

OPINION 8
PERILS OF
GM FARMING

WORLD 12
BORIS JOHNSON FINALLY
MEETS EU'S JUNCKER

SPORT 15
MY HUNGER, PASSION HASN'T
DIMINISHED AT ALL: PANKAJ

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**DOWNEY JR
WILL BE BACK
AS IRON MAN
14 VIVACITY**

PSA slapped on Farooq for detention

SC to hear Vaiko's plea against NC leader's house arrest on Sep 30; court allows Azad to visit Valley

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Jammu & Kashmir administration on Sunday invoked the stringent Public Safety Act (PSA) against former State Chief Minister Farooq Abdullah to detain him, a day before the Supreme Court took up a petition against his "illegal detention".

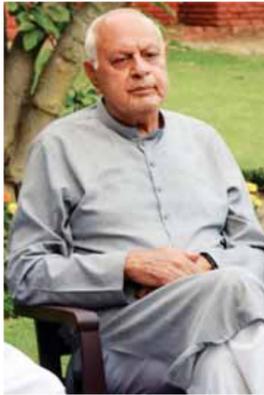
At 81, Abdullah has been charged with "disturbing public order" under the law, which means shorter detention of three months.

On Monday, the SC asked the Centre and the Jammu & Kashmir administration to respond to a plea seeking that Abdullah, allegedly under detention following the scrapping of the State's special status, be produced before the court.

Meanwhile, the SC allowed Congress leader Ghulam Nabi Azad to visit Kashmir but barred him from holding rallies or public meeting there.

A Bench of Chief Justice of India Ranjan Gogoi and justices SA Bobde and SA Nazeer issued notice to the Centre and the J&K administration, and fixed Rajya Sabha MP and MDMK leader Vaiko's plea for hearing on September 30.

Vaiko, who said he has been a close friend of Abdullah for the past four decades, has contended that the National Conference leader has been deprived of constitutional rights on account of "illegal detention without any authority of law".



Father's Act hounds son

Never would Sheikh Abdullah have imagined that his son Farooq would one day be arrested under the PSA which he, as the Chief Minister of J&K in 1978, enacted to fight timber smugglers in the State

The National Conference said the party would take legal course to challenge the detention of its president Farooq Abdullah under the Public Safety Act in J&K

"Is he (Abdullah) under detention?" the Bench asked Solicitor General Tushar Mehta, who was appearing for J&K. Without going into the issue of whether Abdullah has been kept under detention, Mehta said, "I do not have a copy of the petition. I have to take instruction on this."

There was no word by the lawyers from any side during the hearing that the Jammu & Kashmir administration has slapped the Public Safety Act to detain Farooq under the stringent law. After the Bench issued notice on Vaiko's petition, Mehta questioned his locus in filing a "habeas corpus" petition — a writ requiring a person under detention or arrest to be produced before a court. "He (Vaiko) has no locus.

How can he file a habeas corpus petition? He is not his relative. His (Abdullah) relatives have approached the High Court there," Mehta said. The Bench, however, asked the Centre and the Jammu & Kashmir administration to file their responses on Vaiko's plea. In his plea, Vaiko had said authorities should allow Abdullah to attend a "peaceful and democratic" annual conference, being organised in Chennai on September 15, on the occasion of birthday of former Tamil Nadu Chief Minister CN Annadurai.

"The actions of the respondents (Centre and J&K) are completely illegal and arbitrary and violative of the right to protection of life and personal liberty, right to protection



CRPF personnel stand guard near the residence of National Conference president Farooq Abdullah in Srinagar on Monday. PTI

from arrest and detention and also against right to free speech and expression which is the cornerstone of a democratic nation," the plea said.

"The right to free speech and expression is considered to have paramount importance in a democracy as it allows its cit-

izens to effectively take part in the governance of the country," it said. Vaiko said he had written a letter to the authorities on August 29 to allow Abdullah to travel to Chennai to attend the conference but they have not responded.

Continued on Page 4

Restore normalcy in J&K within ambit of national interest: SC

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The Jammu & Kashmir administration was directed by the Supreme Court on Monday to make "all endeavours" to ensure restoration of normalcy in the valley while keeping in mind "national interest and internal security".

The apex court, which also asked the Centre to ensure restoration of services and normalcy in Kashmir "as soon as possible", said efforts should be made to ensure that people have access to medical facilities, education, public transport and communication.

"The State of Jammu & Kashmir, keeping in mind the national interest and internal security, shall make all endeavours to ensure that normal life is restored in Kashmir; people have access to healthcare facilities and schools, colleges and other educational institutions and public transport functions and operates normally," a Bench headed by Chief Justice Ranjan Gogoi said in its order.

"All forms of communication, subject to overriding consideration of national security, shall be normalised, if required on a selective basis, particularly for healthcare facilities," said the Bench, which also comprised justices SA Bobde and SA Nazeer.

Attorney General KK Venugopal, representing the Centre, and Solicitor General



Tushar Mehta, appearing for Jammu & Kashmir, informed the Bench about steps taken by the authorities to restore normalcy in the State and also the Valley.

The top court, which posted the matter for hearing on September 30, asked the Centre and Jammu & Kashmir to file their affidavits indicating their responses on the plea and applications which raises the issue of shutdown of mobile and Internet services in the valley and lack of health care facilities there.

While Venugopal apprised the Bench about medical and other facilities being provided to the people, Mehta said that "not a single bullet has been fired" in the State since August 5, the day when Article 370 was abrogated. Venugopal said that since 1990 till date, 41,866 persons have lost their lives in 71,038 incidents of terrorist violence in the state which includes 14,038 civilians, 5,292 personnel of security forces and 22,536 terrorists.

Continued on Page 4

Trump to join PM at mega Howdy, Modi!

US Prez's special gesture testimony to growing bilateral bonds, says Modi

PTI ■ WASHINGTON/NEW DELHI



western United States.

US President Donald Trump will join Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi at the mega "Howdy, Modi!" diapaora event in Houston on Sunday to reaffirm the Indo-US strategic ties, the White House has announced, a decision hailed by the Prime Minister as a "special gesture" by the US President to underscore the special bond between the two countries.

Emphasising the new bonhomie in the India-US ties under the Trump Administration, this is for the first time in recent history that the leaders of the two largest democracies would be addressing a joint rally.

More than 50,000 Indian-Americans have registered for the September 22 "Howdy, Modi! Shared Dreams, Bright Futures" event to be held at the sprawling NRG Stadium in Houston, Texas.

"Howdy", short for 'How do you do?', is a friendly greeting commonly used in south-

In a statement on Sunday, White House Press Secretary Stephanie Grisham said, "It (Modi-Trump joint rally) will be a great opportunity to emphasise the strong ties between the people of the US and India, to reaffirm the strategic partnership between the world's oldest and largest democracies, and to discuss ways to deepen their energy and trade relationship."

Soon after, Modi said he looks forward to joining the Indian origin community in welcoming President Trump at the programme. "A special gesture by @POTUS, signifying the special friendship between India and USA...Highlights the strength of the relationship and recognition of the contribution of the Indian community to American society and economy," the PM tweeted.

Continued on Page 4

Cong, NCP to fight 125 seats each in Maha polls

Keep aside 38 seats for allies to take on BJP-Sena

PNS ■ NEW DELHI/MUMBAI

After going separately in 2014, the Congress and NCP have come together to contest the forthcoming Maharashtra Assembly election together. Both the parties will contest 125 seats each and keep aside 38 seats for prospective allies in an attempt to form a broad-based alliance to take on the BJP-Shiv Sena combine.

In 2014, the NCP had then ended the 15-year alliance after the two parties had been unable to reach a seat-sharing arrangement ahead of Assembly elections. The Congress had won 42 seats while the NCP had won 41 seats then. The BJP had emerged as the single-largest party in the State with 122 seats.



The finalisation of the seat-sharing pact between the Congress and the NCP comes after many high-profile leaders from both the parties deserted them to join the BJP and the Shiv Sena. Sharad Pawar had called on Sonia Gandhi in Delhi last week where the two gave final shape to the alliance.

Announcing the deal, Pawar said the seat-sharing pact between the grand old party and the NCP has been finalised and his party will give opportunity to new faces this time. Pawar also said both

the parties are yet to decide on the specific seats they will contest.

The smaller parties, which will contest the remaining 38 seats include Swabhimani Shetkari Sanghataana led by Raju Shetty and Bahujan Vikas Aghadi led by Prakash Ambedkar.

Both the parties had contested as allies in the Lok Sabha this year where the Congress won only one seat and the NCP bagged four. In 2014 general elections, the Congress had won two seats from the State while the NCP won four. The NCP had contested on 21 seats while its partner Congress fielded candidates on 26 seat in the last Lok Sabha polls.

The Congress and the NCP have been in an alliance since 1999 except for the last Assembly elections and they have formed Government thrice. In the 2004 Assembly polls, the NCP had won more seats than the Congress, but the latter bagged the Chief Minister's post.

Continued on Page 4

Rape survivor deposes in Shahjahanpur court against Chinmayanand

PNS/PTI ■ LUCKNOW/ SHAHJAHANPUR

The law student who levelled rape charges against BJP leader and former Union Minister Swami Chinmayanand recorded her statement before a magistrate in Shahjahanpur on Monday.

The 23-year old woman was brought to the court of Judicial Magistrate Geetika Singh under heavy security cover by the special investigation team (SIT).

She remained in the court for around four hours and told PTI that the magistrate recorded her statement in 10 to 12 pages. She said, "I have told the magistrate about the rape complaint I gave in New Delhi, my missing spectacles and a chip



from the hostel room. I also informed about the bedding and liquor bottles, which were removed from the Chinmayanand's room."

The victim's friends who were examined included the one who was with her when she was located in Rajasthan after having gone missing last month. The SIT had also examined principals of the two colleges where the girl studied.

HC stays Yogi's move to shift 17 OBCs to SC list

Lucknow: In a major setback to the Yogi Adityanath Government, the Allahabad High Court on Monday stayed its decision to include 17 Other Backward Castes (OBC) in the Scheduled Castes (SC) list.

The court's decision came on a petition filed by social activist Gorakh Prasad.

On June 24, the state government had directed District Magistrates and Commissioners to issue Scheduled Caste certificates to 17 OBCs - Kashyap, Rajbhar, Dhivar, Bind, Kumhar, Kahar, Kewat, Nishad, Bhar, Mallah, Prajapati, Dhimar, Batham, Turha, Godia, Manjhi and Machua.

The Government's move was apparently aimed at wooing these communities ahead of by-elections to 12 Assembly seats.

The decision, incidentally, had been criticised even by the BJP-led Central Government, with Social Justice and Empowerment Minister



Thawar Chand Gehlot telling the Rajya Sabha on July 2 that the move was not in accordance with the Constitution.

Gehlot had said that if the UP Government wanted to go ahead with its proposal, it should follow procedure and send a proposal to the Centre.

BSP chief Mayawati had also slammed the move as "unconstitutional" and called it

"politically motivated". "No Government can include or remove any caste from the Scheduled Caste list. Article 341 prevents a Government from doing so. Only the President and Parliament have the powers to do so," she had said.

Part 1 of Article 341 clearly states that the President can specify any group to the SC list

through a public notification on the Governor's advice. Part 2 says that if a notification is released under part 1 of Article 341, it can only be changed by Parliament. Part 2 also states that Parliament can specify, include or exclude any group from the SC list.

She pointed out that the notification cannot be undone by any other notification.

"These castes will no longer get the benefits of quota under the OBC category. They will be treated as general castes. It is clear that Yogi Government has issued this order to deceive these castes," Mayawati had said.

The BJP Government in Uttar Pradesh is not the first to move the 17 OBCs to the SC list.

In 2005, the then Mulayam Singh Yadav Government passed the first order to include 11 of these castes in the SC list but the order was stayed and the proposal sent to the Centre.

Subsequently, the BSP Government of Mayawati quashed the notification.

The BSP later said these castes could be included in the SC list provided the SC quota is increased.

The SP Government of Akhilesh Yadav again cleared the inclusion proposal ahead of the 2017 Assembly elections but it was challenged and is still in court.

IANS

Pakistan to open Kartarpur Sahib for Indians on Nov 9



Pakistani workers give finishing touches to the shrine of Sikh spiritual leader Guru Nanak Dev, in Kartarpur, in Pakistan on Monday. AP

PTI ■ LAHORE

From November 9, Pakistan will allow Indian Sikh pilgrims to visit the holy Kartarpur Sahib, a senior official heading the much-awaited Kartarpur corridor project announced on Monday.

