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LUCKNOW, MONDAY OCTOBER 14, 2019; PAGES 16 ₹3



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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 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 will bring back Articles 370 and 35A 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 Fadnavis' 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 will bring back 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 their political fate remain intact? Will the country accept it? When they know that they

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

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," he said.

Modi said 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 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."



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

PTI

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

"You go anywhere in the country... People only talk about joblessness, farmland crises, the economy... Where are the promised 'ache din' (happy days)? They have not come... After demonetisation, nobody knows how much black money was recovered, but only the poor, honest masses suffered," Rahul hit out.

Continued on Page 7

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, Murthal 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.

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

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

The Delhi Police has arrested two youths for allegedly snatching the handbag of Prime Minister Narendra Modi's niece Damyanti Ben Modi, police said on Sunday.

Damyanti's bag, containing cash of ₹56,000 and two mobile phones, was wrenched 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 (21) alias Nonu was arrested from Sonipat 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," said Deputy Commissioner of Police (North) Monika Bhardwaj.

The two persons, who were on a scooter, snatched her purse, mobile phones, some documents and other valu-



Prime Minister Narendra Modi's niece Damyanti Ben Modi



Gaurav told police that he had spotted Damayanti in an auto-rickshaw, a kilometre before targeting her, the officer said.

The stolen items, including the ₹56,000 and some of the documents, have been recovered, said the officer, adding that the scooter was seized from the house of Gaurav's aunt where he had gone after the incident.

The two men were identified after examining CCTV camera footage. They were not wearing helmets.

During interrogation,

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 Kalyanpuri 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.

According to RP Singh,

- 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



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 PTT.

"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.

"This expressway section is completely access controlled and barricaded by concrete crash barriers on either side.

"Being an urban stretch and other packages of the Delhi-Meerut Expressway being under construction, the speed limit sign boards are placed limiting the speed limits at 70/50 kmph.

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India's GDP growth rate to fall to 6%: World Bank

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.

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.

Detailed report on P10

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 stronghold 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 outfits as recently spelled out by its chief. The 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.

CAPSULE

MAN BEATEN TO DEATH BY WIFE IN DELHI'S NARELA

New Delhi: A 35-year-old man was beaten to death allegedly by his wife in outer Delhi's Narela following a quarrel over his drinking habits.

JAWAN KILLED AS PAK VIOLATES CEASEFIRE

Srinagar: An Army jawan was killed on Sunday when Pakistani troops violated the ceasefire along the LoC in Baramulla district of Jammu & Kashmir, an Army official said.

FORGET KASHMIR, FIGHT TERROR: RAJNATH TO PAK

Chandigarh: Defence Minister Rajnath Singh on Sunday told Pakistan to forget Kashmir and instead fight an "honest battle" against terrorism, warning that no power can stop its disintegration if it continued with its rant and did not mend its ways. He said India was ready to assist Pakistan in the fight against terrorism if it cannot do so on its own.

UP bypolls heading for one-sided contests

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

The electoral battle in the bypolls to 11 assembly seats in Uttar Pradesh appears to be heading for a one-sided contest with the virtually 'headless' opposition struggling hard to challenge the Bharatiya Janata Party

While the BJP is leaving no stone unturned in its campaign and its top leaders are campaigning in the 11 constituencies where the by-elections are being held, the top leaders of the opposition parties are missing from the scene.

Congress general secretary Priyanka Gandhi Vadra, according to sources, will not be campaigning for the bypolls.

"As a matter of rule, the Congress high command does not campaign in bypolls," said former Congress MP Pramod Tiwari. Former Congress president Rahul Gandhi will also not campaign in Uttar Pradesh bye-elections.

Uttar Pradesh also does not figure in the itinerary of Bahujan Samaj Party president Mayawati's schedule when she addresses at least eight rallies in Maharashtra, Jharkhand and Haryana. Maharashtra and Haryana are going to polls on October 21, along with 11 constituencies of Uttar Pradesh assembly where bypolls are being held.

.BSP district coordinators have been asked to take charge of the campaign in UP. Party MP Satish Chandra Mishra is also unlikely to come for campaigning as he has been made in-charge of Haryana. Mayawati's nephew Akash Anand, who has been named the party's national coordinator, is unlikely to campaign independently. He will be accompanying Mayawati during her campaign.

The Samajwadi Party, meanwhile, has not yet drawn up the election campaign programme of its president Akhilesh Yadav. Sources said that Akhilesh was likely to campaign for the Rampur seat from where SP Rajya Sabha MP Tazeen Fatma, wife of Rampur MP Mohammad Azam Khan, is a candidate. The seat was won by SP in 2017 and the party is confident of retaining it in the bye-election. SP leaders feel that the sympathy factor will work in favour of the Azam Khan family which is facing a slew of cases. In most other constituencies, Akhilesh Yadav has deputed local leaders to take care of the campaign and ensure the party's victory.

BJP spokesman Harish Chandra Srivastava, meanwhile, said: "This just goes to prove that the opposition has already conceded defeat in the

by-elections. No election is big or small and it is an insult to the voters to think that by-elections are small. We take every election with seriousness and our leaders do not shy away from campaigning."

The BJP claimed that the bypolls to 11 assembly seats in UP will be a "one-sided contest" and in its favour.

BJP state chief Swatantra Dev Singh claimed that the ongoing assembly bypolls in the state would eventually prove to be "one-sided contests in favour of his party

"BJP workers in the entire state are a committed cadre and are working for the party's programmes rather than seeking personal gains. The government of Yogi Adityanath is committed for the protection of the poorest and marginalised section of society. The BJP will make a clean sweep in the by-elections," he said.

Besides development works of the BJP government, the party is also highlighting its initiatives for a clean India and making the state plastic free, he said.

There are 110 candidates in the fray and the state chiefs of the BJP and the Congress are keen to start their parties' innings on a winning note ahead of the polls to the 403-member Uttar Pradesh assembly in 2022.

Azam accuses UP govt of political vendetta

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

Samajwadi Party leader and Lok Sabha member from Rampur, Mohammad Azam Khan, said the Bharatiya Janata Party government had unleashed politics of vendetta against him and he was being hounded for political reasons.

The SP leader, while campaigning for his wife

Tazeen Fatma, who is the Samajwadi Party candidate from the Rampur assembly constituency in the ongoing bypolls, became emotional while addressing an election rally.

Khan said that in his political journey, in which he always stood up for the masses, he also lost the institutions which he had opened for the common good.

"I thought there were people who considered me as a good politician and a good person. In this long political journey, I have not gained a kilo of weight but instead lost 22 kg weight," he said.

"What is the point if all the universities and schools that I have opened for children shut down? If I lose these institutions and my weight then I will be left with nothing," Azam

Khan added.

The member of parliament who held the

Rampur assembly seat for nine terms, said in his long political career, he gained nothing but was only questioned for being a Muslim.

The Samajwadi Party leader also slammed the Yogi Adityanath government in Uttar Pradesh for launching a probe against him for alleged illegal possession of land.

"I am being called a criminal because I am your lawyer. I have been framed in false cases because I fought for the general public and general good. On the triple talaq and Ayodhya Ram mandir issues, I said that everyone should wait for the court's decisions. I said nothing more, and yet I am being punished."

Azam Khan is currently facing a slew of criminal cases in connection with encroachment of land by the Mohammad Ali Jauhar University.

The Samajwadi Party MP from Rampur presently booked in 84 cases with charges that include land-grabbing, encroachment, theft of books, statues, buffaloes and goats, and forgery.

Few takers of cow adoption scheme

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

The Yogi Adityanath government's efforts to tackle stray animal menace through the much-hyped cow adoption scheme is yet to gain momentum as so far only 10,000 cows have been adopted against the target for adoption of one lakh stray animals, mainly cows.

"The response of the people (to cow adoption scheme) is very poor. Around 10,000 cows have been adopted so far despite government support in form of ₹900 per month as fodder that is sent directly to the bank accounts of the beneficiary," a senior official told this reporter on condition of anonymity.

The scheme was launched after widespread protests over the menace of stray cattle across the state. Farmers complained about stray cattle damaging their crops forcing them to locking these stray cattle in school or hospital compounds. Pictures of students studying in the open and hundreds of stray cattle resting in school grounds were flashed in the national and international media.

Facing criticism, Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath had asked the Gau Sewa Ayog ensure protection of the stray cows. The Gau Sewa Ayog had thrown up its hands in despair, saying it could not ensure



maintenance of cows at a paltry sum of ₹30 per day.

