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DISPUTES: JAISHANKAR

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BJP, Opp claim Mahatma's legacy

Modi declares India
ODF, Shah leads march
on Gandhi's life, times

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

On the 150th birth anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi on Wednesday, the BJP and Congress-led Opposition parties jostled to stake claim to his legacy as ruling party chief Amit Shah launched a nationwide exercise to propagate his ideals while Congress chief Sonia Gandhi had a dig at it, saying the Mahatma's soul would have been pained by what has been happening in India under the present dispensation.

The Modi Government and the BJP went all out to lay claim to his legacy with Modi declaring the country open defecation-free and Shah leading a 'Padyatra' as part of the party's four-month-long exercise to reach out to the masses and inspire them to follow ideas and ideals of the Father of the Nation.

The entire top leadership of the BJP took part in a range of programmes, events and 'Padyatras' highlighting Bapu's life and times. Modi said the nation expresses its gratitude to Gandhi for his everlasting con-

tribution to humanity.

"We pledge to continue working hard to realise his dreams and create a better planet," Modi wrote on Twitter.

Speaking at a "Swachh Bharat Diwas" programme at Sabarmati Ashram in Gujarat Modi said the world appreciated India for providing toilets to over 60 crore people.

When Modi launched the ambitious Swachh Bharat (Clean India) campaign after becoming the Prime Minister in 2014, he had announced October 2, 2019 as the day India will be open defecation free (ODF), citing how Gandhi had laid immense stress on cleanliness and wanted the countrymen to pursue it.

"Today rural India and its villages have declared themselves 'open defecation-free'," he said. In a short video on Gandhi, Modi said his message of peace is still relevant to the world community.

The PM also referred to the seven perversions Gandhi had cautioned people about. These are: Wealth without work, pleasure without conscience, knowledge without character,



Prime Minister Narendra Modi pays homage to Mahatma Gandhi on his 150th birth anniversary at Sabarmati Ashram in Ahmedabad on Wednesday

visit without ethics, science without humanity, religion without sacrifice and politics without principles.

Modi also wrote 931-word Op-Ed in *New York Times* titled "Why India and the World Need Gandhi" wherein he wrote, "As a tribute to Gandhi, I propose what I call the Einstein Challenge... How do we ensure the ideals of Gandhi are remembered by future generations? I invite thinkers, entrepreneurs and

tech leaders to be at the forefront of spreading Gandhi's ideas through innovation." Earlier in the day, Modi paid homage to Gandhi at Rajghat and later, he visited the Sabarmati Ashram and addressed a gathering in Ahmedabad.

Top BJP leaders — such as Shah, party working president JP Nadda and Union Minister Prakash Javadekar — undertook 'padyatra', Gandhi's favoured way to reach out to

the masses, as part of "Gandhi Sankalp Yatra" as they gave a call to people to follow the ideals of the Father of the Nation.

Shah asked people to follow the PM's call to shun single-use plastic and said he is the only PM who has made cleanliness a mass movement, after Gandhi. Pointing to the perils of single-use plastic, the BJP president said it takes nearly 400 years for it to degrade.

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Only Cong has followed path of Bapu, says Sonia

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Congress top leadership on Wednesday unleashed a sharp attack on the BJP claiming that the ruling party at the Centre is trying to appropriate the legacy of Mahatma Gandhi while killing Bapu's very ideals and principles on which the foundation of India as a nation was built.

Leading a padyatra on the occasion of 150 years celebration of Mahatma Gandhi, Congress chief Sonia Gandhi said only the Congress has followed the path of Gandhi and has provided jobs, education and facilities to farmers, accomplishments which are unparalleled, no matter what others might claim.

She questioned "those" who consider themselves supreme and indulge in the politics of falsehood cannot understand Mahatma Gandhi's ideals of truth, self rule and selfless service.

"How can those who can do anything for power understand that Gandhiji was a worshipper of non-violence? How can those thirsty for power understand the meaning of Gandhiji's Swaraj? Those who



Congress president Sonia Gandhi with party leaders Ghulam Nabi Azad, Rahul Gandhi and KC Venugopal at Rajghat to commemorate the 150th birth anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi after party's Gandhi Sandesh 'Pad Yatra' from DPCC to Rajghat in New Delhi on Wednesday

claim to be supreme at the first opportunity, how can they understand the value of selfless service of Gandhiji?" Sonia asked while attacking BJP, RSS and the NDA Government.

Sonia also participated in the oath that Congress workers took to achieve the India of 'Bapu's' dreams by keeping faith in constitutional values. "Gandhiji's soul would be sad-

dened by seeing the condition of India in the last four-five years," the Congress president said while attacking the current BJP dispensation.

Several top Congress leaders, including former Prime Minister Manmohan Singh, were among those who paid floral tributes to the Father of the Nation.

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Local polls in J&K from Oct 24

Others freed but NC, PDP top brass remains under detention

MOHIT KANDHARI ■ JAMMU

Top brass of the two mainstream regional parties, National Conference and PDP continue to remain under detention in Kashmir Valley even as the Jammu & Kashmir Government late on Tuesday night ended political detentions of handful of Jammu-based leaders after 58 days with an aim to kick-start political activities ahead of Block Development Council polls beginning October 24.

The timing of the release of these leaders, representing different political parties, clearly indicated that the Government was keen on shoring up its own image by sending a clear message to the outside world that the democracy was flourishing at the grass roots level and "all is well" in the State.

However, several released leaders have accused the Government of making the mockery of democracy by scheduling BDC polls at a time when every single top leader of mainstream political parties and their workers were in



Policemen and a paramilitary soldier guard as relatives of Kashmiri political workers who have been detained wait to meet them outside a hotel turned into a detention center in Srinagar on Wednesday

detention for nearly two months.

Ironically, these leaders were let off with a clear cut warning not to trigger any political storm by making irresponsible statements aimed at

provoking public mood in the region.

Official sources said, "Leaders from the National Conference (NC), Congress and Jammu & Kashmir National Panthers Party

(JKNPP) in Jammu have been freed from their house detention." They were placed under preventive detention since August 5 after the abrogation of Article 370.

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Govt schemes have footprint of Gandhi's ideals: Baghel

STAFF REPORTER ■ RAIPUR

Chief Minister Bhupesh Baghel in his address to the special session held at Chhattisgarh Legislative Assembly, paid courteous tribute to Father of the Nation Mahatma Gandhi on his 150th birth anniversary on Wednesday.

He also paid tribute to former prime minister Lal Bahadur Shastri, whose birth anniversary also falls on this day. Baghel said Gandhi's teachings and ideals are relevant even today and will be relevant in future as well. Chhattisgarh government's efforts for public welfare are inspired by Mahatma Gandhi's ideals, he said.

Baghel said that Chhattisgarh government is following the path of Gram Swaraj, as visualised by Mahatma Gandhi. "Our farmers were turning into labourers, we have provided them support price of Rs 2500 per quintal for paddy." He particularly mentioned Suraji Gram Yojana 'Narva, Garua, Ghurva, Bari Vikas Yojana'. He said,



Chhattisgarh government has launched five major schemes namely Mukhyamantri Suposhan Abhiyan, Chief Minister Haat Bazaar Clinic Scheme, Chief Minister Urban Slum Clinic Scheme, Universal PDS Scheme, and Chief Minister Ward Office Scheme on Wednesday to mark the 150th birth anniversary of Gandhi.

Chief Minister said that Mahatma Gandhi was against violence. In Chhattisgarh a lot of people were affected by Naxal-violence, many died and many became homeless. He said that state government would provide housing to people, who have become homeless due to Naxal-violence.

Baghel announced in the assembly that a special award

would be launched in the memory of Dr. Prabhu Dutt Kheda, who dedicated his life to serve tribal people. This award will be provided to those officials, public representatives, organisations and representatives who have made excellent contribution in tribal welfare.

Chief Minister said that Chhattisgarh Legislative Assembly is one among the first legislative assembly in the country to organise special session on the occasion of Mahatma Gandhi's 150th birthday.

He said that "our Vedas and Upanishads have been preaching non-violence since ancient times. Gautam Buddha and Mahavir had also advocated non-violence. Mahatma Gandhi embodied these saintly teachings and followed the path of truth and non-violence to free India without any bloodshed." Chief Minister said that Mahatma Gandhi's idea of nationalism was based on all-inclusive development. He dedicated his life to women empowerment, women education, uplift of the poor, service of destitute.

CAPSULE

4 ELEPHANT CALVES DIE OF HERPES VIRUS

New Delhi: For the first time in India, four elephant calves have died in Bhubaneswar's Nandankanan zoo within a month after contracting the elephant endotheliotropic herpes virus (EEHV), according to the Central Zoo Authority.

SAUDI ENDORSES INDIA'S ACTIONS IN KASHMIR

New Delhi: Saudi Arabia has told India that it understands "India's approach and actions in Jammu & Kashmir". The Saudi stance on the issue was conveyed to India in a two-hour-long meeting between National Security Adviser Ajit Doval and Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed Bin Salman in Riyadh on Wednesday, sources said.

HASINA ON 4-DAY INDIA VISIT FROM TODAY

Dhaka: Bangladesh Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina will visit India on Thursday on a four-day official visit during which she would hold talks with her Indian counterpart Narendra Modi and the two sides are likely to sign nearly a dozen agreements.

RAIN KILLS 6 MORE IN UP, DEATH TOLL TOUCHES 117

Lucknow: Six more people died in rain-related incidents in Uttar Pradesh, pushing the death toll in the State to 117.

India seeks Lalit Modi, wife's Swiss bank details

PTI ■ NEW DELHI/BERNE

As India steps up its crackdown on suspected black money stashed abroad, Switzerland has issued public notices to former IPL commissioner Lalit Modi and his wife Minal following requests made by Indian authorities about Swiss bank details of the couple.

In its latest federal gazette notification on assistance sought by foreign jurisdictions under bilateral treaties for exchange of information on matters concerning suspected financial irregularities, Switzerland's Federal Tax Administration (FTA) has named Lalit and Minal Modi (alias Minalini Modi) among such individuals.

Detailed report on P10

Win for India, UK rejects Pak claim over Nizam's £35m

PTI ■ LONDON/ISLAMABAD

In a major setback for Pakistan, the UK High Court on Wednesday ruled in favour of India in a decades-old legal dispute with Islamabad over funds belonging to the Nizam of Hyderabad at the time of Partition in 1947 and deposited in a London bank account.

The Nizam's descendants, Prince Mukarram Jah — the titular eighth Nizam of Hyderabad — and his younger brother Muffakham Jah, had joined hands with the Indian Government in the legal battle against the Pakistan Government over around 35 million pounds lying with NatWest Bank plc here.

In his judgment handed down at the Royal Courts of Justice in London, Justice Marcus Smith ruled that the "Nizam VII was beneficially entitled to the Fund and those

claiming in right of Nizam VII — the Princes and India — are entitled to have the sum paid out to their order."

"Pakistan's contentions of non-justiciability by reason of the foreign act of state doctrine and non-enforceability on grounds of illegality both fail," the verdict notes.

The dispute revolves around 1,007,940 pounds and nine shillings transferred in 1948 from the then Nizam of Hyderabad to the high commissioner in Britain of the newly-formed state of Pakistan. That amount has since grown into 35 million pounds as the Nizam's descendants, supported by India, claimed it belongs to them and Pakistan counter-claimed that it is rightfully theirs.

"We are delighted that today's judgment recognises His Exalted Highness the VIII Nizam's rights to funds which

have been in dispute since 1948. Our client was still a child when the dispute first arose and is now in his 80s. It is a great relief to see this dispute finally resolved in his lifetime," said Paul Hewitt, partner in Withers LLP, who have acted for the VIII Nizam since Pakistan issued proceedings in 2013.

"Justice Smith's judgment covers a complex historical and legal set of issues, interpreting facts and events that occurred 70 years ago to establish that the funds, which now amount to 35 million, were always held in trust for our client's grandfather, the VII Nizam. The judgment also makes important findings on justiciability... and whether a nation state can be a trustee," he notes.

In 2013, Pakistan had waived sovereign immunity by issuing a claim for the fund that opened the way for the current case to proceed. The Pakistan



The 7th Nizam of Hyderabad — Nizam Osman Ali Khan

Government's legal team had claimed the fund on two alternative bases.

One, referred to as the "Arms for Money Argument", claimed that funds were transferred to compensate/reimburse/indemnify Pakistan for assistance provided in procuring/facilitating the supply and/or transportation of weapons. The second ground was that the funds were transferred in order to keep them out of the hands of India, referred to by the judge as the "Safeguarding Argument".

Pakistan had made two further arguments — that the facts of this case were such as to render it non-justiciable because the original transfer was governmental in nature and that India's annexation of Hyderabad in 1948 was an unlawful act, which tainted India and Nizam VIII's claim. The UK High Court, dur-

ing a trial earlier this year, had been asked to determine the "central question" of who exactly is the "beneficial" owner of the funds belonging to the late Nizam, Osman Ali Khan. While the Nizam, who faced the quandary of joining Pakistan or staying with India at the time of the funds transfer back in 1948, had later reportedly sought the return of the funds.

NatWest Bank has since held on to the funds deposited into the London bank account of then Pakistan High Commissioner Habib Ibrahim Rahimtoola in safekeeping until its rightful legal owner is established.

While acknowledging that there was evidence of the supply of arms by Pakistan to Hyderabad around this period, the judge said he had not been persuaded by Pakistan's Arms for Money argument.

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150TH BIRTH ANNIVERSARY OF MAHATMA GANDHI

Prez, V-P, PM lead nation in paying rich tributes to Bapu



PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

President Ram Nath Kovind pays homage to Mahatma Gandhi at Gandhi Smriti in New Delhi on Wednesday PTI

President Ram Nath Kovind, Vice-President Venkaiah Naidu and Prime Minister Narendra Modi led the nation in paying rich tributes to the father of the nation Mahatma Gandhi on his 150th birth anniversary that also saw padyatras and commemorative events.

“Homage to Bapu on #Gandhijayanti. The 150th birth anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi is an occasion for all of us to rededicate ourselves to the values of truth, non-violence, harmony, morality and simplicity. His message remains relevant for all & he continues to be our guiding light,” Kovind said.

For his part, Vice-President Venkaiah Naidu tweeted, “As we pay reverential homage to the Mahatma on his 150th Birth Anniversary, let us strive to transform our lives by internalising and implementing the Gandhian principles in our daily life.”

Modi described the Mahatma as the “best teacher” and “the guiding light” who

continues to give courage to millions globally. In an op-ed in The New York Times to mark the birth anniversary of Gandhi, Modi talked about the ideals epitomised by the apostle of peace who inspired such iconic leaders as Martin Luther King Jr and Nelson Mandela.

Modi stated that Gandhi possessed a “unique ability” to become a bridge between some of the greatest contradictions in human society and epitomised trust among all sections of society.

The Prime Minister also tweeted saying the nation expresses its gratitude to Gandhi for his everlasting contribution to humanity. “We pledge to continue working hard to realise his dreams and create a better planet,” Modi wrote on Twitter.

In a short video on Gandhi, Modi said his message of peace is still relevant to the world community. The Prime Minister also referred to the seven perversions Gandhi had cautioned people about. These

are: wealth without work, pleasure without conscience, knowledge without character, visit without ethics, science without humanity, religion without sacrifice and politics without principles.

Numerous events were organised by various government departments, ministries and voluntary organisations to celebrate life and legacy of Gandhi.

Leaders pay tributes to Gandhi, Shastri

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Congress president Sonia Gandhi were among political leaders who paid tributes to Mahatma Gandhi in the Central Hall of Parliament on Wednesday on his 150th birth anniversary.

Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla, Union Ministers Rajnath Singh, Piyush Goyal, Prakash Javadekar, BJP veteran LK Advani, Congress leader Rahul Gandhi, Leader of the Opposition in Rajya Sabha Ghulam Nabi Azad were among others who offered rose petals at the portrait of Gandhi in the historic Central Hall.

Sonia was greeted by Modi and Birla. However, there was no exchange of greetings between Modi and Rahul. The leaders later paid tributes to former Prime Minister Lal Bahadur Shastri on his 115th birth anniversary by offering rose petals at his portrait in the Central Hall.

Earlier, a function to celebrate Gandhi’s anniversary was also held in the



Parliament House Complex, near the statue of the Mahatma. Speaking on the occasion, Speaker Om Birla said that Mahatma Gandhi had led the freedom struggle of the country based on the eternal principles of truth and non-violence, thereby making it a peoples’ movement

Speaker Om Birla and other leaders pay tribute to Mahatma Gandhi at Parliament House on Wednesday PTI

making the farmers of the country self-sufficient. Consequently, India attained self-sufficiency in food and agriculture.

Earlier, speaking on the occasion, Culture & Tourism Minister Prahalad Singh Patel said the Ministry of Culture would ensure that the ban on single use plastic is implemented at all important cultural sites across the country, before the birth anniversary of Sardar Patel on October 31 this year.

A demonstration of Charkha spinning was organised by the Khadi and Village Industry Commission (KVIC). Birla and other dignitaries also participated in the spinning of Charkha and paid rich tributes to Gandhiji.

As part of the celebrations, KVIC is organising a three-day exhibition-cum-sales counter from October 2 to October 4, 2019, in the foyer near the SBI Bank, Parliament House Annex, where Khadi dress, fabric and village industry products will be sold at discounted rates.

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Emphasizing on promoting cleanliness and fitness together, Union Housing and Urban Affairs Minister

‘Swachchhata Hi Seva’ India plog run flagged off

Hardeep Singh Puri on Wednesday flagged off ‘Swachchhata Hi Seva’ India plog run at Rajpath to commemorate the 150th birth anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi. Plog run involves picking up litter while running. The objective was to spread awareness on the harmful effects of plastic waste and enlist citizens support to eliminate.

Addressing a gathering on the occasion, Puri said reiterated the committed to the Prime Minister’s vision of single-use plastic-free India. Administering pledge on ‘Swachchhata Hi Seva’ and against using single-use plastic, Puri said the country has achieved the dream of an open



Minister of State for Housing & Urban Affairs Hardeep Singh Puri interacts with school students during Fit India Plog Run in New Delhi on Wednesday PTI

defection-free India, except 52 local bodies in West Bengal. “This has been made possible with the participation of the biggest stakeholders of the movement — the citizens of

this country. “We are committed to Prime Minister Narendra Modi’s vision of making India free of single-use plastic. With the launch of the India Plog Run, I am confident that the day is not far when India will be free of single-use plastic,” Puri said.

On his part, Housing and Urban Affairs Secretary Durga Shanker Mishra said the ministry has already had over 55,000 events conducted by citizens across urban area with participation of around two crore people.

The Ministry has been taking several initiatives on plastic waste management and promoting its reuse and recycle, Mishra said.

Provided 60 cr people over 11 cr toilets: PM

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Wednesday declared that rural India is now open defecation-free (ODF).

Speaking at the ‘Swachchh Bharat Diwas’ event in Ahmedabad, Modi said, “Today rural India and its villages have declared themselves ‘open defecation free.’

“In 60 months, we have provided toilets to over 60 crore people by constructing over 11 crore toilets. The world is amazed at our success,” Modi said.

“However, this achievement is just a milestone and we should not stop here. The movement has to continue,” the PM added.

“Today, rural India has declared itself open defecation-free. This is a great achievement of the Swachchh Bharat movement which has people’s participation,” Modi said addressing village heads of 20,000 villages.

“On the call of Mahatma Gandhi during the freedom movement, people of the country mobilised for ‘satyagrah’ and they did the same now for swachhagrah,” Modi said.



Prime Minister Narendra Modi visits Sabarmati Ashram on the occasion of Mahatma Gandhi’s 150th birth anniversary, in Ahmedabad on Wednesday PTI

It was on October 2, 2014, that the Prime Minister had launched the ambitious Swachchh Bharat (Clean India) campaign, setting the target of making India open defecation free by October 2, 2019.

“A clean India would be the best tribute India could pay to Mahatma Gandhi on his 150th birth anniversary in 2019,” Modi had said, while launching the campaign.

The campaign aimed to build 120 million toilets across the country by October 2, 2019. Its other goals included cleaning up streets and other public infrastructure, achieving 100 per cent door-to-door waste collection, building solid-waste management plants in each town, and persuading Indians to adopt better sanitation practices.

The Government claims that it has already constructed over 100 million of the 120 million toilets planned across the country.

However, experts say while the construction of toilets has increased, lack of water, poor maintenance and slow changes in behaviour have stood in the way of ending the practice.

Cong leadership selling tickets at ₹5 cr, says Ashok Tanwar

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Days after he was unceremoniously axed as head of the State unit, former Haryana Congress chief Ashok Tanwar on Wednesday alleged his party leadership was selling tickets at Rs 5 crore and giving tickets to undeserving candidates and to those who joined the Congress recently but were critical of it not long ago.

Haryana will go to Assembly polls on October 21 and the results will be declared on October 24 along with Maharashtra.

Tanwar was joined by his close associates staged a protest and address the party workers from Haryana in front of Congress President Sonia Gandhi’s residence in national Capital. “I have worked hard

for years, but the people who joined the party 15 days ago are being given tickets by the party,” Tanwar alleged.

The former Haryana Congress chief alleged the ticket for the Sohna Assembly seat in Gurugram was “sold for Rs 5 crore.” He said the leadership in the state has been destroyed.

“We have remained dedicated to the party. Why do you have to give tickets to those who recently joined the party, but were critical of the party earlier?”

Tanwar claimed that he had been approached by the BJP six times in the last three months, but he turned down the offer as he is “not hungry for power.” “I had personal issues with Randeep Singh Surjewala (AICC chief spokesman), but I set aside all

those differences for the party’s sake,” he said.

With Haryana differences within the Haryana Congress leadership growing and soon after the former Haryana Chief Minister Bhupinder Singh Hooda threatened to quit the party, Sonia Gandhi who had just taken charge as an interim president of the grand old party effected changes in the Haryana Congress.

Former Union Minister and a close aide of the party chief, Kumari Selja was appointed chief of the Haryana Congress.

Resnetment against Tanwar was going on for a long time and went at its peak before the Lok Sabha polls but remained at helms of affairs since he was close to the then Congress chief Rahul Gandhi.

INSHORT

KBC CONTESTANT AS AMRAVATI AMBASSADOR
New Delhi: The Election Commission (EC) has appointed Babita Tade, who won Rs 1 crore on quiz show ‘Kaun Banega Crorepati’, as the Amravati district ambassador for its Systematic Voters’ Education and Electoral Participation (SVEEP) programme ahead of the Maharashtra Assembly polls to spread voter awareness and promoting voter literacy.

GOOGLE MAPS LISTS OVER 57,000 PUBLIC TOILETS
New Delhi: Google Maps has listed over 57,000 public toilets in over 2,300 cities across the country, a company statement said on Wednesday. The initiative was launched in 2016 as a pilot in three cities — New Delhi, Bhopal and Indore — in collaboration with the Swachchh Bharat Mission and Union Housing and Urban Affairs Ministry.

IMD, Skymet contrary on outcome of monsoon

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Monsoon forecasts by the India Meteorological Department (IMD) and the private forecaster Skymet Weather were found to be contrary to the outcome this year as the four-month rainfall season ended with above normal monsoon.

IMD in April had said the country would receive 96 per cent of the Long Period Average while Skymet had predicted 93 per cent of the LPA. Both had given an error margin of plus or minus five per cent.

According to the Skymet, 96 per cent of Long Period Average (LPA) falls on the border line of “below normal” and “normal” rainfall. Skymet had cited El Nino as the reason behind a possible below normal rainfall. However, as the rainfall season ended, IMD recorded a whopping 10 per cent more rainfall.

Mrutunjaya Mohapatra, director-general of IMD, said the department would do a detailed analysis. He, however, added that IMD was able to gauge the trends like El Nino turning neutral and the Indian Ocean Dipole turning positive.

Mohapatra said the IMD also did not change the forecast even when June ended with 33 per cent deficiency. “We will carry out an analysis on this,” he said, adding that there has been a significant improvement in seasonal forecast.

Mohapatra said several global models had predicted below normal monsoon because of the El Nino but IMD stuck to its prediction and did not revise it.