Project Director Atif Majid made the announcement during the maiden visit of Pakistani and foreign journal-

ists to the proposed Kartarpur corridor in Narowal, some 125 km from Lahore, amidst fresh tension between India and Pakistan after New Delhi revoked Jammu & Kashmir's special status.

Majid said so far 86 per cent of the work on the corridor has been completed and it will be opened to pilgrims on November 9.

Continued on Page 4

Nagar, Seth elected unopposed to RS

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

Bharatiya Janata Party candidates Surendra Singh Nagar and Sanjay Seth were declared elected unopposed on Monday in the bypolls to two Rajya Sabha seats of Uttar Pradesh.

Both were declared elected after the end of the last day for withdrawals of nomination papers at 3 pm on Monday.

Except for Nagar and Seth, no other candidate had filed their nomination papers in the bypolls to the two seats.

Sources in the UP Assembly secretariat said that election certificates would be handed over to the candidates or their representatives.

Both Nagar and Seth were earlier in the Samajwadi Party but had quit the party and their Rajya Sabha seats to join the BJP.

CAPSULE

7 CHINESE WARSHIPS SEEN IN INDIAN OCEAN

New Delhi: As many as seven Chinese Navy warships are operating in and around the Indian Ocean Region, including an over 27,000 tonnes amphibious vessel, which have been tracked closely by the Indian Navy using its American-origin P-8I anti-submarine warfare spy planes.

2 AUTO DRIVERS KILLED IN DELHI ROAD ACCIDENT

New Delhi: Two auto-rickshaw drivers were killed after a speeding car collided with their autos in North Delhi's Swaroop Nagar area on Monday.

EX-AP SPEAKER'S SUICIDE SPARKS POL SLUGFEST

Amaravati: The suspected suicide of former Andhra Pradesh Speaker Kodela Sivaprasada Rao triggered a political slugfest in the State with the TDP holding the YS Jagan Mohan Reddy Govt responsible.

NO OIL SHORTAGE EXPECTED SAUDI DRAWDOWN: MIN

New Delhi: India, the world's third-largest oil consumer, will not face any supply disruption after a reduction in production at its No. 2 supplier Saudi Arabia, Oil Minister Dharmendra Pradhan said on Monday.

Modi has changed political agenda of the country: CM

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

Claiming that Prime Minister Narendra Modi had changed the political discourse of the country, Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath said that earlier the political agenda used to revolve around caste, religion, region and language but now it was development of youth, villages and women.

"Prime Minister Narendra Modi has completely changed the political agenda of the country in the last five years. Now, issues like villages, poverty, farmers, youth and women have been included in the agenda," the Chief Minister said after laying foundation stones and dedicating to people projects worth Rs 71.36 crore in Zaidpur Assembly constituency of Barabanki on Monday.

Addressing the people, Yogi Adityanath said that development was the key to happiness and his government was committed for growth in a time-bound manner.

"Development should be all-inclusive and not incom-



Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath laying foundation stones of several projects in Barabanki on Monday

plete. If any part of the body stops functioning, it is called divyang. Similarly, if there is poverty, weakness and misery, the country cannot prosper and we must get rid of it," he said.

The Chief Minister said the abrogation of Article 370 had helped in connecting Jammu and Kashmir with mainstream of development as envisioned by Dr BR Ambedkar, Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel and Dr Syama Prasad Mookerjee. "It took almost 70 years to get this dream fulfilled," he added.

"We must congratulate PM Modi and Home Minister Amit Shah who have shown the courage to abrogate the temporary clause in our Constitution," the Chief Minister said.

Yogi Adityanath said the issue of women empowerment had been discussed for a long time but nothing was done at the ground level.

"After Independence, nobody ever imagined that in order to save the dignity of women, a step could be taken towards making the nation

open defecation-free," he said, and added, "PM Modi has also put to end the evil and archaic practice of triple talaq."

Expressing concern over the use of plastic, the Chief Minister said it had become a nuisance today and was harming environment and health.

"It (plastic) adds to pollution and hampers water conservation. Plastic also harms the cattle and it is like an enemy for farmers. Thus, it is important to shun plastic altogether," the Chief Minister said.

Encephalitis is no more a dreaded word in east UP

Yogi initiative tames killer disease

BISWAJEET BANERJEE ■ GORAKHPUR

Encephalitis is no more a dreaded word in eastern Uttar Pradesh. In the previous years, this killer disease had taken the lives of thousands of children but now people are ready to wage a war against it with the help of government schemes and improved health facilities at the village level.

The figures say it all. In 2016, encephalitis had taken the lives of 715 children in eastern UP and in 2017, the toll was 748. After this the mortality figures showed a declining trend and in 2018 278 children died of encephalitis while till August 31 this year, only 38 children have fallen prey to it in Purvanchal, considered the hot bed of this killer disease.

"The figures are really a source of encouragement for us. We fought hard to control this menace and now it seems we are succeeding," Dr Ganesh Kumar, principal of BRD Medical College in Gorakhpur, told this reporter.

Doctors, both government and private, give the credit of this change to the awareness campaign that the Yogi Adityanath government launched against encephalitis for bringing down the toll.

"The inflow of encephalitis patients in BRD Medical College hospital in Gorakhpur is much less now because the people are now getting treatment at the village level. The primary health centres (PHCs) and community health centres (CHCs) now have trained doctors and para-medics who give treatment to the patients at their door step. Thus, the pressure on us is not as it used to be earlier," said Dr Mahima



Mittal, head of the paediatrics department at the BRDMC hospital.

Eastern Uttar Pradesh had witnessed the worst years of encephalitis menace in early 2000 when over 1,500 deaths were reported only at the BRD Medical College hospital in 2005.

Small children, some convulsing, others lying unconscious with their eyes rolled back, used to overcrowd the only 52-bed ward in the hospital. Deaths were announced over and over again by the wails of mothers collapsing on the filthy floor.

"The situation has changed now. In 2005, we had a 52-bed ward but now the number of beds has increased to 428. The ICU has now ventilators and all the beds have connected oxygen facilities. This is in BRDMC hospital but the biggest change is in PHCs and CHCs where special encephalitis wards have been set up," Dr Mittal said.

Chief convener of Encephalitis Eradication Campaign, Dr RN Singh, con-

firms Dr Mittal's observation. "I cannot vouch for government figures but as a private practitioner I can say that earlier I used to examine 2-3 encephalitis case in a week but now one case comes in a month or so," Dr Singh said.

What has brought about the change is the steps taken by the Yogi Adityanath government after it assumed office in UP.

Dr KP Yadav, in-charge of paediatrics department in Chauri Chaura CHC, said the biggest transformation was in rural areas where 104 encephalitis treatment centres (ETCs) were set up from block to village levels.

"Dastak, an inter-departmental programme, brought several government departments like Urban Development, Health, Education, Women and Child Development, Panchayati Raj etc., together to create awareness about cleanliness, safe drinking water and fight against encephalitis," Dr Yadav said.

He said 3-bed ICUs had

been set up at CHCs where the children get quick treatment.

Dr Shishir Roy gives credit to the sustained vaccination drive that was carried out by the government. "Over 40 lakh children were given anti-encephalitis vaccine in seven endemic districts of Uttar Pradesh. This vaccine has helped in eradicating Japanese Encephalitis," he said.

Japanese encephalitis has been wiped out of many Asian countries, but has plagued parts of India for decades, especially near the Nepal border in the north-east corner around Gorakhpur. It is closely related to West Nile virus and attacks the brain and spinal cord. It typically spreads from pigs to people via mosquitoes, is easily identified through testing and can be prevented by vaccination. It infects many people in childhood, but only a small percentage end up experiencing severe symptoms. Up to a third of those who are sickened develop problems ranging from paralysis to mental disabilities.

Anupriya elected Apna Dal (S) president

Lucknow (PNS): Former Union minister and member of parliament from Mirzapur, Anupriya Patel, was elected national president of Apna Dal (S) here on Monday.

The announcement of Anupriya Patel's election as party president was made after a meeting of the national convention of the Apna Dal (S) in Mirzapur.

Anupriya Patel was a Union minister in the previous Narendra Modi government but was dropped in the National Democratic Alliance's second term.

Apna Dal (S) is a coalition partner of the Bharatiya Janata Party in Uttar Pradesh.

The party also announced the state working committee and presidents of several district units.

The humane face of Jhansi police

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

After bringing in change in the life of senior citizens mostly living alone for various reasons, the Savera—Senior Citizen Police Cell of Jhansi police have now helped a mentally retarded woman not only in recovering from illness but also in reuniting her with her family.

The woman was found in almost unconscious state about a year back after which the Jhansi police took care of her and finally their humane act paid result and brought remarkable change in the life of the lady.

Jhansi range DIG Subhash Singh Baghel, while revealing how the cops played Samaritan, claimed that on October 26 last year, someone informed the police control room that a woman, who appeared to be mentally retarded, was lying near Marai Mata Mandir temple in Nawabad locality of the district and was also taking no food or water.

The DIG said that the local cops went to the spot and on finding that the woman could not reveal anything about herself and was also not taking anything to eat, passed message to the Savera team engaged by him to look after such persons.

Baghel said the team comprising sub-inspectors Manoj Mishra, Mateen Khan, Baboo Singh, head constables Meena and Vimal Kumar along with constables Gajendra, Subodh Kumar, Manvendra Singh and Parmananand, rushed to the spot and took the woman to Mother Teresa Home. He said that the lady initially revealed her name as Sheela but failed to tell anything more about herself.

Baghel claimed that the team members, with the help of Mother Teresa Home staff, took care of the lady and also took help of local doctors to get



her treated of her mental ailment. He said that after about 11 months of hard work of his team members, specially head constable Meena, the woman recovered her memory and revealed her name as Chanda and said she was wife of Rajesh Kumar Khanna, a resident of Gwal Toli in Prem Nagar area of Jhansi. The woman also revealed that she had two daughters, Vaishali and Jyoti, both married, and a son Devraj Khanna.

Baghel said that after learning these facts, the Savera team got in touch with Devraj and after learning that their mother had left home and was missing since last about one year, they called him. He said that last week, Devraj visited Mother Teresa Home with his sister Vaishali and they took their mother home.

The DIG said that he had issued citation and honoured the Savera team members for their noble gesture. He said that besides Sheela aka Chanda, at least a dozen similar women had been rescued from footpaths in different parts of Jhansi and as they were men-

tally unfit, the team arranged their treatment and provided them a homely atmosphere with a hope that one day they too would be reunited with their families.

Baghel revealed that Savera was formed more than a year back after a survey showed that senior citizens needed personal care more than anything else.

The DIG said while preparing a data base of senior citizens living in the district to safeguard them from crime as they were the softest target for criminals, they were shocked to learn that several couples or individuals living in the district were least bothered about their belongings or personal security as they had lost interest in life as their near and dear ones had abandoned them.

He said with the data base in place, he formed Savera—Senior Citizen Police Cell comprising senior officers as office-bearers and 14 prominent citizen of the district as members.

The cell organises programmes to bring old citizens under one roof to enjoy like a family.

Shivpal announces state-wide stir

Lucknow (PNS): Pragatisheel Samajwadi Party (Lohia) led by Shivpal Singh Yadav on Monday announced to hold a state-wide agitation in UP on September 18 to protest against the failures of the Bharatiya Janata Party governments at the Centre and in the state.

Shivpal Yadav said that demonstrations would be held at all district headquarters and the party leaders and supporters would sub-

mit an 11-point charter of demand.

"The BJP governments at the Centre and in UP have failed to address the grievances of the common man," he said.

Yadav said that loss of jobs, hike in power tariff, problem of stray cattle and deteriorating law and order along with other issues had aggravated the problems faced by the common man.

Sikh woman shaves head to protest police inaction

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

Close on the heels of suicide by a couple due to inaction of Mathura police, in another incident reported from Jhansi, a woman belonging to Sikh community took the bold decision of shaving her head to register protest against the alleged inaction of local cops in the mysterious death of her 80-years-old father.

The woman, who runs a Divyang Centre in Jhansi city, accused her neighbours—Virendra Kumar and Rajiv Kumar—of being behind the death of her father.

In an FIR lodged by her with the local police, the woman alleged that her neighbour pushed her father from the terrace, killing him. She alleged that her father was "killed" as he had a property-related dispute with the accused.

The police confirmed that the FIR had been registered under stringent sections of the IPC, but so far the matter was under investigation.

The woman charged that the SHO of Nabababad was trying to "scuttle" the case.

After the woman tonsured her head, senior police officials of the district appeared before the media on Monday afternoon and claimed that investigation was underway and action would be taken against the guilty people.

According to sources, the woman, who reside in Nabababad police station area, had written letters to Prime

Minister Narendra Modi, Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath and Chairperson of Minority Commission about the incident.

