall spa and wakes to find he's been replaced by a better version of himself. Created by Timothy Greenberg and starring Paul Rudd, Aisling Bea and Desmin Borges, the series will release on October 18 on Netflix.



JUST ADD MAGIC

When Kelly and her two best friends stumble upon a mysterious cookbook, they discover that the book's recipes are far from ordinary — magical. Starring Olivia Sanabia, Abby Donnelly, the series releases on October 25 on Amazon Prime Video.



Bamboo huts with thatched roofs, open areas with cots and trees in front, a vegetable garden in the backyard, walls covered with a mixture of cow dung, dirt and grass, *rangolis* at the entrance, hospitable people with a shine and curiosity in their eyes...all this, and more are noticeable in the sweep of an eye when one enters Mirzapur, recently made famous by a web series.

But while that is the reel, there are stories of hope, development and progress, which form the warp and weft of the real in the area, which remains ignored as it is imagined, falsely, of course, that the rural sector lacks in entrepreneurship because the majority of the populace is illiterate. However, delving deeper reveals that there are a number of innovative minds who can do wonders when provided the right guidance. And specially given the fact that there is an increase in the number of unemployed youth each year and if there is an emphasis on changing the outlook from a job-seeker to a creator, it can transform the area. Development Alternatives, a social enterprise, is working towards the same goal through its *Work 4 Progress* programme, which is a platform for encouraging entrepreneurship.

The programme commenced in 2017 and since then, it has impacted several lives. We were here to witness that change and ensure that other people could see the transformation in Mirzapur, which is far-removed from the gun and mafia culture perpetuated by the eponymous series.

The journey began from a school in Kantit Gramin village. From afar, we could hear girls laughing, giggling and clapping among themselves. When we

BE THE CHANGE

A community programme in Mirzapur has made palpable difference in empowering anyone who has a workable idea to become an entrepreneur, discovers

SAKSHI SHARMA

entered, they were so excited to take this forward that they all shouted, "Sister, we will first sing a song." This was followed by details of how the programme had empowered them. Mamta Yadav, an 18-year-old, said, "We now understand the role education plays in shaping a child's future. Not only this, we are also aware about child marriage and child rights." She recalled an incident where she, along with a group of girls, stood for the rights of an underage girl from a nearby village, who was being forced to get married. As she shared this, the classroom echoed with claps from every corner. Another girl, Kavita Patel, a student of BA first year, said, "The programme has empowered us and we feel more confident now. Earlier, we fumbled for words even when we discussed our basic

needs." However, when asked about their parents' reaction to all this, a girl from the corner of the class promptly answered, "Mere papa ab mere dost ban gaye hai (My father is my friend now)." She explained that earlier their parents didn't allow them to study and wanted them to invest their time in household chores.

To solve this issue, an inclusive programme was conducted for father-daughter and mother-daughter separately to make the parents understand the importance of education. Though initially rigid for about six months to a year, they finally understood the need to adapt to the changing times. The transition from the programme was such that the girls who could barely speak for themselves began fighting for the rights of



others. The ones who had been confined within the four walls were now saying out loud that they wanted to become an IAS officer, a teacher, a doctor or a singer.

We then headed towards a closed room in the narrow lanes of the village filled with mud and cow dung. It was Tara Mani and his wife, Malti Devi's home, which was more like a home-cum-shop, as it had a bed on one side and machines on the other. They had a small business where they sold vermilion. Tara said, "Earlier, I only made *sindoor* boxes but the programme has made us aware about the Startup Village Enterprise Programme (SVEP), which provides loan to the rural women to motivate them for small-scale businesses." So Malti took a loan and set up a machine to make vermilion too. She

added, "Our vermilion and its box has a special shine. People from far away come to buy it." As she said this, her head became a tad more alert, her shoulders straightened up and there was no mistaking the hint of pride in her statement.

Another entrepreneur was Asha Devi, a strong-headed middle-aged woman, whose success clearly reflected in her personality. Her idea had come to fruition, which also added revenue to her family earnings. In March 2018, she decided to set up a vermicompost enterprise, which now runs successfully and was supported by the programme during ideation. Today, she even makes profit out of her business and runs it without debts. She said, "A lot of effort has gone into bringing this business to the level where it is today," and made sure that we were made aware about her online presence before we took her leave.

While the assistance from the programme helped, the people themselves were not lacking in enterprise. The way to Mamta Devi's ice-cream manufacturing unit of Dhanipatti village might not have a proper road as there was a smattering of bricks on the wet mud to ensure that people did not soil their footwear or their feet but the petite woman had expanded her business to employ seven people. "I am not stopping here. I also want to set-up a chips packaging machine," she said as we all looked at her in wonder.

The day also saw a village entrepreneurship fair — *Taragram Mela* in the National Convent Public School — where people from all walks of life who had started something of their own were present. Clearly, there is no stopping of ideas.

The eternal connection

Meditation and yoga can lead to such a level of remembrance that the soul can relate to god silently and personally without needing any physical image or idol, says RAJYOGI BRAHMAKUMAR NIKUNJ JI

In spirituality, remembrance is said to be the highest state of connection, wherein an individual recollects their divine self which is the supreme soul. This releases a transformative energy, thereby, empowering the individual for a spiritual consciousness. Most of the people recognise this need when they want to be more peaceful, respectful and happier in life. However, the human consciousness is so overloaded with negative energies such as anger, fear, arrogance, possessiveness that from time to time this negativity explodes in emotional, verbal and physical violence.