The El Nino is associated with the heating of Pacific waters, while a Positive



Indian Ocean Dipole is linked to cooling of the Indian Ocean waters. El Nino is a global phenomenon while the IOD is regional and has an impact mostly on the Bay of Bengal and Arabian Sea.

“In spite of several global models indicating a strong possibility of continuation of an El Nino episode during the monsoon season and possibly a below normal monsoon, IMD had predicted a normal rainfall (96-104 per cent of LPA)

“While issuing the forecasts, based on IMD’s models, it was suggested that the El Nino episode will weaken further and a positive Indian Ocean Dipole (IOD) event will emerge in the Indian Ocean. Moreover, IMD also predicted that the monsoon performance would be better in the second half compared to the first half,” a statement by the IMD said.

IMD’s analysis on weakening of El Nino and development of a positive IOD and the second half monsoon rainfall being above normal were thus proved correct, it said. “However, quantitatively, realised rainfall during the second half was more than what IMD predicted,” it added.

Citing reasons behind the above normal rainfall, Mahesh Palawat Vice-President (Climate Change and Meteorology), Skymet Weather, he said El Nino, most of the time, overwhelms IOD. But this time it was the other way around. Most global models indicated below normal rainfall, Palawat said.

The Madden-Julian Oscillation (MJO) is the major fluctuation in tropical weather on weekly to monthly timescales. The MJO can be characterised as an eastward moving ‘pulse’ of cloud and rainfall near the equator that typically recurs every 30 to 60 days. Palawat said whenever there is MJO, the monsoon activity increases.

Culture Ministry extends 2,500 gifts auction date

New Delhi: The Union Culture Ministry has extended the time period of auctioning of over 2,500 gifts received by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, from October 3 to October 17, officials said on Wednesday, attributing the decision to a huge demand for the mementos.

Celebrities, politicians and activists have shown interest in the auction, with many like Bollywood stars Arjun Kapoor, Anil Kapoor and singer Kailash Kher endorsing it. The ministry had launched the e-auction on September 14 to sell 2,700 mementos received by the prime minister, the proceeds of which will go to the Namami Gange Mission.

The mementos include paintings, sculptures, shawls, jackets and traditional musical instruments. The lowest base price is Rs 200 and it goes all the way up to Rs 2.5 lakh. A copy of the Indian Constitution with a base price of Rs 2,000 received bids of Rs 33,000. Other items include a portrait of Modi on a silk saree with a base price of Rs 2.5 lakh, a mace with a base price of Rs 2,000 and a photograph of the prime minister with his mother, which received a bid of Rs 10 lakh. The collection also includes a jersey of the Indian cricket team. PNS

We don’t want to ‘transplant’ ideology on others: Rawat

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Stressing that India is modernising its armed forces to defend itself, Army Chief General Bipin Rawat on Wednesday said the country has no extraterritorial ambitions and does not want to “transplant” its ideology on others.

Without naming Pakistan, he also said India is fighting a proxy war in Jammu & Kashmir and reserves the right to acquire military capabilities to counter any security threats.

Making this point while

addressing strategic affairs experts and Defence personnel in Male, capital of Maldives, during his ongoing visit there, he said the country will fulfill its regional and global security obligations as a responsible emerging power.

His remarks come against the backdrop of India playing a crucial role in the strategically important Indian Ocean region and ongoing efforts to further enhance ties with littoral states located on its rim.

Rawat also said instability in energy-rich West Asia has the potential to significantly increase global tensions and

trigger unrest and that the tension between the US and Iran was “worrisome.”

Without naming Pakistan, the Army Chief said Indian armed forces are countering a proxy war in Jammu & Kashmir on a daily basis and that India reserves the right to acquire military capabilities to counter any security threats emanating from its neighbourhood.

“Our strategic culture flows from two cardinals — we have no extraterritorial ambitions and no desire to transplant our ideology on others,” the Army Chief said.

In quiet visit to Saudi Arabia, NSA Doval apprises Crown Prince of Kashmir situation

New Delhi: National Security Adviser (NSA) Ajit Doval paid a two-day quiet visit to Saudi Arabia during which he apprised Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed Bin Salman about the situation in Jammu & Kashmir after the State’s special status was withdrawn, official sources said on Wednesday.

The Saudi side conveyed to Doval that it is aware of New Delhi’s long-held position on Kashmir and emphasised on the need for de-escalation of tension between India and Pakistan, they said. The NSA arrived in Saudi Arabia on Tuesday.

Doval and Salman also deliberated on a range of bilateral, regional issues including the missile and drone attacks on Saudi oil facilities last month and ways to further deepen anti-terror cooperation.

Saudi Arabia is a key pillar of India’s energy security, being a source of 17 per cent or more of crude oil and 32 per cent of LPG requirements of India. Notwithstanding the biggest ever attack on its oil facilities on September 14 that knocked out half of its daily oil production, Saudi Arabia assured India that it was committed to meet the country’s energy security needs. PTI

CM launches five new welfare schemes

To mark 150th birth anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi

STAFF REPORTER ■ RAIPUR

Chief Minister Bhupesh Baghel, to mark the 150th birth anniversary of Father of the Nation Mahatma Gandhi, on Wednesday launched five schemes, three related to health, one for food security and third to quick redressal of civil problems of urban people.

He launched the schemes at a brief function held at Dr Shyamprasad Mukherjee auditorium in state assembly premises.

The schemes are Chief Minister Nutrition programme (Mukhyamantri Suposhan Abhiyan), Chief Minister Haat-Bazaar Clinic Scheme, Chief Minister Urban Slum Health Scheme, Universal PDS Scheme and Chief Minister Ward Office



Scheme. As part of launching the schemes, Chief Minister administered food to a minor boy. He also released balloons during the function, at auditorium, he announced ₹21,000 for the scheme as public participation amount. He along with Speaker Charandas Mahant and

ministers launched the logo of each programme. The booklet for nutrition programme published by women and child welfare department was also released.

During launch of Chief Minister Haat-Bazaar Clinic Scheme, he interacted with two teams, one at Bhilai and other at Raipur making inquiry of blood test, testing of blood pressure, medicines given by doctors after check up. Earlier, he flagged off the mobile medical teams.

Chief Minister and other ministers under Universal PDS Scheme gave away the ration cards to 10 beneficiaries to launch the scheme.

Under Chief Minister Ward Office Scheme, Baghel released a video clipping highlighting the scheme while website linked to the ward office was also launched.

BJP MP takes out foot-march



STAFF REPORTER ■ RAIPUR

As part of nation-wide call for BJP Members of Parliament to hold 'Gandhi Sandesh Yatra' to create public awareness, Raipur Member of Parliament Sunil Soni commenced the foot-march at capital city Raipur.

The foot-march, began from the place where once Mahatma Gandhi himself had addressed a public meeting and conducted a march, from Anand Samaj Library, Brahmanpara.

The main aim of the march is to spread the message of Gandhi mainly on issues of cleanliness, health and dream of Mahatma for a

progressive country. Addressing the gathering Soni said all the public representatives and party workers should take a pledge that maximum people will be brought under the fold so that they get influenced by Gandhi's message.

Raipur South MLA and former cabinet minister Brijmohan Agrawal said Prime Minister Narendra Modi had called for freeing the country from single use plastic for which all should join hands.

Everyone, should take a pledge to be part of the drive. After the foot-march reached Azad Chowk, leaders offered floral tribute on a statue of Mahatma Gandhi.

School children participated in foot march dressed up as Gandhi

STAFF REPORTER ■ RAIPUR

A foot march on the theme 'Bachcha Bachcha Gandhi' was held from heart of the capital city Jaistambh to Gandhi Maidan on Wednesday to mark the 150th birth anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi.

Highlight of the programme was a procession taken out from Jaistambh Chowk to Gandhi Maidan of Raipur by thousands of children from more than twenty schools dressed up as Mahatma Gandhi.

Children were accompanied by Chief Minister Bhupesh Baghel, AICC's Chhattisgarh in-charge and member of Rajya Sabha PL



Punia, PCC chief Mohan Markam, MLA Kuldeep Juneja, Mayor Pramod Dubey, and a large number of public representatives as well as citizens.

Later the procession was converted into a massive public gathering at historical Gandhi Maidan.

In his address to the

public gathering, Chief Minister recalled that in year 1933, the Father of the Nation had addressed a public meeting on the same ground.

"Today, thousands of children dressed up in 'dhoti', 'Gandhi Topi' and holding 'lathi' followed the footsteps of Mahatma

Gandhi" he said. Earlier, Chief Minister welcomed the children dressed as Mahatma Gandhi at Jaistambh Chowk and praised their get up. He said that Mahatma Gandhi had given to the world the message of 'truth and non-violence'.

"We have to reform Chhattisgarh and the entire country by following the footsteps of him," Baghel said.

On the occasion, Chief Minister also distributed bags made up of cloths to encourage people to minimize use of plastic bags.

Speaking on this occasion, AICC in-charge Punia said that he was overwhelmed to see children dressed as Gandhi.

Min assures every possible help to Supebeda renal ailment victims

STAFF REPORTER ■ RAIPUR

Health Minister T.S. Singhdeo Wednesday visited Supebeda village in Gariaband district, infamous for renal deaths.

During his visit he met the villagers there and assured of providing every possible facility to them to combat the kidney related ailments.

Sharing apprehension of the villagers in taking health services from government hospital situated at Devbhog where kidney patients can avail dialysis facility, he assured them that an expert doctor would be deployed there.

Singhdeo also appealed the affected villagers of Supebeda to directly reach DKS super specialty hospital and AIIMS, Raipur for better treatment of their renal ailment.



On this occasion he also apprised that a mobile medical unit visits the affected area twice a week and more than 200 patients were treated through it.

On demand of villagers, Singhdeo assured them that soon government would lay a pipeline to bring water from nearby Tel River to the affected region. He also assured of upgrading Sub Health Centre to Primary Health Centre and permanently deploying an expert doctor in the centre.

Floral tributes paid to Mahatma, Shastri

RAIPUR: On the occasion of 150th birth anniversary of Father of the Nation Mahatma Gandhi and birth anniversary of former prime minister late Lal Bahadur Shastri, Governor Anusuiya Uikey and Chief Minister Bhupesh Baghel paid floral tributes to both the leaders at Vidhan Sabha premise. Assembly Speaker Dr Charandas Mahant, Leader of Opposition Dharamlal Kaushik and Parliamentary Works Minister Ravindra Choubey, cabinet members, MPs and MLAs also paid floral tribute to the two great sons of India.



As part of two-day special session of Chhattisgarh State Assembly on Wednesday evening, 'Kasturba ke Gandhi' play was staged at State assembly-based Dr Syama Prasad Mukherjee auditorium. Pioneer Photo

NMDC celebrates 150th birth anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi

STAFF REPORTER ■ RAIPUR

The NMDC Limited celebrated 150th birth anniversary of Father of the Nation Mahatma Gandhi on Wednesday at its headquarters in Hyderabad and also in all its major projects across the country spread Gandhian values of ahimsa, non-violence and truth along with Swachh Bharat Abhiyan.

NMDC's CMD N. Bajindra Kumar inaugurated the programme at its head quarters in Hyderabad as chief guest. P.K. Satpathy, Director (Production), Amitava Mukherjee, Director (Finance), Alok Kumar Mehta, Director (Commercial), Sumit Deb, Director (Personnel) and



other senior officials and employees were also present on the occasion.

While addressing the gathering Kumar emphasised on the need to follow the ethics and values of Mahatma Gandhi. He stressed upon the importance of maintaining clean surroundings and safe

environment.

He also appealed to all the employees to discourage the use of "Single Use Plastic". To discourage use of plastic material, bottles made of copper and jute bags were distributed to the employees on this occasion.

After garlanding and paying floral tributes to Mahatma Gandhi, a pledge on "Swachh Bharat Abhiyan" was taken by all the employees.

Later, areas surrounding premises of NMDC head office building Khanij Bhawan at Masab Tank, Hyderabad were cleaned by the employees.

Congress muddled Mahatma's anniv: BJP

STAFF REPORTER ■ RAIPUR

Charging that ruling Congress was unnecessarily raking up the issue of Gandhi verses Godse, state BJP on Wednesday alleged that it had put posters humiliating Union Minister Amit Shah and National Spokesperson Sambit Patra.

The BJP leaders under leadership of their State Spokesperson Sanjay Shrivastava also lodged a complaint at Civil Lines police station against the posters put at Ambedkar Chowk.



statement charged that the Congress was behind the controversial posters at Ambedkar Chowk and termed the alleged act cowardice.

When the entire nation is "assimilating the ideology of

Gandhiji" and the BJP-led Union government adopting his philosophy had framed and initiated a host of welfare works, Congress on the other hand is trying to create controversy over Mahatma Gandhi, he alleged.

MLAs dress code catches eyeballs in spl assly session

STAFF REPORTER ■ RAIPUR

During the two-day special session of Chhattisgarh State Assembly, to mark the 150th birth anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi, all the members of assembly, and also Governor, were dressed in a similar dress code, made of traditional kosa fabric, transcending their political differences. Women members also wore identical sarees.

All the members could be seen in a relaxed mood as there was no question-answer session like normal proceedings of the House. But discussions on different aspects of Gandhiji's life and his philosophy were held.

The odd one out among the MLAs was Congress legislator from Rajim, Amitesh



Shukla. He was in normal white colour 'kurta' and 'pyjama'. Asked about the reason for his dissimilar dress code, Shukla said, "It is my non-cooperation movement. You are all investigative journalists, you people can make enquiry for such a protest."

He further said, "I am the foot soldier of Rajiv ji and I'm bounded by the party. I will not be able to reveal much now. Like the Bhisma Pitahmah was wounded by the throne, similarly I am also bounded by it." As per information, he was irked for being allotted a seat in the second row.

Inside the House, BJP leaders backed him for his 'satyagraha' for registering protest against the government for not giving ear to his resentment.

Kejriwal to share best clean air efforts' story in Denmark

Delhi CM to take pledge on Oct 11 in Copenhagen to reduce emissions

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI



In a bid to curb air pollution and save environment, Delhi along with 20 other cities will pledge to reduce emissions and air pollution on October 11 at Central European Summer Time (CEST) Tivoli Conference Centre, Copenhagen.

Officials of the Delhi Government said Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal will also attend the C40 World Mayors Summit in Denmark between October 9 and 12 where he is expected to share the challenges and successes of Delhi's effort to curb pollution and improve quality of life and talk about initiatives taken by the city Government that led to 25 per cent reduction in Delhi's air pollution.

"Invited as the leader of one of the world's largest metropo-

lis, the CM will join leaders of cities like New York, London, Paris, Los Angeles and Berlin on the high table of urban powerhouses to deliberate on the climate crisis impacting the world," said a statement from Chief Minister Office (CMO).

C40 is a network of the world's megacities committed to addressing climate change. C40 supports cities to collaborate effectively, share knowledge and drive meaningful, measurable and sustainable action on climate change.

Around the world, C40 cities connect 94 of the world's

greatest cities to take bold climate action, leading the way towards a healthier and more sustainable future.

"Representing 700+ million citizens and one quarter of the global economy, mayors of the C40 cities are committed to delivering on the most ambitious goals of the Paris Agreement at the local level, as well as to cleaning the air we breathe," said the official.

Additionally, the CM will also be speaking during the summit on the future plan of action on air pollution. In a session titled 'Breathe Deeply', city leaders, experts, and business leaders will discuss the innovative new solutions underway in cities that are improving air quality and creating healthier, more equitable and prosperous communities.

Besides, the CM will also speak about odd-even scheme, improving the supply of electricity and other power sector reforms at the summit called the 'Asian Mayors and City Leaders Meeting on Low Carbon Inclusive Growth'.

Centre likely to introduce NRC in Odisha

PRADIP KUMAR DAS ■ CUTTACK

The NDA Government at the Centre seems to be very keen on introducing the National Register of Citizens (NRC) in Odisha, particularly in the coastal district of Kendrapada, to identify the illegal immigrants from Bangladesh and to throw them out of the country through legal means. This is indicated from a letter the Union Ministry of Home Affairs has written to the Registrar General of India (RGI) on September 20 asking it to take further necessary action under the Citizenship (Registration of Citizens and Issue of National Identity Cards) Rules of 2003.

The Centre-State (CS) Division of the Ministry wrote the letter to the RGI in response to a mail sent to the Ministry by Orissa High Court Amicus Curiae Mohit Agarwal with reference to a pending writ petition in the High Court pertaining to protection of

wetland in Kendrapada district.

Agarwal had referred to a report he had submitted to the High Court seeking the court's direction to the State Government and the Centre to update the NRC in Kendrapada district.

The High Court in January this year had asked the State Government to take prompt action on the suggestion made by the Amicus Curiae. Notably, on the direction of the Supreme Court for the protection of the Chilika lake and the Bhitarkanika National Park in Kendrapada district, the High Court Registry had registered the case making the State and Union Governments as respondents to the petition; and Agarwal was roped in by the High Court to assist it in deciding the matter.

In a report to the High Court, Agarwal had pointed out that illegal Bangladeshi immigrants have intruded into the Bhitarkanika National Park through sea route and have permanently settled there.

10 Mohalla clinics inaugurated



STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Marking the 150th birth anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi, Deputy Chief Minister of Delhi Manish Sisodia and Minister of Health Satyendar Jain on Wednesday inaugurated 10 new Mohalla clinics in South Delhi. Also, two Foot over Bridges (FOB) in Chirag Delhi and Sheikh Sarai has been thrown open to the public.

Besides, to provide safety and security for pedestrians, two more FOB's will be constructed in South Delhi's Krishi Vihar- Panchsheel Enclave and Select City Walk Mall opposite Khirki Extension, foundation stones has been laid by Deputy Sisodia, Satendra Jain, Minister Public Works Department (PWD) and Health.

The area which has been highly accident-prone for pedestrians due to the lack of foot over bridges will now have a FOB installed soon. Moreover, the Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) corri-

dor, known as third dangerous road in the National Capital will also be removed for the safety of the people.

Besides, 10 more mohalla clinics were opened in the posh areas such as Chitranjan (CR) Park, Greater Kailash-I, Greater Kailash-II, Shahpur Jat, Khirki Flats, Savitri Nagar, Chirag Delhi and Sheikh Sarai. The residents of these areas will now have access to free medical tests and free-of-cost medicines at these Mohalla Clinics.

"It is a big thing that the BRT road which was a cause of various hurdles for us as commuters has been removed finally. Residents of Chirag Delhi and Sheikh Sarai have been eagerly waiting for a foot over bridge to be installed in the areas. Today, with the help of the Delhi Government, we are having two FOBs installed here on these roads," said Saurabh Bhardwaj, MLA of Greater Kailash Constituency.

Local polls in J&K...

From Page 1

NC leaders Devender Singh Rana and SS Salathia, Congress' Raman Bhalla and JKNPP leader Harshdev Singh along with others were put under house arrest in Jammu and were barred from attending political functions and visiting party offices.

Meanwhile, the released leaders visited their party offices in Jammu on Wednesday and held informal discussions on the occasion of paying tribute to Mahatma Gandhi on his 150th birth anniversary.

Speaking to The Pioneer, former Congress MLC and party spokesman Ravinder Sharma said, "It is very unfortunate that the Government has decided to hold BDC polls without consulting leaders of mainstream Opposition parties in the State". Sharma also accused BJP of trying to grab power at the grass roots level by holding these BDC polls on party lines. He said, for the last two months BJP leaders were holding political functions and preparing for their BDC polls, but we were even prevented from holding regular press briefings in party offices.

"Majority of senior party leaders from Kashmir Valley

continues to remain under detention and under these circumstances the Government is proceeding further to hold these BDC polls," he said.

Senior National Conference leader and close aide of Omar Abdullah, Devender Singh Rana said he will first meet senior party leaders in Sher-r-Kashmir Bhawan on Thursday before interacting with the media.

PDP leader Daman Bhasin told The Pioneer, "The Government is making mockery of the whole election process by going ahead without releasing mainstream political leaders currently under detention."

At present Omar Abdullah and Farooq Abdullah, PDP's Mehbooba Mufti, former Cabinet Ministers, J&K People's Conference's Sajad Gani Lone and many others continue to remain under house arrest in Kashmir Valley. Bhasin claimed, as per guidelines of the Election Commission of India, the State president of a regional party is authorised to give mandate to party candidates to fight elections. He said in the absence of party chiefs who will give mandate to party leaders to contest BDC polls in Jammu & Kashmir.

Min releases station cleanliness report on New Delhi Rly Station



STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Railway and Commerce Minister Piyush Goyal on Wednesday released the station cleanliness report at the New Delhi Railway Station. Goyal while releasing the report said "Today we are committed to develop India as clean India, healthy India and prosperous India. The Railways is doing its bit to provide a clean and hygienic environment to the travelling people."

"Cleanliness has an important place in our life and the

way in which people adopted Prime Minister Narendra Modi's call for a clean Bharat, is the biggest tribute to Babu on his 150th anniversary," he said.

"The dignitaries present on the occasion visited the exhibition and witnessed the displays of tools and equipments used for cleaning purposes."

They understood the features of the bio-toilet and inspected the new generation coaches being used by the Railways," a senior official said,

adding that under the initiative of waste and scrap management, a sculpture of Babu made from scrap material was also showcased which was highly appreciated by all.

He also made a surprise inspection at the New Delhi railway station and also interacted with the passengers in the waiting room. Goyal later inaugurated an exhibition on Mahatma Gandhi on his 150th birth anniversary at National Rail Museum through Video Conferencing.

Delhi CM, Sisodia pay tribute to Mahatma Gandhi, Lal Bahadur Shastri

"Today is birth anniversary of two great souls. Gandhiji, an epitome of truth and non-violence and Shastriji of simplicity and honesty. Greetings to countrymen on birth anniversary of these great personalities," Kejriwal tweeted in Hindi

New Delhi: Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal and his deputy Manish Sisodia on Wednesday paid tributes to Mahatma Gandhi and Lal Bahadur Shastri on their birth anniversaries.

The duo first visited Vijay Ghat, the resting place of former Prime Minister Lal Bahadur Shastri, and paid floral tributes to him on his 115th birth anniversary. Kejriwal and the Sisodia later went to Rajghat to pay homage to Gandhi on his 150th birth anniversary.

"Today is birth anniversary of two great souls. Gandhiji, an epitome of truth and non-violence and Shastriji of simplicity and honesty. Greetings to countrymen on birth anniversary of these great personalities," Kejriwal tweeted in Hindi. SR

Mahatma Gandhi showed love for non-violence is only way to defeat hatred, says Rahul Gandhi



STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

To mark 150th birth anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi, Congress president Sonia Gandhi, Rahul Gandhi and other party leaders on Wednesday paid tributes to the leader at their 'samadhi'.

Rahul Gandhi led the Congress padyatra, preceded by a tableau of Mahatma Gandhi's Sabarmati Ashram and his iconic wooden spinning wheel mounted on a vehicle. Many Congress workers sported Gandhi's trademark spectacles. The Congress workers also chanted the slogan "Mahatma Gandhi Amar Rahein". Rahul Gandhi said that the Father of the Nation showed that love for all living beings and non-violence is the only way to defeat bigotry and hatred.

"On his 150th Jayanti, my tributes to Mahatma Gandhi Ji, the 'Father of the Nation', who through his words & deeds, showed us that love for all living beings & non violence is the only way to defeat oppression, bigotry & hatred," he tweeted. Several other top Congress leaders such as Punjab Chief Minister Amarinder Singh, Rajasthan Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot,

Rajasthan Deputy Chief Minister Sachin Pilot, Jyotiraditya Scindia, Sushmita Dev and Meira Kumar paid homage to Mahatma Gandhi. The Congress president and former Prime Minister Manmohan Singh were among those who paid floral tributes to the father of the nation.

The Congress will celebrate Mahatma Gandhi's 150th birth anniversary by organising 'padayatras' across the country, with party leader Rahul Gandhi joining the foot march in the national capital.

Sonia Gandhi said that Mahatma Gandhi not only influenced the Indians but also the whole world with his non-violent and satyagraha methods. "When not only Indians, but the whole world is celebrating the 150th birth anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi, we should realize that India has reached where it has only because we followed the path of Mahatma Gandhi," she said.