Meanwhile in Mainpuri, a 17-year-old girl student of class 11 was found dead on Monday in her school's hostel room in Bhogaon area of the district.

Police said the body was found hanging from the ceiling of her hostel room. The police were informed after the body was discovered by other hostellers, said Superintendent of Police Ajay Shankar Rai.

The family members of the girl blamed Navodaya Vidyalaya administration for the death, alleging that she was badly beaten and murdered.

No FIR has been lodged in the case so far as the victim's father Subhash Pandey is out of station.

The SP said the FIR would be registered after receiving a complaint from the girl's family members.

Meanwhile in Hardoi, a 20-year-old Dalit was allegedly burnt alive over his relationship with a woman from another caste, a killing that his relatives said led to his mother's death. According to police, the suspected case of honour killing occurred at Bhadesa area of Hardoi district on Saturday.

Abhishek alias Monu was beaten up, kept hostage in a house and set ablaze. Locals rushed to the spot on hearing his cries and took him to a local hospital from where he was referred to hospital in Lucknow but he succumbed to injuries on the way on Sunday.

NOTICE

Be it known to all that Shri Bipin Kumar Yadav S/o Late MS Yadav is the owner of House Villa No. 5, Harmony Enclave, Udayan - I, Edeco, Lucknow - 226002, has lost original allotment letter No. UDI/HE/11503 issued by Edeco Housing & Industries Ltd. FIR No. LAR No. 416558/2019 lodged on 03 August 2019. If any claim, mortgage and transaction of aforesaid house please inform to Adv Poonam Sinha Mob. No. 8318109312 after 10 days of publication, no claim will be entertained. Shri Bipin Kumar Yadav wish to create charge on the said property for availing loan facility.

CLASSIFIEDS

NOTICE

I declared that my correct name is Rahila Ahmed instead of Rahila Anis. Correct name is Rahila Ahmed W/o Anis Ahmed R/o H-II/4, Sector-D, L.D.A. Colony, Kanpur Road, Lucknow.

NOTICE

Be it known to all that I have disowned my son Sambhav Agarwal, from all my Moveable & Immoveable Properties due to his bad behaviour & ill treatment. I & my family will not be responsible for his deeds. Shubha Agarwal, 84, New Ganeshganj, Lucknow-226018.

NOTICE

Be it known to all that I have disowned my grand son, Sambhav Agarwal, from all my Moveable & Immoveable Properties due to his bad behaviour & ill treatment. I & my family will not be responsible for his deeds. Usha Joshi, 84, New Ganeshganj, Lucknow-226018.

NOTICE

I, Vandana (Existing Name of spouse as per change of Next of Kin Record/Service Document), spouse of No 15145696K Hav Navaneeta Kumar Upadhyay (Name of the Husband) resident of Village-Belwania, Post-Lahipar, Dist-Deoria (UP), PIN-274001 (Address) have changed my Name from Vandana (Existing Name of spouse as per change of Next of Kin Record/Service Documents) to Bandana (Proposed/adopted New Name) vide Affidavit dated 12.9.2019 before Notary Deoria.

CANTONMENT BOARD, LUCKNOW

31, Nehru Road Lucknow Cantt. Phone No. 0522-2480037 Email ID - cblucknow@ggest.org

SHORT TERM NOTICE INVITING TENDER

REPAIR/MAINTENANCE OF CANTI. FUND BUILDING (PART A & B) AND REPAIR/MAINTENANCE OF DEFENCE ESTATE ASSETS.

Online Tenders are invited from the reputed firms/agencies/contractors having work experience in the relevant field (MES/Cantonment Board/Central or State Govt. Departments, through the Government e-procurement portal <http://eprocure.gov.in/cppp/> The bid document can be downloaded from the <http://eprocure.gov.in/cppp/> CPPP portal.

The other terms and conditions can be seen from the Office of the Cantonment Board Lucknow, 31 Nehru Road, Lucknow Cantt-226002 during working hours on before 02.10.2019.

LCB/4/TC/Building/A/2019-20 Cantonment Board Lucknow. Dated Sept' 2019

(Amit Kumar Mishra) Chief Executive Officer Cantonment Board Lucknow

TENDER NOTICE

Online tenders through two bid system are invited from the Contractors, PSUs, any Government agency having work experience in MES/Cantt. Board/Central or State government departments through the Government e-procurement portal <http://eprocure.gov.in/> for the work of "Supply Installation Testing & Commissioning of grid connected Rooftop Solar Power Plants with five years comprehensive maintenance in Cantt area Lucknow."

The other relevant information/terms & conditions can be seen from the Government e-procurement portal <http://eprocure.gov.in/>.

No. LCB5/E/M/Tender/Notice/2019 Office of the Cantonment Board Dated 16 Sep 2019

(Amit Kumar Mishra) Chief Executive Officer Lucknow Cantt.

PSPCL Punjab State Power Corporation Limited

OFFICE OF CHIEF ENGINEER/ METERING

C-3, Shakti Vihar, PSPCL, Patiala, Punjab-147001 Tel. No. 0175-2218871, Fax: 0175-2200284, e-mail: se-hq-metering@pspcl.in CIN: U40109PB2010SGC033813, Registration Number: 33813 Website: www.pspcl.in E-tendering Portal: <https://pspcl.abcpocprocure.com>

NOTICE INVITING TENDER

Tender Enquiry No.	MQP-152/2019-20(POM)
Short Description	Procurement of 70,000 No. "ISI" marked, DLMS compliant LT AC 3 -Phase, 4-wire, Whole Current Static Intelligent Energy Meters (Category -C2) with 'Optical Port' & 'RS-232 port' of rating 10 -60 Amps, 50 Hz, 415 volts (3x240 volts) of accuracy class -1
Last date and time for downloading of tender documents	04-11-2019 up to 11:00 Hrs.
Last date and time for Bid submission	05-11-2019 up to 11:00 Hrs.
Date and time of opening of tender	05-11-2019 up to 11:30 Hrs.

Tender specification can only be downloaded from PSPCL e-tendering website <https://pspcl.abcpocprocure.com>

Note: Corrigendum, if any after the publication of this tender enquiry shall only be uploaded on website <https://pspcl.abcpocprocure.com> and will not be published in newspapers.

C-36719 DPR/16SEP19/C7135 Dt. 16-09-2019

By CE/HMC PSPCL, Patiala

Property dealer peppered with bullets

Ex-armyman battling for life at SGPGI Trauma Centre

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ LUCKNOW

Three unidentified bike-borne miscreants on Monday afternoon peppered with bullets a retired armyman working as a property dealer in full public view near a bank, about 200 metres away from Mohanlaljanj police station, and sped off. The incident left local businessmen panic-stricken as they hid inside their shops even as the commuters ran for cover. The firing continued for several minutes.

While fleeing, the motorcycle of the miscreants skidded on gravels near a school and they opened fire again to intimidate people who had started converging on the scene.

A profusely bleeding property dealer, Ashok Yadav (42) of Medai Kheda locality, hurriedly got down from his SUV and took refuge in a shop whose owner, identified as Shekhar, rushed him to the community health centre. Ashok was later referred to the Trauma Centre of SGPGI.

Ashok sustained three bullet injuries in the right side of his abdomen and one gunshot wound on his right arm. Police detected several impressions of bullet strikes on the SUV. The police recovered seven bullet shells and it was suspected that the miscreants fired at least ten shots.

As per reports, Ashok, who presently stays in Ashiyana (Sector-H), had left his house around 9 am on Monday. His wife Veena said: "Ashok had two sites in Mohanlaljanj and he had gone there to show the same to buyers. He also had to get a land registered in the name of a customer at Mohanlaljanj tehsil and was



Bullet shells scattered at the crime scene

Pioneer

going there when attacked."

Eyewitnesses said they saw Ashok stop his SUV on the roadside near the bank and get down from the vehicle. "He was talking on his phone sitting in the SUV when the miscreants reached the scene. The man driving the bike had his face covered with a gamchha while the other two were wearing helmets. They opened a fusillade of fire at the victim. Initially, we were under the impression that someone was burning firecrackers. Later, we saw the miscreants fleeing the scene even as they opened fire in air, and we ran for cover. The man got down from his SUV and moved towards Shekhar's shop who rushed to CHC," an eyewitness told the police.

A little part of the incident was captured by a CCTV camera installed outside a school near the crime scene. "The miscreants were seen opening fire in the air after their bike skidded, and then they sped off. Another footage in which they were seen speeding off was captured by a CCTV camera installed at an automobile showroom. They fled towards the city and disappeared some

metres away from the showroom. They may have taken some loop route to escape being caught," sources said.

IG, Lucknow Range, SK Bhagat was the first to reach the crime scene. He directed the investigating team to collect circumstantial evidence. Under his supervision, the cops minutely examined the crime scene and also the SUV. The IG later reached the Trauma Centre where he talked to victim's wife Veena and their sons Vishal and Atul.

ASP (Rural) Vikrant Veer and ASP (Crime) Dinesh Puri were asked to work on the case and work it out soon. The police suspected that Ashok was attacked over a property-related issue. However, his family said Ashok had no dispute with anyone.

Sources at the Trauma Centre said the condition of Ashok was critical. "The bullets imbedded in his stomach are yet to be removed and bleeding was detected in the internal organs, making surgery a difficult task. Ashok, who served as Hawildar in Army, retired in 2011 after which he became a property dealer.

Tall claims by police come crashing down

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ LUCKNOW

The Mohanlaljanj incident exposed the tall claims of the Lucknow police regarding quick response and also that they have checked crime by implementing stern traffic rules. "The Mohanlaljanj police reached the crime scene after the victim, Ashok Yadav, had been admitted to CHC. They rushed to the CHC but the victim had been shifted to Trauma II by then," sources said.

They said the miscreants stopped movement of people on the road for over 15 minutes by opening incessant fire. The incident took place close to the police station and the cops did not get a whiff until people started crying for help and were seen running for cover," the sources said. They said the tech-savvy police failed to get any clue about the miscreants till late night. "The cops could get only two CCTV footages in which the faces of the miscreants were not clear. Soon, they appeared disappointed," the sources said.

They expressed surprise that the miscreants were not noticed by the cops conducting vehicle checking drives.

"The miscreants were tripe-riding the bike. The pillion-riders were wearing helmets while the one driving the bike was not, and had his face covered. How could they escape being caught by police is not understandable," the sources pointed out. They said the attack was orchestrated probably by some bigwig with whom Ashok might have had

a tussle over some property-related issue.

ASP (Crime) Dinesh Puri said: "We are yet to get any clue about the miscreants and also about the motive for attack. We are collecting details related to the incident. The mobile phone of the victim is locked and we are waiting for him to recover soon. We are also scanning CCTV footages to get a clue about the miscreants," he said.

The incident had a striking similarity with the one in which a realtor, Sunil Singh (35) of Ansal Golf City, was attacked in PGI police station area on August 3. Sunil was attacked by unidentified miscreants at the gate of colony when he was in his BMW.

The sources said that the modus operandi of the PGI incident was similar to the attack on Ashok. The attackers had covered their faces and two of them were wearing helmets. Sunil had suffered four gunshots but was lucky that he escaped being hit in his vital organs. In that case too, the initial probe had hinted at property dispute.

They said in the initial probe, the needle of suspicion in the attack on Sunil had pointed towards a politician of Eastern UP. "The police were also told by their network in underworld that the attack on Sunil was a reply to the attack on realtor brothers in a lane behind St Francis School in Hazratganj. But after the arrest of the miscreants, the police had termed these findings pointless," the sources said.

Protests keep cops on toes after 6-yr-old girl's murder



Huge gathering outside the house of the girl after her body reached there on Monday

Pioneer

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ LUCKNOW

The grisly murder of a 6-year-old girl in Saadatganj on Sunday night took the city by storm as a huge number of people took to streets protesting police apathy. The protests continued on Monday.

Reports said the accused, identified as Bablu aka Arafat of Thakurganj, had not only caused internal injuries to the girl but also hammered her before slitting her throat.

The autopsy report revealed that the accused choked the throat of the girl. The girl had wounds on her head, right eyebrow and a deep cut on the throat apart from internal injuries. The police recovered a blood-stained knife and clothes, a hammer and also a towel with which the accused wiped blood off the floor. The police have sent the samples to forensic lab for further examination.