We are so used to the violence in the world nowadays, that we have accepted it as a norm of life. But, there is also an instinct for harmony and peace, deep within the human spirit. That's the reason many people consistently strive for peace and mutual respect.

However, fears and grievances hijack a person into a state of turmoil and stress even if they don't want to. Under such a scenario, meditation works as a healing process that helps the person reconnect with his original self through understanding and remembrance. Through the remembrance of the Supreme soul, the human spirit can heal, purify and liberate itself from the treacherous habits that constantly sabotage its life. It is the basis of relationship of souls with their master — the Supreme soul. The steps for such remembrance are understanding, connection, concentration and absorption. When one absorbs themselves in the pure being of God, the divine energy is transferred into one's body which purifies and empowers the self. This absorption helps the self to re-emerge its original qualities.

To remember the one who is eternally loving, truthful and peaceful, is called the art of Rajyoga. Traditionally, it has been said that Rajyoga is the most difficult yoga but it is probably the easiest wherein the self, soul and God are understood as a form of light. Though they have separate forms but are united through thought and feeling.

This connection with God is based on subtle love and not on anything visual or physical. There is no discrimination on the basis of nationality, culture and religion because it is a connection of pure feeling. For inner liberation, such kind of remembrance is paramount. It is regarded as the truest form of spirituality for cleaning and fulfilling the soul. One should not forget that God is available and accessible to all. You don't need any position, role or nationality to connect with him instead the only thing that matters is a clean motive.

Yoga has become a very common word today. However, the word remembrance pinpoints the relationship with the Divine. A relationship that includes the feeling of a companion. After the soul connects with God, one is able to concentrate on the eternal friend's divine qualities and absorb them within themselves. So, beyond meditation and yoga is such remembrance where the soul is able to relate to God silently, personally and constantly, beyond any physical or subtle image, and feels fully connected and empowered.



Why train your dog with food rewards? A growing body of research says it's the easiest and most effective way to train.

"Using treats during training is the best way to guarantee that your dog will repeat the behavior you want," says the American Kennel Club.

Other methods don't work as well, experts say, and can even harm your dog and the pet-owner relationship.

Erica Feuerbacher, an assistant professor in the Department of Animal and Poultry Science at Virginia Tech, did a study that compared a food reward to the reward of petting and praise. Dogs were clear about what they preferred: "They'll work harder and respond faster for food than for social interaction," she says.

Dogs do love to be with us, but our monkey chatter doesn't mean that much to them: Feuerbacher has found that dogs will stay near a person who's praising them for the same amount of time as if they're being ignored.

And if you want your dog to obey just because they love you, get real.

"If only it was like that!" says Zazie Todd, author of the forthcoming *Wag: The Science of Making Your Dog Happy* (Greystone Books, 2020). "If

Feed a little more

Using treats during training is the best way to guarantee that your dog will repeat the behaviour you want, suggest experts



your boss stopped paying you, you'd probably stop going to work pretty quickly. You need to motivate your dog too."

Dog trainers also talk about life rewards like getting to play or go for a walk. These can be useful, especially to maintain

behaviours you've already trained, but are more complicated and take longer.

"For most everyday behav-

iours that ordinary people want to teach, food is quicker and easier," says Todd.

"You want to find a trainer who's using modern reward-based methods, and that means they'll be using food to train a dog," she says.

Consider the alternatives that don't involve rewards. Punishment also works to change behaviour. After all, in nature, animals that don't avoid painful experiences aren't going to live long.

However, research has shown that using punishment in dog training has serious side effects. "The risks include fear, anxiety and stress," says Todd, "and they include an increased risk of aggression, because the dog may react badly to punishment or the threat of punishment."

It also affects the human-animal bond. One study found that dogs trained with aversive methods looked at their owners less frequently than dogs trained with positive reinforcement. That's the opposite of what you want when you're training. "They associate you with bad things, and become fearful of you," says Feuerbacher.

Although some trainers use language that obscures this, Feuerbacher says that if you look closely, you'll see that what's actually getting their

results is something aversive, like a leash jerk. "Often their 'energy' is a looming physical threat that bad things will happen if you don't comply," she says.

By contrast, giving a dog food has good side effects.

"If you have a fearful dog, using food is especially important because it builds a positive association through Pavlovian conditioning with the person providing it," Feuerbacher says. Translation: The way to a dog's heart really is through its stomach.

Some pet owners say their dog won't work for food; Feuerbacher says those dogs might be overfed. Food used for training should be part of their ration of calories, not an addition. So feed a little less to make sure your dog isn't too stuffed to want more.

While some dogs will work for just a portion of their kibble, for most, you have to offer something better. Feuerbacher says, "Break out the spray cheese or liverwurst — people may need to be creative." Research has shown that even dogs get tired of the same flavour all the time.

Also, it's possible for a dog to be too frightened to eat, so if you have a fearful dog, avoid training in a situation where he's overwhelmed by unfamiliar sights and sounds.

—AP

We are what we think. All that we are arises with our thoughts. With our thoughts, we make the world.
—Gautama Buddha

EYE DROPS TREAT EYE DISEASES

Researchers have identified the presence of a specific type of antibody, called anti-citrullinated protein autoantibodies or ACPAs, in human tear fluid.