Taking a swipe at the BJP, she said that those who are trying to use Gandhi's name and taking India astray from his teachings to take their own way will not succeed as India has Gandhi's principles in its foundation.

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NOTICE

1. Approval under regulation-86 of CERC (Conduct of Business) Regulations'1999 and CERC (Terms and Conditions of Tariff) Regulations'2019 for (i) Truing up of Transmission tariff for 2014-19 tariff block and (ii) Determination of Transmission tariff for 2019-24 tariff block for Petition No. 1:- 2 Nos. 400 kV line Bays at Parli (POWERGRID) Switching Station (for Parli new (TBCB)-Parli (POWERGRID) 400 KV D/C (Quad) line under TBCB) and 2 Nos. 765 kV line Bays at Solapur (POWERGRID) Station (for Parli new (TBCB)-Solapur (POWERGRID) 765 kV D/C line under TBCB route) under "POWERGRID works associated with Western Region Strengthening Scheme XV" and Petition No. 2 :- combined assets Associated with under Sipat-II supplementary in Western Region.

2. The beneficiaries of the above mentioned transmission system are: (a) Madhya Pradesh Power Management Corporation Ltd., (b) Electricity Department, Administration of Daman & Diu, Daman, (c) Gujarat Urja Vikas Nigam Ltd., Vadodara, (d) Electricity Department, Government of Goa, Panaji, (e) Electricity Department, Administration of Dadra & Nagar Haveli, Silvassa, (f) Maharashtra State Electricity Distribution Company Ltd., Mumbai, (g) Chhattisgarh State Electricity Board, Raipur, (h) Madhya Pradesh Audyogik Kendra Vikas Nigam (Indore) Ltd., Indore I) Maharashtra State Electricity Transmission Co. Ltd., J) DNH Power Distribution Corporation Limited., k) Madhya Pradesh Power Transmission Company Ltd., Mumbai.

3. Tariff details:

Petition No & project	True up Transmission Tariff for 2014-19				
Petition No. 1	Asset - I DOCCO : 27.04.2018				
Petition No. 2	Combined asset I & II DOCCO : 01.12.2009 Combined asset III & IV DOCCO : 01.02.2011				
	₹ in lakh				
	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19
	-	-	-	-	827.13
	12467.51	12450.03	12574.18	12522.45	12563.62
	1063.08	1074.39	1095.98	1106.09	1123.10

a) 2019-24 Block

Petition No.	DOCCO	Tariff for 2019-24 block
Petition No. 1	27.04.18	792.22
Petition No. 2	24.12.09 (effective)	12990.41
		12780.44
		12576.19
		8519.48
		8518.69

4. A copy of the application made for determination of tariff is posted on the website of the applicant at www.powergridindia.com

5. The suggestions and objections, if any, on the proposals for determination of tariff contained in the application be filed by any person, including the beneficiary, before the Secretary, Central Electricity Regulatory Commission, 3rd and 4th Floor, Chandralok Building, Janpath, New Delhi-110001 (or other address where the office of the Commission is situated), with a copy to the applicant at the address of its Corporate Office, "Saudamini", Plot No. 2, Sector-29, Gurugram, Haryana - 122 001 within 30 days of publication of this notice.

Place : Gurugram Sd/-
Date : 01.10.2019 Dy. General Manager (Commercial)

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Gandhi birth anniv observed in Paradip

PARADIP: The 150th birth anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi was observed holding a wide range of activities here on Wednesday. A Prabhat Pheri was organised in the port township followed by a mass sanitation drive at Paradip Bus Stand here.

BJD State secretary Santosh Kumar Pattnaik garlanded the statue of Biju Patnaik and Netaji Subhash Chandra Bose here.

Later a national integrity rally began from the bus stand to ADM Office, Madhuban here led by Municipality Chairman Basanta Kumar



Biswal. Paradip MLA Sambit Routray, Paradip ADM Dr Kahn Charan Dhir, Executive

Officer Dilip Kumar Mohanty, PPT FA and CAO SK Sahu, Municipality Vice-Chairperson Prabhati Nayak, BJP Paradip Mandal president Kailash Chandra Sahoo, councillors, SHG members and public joined the rally. A statue of Gandhiji in front of ADM office was also unveiled. PNS

BJP, Opp claim Mahatma's legacy

From Page 1
Addressing a rally at the start of the 'Sankalp Yatra' Shah said even animals are adversely affected due to single-use plastics. After flagging off the nationwide 'Sankalp Yatra', he undertook a foot march for around 500 metres.

BJP leaders, MPs, MLAs, organisational leaders and other party members undertook 2-km-long foot march and spoke about non-violence, peace, use of khadi and cleanliness in events held across the country.

In the run up to Gandhi's 150th birth anniversary, Modi had given a call to his party, particularly to MPs and MLAs, to make the day memorable and asked its leaders to organise events and foot marches commemorate the day in their constituencies.

BJP which has already brought Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, a Congress leader, in its political pantheon and installed his statue, one of the tallest in the world, in Gujarat, is trying hard to move closer to the Mahatma. A major effort in the direction was initiated by Modi in his first term as PM when he launched ambitious 'Bharat Swachh Abhiyan', largely inspired by Gandhi's life-long focus on cleanliness and personal hygiene.

Win for India...

From Page 1
He notes there was no evidence linking the funds in the NatWest bank account to the supply of arms.

On the Safeguarding Argument, the judge accepted that the fund was to safeguard it by making it less accessible to India following the annexation of Hyderabad but he did not accept that this meant the trans-

fer was absolutely for Pakistan rather than on trust.

In a judgment which will go on to set precedent on non-judiciality, the court also rejected Pakistan's claims of illegality as it concluded that India's submission was well-founded, and that even if there were illegality of the nature alleged by Pakistan in the annexation of Hyderabad, any such alleged illegality would in any case be irrelevant to the claim. The ruling marks an

important conclusion to an extremely long-drawn legal battle, which also witnessed the Indian government, the princes and the administrator of the estate of Nizam VII compromising their differences and entering into a confidential settlement agreement last year, which meant the case was effectively an India-Pakistan clash in the UK courts. Commenting on the ruling, the Pakistan Foreign Office in Islamabad said it would

take further action after examining the detailed judgment.

"Pakistan is closely examining all aspects of the detailed judgment and will take further action in light of legal advice received," the FO said. It also said the ruling failed to take into account the historical context of the transfer when "India illegally annexed Hyderabad." However, the FO did not specify the actions Pakistan was contemplating against the decisions.

Only Cong has followed path of...

From Page 1

The party has planned a week-long programme that will mark the culmination of the year-long celebrations commemorating Gandhi's memory and it will re-emphasise his values.

Terming it a historic, pious and auspicious day, the Congress chief described Gandhi as a "great personality" who inspired not only India but the entire world to adopt the path of non violence and 'satyagraha'. She said all are proud that India has attained its present status following the path shown by the Mahatma, noting that it is easy to cite Gandhi's name but difficult to follow the path shown by him.

"Despite all this, if India has not been distracted it is because its foundation is laid on the values of Gandhiji. India and Gandhiji are synonymous with each other. It is a different thing that some people are adamant on reversing this. They want the

RSS and not Gandhiji to become the symbol of India. I want to tell them clearly... There cannot be any thought except Gandhiji's all-inclusive system, that includes the composite culture, civilisation and society of India," said Sonia.

While Congress leader Rahul Gandhi led a march of party workers from the Delhi Congress office to Rajghat, other leaders including Priyanka Gandhi did the same in their respective States.

In Lucknow, taking a swipe at the BJP, Priyanka Gandhi said BJP should first pursue the path of truth shown by Mahatma Gandhi and then talk about him.

She made the remarks before participating in a silent march organised here by the Congress on the 150th birth anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi. "It was the order of Gandhiji to pursue the path of truth. First, the BJP should pursue the path of truth and then talk about Gandhiji," the Congress leader said.

The silent march is also being viewed as a show of strength by the Congress which has been on the sidelines of state politics for a long time.

Sonia Gandhi said the Mahatma wanted India and its villages to be self-reliant. The Congress after independence followed this path and took revolutionary steps in this regard. Be it Jawaharlal Nehru, Lal Bahadur Shastri, Indira Gandhi, Rajiv Gandhi, Narasimha Rao or Manmohan Singh, all struggled to build a new India and establish new paradigms of progress, the Congress leader said.

"I want to tell those who decide the country's destiny that Gandhiji is a symbol of love not hatred, he is a symbol of harmony not confrontation, he is a symbol of democracy and not autocracy. No matter what others claim, the Congress is the only party that has followed the principles of Gandhiji and will continue to do so," she said.

HK flash-mob rallies erupt as anger mounts over shot protester

AFP ■ HONG KONG

Spontaneous flash-mob rallies broke out in Hong Kong on Wednesday as anger mounted over police shooting a teenage protester who attacked officers in a dramatic escalation of the violent unrest that has engulfed the territory for months.

A few thousand demonstrators, including office workers in shirts and suits, mustered in a park and then began marching through the city's commercial district in an unsanctioned rally, chanting anti-police and anti-government slogans.

Hours earlier, hundreds of students staged a sit-in at the school of 18-year-old Tsang Chi-kin, who was shot in the chest by a policeman as he and a group of masked protesters attacked officers with umbrellas and poles.

The international finance hub has been left reeling from the shooting, the first time a

demonstrator has been struck with a live round in nearly four months of increasingly violent pro-democracy protests.

Hong Kong was battered by the most sustained political clashes of the year on Tuesday as China celebrated 70 years of Communist Party rule with a massive military parade in Beijing.

The spiralling violence underscored seething public anger against Beijing's rule and shifted the spotlight from China's carefully choreographed birthday party, which was designed to showcase its status as a global superpower.

Running battles raged for hours across multiple locations as hardcore protesters hurled rocks and petrol bombs. Police responded for the most part with tear gas, rubber bullets and water cannon.

Police said the officer fired at Tsang because he feared for his life on a day that saw his colleagues fire five warning shots from their pistols



Protesters throw petrol bomb outside the Tsuen Wan police station in Hong Kong on Wednesday AP

throughout the city. "In this very short span of

time, he made a decision and shot the assailant," police chief Stephen Lo said. But protest groups said the officer charged into the melee with his firearm drawn and condemned the increasing use

of live rounds.

"The people of Hong Kong are sick and tired of having mere words of condemnation as their only shields against lethal bullets and rifles," a masked protester said at a press conference near Tsang's school.

The shooting was captured on video that quickly went viral.

Opinion towards the shooting has largely cemented along ideological divides with pro-democracy activists condemning the police and establishment figures calling it a justified use of force.

Tsang, who was filmed trying to strike the officer with a pole as he was shot, was taken to a nearby hospital in a critical condition but authorities said his condition had since improved.

A friend and classmate of Tsang, who gave his first name Marco, said the 18-year-old was a keen basketballer who was infuriated by sliding freedoms

in Hong Kong and the police response to the protests.

"If he sees any problems or anything unjust, he would face it bravely, speak up against it, instead of bearing it silently," Marco told AFP.

Police said 25 officers were injured in the National Day clashes, including some who suffered chemical burns from a corrosive liquid that was thrown at them by protesters. The liquid also wounded some journalists.

Hospital authorities said more than 70 people were admitted on Tuesday.

Police made some 160 arrests throughout the day.

On Wednesday, 96 protesters arrested during clashes with police on Sunday appeared in court charged with rioting, according to court documents. Their ages ranged from 14 to 39.

The majority were students in their early twenties but other occupations listed included a waitress, a teacher, a doc-

tor, an advertising executive and a cook.

Hong Kong's protests were ignited by a now-scraped plan to allow extraditions to the mainland.

But after Beijing and local leaders took a hardline they snowballed into a wider movement calling for democratic freedoms and police accountability. With Hong Kong leader Carrie Lam seemingly unwilling or unable to find a political solution, police have been left to battle increasingly radicalised protesters.

Sentiment is hardening on all sides. Protesters and some local residents routinely shout "trials" at officers who often respond by calling demonstrators "cockroaches". The protest movement's main demands are an independent inquiry into police actions, an amnesty for those arrested and universal suffrage.

But Beijing and Lam have said they are unwilling to meet those demands.

Trump denounces impeachment enquiry as 'coup'

AFP ■ WASHINGTON

Donald Trump on Tuesday denounced the impeachment inquiry threatening his presidency as a "coup," as his administration pushed back hard against the investigation.

Trump's comments came after Secretary of State Mike Pompeo pressed to prevent or delay five former or current State Department staffers from testifying in the investigation probing accusations that Trump abused his office by seeking dirt from Ukraine on a 2020 election rival.

"As I learn more and more each day, I am coming to the conclusion that what is taking place is not an impeachment, it is a COUP," Trump tweeted.

It is "intended to take away the Power of the People, their VOTE, their Freedoms, their

Second Amendment, Religion, Military, Border Wall, and their God-given rights as a Citizen of The United States of America!" he wrote.

Pompeo meanwhile accused three Democratic House committee heads conducting the impeachment inquiry of "an attempt to intimidate, bully and treat improperly the distinguished professionals of the Department of State."

But Democrats accused the top US diplomat of "stonewalling" the investigation and, according to media reports, scheduled interviews with at least two of the diplomats who both had direct involvement in the Ukraine matter.

It was the first major clash of the days-old impeachment probe, pointing to a dramati-

cally mounting political and legal siege as Trump battles to save his presidency.

Trump faces the possibility of becoming only the third president ever impeached by Congress, which could lead to his going on trial in the Senate.

Democrats decided last week to seek impeachment after a whistleblower complaint, supported by a White House call transcript, showed Trump pressuring Ukraine President Volodymyr Zelensky to supply him with politically useful information on Democratic former vice president Joe Biden.

Biden is the most likely Democrat to challenge Trump's reelection bid next year.

The first move of the three powerful House Democrats -- Adam Schiff of the Intelligence Committee, Eliot Engel of the



House Foreign Affairs Committee and Elijah Cummings of the Oversight Committee -- was to subpoena Pompeo and Trump's private lawyer Rudy Giuliani for documents and to summon the five diplomats to testify. "Secretary Pompeo was reportedly on the call when the President pressed Ukraine to smear his political opponent,"

they said.

Pompeo's letter suggested that the committees could be forced to subpoena the five diplomats, and that the State Department and White House could seek to limit what they can talk about.

"I will use all means at my disposal to prevent and expose any attempts to intimidate the dedicated professionals whom I am proud to lead," Pompeo said.

But news reports said the State Department's former special envoy to Ukraine, Kurt Volker, would testify Thursday and that the ex-ambassador to Kiev, Marie Yovanovitch, would appear behind closed doors on October 11. Volker had been sought by Giuliani to help pressure Zelensky, while Yovanovitch was removed earlier this year as ambassador

after she reportedly resisted that effort.

The three committee heads warned Pompeo in a statement Tuesday that any effort to prevent witnesses from speaking to them was "illegal and will constitute evidence of obstruction of the impeachment inquiry." Trump's personal lawyer Rudy Giuliani suggested he might not comply with a House subpoena issued on Monday.

Giuliani spent months earlier this year contacting Ukraine officials to encourage them to investigate Biden, whose son had business ties to Ukraine.

While Pompeo and Giuliani battled the House committees, Trump also stepped up his personal attacks on Schiff, the leader of the impeachment investigation, as well as the anonymous whistle-

blower.

"Why isn't Congressman Adam Schiff being brought up on charges for fraudulently making up a statement and reading it to Congress," he asked.

On Monday, Trump said the White House was trying to get more information on the whistleblower, whose identity is protected by law.

But politicians from both parties warned the president against threatening or attempting to unmask the whistleblower, who was reported to be a CIA analyst.

"This person appears to have followed the whistleblower protection laws and ought to be heard out and protected," said Republican Senator Chuck Grassley.

"Folks just ought to be responsible with their words."

GLOBE TROTTER

XI, PUTIN HAIL 70TH YEAR OF DIPLOMATIC TIES

Beijing: Chinese President Xi Jinping and his Russian counterpart Vladimir Putin on Wednesday exchanged congratulatory messages on the 70th anniversary of the establishment of the two countries' diplomatic ties.

25 SOLDIERS KILLED IN MALI MILITANT ATTACK

Bamako: At least 25 Malian soldiers were killed and 60 others were missing after militants attacked two army outposts, the government said. Camps in the towns of Boukessy and Mondoro near the border with Burkina Faso came under attack on Monday, the BBC reported on Wednesday.

5 ISLAMIC STATE MILITANTS KILLED IN AFGHANISTAN

Kabul: At least five Islamic State (IS) militants have been killed in a NATO-led coalition drone strikes in Afghanistan's Nangarhar province, an official said on Wednesday. "The coalition pilotless planes fired missiles on two militants' compounds in Wazir Tangai locality of Khogyani district on Tuesday, killing five IS militants," Xinhua reported citing a statement by the Nangarhar provincial government.

IRAN WELCOMES DIALOGUE WITH SAUDI ARABIA

Tehran: Iranian Parliament Speaker Ali Larijani has welcomed Saudi Arabia's proposal for holding talks to resolve mutual issues. Tasnim news agency reported. "We welcome (Saudi Crown Prince) Mohammed bin Salman being quoted as saying he wants to resolve issues through talks with Tehran," Larijani said on Tuesday.

NASA's InSight lander 'hears' strange sounds on Mars

Washington: NASA has released recordings of eerie sounds on Mars picked up by one of its missions to the Red Planet, the InSight lander.

Far below the human range of hearing, these recordings had to be speeded up and slightly processed to be audible through headphones, NASA said on Tuesday. The spacecraft's exquisitely sensitive seismometer, called the Seismic Experiment for Interior Structure (SEIS), can pick up vibrations as subtle as a breeze. The instrument was provided by the French space agency, Centre National d'Etudes Spatiales (CNES), and its partners.

The instrument was designed to listen for quakes on Mars, known as marsquakes. Scientists want to study how the seismic waves of these quakes move through the planet's interior, revealing the deep inner structure of Mars for the first time.

But after the seismometer was set down by InSight's robotic arm, Mars seemed shy. It did not produce its first rumbling until this past April, and this first quake turned out to be an odd duck. It had a surprisingly high-frequency seismic signal compared to what the science team has heard since then.

Out of more than 100 events detected to date, about 21 are strongly considered to be quakes, NASA said. The remainder could be quakes as well, but the science team hasn't ruled out other causes.

Five bodies found, one still missing after Taiwan bridge collapse

Taipei: Five bodies have been recovered from under a collapsed bridge in Taiwan, rescuers said Wednesday, as the search continued for the last person missing after the structure smashed into fishing boats moored underneath.

Taiwan's National Fire Agency said the deceased were fishing workers from Indonesia and the Philippines whose bodies were found in waters near two damaged boats late Tuesday and earlier Wednesday.

"The search and rescue mission continues," transport minister Lin Chia-lung told reporters, adding evidence was being collected for an investigation.

The Philippines labour ministry confirmed that two of its nationals were killed while one remained missing and five others were injured in the incident.

The ministry pledged assistance to the affected workers and their families. Dramatic CCTV footage captured the moment the 140-metre (460-foot) long single-arch bridge

came crashing down early on Tuesday morning in Nanfangao, on Taiwan's east coast.

In the video, a vertical cable at the centre of the bridge's steel arch suddenly snaps.

The road then collapses into the water, crashing down on three fishing boats as a petrol tanker, which nearly made it across, also plunged into the water.

Twelve people were injured, including six Filipino and three Indonesian fishing workers, the Taiwanese driver of the petrol tanker, and two coastguard personnel. The petrol tanker burst into flames at some point after it hit the water, sending a thick plume of black smoke into the air.

The local landmark was completed in 1998 and spanned a small fishing port. It was featured in a number of TV dramas and commercials.

Taiwan was skirted by a typhoon on Monday night, which brought heavy rains and strong winds to parts of the east coast. AFP

Two dead, 200 injured in clashes at Iraq protests

Baghdad: Two demonstrators were killed and more than 200 people injured Tuesday, health officials said, in clashes with security forces during protests in Baghdad and the provinces that mounted the first challenge to Iraq's fragile one-year-old government.

More than 1,000 protesters had descended on the capital before security forces dispersed the crowds with a volley of gunfire and tear gas.

Protests in Baghdad left one dead and 200 wounded, including 160 civilians, the health ministry said without providing further details.

According to medical and police sources, most of them needed treatment for tear gas inhalation and some were injured by rubber bullets.

A health official in Dhi Qar later said that one protester was killed and two others were wounded in the southern province.

With Iraqi flags draped over their shoulders or wrapped around their foreheads, the demonstrators had gathered in the iconic Tahrir Square, with a

wide range of grievances but apparently without a unified leadership.

"Those thieves robbed us!" they cried out in condemnation of the political class in Iraq, considered the 12th most corrupt country in the world by Transparency International.

"The problem is that parliament is a bunch of gangs that have divided up everything amongst themselves," said Abbas Fadel, a 30-year-old demonstrator.

Some were on the streets to protest at the lack of public services, including rampant power cuts, water shortages and unemployment, particularly among youth.

"Show us what you can do: show us paved roads, a city that functions, reconstruction, work, public services. We have none of that," said Mustafa Khaled, 34.

And others carried portraits of Staff Lieutenant General Abdulwahab al-Saadi, who was this week removed from his post in Iraq's Counter-Terrorism Service in a shock move. Demonstrators were cleared

from Tahrir Square a first time but then regrouped, facing a steady volley of live shots, water cannons and tear gas from security forces.

More shots were fired even after the crowds had dispersed into adjacent neighbourhoods.

Three young men could be seen carrying a wounded demonstrator wearing a checkered white-and-black scarf to protect him from the tear gas.

Some protesters made their way towards Al-Jumhuriyah Bridge, which leads into the high-security Green Zone that houses government offices and foreign embassies.

Police had set up metal barricades and stationed trucks at the mouth of the bridge to prevent protesters from crossing, and a security source inside the zone told AFP that reinforcements were requested.

The gathering was the biggest demonstration against Prime Minister Adel Abdel Mahdi since he came to power in late October 2018, just months after demonstrations that engulfed the southern city of Basra last summer. AFP

North Korea fires ballistic missile ahead of nuclear talks

Seoul: North Korea fired what appeared to be a "submarine-launched ballistic missile," Seoul said Wednesday, a day after Washington and Pyongyang announced they would resume stalled nuclear talks.

Pyongyang frequently couples diplomatic overtures with military moves, as a way of maintaining pressure on negotiating partners, analysts say, and may believe this weapons system gives it added leverage.

A proven submarine-based missile capability would take the North's arsenal to a new level, allowing deployment far beyond the Korean peninsula and a "second-strike" capability in the event of an attack on its military bases.

The South's Joint Chiefs of Staff said it detected a ballistic missile early Wednesday fired around 450 kilometres (280 miles) in an easterly direction at a maximum altitude of 910 kilometres.

The missile was "believed to be one of the Pukkuksong models", the JCS said in a statement, referring to a line of submarine-

launched ballistic missiles (SLBM) under development by the North.

"Such actions by North Korea to raise tensions are not helpful to efforts to ease tensions on the Korean peninsula and we urge it again to stop immediately," it added.

The North carried out a successful test of the Pukkuksong-1, also known as KN-11, in August 2016 which flew around 500 kilometres.

The United States said it was monitoring the situation on the Korean peninsula.

One of the projectiles fell into waters within Japan's exclusive economic zone -- a 200-kilometre band around Japanese territory -- Tokyo said.

"The launching of ballistic missiles violates UN Security Council

resolutions and we strongly protest and strongly condemn it," Prime Minister Shinzo Abe told reporters.

The North is banned from ballistic missile launches under UN Security Council resolutions. AFP

Johnson prepares to unveil 'final' Brexit offer

AFP ■ MANCHESTER

Prime Minister Boris Johnson will submit "final" proposals for a new Brexit agreement on Wednesday, officials said, warning that if the European Union did not engage with them, Britain would leave the bloc this month with no divorce deal.

Johnson will provide details of what his Downing Street office said was a "fair and reasonable compromise" during his closing speech to his Conservative party's annual conference in Manchester.

But a statement issued late Tuesday stressed this was a "final offer" and Johnson would be keeping his pledge to leave the EU on October 31, with or without a deal. Johnson himself told The Sun newspaper that he had "10 days" to listen to EU counter-offers and find a compromise.