On Monday, enraged protesters assembled outside the house of the victim to protest police apathy. They claimed that the girl went missing around 4 pm and the family contacted the police immediately for help. "The girl's father was asked to search for the girl

on his own even though he suspected the role of Bablu. The girl's father became apprehensive when he called Bablu and he did not attend the call and switched off his phone. We went to the police station and this time, the police agreed to raid Bablu's house. They caught Bablu but did not search his house. The girl remained in a pool of blood and writhing in pain. They conducted another raid after we insisted for the same and this time, the girl was recovered from Bablu's house where she was lying under a sofa," they claimed. Doctors who conducted the autopsy said the crime was executed in a very inhumane way. "The girl was choked to death in a brutal way after being subjected to sexual assault," they said.

The Lucknow police were on their toes following the protest. ASP (West) Vikas Tripathi took the lead and successfully counselled the irate mob that agreed for girl's last rites. Protests by different groups of residents kept the police occupied and even gave them tense moments.

Forces from several police stations of the city, PAC jawans and sleuths of crime branch

stood guard outside the house of the victim and also at the mortuary. Shops in the locality remained closed and several groups of youths raised anti-police slogans.

The girl's family alleged that a woman was found present at the house of the accused when the police conducted the first raid. "At the time of second raid, the house of the accused was found locked from outside and the police had to break open the doors to recover the girl," the family claimed. There were reports that the accused had a grudge with the victim's father and he committed the crime in revenge. The ASP said it was yet to be verified. "We came across similar claims but the accused did not tell us anything to this effect during interrogation. The accused is a drug addict," the ASP said. The girl was found critically injured in the house of Bablu, who she used to address as 'Mama'.

Book fair to kick off on Sept 20

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ LUCKNOW

The 17th National Book Fair will feature a life-sized book of Prime Minister Narendra Modi by a publisher from Ahmedabad featuring his motivational speeches. Key organizer Manoj Chandel told mediapersons on Monday said that the book fair would kick off the Moti Mahal Lawns on September 20 and conclude on September 29.

The book fair is being organised jointly by KT Foundation and The Federation of Publishers and Booksellers Association in India, New Delhi.

Addressing mediapersons, Chandel said the life-sized book of Narendra Modi weighs 77 kg and can be read easily.

"There will also be a 1-foot version of the book in the same cut-out shape of Narendra Modi. The title of the book is 'Narendra Modi - Ek Sakaratmak Soch' and it highlights the encouraging word and positive thoughts which have been shared by Prime Minister Narendra Modi," he said. Chandel said from this



Key organiser of 17th national book fair Manoj Chandel addressing mediapersons in Lucknow on Monday

Pioneer

year, they would be showcasing the 'Guest of Honour' state for the first time and this time it would be Gujarat. "Heritage, culture and tourism of the state will be showcased with a separate stall," he added.

The theme of the book fair will be '150th years of celebrating the Mahatma'.

"The books on life and works of Mahatma Gandhi published from various publishers will be displayed at the fair. Various programmes based on Mahatma Gandhi will also be performed during the event," he said.

Governor Anandiben Patel has been invited to inaugurate

the book fair at 5 pm on September 20.

Co-organiser Aakarshan Jain said there would be free entry as always and a minimum discount of 10% would be given to book lovers. He also talked about the never-ending benefits of books in the virtual world. There will be a free stall for local writers.

According to chief patron Murlidhar Ahuja, a variety of programmes such as book releases, 'Meet the writer', kavi sammelan, mushaira, singing & dancing, quiz, drawing, slogan-writing and story-writing competitions, and magic & puppet shows will be held for children during the 10 days of book fair.

Vice-president of UPOA TP Havelia said Uttar Pradesh Gaurav Samman would be given away to general secretary Anandeshwar Pandey for his contribution to promotion of sports in India and abroad.

Another attraction of this year's book fair will be a free eye check-up camp. A career counselling session will also be organised by Lucknow Chartered Accounting Society on September 21.

Son of follower in UP police found murdered

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ LUCKNOW

The son of a follower (peon) in UP police was killed and his body dumped in the thickets in Madaon on Monday. Police identified the victim on the basis of the registration number of the bike which was found parked some metres away from the crime scene.

The victim, identified as Pradeep Pal (25), was a native of Sitapur and was living with his father Parshuram Pal and other family members in Dudauli village. He worked in a company selling RO units.

Parshuram told the police that Pradeep left the house for some work on Sunday and did not return home till 11 pm on Sunday. "We were in touch with him around 11 pm, his phone was switched off," he said. The incident came to light on Monday after some residents of Umarbarhi village passed by the thickets. They alerted the police after which

reached the place and recovered the bike of the victim. His wallet and mobile phone are still missing.

The autopsy report only muddled the waters as the cause of death was said to be asphyxia due to hanging. The police did not find objects used for hanging. The police suspected that Pradeep was hanged elsewhere and then his body dumped in the thickets. "We will study the call detail records of the victim and his mobile's location. A team will also quiz Pradeep's friends," the police said.

Meanwhile, two youths attacked a woman to coerce her into withdrawing a case which she had lodged against them in Ashiyana on Sunday night. She identified the accused as Vikas Dubey and MP Singh.

She told the police that she had lodged a case against them on March 5 for trespassing and eve-teasing. "The low-rung

cops posted at the police station support the accused. They opted for every tactic — from stalking me to getting my father's makeshift shop removed from its place — to force me to withdraw the case. But I did not fear them and kept fighting the legal battle. In frustration, they attacked me," she told police.

Meanwhile, the Mahanagar police on Monday recovered the body of an unidentified girl who had jumped into Gomti river on Sunday afternoon. A police spokesman said the body was recovered from the river near Papermill Colony.

Besides, the Thakurganj police recovered the body of an unidentified man from near Dhaila bridge road on Monday. The police also recovered a bike registered in the name of Anil Kumar of Ghazipur. The police spokesman said the deceased appeared to be around 30-year-old.

LU's Biochemistry department studying harmful effects of lead

SHARMILA KRISHNA ■ LUCKNOW

The department of Biochemistry, Lucknow University, is carrying out a research with its counterparts in King George's Medical University and Era Medical College on lead toxicity and how it affects human health.

Head of the department Sudhir Mehrotra told *The Pioneer* that it was important to study this because when lead enters human body through various sources in the environment, it is not able to get out with urine because it is insoluble in water and can impact various parts of the body and have harmful effects.

Mehrotra said there were several sources of lead in the environment, including paints and lead batteries to name a few. "In festivals like Ganesh Mahotsav and Durga Puja, the idols are made from plaster of Paris and with paints which are not branded, and it ultimately goes into the human body

through water in which they are immersed," he said.

When reminded that the district administrations had made provisions restricting the immersion of idols into water bodies, he said there were many places in rural areas where people would be immersing idols into rivers.

He said it must be noted that several people carried out individual celebrations at their homes and festivities like Ganesh Mahotsav and Durga Puja had only grown bigger.

Mehrotra said though the branded paints also contained lead, it was in smaller quantity. "Most of the organisers do not use branded paints because the cost increases substantially," he pointed out. He added that yellow swings and yellow school buses were also sources of lead toxicity. "Children's swings and buses should not be coloured with yellow paint because it can lead to lead toxicity since most of the time kids have a habit of putting things in their mouth,"

he added. He said one of the growing sources of lead toxicity were lead acid batteries used in inverters and discarded in rural areas because people do not have proper knowledge. Earlier, lead was also a constituent of the petrol which was brought to an end by the year 2000.

"Lead gets deposited in the adipose tissue of the human being. We are conducting our research primarily on rats to know how this lead toxicity is impacting human health," he said. The Biochemistry department was a part of the Chemistry department, which is one of the oldest departments of Lucknow University. Biochemistry, as a subject, was started in 1955 and it was one of the specialisation subjects in MSc (Chemistry). Mehrotra said there were 10 seats in the department which increased to 28 recently, while the number of seats in Biotechnology was 10. Biotechnology was started in 2002-2003.

UP BJP holds exhibition on PM

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ LUCKNOW

On the eve of the 69th birthday of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, the Uttar Pradesh unit of Bharatiya Janata Party organised a photo exhibition on the life history of Modi starting from his childhood to his achievements as prime minister of the country.

The exhibition, held at BJP state office here, was inaugurated by Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath. BJP state president Swatantra Dev Singh and party's state general secretary (organisation) Sunil Bansal along with senior leaders were present. In his brief speech, Yogi Adityanath said that abrogation of Article 370 and implementation of NRC in Assam on the order of the Supreme Court, along with making 'triple talaq' a criminal offence were the big achievements of Narendra Modi's second term as prime minister.

"The decision on Article 370 and NRC has strengthened the country's unity and integrity. These decisions have sent a message that India is one and



Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath looking at a picture at the photo exhibition on life history of Modi

Pioneer

is governed by one law," he said. The Chief Minister said the country was cruising ahead under the leadership of Narendra Modi and in the past six years, India had earned its name in the world with its

growth. "Modji sacrificed his life for the betterment of the country. He has a vision which is implemented through a policy," he said. Talking about the development in UP, Yogi Adityanath said with the motto

of Sabka Saath, Sabka Vikas, the state government was providing all welfare schemes to all sections of society. "We are committed to the welfare of all sections of society and are doing the same," he said.

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PUBLIC NOTICE

This is to inform the Public that Auction of pledged Gold Ornaments will be conducted by Small Business Fincredit India Pvt. Ltd. (erstwhile Mape Finserve Pvt. Ltd.) on 24th September 2019 at 12.00 PM for Alamnagar at Kundaon Clinic, 1st Floor, Plot No 551 Jha/176 Kanpur Road, Alamnagar Lucknow-226005 & Gomti Nagar Branch at 1st Floor, 1/8, Bhatia Complex, Varam Khand, Gomti Nagar, Lucknow-226002 & Swarnagar Branch at 204-206, 2nd Floor, Nadra Corner, 113/121, Swarnagar Kanpur-208002 and Bareilly Branch: 1st Floor, Building No. SA-57/94,00 Puram Bareilly Uttar Pradesh-243011

The Gold Ornaments to be auctioned belong to Loan Accounts of our various Customers who have failed to pay their dues. Our notices of auction have been duly issued to these borrowers. The Gold Ornaments to be auctioned belong to Overdue Loan Accounts of our various Customers mentioned below with branch name.

Alamnagar Branch: PRO0067006(GLDS1043830) P 0 0 0 5 2 3 8 / (GLDS15203)PRO00615780(GLDS15751)PRO0061771(GLDS04457) PRO00647150(GLDS10387)PRO0060407(GLDS151205)PRO00637646(GLDS104715)PRO0061774(GLDS044738)PRO00647822(GLDS104399) PRO0062400(GLDS18355)PRO0064887(GLDS104336)PRO0064424(GLDS104338)PRO0060315(GLDS1515204)PRO00623844(GLDS181832) PRO00649146(GLDS104337)PRO0067841(GLDS151109)PRO00591266(GLDS158384)PRO0060554(GLDS153763)PRO00645672(GLDS104365) PRO0061025(GLDS16475)PRO0051990(GLDS15385)P 0 0 0 4 1 1 7 1 / (GLDS104716)PRO00645788(GLDS104366)PRO00619532(GLDS108179) PRO00632543(GLDS092248)PRO0059249(GLDS133745)PRO00646172(GLDS158384)PRO0060696(GLDS1515207)PRO00637409(GLDS092246) PRO00623597(GLDS181820)PRO00645252(GLDS104363)PRO0059509(GLDS158385)PRO00608893(GLDS53770)PRO00627345(GLDS10587524) PRO0062498(GLDS10587513)PRO00612927(GLDS158384)PRO00605018(GLDS104461)PRO0061703(GLDS104716)PRO00625238(GLDS10587504) PRO0060888(GLDS151522)PRO0064716(GLDS104363)PRO00649237(GLDS104373)PRO0061767(GLDS104716)PRO00598236(GLDS15794) PRO00609705(GLDS151522)PRO0064716(GLDS104363)PRO00607617(GLDS104363)PRO0060965(GLDS15794)PRO00647324(GLDS104363)PRO0064007(GLDS10587504)PRO00646676(GLDS104377) PRO0061304(GLDS10587522)PRO0064734(GLDS104363) Gomti Nagar Branch: PRO0062122(GLDS104363)PRO0061821(GLDS10587516) PRO0065808(GLDS152481)PRO0061076(GLDS155555)PRO00623186(GLDS158384)PRO0064704(GLDS104363)PRO00644715(GLDS105947) PRO0063990(GLDS12443)PRO0064642(GLDS151487)PRO0059879(GLDS158384)PRO0061076(GLDS104363)PRO0061821(GLDS10587516) PRO00647324(GLDS151545)PRO0063745(GLDS104363)PRO00655975(GLDS158384)PRO00612927(GLDS158384)PRO00605018(GLDS104461)PRO0061703(GLDS104716)PRO00625238(GLDS10587504) PRO00643370(GLDS105930)PRO00603084(GLDS094663)PRO00622907(GLDS158384)PRO0063638(GLDS10587504)PRO0062610(GLDS105931) PRO0063026(GLDS105946)PRO0061459(GLDS158384)PRO00596273(GLDS158384)PRO0061821(GLDS10587516)PRO0061076(GLDS104363)PRO00647324(GLDS10587504)PRO0061076(GLDS104363)PRO0061821(GLDS10587516) PRO0065290(GLDS15458)PRO0063745(GLDS104363)PRO00647324(GLDS10587504)PRO0063990(GLDS158384)PRO0061076(GLDS104363)PRO0061821(GLDS10587516) PRO00647324(GLDS151545)PRO0063745(GLDS104363)PRO00655975(GLDS158384)PRO00612927(GLDS158384)PRO00605018(GLDS104461)PRO0061703(GLDS104716)PRO00625238(GLDS10587504) PRO00643370(GLDS105930)PRO00603084(GLDS094663)PRO00622907(GLDS158384)PRO0063638(GLDS10587504)PRO0062610(GLDS105931) PRO0063026(GLDS105946)PRO0061459(GLDS158384)PRO00596273(GLDS158384)PRO0061821(GLDS10587516)PRO0061076(GLDS104363)PRO00647324(GLDS10587504)PRO0061076(GLDS104

Pesticides, pathogenic bacteria found in samples

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ LUCKNOW

DEATH OF BUFFALOES

The analysis of water samples by Indian Institute of Toxicology Research (IITR) collected from the areas near the pesticide factory in Chinhat, where 25 buffaloes died on August 30, have shown high levels of pesticides, heavy metals and pathogenic bacteria.