They also demonstrated that patients with dry eye disease experienced reduced signs and symptoms of the condition in response to a new eye drop treatment — made from pooled human antibodies — that targets ACPAs, said the study published in the journal *The Ocular Surface*.

"The burden of autoimmune dry eye is much greater than just having an occasional feeling of dryness, it can severely compromise quality of life to the point of disability and can compromise a person's vision," said Indian-origin researcher and study's author Sandeep Jain, Professor at the University of Illinois, Chicago. In the study, the researchers identified ACPAs as another cause of eye inflammation that also contributes to the development of these webs, which Jain calls "a vicious cycle of inflammation." The new eye drops treat dry eye disease by knocking the immune system out of this cycle.



INCREASED STRESS LINKED WITH ACNE

Poor dietary habits, increased stress and harsh skincare routines were among the most significant factors associated with acne, according to a study. The research presented at the 28th European Academy of Dermatology and Venereology Congress in Madrid evaluated the exposure to different worsening factors on acne on more than 6,700 participants across six countries.

"For the first time, this study allows us to identify the most important exposure factors relating to acne from patient questioning prior to any treatment prescription," said the study's lead researcher Brigitte Dreno from the University Hospital of Nantes in France.

The results showed that significantly more individuals with acne (48.2 per cent) consumed dairy products daily compared to individuals who did not (38.8 per cent). Surprisingly 11 per cent of acne sufferers consume whey proteins vs seven per cent without acne and 11.9 per cent of acne sufferers consume anabolic steroids versus 3.2 per cent without acne. Exposure to pollution or stress was also more frequently observed in participants with acne.



WATCH YOUR WEIGHT OR FACE CANCER RISK

Researchers have found that being overweight before the age of 40 could increase the risk of various cancers in adults.

"Obesity is an established risk factor for several cancers. In this study, we have focussed on the degree, timing and duration of overweight and obesity in relation to cancer risk," said study author Tone Bjorge, Professor at University of Bergen in Norway.

The researchers used data for 2,20,000 individuals from the Me-Can study, with participants from Norway, Sweden and Austria. Around 27,881 individuals were diagnosed with cancer during follow-up, of which 9,761 (35 per cent) were obesity-related.

The study showed that if you were overweight before age 40, the risk of developing cancer increases by: 70 per cent for endometrial cancer, 58 per cent for male renal-cell cancer, 29 per cent for male colon cancer and 15 per cent for all obesity-related cancers (both sexes).



LIGHT SMOKING TOO DAMAGES LUNGS

People who smoke fewer than five cigarettes a day cause long-term damage to their lungs, according to a new research.

"Many people assume that smoking a few cigarettes a day isn't so bad but it turns out that the difference in loss of lung function between someone who smokes five cigarettes a day versus two packs a day is relatively small," said study lead author Elizabeth Oelsner, Assistant Professor at Columbia University Vagelos College in the US.

The researchers could see differences in lung function among light smokers (less than five cigarettes per day) and heavy smokers (more than 30 per day).

Their analysis found that lung function in light smokers declines at a rate much closer to that of heavy smokers, as compared to non-smokers. This means that a light smoker could lose about the same amount of lung function in one year as a heavy smoker might lose in nine months.

According to the researchers, light smokers may have a greater risk of developing chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD).



PHYSICAL HEALTH SEEN AS MORE IMPORTANT

A majority of Indians, at 75 per cent, are preoccupied about their physical well-being, over mental at 62 per cent, a survey by global market research agency Ipsos has found.

The survey, conducted to coincide with the World Mental Health Day, found 64 per cent Indians believe that is equally important to have both, physical and mental health.

Indians want a clear shift in the handling and perception of mental illness. As many as 64 per cent Indians want the stigma attached with mental health issues to go and they would prefer if it was treated like any other illness. Further, 74 per cent Indians expect adoption of a more tolerant attitude towards those with mental illness in the society.

The survey also shows a more positive and empathetic change coming about towards those with signs of mental health conditions with 64 per cent urban Indians believe seeing a mental health specialist or therapist, as a sign of strength.





Manju Rani (in red) punches Ekaterina Paltceva during World Championship final

PTI ■ ULAN-UDE

Indian boxer Manju Rani's stupendous debut run at the Women's World Championships ended with a Silver medal on Sunday after she lost the light flyweight (48kg) final to Russia's Ekaterina Paltceva here. The Haryana-boxer, who was seeded sixth, went down 1-4 to the second-seeded local favourite in the first final of the day. Rani, who turns 20 on Saturday, was the lone Indian to make the

Manju's run ends with Silver

finals after six-time champion M C Mary Kom (51kg), Jamuna Boro (54kg) and Lovlina Borgohain (69kg) settled for Bronze medals. In case of Borgohain, it was her second successive third-place finish. There was very little separating Rani and her rival, both of whom looked to attack in the first round. The Russian stood out for her near

perfect left hooks in the opening three minutes. In the second round, the Indian connected some good straights and seemed to have the upperhand over the crowd favourite. The proceedings slowed down in the final three minutes when both the boxers adopted a cautious approach. There was quite a bit of

holding, requiring the referee's intervention quite a few times. However, at the end of it the Russian emerged victorious perhaps for her a shade sharper reflexes. The Indian contingent was however visibly upset after the Paltceva's hand was raised as the victor. Rani broke into the national camp only this year by winning the

national crown for Punjab after not getting the selection nod in Haryana. Earlier this year, she won a Silver medal on debut at the prestigious Strandja Memorial Tournament, one of Europe's oldest and most competitive boxing events. Rani hails from Rithal Phogat village in the Rohtak district of Haryana. The youngster lost her father, a Border Security Force officer, to cancer in 2010.