"If there's a deal to be done, it could be done in that time," said Johnson. "If there isn't, then we'll know. That's the truth."

Johnson, a leading "leave" campaigner in the 2016 EU referendum, took office in July vowing to deliver Brexit at the end of this month in all circumstances. But like his predecessor Theresa May, he has struggled against a hostile parliament and the complexities of untangling four decades of EU integration.

Johnson has pledged to renegotiate the exit terms May agreed with Brussels, which were rejected by the British parliament three times.

He is now focused on replacing the controversial "backstop", a longstanding sticking point that aims to keep an open border between British Northern Ireland and EU member Ireland after Brexit. May's proposal would have

done this by keeping Britain in an effective customs union with the EU, which critics argued would force London to abide by the bloc's rules indefinitely.

The Daily Telegraph newspaper reported that Johnson instead wants to keep Northern Ireland in the EU's single market until 2025, but in a customs union with the rest of Britain. This would potentially create two new borders -- regulatory checks between mainland Britain and Northern Ireland along the Irish Sea, and customs checks on the island of Ireland itself.

After that, a new power-sharing authority in Northern Ireland would decide whether to keep the region aligned with EU or UK standards, the newspaper said. Johnson had earlier denied a media report that he was looking at installing customs posts along the Irish border,

amid outrage from Dublin. The issue is hugely controversial, as the removal of border posts was seen as key to bringing peace to Northern Ireland after three decades of violence over British rule that left thousands dead.

But Johnson said it was a "reality" that there would have to be checks somewhere after Brexit.

Ireland's initial response to Johnson's latest reported offer was strongly negative. "Certainly, the reports we're hearing are concerning, to put it mildly," Irish Deputy Prime Minister Simon Coveney said late Tuesday.

Coveney said Ireland could not accept a time limit to any border solution because there was no guarantee that a new and permanent EU-UK trade agreement dealing with the frontier could be reached within a specific timeframe.



Police officers demonstrate to denounce bad working conditions, lack of equipment and dilapidated police stations, in Paris on Wednesday. Police unions point out overwork due to the Yellow Vests anti-government protests and say officers are exposed to excessive violence. AP

PAPER WITH PASSION

Plastic problems

The Government's U-turn on the ban of single-use plastic may be temporary but we should all ease up on its use



There is little doubt that India is in the middle of an industrial slump with statistics showing that both growth and jobs are declining. The fact that the Government had to reverse its decision to ban single-use plastics because it did not want to cause more industrial disruption is founded on pragmatism. However, this should not stop it or the society's efforts to use less plastic. In fact, a gradual phasing out of its production, re-introduction of alternatives and a sectoral approach could be the executive's view, considering its

widespread use in pharmaceuticals and hospitals for example, but we should all work towards eliminating single-use plastics from our lives. We do not have the luxury to look at excuses provided by a Government decision. It is impossible to imagine modern society without plastics. Indeed, from toys to cars and even the carbon-fibre reinforcement that forms the fuselage of modern aircraft, plastics are everywhere. Everywhere means everywhere, as trash piles have been found at the bottom of the deepest trenches of the Pacific Ocean and the highs of Himalayan peaks. And single-use plastics like glasses, straws, plates, bottles, cutlery and bags are entirely within the domain of individual behaviour and lifestyle change. Unfortunately, while India generates about 9.4 million tonnes of plastic waste a year, it recycles only about 60 per cent of it. Studies by The Energy Resources Institute (TERI) on landfills found that 10.96 per cent of the waste was only plastic and of these, the non-recyclable kind accounted for 9.6 per cent. We should all start adapting and be mindful about daily life, use bags made out of jute or even reuse our plastic bags more than once. If we can avoid using a straw or buying a plastic bottle of water, we would have done our best to clear the heap. Paper cups and metal cutlery will help as well. One shouldn't blame the industry for not providing options because until we ask for alternative products and create a demand swell, we will not get them. That said, we should also know if the replacement products turn out to be as damaging or possibly worse than the plastics they replaced. What we think are "woven paper" bags are actually made from long plastic polymers, wood fibre products, which mostly have plastic elements in them as well. And because both are not pure plastics, they actually do not bio-degrade like some modern variants. So our attempts to be altruistic to the environment should not end up damaging it instead. It is also important that the plastics industry continues its work towards developing less environmentally damaging products. On this front, the industry has been very proactive and is moving fast. Laws, too, have been framed. The Plastic Waste Management Rules, 2018, call for producing industries to collect a fixed percentage every year. The Plastic Waste Management Rules, 2016, make it crystal clear that it is the duty of all — producers, importers and brand owners — to adopt a give-and-take policy where it is their responsibility to ensure that they collect back as much of the filth as they introduce into the environment. The same Act also bans plastic bags that are less than 50 microns in thickness. The crux of the matter is that all such laws have been ineffective due to the sheer lack of enforcement. So the big change has to come from us as enforcers if we want to ensure that we leave the next generation a viable ecosystem. To channel Greta Thunberg, "How dare we not change?" We can't imagine a life without plastic and it is unlikely that it will disappear from our lives. But we must reduce our dependence on it whether the Government orders it or not.

SC recall

By rescinding the provision that diluted clauses of the SC/ST Act, the top court has prioritised societal sensitivities



With mounting political and societal pressure and given the vulnerability of Dalits across the country, the Supreme Court has recalled its earlier order diluting provisions of arrest under the Scheduled Castes & Scheduled Tribes (Prevention of Atrocities) Act, 1989. The verdict last year had done away with the clause of immediate arrest of the accused without proper investigation and provisioned for bail, both of which were found to be easy to play around with and intimidate the victims of hate crimes. Dalit anger has been simmering since and the atrocities against them have spiralled out of control, an abuse being committed against a Scheduled Caste (SC) member every 15 minutes by some estimates. Last year, the apex court had sought to clarify the application process of the law so that it was not subject to misuse by either the offender or the complainant and was not seen as an automatic and instant disbursement of justice. So it made a judgement call by insisting that "immediate arrest" be replaced by "arrest only after preliminary enquiry," thereby eliminating the "heat of the moment" factor and fixing the culpability of the real offender indulging in atrocities against Dalits. But in keeping to legal niceties, it ignored the perception that was created, that the provisions empowered the accused and weakened the complainant. There were fears that the latter would not report atrocities or wrong-doing if the provision of unqualified, non-bailable arrest was done away with, encouraging coercive hit-backs during inquiry. As it is, Dalits find it very difficult to register a simple FIR and with some time lag implied in last year's verdict, the probe itself was feared to be compromised badly. As of now, conviction rates in crimes against Dalits and tribals add up to 23.8 per cent and 16.4 per cent compared to the 40.2 per cent in general criminal cases. Besides, the court, as it rightly admitted this week, had, under the veneer of fair play, assumed that SC/ST community members could cook up false cases, that they could be "a liar or crook." The judge regretted that the umbrella assumption was against "basic human dignity" and could bear heavy on an exploited people, who are already at the receiving end of upper caste authoritarianism. To that extent, the court did well to take a holistic view of sensitivities, one that had been subverted by looking into technicalities.

For the ruling BJP, this comes as a big relief, considering Dalits have been agitated over the death of Rohith Vemula, the beating of Dalit youths at Una in Gujarat, the demolition of the press of Babasaheb Ambedkar and the riots in Bhima Koregaon. In fact, in Maharashtra, Ambedkar's grandson Prakash Ambedkar has been leading a convincing charge against the current regime and is spearheading a renewed movement for legitimacy. With Assembly elections due in the State, the new verdict could not have come at a better time for the BJP. Considering that nearly a fourth of Dalit voters voted for the BJP back in 2014, Prime Minister Narendra Modi believes in consolidating that vote pie and turn it into an asset base with his welfarist schemes. But after Vemula's suicide and the attacks in Maharashtra, it is the new-age Dalit voter who is questioning his/her choice and is at the forefront of new assertive agitations. But a movement is still scattered and not coalesced enough and BJP would like to stem that hereon.

Cheque book diplomacy

China's ability to impress upon nations the benefits of joining its bloc is not unknown. Counter-moves like the Quad need to be strengthened



BHOPINDER SINGH

The Chinese have either deployed "intimidation" or their famed cheque book diplomacy to "win" over other nations towards their own purposes. Both as an undisputed military and an economic powerhouse, the options for Beijing vary from flexing its military muscle (as done in the South China Seas) or by ensnaring nations into economic bondage by pouring billions of dollars. Take the example of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), where a nation-sustaining investment of up to \$60 billion has been made to Pakistan, whose economy is cash-starved today. Often, there is a hybrid model in between that entails the overlapping of the commercial-military footprint through strategic investments by China.

The attempt to stitch together Chinese presence along the crucial sea routes, pursuant to the "String of Pearls" policy, is an ostensibly commercial initiative, one that will subsequently evolve into the invariable presence of Chinese military's boots on civilian ports such as Djibouti. Wherever physical distance still challenges the Chinese "supply chain abilities" to maintain a viable military presence, it can dominate the narrative by out-funding other donor nations or organisations and champion these distant lands, such as in the African hinterland or Latin America.

By punting in these distant lands, not only does Beijing sustain captive sources for raw materials and a ready market for its Chinese end-products but also guarantees invaluable political and diplomatic influence. The importance of having such beholden nations can be gauged from the fact that in the high tables of international diplomacy, like the United Nations, each country's vote counts as "one." This theoretically makes the vote of a country like Nauru, that has a population of less than 15,000 people, matter as much as that of China with a population of 1.5 billion.

One global theatre that was spared the Chinese radar of urgency was the island region of Polynesia, Micronesia and Melanesia in the Pacific Ocean. The sheer distance, fragmentation and "non-threatening" idyll of these small island nations ensured an isolated tropical paradise that was bereft of any major geo-political or geo-strategic posturing till now. In an increasingly interdependent and interconnected global waterway of the 21st century, three factors have driven a sudden interest in this region of less than 2.5 million inhabitants.

First, the growing domestic aspirations within these nations. Second, the strategic relevance of individual nation "vote" in multilateral fora. And third, with increasing reach of the Chinese military-economic might, these nations offer a breakout opportunity from the supposed "encirclement" of China, pitchforking these island nations into the competitive calculus of Chinese hegemonic instincts. Even these nations are creatively leveraging their



geographical position to "counter-balance" the predominant and historical Australian tilt and influence in this region to extract the maximum attention and benefit of competitive bidding among regional powers.

However, among the foremost considerations for Chinese diplomacy is also the need to isolate and "compress" Taiwan internationally by "winning over" those nations that still recognise its official status. This ongoing Chinese concern and project to get nations to switch sides on the Taiwan issue has accelerated in recent times. A record seven countries switched sides since 2016.

These Pacific island nations have historically held a pro-Taiwan position and they had made a sizeable part of the 25-odd countries that recognised it till recently. Today the number to do so is a mere 15 countries. The latest ones to fall prey to the Chinese "buyout" were the Solomon Islands and Kiribati, who were openly assured of "unprecedented development opportunities" in order to grease the deal. The then Prime Minister of Solomon Islands was candid enough to admit that Taiwan was "completely useless to us," both politically and economically.

As part of the "switchover" conditions, Kiribati had to sever ties with Taiwan and re-establish diplomatic relations with China.

“HOWEVER, AMONG THE FOREMOST CONSIDERATIONS FOR CHINESE DIPLOMACY IS THE NEED TO ISOLATE AND 'COMPRESS' TAIWAN INTERNATIONALLY BY 'WINNING OVER' THOSE NATIONS THAT STILL RECOGNISE ITS OFFICIAL STATUS. A RECORD SEVEN COUNTRIES SWITCHED SIDES SINCE 2016”

Meanwhile, credible rumours abound in Kiribati about the Chinese largesse in the pipeline, which includes very soft loans and a Boeing 737 to boot. The Taiwanese are left high and dry, fuming at the obvious play of the Chinese cheque-book diplomacy that brooks no moral, historical or positional consideration.

Traditional dominance of former colonial powers, like Australia, the US, France, New Zealand and Japan in the region, is increasingly diminished as the Chinese go about hunting one nation after the other. Beijing's flush treasury comes handy as does the dispatch of an occasional bomber flying overhead these hapless countries.

The Chinese footprint is visible in the under-developed oil-fields of Sudan and as investment in freight train infrastructure in Bolivia. Now the Pacific Island countries are its new domain of attention. All eyes are now in the neighbouring rim of the remaining Taiwanese allies in Palau, Tuvalu, Nauru and Marshall Islands to see if they, too, would be enticed or coerced into abandoning Taipei and joining the Chinese "bloc."

That the Chinese "generosity" never comes without strings attached is something that these nation states will invariably discover. The Sri Lankan experience with Chinese investments to develop the Hambantota Port

ultimately led to the surrender of the same to Chinese authorities for a lease of 99 years. The Chinese bankrolling was also able to overturn the Filipino bitterness that had earlier led Manila to lodge a case against China in the International Court of Justice and win the same. Almost immediately, the Philippines Government incredulously embraced the Chinese hand and reneged on its historical relationship with the US.

Expectedly, large sums of Chinese investments were assured and all portents of traditional animosity buried. In recessionary times like now, where cash is the king, the ability of China to impress the benefits of joining its "bloc" via gargantuan carrots like the "Belt and Road Initiative" are immense. This allows it the freedom to indulge in profligate chequebook diplomacy that wins it an ever-increasing kitty of vassal nations to do its bidding.

Counter-moves like the Quadrilateral meet (QUAD), enjoining the China-wary nations like Japan, Australia, India and the US, have yet to go beyond the conceptual framework and discussions as the transactional dragon ensnares all, anyhow and anywhere.

(The writer, a military veteran, is a former Lt Governor of Andaman & Nicobar Islands and Puducherry)

SOUNDBITE

Those doing politics of falsehood will not understand Mahatma Gandhi's philosophy of non-violence.



Congress interim chief —Sonia Gandhi

You can't be a hero all your life. Everyone has to go through this transition phase where you have to do character roles.



Actor —Sanjay Kapoor

The new era calls for both India and the US to press the refresh button of their relationship as the really important relationships are the less transactional ones.



Foreign Minister —S Jaishankar

The BJP and its people are miles away from the principles of the Mahatma...The party, whose people believe in violence, are celebrating his birth anniversary.



Samajwadi Party chief —Akhilesh Yadav

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

What is the law?

Sir — It was shocking to learn about the two Dalit children, who had to relieve themselves on a road in Madhya Pradesh because they had no toilet at home and were beaten to death by two upper caste men. This happened at a time when the Centre was preparing to declare India open-defecation free.

It is a fact that the two children belonged to a poor family, who could not afford getting a toilet constructed inside their house. The panchayat had apparently sanctioned a house with a toilet for the family but the sarpanch, a relative of the accused, had scuttled the proposal. Then who is really at fault here? The authorities or the children? Is it not the responsibility of the authorities to ensure that the poor have access to basic facilities?

This incident has also tarnished India's reputation. Further, one of the accused reportedly declared that he had killed the children as in his dreams, god had commanded him to kill "demons," justifying monstrosity in the garb of faith. Urgent steps must be taken to educate people

Wake up to the disaster before it's too late

This refers to the editorial, "Tame the flood fury" (September 1). By now it is pretty clear that floods have become a recurring phenomenon. The present deluge in Uttar Pradesh and Bihar is among the worst in 25 years. Despite rescue efforts, floods have killed 140 people. Disasters are caused due to natural factors that are beyond our control but human activities can certainly rein in the impact with adoption of better management practices. Interestingly, the current floods were attributed to the planets by a political leader, reminding us of the old ways of looking at natural calamities as punishment by God and negating both science and human intervention and greed.

Stark images of cities under knee-deep waters warn us of the scale of the disaster. Water stagnating without receding and inundated homes are examples of the collapse of drainage systems. The blockage of natural drainage channels, caused by accumulation of construction cement and other impermeable materials, soil and sand, is silting up river delta and catchment areas.



Denuded forests and rampant mining and quarrying mean the top soil is losing holding capacity. In the past, we used to receive "light to moderate" rains for a number of days. Nowadays, we get "heavy to very heavy, even extremely heavy" rainfall for fewer days. We cannot afford to be fatalistic or complacent that this, too, shall pass. G David Milton Maruthancode

who are falling prey to blind faith. Open defecation is an old habit, especially among those living in rural areas. I recently discovered that in Tamil Nadu, even well-off families in villages consider it unhygienic to have a toilet within the premises of the house and prefer open grounds for defecation. Clearly, a lot more needs to be done to explain to the people

Prepare for the worst

Sir — This refers to the editorial, "Tame the flood fury" (September 1). The wrath of mother nature is such that nobody, the rich or the

poor, is spared from the horrors of climate change. That Bihar Deputy Chief Minister Sushil Kumar Modi and his family were stranded and had to be rescued in lifeboats depict just that.

The extended monsoon this year has left behind a trail of destruction with 1,685 deaths being reported by 14 States till September 30 and hundreds

still missing. Although there is no available data on the extent of economic damages, such episodes pose a heavy economic burden for the country. Urban planning is in a mess, infrastructure is in shambles and above all, there is no dearth of governance. If indeed we have to minimise our losses, we must start preparing for such weather events that bring only destruction.

Anand Via email

Celebrating Gandhi

Sir — This refers to the editorial, "Whither Gandhi?" (September 2). It is indeed ironic that we are celebrating Gandhi even as we are busy destroying everything he believed in and stood for. It is time for us to reflect on why our country has changed so drastically since Independence. Only by ensuring that Gandhi's ideals come true can we truly celebrate him.

Manisha Via email

Send your feedback to: letterstopioneer@gmail.com

FIRST COLUMN

Relevance of the Mahatma

Reversing the civilisational slide will require a shift towards a need-based economy, whose cornerstones are just morality and justice



HIRANMAY KARLEKAR

Mahatma Gandhi's message and the way of living have a special relevance in the world today given the direction in which the dominant global civilisation is unfolding and the impact of its economic infrastructure on values.

The contemporary dominant global civilisation increasingly owes its character, direction and thrust to market capitalism. As its name suggests, this latest phase in the evolution of capitalism derives its surplus for survival and growth from the market through sales. The latter is a result of demand, which since the days of primeval societies, has been the result of existential human activity and the desire to possess. The process was very simple to begin with. The issue was survival, which required, in its most basic form, security (the need to live), food, shelter and clothing. Thus, the perception of the need for better weapons for hunting and warding off attacks by wild animals and other human groups might have led to devising of sharper stone spearheads.

Satisfaction over their use would have led to demands for more of these, and perhaps, also for even better weapons, leading to their invention and production. The search for such and other items led to the emergence of technologies. Jacques Ellul, who uses the words "technique" and "technology" almost synonymously, writes in his classic, *Technological Society*, that the latter "is nothing more than means and the ensemble of mean." The technical operation, he adds, "includes every operation carried out in accordance with a certain method in order to attain a particular end. It can be as rudimentary as splintering a flint or as complicated as programming an electronic brain. In every case it is the method which characterises the operation."

The application of technology on the available resources led to the invention and manufacture of products and the emergence of services that were felt to be necessary. This, shorn of trappings, was the basic process. The growing diversity, complexity and sophistication of economic, societal and political activity through centuries and the concomitant evolution of institutions, *weltanschauungs* and practices through millennia, has led to the evolution of the primeval barter economy to the present information technology and financial capital-based market economy, which as we have seen, derives the surplus for its survival and growth from sales in the market. Market capitalism does not just respond to demands; it creates these through seductive marketing and sales strategies whose cutting edge is advertising, which has emerged as a major high-profile industry.

Advertising seeks to boost sales through multiple strategies that, in bare essentials, is tantamount to projecting the possession of certain goods and the enjoyment of certain services as an end in themselves and the measure of a person's worth. For example, X is an outstanding person because he/she wears a certain brand of clothing and a certain make of watch, owns a certain make of car and, if a woman, wears a certain brand of make-up. People consume not only because they want to do so but to show others that they can afford to do so or are superior people who can do so.

The result is competitive and not just conspicuous consumption, causing the alienation of those who cannot indulge in it and social tension and violence. The other result is aggravation of climate change as the increasing levels of greenhouse gas emissions are a result of economic activity to cater to spiralling consumer demands. As is increasingly clear, the two processes taken together can mean the extinction of humankind.

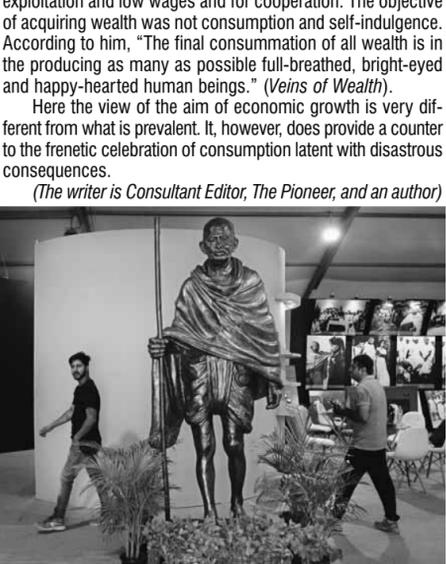
Mahatma Gandhi stood for a need-based economy whose cornerstone was morality and justice. The first part of it is encapsulated in his famous, oft-quoted statement, "The world has enough for everyone's need but not for everyone's greed." The ubiquitous conspicuous consumption of our time was absent in his, but the statement underlined his strong disapproval of unnecessary, self-indulgent consumption and was in keeping with his belief that an economy should be guided by principles of universal morality. He wrote in *The Veins of Wealth* (Selected Works Vol III), "The real value of acquired wealth depends on the moral sign attached to it, just, as sternly as that of a mathematical quantity depends on the algebraical sign attached to it. Any given accumulation of commercial wealth, may be indicative, on the one hand, of faithful industries, progressive energies and productive ingenuities; or on the other hand, it may be indicative of mortal luxury, merciless tyranny, ruinous chicane."

Inequality, to him, was not condemnable *per se*. He wrote in *The Veins of Wealth*, "Inequalities of wealth, unjustly established, have assuredly injured the nation in which they exist during their establishment; and unjustly directed, injure it yet more during their existence. But inequalities of wealth, justly established, benefit the nation in the course of their establishment; and nobly used, aid it yet more by their existence."

Mahatma Gandhi was against competition, which led to exploitation and low wages and for cooperation. The objective of acquiring wealth was not consumption and self-indulgence. According to him, "The final consummation of all wealth is in the producing as many as possible full-breathed, bright-eyed and happy-hearted human beings." (*Veins of Wealth*).

Here the view of the aim of economic growth is very different from what is prevalent. It, however, does provide a counter to the frenetic celebration of consumption latent with disastrous consequences.

(The writer is Consultant Editor, The Pioneer, and an author)



THE BIHAR GOVERNMENT ISSUED AN ALERT ASKING THE PEOPLE TO BE ON GUARD. BUT WAS IT ON GUARD ITSELF? WE OWE THE PEOPLE AN APOLOGY.

—UNION MINISTER GIRIRAJ SINGH

POINT COUNTERPOINT



IS WATER IN SOME PARTS OF PATNA THE ONLY PROBLEM WE HAVE? WHAT HAPPENED IN AMERICA? NO ONE IN THE GOVERNMENT IS SITTING IDLE.

—BIHAR CHIEF MINISTER NITISH KUMAR

The storm ahead

The worst drag in life is poverty, so Indians must now choose whether they wish to continue living in poverty or sacrifice 135 million people for a gigantic revolution



MARKANDEY KATJU

Hai maujazan ek kulzum-e-khoon, kaash yahi ho. Aata hai abhi dekhiye, kya kya merey aage. (A turbulent sea of blood is before me. But see what is coming ahead.)

—Mirza Ghalib

I am in my sunset years (I just crossed 73) and my remaining time will be spent on educating my fellow Indians (including non-resident Indians in America — where I am living at present — who though very good in their technical jobs, are gullible in other respects).

The crux of what I teach is this: There are really two worlds. One is that of the developed, highly industrialised countries like the US, Europe, Japan, Australia and China and second is that of the under-developed countries, including India (which is perhaps the most developed of the underdeveloped nations).