In Chinhat industrial area, 25 buffaloes had died and several others taken ill after consuming water from a nullah. A team of IITR visited the site and collected water samples.

IITR director Alok Dhawan, while talking to *The Pioneer*, said water samples collected from four sites near the discharge from the pesticide factory had been tested for pesticides, heavy metals and for the presence of pathogenic bacteria.

When asked whether these could have caused the death of the buffaloes, Dhawan said: "We took the samples on the second day, which means that the pesticides levels must have

been very high on the day the buffaloes drank water from that point. The presence of pathogenic bacteria shows that the buffaloes may have defecated there and all these things combined could aggravate the problem. However, the visceral testing will only be able to show how much of the water the buffaloes consumed from these areas. Our report of the water body only stresses on the presence of pesticides and bacteria." It was found that pesticides such as Acetamiprid, Monochrotophos, Imidacloprid and Carbandazim were present in all the four samples. Imidacloprid was found in the range of 99-299 µg/L while the USEPA permissible limit is only up to 1.5 µg/L.

Furthermore, total Hexachlorocyclohexane was found higher in samples from three points. Among all the four sites, the 'S2' sample site had the

highest concentration of most of the pesticides. In the analysis of heavy metals, concentration of lead, manganese and nickel were found to be higher than the permissible limit in the river.

In the bacteriological analysis, the total microbial count was found in the range of 0.29 to 1.4 million per 100 ml. As per the standards, the total coliform should be 500 MPN (most probable number) per 100 ml while in the samples, it was found much beyond the permissible limits (68000 to 93000 per 100 ml). The permissible limit of dissolved oxygen (DO) is more than 5 mg per litre. The samples analysed had the DO (Dissolved Oxygen) ranging very low (0.00-1.74 mg per litre). The Biological Oxygen Demand and Chemical Oxygen Demand values were also beyond permissible limits in all the four samples.

Dikshit to take part in CPC in Uganda

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ LUCKNOW

Uttar Pradesh Assembly Speaker Hriday Naryan Dikshit will represent the state in the six-day 64th Commonwealth Parliamentary Conference (CPC) being held in Kampala, capital of Uganda, from September 24 to 29.

Speakers of all state assemblies and Union territories of India along with secretaries of the Assembly secretariats will participate in the CPC. All the delegates from India will be given diplomatic passport.

Dikshit will address the CPC on September 27 on the issue of combating rapid urbanisation and rural decline.

Principal Secretary of UP Assembly, Pradeep Dubey, will speak on 'Communication, parliament or interface of the public with the parliamentarians'. The Ministry of External Affairs had in a day-long programme on August 28, briefed the speakers, secretaries of state assemblies on the issues to be discussed at the CPC. The secretaries of almost all the



Union ministries were also present during the briefing. Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla will lead the Indian delegation to the CPC. Deputy Chairman of Rajya Sabha, Harivansh, will also be part of the Indian delegation.

The CPC is being organised by the London headquartered Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (CPA) comprising 52 nation states, all former colonies of Great Britain. As per the established convention of the CPA, members of the delegation of

each nation state can undertake pre or post conference study tour of three nations. The UP delegation on a pre conference will visit London and Hague, the capital of the Netherlands. UP Assembly Speaker Hriday Naryan Dikshit along with Pradeep Kumar Dubey will go to London for a two-day visit on September 20. The Secretary of UP Legislative Council will also accompany the delegation. Chairman of the Council, Ramesh Yadav, is indisposed so he will not be part of the UP

delegation. In London, the UP Assembly Speaker will meet the Indian Diaspora at the Indian high commission on September 20. He will also meet the MPs of the House of Commons, particularly the MPs of Indian origin, on September 22. The UP delegates will also conduct a tour of the House of Commons in London.

The speaker will later visit Hague, the capital of the Netherlands, where the executive branch of the Dutch government is located. In Hague Dikshit will release a self-authored book 'The Way India Thinks'. He will also meet the MP of the Dutch House of Representatives and the Chairman of the Foreign Affairs Committee of the Dutch House of Representatives.

UP TO HOST CPA MEET NEXT YEAR

Lucknow will host conference of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association of India region in January next

year. Over 200 delegates from 52 Commonwealth nation states from all eight regions of the CPA will participate in the conference.

Lok Sabha Speaker, Om Birla, executive chairman of the CPA, India region, has approved the proposal for organising the event in Lucknow in January 2020.

The eight regions of the CPA are Africa, Australia, British Island and Mediterranean, Canada, Caribbean Americas and Atlantic, India, Pacific and South East Asia. Besides delegates from branches in India region, one observer each from the eight CPA regions will be invited to attend the regional conference. The secretary general of the CPA from London is also being invited to attend the regional conference in the state capital.

As per the practice, the host branch — UP branch of the CPA — will bear the cost of organising the conference like food and local transportation of the delegates.

PARADIP PORT TRUST
e-TENDER CALL NOTICE No. AD/OE/ GL-85/2016(PLI/II)/3045 Dtd. 12.09.2019
Name of the work:- "Providing assistance to regular employees in receipt & dispatch of letters/files, distribution of daks, operating computer etc. in various departments/divisions and operational areas of PPT on manpower basis for a period of one year". Estimated cost put to tender ₹ 3,02,76,122/-. The last date & time of submission of bid is 03.10.2019 upto 17.00 Hrs. For details please refer our website www.paradipport.gov.in or ireps@procure.gov.in or www.ireps.gov.in Asst. Secretary (Admn.) PPT/PR/331/19-20 Dt : 13.09.2019

LU extends login date

Lucknow (PNS): Lucknow University has extended the login date for the newly admitted students to September 22. Admission coordinator Anil Mishra said that the students of semester 1 of all the faculties admitted during the session 2019-20 had to complete their logins on the University Data Resource (UDRC) portal

through the link available on the website. "They also have to give the option of paper through their logins. In case some of them have not completed the process yet, they can do so till September 22, after which the data will be transferred for use in the examination process," he said. "Students have to register by entering their student ID. A verification code will be sent on their registered mobile numbers. In case the mobile number of the student is changed, they can submit an application along with a copy of their ID card or copy of their allotment letter to get it updated in the UDRC," he said.

Mishra said the students of Old Campus had to submit it at the Computer Centre. The students studying in the Old Campus have to submit to Dr Vineet Saxena in the Institute of Management Sciences," he said.

NORTH CENTRAL RAILWAY, ALLAHABAD
Tender Notice
E-Procurement Tender Notice No.: 15/P-69/2019-20/TMC/HQ/NCR/ALD Date: 09.09.2019
On behalf of the President of India, Principal Chief Engineer, North Central Railway, Subdarganaj, Allahabad-211015 invites the following E-Procurement Tender: (The complete information along with tender document of this E-Procurement Tender are available in website on www.ireps.gov.in up to 15:00 hrs. of the due date of tender opening.)

Tender No.	Brief Description	Quantity	Tender Value
TMC 00631920	Set of Cylindrical Raoller Bearing Details of Description, make and quantity as per tender document (Acceptable Make: Plasser, HMT, SKF, FAG & Koyo only)	As per Section IV of tender document	₹ 4052291/-

Earnest Money: ₹ 81100/- **Date of opening:** 09.10.2019 **Note:** 1. The complete information along with tender document of above E-Procurement Tender is available on website www.ireps.gov.in up to 15:00 hrs. on the due date of tender opening. 2. Following condition has been included in Tender Document vide Railway Board Letter No. 2001/RS(g)/779/7 Pt. 1 dated 29.06.2017. "Whenever tender is floated with purchase restriction from sources approved by nominated authorities and there exists a suspected cartel situation by approved sources or the rates available from approved sources are adjudged unreasonably high, despite fair efforts as permissible, the purchaser reserves the right to place order on firms outside the approved vendors list without any restrictions" 3. Bids other than in the form of E-Bids shall not be accepted against above Tenders. For this purpose, vendors are required to get themselves registered with IREPS website along with Class III digital signature certificates issued by CCA under IT Act-2000. 4. This tender notice has also been uploaded on www.ncr.indianrailways.gov.in 5. Allocation for Security deposit and Earnest money is "Deposit Misc stores 00844523". 6. In case of any difficulty helpdesk available on the website of IREPS may be approached. 1318/19(I)

E-Procurement Tender Notice
E-Procurement Tender Notice No. 16/P-69/2019-20/TMC/HQ/NCR/ALD Date: 12.09.2019
On behalf of the President of India, Principal Chief Engineer, North Central Railway, Subdarganaj, Allahabad-211015 invites the following E-Procurement Tenders. (The complete information along with tender document of this E-Procurement Tender are available in website on www.ireps.gov.in up to 15:00 hrs of the due date of tender opening.)

SN	Tender No.	Brief Description	Quantity	Tender Value	Earnest Money
1	TMC 00641920	Various types of Bearing. Details of description, make and quantity as per tender document. (Acceptable Make: Plasser, HMT, SKF, FAG, Koyo, INA, IKO, Elgis & Mayfield, [AEC & ZWZ China Developmental order] only)	As per Section IV of tender document	₹ 875861/-	₹ 175200/-
2	TMC 00651920	Various types of bolt hex. Details of description, make and quantity as per tender document. (Acceptable Make: TVS, LPS, Unbrako only)	-Do-	₹ 299565/-	(Exempted)
3	TMC 00661920	Hydraulic 4 Way Valve. Details of description, make and quantity as per tender document. (Acceptable Make: Plasser, Rexroth, Veljan Denison only)	-Do-	₹ 150769/-	(Exempted)
4	TMC 00671920	Squeezing Cylinder small (female) complete. Details of description, make and quantity as per tender document. (Acceptable Make: Plasser, or Equivalent)	06 Nos.	₹ 368160/-	(Exempted)
5	TMC 00681920	Set of Tamping Arm/Tool holder and swivel bearing. Details of description, make and quantity as per tender document. (Acceptable Make: Plasser, or Equivalent)	-Do-	₹ 13048439/-	₹ 261000/-
6	TMC 00691920	Stainless steel bridged Teflon hose Assembly Details of description, make and quantity as per tender document. (Acceptable Make: Plasser, or Equivalent)	-Do-	₹ 217999/-	(Exempted)

Date of opening: 16.10.2019 **Note:** 1. The complete information along with Tender document of above E-Procurement Tender is available on website www.ireps.gov.in up to 15:00 hrs. On the due date of tender opening. 2. Following condition has been included in Tender Document vide Railway Board Letter No. 2001/RS(g)/779/7 Pt-1 Dated 29.06.2017 "Whenever tender is floated with purchase restriction from sources approved by nominated authorities and there exists a suspected cartel situation by approved sources or the rates available from approved sources are adjudged unreasonably high, despite fair efforts as permissible, the purchaser reserves the right to place order on firms outside the approved vendors list, without any restriction". 3. Bids other than in the form of E-Bids shall not be accepted against above Tenders. For this purpose, vendors are required to get themselves registered with IREPS website along with class III Digital signature certificates issued by CCA under IT Act-2000. 4. This tender notice has also been uploaded on www.ncr.indianrailways.gov.in 5. Allocation for Security deposit and Earnest money is "Deposit Misc stores 00844523". 6. In case of any difficulty helpdesk available on the website of IREPS may be approached. 1340/19(I)

E-Tender Notice
E-tender Notice No: CM-I/Deluxe Pay & Use Toilet/BOT/ACOI-B/2019 Date: 12.09.2019
Following e-tender on prescribed tender forms are invited by the Senior Divisional Commercial Manager, Divisional Railway Manager's Office, North Central Railway, Allahabad on behalf of President of India.