A senior official of Gau Sewa Ayog said that it could emerge as another 'chara ghotala' (fodder scam).

"We need to verify the claims of lower level officials about he number of animals. This is a gigantic process and we do not have enough staff," he said.

With no option left, the Yogi Adityanath government had offered people to adopt cows kept in temporary shelters. The local level officers were asked to go from door to door and count cows which were not of any commercial use now. The government proposed to give the farmers ₹30 per day (₹900 per month) for every cow's fodder.

As per government fig-

ures, there are around four lakh abandoned cattle in temporary shelters across Uttar Pradesh.

Principal Secretary (Animal Husbandry) BL Meena said that people had so far adopted anything between 9,000-10,000 animals from various adoption centres across the state.

"The government is trying to motivate people to adopt animals so that the animals get a permanent shelter," he said.

Cow has been a big political issue for the Bharatiya Janata Party. Incidents of mob lynching against alleged cow trafficking have been reported from time to time. Muslims in UP have stopped rearing cow and the cattle fairs where farmers used to sell their animals are no longer being held in the state.

Purvanchal Expressway work progressing at a fast pace

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

Work on different sections of Purvanchal Expressway is progressing at a fast pace and it is expected to be completed within the stipulated time so that the green-field expressway is opened for public by the end of 2020.

UP Expressway Industrial Development Authority (UPEIDA) Chief Executive Officer Awanish Awasthi told this reporter on Sunday that so far 20 per cent of the work had been completed and they would make the main expressway operational by the end of 2020.

He said the UP government was laying a network of new expressways in the entire state to make transport easier and comfortable for the citizens.

Among the expressways, the most prestigious project of the Yogi Adityanath government is the Purvanchal Expressway. Other important upcoming highway projects of the government include Bundelkhand Expressway, Gorakhpur Link Expressway,



Ganga Expressway, Ballia Link Expressway, Defence Industrial Corridor and Semi High Speed Rail Corridor.

Purvanchal Expressway is a six-lane expressway with a total length of 340.824 km. The cost of the project is estimated at Rs 22,496.93 crore.

"Earlier, the approximate cost of the civil works of the project was Rs 11,836.02 crore. But now, contracts for eight packages of the project have been formed by obtaining tender of Rs 11,216 crore through which government has been

able to save around Rs 620 crore," Awasthi said.

Out of 832 structures, which include culverts and underpasses on the main carriageway, around 200 structures have been completed and 402 structures are under construction. Under the project, seven rail over bridges (ROBs) are to be constructed and permission is being sought from the Railways.

"Besides this, construction of seven bridges on major rivers has already started," the UPEIDA CEO said.

Jal Shakti dept to irrigate 20L ha additional land

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

The newly-formed Jal Shakti department of Uttar Pradesh government has set a target to irrigate 20 lakh hectares of additional land through the Saryu canal, Madhyaganga canal, Arjun tributary by the end of this year.

"Prestigious projects like the Saryu canal have been pending for nearly four decades due to the neglect of earlier governments. The priority of the BJP government in UP is not only to create additional irrigation capacity by completing incomplete projects, but also to promote sprinkler and drip irrigation, a relatively efficient mode of irrigation, for optimum utilisation of available water," Jal Shakti Minister Mahendra Singh said.

It is noteworthy that out of 49 projects worth over Rs 500 crore reviewed by Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath in October last year, 10 were related to irrigation. The government has prepared a draft paper which says that the chief minister analysed the reason for the delay of every scheme, fixed the deadline to

complete them and also fixed accountability at two levels for effective monitoring, one at the level of departmental officers and other at the Chief Minister's office.

The paper further says that in its two-and-a-half-year rule, the Yogi government has created about 2,67,000 hectares of additional irrigation capacity by completing incomplete projects over the years such as Ban Sagar, Pahuj Dam, Pathrai Dam, Pahari Dam, Gunta Dam, Laharchura Dam, Maudha and Jamrar. Around 2.35 lakh farmers have been benefited from this.

In order to use every drop of rain water in Bundelkhand, which often reels under drought due to less rain, and to improve the ground water level in the state, the government dug ponds under the Khet Talab Scheme on a war footing, the paper says, adding that at present, the number of such water bodies has reached 8,384.

The government has set a target to dig 6,558 ponds this year. Not only will the rain water be conserved in these ponds, the ground water level of

the surrounding area will also improve. During drought, the water available in these ponds will be used for irrigation of crops, the paper says.

So far, 50 lakh farmers have been covered under drip irrigation scheme at a huge grant for irrigating more land with less water. In the coming years, the government plans to connect canals with drip irrigation wherever possible.

Apart from this, the area of irrigation has also increased in dark zones. In this order, about 1.61 lakh hectares of additional land can be irrigated through free boring.

"Water is priceless. People should understand the importance of water. The government has recently set up the Department of Jal Shakti on the lines of the Central government, for better management and utilisation of available water," the minister said.

The Department of Jal Shakti includes Namami Gange, Rural Water Supply, Irrigation and Water Resources, Minor Irrigation, Fallow Land Development and Flood Control departments.

Second stage of BJP organisational polls begins in UP

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

In the second stage of organisational polls, division-level elections began in the Bharatiya Janata Party's Uttar Pradesh unit on Sunday to elect local level leaders through ballot.

In the first phase, booth level elections were held and the lists of elected candidates were handed over to the returning officer for organisational polls, Ashutosh Tandon, on September 30 last.

In the BJP's organisational structure, there are 1.63 lakh booths out of which elections were completed in 1.49 lakh booths between September 18 and 24.

"BJP is not only the biggest political party of the world but also the only party which believes in democracy. The elections start from ground zero and reach the top level, thus giving equal opportunities to all leaders to showcase their leadership qualities," Tandon said here.

Tandon said that organisational elections in the party

were being held at the right time.

"The booth level elections are complete and now we have started division level elections. There is tremendous enthusiasm among leaders for these elections," he said.

A senior party functionary said that organisational elections were held in a transparent manner.

"A war room has been set up at the party headquarters where region-wise monitoring is being done and updates are flashed digitally," the party functionary said.

The elections in the party began after the BJP carried out an enrolment drive in which 50 lakh new members were enrolled.

BJP's organisation secretary Sunil Bansal said that this time the party had been able to make members even at booths where it lost elections on regular basis.

"The high point is that the party has been able to make 60-70 per cent of members in those booths," he said.

New UPCC chief banking on 3S for strengthening Congress

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

Newly-appointed Uttar Pradesh Congress Committee president Ajay Kumar 'Lallu' said they were banking on 3S — *sampark* (contact), *samvaad* (dialogue) and *sangharsh* (struggle) — to strengthen the party and exude confidence that the Congress would form the government in the state after 2022 UP assembly elections.

"The biggest challenge is to make the Congress the only alternative to the Bharatiya Janata Party. For this, we have to infuse enthusiasm and self-confidence among the party workers and work closely with them," the UPCC chief said here on Sunday.

"For emerging as the only alternative to the BJP, the path is of 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," Ajay Kumar said.

Asked how he would strengthen the Congress in UP, Ajay Kumar said, "I am banking on sampark, samvaad and sangharsh. The party will undertake a number of creative works and engage in a dialogue with the public. The party will also link more students and youth with itself."

He said at present the people had given their mandate to the Congress to occupy the fourth position. "But the people will catapult us to the top spot," he said, adding that the party would be strengthened at the block, tehsil and district levels.

"The party will launch a campaign to gear up for the upcoming panchayat elections and polls to various cooperative organisations," he said.

On factionalism within the party, the UPCC chief said, "There can be difference of opinion, but every Congressman, be it a leader or

a worker, is standing firm while reposing their faith in ideals and thoughts of Mahatma Gandhi. And, if there are any difference of opinion, they will be sorted out."

In the Congress, out of power in Uttar Pradesh for the last three decades, the elevation of an Other Backward Class (OBC) leader as state president is being seen as fundamental shift in party's strategy so far identified as a party of the upper castes.

With the induction of Ajay Kumar 'Lallu' as UPCC chief, the Congress has tried to reach out to the marginalised sections of society by accommodating the youth from the OBC community and endorsing the politics of social justice.

The Congress has steadily lost ground in UP and its tally in UP assembly has been reduced to single digit — seven — while in the Lok Sabha it has one seat from the state.

With the elevation of Ajay Kumar, the Congress is focusing on eastern UP district. Ajay Kumar is a second term MLA from Tamkuhraj in Deoria district of eastern UP. Besides, several members in the UPCC executive are also from east UP.