Our national aim must be to transform India from the second world to the first. In other words, from being an under-developed country, we must make it a developed, highly industrialised one. This is necessary if we wish to abolish poverty, unemployment, malnourishment, lack of healthcare and good education and so on. Because only a high-level and widespread industry can generate the wealth needed to provide for the welfare of our people and create millions of jobs to wipe out unemployment.

But how is this to be done? We no doubt had a limited degree of industrialisation after 1947 but then the process stalled. And of late our economy has tanked; the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) has declined to five per cent, there have been massive retrenchments in the auto, Information Technology (IT) and other industries while real estate and power sectors are in the dumps. In fact, it is to divert attention from this economic crisis that the Government has resorted to gimmicks like cow protection, building the Ram temple, Yoga Day, Swachh Bharat Abhiyan, abolition of Article 370, Howdy Modi in Houston and so on. But economic slow-downs cannot be wished away by such gimmicks and stunts.

One can win elections on the plank of Hindutva (as happened in the 2019 Lok Sabha elections) but one can't live off it. One has to eat food and to get food, one must have a job. But jobs are getting less (as the National Sample Survey, a Government of India organisation, admitted recently). Twelve million Indian youth are entering the job market every year but opportunities are drying up (due to manufacturing decline). Consequently many Indian youths will end up as criminals, beggars, hawkers or will end their lives. I submit that the Indian people must now make a choice: Either keep living in their miserable conditions characterised by poverty, unemployment, malnourishment (the highest in the world, with every second Indian child malnourished, as stated by the Global Hunger Index, UNICEF), farmers' distress and the consequent unabated suicides, poor healthcare and education for the masses, discrimination against minorities, Dalits and so on. Or else, sacrifice about 10 per cent of the 1,350 million population in a gigantic, historical people's revolution which alone can destroy backwardness, the fe-

“ UNFORTUNATELY, THE POLITICAL LEADERS IN INDIA TODAY RELY EITHER ON CASTE OR RELIGION FOR WINNING ELECTIONS. TAKING ADVANTAGE OF THE FACT THAT OUR SOCIETY IS STILL SEMI-FEUDAL, WITH RAMPANT CASTEISM AND COMMUNALISM, THEY POLARISE SOCIETY FURTHER AND SPREAD CASTE AND RELIGIOUS HATRED TO GET VOTES. BEING MOSTLY CORRUPT, THEY HAVE NO IDEA OF HOW TO SOLVE OUR MASSIVE ECONOMIC PROBLEMS BUT ARE EXPERTS IN MANIPULATING CASTE AND COMMUNAL VOTEBANKS ”



dal casteism and communal mindsets and practices among our people. This hydra-headed monster was obstructing any progress and keeping us chained to poverty and other social evils.

Many would say I am presenting a horrible choice between the devil and the deep sea and a cruel prognostication and augury. Do we really want our 135 million men, women and children to rise up and set off a revolution? I am not a bloodthirsty person and I wish this great historical transformation could take place peacefully. But unfortunately that is not how history operates.

Consider the experiences so far. The transformation of feudal Europe of the 16th century to a modern Europe of the 19th century was not accomplished peacefully. It witnessed wars, revolutions, chaos, massacres, social churning, intellectual ferment and so on. It was only after going through that fire that modern society emerged in Europe.

Similarly, after the Chinese Revolution was completed in 1949, the Chinese authorities made an investigation about how many people were killed in this churning (which lasted for a quarter of a century, from 1924 to 1949). It was found that about 10 per cent of the then 550 million Chinese people, which is about 50 million, were killed. Similarly, about four of the then 40 million Vietnamese people were killed in the liberation war in Vietnam, which lasted from 1945 to 1975. So it

can be assumed that about 10 per cent of the people are killed in a revolution. For, after all, what is a historical revolution? It is a period when the old society and its values are being uprooted and torn apart but new values have not yet replaced them. Everything is in ferment, in chaos.

Can this be a peaceful affair? Not at all. The reactionary elements in the old order will fiercely oppose any change, as happened in France in the period prior to the 1789 Revolution and even during the one in Vendee in 1793. And many of the ordinary people in society, being conservative by nature, will oppose any fundamental change. In India, most people still have casteist and communal mindsets, and to replace that by modern minds is 10 times more difficult than changing the physical environment.

In India, all our State institutions have collapsed and become hollow and empty shells. We adopted the parliamentary system of democracy but this has degenerated into caste and communal vote banks, as everyone knows. Casteism and communalism are feudal forces, which must be destroyed if India is to progress but parliamentary democracy further entrenches them. So we have to replace parliamentary democracy by another system which enables us to rapidly progress.

Today, India has two of the three pre-requisites to becoming a modern industrial giant, like China, namely a huge pool of technical talent (our IT

engineers are manning Silicon Valley, and many Indians are professors in Science, Maths and Engineering Departments in American Universities), and immense natural resources. What it lacks is the third prerequisite — a modern, patriotic political leadership. Without this, our transformation from the second to the first world is impossible.

Unfortunately, the political leaders in India today rely either on caste or religion for winning elections. Taking advantage of the fact that our society is still semi-feudal, with rampant casteism and communalism, they polarise society further and spread caste and religious hatred to get votes. Being mostly corrupt, they have no idea of how to solve our massive economic problems but are experts in manipulating caste and communal votebanks. Obviously such people are unfit to transform India into a modern, highly industrialised country.

It is only modernist, selfless and patriotic leaders who can solve India's massive socio-economic problems. Who these movers will be, when will the revolution which they will lead occur, what form it will take is impossible to predict. But about one thing there can be no doubt: The next two decades in our country will be very turbulent and bloody. As the great Urdu poet Mirza Ghalib said, "Aata hai abhi dekhiye kya kya mere aage." (I wonder what lies ahead of me.)

(The writer is a former judge of the Supreme Court of India)

Time to put salve on wounds

Bangladeshi Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina's visit to India comes at a time when the relations between the two neighbours are a bit strained



JOYEETA BHATTACHARJEE

Indo-Bangladesh relations will get a boost with the visit of our neighbouring country's Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina to India, beginning today. This will be the first visit by Hasina after the National Democratic Alliance (NDA) formed the Government for the second consecutive time at the Centre. The visit comes at a time when the relations between the two neighbours are a bit strained over the National Register of Citizens (NRC) in Assam and Bangladesh nurturing defence ties with China. There are concerns that such issues will affect the relationship between the two nations who have historic linkages.

Hasina's visit provides both New Delhi and Dhaka the opportunity to

dispel any prevailing doubts about the future of the relationship and highlight the importance India gives to its friendship with Bangladesh. Indo-Bangladesh relations made significant progress under Hasina's decade-long rule that began with her second term as Prime Minister in 2009. At present, except for some minor irritants, the alliance between New Delhi and Dhaka is said to be at an all-time high and India considers Bangladesh a trusted friend and partner in the neighbourhood.

After the Uri attacks, our Government used all possible avenues to try and isolate Pakistan diplomatically. As part of that strategy, it refused to attend the 2016 SAARC summit in Islamabad and was supported by Bangladesh. Dhaka was also the first nation to back New Delhi's entry as an observer in the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation in 2018, a club open only to Muslim-majority countries.

Recently, after the promulgation of Article 370 and the anti-India propaganda by Pakistan and radical groups, Bangladesh echoed our stance

that Kashmir was our internal matter. Again, on the NRC, an initiative primarily undertaken to identify infiltrators from Bangladesh into Assam, the Hasina government refrained from indulging in any negative comments in public.

India and Bangladesh share a deep sense of bonhomie, especially at the Governmental level. Nevertheless, rising scepticism among the people, particularly in Bangladesh, cannot be overlooked. It is an area that demands in-depth introspection as the importance of public opinion in influencing Government policies is established.

In Bangladesh, reasons for apprehensions among the masses include the pendency of the Teesta River water-sharing agreement since 2011. India refrained from signing it during former Prime Minister Manmohan Singh's visit after West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee objected to the draft agreed upon by the two countries. The delay in the signing of the agreement substantially hurt India's credibility in the eyes of common Bangladeshis.

Again, India's initial reluctance in taking a firm stance on Rohingya refugees, a vital issue for Bangladesh inundated by the influx of refugees, further dented public perception. India being a regional power, expectations from it are always high and any fall from them leads to resentment among the people. The most prominent and recent case is India's disjointed response on the NRC, where one of the arms of the Government assured that none would be deported to Bangladesh while another repeatedly expressed its resolve to deport Bangladeshis and referred to migrants as a security threat. Besides, the venom spewed against Bangladeshis by some political leaders close to the ruling dispensation, who equated them to "termites", has added to the people's apprehensions.

Similarly, people in India have been watching Bangladesh's growing ties with China closely, especially in defence cooperation. In particular, Bangladesh's recent contract to China for construction of a submarine dockyard has raised eyebrows in India because the feeling on the

ground is that such contracts always have some strategic consideration. This unease is despite the fact that during her July visit to China, Sheikh Hasina categorically mentioned that her nation's relationship with Beijing is economic and with New Delhi, it is organic and cannot be measured by any monetary benefits.

In the backdrop of these niggling issues, Hasina's visit signifies the special relationship the two countries share. During her stay, she will be discussing a wide range of issues of bilateral, regional and international importance with Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

A deepening economic cooperation is also an important aspect as Hasina will be accompanied by a large delegation of businessmen. In addition, she will participate in the India Economic Summit, organised by the World Economic Forum. So one hopes that the two neighbours will put a salve on any wounds before they fester.

(The writer is a Senior Fellow at the Observer Research Foundation and views expressed are personal)

India's stature rising on world stage: Modi

Ahmedabad: India's stature is rising on the world stage and a glimpse of the respect the country has globally was seen during the 'HowdyModi' event in Houston, Prime Minister Narendra Modi said here on Wednesday.

The world can see that India is at the forefront of several positive changes taking place at the world stage, he said, during an event organised by BJP's state unit to felicitate him for his speech at the UN General Assembly. "At the Houston programme, Republicans and Democrats spoke. Their attending the HowdyModi event was very special," he said.

"The fact that India always believes in taking everyone along has also been noted," Modi said. "Respect for India is increasing all over. One can experience the change," he added.

A large poster of of Modi and US President Donald Trump was put up on stage.

"The strength and the value of Indian passport has increased. The world sees those holding Indian passport with respect,



Modi said.

Modi said 'HowdyModi' has become a talking point among all world leaders he met after the event. "The fact that the US President came to the Indian event and stayed there for such a long time was great. After speeches, when I requested him, he came for a round of stadium without considering security protocol. I thank him and all those who organised the event," Modi said.

"In a way, the world is looking at India with great eagerness. The world was curious about India, a huge country with a vibrant democracy and it is hopeful that India's participation will be most significant whenever there are opportunities to bring about global changes," he

said. India has the capacity to take the world together due to our ideals, behaviour and culture, he said.

Modi also referred to his 2014 proposal in the UN for the International Yoga Day, which he said was passed in the shortest time.

He said during his US visit, Mahatma Gandhi was given "real tribute" by world leaders at the United Nations.

"Gandhi was with us, is with us and will be there for future generations," he said. Modi also spoke of the "immense enthusiasm" at the UN for Mahatma Gandhi's 150th birth anniversary celebrations.

"Take any problem the world faces, the teachings of Mahatma Gandhi offer solutions to those challenges," he said. Singers of over 150 countries rendered Gandhi's famous 'Vaishnav Jan..' bhajan in their language, Modi said. These singers tried to understand the feeling, meaning and message of the song, he said.

PTI

Gandhi's birthday celebrated across Bengal, political parties fight for Mahatma's legacy

Kolkata: Processions and commemorative events on Wednesday marked the sesquicentennial of Mahatma Gandhi in West Bengal, where parties cutting across political lines fought over the legacy of the Father of the Nation.

Since morning various programs like mass prayers and processions were organised in various parts of state and the city to mark the occasion.

A programme was held at the Gandhi Ghat in neighbouring Barrackpore. In several parts of the city several non governmental organisations along with children and foot-path dwellers organised mock khadi spinning programmes and sang bhajans associated with Gandhi.

Paying her homage to Mahatma Gandhi on his 150th birth anniversary at Mayo Road here, West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee in an apparent reference to BJP leadership said the leader of the country should follow the Gandhian principles and take

community along with him. "Not only us but the entire world has learnt from Gandhiji's principles of non-violence, satyagraha and peace. We(TMC) don't want to advise others, but we will just say that the leader of the country should be like Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose and Mahatma Gandhi, who had led the nation by taking along with them people of all communities, castes and religions," Banerjee said.

She said the historic Gandhi Bhavan located at Belegata area in the city where the nationalist leader had stayed during Independence 1947 to protest against communal riots in the city has been renovated and developed into a museum by the state government.

It was inaugurated during the day. Rare photographs capturing Mahatma Gandhi's 1947 stay at Belegata and articles used by him during the period will be on display at the newly opened museum.

The Bengal Congress unit took out a padyatra in the city and various parts of the state with posters and placards on Gandhiji to mark the day.

West Bengal PCC president Somen Mitra, who participated in a march organized by the party from Subodh Mullick Square to Gandhi statue at Mayo Road in the city, used the occasion to lash out at the BJP government at the Centre over its proposal to update NRC across the country.

"Both TMC and BJP governments at the state and at the Centre respectively are unable to understand the principles and ideology of Mahatma Gandhi. So they should stop pretending about respecting Gandhiji and his struggle. Only those (political parties) who don't understand Gandhiji talk about NRC, driving out Muslims and communal divide in the country," Mitra told reporters.

Gandhiji had throughout his life fought for communal harmony. "But those in power at the state and the Centre are determined to destroy that

harmony to serve their political purpose," he said.

Union Home Minister Amit Shah had on Tuesday at a seminar here asserted that the NRC is "a must" for national security and will be implemented but made it clear that Hindu, Sikh, Jain and Buddhist refugees will be granted Indian citizenship beforehand with the passage of the Citizenship (Amendment) Bill.

Reacting to Mitra's statement, BJP national secretary Rahul Sinha said Congress should stop behaving as if Gandhiji is the "personal fiefdom" of the Congress party.

"Mahatma Gandhi is the father of the nation. Gandhiji is not a personal fiefdom of Congress party or its first family - the Nehru-Gandhi family. "Since Independence they (Congress) had tried to create this impression as Gandhiji and Congress are synonymous. We don't need to take lessons on Gandhiji from the Congress," Sinha hit back.

The BJP organised Swachh Bharat Abhiyan (cleanliness drive) on the day.

TMC secretary general Partha Chatterjee said the party has been at the forefront in the fight against communal politics and had opposed the implementation of NRC across the country.

Last week, West Bengal government had directed the heads of all primary and secondary schools to observe the 150th birth anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi in their premises.

The schools organised national flag hoisting ceremonies, rallies, cultural programmes and seminars on Gandhi Jayanti. Some schools also held programmes on Gandhiji's thoughts on non-violence, peace, patriotism, communal harmony and universal brotherhood through events. The heads of the schools have been asked to encourage the participation of guardians and locals in the circle-level programmes that will be continued throughout the year, a senior state government official said.

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Newborn baby girl found in garbage bin

Jajpur: A newborn baby girl was rescued from a garbage bin in a community health centre in Odisha's Jajpur district on Wednesday, police said.

The newborn baby was found abandoned in a garbage bin in the Madhuban Community Health Centre (CHC) premises under Kuakhia area, said Inspector In-Charge of Kuakhia Police station, Manoj Kumar Swain.

A sweeper, who had come to collect the waste from the bin, first noticed the baby inside the bin on Wednesday morning. He immediately informed the authorities of the health centre.

A doctor on duty of the CHC along with other staff of the health centre rushed to the spot and rescued the baby from the garbage bin

in a critical condition, the IIC said. After primary treatment at the CHC, the doctor shifted her to the Jajpur District Headquarters Hospital (DHH).

The CHC authorities also informed the Child Welfare Committee about the newborn baby. On getting information, Jajpurs District CWC team arrived at the district hospital and inquired about the condition of the newborn baby.

From the DHH, the baby was again shifted to Sishu Bhawan in Cuttack as her condition deteriorated this afternoon, police said.

PTI

Madhav: Modi Govt takes responsibility to safeguard interests of Kashmiris

Jammu: Reaching out to the people of Kashmir with the message "every Kashmiri is ours", BJP national general secretary Ram Madhav on Wednesday assured them that the Modi government has taken up the responsibility to safeguard their interests on land and culture.

He termed Article 370 "anti-people and biggest hurdle" in the development of Jammu and Kashmir, trashing the allegation the provision was revoked to own the land but not the people. He said only 200-250 people are in preventive detention and that this was temporary.

Madhav said scrapping Article 370, which gave special status to Jammu and Kashmir, has started a new chapter of development based on Mahatma Gandhi's ideals of non-violence and unity.

"The interest of the people of Jammu and Kashmir, their land, their culture and their development, whatever is their interest, the full responsibility of safeguarding these (interests) is taken up by the government led by Modi ji," he said at an event here.

He said there is no reason to doubt it.

"This step has been taken in the interest of the people of Kashmir. In the name of Gandhiji, this govern-



ment is dedicated to people," he said.

The BJP leader said the government's steps with regard to Kashmir are meant to ensure peace, progress and development for each and every member of the last village in Kashmir.

"This is reason for Modi ji to take such steps. For us, every Kashmiri is a member of the family of this country," he added.

Trying to strike a chord with the people of Kashmir, Madhav said every Kashmiri is theirs and every step is taken to change their destiny.

"When we say Jammu and Kashmir is ours, it does not mean only land is ours. We say every Kashmiri is ours," he said.

Madhav said Jammu and Kashmir has entered a new era after

the abrogation of Article 370. "The step that should have normally been taken seven decades ago is being taken by Modi ji after 72 years," he said, adding J&K is now a full-fledged part of India, like any other state.

Calling on the people to start a new chapter of development in Jammu and Kashmir based on Gandhi's ideals of non-violence and unity, he said it should move forward to achieve new heights.

On the detentions, he said 200-250 people are in preventive custody and it is a temporary measure. "They will get back their political rights when situation will become conducive. They will soon come out. It is the administration (which will) decide it," he said.

He said it is important for them to ensure "free flow" of political rights for each and every person, even in villages, not just about rights of some selected people.

"It is with this aim to provide political rights to all people that we have to put some people in detention. It is done for a big aim," he added.

He said whatever measures have been taken are temporary.

"This (J&K) will be a full-fledged state and will move forward on the path of development," he said.

PTI

India that Gandhi fought for was inclusive one: Kerala CM

Thiruvananthapuram: Kerala Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan on Wednesday said the people who assassinated the Father of the Nation are trying to make Mahatma Gandhi their own and interpret his statements in their favour.

The CPI(M) leader's remarks came as the BJP and its rival parties battled to claim Gandhi's legacy on his 150th birth anniversary.

Paying homage to the Father of the Nation, Vijayan said the India that Gandhi fought for was an inclusive one, where no one was considered a pariah.

In a Facebook post, he said the values that Gandhi upheld remain relevant even after a century. "But today some are trying to take the country backwards from Gandhi's ideals."

"Those who assassinated Gandhi are trying to make Gandhi their own. They are trying to interpret Gandhi's statements in their favour," Vijayan wrote.

In this context, this year's Gandhi Jayanti had assumed greater significance, he said.



Vijayan, who paid floral tributes to Mahatma Gandhi at Kerala House in New Delhi, urged people to pledge themselves to safeguard his ideals.

"Mahatma's life has given us a moral imperative, to uphold the secular founding values of our republic.

"The India he fought for was an inclusive one, where no one was considered a pariah. Let's pledge ourselves to uphold those ideals," Vijayan said in his post.

Kerala Governor Arif Mohammad Khan paid tributes to the Father of the Nation at the Gandhi statue inside the leg-

islative complex here. "... Today, 2nd October, is the 150th anniversary of the birth of the Mahatma, whose message of non-violence continues to guide us," Khan tweeted.

The Kerala Pradesh Congress Committee arranged state-wide programmes and all-religion prayers along with padyatras to commemorate the occasion.

Congress Working Committee (CWC) member A K Antony flagged-off the Thiruvananthapuram leg of the padyatra.

Leader of the Opposition in the State Assembly Ramesh Chennithala and state Congress chief Mullappally Ramachandran launched foot marches from Ernakulam and Kozhikode respectively.

Among various programmes across the state, the National Institute of Speech and Hearing (NISH) organised a visual representation of the favourite bhajans of Mahatma Gandhi in Indian Sign Language (ISL) here.

PTI

Nagaland CM cleans road on Gandhi Jayanti for plastic-free environment

Kohima: Nagaland Chief Minister Neiphiu Rio on Wednesday picked up plastic waste from a road here with a pair of tongs and launched a statewide mass campaign 'Shramdaan' (voluntary work) to do away with single-use plastic from the state.

He was also joined by his cabinet colleagues and MLAs on the occasion of 150th anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi.

The state was also declared as open defecation free (ODF) on Wednesday.

The advisor for urban development and municipal affairs departments, MLA Dr Neikesalie, Nicky Kire, declared the state as ODF, in presence of the chief minister here at a function that was organised by the state's urban development department.

Addressing a gathering, Rio said, the mass collection of plastic waste across the state is in accordance with Prime Minister Narendra Modi's appeal to keep the environment clean and also do away with single-use plastic, particularly in urban areas and make India a plastic-free country.

"God has created our planet so beautifully. Mother Earth can provide for our needs but cannot satisfy our greed. Because of our greed, we have come to face many problems, including climate change and man-made disasters, he said.

The chief minister said that it is very easy to blame the government for not cleaning the town but everything depends on the people.

PTI



He appealed to all the citizens of Kohima and Dimapur to lead the way in keeping the city clean.

Later, Rio along with his cabinet colleagues and MLAs launched three central flagship programmes such as Kohima Smart City Mission, Swachh Bharat Mission (Urban) and Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana - Housing for All (Urban) at the NBCC Convention Centre here.

"Today, there are very serious issues confronting the urban dwellers unlike before," he said, adding that in Nagaland, there are many settlements in the process of transition.

On the occasion, the chief minister also released an anti-plastic theme song and a 100 days promotional video.

He also distributed cloth bags among people.

He also launched five water ATMs for public use, flagged off 11 sanitation vehicles for urban local bodies under the 'Swachh Bharat Mission' (Urban).

"As responsible citizens, we have to learn to manage our wastes," Rio said.

All these efforts will go a long way in ensuring better quality of life and ease of living to the urban dwellers, the chief minister added.

Cong leader's brother refutes allegations of terror links

Jammu: Facing arrest for alleged links with Hizbul Mujahideen terror outfit, a senior J-K Congress leader's brother Mohammad Shafi Saroori on Wednesday refuted the charges and claimed the case against him was "politically motivated".

In a statement, Shafi Saroori, brother of the party's state vice president and former minister Ghulam Mohammad Saroori, alleged the registration of FIR against him was aimed at maligning him and his family and said he is ready for a free and fair probe.

He said he is hopeful that truth will prevail once such an investigation is conducted. Shafi Saroori is among the dozen people booked in two separate FIRs for their alleged links with Hizbul Mujahideen terror outfit in Kishtwar district of Jammu and Kashmir.

While six persons who were named in one of the FIRs registered last week were arrested, six others including the Congress leader's brother are at large and efforts are on to nab them, officials said.

Saroori, a businessman and former Sarpanch, said he was in the category of protected persons till last year before his security was withdrawn by the previous government.

"I strongly refute the allegations levelled against me in the FIR No: 229/2019," he said in a statement here, adding he and his family had undergone trauma since last more than six years as his wife was suffering from cancer and had to travel for treatment outside the state.

"The house which Kishtwar police had claimed to have used by the militants was abandoned by the family way back. It is

occupied by tenants, including non-Muslims and police personnel over the last over six years," Saroori said.

He said he is open to a free and fair probe as "I have no link with any militant or militant organization. I am hopeful that the truth will prevail once the free and fair investigation is conducted".

As per the FIR (No:229/2019) lodged in Kishtwar police station on the weekend, the officials said Shafi and five others -- Masood Ahmad Mattoo, Mohammad Muzaffar Shah, Ghulam Mohammad, Tawseef Ahmad Gandna and Syed Ahmad -- were accused of providing shelter and transport to active terrorists of Hizbul Mujahideen to carry out their activities.