Italy book Euro space

Jorginho, Bernardeschi score in Azzurri's seventh consecutive qualifiers win; Norway extend La Roja's wait

AFP ■ ROME/OSLO

Italy became the second team to qualify for Euro 2020 after a 2-0 win over Greece on Saturday, while three-time champions Spain edged closer to the finals despite conceding a stoppage-time equaliser away to Norway. Chelsea midfielder Jorginho dispatched a second-half penalty as Italy, wearing green kits for just the second time in history, registered a seventh straight win in Group J.

The Azzurri, who failed to qualify for the 2018 World Cup, added a second in Rome on 78 minutes through a deflected strike from Juventus forward Federico Bernardeschi.

Roberto Mancini's side joined Belgium in the draw for next year's finals, where Italy will play their first two group games at the Stadio Olimpico.

"We managed to create a team in a short period of time. It wasn't easy but you have to thank the players, who have quickly developed an understanding between themselves," said Mancini, who took over as Italy coach 18 months ago.

"It's a team with character that fights and plays with the ball but one that must also improve. Now we have a year to try and get better."

"We have a lot of work but we're not very far from the best European teams. I'm happy and proud to have helped the national team come through a tough patch."

Spain dropped their first points in Group F as Joshua King converted a 94th-minute spot-kick to rescue a 1-1 draw for Norway following a foul by Kepa Arrizabalaga on Omar



Italy teammates Marco Verratti and Lorenzo Insigne stare each other before the start of second half of play during Euro 2020 qualifiers

Elabdellau. The visitors led when Saul Niguez slammed home from 20 yards moments after half-time but Spain were denied a seventh win in a row as King's equaliser kept Norway in the running.

"It's a real pain to lose points in the final seconds. It's complicated to play against a team who knew that if they lost they were pretty much out," said Spain captain Ramos.

Norway last qualified for a major tournament at the 2000 European Championship and are fourth in the group, four points adrift of neighbours Sweden with

three games to play. Sebastian Larsson netted two spot-kicks as Sweden cruised to a 4-0 rout of Malta to reclaim second place behind Spain. Marcus Danielson broke the deadlock on 11 minutes in Ta' Qali and home skipper Andrei Agius also scored an own goal.

Leicester City goalkeeper Schmeichel pulled off superb stops to deny Granit Xhaka, Admir Mehmedi and Ricardo Rodriguez before Yussuf Poulsen grabbed an 84th-minute winner.

The Danes moved up to 12 points alongside group leaders Ireland, who drew 0-0 away to Georgia, while Switzerland are

Ramos sets Spain record

AFP ■ OSLO

Sergio Ramos broke the Spanish international appearances record on Saturday as he won his 168th cap in a 1-1 draw against Norway to overtake Iker Casillas.

The Spain captain was named in the starting line-up in Oslo for the Euro 2020 qualifier by coach Robert Moreno, 14 years since making his debut in a 3-0 friendly win over China.

The 33-year-old was part of the Spain sides which lifted the 2010 World Cup, Euro 2008 and Euro 2012 titles.

He took over the Spain captaincy in 2016 after goalkeeper Casillas' final match. The centre-back equalled

Casillas' mark of 167 games last month against the Faroe Islands.

"All that is personal is a little secondary," said Ramos after the game.

"I would have happily traded this 168th cap for a victory. It was not the case. But this record is a great reward after so many years and it's a great source of huge pride."

"I am emotional every time I put on this shirt. That will not change and I hope to continue doing so for many years."

Ramos is now only eight caps short of the European record held by Italian stopper Gianluigi Buffon (176) and 16 adrift of Egyptian Ahmed Hassan's world record of 184.

Romania remain a point behind Sweden following a 3-0 win in the Faroe Islands secured by second-half goals from George Puscas, Ionut Mitrita and Claudiu Keseru.



four points off the pace but with a game in hand.

Mick McCarthy's Ireland couldn't establish any momentum earlier in the day in Tbilisi and were left frustrated by wayward finishing

from their few opportunities to break the deadlock.

Bosnia and Herzegovina reignited their qualification hopes in Italy's group with a 4-1 win over second-placed Finland.

A brace from Juventus midfielder Miralem Pjanic and goals from Izet Hajrovic and Armin Hodzic pushed Bosnia to within two points of Finland.

Armenia blew the chance to move level with the Finns as Liechtenstein substitute Yanik Fryk cancelled out Tigran Barseghyan's effort in a 1-1 draw in Vaduz.

Neymar limps off in friendly draw

AFP ■ SINGAPORE

Neymar's return to Champions League action may be delayed after the Paris Saint-Germain forward limped off after just 12 minutes of Brazil's friendly against Nigeria on Sunday.

The 27-year-old, who played the full 90 minutes against Senegal on Thursday, clutched his hamstring after eight minutes and was replaced by Philippe Coutinho shortly after.

Neymar, who was playing his 101st international, is now a doubt for PSG's Champions League meeting with Club Brugge on October 22. He has missed the first two rounds



Neymar returns to dugout after getting injured

because of a UEFA suspension.