During the last three decades, caste-based Samajwadi Party and Bahujan Samaj party and the BJP have dominated the politics of eastern UP.

Moreover, the Congress became leaderless in the region after the demise of its tall leaders like Kamalapati Tripathi, Vir Bahadur Singh, Kalpnath Rai and CPN Singh. RPN Singh, son of CPN Singh, was elected to Lok Sabha from Padrauna in 2009 and was also inducted in the Manmohan Singh council of ministers as a minister of state.

The Congress hopes of green shoots in east UP after the elevation of Ajay Kumar as the UPCC president.


Five killed in two road accidents

Lucknow (PNS): Five persons, including two children, were killed in two road accidents on Sunday.

Two persons, including a 4-year-old child, were killed when two motorcycles collided head-on in Hamirpur district on Sunday. Dileep Ahirwar (21) and the child Suraj died in the accident on Raath-Panwaarhi road on Sunday afternoon that left five others injured, according to Additional Superintendent of Police Santosh Kumar Singh.

Ahirwar was riding the motorcycle with his sisters Uma and Roshni riding pillion when he tried to overtake a tractor but collided head-on with a bike coming from opposites direction. Bhaiyyalal was riding the second motorcycle. His younger brother Suraj, fiancée Tulsi and mother Nanhi were on the motorcycle. The injured were rushed to a hospital where doctors pronounced Ahirwar and Suraj dead.

In Etah, three persons died and seven sustained serious injuries when a Roadways bus collided with a van on GT Road in Malawan area on Sunday

| e-TENDER NOTICE NO. GLDB-BPC- 03/2019-20 | | |
|--|---|---|
|  Board Purchase Committee, Gujarat Livestock Development Board, Podium, Krishibhavan, Sector 10-A, Gandhinagar - 382010, Gujarat. Phone : 079-23257916, 18, 19, Fax : 079-23244618 (gldb.gandhinagar@gmail.com) | | |
| e-Tenders with reverse auction are invited by the undersigned for Establishment & Operation of Semen Sexing Facility at Frozen Semen Station- Patan, Gujarat. | | |
| Sr. | Particulars | Information |
| (1) | (2) | (3) |
| 1 | (a) Tender ID (b) Eligibility (c) Amount | 3/2019-20 Only the companies having their own machinery/proven technology for production of sexed/sex sorted semen Tender Fee : 25,000/- Estimated Value of tender : Rs. 44,50,00,000/- EMD: Rs. 1,33,50,000/- All above to be paid in form of Demand Draft / Banker's Cheque / Pay Order / Manager's Cheque/ Bank Guarantee(for EMD) in favour of Gujarat Livestock Development Board, payable at Gandhinagar |
| 2 | Name & Address of office to which Tender Fee, E.M.D. Technical Supporting Documents shall be submitted Physically | The Chief Executive Officer, Gujarat Livestock Development Board, Gandhinagar Podium Level, Krishibhavan, Sector 10/A, Gandhinagar-382010, Gujarat |
| The details of all the above mentioned Tender Documents are available on the website https://nprocure.com as per the following schedule | | |
| Sr. | Particulars | Date and Time |
| 1 | Tender Document's ONLINE Downloading : Start Date and Time | 14/10/2019, From 11.00 Hours onwards |
| 2 | Pre-Bid Meeting Date and Time | 18/10/2019, 12.00 Hours |
| 3 | Tender Document's ONLINE Downloading : End Date and Time | 13/11/2019, Up to 12.00 Hours |
| 4 | Tender Documents ONLINE Submission : End Date and Time | 13/11/2019, Up to 17.00 Hours |
| 5 | Date of Physical submission of Tender Fee, E.M.D., Technical Supporting Documents | 14/11/2019 to 16/11/2019 11.00 to 17.00 Hours |
| 6 | Online Opening of Technical Bid (At Gujarat Livestock Development Board, Podium, Krishibhavan, Sector 10-A, Gandhinagar) | 18/11/2019, From 11.00 Hours onwards |
| 7 | Reverse auction will be carried out after opening of commercial bid and bidders eligible for reverse auction will be intimated separately | |
| Date : 11/10/2019 Place : Gandhinagar No/INF/VPN/2019/G/1295 | | Chief Executive Officer Gujarat Livestock Development Board |

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Dengue outbreak: Commissioner for extensive cleaning drive

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ LUCKNOW

Divisional Commissioner Mukesh Meshram had an extensive meeting to discuss cleanliness, dengue deaths and measures being taken in this regard. He directed the officials concerned to conduct an extensive cleaning exercise across the city. He said he review the status after three days. “For any laxity, action will be taken against individuals concerned,” he stated.

Meshram directed the officials to ensure cleanliness is maintained in all parts of residential areas and people are made aware of diseases and ways to combat the same. He said posters carrying information related to dengue should be pasted on Metro pillars in urban areas and on hoardings in old parts of the city.

The Divisional Commissioner said they have received information that empty plots of Lucknow Development Authority and Awas Vikas were waterlogged and served as breeding grounds for mosquitoes. He directed the officials to take appropriate action against those responsible. He also directed LDA and the Awas Vikas officials to get the plots cleaned on a priority basis.

Meshram said all the executive engineers and resident welfare associations should keep their respective areas clean. “Nagar Nigam must see



Divisional Commissioner presiding over a review meeting on Sunday

to it that there is a proper disposal of garbage and fogging in the mosquito-infested areas. Undeveloped areas should also be spruced up and cleaned so that they do not breed mosquitoes,” he said.

The cleaning exercise will be carried out from 6 am and officials will set out on the task of monitoring it. The supervisors will report it on a daily basis to the District Magistrate and Municipal Commissioner.

He directed the CMO to carry out drives against larvae

in all residential areas, schools and in government and private hospitals. He also directed the CMO to send information related to dengue prevention to cinema halls and circulate video clips in this regard. He said all the departments should carry out awareness programme for prevention of dengue.

He asked the officials to remove all illegal dairies in the city as the dirt and squalor leads to outbreak of diseases such as malaria. He said the

dairies not complying with the directions should be removed on charges of violation of law and order.

Meanwhile, 13 cases were reported in different parts of city on Sunday. All the hospitals have made special arrangements for suspected cases of dengue and till date, 452 cases have been reported. According to ACMO KP Tripathi, they carried out activities with mobile medical unit in Keshav Nagar and Shyama Vihar Colony on Sunday.

Youth abducted by rivals, thrashed; S-I suspended

Lucknow (PNS): In a brazen display of muscle power, four youths abducted their rival from his house. They also made a video clip even as they thrashed and tortured him. Later, they uploaded the video on social media, prompting senior government officials to ask the SSP to take action. In the afternoon, the police arrested two of the accused. SSP Kalanidhi Naithani suspended a sub-inspector for laxity in duty. As per reports, the victim, identified as Rahul of Malviyanagar, was at loggerheads with Israel, Samad, Rahim, Shagun and Pradyumn over some issue. On finding Rahul moving all alone, they abducted him and took him to a place on October 7. They thrashed him and filmed their act using a mobile phone camera. To humiliate Rahul and to exert their supremacy in the locality, they uploaded the video, which went viral and senior officials got to know about the issue.

On Sunday afternoon, the issue came to the notice of the SSP and he asked the Talkatora police to arrest the accused. Swinging into action, the police arrested Israel and Shagun while the hunt was on for others. By evening, the video created a stir on social media and the SSP suspended sub-inspector Jaichand Babu Sharma and ordered a probe against Sharma and another S-I Manvendra Singh. “Jaichand Babu Sharma was suspended for laxity in duty,” police spokesman AK Dwivedi said, adding that he did not act in time and the issue escalated.

The family of the victim alleged that they complained to the Talkatora police but their case was not heard.

“When Rahul did not return, we contacted his friends and were told that Rahul was forcibly taken by his rivals. We went to the police station but our case was not entertained. On the next day, they dumped Rahul outside the house. He was injured and was profusely bleeding. We again reached the police station after admitting Rahul to a hospital. But the cops remained unmoved and even termed the incident a simple case of brawl and registered a case on October 11,” Rahul’s parents alleged.

Two held for defrauding Amazon of ₹20 crore

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ LUCKNOW

An engineering graduate and his lackey were arrested by a joint team of Gautampalli police and cyber cell sleuths on Sunday for duped an online shopping giant of Rs 20 crore. Those arrested were identified as Sohni Soni (BTEch) and Rahul Singh Rathor, an ITI passout (both of Rajasthan). The police recovered seven mobile sets, packets and cans of protein supplement and a huge number of fake labels of renowned companies, besides 29 SIM cards of different service providers.