They were also charged with conspiring with terrorists to

harm the integrity of the nation besides providing information on security installations to the terrorists including Mohammad Amin alias "Jehangir Saroori" to carry out attacks, the officials said adding they were booked under various sections of Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act. In the second FIR (230/2019), six persons -- Nissar Ahmad Rather, Kousar Hussain, Liyaqat Ali, Mohammad Muzaffar Sheikh, Asif Hussain and Imtiyaz Ahmad Bhat -- who were facing similar charges - were arrested, the officials said.

After being declared terrorist-free over a decade ago, Kishtwar district was rocked by killings of four persons including a senior BJP leader and an RSS functionary and two weapons snatching incidents since November last year.

PTI

On Mahatma's 150th anniv, people want Patna Collectorate to be linked with Gandhi Circuit

Patna: The high court's stay on demolition of the centuries-old Patna Collectorate has come as a "ray of hope" to people striving for its preservation and on the 150th birth anniversary of the Mahatma, they urged authorities to link the landmark with a Gandhi tourism circuit.

Some iconic scenes in Richard Attenborough's Oscar-winning 'Gandhi' were filmed at the collectorate, whose Dutch-era Record Room was doubled up as Motihari Jail, while British-built DM Office building was shown as a court in the movie.

Gandhi's sesquicentenary evoked the memories of the shooting of the fill in early 1980s.

"People have been appealing to the Bihar government to

save the collectorate and use it as a cultural space, but the government has been adamant about its demolition plan. The stay by the Patna High Court has sent a wave of confidence among heritage lovers," said Anjum Abidin, a city resident.

"Had it not been for a sustained people's movement running for around three-and-a-half years to save and preserve it, perhaps the historic Patna Collectorate would not have witnessed this landmark 150th anniversary of Gandhiji today," he said.

Many residents still fondly recall the crowd outside the Record Room or the artificial rain being created in front of the DM Office during the shooting of the biopic.

US-based professional Twisha Chandra, who hails

from Patna, and also a member of the Executive Committee of London-based Gandhi Foundation, recently visited her hometown, and feels the struggle to save the collectorate is "bearing fruits".

"The collectorate was neglected during the huge Champaran Satyagrah centenary celebrations in 2017 organised by the Bihar government. Now that the court has stayed its demolition, the government should see the merit in its preservation. And, instead of planning to knock it down, it can link it to Gandhi circuit to promote tourism," she said.

Entire world is marking Gandhi's 150th anniversary and hopefully the court's final verdict will remove the wrecking ball dangling over it.

PTI

On the 150th anniversary, a memorial plaque outside the building could have been put up as part of an overall plan to bring the landmark on the tourism map. In fact, the Bihar government should have restored and gifted the building to the city on the occasion," Chandra said.

Incidentally, the Gandhi Foundation in 2016, in a letter to Chief Minister Nitish Kumar, had appealed to preserve the collectorate and also suggested linking the heritage building with the Gandhi tourism circuit.

The government's decision in early 2016 to demolish the collectorate to make way for a high-rise complex had triggered a public outcry.

A civil society-led campaign 'Save Historic Patna

Collectorate', started in April the same year, too urged the Bihar government to link the collectorate on the banks of Ganges to a tourism circuit.

"The place could be reimagined as a cafe, library, museum and a performing arts centre. And, the Oscar-winning biopic connection should be promoted," said JK Lall, a veteran architect and convener of INTACH Patna Chapter.

The Indian National Trust for Art and Culture (INTACH) had filed two PILs, after which the court stayed the proposed demolition of the government complex while restraining the state authorities from "causing any harm to the collectorate building until further orders".

Anil Kumar, professor of

UP special session being held to hide BJP Govt's failures: Maya

Lucknow: The actual reason for holding a special session of Uttar Pradesh legislature to mark Mahatma Gandhi's 150th birth anniversary is not to deliberate on his works but to hide the failures of the BJP government, BSP president Mayawati on Wednesday claimed.

In a tweet, she said, "Convening a special session of the UP Legislative Assembly on Gandhiji's 150 birth anniversary is not to deliberate on his works but to hide the failures of its government by the BJP. This is why BSP has deployed its MLAs in the real public service to help the flood

victims." Mayawati was apparently referring to the absence of her party legislators from the special 36-hour-long session.

In a dig at the Congress over its silent march by Congress on Gandhi Jayanti, she said, "In spite of being in power for the longest time in various states including Uttar Pradesh and Centre, when Congress party could not realise Gandhiji's dreams even a little bit then what can they now do by holding padyatra while being out of power. The same situation is being seen of the BJP. Public needs to remain vigilant."

PTI

Ancient Indian History at Visva Bharati University in Santiniketan, West Bengal, also backed the idea of linking the collectorate with the Gandhi circuit.

"Development should mean a harmonious balance of old and modern. Patna being an over 2,500-year-old city has layers of history, from ancient to modern, and heritage should not be replaced to bring modernity," he said.

Aditya Jalan, a heritage enthusiast and resident of the iconic Quila House in old Patna, said, "Patna should boast its Oscar connection".

"Tourists go on 'Harry Potter' and 'Game of Thrones' trails and countries where they were filmed are showcasing it. Why can't Patna do the same?" he said.

PTI

BIHAR CM ENCOUNTERED WITH PRESS ON FLOODS

Nitish snaps back at scribe

Cites Mumbai, US floods' instances to evade queries

PTI ■ PATNA

Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar lost his cool in the face of persistent queries from a journalist about inundation of many parts of Patna due to heavy rains and shot back asking whether there was similar outrage when Mumbai suffered a deluge and floods disrupted normal life in the US.



Ministers soundbite.

The incident took place late Tuesday night when Kumar while wading through knee-deep water was approached with questions from a posse of journalists when he was surveying the inundated areas of the city.

As he began explaining at length how the State's northern districts had experienced flash floods as early as in July, followed by a dry spell leading to a drought-like situation until it was ravaged by torrents last week, a journalist from the national Capital who was here to cover the situation tried to cut him short.

While Kumar was visibly irritated, the interjection was resented by the local journalists who quarreled with the visiting scribe. They were heard shouting Have you come here to gain prominence for yourself? This is not your Delhi studio. We are based in Bihar and please let us have the Chief

Ministers soundbite. When the commotion subsided after a few minutes, Kumar resumed speaking about how the latest disaster was in a way connected to the problem of climate change, which his Government was doing its bit to tackle.

Kumar was then interrupted again by the journalist who sought to draw his attention to the sufferings of people living in water-logged areas of the city for the past few days.

He began explaining the topography of the city, where the worst affected localities like Rajendra Nagar were low-lying areas and urged for an "honest appraisal of the Government's efforts and a proper study of the factors responsible for the current situation.

When the reporter continued to ask questions on top of

her voice on what his government did to change things after having ruled the state for close to 15 years, Kumar snapped I would like to know whether water-logging in Patna has been the biggest problem. How much concern was shown when Mumbai and America were water-logged?

You people have failed to even contribute towards raising public awareness, Kumar said turning away amid protestations by the scribe who shouted raising public awareness is what we are trying to do. Please answer the questions. Look at this girl shouting here. The local representative of her channel is nowhere to be seen and she has been sent from outside to create mischief, he remarked sardonically as he was led towards his vehicle by the security personnel on duty.

NDA owes apology to flood-hit people of Patna: Giriraj

Begusarai (Bihar): The BJP-led NDA in Bihar, which has been ruling the State for about a decade and a half, owes an apology to the people of Patna who have been reeling from inundation following heavy rain, Union Minister Giriraj Singh said here on Wednesday.

The firebrand BJP leader also attacked the Nitish Kumar Government saying an alert had been sounded ahead of the downpour but it failed to ensure attentiveness in the administrative machinery, which could have lessened the severity of the crisis.

"It is not a failure of the people of Patna. It is our failure. Residents of the city have reposed so much of trust in the NDA, especially the BJP. We owe an apology to them," said Singh who is the Lok Sabha MP of Begusarai in Bihar.

Singh, a former member of the Nitish Kumar Cabinet, is a known detractor of the Chief Minister and his deputy Sushil Kumar Modi, a senior BJP leader. "The Government issued an alert asking the people to be on guard. But was it on guard itself? Had it been so, people would not have been compelled to suffer so much of misery," he said. On Tuesday also, the BJP leader accused the State



Government of corruption in flood relief and claimed that "floods seem to have become an occasion for celebration for the State administration".

Patna has been a BJP stronghold since the 1980s when Lalu Prasad's RJD held sway over Bihar. In the 2015 Assembly polls, which the BJP-led coalition lost badly to the Grand Alliance then comprising Nitish Kumar's JD(U), RJD and Congress, all the four seats that cover the city were bagged by the saffron party.

BJP legislators who have won from the city include State Minister Nand Kishore Yadav, while Sushil Modi who is now a Legislative Council member, was a four-term MLA from the now-abolished Patna Central constituency. The State capital was pounded by 342.5 mm of rainfall between September 27 and 30, as against the state average of 255 mm, an official release said. At least 42 people have died in rain-related incidents in the entire state during the period following torrential showers. PTI

AHEAD OF LOCAL POLLS IN POST-ART 370

Jammu leaders freed on conditions

Asked to shun making inflammatory statements

MOHIT KANDHARI ■ JAMMU

While top brass of the two mainstream regional parties, National Conference and PDP, continue to remain under detention in Kashmir valley, Jammu & Kashmir Government late on Tuesday night ended political detentions of handful of Jammu-based leaders after 58 long days with an aim to kick start political activities ahead of Block Development Council polls beginning October 24.

The timing of the release of these leaders, representing different political parties, clearly indicated that the Government was keen on shoring up its own image by sending a clear message to the outside world that the democracy was flourishing at the grass roots level and 'all is well' in the State.

Ironically, these leaders were let off with a clear cut warning not to trigger any political storm by making irresponsible statements aimed at provoking public mood in the region.

Official sources said, "Leaders from the National Conference (NC), Congress and Jammu & Kashmir National Panthers Party (JKNPP) in Jammu have been freed from their house detention". They were placed under preventive detention since August 5 after the abrogation of Article 370.

NC leaders Devender Singh Rana and SS Salathia, Congress's Raman Bhalla and JKNPP leader Harshdev Singh along with others were put under house arrest in Jammu and were barred from attending political functions and visiting party offices.

Meanwhile, political leaders, who were detained for last 58 days in Jammu, Wednesday visited their party offices in Jammu and held informal discussions on the sidelines of tribute ceremonies on the occasion of 150th Birth anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi.

Speaking to *The Pioneer*, former Congress MLC and party spokesman Ravinder Sharma said, "it is very unfortunate that the Government has decided to hold BDC polls without consulting leaders of mainstream Opposition parties in the State". Sharma also accused BJP of grabbing power at the grass roots level by holding these BDC polls on party lines.

He said, for last two months BJP leaders were holding political functions and preparing for their BDC polls but we were even prevented from holding regular press briefings in party offices. Sharma said, "majority of senior party leaders from Kashmir valley continue to remain under detention and under these circumstances the

government is proceeding further to hold these BDC polls".

Senior National Conference leader and close aide of Omar Abdullah, Devender Singh Rana claimed, "he will first meet senior party leaders in Sher-e-Kashmir Bhawan on Thursday before interacting with the media". PDP leader Daman Bhasin told *The Pioneer*, "the Government is making mockery of the whole election process by going ahead without releasing mainstream political leaders currently under detention. At present Omar Abdullah and Farooq Abdullah, PDP's Mehbooba Mufti, former Cabinet Ministers, J&K People's Conference's Sajjad Gani Lone and many others continue to remain under house arrest in Kashmir valley.

Bhasin claimed, as per guidelines of the Election Commission of India, the State president of a regional party is authorised to give mandate to party candidates to fight elections. He said, in the absence of party chiefs who will give mandate to party leaders to contest BDC polls in Jammu & Kashmir. Jammu & Kashmir National Panthers party leader Harsh Dev Singh said, "the credibility of BDC polls is under scanner". He said, the situation is not conducive to hold polls in the State.

Aditya works harder than me: Uddhav

TN RAGHUNATHA ■ MUMBAI

Expressing his satisfaction over Yuva Sena leader Aditya Thackeray's decision to contest the State Assembly polls, Shiv Sena president and father Uddhav Thackeray said here on Wednesday that his son worked harder than him, that the Shiv Sainiks had accepted him with happiness and love and that it was the Sainiks' responsibility to nurture him.



Thackeray had told me: Since you are my son, I would not thrust you upon the Shiv Sena. In case, people accept you will succeed in politics. I followed my father's footsteps and I am where I am. People have accepted Aditya. That's why he is contesting the elections," Uddhav said.

Dwelling upon Aditya's decision to contest the Assembly polls, Uddhav said: "I am satisfied with what is happening today. Aditya is

very determined and is working for the party with a lot of interest. He works harder than me. The Shiv Sainiks have accepted him with happiness and love. That's why I did not go to the function where he announced his decision to contest the Assembly polls. I do not want to do things in a hurry. Henceforth, he is the responsibility of Shiv Sainiks". "Working for the people is the tradition in Thackeray's family. I am happy that Aditya is carrying forward the tradition. I would like to thank Shiv Sainiks for this. He is fighting for the development of Maharashtra and also to fulfil the dreams of the youth in the state," Uddhav said.

Uddhav, who was speaking at a function organised to welcome Congress MLC from Nandurbar Chandrakant Raghuvamshi into the Shiv Sena, said that he would dwell upon in detail about the seat-sharing arrangement with the

BJP and other issues relating to the State Assembly at the Dussehra rally to be held at the Shivaji Park in north-central Mumbai on October 8.

Rooting for the younger generation entering electoral politics, Uddhav said: "Till today, political leaders have sold only dreams to the youth. The youth have been living with the same dreams until now. However, the youth should now come forward to realise their dreams by entering electoral politics and becoming part of the Government. The youth should now bring about transformation in Maharashtra and the country".

Meanwhile, Aditya — who is the first Thackeray in the four generations of Thackerays to have taken a plunge into electoral politics — is expected to file his nomination for the State Assembly polls from Worli constituency in south-central Mumbai on Thursday.

BJP's Khadse warns of rebellion if denied ticket

TN RAGHUNATHA ■ MUMBAI

Senior BJP leader and former Minister Eknath Khadse — who has gone ahead and filed his nomination for the State Assembly polls despite his name not figuring in the first list of 125 candidates released by his party — does not seem to be in a mood to relent. He has indicated that if denied the party ticket, he would turn a rebel in the polls.

A day after he filed his nomination from his home constituency of Muktai Nagar in Jalgaon district of Maharashtra, Khadse told local media persons on Wednesday: "If I am denied ticket by my party, people are with me. I also expect co-operation from you (media)".

Fifty-seven-year-old Khadse, who has gone into sulking mood ever since his

name did not figure in the first list of party candidates released by the BJP on Tuesday, said: "I have been working honestly for the party for the last 42 years. Never once have I betrayed the party, despite the fact that I received offers from other political parties. Because of allegations made against me by some people, I was kept out of the State Cabinet for three years despite my having done anything wrong".

"I will definitely ask my party leaders as to what wrong have I done that I am being treated this way. I would also like to ask them as to who has poisoned their minds against me," Khadse said. Displaying his show of strength, Khadse went in a huge procession and filed his nomination from Muktainagar constituency. "In case, my name figures in the sec-

ond list of candidates, I will file another nomination," he had, after filing the nomination. It may be recalled that on June 4, 2016, Khadse had resigned from his post as the State Revenue Minister over irregularities in the purchase of a plot of land at Bhosari in Pune district. Chief Minister Devendra Fadnis had then appointed a judicial committee, headed by retired Bombay HC judge Dinkar Zoting, to probe the allegations of corruption against Khadse.

The charge against Khadse was that he, his wife Mandakini and son-in-law Girish Chaudhary had hatched a conspiracy and purchased a 3-acre plot of land at Bhosari near Pune owned Maharashtra Industrial Development Corporation (MIDC) in the name of his kin for ₹3.75 crore as against the market price of ₹40 crore.

Rape accused being protected in UP: Priyanka



Lucknow: Congress leader Priyanka Gandhi Vadra alleged on Wednesday that rape accused were being protected in Uttar Pradesh and demanded lodging of a rape case against BJP leader and former Union minister Chinmayanand.

"Atrocities are being committed against women, especially in Uttar Pradesh. Rapists are being protected. It is our demand that in the Shahjahanpur incident, a rape case should be registered against the accused," the Congress general secretary in-charge of east UP said on the sidelines of a party march here to mark the 150th birth anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi.

Priyanka Gandhi had expressed displeasure on Monday over Congressmen being stopped from taking out a "nyay yatra" (march for justice) in support of the law student who has accused Chinmayanand of rape.

"The UP BJP government wants to suppress the voice seeking justice for the daughter of Shahjahanpur. The padyatra is being stopped. Our workers and leaders are being arrested. What is there to be afraid of," she had said in a tweet in Hindi.

About 80 Congress workers were arrested on Monday at a public meeting ahead of the planned march in Shahjahanpur in support of the law student.

Former Union minister Jitin Prasad was stopped from leaving his Shahjahanpur residence for the march and placed under house arrest, while the borders of the district were blocked from all sides. PTI

TECHIE'S DEATH

Modi-Xi meet: Haasan flays Govt for seeking HC nod for banners

Chennai: MNM founder Kamal Haasan on Wednesday faulted the Tamil Nadu Government for seeking the court's approval to erect banners to welcome Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Chinese President Xi Jinping for their informal meet here this month.

The actor-politician appealed to Modi to "act as a pioneer" and put an end to the "banner culture".

In a tweet, he said the Tamil people were "struggling" to cope with the death of 23-year-old Subasri who was killed when an illegal hoarding put up by an AIADMK functionary fell on her, with the techie riding a two-

wheeler losing balance. A water tanker coming from behind had run over her. "Honourable @PMOIndia While Tamil Nadu and Thamizhians (Tamilis) are struggling to cope with the loss of Shubasri's death, the Tamil Nadu Government has approached the courts to obtain permission to erect your banners," he said.

"If you act as a pioneer in taking the first step to put an end to this haphazard banner culture, it will reflect your concern towards the sentiments of Tamils, and that in itself will garner you the greatest publicity possible. Jai Hind!", the Makkal Needhi Maiam (MNM) founder said. PTI

BJP's ally RPI fields Chhota Rajan's brother from Phaltan Assembly

TN RAGHUNATHA ■ MUMBAI

In what may prove to be an embarrassment for the ruling BJP, its ally Republican Party of India (Athavale) on Wednesday announced that it would field incarcerated underworld don Chhota Rajan's brother Deepak MAHA POLLS

Nikalje as its candidate for the Maharashtra Assembly polls from Phaltan constituency in Satara district of western Maharashtra. Announcing Nikalje's name as his party's candidate from Phaltan constituency, RPI (A) founder-president Ramdas Athavale said that his party — which is a constituent of the BJP-led saffron alliance in the state and of the NDA at the Centre — would in all contest six seats in

the State Assembly polls.

Athvale said that the RPI(A) would contest the seats of Phaltan in Satara district, Malshiras in Solapur district, Bhandara, Naigaon in Nanded district, Pathri in Parbhani district and Mankhurd- Shivaji Nagar in Mumbai.

Phaltan, where Nikalje is contesting is reserved for the candidates belonging to the Scheduled Caste. Phaltan is the native place of Chhota Rajan.

This is not for the first time that Nikalje will be contesting the State Assembly polls. He had in the past contested the Assembly from Chembur as an independent in the past.

Nikalje has been nominated to contest from Phaltan, since Chembur has gone to the Shiv Sena in the seat-sharing arrangement with the BJP. Nikalje has several cases registered against him in various police stations of Mumbai. In the 2014 polls, Nikalje had declared assets worth ₹17 crore. As recently as in the third week of March 2018, the Mumbai police had registered a case of alleged rape and sexual harassment based on the complaint of a 22-year-old woman.

Quoting the complaint lodged by the victim woman, the police had said that the woman, who used to reside in Siddharth Colony in north-east Mumbai, had alleged that Nikalje had exploited the victim sexually.

Telecom Ministry okays e-governance platform

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

On the occasion of Gandhi Jayanti, the country's major e-governance platform-Common Service Centres (CSC) — has been approved by Ministry of Telecom to manage and maintain Bharat Net last mile access point in more than 1.2 lakh Panchayat across the country to provide internet access at ₹1 per month.

Sources in Telecom Ministry said the Bharat Net access points will now be shifted phase wise from Panchayats to the CSC. "The CSC village level entrepreneurs (VLE) will maintain and manage the nodes for enabling citizen to access internet. Already CSC has more than one million subscribers

and consum more than 40 TB of data in a month and this move will empower the villages of India like Bajupio dreamt of empowering the rural areas of our country," said a ministry official. CSC in a Special Purpose Vehicle and to begin with, CSC CEO Dr Dinesh Tyagi on 150th anniversary celebrations of Mahatma Gandhi launched the ₹1 - unlimited data usage for a month to rural citizen at a function in Ulhadi village of Alwar Block in Rajasthan. The event was also attended by Telecom Ministry Joint Secretary Amit Yadav. Yadav said GoI has announced one lakh villages to be made Digital Villages and extend wifi / Bharat net to all 2.5 lakh Panchayats.

Kerala Govt rejects flat owners' demand for more time to vacate

Kochi: The Kerala government on Wednesday rejected residents' demand for more time to vacate their flats in four illegal apartment complexes here and said they would stick to the October 3 deadline set for leaving the place.



Authorities said they were going ahead as per the 138-day action plan for demolishing the buildings, and warned the residents of legal consequences if they refuse to move out by tomorrow.

"The deadline (for vacating the flats) ends tomorrow. That is the direction from the government," a senior official of the Maradu municipality told reporters here.

He said the power and water supply to the apartment

complexes, temporarily restored two days ago for facilitating the smooth relocation of the residents, would be disconnected automatically on Thursday.

As the deadline for vacating their flats nears, residents alleged that no temporary dwellings for them have been arranged by the administration so far.

The flat owners said they would not leave the buildings till the authorities complete the arrangements for their relocation.

"We are caught in between

the devil and the deep blue sea," a resident said.

They threatened to relaunch their protest seeking a humanitarian approach from the authorities.

According to them, at least 10 days were required for the relocation from their flats.

The Ernakulam district administration said those who want assistance in finding a home can approach authorities of Maradu municipality.

The authorities commenced the eviction process on Sunday by visiting the owners to help them relocate. On Tuesday, the residents had said they were receiving embarrassing responses when they contact people entrusted by the administration to arrange alternative houses for

them in the city.

Earlier, the administration had claimed that they have identified over 500 flats in the city and its premises for the relocation of the people living in the four apartment complexes for their temporary rehabilitation.

The administration had also provided mobile and telephone numbers of those to be contacted for getting the accommodation.

The 343 waterfront flats built in violation of Coastal Regulation Zone norms are located in Maradu municipality here.

Adding more woes to the authorities, people living in the neighbourhood have sought an assurance from the government on the issue of ade-

quate compensation if their houses are damaged when the unauthorised buildings are demolished by controlled implosion.

Locals have said the area would witness strong protests if the authorities do not give them an assurance on compensation.

Authorities have reportedly zeroed in on three firms having experience in demolishing structures using controlled implosion method.

Last week, the Supreme Court had directed demolition of the apartment complexes within 138 days, a time-line given by the Kerala Government, and asked the State to pay ₹25 lakh interim compensation to each flat owner within four weeks. PTI

Modi should have protested when called Father of India by Trump: Siddaramaiah

Bengaluru: Senior Congress leader Siddaramaiah on Wednesday took exception to Donald Trump calling Prime Minister Narendra Modi as father of India, saying the US president was 'ignorant' and should try to learn about Mahatma Gandhi.

Speaking at a party event on the occasion of Gandhi Jayanti here, the former Karnataka Chief Minister said if Modi was a 'patriot', he should have protested immediately against Trump describing him as "father of nation" instead of Gandhi.