He was injured while on national duty back in June when he hurt an ankle in a friendly against Qatar. It ruled him out of the Copa America which Brazil went on to win.

If the injury was bad for Neymar then the result was disappointing for Brazil — it is their fourth successive match without a win.

Their previous three outings since winning the Copa America had yielded draws against Colombia and Senegal and a defeat by Peru.

Even when Neymar was on the pitch, the Nigerians were causing problems with Brazil goalkeeper Ederson at full stretch to keep out

Victor Osimhen.

Gabriel Jesus went close for Brazil but it was the Super Eagles who took the lead in the 35th minute when Moses Simon slipped the ball to Joe Aribo who got the better of Marquinhos before firing home.

Brazil showed more invention in the second half and levelled three minutes after the break. Marquinhos' header came back off the bar but Casemiro was on hand to stab the ball across the line.

Jesus and Coutinho both had chances to wrap up the win for Brazil but Nigeria held firm for the draw.

Player coordination will be key in playoffs

The experience of playing with Haryana Steelers in Pro Kabaddi League season seven has been simply incredible and we are very excited to play against U Mumba in the playoffs in Ahmedabad today. The team has gelled very well throughout the season and our hard work has paid rich dividends. We have gone through ups and downs, but the important thing is that all players have always believed in their ability.

We had hopes of finishing in the first two spots when the team had a long winning streak during the league, but unfortunately, we couldn't achieve direct qualification for the semi-finals. However, it doesn't make a big difference for us as we can win the quarter-finals and reach the last four stage. All teams are equal in this competition, so it doesn't matter which opponent we face at whichever stage of the tournament. We will try to do our best in every match we play.

There is certainly a different feel to a playoff match. We have to be mentally ready for the fact that we can be out of the tournament after a single loss. We cannot afford to make too many mistakes in the knockouts. These are crucial matches. So, we have to be very careful with the way we approach each and every move during the matches. We will work out our strategies and follow them properly.

There will be a slight change in our training regime for the playoff matches. We have played exceedingly well during the tournament, so we don't need to change much in our game. We will just focus on what we have been doing right throughout this edition and we are confident that we will pull through in all tough situations.

Our captain Dharmaraj Cheralathan keeps talking and motivating us during tight



—PRASHANTH KUMAR RAI

matches. The players of the team have also gained experience as the season has progressed, so all of them have also become equipped to thrive in pressure situations.

Our offense and defense has been terrific throughout the season. We will rectify our mistakes after every match. However, if I have to point out one aspect which should work on is coordination between the players. I feel coordination on the mat will be the key in the playoffs. The team which coordinates well with each other has been triumphant most times in PKL-7. So, we will focus on talking to each other during the playoff matches.

I was in the Haryana team in the fifth season. I have played with Vikash Kandola and Dharmaraj Cheralathan for a few years, so I have a great understanding with them on the mat. All of us complement each other very well. We will try our best to reach the final. After working so hard throughout the tournament, we shouldn't stumble in the last stage. The team has made multiple comebacks in this edition and therefore we are aware that a match is never over until the final whistle.

(The writer represents Haryana Steelers in Pro Kabaddi League season 7)

Dutee closes season with 200m Gold

PTI ■ RANCHI

Dutee Chand completed a sprint double in the season-ending 59th National Open Athletics Championships, clocking the fastest time in 200m by an Indian this year with a 23.17 second burst here on Sunday.

Having set a national record in the 100m on Friday, Dutee added the half-lapper Gold to her collection, showing her challenger Archana Suseendran (23.41) a clean pair of heels.

The Odisha athlete not only topped Archana's time of 23.18 seconds clocked in the AFI Grand Prix in Patiala on August 16 but also came up with her own second fastest time behind the 23.00 timed in the Asian Games last year.

Dutee was also adjudged the best female athlete while shot putter Tajinderpal Singh Toor, who broke his own national record on Saturday, was named best athlete in the men's category.

There was intense competition at the triple jump pit, even in Asian Games Gold medalist Arprinder Singh's absence. Abdulla Aboobacker challenged his Services team-mate Karthik Unnikrishnan till the very last jump in an event that saw the top six competitors cross the 16m mark.

Karthik Unnikrishnan, who took the lead with a 16.61m in the third



Dutee Chand celebrates after win

round, leapt 16.78m on his final try to win the Gold.

Chinta Yadav emerged a surprise winner of the women's 3000m steeplechase, outstripping her Railways team-mate Parul Chaudhary in a time of 10 minutes 11.70 seconds.

Railways' PU Chitra was another athlete who completed the double, adding the women's 800m crown to the 1500m title she won earlier this week.

With Lili Das dropping out, Chitra did not have to worry much in winning the two-lap race in 2 minutes 04.59 seconds.

AFP ■ SUZUKA

Valtteri Bottas jumped from third to first with an electric start to win the Japanese Grand Prix on Sunday ahead of Ferrari's Sebastian Vettel and Mercedes teammate Lewis Hamilton.

With only Bottas now able to overtake Hamilton in the standings, Mercedes clinched an unprecedented sixth successive drivers' constructors' world championship double.

"I'm happy, very happy," said flying Finn Bottas, who ended a six-month wait for his third victory of 2019 after winning the season-opener in Australia and the Azerbaijan Grand Prix in April.