E-Tender No.	Name of Work and Station	Minimum reserved L/fee of contract for 15 years	Minimum reserved L/fee of contract for 01 year	Earnest Money (₹)	Cost of Tender Form (₹)
176/2019	Contract of Deluxe Pay & Use toilets on "Built, Operate and Transfer" (BOT) basis at Allahabad Cheeki Railway station Near Station Entrance of COD for a concession period of 15 years.	₹ 3700701.00	₹ 147,268.00	₹ 14800.00	₹ 3540.00

Period of Contract: 15 Years **Time & date for the opening of tender:** At 15:00 hrs. on 10.10.2019 **Website & Notice details:** E-tender forms shall be available on www.ireps.gov.in upto 13:00 hrs on 10.10.2019 from the date of opening of the e-tender. The e-tender Notice can also be viewed on Railway's website www.ncr.indianrailways.gov.in 1344/19(I)

North central railways www.ncr.indianrailways.gov.in CPNCRNG

CITYBRIEFS



Workshop by Sri Sharda Group of Institutions

INT'L OZONE LAYER CONSERVATION DAY

Regional Science City, in collaboration with Directorate of Environment (UP), commemorated International Ozone Layer Conservation Day from September 14 to 16. On Monday, a written quiz contest on 'Ozone and our environment' was organised for school students and a science-making workshop was also organised. Besides this, students from government schools visited the centre and took part in a quiz contest while a puppet show was organised for students and

general public for awareness regarding protection of ozone layer. Prizes and certificates were given away to the winners. About 526 students from different schools and general public took part in the event.

UZBEK-INDIA RELATIONS

A talk on 'Uzbek-India relations' by Farhod Arziev, Ambassador, Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Republic of Uzbekistan to the Republic of India, was organised by Integral University on Monday. It was stated that Uzbek-Indian relations are

deeply rooted, which always served as a solid foundation for the development and strengthening of bilateral cooperation in the political, economic, cultural and humanitarian spheres between both the countries. The event mainly focused on the cultural, economic and social similarities between the two countries.

WOMAN EXEMPLAR PROGRAMME

CII Foundation announced and sought calls for nominations for its 16th edition of Woman Exemplar Programme 2020. The programme identifies, recognises and mentors exemplary women change makers from grassroots, who have overcome grave personal challenges to create transformative work impacting communities and providing a new paradigm for social development. Since its inception in 2005, more than 80 women have been recognised, who further reach out to more than one million beneficiaries every year. Selected by an eminent panel from industry and social sector,

the women exemplars are shortlisted from hundreds of nominations received from various NGOs across the country. Every year, the programme identifies 15 women leaders from grassroots and works with them to increase scale and impact of their work. Three exemplars receive a cash award of Rs 3 lakh at the CII Annual Session, in the presence of senior dignitaries and thought leaders from the government, business, media and civil society.

WORKSHOP

Sri Sharda Group of Institutions conducted a workshop on challenges faced by today's youths and how to overcome the same. Head of Clinical Psychology department, Nurmanzil Psychiatric Centre, Dr Anjali Gupta and career counsellor Shobhit Narain Agarwal addressed the students. The workshop covered major problems faced by youths and their survival. The workshop was aimed at discussing the challenges and also providing solution to the

problems faced by youths. The students were encouraged to be optimistic and to have a positive approach about everything in life. The workshop ended with a question-answer round where experts tried to clear the doubts of students.

FOREIGN UNIVERSITIES

Akshar Sethi, a student of City Montessori School, Kanpur Road Campus, has been selected for admission by eight noted universities of Australia and Canada. His academic excellence and diligence got him this golden opportunity. He attributed his achievement to the robust academic atmosphere of CMS. Akshar has been offered admission by University of Canberra, University of Auckland, Macquarie University, RMIT University, Monash University, Ryerson University, International College of Manitoba, and Fraser International College.



RESTORE NORMALCY...

Referring to the around three months shutdown of internet services in the valley in 2016 due to violent protest after encounter of terrorist Burhan Wani, Venugopal said when Wani was eliminated, the "whole Kashmir went into boil" and 46 persons had lost their lives at that time. Countering the claims of petitioners about lack of medical facilities, he said that 10.52 lakh patients attended the outpatient department (OPD) in Kashmir hospitals till September 15. He said that 67,196 patients have visited indoor patient department in various government run health care institutions and doctors have successfully performed 10,699 major surgeries including caesarean sections and 53,297 minor surgeries in various hospitals in the valley.

Mehta told the bench that restrictions have been removed in 93 out of 105 police stations of the Kashmir division, which comes at 88.57 per cent while in Jammu and Ladakh division, 100 per cent restrictions have been removed.

Mehta said there was sufficient stock of essential drugs and other medical requirements across the hospitals in Kashmir, Jammu and Ladakh and three months stock of essential commodities like food grains, LPG cylinders, petrol, diesel have been ensured there.

He said 8,98,050 LPG cylinders have been home delivered to consumers in the last one month across the valley while 6.46 lakh quintals of ration were distributed there.

"The picture presented before the court is wrong," he said. After the bench said that both the Centre and state should ensure restoration of normalcy in Kashmir, Mehta said, "This direction can be misused elsewhere, not inside the country but outside."

To this, the bench observed, "We are not issuing any direction. We have said that restoration will be on a selective basis keeping in mind the national interest."

When the top court was told about the alleged "shutdown" of mobile and internet services in Kashmir Valley, the bench said these issues could be

dealt with by the Jammu and Kashmir High Court. "Is it the same situation today? We are saying that if it is some local issue then it would be better if the high court dealt with it. It is simpler for the high court to know what is happening in the state in terms of the shutdown of mobile and internet services," the bench said.

PSA SLAPPED...

He has said he had spoken to Abdullah over phone on August 4 and had invited him to attend the conference on September 15. He claimed Abdullah had "verbally communicated" that he would be glad to attend the conference but on August 5, Abdullah, along with other political leaders of Jammu & Kashmir, were placed under "wrongful detention". Reacting to the development, Congress Rajya Sabha MP and Leader of Opposition in the House Ghulam Nabi Azad said, "I strongly condemn it. It is most unfortunate that a (former) Chief Minister of one of the oldest political parties in Kashmir (has been detained)."

"Each Chief Minister, and each political party be it Congress, National Conference and Peoples Democratic Party in Jammu & Kashmir have tried their level best to fight militancy. If there is no militancy today, it is because of these political parties and not the BJP," he told reporters. Azad was on Monday allowed by the SC to visit four districts in Jammu & Kashmir for assessing the impact on life of daily wagers due to the present situation prevailing after the abrogation of Article 370 provisions.

The top court noted Azad's submission that he will not indulge in any political rally or political activity during his visit. The bench allowed Azad to visit Srinagar, Anantnag, Baramulla and Jammu districts of the State subject to any restrictions, if any.

CONG, NCP...

Meanwhile, The Election Commission will visit Mumbai on Tuesday and interact with various stakeholders in the upcoming Maharashtra assembly elections as part of its review of the state's poll preparedness, sources said on

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

Monday. Chief Election Commissioner Sunil Arora will reach Mumbai on Tuesday evening with Election Commissioners Ashok Lavasa and Sushil Chandra and hold meetings with civil administration and police officials besides various parties' leaders there to take stock of the state's poll readiness. The meetings would be spread over two days between Tuesday and Wednesday. The poll panel will be back to Delhi on Wednesday evening. The term of the 288-member Maharashtra assembly ends on November 9 and a new assembly has to be constituted before that.

PAKISTAN TO OPEN...

The corridor will connect Darbar Sahib in Kartarpur with Dera Baba Nanak shrine in Gurdaspur district of Punjab and facilitate visa-free movement of Indian pilgrims, who will have to just obtain a permit to visit Kartarpur Sahib, which was established in 1522 by Sikh faith founder Guru Nanak Dev. Pakistan is building the corridor from the Indian border to the Gurdwara Darbar Sahib in Kartarpur while the other part from Dera Baba Nanak in Punjab's Gurdaspur district up to the border will be constructed by India. Both countries have agreed that Pakistan would allow 5,000 Sikh visitors per day into the country through the corridor, which will also be the first visa-free corridor between the two neighbours since their independence in 1947. Majid said some 76 immigration counters have been set up to cater to 5,000 Sikh pilgrims from India every day. And for 10,000 pilgrims visiting here daily, 152 immigration counters will be set up. He said that initially 5,000 Sikhs from India will come daily and later the number will rise to 10,000.

Tension between India and Pakistan has escalated after New Delhi revoked Jammu and Kashmir's special status. Reacting to India's move on Kashmir, Pakistan downgraded diplomatic ties with New Delhi and expelled the Indian

High Commissioner.

Pakistan, however, repeatedly said that the opening of the Kartarpur corridor will not be hit by the current tension with India. The visiting Indian Sikhs will have to bring their passports with them and they will be issued corridor pass. On return, they will receive their passports from immigration counter after returning the pass. Airport-like facilities will be provided to the pilgrims who will come here by bus, he said. "Finger prints will be taken of every Indian and Pakistani Sikhs entering the Kartar Sahib," he said.

PAKISTAN TO OPEN...

The journalists were told that the visiting Sikh pilgrims will be provided free food and medicines by the Pakistan Gurdwara Sikh Parbhandik Committee. The security of the corridor will be provided by provincial paramilitary forces Punjab Rangers. During the last round of talks on the Kartarpur corridor held last week, Pakistan showed inflexibility and gave unfavourable responses on issues of charging a service fee, the number of pilgrims to be allowed on special occasions and allowing protocol officials to accompany them. "There were three issues on which the Indian side had asked Pakistan to show some flexibility -- their insistence on charging USD 20 per pilgrim, allowing 10,000 pilgrims on special occasions and Indian protocol officer to accompany the delegation that visits Kartarpur everyday.

"We had hoped that all pending issues will be resolved. However we realised that Pakistan was quite inflexible during the talks," Ministry of External Affairs Spokesperson Raveesh Kumar had said.

TRUMP TO JOIN...

This would also be the first time that an American president would be addressing thousands of Indian-Americans at one place in the US. It comes ahead of the 2020 presidential elections in the US in which the influential Indian-American community members are expected to play a

greater role. President Trump, a Republican, has already announced his candidature.

India's Ambassador to the US, Harsh Vardhan Shringla called Trump's participation in the "Howdy, Modi!" event "historic" and "unprecedented". "It is reflective of the strong bonds of friendship and cooperation that has developed between India and the US," Shringla told PTI.

He said it was also reflective of the people-to-people contact that provides the "organic" linkage between the two countries.

The ambassador said the two leaders addressing the event sets a bold precedent, which is unconventional and unique. "It would be quite a historic meeting with Prime Minister Modi and President Trump jointly addressing over 50,000 Indian-Americans, mainly US citizens," Shringla said. White House officials told PTI that a request for the joint address was made by Prime Minister Modi to President Trump when the two met in France last month on the sidelines of the G7 summit. While India is not part of the G7 countries, Modi was invited as a special guest by French President Emmanuel Macron for the summit.

Trump, who enjoys a great chemistry and friendship with Modi, "immediately accepted" the invitation to join him in Houston and directed his officials and secret service to make arrangements, officials said. This would be the third meeting between the two leaders this year. The previous two were on the sidelines of the G20 Summit in June in Japan and in France in July on the sidelines of the G7 Summit.

In October 2016, Trump, then as Republican presidential nominee, addressed a strong crowd of some 5,000 Indian-Americans in New Jersey, a few weeks away from his historic win in the November 2016 elections.

So far, Trump is the only presidential candidate to address the Indian-Americans solely during an election year.

In his address, Trump had said that if elected, he would be the best friend of India in the White House.

Plea against Admiral pick rejected

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

The Armed Forces Tribunal on Monday dismissed Vice Admiral Bimal Verma's petition challenging the appointment of Karambir Singh as the Navy chief on the grounds that the former was the senior most officer for the top job. Verma had filed the petition days after the Government announced Singh as the new Chief after then chief Sunil Lanba was to retire on May 31. Singh took charge the next day.