There is no much difference between Narendra Modi and Trump. He (Trump) called him (Modi) father of nation. I think

Trump is ignorant... He should try to know about Mahatma Gandhi, Siddaramaiah said. He (Trump) should have at least asked Obama (former US President Barack Obama) about Gandhi...If Narendra Modi is a patriot he should have protested there, in front of Trump," Siddaramaiah said. Trump had last week heaped praise on Modi in New York, when both the leaders met. "I remember India before was very torn. There was a lot of dissension, fighting and he brought it all together. Like a father would. Maybe he is the father of India," the US president had said, a comment which had already drawn flak from several opposition leaders in India. PTI

India, US will fix their trade disputes: Jaishankar

PTI ■ WASHINGTON

Trade deals are not simple arithmetic but much more complicated as they involve a number of variables, External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar has said, exuding confidence that India and US will "find a fix" to their trade disputes with intense engagement going on between the two countries.

Trade tensions between India and the US have been rising with American President Donald Trump complaining that tariffs imposed by New Delhi on American products were "no longer acceptable". Trump, championing his 'America First' policy, has been a vocal critic of India for levying "tremendously high" duties on US products. He has described India as a "tariff king".

Ahead of the New Delhi visit of US Commerce Secretary Wilbur Ross for trade talks with his Indian counterpart Union Commerce Minister Piyush Goyal, Jaishankar on Tuesday said he was hopeful that something will come out of this ongoing intense engagement between officials of the two countries on trade issues.

"My understanding of the conversations is that he (Goyal) has had with his counterpart and (that) his officials, have had - team to team - that there's been a very intense engage-



ment. I am hopeful that something would come out of it," Jaishankar told a meeting of US corporate bodies during an event organised by US India Strategic and Partnership Forum.

Trade officials from the two countries would naturally want progress on what are considered to be the outstanding issues, he said.

"But I think there's also some desire to look beyond. So when people speak about what's gonna be the trade deal, we'll have to see about that goes," he said.

Whether one draws a sharper kind of framework for the certain set of issues, then look beyond or does one attack a more ambitious agenda, which will obviously then take more time, he said.

"So it's going to be sort of

you trade the size of it and the complexity of it for the time and the energy for it. I think that part of it is still a little open, but again, my understanding is that they would be talking with each other continually over the coming days," Jaishankar said.

Jaishankar said he had seen much more difficult issues which have been creatively resolved.

"I can't believe that people today are less ingenious than we were in our time. So I'm reasonably confident that we will find a fix," the top Indian diplomat said.

One of the challenges is really how do one define the issue for which they are trying to find a fix.

"Are you looking at immediate trade frictions? Are the legacy issues you want to

resolve? Are the things on the horizon? Are you looking at future policymaking? Those are decisions which both sides really need to have conversations about," Jaishankar told the audience at the Atlantic Council.

Observing that two countries are dealing with multiple, parallel realities when it comes to trade issues, he said the first reality is that a lot of these problems pre-existed.

"They become much more sort of central because the current administration in the US puts certain salience on these sets of issues, he said.

"We could have had those arguments in a different administration in a different way," he said and acknowledged that there are real issues.

"I don't see anything wrong with that," he said.

Earlier, responding to a question at the Atlantic Council think-tank, Jaishankar cautioned against "overstating" that economic friction between the two countries, saying because the numbers are not going up.

"The numbers are still good, pretty much in every sphere. What has happened is that there is a degree of spotlight on trade and economic issues, which was not there earlier. There is a salience to those issues in the overall policy making in Washington, which was not there earlier," he said.

India, US to launch new clean energy initiative to fuel economic growth

PTI ■ WASHINGTON

India and America will launch a new initiative for clean energy to fuel economic growth in the strategically-important Indo-Pacific region where China has been trying to expand its sphere of influence, the US State Department has said.

The US has been pushing for a broader role by India in the Indo-Pacific region in the backdrop of China's rising military maneuvering in the region. China has been trying to expand its military presence in the biogeographic region, comprising the Indian Ocean and the western and central Pacific Ocean, including the South China Sea.

Beijing claims almost all of the South China Sea, Vietnam, the Philippines, Malaysia, Brunei and Taiwan have counter claims over the sea.

Assistant Secretary of State for Energy Resources Francis R Fannon is travelling to India from September 30 to October 6 to launch the Flexible Resources Initiative (FRI,

"free"), under the US-India Clean Energy Finance Task Force, an official statement said on Tuesday.

"FRI will execute the United States and India's shared vision for Indo-Pacific economic growth fuelled by clean energy," the State Department said.

The FRI is also a component of the broader US-led Asia EDGE (Enhancing Development and Growth through Energy) Initiative, which is a whole-of-government effort to grow sustainable and secure energy markets throughout the Indo-Pacific, it said.

Fannon will co-lead efforts, along with the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission, as well as partners from US Department of Energy and the US Agency.

India's Ministry of Power will host, along with the Indian Ministry of New and Renewable Energy, the Indian Central Electricity Regulatory Commission, and the Indian Petroleum and Natural Gas Regulatory Board, the statement said.

India seeks Swiss bank details of Lalit Modi

PTI ■ NEW DELHI/BERNE

As India steps up its crackdown on suspected black money stashed abroad, Switzerland has issued public notices to former IPL commissioner Lalit Modi and his wife Minal following requests made by Indian authorities about Swiss bank details of the couple.

In its latest federal gazette notification on assistance sought by foreign jurisdictions under bilateral treaties for exchange of information on matters concerning suspected financial irregularities, Switzerland's Federal Tax Administration (FTA) has named Lalit and Minal Modi (alias Minalini Modi) among such individuals.

The former IPL commissioner, who is said to have left India for London in 2010, is already facing a money laundering probe also, though he has been denying any wrongdoing.

The two separate notifications dated October 1 did not disclose any further details, besides giving Lalit and Minal Modi ten days' time to designate authorised persons to respond to the assistance request received by the FTA from India.

Interestingly, similar notices were issued against the two in 2016, but it could not be ascertained whether the details were eventually shared by the Swiss authorities with India in that case.



were given time for "exercise of the right to be heard".

In recent months, several other Indian nationals have been named in such notifications after the Swiss FTA was approached by Indian authorities for information about those people with regard to the pending tax-related probes against them.

After a due process prescribed under the Swiss law, the information has been shared by Switzerland with India in several cases, pursuant to which the Indian authorities — including the tax department and Enforcement Directorate — have proceeded with their prosecution and other actions.

These included several Indians named in the leaked 'HSBC List' of people with accounts in the Geneva branch of the global banking giant.

For long, Switzerland used to be known for strict secrecy clauses about details of foreigners having accounts in

Swiss banks. Under growing global pressure, Switzerland has, however, begun sharing information in cases where other countries have been able to present some evidence of suspected illegalities.

Under the Swiss law, a prescribed procedure is followed for any administration assistance or information exchange by the FTA with India or any other country with which the Alpine nation has tax treaties about their respective nationals.

Besides, an automatic information exchange mechanism has also come into force between India and Switzerland under which the Indian tax authorities now have access to all details about Swiss bank accounts of Indians, including those closed during 2018.

The Automatic Exchange of Information (AEOI) is being seen as a major boost in India's fight against suspected black money stashed abroad.

PMC's suspended MD blames 'superficial auditing' for mess

PTI ■ MUMBAI

The suspended managing director of Punjab and Maharashtra Cooperative (PMC) Bank, Joy Thomas, has blamed the auditors for the mess at the bank, accusing them of only "superficially auditing" the books of the now crippled lender due to "time constraints".

In a five-page letter to the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) dated September 21 after a board member blew the lid on the fraud at PMC, which is among the top ten urban cooperative banks, Thomas has confessed to the role of the top management, including a few board members, in hiding the actual NPA numbers and also the actual exposure to the bankrupt HDIL, which is stated to be around Rs 6,500 crore or over 73 per cent of its total loan book of Rs 8,880 crore.

While Thomas has not named any auditor in the letter to the RBI written two days before the regulatory clamp down which PTI has reviewed, according to its annual report for FY19, the bank had three auditors -- Lakdawal & Co, Ashok Jayesh & Associates and DB Ketkar & Co since FY11.

Emails from PTI sent to all these auditors did not elicit any replies even after 24 hours.

The shallow auditing of the books of PMC by its statutory auditors was done as the 'bank was growing', Thomas claimed in the letter.

The letter of Thomas is part of the first information report (FIR) filed by the Economic Offence Wing of the Mumbai Police on Monday. The FIR names Thomas, PMC chairman Waryam Singh and the promoters of the HDIL and related entities.

"Since the bank was growing the statutory auditors, due to their time constraints, were checking only the incremental advances and not the entire operations in all the accounts," Thomas claimed in the letter.

"The statutory auditors validated the incremental loans and advances and scrutinised the accounts which were shown to them by the bank," he added.

In the past eight years, PMC had three statutory auditors -- Lakdawal & Co (FY19 and FY18); Ashok Jayesh & Associates (FY17, FY15, and FY11) and DB Ketkar & Co (FY14 and FY12).

Thomas confirmed that the exposure to the bankrupt HDIL Group continued to remain standard despite there was delay in repayments for over three years. The bank's exposure to HDIL Group was around Rs 6,500 crore as of September 19, 2019, he admitted in the letter.

He said some of the large accounts were not reported to the RBI from 2008 because of fear of reputational risks.

"The concealment of information from the board, auditors and regulators was due to the fear of reputational loss," Thomas informed the RBI.

34 functional teams to smoothen merger of UBI, PNB, OBC

PTI ■ KOLKATA

A total of 34 functional teams have been formed to smoothen the process of merger of United Bank of India (UBI), Punjab National Bank (PNB) and Oriental Bank of Commerce (OBC), a senior official said.

The merger is scheduled to come into force from April 1 next year.

"Thirty four functional teams have been created to come out with solutions for the process of integration," a UBI official told PTI.

A team comprises two members each from the three banks from different functional areas, he said.

"The functional teams will also try standardising the loan process, credit terms and benefits extended to the customers in the interim period till the merger comes into effect to avoid customer-related issues in the future," the official said.

The UBI had conducted customer meets at Kolkata, Guwahati and Patna to allay their apprehensions about the future of banking, the official said.

UBI managing director and CEO A K Pradhan had earlier said that though the balance sheet merger is likely to happen by April 1 next year, it will take another three to six months after that for the HR and IT integration to be completed.

He had said the complete harmonisation among the three entities would take another 12 to 14 months after the merger.

BUSINESS CORNER

NLCIL PAYS TRIBUTES TO MAHATMA GANDHI

New Delhi: Rakesh Kumar, CMD, NLC India Limited, on Wednesday paid tributes to "Father of the Nation" Mahatma Gandhi, on the occasion of his 150th Birth Anniversary by garlanding the Statue of Mahatma Gandhi Ji at Township Administrative Office, Block-10, on 02.10.2019 at 7.55 hrs and Ramdhun was recited by the members of Neyveli Ladies Club.



NLC India Limited organised a befitting function to commemorate the 150th Birth Anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi Ji at Yegnevaran Auditorium at L&DC, Neyveli wherein, representatives of various Cultural Associations performed cultural programs by depicting how the Mahatma's principles are still relevant for the present and continues to be a driving force behind activism in modern-day India.

LG INAUGURATES EXHIBITION ON MAHATMA GANDHI

New Delhi: Country's premier Arts body, the Lalit Kala Akademi's commemorative Art exhibition "BAPU Through the eyes of Artists" on Mahatma Gandhi's 150th birth anniversary was inaugurated today by Delhi's Hon'ble Lieutenant Governor Shri Anil Bajjal, in the presence of LKA Chairman, Dr. Uttam Pacharne, renowned artist Ram V. Sutar, Padma Bhushan, Adwaita Gadanayak, DG, NGMA and participating Artists as well as the art critics and art lovers at the Akademi's art galleries of Rabintra Bhavan complex, Mandi House. The exhibition catalogue was also released on this occasion. More than 100 pieces of artistic expression of gratitude to Gandhi ji are on display in this 21-day long exhibition. The Artists have depicted the life and principles of the Mahatma which include peace and non-violence through their art.



Assistant Secretary of State for Energy Resources Francis R Fannon is travelling to India from September 30 to October 6 to launch the Flexible Resources Initiative (FRI,

NMDC CELEBRATES BIRTH ANNIV OF GANDHI



New Delhi: NMDC Limited celebrated 150th Birth Anniversary of Father of Nation — Mahatma Gandhiji today i.e. 02.10.2019 at its headquarters in Hyderabad and also in all its major projects across the country spreading the message of Gandhian values — Ahimsa, Non-violence and truth along with Swachh Bharat Abhiyan. N Bajindra Kumar, IAS, CMD, NMDC, the Chief Guest inaugurated the programme at Head Quarter, Hyderabad where Shri P.K. Satpathy, Director (Production); Shri Amitava Mukherjee, Director (Finance); Shri Alok Kumar Mehta, Director (Commercial); Shri Sumit Deb, Director (Personnel); Sr. Officials and employees were present.

MMTC HOLDS 56TH ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

New Delhi: MMTC's 56th Annual General Meeting was held on Monday, September 30th at SCOPE Complex in New Delhi with the Company's shareholders and its Board of Directors in attendance. Despite the global economic slowdown, MMTC has recorded a turnover of ₹28292.82 crores and a net profit of ₹81.43 crores during FY 2018-19, surpassing its last year's performance. Addressing the meeting, CMD Shri Ved Prakash declared that measures are being taken to revamp the Company's operations to maintain and improve profitability in today's competitive business environment. MMTC further declared a dividend of 30%, continuing its streak of positive returns to shareholders.



New Delhi: NBCC (India) Ltd., a Navratna CPSE, has signed a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) with Department of Sports, Ministry of Youth Affairs & Sports, Govt. of India for development of National Sports University at Imphal (Manipur) worth ₹400 crore. Earlier in the month of September 2019, the Company bagged other works in States like West Bengal, Delhi, Odisha, Maharashtra, UP, Manipur from various esteemed clients, valuing nearly ₹640 crore. It is worth mentioning that with this new work order, NBCC during the FY 2019-20 and upto September 2019, has secured a total work order of approximately ₹2,028 crore.

NBCC SIGNS MOA FOR ₹400 CR WORK ORDER

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WTO OK's US tariffs on \$7.5 bn of EU goods in Airbus retaliation

AFP ■ GENEVA

The World Trade Organization on Wednesday gave Washington the greenlight to slap tariffs on \$7.5 billion (6.8 billion euros) worth of EU goods in retaliation for the bloc's illegal support of Airbus.

The ruling is the largest arbitration award in WTO history and a landmark moment the 15-year long Airbus-Boeing

battle, which threatens to intensify already strained trade relations between the US and the European Union.

The EU immediately threatened to respond to any US move.

"If the US decides to impose WTO authorised countermeasures, it will be pushing the EU into a situation where we will have no other option than to do the same," Brussels said in a statement.

PMO seeks clarity from high-level panel on revival of MTNL, BSNL

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The Prime Minister Office is learnt to have asked a high-level panel, looking into the revival of MTNL and BSNL, to explain if the two telecom PSUs can be turned around and how.

The direction has come after the finance ministry raised objections to a proposal moved by the telecom department (DoT) for reviving the two PSUs. A group of ministers headed by Home Minister Amit Shah had earlier approved the revival plan proposed by the DoT.

"Prime Minister Office panel under Principal Secretary P K Mishra in its meeting last week asked if MTNL and BSNL can be revived and if they can be revived then how. The panel has set up a committee of secretaries to work on these questions," an official source told PTI.

The committee includes Telecom Secretary Anshu Prakash, senior officials from Department of Public

Enterprises, Niti Aayog, and the Department of Investment and Public Asset Management and is likely to submit its reply this week, the official said.

The Group of Ministers headed by Amit Shah had approved the revival package for the loss-making public sector telecom firms in mid-July. Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman, telecom minister Ravi Shankar Prasad were part of the GoM that approved the plan.

However, finance ministry officials later raised over 80 objections to the proposal firmed up by the telecom ministry.

The DoT has proposed ₹74,000 crore revival plan for BSNL as closing down of BSNL alone would cost the government ₹95,000 crore. The revival plan proposed by the DoT includes ₹29,000 crore pay out for voluntary retirement scheme, ₹20,000 crore for 4G spectrum and ₹13,000 crore to fund capex for 4G services.

UK retail king Tesco says CEO to check out in 2020

AFP ■ LONDON

Britain's biggest retailer Tesco said Wednesday that CEO Dave Lewis will step down next year, after declaring his mission "complete" to turn around the group's fortunes.

Lewis, who has axed thousands of jobs in a radical overhaul of the supermarket chain since arriving five years ago, is leaving for personal reasons and will be replaced by Walgreens Boots Alliance executive Ken Murphy, Tesco said in a statement.

Former Unilever director Lewis was parachuted into Tesco in July 2014 to help turn around the group, which at the time was mired in an accounting scandal and fierce competition in home market Britain.

"My decision to step down as group CEO is a personal one," he said in a statement alongside the publication of the group's first-half earnings.

India has potential to become one of the largest electric vehicles markets: Report

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

India has the potential to become one of the largest electric vehicles (EVs) markets in the world, with the government pushing for the segment in order to curb pollution and reduce reliance on import-dependent fossil fuel, says a report.

However, the uptake of EVs has been slow in the country due to the high upfront as well as lifecycle costs but long-term investment in research and development (R&D) will create sustained growth, according to the report by the World Economic Forum and Ola Mobility Institute.

Apart from investment, government backing and direction will be crucial for accelerating adoption and deployment of electric mobility, it added.

The report said there are 10 states and union territories (UTs) that are leading the way in building production, infra-

structure and services to increase the momentum of EV usage in India.

These states and UTs are Andhra Pradesh, Bihar, Delhi, Karnataka, Kerala, Maharashtra, Tamil Nadu, Telangana, Uttarakhand and Uttar Pradesh.

"Considering the strong governmental push towards EVs, India has a huge potential to become one of the largest EV markets," the report noted.

The report, which also highlights the opportunities for the sector, analysed three value chains — production, infrastructure and services — of these states and found that most of them emphasised on the production of EV value chain, aspiring to be manufacturing hubs for such vehicles as well as their components.

In the infrastructure value chain, provisions for installation of charging infrastructure in public and private places were made by most states to address range anxiety.

US warns Italy over China, 5G

AFP ■ ROME

US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo warned Italy on Wednesday of China's "predatory approach" to trade and investment, but Rome insisted its special powers over 5G supply deals would protect it.

"China has a predatory approach in trade and investment" and represents a "mutual threat" to the two countries, Pompeo said during a joint press conference with Italy's Foreign Minister Luigi Di Maio.

"When the Chinese Communist party shows up to make an investment to gain political power or threaten a nation's security, that's what needs to be protected against," he said.

But Di Maio said Rome's so-called "golden powers" in supply deals for fifth-generation (5G) telecom services, approved by the government in September, "make us among the most advanced in Europe on security".

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Date Extension Notice-1
Due to unavoidable circumstances the date of e-Tender No. 07/EE(C-M)/DDN/2019-20 invited by Executive Engineer (Civil- Maintenance) Yamuna Bhawan, Yamuna Colony, Dehradun is hereby extended as below:

Date of availability of bid document on website : Upto 17:00 hrs of 11th Oct. 2019
Last date for submission of bids on website : Upto 17:00 hrs of 11th Oct. 2019
Last date of submission of hard copies of bids : Upto 17:00 hrs of 11th Oct. 2019
(Tender Fees, Earnest Money, Non-judicial stamp paper of Rs.100/-)
Date of opening of bids on website: at 11.30 hrs of 14th Oct. 2019
For further details, kindly visit e-procurement portal "http://ukenders.gov.in"
पत्रांक: 572 दिनांक: 01.10.2019 Executive Engineer (Civil-Maintenance)
"Avoid wasteful use of Electricity"



Debut 2.0

Rohit scores hundred on his maiden game as Test opener

PTI ■ VISAKHAPATNAM

Rohit Sharma's Test career got a new lease of life as he struck an unbeaten 115 in his first innings as an opener to take India to a commanding 202 for no loss against South Africa before rain washed out the final session of the series-opener, here on Wednesday.

There was an 80 percent chance of rain on the opening day but it only arrived during the tea break with India comfortably placed after 59.1 overs of play.

Mayank Agarwal was on course for a maiden Test hundred, having played extremely well for his 183-ball 84.

Thunderstorm, followed by a heavy spell of rain, ensured no play was possible after the tea break.

Before weather played spoilsport, Rohit stole the show in what could be a career changing knock for him.

While South African bowlers did trouble the Indian batsmen on a few occasions in the first session, they seemed toothless in the second session where Rohit and Agarwal scored at a brisk rate.

Rohit, who got to his fifty before lunch, shifted gears and was particularly harsh on the spinners.

He hammered off-spinner Danie Piedt for successive sixes over deep midwicket to get into the nineties before completing his fourth Test ton with a single off debutant spinner

Senuran Muthusamy.

The entire dressing room, including skipper Virat Kohli, stood up to laud Rohit's feat. His 174-ball unconquered innings contained 12 fours and five sixes.

At the other end, Agarwal was cruising towards his maiden Test ton. He too looked assured at the crease and played his shots.

Early into the afternoon session, he brought up his half century with a spectacular six over extra cover off Keshav Maharaj.

Clouds gathered over the stadium towards the end of the session and thunderstorms forced the umpires to take the tea break eight minutes before scheduled time.

Earlier, Rohit and Agarwal played out 30 overs in the morning session after safely negotiating the South African pacers Kagiso Rabada and Vernon Philander, taking India to 91 for no loss.

India, who had named their playing on the eve of the first Test, opted to bat on a dry surface with skipper Kohli calling his decision a "no brainer." Expecting the pitch to turn, South Africa picked three spinners in Maharaj, Piedt and Muthusamy, who is more of a batting all-rounder.

All eyes were expectedly on Rohit whose stop-start Test career has taken a new direction with the management accommodating him at the top of the order.

He left the first ball he

faced before driving Rabada past backward point with minimal feet movement for a four.

His second scoring shot was also a boundary as he punched Philander towards backward point. The pitch offered very little to the pacers and spinners in the first two hours of play.

What worked for Rohit was standing outside the crease when Philander was bowling to negate any little swing that was available.

Rabada has the express pace but he did not test the Indian openers as much as Philander.

Rohit and Philander's battle in the first hour was absorbing. Philander, who got the better of Rohit in the warm-up game, challenged Rohit by moving the ball both ways in his opening spell of four overs.

After a few play and misses, Rohit chose to walk down the pitch before South Africa skipper Faf du Plessis asked wicketkeeper Quinton de Kock to stand up to the stumps.

After getting the measure of the surface, Rohit went for his strokes like he does in white-ball cricket.

His first big hit was a typical one as he gently stepped out of the crease to smash Maharaj over long-on. A little later, he played a similar short off Piedt and this time the ball flew well above the long-on fielder.

Rohit completed his 11th Test half-century towards the end of the session.

Opening suits Rohit's game

PTI ■ VISAKHAPATNAM

Emphasising that opening the batting suits him, Rohit Sharma said he was mentally prepared to make the switch as he scored an unbeaten 115 in his first Test innings as opener and with his assuring knock, India seized the initiative on day one of the series opener against South Africa.

Asked about his mindset in the lead up to the series, India's limited overs vice-captain said he kept things simple in his head.

"The talk (of him opening in Tests) was going on for a long time. In the West Indies (in August), they told me clearly it is going to happen now. I was prepared for the past two years. At some stage, I was aware that I might have to open so I was ready," said Rohit after scoring his fourth Test ton.

He was part of the squad for West Indies series but could not final place in the middle order.

"Of course, opening the batting is a different ball game in red ball cricket. Mentally you have to train your mind more than anything else. At the same time, you do need to look into some technical aspects of batting but more than that you have to challenge yourself mentally to play the new ball and take the game forward.

"Those are the things I kept in mind when I went out to bat. There was no confusion about how I wanted to approach the innings."

In ODIs too, Rohit used to bat in the middle order but he became a white-ball great only with his stupendous success at the top of the order.

"I think it (opening) just suits my game, just wear the pads and bat. It was a waiting game, when I used to bat at five or six. I won't say it didn't suit my batting. Your mind is fresh, we know we have to play the new ball. You know the bowlers who will bowl the new ball, these will be the fielders, so the game plan is easier for you.