Disclosing their modus operandi, they said they used to register on Amazon using fake email IDs and pre-activated SIM cards, and would purchase expensive items. “After the

products were delivered, we would go to the return option. However, we would keep the products and return other useless or inexpensive items. The amount would be credited to our bank accounts and while we would sell the original products in the offline market,” they told the police.

SSP Kalanidhi Naithani said the accused were operating from their rented house in Samar Vihar Colony in Alambagh. “A case was registered by an Amazon employee in the recent past at Gautampalli police station. The Gautampalli police and cyber cell were asked to work on the case. The accused had been defrauding online shopping giant for a long time and duped it of around Rs 20 crore, as per their own confession,” the SSP said.



CANTONMENT BYPOLL

Dist admn to start voter awareness programmes



PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ LUCKNOW

The district administration will begin voter awareness programmes from Monday in the Cantonment area for the forthcoming Vidhan Sabha by-elections to be held on October 21. Chief development officer Manish Bansal said that EVM demonstrations will be carried in prominent residential areas of the constituency and people will be shown how the EVMs work. A rally will be taken out by schoolchildren from schools in the area. The exercise to rope in people with disabilities will be conducted in the same way as it had been done in the Lok Sabha elections so that maximum numbers could exercise their franchise. “We already have the volunteers who will contact people with disabilities so that they come out in large numbers,” the CDO said.

He said that the second training of polling personnel will take place from October 15 at KKC College. “It will be theoretical as well as hands-on training in two shifts,” he added.

Currently, the commissioning of EVMs is taking place at Ramabai Ambedkar Rally Sthal. Regarding the polling day preparations, he said sector

and zonal magistrates have already taken stock of the booths. “Two or three booths need some more preparations in terms of the facilities for the voters,” he said. “On October 20, the polling parties will leave from Ramabai Ambedkar Rally Sthal. On October 21, the polling parties will conduct a mock poll an hour-and-a-half earlier at 5.30 am,” the CDO said. Regarding the SVEEP activities, Bansal said schools and colleges in Cantonment have been told that children should urge their parents to go out and vote. “Nagar Nigam will be putting up some posters and banners in the area. The Cantonment Board has been asked to communicate to the voters to come out in large numbers and exercise their franchise. The percentage of voters stepping out in Cantonment has been less in the past years,” he said.

A total of 15 candidates filed their nominations for bypoll to the Cantonment seat, including Dilpreet Singh from Congress, Arun Dwivedi from BSP, Shatrohan Lal Rawat from Lok Dal, Vinod Kumar (Independent), Major Asheesh Chaturvedi from Samajwadi Party, Geeta Kumari from Mahila Swabhimaan Party, Suresh Chandra Tewari from BJP, Neelam Saroj from Bahujan Awam Party, Anurodh Srivastava (Independent), Nigendra Mishra (Independent), Satyapal Singh from Bharatiya Sangathit Party, Sachitanand Srivastava from Loktantrik Samajwadi Party, Deepak Chaurasia from Janhit Kisan Party, Satyendra Kumar from Bahujan Mukti Party and Shyam Pal from Rashtriya Samaj Paksh. The papers of two candidates were rejected.

Plumber killed for ‘creating hindrance’ in love affair

Landlord, three aides arrested

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ LUCKNOW

A plumber was done to death for ‘creating hindrance’ in the love affair between his landlord and a woman of the locality in Para. The assailants dumped the body at a deserted place in Malihabad in a bid to hide their crime. However, after the recovery of the body, the police swung into action and nabbed the landlord and three of his aides.

As per reports, the victim, Alok Kumar Gupta of Hardoi, went missing from his house where he lived on rent in Para police station area. On Sunday, his sister Ruby lodged a complaint with the police. The cops noted down the details about Alok and asked Ruby to also search for Alok without doing any investigation.

By afternoon, the Malihabad police recovered the body of an unidentified youth. Later, on instruction of senior police officials, the cops contacted the Para police. Ruby was informed and she identified the body as that of Alok.

The Para police swung into action and interrogated the landlord, Sipahiram



Pal, who owned up his crime. According to a police spokesman, Sipahiram Pal was in love with a woman of Para locality and Alok knew about their affair.

“The prime accused took Alok as a major hindrance in his love affair. On Saturday night, he invited Monu Pandey, Bablu Prajapati and Himanshu Gupta over drinks at his house around 9.30 pm. The inebriated group attacked Alok, who was resting in his room. After he succumbed to injuries, they dumped the body in Malihabad,” the police spokesman said.

He added that Sipahiram Pal and his aides Monu Pandey, Bablu Prajapati and Himanshu Gupta were arrested on Sunday night. The incident raised a question mark on night vigil by police. Sources said the accused used to a pick-up van to dump the body. “They managed to escape police checking while car-

सबका साथ-साथ विकास-सबका विश्वास

“स्वच्छ वायु, दीर्घ आयु”

नेशनल नॉलेज नेटवर्क की सहायता से

प्रदेश में स्वच्छ वायु हेतु

‘नेशनल क्लीन एयर प्रोग्राम’ विषयक

कार्यशाला का शुभारम्भ

योगी आदित्यनाथ

मुख्यमंत्री, उत्तर प्रदेश

के कर कमलों द्वारा

दिनांक : 14 अक्टूबर, 2019 | समय : पूर्वाह्न 9:00 बजे

स्थान - मर्करी हॉल, इंदिरा गाँधी प्रतिष्ठान, लखनऊ

राज्य में स्वच्छ वायु सुनिश्चित किए जाने हेतु उठाए गए कदम

- दिनांक 9 अगस्त, 2019 को एक ही दिन में पूरे राज्य में 22 करोड़ से अधिक पौधों का रोपण।
- राज्य में पॉलीथीन कैरीबैग, सिंगल यूज प्लास्टिक एवं थर्माल कोल कटलरी पर प्रतिबंध।
- संयुक्त राष्ट्र संघ द्वारा निर्धारित सतत विकास लक्ष्यों की प्राप्ति हेतु कार्ययोजना क्रियान्वित।
- 15 शहरों यथा आगरा, प्रयागराज, अनपरा, बरेली, फिरोजाबाद, गजरौला, गाजियाबाद, झांसी, कानपुर, खुर्जा, लखनऊ, मुरादाबाद, नोएडा, रायबरेली एवं वाराणसी हेतु वायु प्रदूषण नियंत्रण कार्ययोजना क्रियान्वित तथा वर्ष 2024 तक पार्टिकुलेट मैटर में 20-30 प्रतिशत कमी लक्षित।
- वायु प्रदूषण संबंधी शिकायतों के निस्तारण के लिए “स्वच्छ वायु” मोबाइल ऐप विकसित।
- मेरठ शहर के अंतर्गत 03 सतत परिवेशीय वायु गुणता अनुश्रवण केन्द्रों का शुभारम्भ।

- राज्य में 18 स्थलों पर सतत परिवेशीय वायु गुणता अनुश्रवण केंद्र संचालित तथा 18 अन्य स्थलों पर नये केंद्र प्रस्तावित।
- पर्यावरण अनुश्रवण हेतु त्रि-स्तरीय अनुश्रवण व्यवस्था के अंतर्गत जिला पर्यावरण समितियां एवं राज्य स्तर पर 04 उच्च स्तरीय अनुश्रवण समितियां गठित।
- पेपरलेस एवं ऑनलाइन पर्यावरण अनुश्रवण हेतु वेब-पोर्टल **www.upecp.in** क्रियान्वित।
- अनुश्रवण की व्यवस्था के सुदृढीकरण हेतु 09 क्षेत्रीय पर्यावरण अनुश्रवण केंद्र की स्थापना स्वीकृत।
- वाहन प्रदूषण के नियंत्रण के लिए इलेक्ट्रिक वीहिकल मैनुफैक्चरिंग एवं मोबिलिटी पॉलिसी-2019 प्रख्यापित।
- पर्यावरण अनुकूल मास ट्रांसपोर्टेशन व्यवस्था हेतु गाजियाबाद, नोयडा, ग्रेटर नोयडा एवं लखनऊ में मेट्रो संचालित तथा कानपुर, आगरा एवं मेरठ में मेट्रो परियोजनाएं प्रस्तावित।

दोपहिया वाहन चलाते समय हेलमेट का प्रयोग करें। **उत्तर प्रदेश प्रदूषण नियंत्रण बोर्ड** **पर्यावरण, वन एवं जलवायु परिवर्तन विभाग, उत्तर प्रदेश**

Concept of social wellbeing important: Dinesh Sharma

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ LUCKNOW

In today's time if any individual is not able to have access to basic necessities, we cannot call India a developed state. In Indian concept, a man is born to feed all, hence the concept of social wellbeing is very important and cannot be neglected anymore. These views were expressed by the Deputy Chief Minister Dinesh Sharma while speaking at the valedictory function of 7th Indian Social Work Congress-2019, organised by Lucknow University's Social Work department.