"Starting third isn't easy. I had a really nice start, managed to get the lead and then the pace was super good, I could really control the race," he added.

"I'm really proud to be part of the team. A sixth title is really impressive."

"Firstly congratulations to the team," said Hamilton, who now leads the drivers' standings by 64 points from Bottas. "That's the main point. I just wanted to bring home good points for the team."

Emotional Mercedes team principal Toto Wolff dedicated his team's achievement to Formula One legend Niki Lauda, who died earlier this year.

"We want to dedicate this to Niki because he's just been such an important part from the beginning of the journey," said Wolff.

Victorious Valtteri

Bottas wins Japanese Grand Prix as Mercedes clinch record sixth constructors' title



Winner Valtteri Bottas, right in white cap, and third placed Lewis Hamilton, left, celebrate with Mercedes crew at their garage after the Japanese F1 Grand Prix at Suzuka Circuit in Suzuka

Ferrari had enjoyed a front row lock-out in the morning qualifying session caused by Typhoon Hagibis but that was as good as "Super Sunday" got for them as their race unravelling right from the start. Vettel twitched before the lights went out and his hesitation enabled the fast starting Bottas to leapfrog from third into the lead.

"It was my mistake," admitted Vettel who escaped a penalty for his false start. "It was worse than a poor start. It was a really poor start. With the lack of pace today, second place today was probably the maximum."

Meanwhile Leclerc's miserable day was completed by being relegated from sixth place to seventh behind Daniel Ricciardo's Renault.

2-0! India win series

Virat & Co crush South Africa by an innings and 137 runs to seal record consecutive 11th series at home

PTI ■ PUNE

The Indian juggernaut continued to roll as the hosts humiliated South Africa by an innings and 137 runs in the second Test to clinch a record 11th consecutive series victory at home, here on Sunday.

The struggling South Africa batsmen surrendered yet again against the Indian bowlers, who asserted their supremacy in all conditions.

The comprehensive victory, coming on the fourth day, has consolidated India's top position in the World Test Championship table. India now have 200 points in their kitty, a handsome 140 points away from nearest-rival New Zealand.

Competing in his 50th Test as captain, Virat Kohli has now led India to their 11th consecutive series at home, a world record.

After being asked to follow-on, South Africa were all-out for 189 in 67.2 overs just after the tea break.

Following a superb effort from the batsmen, it was an all-round effort from India's five-pronged bowling unit with comeback man Umesh Yadav claiming 3 for 22.

Ravindra Jadeja (3/52), Ravichandran Ashwin (2/45), Mohammed Shami (1/34) and Ishant Sharma (1/17) played their part in the comprehensive victory.

Like in the first innings, Vernon Philander (37) and Maharaj (22) again came together to delay the inevitable adding 56 runs in 21.2 overs.

Once Philander was caught down the leg-side by Wriddhiman Saha, the resistance was over in a flash.

In the morning, the stodgy Dean Elgar (48 off 72 balls) put up some stiff resistance before Ravichandran Ashwin (2/45) snuffed him out, in what was a decisive blow to the Proteas, just before lunch.

After going wicket-less in the first innings, Ishant Sharma (1/17) struck with the very second delivery of the morning, a full-length in-dipper that struck Aiden Markram's pads (0) and umpire Nigel Llong had no hesitation in raising his finger.

The opener had the ignominy of bagging a 'pair' in this Test.

However it was Wriddhiman Saha's superb keeping skills that had everyone on the edge of their seats. He showed why he is so highly-rated in world cricket.

On the third morning during South African first innings, poor Theunis de Bruyn (8) had suffered trying to play an expansive cover drive off Umesh Yadav (1/14 off 5



India captain Virat Kohli, center, celebrates with teammates after winning the second Test against South Africa in Pune on Sunday

MOST CONSECUTIVE TEST SERIES WINS AT HOME					
Team	Series	Period			
India	11	Feb2013-Oct 2019			
Australia	10	Nov 1994-Nov 2000			
Australia	10	July 2004-Nov 2008			
West Indies	8	March 1976-Feb 1986			
England	7	May 2009-May 2012			
South Africa	7	March 1998-Nov 2001			
MOST WINS AS SKIPPER IN FIRST 50 TESTS					
Skipper	P	W	L	D	Success%
Steve Waugh (AUS)	50	37	8	5	79.00
Ricky Ponting (AUS)	50	35	6	9	79.00
Virat Kohli (IND)	50	30	10	10	70.00

Faisal Features

VIRAT KOHLI BECAME THE FIRST INDIAN CAPTAIN TO ENFORCE A FOLLOW-ON AGAINST SOUTH AFRICA. ENGLAND WERE THE LAST SIDE THAT HAD ENFORCED A FOLLOW-ON AGAINST THE PROTEAS IN JULY 2008 AT LORD'S

overs) that Saha had plucked from

thin air in-front of the first slip.

On the fourth morning, De Bruyn tried playing a delicate glance

after Umesh had drifted on the

pads. To his horror, he saw an air-

borne Saha pull off an acrobatic

stunner that left everyone stunned. Elgar and skipper Faf du Plessis (5 off 54 balls) added 49 runs and were ready to show patience, especially the skipper, who was presenting

dead bat. However, the ultra defensive tactic didn't work for a lengthy period as Du Plessis got out trying to drive an Ashwin off-break. The bat-pad inside edge kept low but Saha's sharp reflexes meant that he pounced it on the fourth attempt.