In his petition in May, Verma, now heading the strategically important Andaman and Nicobar tri-service command, contended that the tribunal should call for his service records besides that of the then incoming chief and see if any "extraneous or irrelevant considerations" were placed before the competent authority to reject his case while the Navy Chief appointment was being made.

Verma also contended that he was the senior most officer after Lanba to be considered for the top job. He was overlooked by the Government and Singh was made the chief. Verma is set to retire in November.

The NDA Government in its 2014-2019 tenure set aside the convention of selecting the senior most officer as the chief and named Bipin Rawat as the Army Chief though he was junior to Lt General P Bakshi. Similarly, Karambir Singh was appointed the Navy chief.

Verma filed the petition in May after the Defence Ministry rejected his statutory complaint challenging Singh's



apointment.

The first plea by Verma was filed in April after the Government announced its decision about Singh.

While rejecting his plea, the Defence Ministry had then clarified that though seniority is an important criterion while appointing services chiefs but it is not the "sole" criterion and has been dispensed with the past too while appointing Navy chiefs.

"The Central Government after careful examination of the matter is of the opinion that this statutory petition dated April 10, 2019, from Vice Admiral Bimal Kumar Verma regarding his non-selection as the chief of naval staff is devoid of merit and be rejected," the Defence Ministry had said while rejecting the officer's plea.

The Defence Ministry also

□ In his petition in May, Bimal Verma, now heading the strategically important Andaman and Nicobar tri-service command, contended that the tribunal should call for his service records besides that of the then incoming chief and see if any "extraneous or irrelevant considerations" were placed before the competent authority to reject his case while the Navy Chief appointment was being made

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Wing Commander Anjali Singh first woman officer attaché posted abroad

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Wing Commander Anjali Singh has become the first woman officer has been appointed as an attaché in an Indian embassy abroad. The IAF officer has already taken charge as the Deputy Air attaché at the Indian Embassy in Moscow. So far, the three Services used to send male officers as Defence attachés in more than 95 countries around the world.

Breaking the glass ceiling, Singh, an officer in the aeronautical engineering wing of the IAF, will represent the country in military related matters to Russia. Moreover, the IAF has taken the lead in appointing the first ever woman officer as an envoy besides having at least eight woman pilots now in various stages of training as fighter pilots. The force has more than 1,800 woman officers and many of them are flying helicopters and transport planes besides perform the role of navigators.

With this path breaking appointment, Singh has opened the doors for her women col-



Wing Commander Anjali Singh joins as the Deputy Air Attaché in Embassy of India in Russia

leagues in other forces also to become attaches thereby signifying growing role of women in the so far male dominated armed forces.

The Navy is also mulling picking women for such prestigious assignments and it was learnt the Service was in the process of suitable candidates for such appointments in foreign countries, sources said on Monday adding the women attaches will play a significant role in projecting India's military diplomacy.

Crackdown on wildlife online traffickers

Enforcement agencies join hands with internet firms to help stop wildlife crime based on 'click, pay and ship' policy

ARCHANA JYOTI ■ NEW DELHI

With wildlife traffickers switching from physical market to virtual ones as India's internet user population reaches 500 million, enforcement agencies are joining hands, among others, with internet firms to help crack down on wildlife cybercrime based on 'click, pay and ship' policy.

Everything from turtles and tortoises to Red Sand Boa, monitor lizard, Red Sanders, body parts of elephants, tigers, leopards etc. are being traded on various websites and mobile applications, Tilotama Varma, Additional Director, Wildlife Crime Control Bureau (WCCB) under the Union Environment Ministry rings the alarm bell.

She added, therefore, it becomes imperative to involve internet companies and find solutions with them to curb online illegal wildlife trade.

In this connection, a meeting was held recently here at the Ministry with companies providing online platform like Google India, Quicqr, Flipkart, IndiaMART besides representatives from business chambers such as FICCI and CII, Central Zoo Authority, National Tiger Conservation Authority, Global Tiger Forum, International Fund for Animal Welfare (IFAW), IUCN and Wildlife Trust of India among others.

The meeting organised by TRAFFIC and WCCB, in collaboration with the US Embassy here and WWF-India enabled creation of a common platform for wildlife law enforcement agencies, internet-based companies, policy makers and market leaders to highlight and discuss problems and solutions for

Everything from turtles and tortoises to Red Sand Boa, monitor lizard, Red Sanders, body parts of elephants, tigers, leopards etc. are being traded on various websites and mobile applications



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curbing online wildlife crime.

Stressing on intensifying global efforts to end wildlife trafficking, Isabella Detwiler, acting Minister counselor for economic, environment, science and technology affairs, US Embassy, New Delhi added: "The web is the biggest marketplace for the illegal trade of wildlife. Wildlife is being trafficked from the comfort of people's homes."

Dr Saket Badola, head of TRAFFIC's India said illegal wildlife trade is a significant threat to wildlife conservation today and in recent years has increasingly moved into cyberspace. With India's internet user population reaching nearly 500 million, cybercrime has become a mounting concern. Large numbers of wildlife species and their parts and derivatives have been found on sale online, among them skins and body parts of tiger, leopard and snow leopard; elephant ivory; rhino horn; pangolin scales; marine species; birds, reptiles. Their timely detection and subsequent enforcement action are fast becoming con-

servation priorities, he added. Ravi Singh, CEO of WWF India emphasised on exploring "the possibilities of data mining, big data analysis and artificial intelligence" while MS Negi, Addl Director General (Wildlife) called the meeting end of the hour to solve the crisis.

According to IFAW's 'research into wildlife crime' last year, "the vast quantity of live animals and their body parts available for sale online and the threat this poses to the future survival of many species." The IFAW, in just six weeks in four countries had, identified advertisements for 11,772 endangered and threatened specimens worth more than £3m.

To tackle wildlife crime, the Global Coalition to End Wildlife Trafficking Online, convened by WWF, TRAFFIC and IFAW was launched last year, bringing together e-commerce, technology and social media companies from across the world to reduce wildlife trafficking online. The Coalition aims to collectively reduce wildlife trafficking online by 80 per cent by 2020.

INSHORT

THREE-DAY NOTICE TO EVACUATE GOVT HOUSE

New Delhi: The Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs (MoHUA) has notified the 'Public Premises (Eviction of Unauthorised Occupants) Amendment Act, 2019 which has come into effect from Monday. As per the Amendment Act, the Estate officer will issue short show cause notice of three days before eviction of the unauthorised occupant from Government accommodation.

CEC TO VISIT MUMBAI FOR ASSEMBLY POLLS

New Delhi: A three-member delegation of the EC, headed by Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) Sunil Arora, will visit Mumbai for review meetings with stakeholders on Tuesday and Wednesday ahead of the Assembly elections scheduled to be held next month.

LEFT TO HOLD PROTEST AGAINST ECO POLICIES

New Delhi: The five Left parties will organise a joint protest against the economic policies of the Government. In a joint statement on Monday, leaders — Sitaram Yechury, General Secretary, CPI(M), D Raja, General Secretary, CPI, Dipankar Bhattacharya, General Secretary, CPI(ML) Liberation, Debabrata Biswas, General Secretary, AIFB and Kshitij Goswami, General Secretary, RSP said a protest will be organised to highlight growing misery on the people.

AI TO BE PART OF CLASS IX SYLLABUS

New Delhi: HRD Minister Ramesh Pokhriyal 'Nishank' instructed officials of his Ministry to develop syllabus on artificial intelligence introduced by the CBSE for Class IX students according to the needs of the industrial sector.

SC ALLOWS TARIGAMI TO GO BACK TO J&K

New Delhi: The SC on Monday allowed CPI (M) leader Mohd Yusuf Tarigami to go back to his home State Jammu & Kashmir. A Bench of Chief Justice Ranjan Gogoi and justices SA Bobde and SA Nazeer said the former MLA does not need any permission to go home if doctors at AIIMS allow him.

COLLEGIUM TAKES DECISION ON KURESHI

New Delhi: The Supreme Court Monday said the Collegium has taken a decision on the elevation of Justice Akil Kureshi as the Chief Justice of the Madhya Pradesh High Court.

NAVAL EXERCISE BEGINS AT PORT BLAIR

New Delhi: A trilateral maiden naval exercise involving India, Singapore and Thailand commenced at Port Blair on Monday, the Navy said in a statement.

Is live streaming of Ayodhya case possible? SC asks its Registry

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court asked its Registry on Monday to inform it whether live streaming of the ongoing hearing in the Ram Janmabhoomi-Babri masjid land dispute case was possible.

A Bench headed by Chief Justice Ranjan Gogoi also asked the Registry to apprise it as to how much time it would take to do so, if possible. "Registry to inform if live streaming can be done and how much time it will take to do so," said the Bench also comprising justices SA Bobde and SA Nazeer.

Senior advocate Vikas Singh, appearing for former RSS ideologue KN



Govindacharya, said the petitioners have faith in the apex court but many petitioners in this case cannot come to the court to take part in the hearing on daily basis.

Since they cannot watch proceedings here, live proceedings will help them to know about details of hearing, Singh said. After the Bench passed the order, Singh sought to know from the bench about the deadline of the report from Registry. The Bench, however, said it depends on Registry.

SC to hear Patel's plea against petition challenging his RS election

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Monday said it will hear on September 23 the plea of senior Congress leader Ahmed Patel seeking stay on further proceedings in the Gujarat High Court on his 2017 election to the Rajya Sabha that has been challenged by rival BJP candidate Balwantsinh Rajput.

A Bench of Chief Justice Ranjan Gogoi and Justices SA Bobde and SA Nazeer agreed to

hear the plea after senior advocate Abhishek Manu Singhvi, appearing for Patel, submitted that the matter is scheduled for hearing in the high court on September 27.

Singhvi, along with senior advocate Dev Dutt Kamath, said there was a need for hearing the matter in the apex court before the high court goes in for further proceedings in which the arguments are at final stage.

Patel has challenged in the

apex court the maintainability of the election petition in the High Court, the advocates said.

Till the apex court decided the maintainability of the election petition, there was a need for stay of proceedings in the high court, they said.

Patel has challenged the order of the Gujarat High Court by which it had dismissed his plea questioning the maintainability of Rajput's election petition.

REMARK ON NORTH INDIANS

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Stepping up its attack on Union Minister Santosh Gangwar for saying that recruiters complain of lack of "quality people" in north India, the Congress on Monday demanded an apology from him, while its general secretary Priyanka Gandhi Vadra asked him to provide figures for jobs given to people from that region in the last five years.

The Congress general secretary also posted a video of the interaction in Bareilly, held on Saturday, during which Gangwar said recruiters complain of paucity of "quality people" in north India for the posts they wish to fill. The Minister represents Bareilly constituency in the Lok Sabha.

At the Congress briefing,

Cong demands Min Gangwar's apology

□ Congress general secretary Priyanka Gandhi Vadra asked Union Minister Santosh Gangwar to provide figures for jobs given to people from that region in last five years

□ Priyanka also a video of the interaction in Bareilly, held on Saturday, during which Gangwar said recruiters complain of paucity of "quality people" in north India for the posts they wish to fill. The

Minister represents Bareilly constituency in the Lok Sabha

□ Clarifying his remarks, Gangwar said his statement "had different context". "What I said had different context that there was lack of skills and the Government has opened Skill Development Ministry..." the Union Labour Minister added

party leader Rajiv Shukla said the Minister's remarks that "youth of north India are not employable is a very big insult to them. The Government and the Minister concerned should clarify their position. The Minister should apologise or should say that this is the policy of the Government."

Clarifying his remarks, Gangwar said his statement "had different context". "What I said had different context that there was lack of skills and the

Government has opened Skill Development Ministry..." the Union Labour Minister added.

"Mr Minister, you have said such a big thing, so please also give the figures now. How many jobs you have given in the last five years and 100 days? How many jobs you have given to north Indians in the last five years? How many jobs were given under the skill India programme?" Priyanka Gandhi said in a tweet in Hindi.

"Do remember that figures

of job losses are with the people," she added. "Mr Minister, it has been more than five years of your Government. There is no job creation. Whatever jobs were there, they have been snatched due to the economic slowdown brought by the Government. You want to escape by insulting north Indians," she added.

Shukla also urged the Government to take note of the serious problem of economy and unemployment and

address the issue seriously and not be in a denial mode, as it was currently.

Shukla said, "If the country's Labour Minister himself is saying that the youth of north India is not employable, is incompetent and are not worthy of jobs, then the Government's problem is over...This is a very serious issue."

He claimed that though the Government has initiated the Skill India campaign but only 30 per cent of those enrolled have got jobs. "The Government should admit that there is a serious economic slowdown. This Government is in a denial mode," he said.