"A 36-hour special session was held in UP Assembly to achieve sustainable development goals. The government is all set to make UP a welfare state and take initiatives to promote mental health of its people," he said.

He said social work was the basis for smooth functioning of society which, in turn, will results in the economic development of the country.

"With the challenges being faced by people, there exists a dire need of professional social workers who can meet these challenges and bring about holistic development of the society," he added.

LU Vice-Chancellor SP Singh appreciated the efforts of the department in organising the programme. "Challenges and opportunities are part of work. However the best you do, they will keep coming up. We need to accept the challenges and not deny them, as we will find more new visions and ways to solve them. Social scientists have the prime responsibility to cater to the need of people," he said.

The special guest was Vice-Chancellor of Dharmashastra National Law University (Jabalpur) Balraj Chauhan, who said a vibrant social law culture is the need of the hour for a nation. "The challenge of the social worker starts from the preamble of India because until and unless there is no harmony and

peace, there cannot be a fraternity and existence of a social state," he pointed out.

Prof Shailly Awasthi from department of Pediatrics, KGMU, spoke on the need of health professionals and said social workers should work in consonance with the social wellbeing of society. She added that social workers need to be part of curative practices rather than just preventive. "We need to provide social care settings and make it an intrinsic part health care system," she added.

Prof SP Srivastava memorial lecture was delivered by BB Pandey, former professor of Law, Delhi University, and dean, Faculty of Law, LU. He was of the view that memorial lectures comprise legacy, academic achievements, contribution and controversies related to the person in whose memory they are organised. He said Prof Srivastava carried and improved the great tradition and legacy of the department and had a range of aca-

demie writings on crime, juvenile justice, correctional administration and social issues like ageing and beggary. The originality and authenticity of his articles on various social issues were widely read and referred by the scholars in the field of social sciences and humanities. "He was very efficient and updated and authored book on Juvenile Justice Act, 1986 in 1989. Prof Srivastava had authored more than 95 books and articles and more than 100 oral presentations," he pointed out.

The second plenary session was themed on child protection and workforce. Speaking on the issue, Ruth L Leano, CFO in UNICEF, talked about convention on the rights of the child and protection from child abuse. She laid emphasis on developing the capacity of duty-bearers and social service workforce, including practitioners, professors, students etc. Leano discussed issues and prospects of child rights and abuse.



Lucknow University organised a campus walk on Sunday as a curtain raiser to the convocation which will be held on October 15



A shobha yatra being taken out from Aryanagar gurudwara in Lucknow on the occasion of Guru Ramdas Prakash Parv on Sunday

‘Lion’s death was caused by bacterial infection’

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ LUCKNOW

The death of the lion, Taugeer, brought recently to the Lion Safari in Etawah from Junagarh Zoo in Gujarat, was caused by bacterial infection in lungs which he had been carrying before his arrival to the state. Taugeer, who had arrived at the Etawah Lion Safari on September 25 along with six other lions, including five females and two males, died at around 1 am on October 12.

Director, Lion Safari, VK Singh said they were mere custodians of the lions that will go further to the Gorakhpur Zoo. Singh said they had sanitised the entire area where the lion was moving before death, and also blowtorched the two rooms where Taugeer had been kept to remove any traces of infection. He said they would keep the remaining lions in quarantine for the next 31 days and keep a strict vigil on their diet.

"The preliminary report shows that the death was caused by bacterial infection, and not due to canine distemper. However, we are waiting for the detailed report. Meanwhile, each and every detail of the diet taken by the

remaining lions will be monitored," he added. Singh admitted that the lion had been eating sporadically since it arrived and efforts were made to examine whether anything was wrong with him. "Ever since Taugeer arrived, he would have food and water in gaps of four to five days, and we talked in this regard to his keeper who said that it was his habit and in Gujarat too, he was not having a proper diet. We got him tested with vets from Mathura University and later experts from IVRI. Our doctors also gave him glucose to keep up his energy levels. A blood test had showed that infection levels were high in his body and for that, IVRI had given a detailed drug regimen before they left on October 11. When the lion died, he had been walking properly but was looking a little dull in the evening," Singh said. He pointed out that the death was not due to canine distemper for which the Lion Safari has been infamous for. "The report showed that there was heavy infection in lungs, kidney and liver. Had it been canine distemper, the lion would have suffered for over three months with the body being paralysed," he said.

| Bharat Nirman through Rural Roads | | | | | | | | | |
|---|----------|-----------|----------------|--|---------------------------|----------------------|--|------------------------|--|
| OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDING ENGINEER, RURAL ENGINEERING DEPARTMENT, CIRCLE-BASTI. | | | | | | | | | |
| Opposite District Employment Office, Ganeshpur Road, Anand Nagar Katra Basti -272001 | | | | | | | | | |
| Letter No. 827 /RED/Renewal of road/Tender/Basti Circle/ 2019-20 Dated 05.10.2019 | | | | | | | | | |
| UNDER PRADHAN MANTRI GRAM SADAK YOJAN RENEWAL OF ROADS | | | | | | | | | |
| e-Procurement Notice (IInd Call) | | | | | | | | | |
| 1- The Superintending Engineer, Rural Engineering Department, Circle-Basti on behalf of Governor of Uttar Pradesh invites the percentage rate bids in electronic tendering system for Renewal of roads under Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana in the district of Basti for 03 numbers of Group with estimated cost totalling to Rs 357.46 Lac. The eligible contractors registered with the UP.PWD/RED, in appropriate class (A, or B as per limit) or equivalent category in CPWD/ MES/ P&T/ Railways and other State Govt. and Central Govt. Departments. | | | | | | | | | |
| Sl. No. | District | Group No. | old package no | Name of work | Total Cost with (in Lacs) | Period of Completion | Cost Of Bid Document including all taxes | Bid Security (in Lakh) | |
| 1 | | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | |
| 1 | | | UP-1516 | N.H.28 to Nipaniya Via Rajauli | | | | | |
| 2 | | | UP-1519 | Ramjanki road to Sandpur road | | | | | |
| 3 | Basti | UP1505/R | UP 1558 | Ramjanki road to Chanha | 122.19 | 03 Month | Rs.3500/= | 2.45 | |
| 4 | | | UP-1524 | Parsa lakadmandi road to Karpimpatti Via Gopinathpur | | | | | |
| 5 | | | UP-1527 | Kaptanganj Tinich road to Baghauda | | | | | |
| 6 | | | UP-1510 | Ramjanki road Pandulghat to Basantpur | | | | | |
| 7 | | | UP-1515 | Basti Tanda Sonha Road to Rajpurwa Via Semra Chiegan | | | | | |
| 8 | Basti | UP1506/R | UP-1515 | Piragautam Dhaurahra road to Kothwa Bharatpur | 135.36 | 03 Month | Rs.3500/= | 2.71 | |
| 9 | | | UP-1521 | Aksara kuchereghat to Govindpur road | | | | | |
| 10 | | | UP-1532 | Basti Tanda road to Bharwalaya | | | | | |
| 11 | | | UP-1532 | Basti Tanda road to Kanhaihi | | | | | |
| 12 | | | UP 1561 | Babhanan Ailakal road to Santhua | | | | | |
| 13 | | | UP 1561 | Gaur Halua road to Balua Chaubey | | | | | |
| 14 | Basti | UP1507/R | UP 1561 | Babhanan Ailakala road to Ghanghariya | 99.91 | 03 Month | Rs.3500/= | 2.00 | |
| 15 | | | UP 1563 | NH 28 Mahrajnani to Marwatia Tiwari | | | | | |
| 16 | | | UP 1563 | Ramjanki Penda Ghat road to Sikithwa | | | | | |
| Total | | | | | 357.46 | | | | |
| Only Online submission of bid is permitted on bid document website http://pmgsy tendersup. gov.in the bid document upload/download online from 16.10.2019 to 31.10.2019 up to 12.00 Noon. Technical qualification part of the bids will be opened online 1.00 PM, on 31.10.2019 Other details about tender is available at website http://pmgsy tendersup. gov.in . | | | | | | | | | |
| (Er.Sirajuddin Ahmad) | | | | | | | | | |
| Superintending Engineer, | | | | | | | | | |
| Rural Engineering Department,Circle-Basti | | | | | | | | | |
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CISH proposes mango export by sea route

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ LUCKNOW

Central Institute for Subtropical Horticulture has submitted a project proposal to Agricultural and Processed Food Products Export Development Authority (APEDA), Union Ministry of Commerce and Industry, for shipment of mangoes for export. CISH director Shailendra Rajan said it has been done because the air freight charges are 4-5 times higher than that of sea freight, which makes Indian mangoes comparatively expensive in international market, hence the option to be explored is the shipment of mango for which a protocol needs to be developed. The proposal, 'Development of sea shipment protocol for export of north Indian mangoes to long distance markets', has been submitted for financial assistance. Mango varieties differ in their storage condition requirements, therefore, CISH will develop protocol for Dussehri and Chausa for shipment.