Elgar, who lost a bit of concentration, tried to play a lofted shot but didn't get his timing right as Umesh ran back from his mid-off position to take a fine running catch as India got the decisive breakthrough.

Linde in for Maharaj

PTI ■ PUNE

Left-arm spinner George Linde will replace an injured Keshav Maharaj in South Africa's squad for the third Test in Ranchi, starting on Saturday.

According to a CSA media release, Maharaj sustained an injury to his right shoulder while fielding on day two of the second match and MRI results revealed that he will not be fit in time to play in the final Test match.

"An MRI scan revealed that Keshav has sustained an injury to a muscle in his right shoulder. He was re-assessed this morning, particularly with regards to bowling, and he showed significant discomfort in this latter discipline," team doctor Ramjee Hashendra commented.

"Based on this morning's assessment and the findings of the scan, the medical team feels, he will not be fit in time for the next Test match in six days' time. The nature and extent of the injury would mean that he will probably return to play in 14 to 21 days based on his progress during the rehabilitation phase."

WE'LL GO FOR 3-0 SERIES WIN: KOHLI



Virat Kohli, right, celebrates with teammates after India win the second Test

PTI ■ PUNE

Sounding a warning to the rivals, India captain Virat Kohli on Sunday said they will not "take their feet off the gas" and will aim for a whitewash when the final Test begins in Ranchi.

"Looking at the larger picture of the Test championship, every game has value, whether it is at home or away, that is the format. So, we're not going to take our foot off the gas in the third Test," Kohli said at the post-match presentation.

"No one is going to relax at any stage, we are going to go for a result in the third Test and hopefully make it 3-0, that's a guarantee," he said.

South African captain Faf du

Plessis conceded that India are deserving series winners and his side was found wanting in the contest.

"They are very tough to beat at home, their record speaks for itself. We know in the subcontinent your first innings is really important. The runs you put on the board gives you a chance," he said.

"But the way India batted, especially Virat with 250, it takes a lot of mental toughness. Two days in the field can wear you down. Especially that second evening, the batsmen were a bit weak in the mindset. From then it's playing catch-up."

He said Kohli was too good and his hunger for runs stood out. He was not satisfied with 100, 150?



Umesh Yadav celebrates after taking wicket of Kagiso Rabada during fourth day play

I owe Saha treat for stunning catches: Umesh

PTI ■ PUNE

Paceman Umesh Yadav said he owed Wriddhiman Saha a "treat" since the wicketkeeper plucked catches out of thin air when his leg-side deliveries could have gone to the boundary line, in the second Test.

Umesh returned figures of 3 for 22 in South Africa's second innings and the pacer admitted that the credit for his first two wickets entirely goes to Saha for his brilliant display behind the stumps.

"I think I should treat him for those wickets down leg-side and that first catch, and I think those two wickets are Wriddhi bhai's wickets," Umesh said after the match.

Saha's superb keeping skills once again stole the show. On the third morning during South African first innings, poor Theunis de Bruyn (8) tried playing an expansive cover drive off Umesh but a diving Saha held a sensational catch in-front of the first slip. And on the fourth day again, Saha pulled off two stunners down the leg-side off Umesh's bowling in South Africa's second innings to dismiss De Bruyn and Vernon Philander.

"When you put the ball outside leg stump you think it'll be a boundary, but if there is a little bit chance to convert a catch, we know he will take it," Umesh said of Saha.

Meanwhile Saha, who was making a comeback in the Test playing XI after being sidelined for more than a year, said keeping against quality pacers at nets makes life easy for him during match situations.

"The ball wobbles for all three — Umesh, Ishant, Shami. We practice for that. But ultimately you have to come into the match and do it," he said.

"Our trainers help us out with stretches, ice-baths, and we are trained for the match-day really well, so credit to them for my fitness as well as my wicket-keeping performance," added Saha.

Youngsters need to be better than us'

PUNE: There is no dearth of talent in India but the youngsters have a fair idea that they have to be better than the existing bunch of seasoned campaigners to break into the national side, reckons Umesh Yadav.

The Vidarbha speedster feels that the current lot has gained rich experience over the years and is setting the benchmark for the next batch of players.

"Most of the boys in this set-up, at least 7-8 have played 40 plus Tests. So when the youngsters, who are coming up, see the kind of hard yards seniors are putting in, it's not easy for them. They know that they need to get better than us to be in the side," Umesh said after the match.

PTI



PTI ■ PUNE

South Africa captain Faf du Plessis on Sunday acknowledged that the difference between his team and India in the ongoing Test series has been the "inexperience" of the Proteas as it's not possible to replace world class players like Hashim

Amla and AB de Villiers overnight.

"I think, it's purely a case of inexperience. I said before this Test series, your best Test teams are the teams with the most experience. When it comes to this Indian team, there's a lot of experience in that dressing room, there's a lot of Test matches

behind their names," a dejected Du Plessis said after losing the series and Gandhi-Mandela Trophy.

"We are at this stage where we have lost almost all of our experience. Dale Steyn, Morne Morkel, Hashim Amla, AB de Villiers, all of them were seasoned campaigners. You

don't replace those guys overnight.