"At number six, the ball is reversing, field placement is different and you need to keep all those things in mind. That game of wearing the pads and going in to bat suits me more," said the maker of more than 10,000 runs in limited overs cricket.

Young boxers eye glory at Worlds



PTI ■ ULAN UDE

Six-time champion M C Mary Kom's seemingly endless reservoir of experience makes her a strong medal contender yet again but the spotlight will also be on some youngsters when India takes guard at the World Women's Boxing Championship starting here today.

Mary Kom was on Wednesday seeded third and handed a bye into the pre-quarterfinals. She will begin her campaign on October 8 against a yet to be decided opponent.

In all, five Indians got first-round byes into different stages depending on the size of the draw. No Indian will be in action on the opening day of the mega-event.

The 36-year-old Manipuri has been an ambassador of the sport not just in India but also the world over. However, there is a minor blemish in her magnificent record — the lack of a world title in the 51kg category.

She would be aiming to set it right in this Russian city. This is not to say she hasn't done well in the hard-fought category — Mary Kom has the Olympic Bronze medal and the Asian Games Gold to her credit in the division.

Former champion and Mary Kom's contemporary L Sarita Devi (60kg) is another one to watch out for after she defeated last edition's Bronze-winner and a much younger Simranjit Kaur in the trials. Sarita, seeded fourth, has also got a bye but into the round of 32.

Outside the ring, the eight-time Asian medallist is in the running to become a member of the International Boxing Association's (AIBA) first ever athletes commission, the voting

for which will take place during the mega-event here. She is expected to make the panel as there hasn't been any other nomination from the Asian block.

Previous editions Bronze-medallist Lovlina Borgohain has moved up a division to 69kg this time. She is seeded third and given a bye into the pre-quarterfinals.

India Open Gold-medallists Neeraj (57kg) and Jamuna Boro (54kg) are among the five boxers, who will be making their debuts at the big event and can be expected to create a flutter. Neeraj, a former national champion, has got a bye into the round of 32.

In the 75kg category, former Asian champion Saweety Boora will be keenly watched. She was a Silver-medallist in the 2014 edition of the marquee tournament.

"This squad is a nice mix. Last time we had four medals, let's see how the debutants respond to the challenge this time. Fingers crossed," national coach Mohammed Ali Qamar said.

"Before coming here, we had a fruitful training stint in Italy where we got to spar with the Chinese, which is not something that happens quite often. They hardly travel elsewhere and they are the biggest force in women's boxing," he added.

In the 48kg category, which Mary Kom made her own, Strandja Cup Silver-medallist Manju Rani will be fighting it out this time. A debutant at the world championship, Rani got a bye into the pre-quarterfinals.

"She has shown a lot of promise and hopefully, it would translate into a medal here," Qamar said.

AFP ■ KARACHI

Recharged opener Danushka Gunathilaka scored a career best century to lift Sri Lanka to a challenging 297-9 against Pakistan in the third and final day-night international against Pakistan in Karachi on Wednesday.

The 28-year-old left-hander knocked a 134-ball 133 with 16 boundaries and a six for his second hundred which lifted Sri Lanka after they won the toss and batted on a flat National stadium pitch.

Gunathilaka, suspended twice for breaches of disciplines in the last two years, held the innings together with stands of 88 with skipper Lahiru Thirimanne (36) for the second, 50 for the third with Angelo Perera (13) and 74 with debutant Minod Bhanuka (36) for the fourth in a brilliant display of bat-

Gunathillaka takes SL to 297-9



ting. He was finally dismissed in the 45th over, bowled by paceman Mohammad Amir who was the best Pakistani bowler with 3-50.

It was Amir who gave Pakistan an early breakthrough when he had Avishka

Fernando caught behind for four by Sarfaraz Ahmed, leading Pakistan for the 50th time in an ODI.

Gunathilaka defied Pakistan's bowling with guts and determination, improving his previous ODI best of

Shehzad, Umar for T20s

AFP ■ KARACHI

Pakistan Wednesday recalled trouble-making opener Ahmed Shehzad and middle-order batsman Umar Akmal for the three-match Twenty20 series against Sri Lanka starting this weekend.

It will be the first time the 27-year-old Shehzad will represent Pakistan since a four-month ban for a failed dope test last year.

Shehzad played the last of his 57 Twenty20 internationals in Scotland in June last year.

Umar, 29, played the

last of 82 Twenty20 internationals in 2016 against the West Indies.

The three Twenty20 internationals will all be played in Lahore on October 5, 7 and 9.

Chief selector Misbah-ul-Haq announced the changes to the squad.

"From the ODI side against Sri Lanka there are three changes. Shehzad, Umar and Faheem Ashraf have replaced Abid Ali, Mohammad Rizwan and Imam-ul-Haq," said Misbah.

Sarfaraz Ahmed will lead the Twenty20 squad.

116 he made against Zimbabwe at Hambantota in 2017.

Thirimanne hit four boundaries off 54 balls while Bhanuka had two sixes in his 39-ball knock.

Allrounder Dasun Shanaka hit a quick 24-ball 43 with five boundaries and two sixes as Sri Lanka added 50 in the last five overs.

Pakistan, who leads the three-match series 1-0 on winning the second match by 67 runs, brought Abid Ali and Mohammad Nawaz for Imam-ul-Haq and Imad Wasim.

For Sri Lanka, Sadeera Samarawickrama, Isuru Udana and Oshada Fernando made way for Bhanuka, Lakshan Sandakan and Perera.

The first match was rained off, also in Karachi, on Friday.

PTI ■ MARLOW

The Indian women's hockey team tasted its first defeat on England tour when it went down 1-3 against Great Britain in the fourth match here on Wednesday.

Great Britain took an early lead through Hannah Martin (5th minute) but India's Neha Goyal (18th) scored the equaliser.

However, a goal before half-time from Charlotte Watson (29th), and one in the last quarter through Giselle Ansley (50th) meant that Great Britain secured their first win of the tour, snapping India's unbeaten run.

World No 9 India had notched up a 2-1 win in the first match, before drawing the next two games 1-1 and

Indian Eves suffer 1-3 defeat

0-0 respectively.

The hosts dominated possession in the early stages and won their first penalty corner in just the 3rd minute, but India's goalkeeper Rajani Etimaru produced a fine save to deny the hosts early on.

However, the visitors could not deny the hosts on the second occasion as they took the lead through a field goal by Hannah in the 5th minute.

India gradually came into the game, and had a few chances of their own in the latter stages and with the momentum on their side, the Indian team combined well at the start of the



second quarter, and pressed for the equaliser, which eventually came in the 18th minute as Neha produced a slick finish to make it 1-1, and put the pressure back on the host nation.

It was in the 29th minute at the stroke of half-time that Great Britain created a great chance through combination play by their forwards, and managed to take a 2-1 lead into half-time as Charlotte Watson scored their second.

Neither team could create any real opportunity in the third period, and were battling it out in midfield. The Indian team tried to attack their opponents more in the last quarter, but it was Giselle Ansley, who made it 3-1 in the hosts' favour via strike from penalty corner.

Murray reaches Beijing quarters

AFP ■ BEIJING

Exhausted Andy Murray battled into a singles quarter-final for the first time in a year on Wednesday — and then immediately grabbed a snooze.

The former world number one outlasted fellow Briton Cameron Norrie 7-6 (8/6), 6-7 (4/7), 6-1 over nearly three gruelling hours in hot and hazy Beijing.

The 32-year-old, now ranked a lowly 503, will play top seed Dominic Thiem in the last eight of the China Open on Friday.

On the mend after a career-saving hip operation in January, Murray looked all in afterwards, and walked gingerly in and out of the post-match press conference.

Blowing out his cheeks several times, the three-time Grand Slam champion said he had slept in the 90 minutes between his victory and talking to reporters.

"I'm tired, I just had a sleep before coming. I mean, I'm real-



ly tired," he said.

The hard-fought triumph over 69th-ranked Norrie means he reaches the last eight in singles on the ATP Tour for the first time since Shenzhen in September last year.

Also into the quarter-finals was Russian fourth seed Karen Khachanov, a 7-6 (7/0), 7-6

(7/5) winner over France's Jeremy Chardy. He faces the Italian Fabio Fognini.

BARTY ADVANCES

In the women's draw, world number one Ashleigh Barty will face Czech seventh seed Petra Kvitová in the quarter-finals.

The top-ranked Australian, 23, beat home hope Zheng Saisai 6-3, 6-7 (5/7), 6-2, but was unhappy to have been forced to three sets.

"I think I was pretty loose, I played a pretty stupid (second) set," said Barty.

"I made far too many errors, let her back in the match well and truly.

"I think too many times I gave away cheap service games... when I did have my opportunity, I didn't take it.

"A bit of a frustrating one." Teenage US Open champion Bianca Andreescu reached the last 16 with a 6-3, 7-6 (7/5) victory over Belgium's unseeded Elise Mertens.

Andreescu meets Jennifer Brady of the United States.

Djoker continues winning run



AFP ■ TOKYO

Novak Djokovic stepped up a gear at the Japan Open on Wednesday, fending off a tough challenge from Japanese wild card Go Soeda 6-3, 7-5 to advance to the quarterfinals.

The world number one said he had no problems with the injured shoulder which forced him out of the US Open as he looked to face French fifth-seed Lucas Pouille at the Ariake Colosseum.

Djokovic was cruising to a victory until late in the second set when the 35-year-old Japanese player put up a tenacious fight as the Serb began missing many of his first serves, reducing his 5-3 lead to 5-5.

giving a single point away, ending the match in just over 90 minutes.

"Obviously, I was pleased to get that done in two (sets)," Djokovic said. "We must give credit to Go Soeda, who played a really good match, fought hard, made me work for my win today.

"For my side, I am really pleased. Probably I played even on a higher level than the first round. So the game is going in the right direction for sure," he said.

"I played now three days in a row," he said. "Everything is fine."

Elsewhere, third-seed David Goffin came from behind in a dramatic first-round victory against Pablo Carreno Busta 1-6, 7-6(8), 6-0.

Djokovic's next opponent Pouille defeated Japan's Yoshihito Nishioka 6-1, 6-2.

American Reilly Opelka squeezed past Gilles Simon 7-6(4), 7-6(2)

Australian qualifier John Millman defeated Adrian Mannarino of France 4-6, 6-3, 6-4.

Japanese qualifier Yasutaka Uchiyama beat Radu Albot 6-7(2), 6-3, 6-4.

Lloyd Harris of South Africa edged past Australian eighth-seed Alex de Minaur 6-3, 6-7(6), 7-6(8).



North London is RED

Former Gunners boy Gnabry nets four as German champions batter Spurs 7-2 at White Hart Lane

AFP ■ LONDON

Serge Gnabry scored four second-half goals as Bayern Munich embarrassed Tottenham 7-2 on Tuesday — the biggest-ever margin of defeat suffered by an English team at home in any European competition.

The Bundesliga champions fell behind to an early Son Heung-min goal but then clicked into gear, producing a ruthless display of finishing in the north London rain as Spurs fell apart.

Harry Kane briefly gave the home side hope with a penalty to reduce the deficit to 4-2 but that was merely the prelude to another masterclass in finishing from the five-time European champions.

"It was a great evening for

Bayern Munich and for German football," said Bayern boss Niko Kovac. "Playing this way here in England is really unique."

"I have compassion for my colleague (Spurs boss Mauricio Pochettino)," he added, praising the "amazing" Gnabry and Manuel Neuer for his display in the Bayern goal.

Spurs, who reached the Champions League final in June, where they lost to Liverpool, also had a sluggish start to the competition last year, winning a single point from their first three games.

But Pochettino faces a huge task now to lift the team after this humbling at their new ground following an unconvincing start to the season.

The Spurs boss urged his side to stay together despite the traumatic defeat, saying the timing of Bayern's second goal just before half-time was a hard blow.

"The most important thing is to stay calm, no rushed analysis, no rushed judgement, no rushed assessment," he said, praising the clinical finishing of Bayern, who had 11 shots on target.

"You need to show your quality like a man first," he added. "To face it like a professional. This type of situation you have to show your quality, how you are strong."

The early exchanges gave no clue about the carnage to come.

Tottenham's deserved early lead was wiped out 194 seconds later by Joshua

Gnabry was born in Stuttgart, but joined Arsenal's academy as a teenager before moving back to Germany for spells at Werder Bremen, Hoffenheim and then Bayern recruited him as replacement for Arjen Robben in 2017

Kimmich but the home side went toe to toe with Bayern for most of the first period.

Bayern forged ahead on the stroke of half-time, though, thanks to a superb finish from Robert Lewandowski, who picked up the loose ball at the edge of the area and swivelled to fire into the bottom corner.

GNABRY STRIKES

The second half belonged to former Arsenal man Gnabry, who struck four times as the visitors completed a rout. Lewandowski also scored a second.

It was the first time Spurs had conceded seven goals in a home match in any major competition.

The result leaves Bayern in pole position in Group B with two wins from two matches while Spurs have just one point after seeing a 2-0 lead wiped out in their opening game against Olympiakos.

But despite their poor start they are just two points behind second-placed Red Star Belgrade, who beat Olympiakos 3-1.

Bayern extended their advantage eight minutes after the break as Gnabry broke at pace down the left and burst into the box before drilling into the bottom corner.

Spurs' misery was compounded as Gnabry struck again two minutes later, capitalising after Harry Winks lost possession.

Pochettino's men were handed a lifeline as the referee pointed to the penalty spot for a foul on Danny Rose, with Kane reducing the deficit to 4-2 on the hour mark.

But Gnabry sealed his hat-trick for Bayern in the 83rd minute after racing beyond the Spurs defence and slotting past Lloris from 15 yards.

There was still time for Lewandowski to side-foot home a sixth for the German giants and Gnabry was able to add his fourth, and a seventh for Bayern, in the 88th minute.



Emmanuel Dennis celebrates after scoring Club Brugge's opening goal against Real Madrid during UCL match day 2 at Santiago Bernabeu

Zi-done?

Casemiro spares Real's blushes against brilliant Brugge

AFP ■ MADRID

Casemiro's late header rescued Real Madrid from an embarrassing defeat at home against Club Brugge on Tuesday as Zinedine Zidane's side came from two goals down to salvage a 2-2 draw.

Madrid were run ragged in the first half by a brilliant Brugge and their speedy striker Emmanuel Dennis, who scored twice at the Santiago Bernabeu and should have completed his hat-trick shortly after the interval.

Instead, Madrid came storming back as Sergio Ramos headed in, before Casemiro claimed a dramatic equaliser in the 85th minute, seconds after Brugge's Ruud Vormer had been sent off for a second yellow card.

"I would like to keep the second half and forget the first," said Zidane afterwards. "The goals we conceded were laugh-

able." "The match was historic, the point was historic and the way we played was as well," said Brugge coach Philippe Clement.

After losing 3-0 to Paris Saint-Germain two weeks ago in what was Zidane's worst ever loss as coach, Madrid will be relieved to have avoided another defeat that would have left them facing their first ever group-stage exit in this competition.

But there were no celebrations at the final whistle from those in white shirts after a chaotic performance checked any morale and momentum gained following three consecutive victories in La Liga.

"I am not worried about anything," Zidane said. "We know we are in a worse situation in the Champions League but we keep going."

"We have to do more, we have to do better," added Ramos.

IT'S DIFFICULT TO PUT THIS INTO WORDS, WINNING 7-2. NONE OF US WOULD HAVE IMAGINED THIS. TO HAVE SCORED FOUR GOALS IS ALSO AN AMAZING FEELING. I IMAGINE ALL THE ARSENAL FANS ENJOYED THAT ONE!

FIGURATIVELY

- 7 Bayern Munich scored 7 goals in a Champions League away match for the second time, they did so in October 2014 before (7-1 win at AS Roma)
- 4 Serge Gnabry is the 2nd German to score 4 or more goals in a Champions League match, that has only been achieved by Mario Gomez before, also for Bayern Munich (4 goals versus Basel in March 2012, 7-0-win)
- 5 Tottenham's 2-7 defeat to Bayern Munich was the biggest ever margin of defeat by an English team at home in any European competition
- 7 Tottenham Hotspur are the first English side to concede seven goals in any European competition since Tottenham Hotspur lost 0-8 to FC Koln in the UEFA Intertoto Cup in July 1995
- 5 Harry Kane has scored more Champions League goals versus German teams (5) than he has versus sides from any other nation
- 13 Robert Lewandowski has scored 13 goals in just 10 appearances in all competitions for Bayern Munich this season, more than any other player in the big-five European leagues
- 194 There were just 194 seconds between Son Heung-Min's opener for Tottenham Hotspur and Joshua Kimmich equalising for Bayern Munich
- 18 Raheem Sterling has been directly involved in 18 goals in his last 16 home appearances in the Champions League for Man City (11 goals, seven assists), scoring or assisting at least once in 12 of his last 13 such matches
- 0 Before Atalanta, the last Italian side to lose each of their first two games in a Champions League group stage were Inter, in 2006-07 — the Nerazzurri progressed that stage
- 10 Sergio Ramos has scored in a 10th different season in the Champions League, becoming just the second defender to do so in the competition after Gerard Pique (also 10)
- 3 Real Madrid have conceded 2+ goals in three consecutive home games in all European competitions for the first time in their history
- 0 Real Madrid have failed to win their opening two games to a Champions League season for the first time ever (D1 L1)
- 19 Aged 19 years and 325 days, João Félix has become Atlético de Madrid's youngest ever goalscorer in UCL, overtaking Sergio Agüero (20y 106d against PSV in September 2008)
- 33 Cristiano Ronaldo has scored to the joint-most different teams in Champions League: 33, equalling the record of Raúl.
- 26 Paris have scored a goal in each of their last 26 games in CL, only Real Madrid (34) and Barcelona (29) have done a longest streak in the history of the competition

AFP ■ MANCHESTER

Manchester City manager Pep Guardiola said Phil Foden's lack of minutes for the English champions is "unfair" as the 19-year-old came off the bench to score in a 2-0 win over Dinamo Zagreb.

Foden has been limited to just one start, in the League Cup against Preston, so far this season as the return of Kevin De Bruyne and signing of Rodrigo has seen the England under-21 international fall further down the pecking order.

But he made the most of barely a few minutes on the field against the Croatian champions after being introduced as a substitute in stoppage time to fire home after fellow sub Raheem Sterling had opened the scoring.

"I know he deserves to play. I want to give him minutes, every time he doesn't play I am completely unfair to him, I'm sorry," said Guardiola.

"But Kevin De Bruyne is there, David Silva, Bernardo Silva, Rodri, (Ilkay) Gundogan. It's what it is.

City close on last 16

"I know the best way to grow up is play minutes and minutes, but he is so young.

"I don't know how many players of that age played as many minutes in the recent past he played in these last seasons with us.

"He is going to be an incredible future player for us because we count on him and we trust a lot in him."

Sterling even hopes Foden will get enough chances to shine to make a late run to be included in the England squad for next year's European Championship.

"I am buzzing for Phil and I want him in the national team," said Sterling. "If he keeps going he will be there."

However, City's local hero Foden is happy to play a patient game with such an array of midfield talent to



compete with.

"You have to show the manager what you can do each day in training," said Foden. "Every young kid wants to play but you have to keep patient."

City enjoyed 71 percent possession and had 19 attempts on goal, but had to wait until 24 minutes from time to make the breakthrough when Sterling rounded off an excellent team move.

The English champions have maximum points from their opening two games with back-to-back matches against bottom-of-the-group Atalanta to come.

"It was good. We didn't concede one shot on target, with our huge possession we created enough chances to score earlier, but we were patient," added Guardiola.

"We need two more victories to qualify for the last 16 and hopefully we can make against Atalanta almost the definitive step to be there."

"Nobody is going to give us anything," said Guardiola. "We did it ourselves and that's top. That's why I love this team."

Old Lady still strong

AFP ■ TURIN

Cristiano Ronaldo scored his first goal in this season's Champions League, sealing a 3-0 win for Juventus over Bayer Leverkusen in their Group D game in Turin.

Ronaldo blasted in the third goal in the 89th minute to extend his record to 127 strikes in the competition to add to Gonzalo Higuain and Federico Bernardeschi's earlier efforts.

Juventus move top of their section, level on four points with Atletico Madrid, who defeated Lokomotiv Moscow 2-0 in Russia.

The Italian champions had been held 2-2 by the Spaniards at the Wanda Metropolitano in their opener.

"We had a good match against a team who love possession and are not easy to deal with," said Juventus coach Maurizio Sarri.



"They took a lot of energy out of us in the first half. After the break, they slowed down a little and we took control." Leverkusen face an uphill

battle after their shock 2-1 defeat at home against Lokomotiv Moscow and are rooted to the foot of the table.

"It was a clear defeat," said Leverkusen coach Peter Bosz. "We played well in the first half even if we didn't have chances, and then we made the mistake which led to the first goal."

"It's the difference between a team who has experience in the Champions League and one that is beginning its journey at this level."

Juventus next host Lokomotiv and Leverkusen travel to Atletico on October 22.

"It was an important match, after the draw in Madrid we had to win to get closer to the qualification," said Higuain.

"Now we head to Sunday, because another battle awaits us," added the Argentine of next weekend's Serie A clash with leaders Inter Milan.

Icardi off the mark

AFP ■ ISTANBUL

Mauro Icardi scored his first Paris Saint-Germain goal as the French champions beat Galatasaray 1-0 to move four points clear at the top of their group A.

Argentina forward Icardi, who joined PSG on loan from Inter Milan last month, opened his account for the club to maintain their perfect start to their European campaign after downing Real Madrid 3-0 two weeks ago.

The Turkish champions sit third in the standings with a single point from the draw at Club Brugge on September 18 and have not registered a win in four games in all competitions.

PSG were without Neymar, serving the last match of his European suspension for abusing a referee on social media, Edinson



Cavani due to a hip injury, and Kylian Mbappe who started on the bench as he continues to recover from a thigh injury as Icardi led the attack in Istanbul. "It wasn't the hardest goal to score but it came from excellent build-up play. He's worked a lot," coach Thomas Tuchel said. Next for PSG is a trip to Club Brugge, while Galatasaray host the Spanish giants on October 22.

First of many

Group D with Juventus, who eased to a 3-0 victory at home.

"I'm delighted to score my first Champions League goal. It was a great game, and the important thing was that we came away with the three points," said Felix.

Atletico rallied from two goals down a fortnight ago in a

2-2 draw with Juventus, but they took the lead here on 48 minutes when Felix stabbed in a rebound after his first effort was parried by Guilherme.

Felix, who last season became the youngest player to score a hat-trick in the Europa League while with Benfica, created the second goal with a sear-

ing break from deep. Atletico cleared a corner and Felix surged into the Lokomotiv half before floating a cross-field ball towards Costa, who unselfishly squared for a sliding Partey to tap home on 58 minutes.

Jan Oblak then produced two sublime stops as Atletico remained unbeaten in seven trips to Russia, winning for the fourth time in five visits to Moscow.

Extra time winner

AFP ■ MILAN

Israeli forward Manor Solomon scored a dramatic winning goal deep into stoppage time as Shakhtar came from behind to beat Atalanta 2-1.

The sides looked set to share the spoils as the game moved into a fifth minute of added time, but then the

Brazilian Dodo found fellow substitute Solomon in the box and neither Atalanta goalkeeper Pierluigi Gollini nor defender Timothy Castagne could stop him from scoring.

It was cruel on Atalanta, who had been denied by Shakhtar Donetsk goalkeeper Andriy Pyatov on several occasions and remain without a

point in Group C. Hammered 4-0 by Dinamo Zagreb in their first ever match in the Champions League group stage, the side from Bergamo now face a daunting double-header against Manchester City next.

Shakhtar had been beaten 3-0 at home by Pep Guardiola's side in their opening game but this result gives the Ukrainian champions a massive lift in their bid to reach the last 16.



MOSCOW: Portuguese teenager Joao Felix scored his first Champions League goal on Tuesday as Atletico Madrid recorded a precious 2-0 win away to Lokomotiv Moscow. The 19-year-old Felix, Atletico's club-record signing, put the visitors ahead three minutes after half-time in Russia and helped set up Thomas Partey for the second goal on the hour. Diego Simeone's side sit level on four points at the top of