"India is the largest producer and one of the leading exporters of mangoes. There is a huge requirement of mangoes in the long-distance markets of US, Russia, UK, Gulf countries, Japan, etc. Currently, mangoes are being exported to the long-distance markets by air. The air freight charges are 4-5 times higher than sea freight charges, which makes Indian mangoes comparatively expensive in international market. Besides, it is not possible to transport bulk volume of mangoes to foreign markets through air cargo. Lack of proper protocol for transport of

mangoes by sea shipment hinders the trading of mangoes in bulk volumes. The export of mangoes will become competitive in the international market only when it is possible to transport them by sea route," the CISH director explained. He said that for the development of protocol for sea shipment of north Indian mango varieties to long-distance markets was conceptualised to integrate pre and post-harvest protocols of mangoes for achieving 5-6 weeks storage life under low temperature conditions.

"Many techniques applied for export, like integration of post-harvest quarantine treatments, irradiation and vapour heat treatment with modified atmospheric packaging to finalise the export protocol, will be used. The proposal includes conducting trials with the developed protocols under real shipment conditions in PPP mode," he said. CISH has got a feedback that despite export potential of Indian fruits and vegetables, including mangoes being exported to more than 60 countries, India is not able to send mangoes and others fruits to long-distant markets of EU, USA, Korea, Japan, Russia and distance destinations due to non-availability of sea protocol.

In this regard, APEDA interacted with ICAR, CSIR, IIT institutions for conducting a static trial for development of sea protocol for export of mangoes has been initiated for long-distance markets. For developing the protocol, Indian Institute of Horticulture Research, Bangalore, and CISH will work as collaborators.

CITYBRIEFS

LIGHT & SOUND SHOW NEXT YEAR

The 'Light & Sound Show' at the Residency will be inaugurated on January 1 next year. Regional tourism official Anupam Srivastava said the delay was caused as the agency involved in the project was waiting for Bollywood superstar Amitabh Bachchan's voiceover. "We have yet to get the dates for Amitabh Bachchan's voiceover for the script which has been prepared by Tourism department and ASI. We had earlier thought of opening it for the public on August 15," he said. Regarding the preparations for Lucknow Mahotsav, he said a meeting will be held on Monday to discuss various issues. "We have already received confirmation from Thailand artistes that they will performing at the Mahotsav. Thailand artisans will also put up a handicraft stall," he added.

SARBOJANIN KOJAGARI LAKSHMI PUJA

Charbagh Durga Puja Samiti organised Sarbojanin Kojagari Lakshmi Puja on Sunday. Key organiser PK Ghosh said that full moon day in the month of Aswin (mid-September to mid-October) is one special day in autumn when Goddess Lakshmi is worshipped in many parts of India like in Bengal, Odisha and Maharashtra. "This puja is called Kojagari Lakshmi Puja.



Kojagori means the night of awakening and the word is derived from the question 'ko jagorti' which means 'who is awake'. Goddess Lakshmi, who is said to descend on earth on this day, goes around asking this question. Thus to respond in the affirmative so as to be bestowed with her blessings, many stay awake this night. Sharad Purnima or Kojagari Purnima is a day of great significance for Hindus," he explained.

MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS

Mental health activist Farah Sarosh and her team came together at Hussainabad Clock Tower to spread mental health awareness on Sunday. On the occasion of World Mental Health Day, the team curated several activities, including a mental health

awareness open discussion session by renowned psychologist Kumud Srivastava. Fahima Rashid gave a talk on adolescence and parenting while Arshi Alvi spoke on writing being a stress-buster. 'Art therapy workshop' was taken up by Bushra Masood while a 'nukkad natak' was staged by Sameeka Sahban and her team including Pratiksha Tandon, Simra Rais, Yasir Ali Khan, Shagufta Husain, Pratham Tandon, Ashkar Husain, Waheba Husain, Mehvish Salman, and Osama Bin Salman. Volunteers from Integral University also took active part in the exercise. An open mic session was also organised and students of IILM took part in it. A walk was also flagged off by Dileep Yashvardhan, a social activist and legal expert.

SCHOOLSCAN



ITMO-2019 INAUGURATED

The 4-day International Teenagers' Mathematics Olympiad (ITMO-2019), organised by City Montessori School, Gomti Nagar Campus I, was inaugurated at Gomti Nagar Campus II auditorium amidst colourful educational-cultural items on Sunday. The programme was inaugurated by Deputy Chief Minister Dinesh Sharma. CMS students presented a scintillating cultural programme in honour of the participants who arrived from various countries. Distinguished maths experts and educationists Simon L Chua from Philippines and Wen Hsien Sun from Taiwan were also present on the occasion. Nearly 500 young mathematicians from 17 countries (Philippines, South Africa, Thailand, Nepal, UAE, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Taiwan, Vietnam, Malaysia, Sri Lanka, Indonesia, Russia, Tunisia, Bulgaria and Finland) and various states of India are displaying their mathematical skills through competitive events. Addressing the gathering, Sharma said the event would give a golden opportunity to young participants of various countries to join hands and come together for the benefit of mankind.

TALENT SEARCH EXAM

SKD talent search exam was organised by SKD Group in all the five branches (Hazratganj, Vikrant Khand Gomti Nagar, Vrindavan Yojana, and Rajajipuram E & C Block). Around 4,000 students from various of the city took the exam. The toppers will be given up to 100% scholarship and cash prizes. Founder of SKD Group SKD Singh and director Manish Singh met the students who took the exam.

Girl's abduction triggers panic

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ ALLAHABAD

In a daring incident a car-borne youth abducted a girl in front of the PVR under the Civil Lines police station on Saturday evening. The youth dragged the girl from a bike and made her sit forcefully inside the car and sped away. Panic gripped the Civil Lines after the news of abduction of a girl spread like wildfire.

When the police officials launched an intensive checking drive and surrounded almost all parts of the city, the youth returned from Mauaima area and was nabbed by the police. His car was also seized. Hailing from Amethi, the girl (Sanjana) not her real name lives in a women's hostel located at Civil Lines. After attending her coaching classes on Saturday evening, she had gone to PVR

along with her friend Vaibhav Yadav. As the duo stepped out of the PVR around 8 pm a youth identified as Chanchal Tiwari reached there in his car. He opened the door of his car, suddenly pulled the girl from the motorbike and made her sit inside it and then locked it from inside. On seeing the shocking spectacle Vaibhav raised an alarm. By the time people from the nearby areas could make any sense, Chanchal fled from there by accelerating the speed of his vehicle. Distraught Vaibhav immediately informed the police about it. The police swung into action, sounded an alert and asked the policemen of other police stations to trace the whereabouts of the girl with the help of the footages of the closed-circuit television (CCTV) cameras and surveil-

lance. Circle Officer (CO) Brij Narayan Singh said that the accused, Chanchal Tiwari, knew the girl and they were friends. He took her to Mauaima but turned back on seeing the police checking there. He then threatened her and had hardly reached her hostel to drop her where he was nabbed by the police there. His car was also impounded. An FIR was lodged against him and necessary action would be taken against him, the CO added.

Meanwhile after two back-to-back cases of loot in Mauaima area—a bank heist of ₹6.24 lakh and ₹4 lakh loot with a collection agent police have swung into action to check criminal activities in areas along the Allahabad- Pratapgarh border. Deputy Inspector General of Police (Allahabad range) KP

Singh instructed the SPs of Allahabad and Pratapgarh districts to ask additional SPs (ASPs) and deputy SP-rank officials to camp in the crime-infested areas and launch a special drive against wanted criminals. Singh said that cops of nine police stations located on the Allahabad-Pratapgarh border, including four of Pratapgarh and five of Allahabad, had been asked to share the details of wanted criminals and launch a fresh drive against them. On September 19 five armed robbers had looted ₹6.24 lakh from the rural branch of Bank of Baroda at Tilai Bazar in Mauaima. On October 9, three robbers looted ₹4 lakh from a collection agent of finance company in Mauaima. Police have failed to arrest the accused involved in both the cases, last reports received here said.