"And now it's a new group of guys, who have played 5, 6, 10, 11, 12, 15 Test matches. That will take time. If you take the best players out of any team, they would find the same challenges," Du Plessis explained.

He put his hands up and

said that as captain he needs to show the way along with Quinton de Kock and Dean Elgar.

"For us, it is important as a senior player group to make sure that we put in performances ourselves. Myself, Deano (Elgar), Quimny (De Kock), we can't expect other guys to make

runs.

"We need to make sure we make the runs first and then the others guys to chip in with us. In a time like this, it is important that your big guys really, really take control and make sure that they put in the bulk of the work," said Du Plessis, putting across his point clearly.

Lakshya wins Dutch tourney

PTI ■ ALMERE

Rising Indian shuttler Lakshya Sen on Sunday clinched his maiden BWF World Tour title by winning the Dutch Open men's singles title after beating Yusuke Onodera of Japan in the summit clash here on Sunday.

The 18-year-old Indian rallied from a game deficit to defeat his world No 160 opponent 15-21, 21-14, 21-15 in a final that lasted 63 minutes.

The Dutch Open is a BWF World Tour Super 100 tournament.

In the opening game, Lakshya fell behind early on and could not erase the deficit, despite coming as close as 10-11 and 13-14. Onodera managed to keep his nose ahead and pocketed the opening game to earn the bragging rights.

The second game started on a competitive note with the pair trying to outwit each other. The Indian grabbed a 8-5 lead at one stage but the Japanese clawed his way back.

Lakshya again managed to move to 12-8 with four straight points. Onodera narrowed it



Lakshya Sen in a file picture. BWF/Fansite

down to 11-12 but Lakshya jumped to 18-11 and then roared back into the contest.

In the decider, Lakshya came up with a clear strategy and managed to keep his rival at a distance. He led 9-4 before making it 11-8 at the break.

After the interval, Lakshya continued to move ahead and slowly marched ahead to shut the door on Onodera.

Lakshya, currently ranked

72nd, had won the Belgian Open

last month and reached the finals

of Polish Open this year.

Medvedev seals Shanghai Masters | Biles extends record to 25 world medals

AFF ■ SHANGHAI

Daniil Medvedev won his fourth title of a spectacular year with a thumping 6-4, 6-1 victory over Alexander Zverev in the Shanghai Masters final on Sunday.

Victory for the 23-year-old Russian, contesting a sixth final in a row, was more evidence that he is the prime contender to join the "Big Three" of Novak Djokovic, Rafael Nadal and Roger Federer.

The US Open finalist is also able to say that he has finally beaten the German Zverev, another young contender at 22, at the fifth attempt.

This was an emphatic statement from the world number four, needing just 74 minutes to seal the crown.

"I think the stadium was full today and you guys are amazing support, starting from my first match," Medvedev told the crowd.

"You gave me good energy to win this tournament. Thank you very much, Shanghai will always be a



Daniil Medvedev and Alexander Zverev pose with their trophies

special place in my heart."

Zverev, long touted as the best of the new generation of men's tennis stars, was error-prone, but had no complaints.

"As I said yesterday, you are probably the best player in the world right now," the world number six told Medvedev.

"How you are playing is unbelievable."

The next generation has stamped its authority on

Shanghai with Djokovic and Federer — beaten by Zverev — both going out in the quarter-finals.

Medvedev said that he is a better player than he was at the start of the year, but has really sparkled since the summer.

Starting with Washington, DC, in July, the Russian has reached six finals on the spin — including the US Open — winning three of them.

First WTA title for Coco

AFF ■ LINZ

Teenage prodigy Coco Gauff won her first WTA title on Sunday following a 6-3, 1-6, 6-2 win over Jelena Ostapenko in the final in Linz that saw her hold her first trophy aloft aged 15.

Gauff, who only entered the field as a lucky loser after failing to qualify, completed a dream week in Linz in front of a supportive crowd to become the youngest player to win a WTA event since Czech Nicole Pietrangeli, who triumphed in Vancouver and Tashkent two months apart in 2004.

"I'll remember this day for the rest of my life," the delighted Gauff said after receiving a minutes-long standing ovation from 3,000 spectators.

"I had an amazing week and I hope to be back in the future."

Biles extends record to 25 world medals



Simone Biles performs during Worlds

AFF ■ STUTTGART

All conquering American gymnast Simone Biles won her fifth Gold, her second of the day, at the world championships on Sunday in the women's floor final to extend her own all-time record to 25 world medals.

Having earlier won the beam final, the 22-year-old also extended her own record of 19 world championships Golds after success earlier this week in Stuttgart in the team, all-round and vault events with the USA.

Biles was crowned world floor champion for the fifth time in her career after winning the final by a full point from team-mate Sunisa Lee, who earned Silver with Russia's Angelina Melnikova taking Bronze.

Her double Gold success came within a two-hour spell after earlier winning the beam final with China's Liu Tingting, 19, taking Silver with 16-year-old team-mate Li Shijia in Bronze place.

Her victories on the beam and floor makes Biles the most decorated gymnast in history, surpassing the previous all-time record of 23 world medals won by men's star Vitaly Scherbo of Belarus in the 1990s.

This is the first time Biles has finished a world championships with five Gold medals having said she is "99 per cent" sure Stuttgart will be the fifth and final worlds of her career.

The only blot on Biles' near-perfect record in south-west Germany came in Saturday's uneven bars final when she finished fifth.