Former minister Arvind Singh Gope garlanding the statue of Maharshi Valmiki at Parivartan Chowk in Lucknow on his birth anniversary on Sunday

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 initiative 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 exuded 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 stated.

Senior Congress leader Jitin Prasada 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. Prasada however also mentioned the revamp of the State unit will be a "mix of the old and new".

Prasada, 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," Prasada 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.

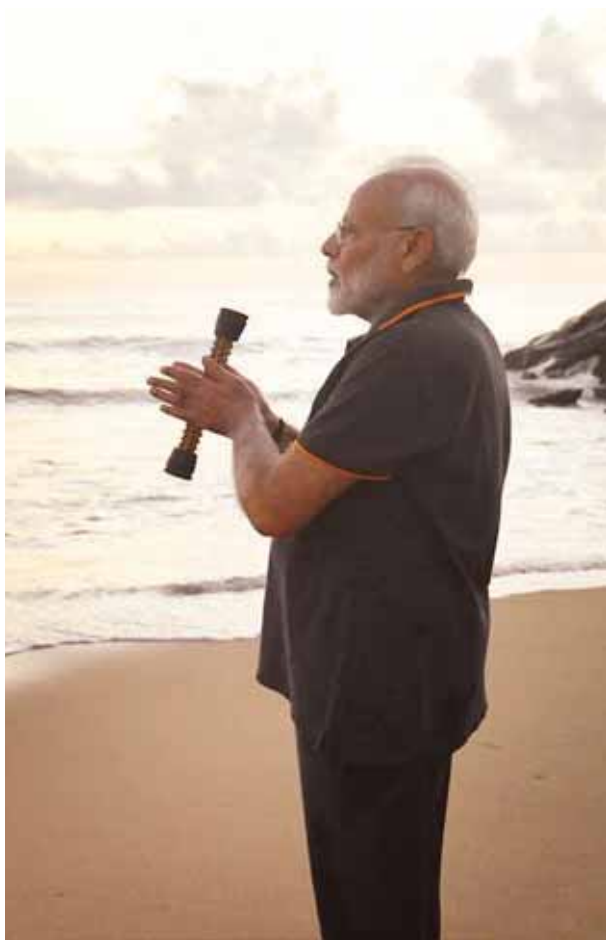
The Tamil Nadu Government later on September 9, 2018 had passed a Cabinet resolution recommending to Governor Banwarilal Purohit for the release of convicts, but his office has been delaying the matter, he said.

"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

Ending the curiosity of people over the stick-like object he was holding while plogging on 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

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

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 Bhusan 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 Kalifulla, 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

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.

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 ofBengal 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 calledGandhiji 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 themurder 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 mainreason 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 Jiaganj 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

Irked 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 Poonrma 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.



Folk artists perform at the 12th edition of Rajasthan 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 and 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 as 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 Jiaganj 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 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 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 Punchakkari and Dharani, from Kulathur, Kamalamma from Thiruvallam and Subhddramma of Thrikkkanapuram, both aged 83, and Sarada (82) of Aarannoor participated in the exam, the Literacy Mission Authority said in a release.



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

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.

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

MODI DARES...

Rahul came down heavily on the Government for waiving bad loans of around 15 top industrialists to the tune of Rs 5.50 lakh crore in past few years. He demanded to know that while the Government doled out a ‘diwali gift’ of tax benefits to the rich industrialists worth Rs 1.25 lakh crores last month, when it came to the beleaguered farmers, the Government said it had no funds of barely Rs 35,000 for MNREGA scheme.

Rahul slammed 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 forty 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. “But, remember, rockets will not help fill up the stomachs of the hungry millions,” Rahul said.

DELHI-MEERUT...

“Now this stretch has been completed on June 28, 2018 and other stretches are likely to be completed by the end of December 2019, it is suggested to upgrade the speed limits... 120/100 kmph for expressway portion and 70/50 kmph for National Highway on this Delhi-Meerut Expressway,” the letter, a copy of which is in possession of PTI, reads.

In the letter, the NHAI said that 2/3-wheelers/motorcy-

cles/tractors/light commercial vehicle and other slow moving vehicles, which are not permitted, are the main reasons of accidents on this section.

It also requested the Delhi Police to deploy sufficient traffic police on the expressway so that the road users follow the traffic rules for which the expressway has been designed, according to the letter written by Singh. The 82-kilometre long expressway connects Delhi with Meerut in western Uttar Pradesh. A sum of ₹8,346 crore is likely to be spent on the project. The ambitious project will help in decongesting the National Capital Region (NCR) and bring significant reduction in pollution level. The Delhi-Meerut Expressway project is being implemented in four packages — an 8.72 km long 6-

lane expressway/ 8-lane NH 24 from Sarai Kale Khan in Delhi to Ghazipur border, already completed in June 2018 under Phase-I, a 19.28 km long 6-lane expressway/ 8-lane NH 24 from Ghazipur border to Dasna in UP which is 60 per cent done under Phase-II. A 22.23 km long 6-lane NH 24 with 2+2 lane service roads on either sides from Dasna to Hapur in UP was inaugurated last month under Phase-III, and 57 per cent work is done under Phase-IV of the 31.78 km long greenfield 6-lane expressway from Hapur to Meerut.

DELHI AIR...

Prepared by Central Pollution Control Board, GRAP lists various actions to be taken according to severity

of pollution. The 10-member task force on the Graded Response Action Plan had on Friday held a meeting on the stubble burning incidents reported from Punjab and Haryana, and its likely impact on Delhi-NCR’s air quality.

V K Soni, a senior scientist at the India Meteorological Department, who attended the meeting, said winds are calm due to monsoon withdrawal, leading to low dispersion of pollutants. Also, wind direction has changed to west and North West, he said. Westerly and northwesterly winds bring dust from western regions and smoke caused by burning of crop residue in neighbouring Punjab and Haryana to Delhi-NCR. Starting October 15, stricter measures to fight air pollution will come into force

in Delhi and its neighbourhood as part of the Graded Response Action Plan, which was first implemented in Delhi-NCR in 2017. These measures include increasing bus and metro services, hiking parking fees and stopping use of diesel generator sets when the air quality turns poor.

When the situation turns “severe”, GRAP recommends closure of brick kilns, stone crushers and hot mix plants, sprinkling of water, frequent mechanised cleaning of roads and maximising power generation from natural gas. The measures to be followed in the “emergency” situation include stopping entry of trucks in Delhi, ban on construction activities and introduction of the odd-even car rationing scheme.

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.

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 communicate 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 by elements of *Atithi 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-



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)

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.

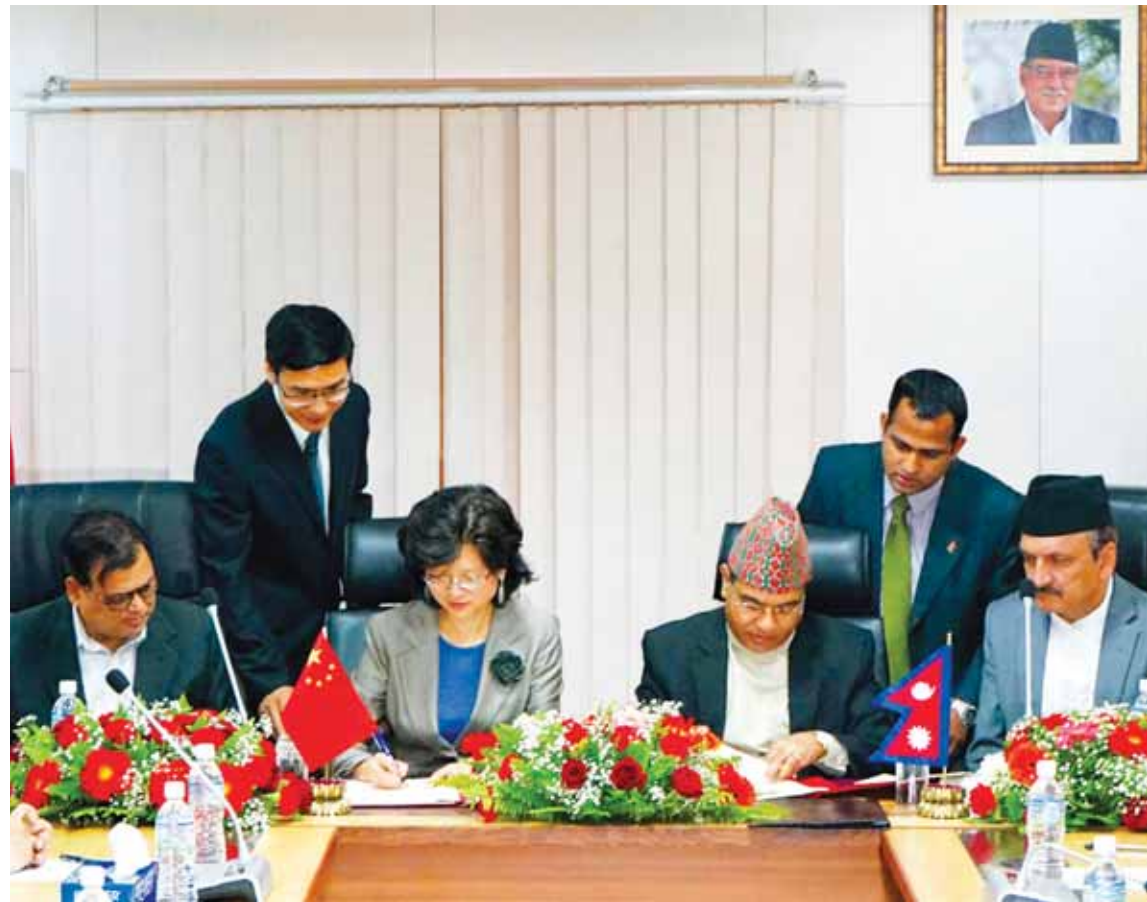
On the other hand, China from day one of its arrival in Tibet, has been attempting to gain political and strategic clout in Nepal. While Prithvi Shah was wary of Chinese intentions, his successor King Mahendra began to change the course of Nepal's diplomatic ties and formalised relations with China in 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 Madhesi, 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 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-colonist \$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 ridiculed 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 apologies 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)

| Year | Domestic LPG Customers (in Lakh) |
|------|----------------------------------|
| 2019 | 26.49 |
| 2018 | 22.43 |
| 2017 | 19.88 |
| 2016 | 16.63 |
| 2015 | 14.86 |
| 2014 | 16.83 |
| 2013 | 15.23 |
| 2012 | 13.87 |
| 2011 | 12.69 |
| 2010 | 11.63 |

Domestic LPG Customers
(in Lakh)
as on April 1

Source: Ministry of Petroleum & Natural Gas

PTI GRAPHICS

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.

The significant slowdown in the first quarter of the fiscal year and high frequency indicators, thereafter, suggested that the output growth would not exceed 6 per cent for the full fiscal year, the bank said.

The report said the consumption was likely to remain depressed due to slow growth in rural income, domestic demand (as reflected in a sharp drop in sales of automobiles) and credit from non-banking financial companies (NBFCs).

However, the investment would benefit from the recent cut in effective corporate tax rate for domestic companies in the medium term, but also will continue to reflect financial sector weaknesses, the report said.

"Growth is expected to gradually recover to 6.9 per cent in 2020-21 and 7.2 per

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 bestimated 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 'psbloansin59minutes' 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 wherever 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 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.

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**

\$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.



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

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



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 it's position.

The overall demand for walnuts in India is growing steadily. The CWC has exported 10468.43 tonne 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 job will also lose their source of income, she added.

Germany urges Turkey to immediately end Syria offensive

Turkey and proxies advance deep into Syria

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**

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 1,30,000 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**

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 Dharanmshala 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

smeared 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



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 Dhannipatti village might not have a proper road as there were 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

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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 exhort 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.



Trend Glazer

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 Raktabija 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 Raktabija, 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 Raktabija’s body after Kartikeya finally slits his throat. At last, when nobody comes to his res-

The Kali trance



cue, 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 Raktabija, the gods and Shiva ponder that Parvati has drank 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 Raktabija-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 little token

to the time capsule.” His collection aimed to metamorphosise 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.



Manju Rani (in red) punches Ekaterina Paltceva during World Championship final PTI

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 MC 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.

SINGLES



Joginder Narwal (Dabang Delhi), Fazel Atrachali (U Mumbai), Pawan Sehrawat (B'Juru Bulls), Nilesh Kumar (UP Yoddha), Dharmaraj Cherlathan (Haryana Steelers), Esmail Nabibakhsh (Bengal Warriors) pose with the PKL-7 trophy before the start of knockouts

SANJAY FINDS BRACE IN INDIA'S WIN

JOHOR BAHRU: Sanjay struck twice in Indian junior hockey team's dominating 8-2 win over New Zealand in Sultan of Johor Cup, here on Sunday. Apart from Sanjay (17', 22'), Dilpreet Singh (6'), Shilanand Lakra (14'), Mandeep Mor (22'), Suman Beck (45'), Pratap Lakra (50') and Sudeep Chirmako (51') scored for India while Dylan Thomas (28', 44') notched two goals for New Zealand. It was India's second win in the tournament and they face Japan in their next round robin league-stage match on Tuesday.

UK ROUT SIKKIM BY 253 RUNS

UDHRADUN: Medium pacer Sunny Rana returned with a career-best 5/26 as Uttarakhand bowlers bundled out Sikkim for just 52 to script a massive 253-run victory in their Plate Group Vijay Hazare Trophy fixture here on Sunday. A target of 306 proved too big for the Sikkim batsmen who tumbled like a pack of cards to fold their innings in 21.1 overs with Rana being the wrecker-in-chief and was well-supported by Mayank Mishra (2/2) and Pradeep Chamoli (2/15). Uttarakhand (26 points) jumped to the top of the Plate Group standings with a two-point lead over Pondicherry, who however have a match in hand.

MAHARASHTRA BEAT HP BY 3 WICKETS

VADODARA: Azim Kazi produced a timely half century to guide Maharashtra to a thrilling three-wicket win over Himachal Pradesh in a Group B match of the Vijay Hazare. After Maharashtra suffered a top-order batting collapse while chasing a modest 202, Azim scored 84 off 82 balls to take side past the finish line. After his dismissal, Nikhil Naik (32 not out) and Shamsuzzama Kazi (21 not out) played a late cameo to took the side home with eight balls to spare at the Gujarat State Fertilizer Corporation Ground. Arpit Guleria (2/24) was the pick of the bowlers for Himachal Pradesh.

22 PALYERS NAMED FOR NAT'L CAMP

NEW DELHI: Hockey India on Sunday named 22 players for the national coaching camp ahead of the crucial FIH Olympic Qualifiers to be held on November 1 and 2 in Bhubaneswar. The players will report to chief coach Graham Reid for the camp that commences from today at the Kalinga Stadium in Bhubaneswar. The team is coming from a successful Belgium Tour where they beat the hosts thrice (2-0, 2-1, 5-1) and also emerged victorious twice against Spain (6-1, 5-1). They will take on Russia in the crucial two-match Tokyo Olympic Qualifiers next month.

JAPAN FLOOR SCOTS TO REACH WC Q/F

YOKOHAMA: Japan's "Ferraris" hit top gear on Sunday as the hosts beat Scotland 28-21 in a barnstorming Rugby World Cup clash to create history by reaching the quarter-finals. Rampaging wingers Kotaro Matsushima and Kenki Fukuoka did the damage for Japan, who survived a late fightback to advance as Pool A winners along with Ireland. The Brave Blossoms will face two-time world champions South Africa in Tokyo next weekend after making it a perfect four wins out of four, roared on by a crowd of 67,000. AGENCIES

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 medallist 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 PTI

round, leapt 16.78m on his final try to win the Gold.

Chinta Yadav emerged a surprise winner of the women's 3000m steeplechase, outpacing her Railways teammate 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.

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

AFF ■ 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 AP

Elabdellaoui.

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.

Neymar limps off in friendly draw

AFF ■ 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.

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 AP

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 unravelled right from the start.

Vettel twiddled 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.

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)

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 indipper that struck Aiden Markram's pads (0) and umpire Nigel Long 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



Indian 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

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."

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 airborne 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.

Can't replace AB & Amla overnight: Faf

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

AFP ■ 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

AFP ■ 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

AFP ■ 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 worlds 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 percent" 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.



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 bobbles 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 it 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