Training his guns on the Government, Shukla said, "It is only about speeches, statements and advertisements, there is nothing else."

Varsity in UP develops nano-silica particle to beat air pollution

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Taking a cue from the super-hydrophobic (water-repelling) nature of the lotus leaves, a team of scientists from UP-based Shiv Nadar University has developed a unique environment-friendly cost effective coating by extracting the nano-silica particle of rice husk to eliminate discoloration of the surface, physical damage or corrosion on a long-term basis.

It also has the potential to offer an alternative to crop residue burning by farmers, a major cause for air pollution in the northern part of the country. "The self-cleaning coating

is a cost-effective and eco-friendly substitute for the existing toxic paints and coatings available in the market," said Dr Harpreet Singh Grewal and Dr Harpreet Arora, Associate Professors who with their research team at the School of Engineering at Shiv Nadar University had developed the coating.

The research which has been published in the scientific journal, Progress in Organic Coatings has been sponsored by the Government's Council of Scientific & Industrial Research (CSIR), and has been tested under extreme weather conditions including rain and storms. Results of the research

indicate that the exposure to the outdoor conditions has no impact on the coating. Another important feature of the coating is that it is non-toxic and can be applied on all household appliances, buildings, automobiles and industrial components to help elongate their life.

Highlighting the importance of this invention coming out of agricultural waste, Dr Rupamanjari Ghosh, Vice Chancellor of the University said, "Dust and corrosion have a detrimental impact on the industrial and mechanical operations especially in regions that deal with the problem of height-ened air pollution. Excessive

It also has the potential to offer an alternative to crop residue burning by farmers, a major cause for air pollution in the northern part of the country

The research which has been published in the scientific journal, Progress in Organic Coatings has been sponsored by the Government's CSIR, and has been tested under extreme weather conditions including rain and storms

corrosion leads to unnecessary wear-and-tear of machines and devices, reducing their efficacy and functional life"

Corrosion has a huge economic and environmental impact on virtually all facets of



the infrastructure, from highways, bridges, and buildings to oil and gas rigs to factories and industrial plants.

In addition to causing severe damage and being a potent threat to public safety, corrosion

disrupts operations and requires extensive repair and replacement of failed assets. Studies have indicated that global cost of corrosion is around US\$ 2.5 trillion, which is equivalent to 3.4 per cent of global GDP.

Pakistan will be destroyed by its own 'demon of terrorism': Naqvi

PTI ■ RAMPUR

Pakistan will be destroyed by its own "demon of terrorism" it has nurtured on its soil, Union minister and senior BJP leader Mukhtar Abbas Naqvi said on Monday. Addressing a large number of people in Rampur during BJP's 'Rashtriya Ekta Abhiyan', Naqvi said a "desperate" Pakistan, its "terrorist friends" and spy agency ISI are now engaged in a conspiracy to raise questions over the patriotism of Indian Muslims.

"But these masters of terrorism should understand clearly that terror outfits like the al-Qaeda and ISIS have failed to find roots in India only because of the nationalist commitment of Indian Muslims," Naqvi said.

The Indian Muslims have always rejected and defeated all forms of terrorism and have always followed the path of peace, brotherhood and humanity, the Minority Affairs Minister was quoted as saying by a statement issued from his office. Naqvi said that Pakistan will be destroyed by its own "demon of terrorism" that is being nurtured on its soil.

Isolated in the entire world due to its "nefarious designs", Pakistan is now



looking for a safety cover for its "terror factory by hypocritically shouting that Islam is in danger", the minister said. Pakistan is a threat to peace and humanity of the entire world, he said. The whole world has now understood what India has known for long, he said. All countries, including Islamic nations, have come to know about the evil designs of the "terror factory" operating in Pakistan, Naqvi said.

Pakistan-sponsored separatists and terrorists had used Article 370 as a weapon to hijack development and peace of the people of Jammu, Kashmir, and Ladakh, Naqvi said. Now that "weapon" has been destroyed by the Modi

government, he said. "Welfare of the people of Jammu, Kashmir and Ladakh will be ensured after scrapping of Article 370. This has sent Pakistan, separatists and terrorists into panic," Naqvi said. He asserted that national security and prosperity of the people of the country is paramount for the Modi government and there will be no compromise on that.

The government has taken "historic bold decisions" in the interest of the country and its people such as scrapping Article 370, he said. Naqvi said the BJP is organising 'Rashtriya Ekta Abhiyan' across the country to inform the people about benefits of scrapping Article 370.

UP honour killing: Dalit burnt alive

Hardoi (UP): A 20-year-old Dalit man was allegedly burnt alive over his relationship with a woman from another caste, a killing that his relatives said also led to his mother's death.



According to the police, the suspected case of honour killing occurred at Bhadesa area of Hardoi district on Saturday.

Abhishek alias Monu was beaten up, kept hostage in a house and set ablaze, Superintendent of Police Alok Priyadarshi said. Locals who rushed to the spot on hearing his cries and took him to a local hospital. He was referred to a Lucknow hospital but succumbed to injuries on the way on Sunday, the SP said.

A relative said Monu's mother died of shock after hearing the news.

According to the SP, locals said Monu was in a relationship with a girl and had gone to meet her when the incident took place.

Monu was returning after arranging Rs 25,000 for the treatment of his ailing mother, Ram Beti (60), his uncle Raju said. Monu was stopped and taken to a house by some people with whom the family had an enmity. They also snatched the money and set him ablaze, according to Raju.

An FIR has been filed against five people, including two family members and two neighbours of the girl, the SP said, adding that an investigation is on. PTI

Shah's Hindi remark: DMK to stage protests on Sept 20

PTI ■ CHENNAI

Upping the ante against "Hindi imposition," a high-level DMK meet on Monday announced protest demonstrations across Tamil Nadu on September 20 to condemn Home Minister Amit Shah's Hindi pitch.

The agitation was to nip in the bud the "adverse effects" of "Hindi imposition on 'mother Tamil'" and the mother tongues of people of other (non-Hindi speaking) states," a resolution adopted at the meet said.

Briefing reporters, DMK chief MK Stalin said the agitation was the first phase of protest on Hindi issue and the further



course of action will be decided on the basis of Central Government's response and consultations with like-minded parties.

No love for Hindi as rashtra bhasha is no love for India, says Tripura CM

Agartala: Tripura Chief Minister Biplab Kumar Deb on Monday claimed that those who are opposing Hindi as the 'rashtra bhasha' (national language) do not love the country.

He, however, made it clear that he was not against English or was not trying to impose Hindi.

"The people who are opposing Hindi as the national language are those who have no love for the country... I am supporting Hindi as the national language as most of the people of our country speak Hindi," the chief minister said.

Had the Britishers not ruled India for 200 years, there would have been no use of English in official works in the country, he said.

According to the Official Languages Act, 1963, Hindi and English are the offi-

cial languages for the Union government and Parliament.

A total of 22 languages of the country are recognised under the Eight Schedule of the Constitution.

Supporting Union Home Minister Amit Shah's assertion on Saturday that Hindi as a language can unite the whole country, Deb said, "Due to loyalty to the colonial rule, English became a status symbol for many people."

"It is not that only English speaking nations progress. Had it been the case, countries such as Germany, China, Japan, Russia and Israel would have not developed," the chief minister said.

He also urged government officials to help people in official works, who does not understand English and can speak only regional languages. PTI

No 'Shah or Sultan' can alter India's diversity, says Haasan

Chennai: Taking a dig at Union Home Minister Amit Shah on the Hindi language issue, Tamil actor-politician Kamal Haasan on Monday said "Shah, Sultan or Saamraat" should renege on the promise of unity in diversity that was made when India became a republic.

Two days after major political parties in Tamil Nadu reacted strongly to Shah's comments in connection with the celebration of Hindi Diwas, MNM party founder Kamal Haasan joined the tribe through a video message and a tweet.

"The unity in diversity is a promise we made when we made India into a Republic. Now no 'Shah, Sultan or Saamraat' should renege on that promise. We respect all languages. But our mother language will always be Tamizh," he said.

Continuing further he added: "Jallikkattu was just a protest. The battle for our language will be exponentially bigger than that. India or Tamil Nadu does not need or deserve such a battle."

"Most of the nation happily sings the national anthem in Bengali with pride and will continue to do so. The reason is the poet who wrote the national anthem gave due respect to all languages and cultures within the anthem," he said. IANS

2 injured in mob attack on family

AMU students protest, demand arrest

PTI ■ ALIGARH

At least two members of a family were injured in an alleged mob attack at a railway station here, triggering protests by Aligarh Muslim University students who said it was an attempt to lynch them.

The attack took place following an altercation Sunday as the family of Afsana Begum was getting off a train while some other passengers were trying to get into the same compartment, according to a complaint lodged with the railway police.

A little later, about 30 peo-

ple reached there and attacked Afsana Begum's family members, their complaint said. Police said two family members, Shafiq and Fahim, were admitted at AMU's Jawaharlal Nehru Medical College. Afsana Begum told reporters that four others suffered minor injuries.

Before the complaint could be lodged with the railway police, the assailants had fled. AMU students said they were outsiders. As the news spread, several Aligarh Muslim University students gathered at the station, demanding the arrest of the unidentified assailants.

Afsana Begum's family had come from Kannauj for the medical treatment of her son Shafiq. The situation was defused after GRP inspector Yashpal Singh assured them that the culprits would be booked.

Ex-Andhra Speaker commits suicide

SEELAM AROZIE ■ VIJAYWADA/HYDERABAD



Former Speaker of Andhra Pradesh Assembly and six-time TDP MLA from Narasaraopet, Dr Kodela Siva Prasada Rao, allegedly committed suicide at his residence in Hyderabad on Monday.

Over the last few months, the former Speaker was in the midst of a major controversy as he was accused of diverting the Assembly furniture to his residence and his son's showroom, inviting sharp criticism from his own party as well as the YSRCP Government.

However, mystery shrouds his death as authorities of the Basavatarakam Hospital, where he was shifted by his family members, said he died due to a massive heart attack. The exact reason that forced the ex-Speaker, who was also a qualified MBBS doctor, to take the drastic step is being ascertained

by the police, sources said. He is survived by wife Sasikala, daughter Vijayalakshmi and son Sivaramakrishna — both doctors. His family members said he was under tremendous stress and strain due to the allegations against him.

A case had been filed against him last month after he admitted to shifting Assembly furniture and computers from the premises to his residence in Guntur. Charges were filed under sections relating to criminal breach of trust by a public servant and dishonestly receiving stolen property at the Thullur police station in Guntur district. Assembly section officer Easwara Rao filed a complaint against the TDP leader.

The former Assembly Speaker had admitted to shifting the property. As Speaker, he claimed, he was the custodian of Assembly property so he kept the furniture in his 'safe custody' after it was 'retrieved' from the old Assembly in Hyderabad while the Capital was being shifted to Amaravati.

After his admission, officials from the Assembly had searched a showroom owned by Rao's family, last month and reportedly identified 32 chairs, four sofas, three tables, one teapoy and other items that belonged to the Assembly. Kodela justified moving the property saying if the furniture was left at the Speaker's chambers in Hyderabad, its maintenance would have been a problem.

The ruling YSR Congress, including its chief Jagannath Reddy, pounced on Kodela and the TDP, accusing the former Speaker of 'stealing' the legislature property. Sattenapalli MLA

Ambati Rambabu said that only because Rao was 'exposed', he was willing to return the property. But even his own party workers lodged several criminal cases against him and his family members. Last month, a section of TDP workers protested at the party's State office in Guntur, demanding Rao's removal as in-charge of the Sattenapalli constituency. Sivaprasad moved the HC seeking directions to the Assembly to take back the furniture.

After speaking to the agitating leaders and workers, party president and former Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu told reporters that the party won't hesitate to take action against top leaders. "We have already prepared a list of leaders who were involved in corrupt practices in the past five years when TDP was in power," he said. On Monday, Naidu said he was "unable to digest" Sivaprasad's death.

Eminent personalities in West Bengal oppose Hindi imposition

Kolkata: Over 50 eminent Bengali personalities from different walks of life have called upon the people of West Bengal to give "due respect to all languages" and "resist attempt to impose just one".

Taking to Facebook, they issued a statement on Monday, urging people to register a strong protest against any bid to edge out Bengali language from their lives.

Among the signatories are poet Subodh Sarkar, poet-columnist Binayak Bandyopadhyay, elocutionists Urmimala Basu and Jagannath Basu and independent filmmaker Pradipta Bhattacharya.

The social media statement was issued two days after Union Home Minister Amit Shah pitched for a common

language in the country and said it was Hindi which is spoken the most and can unite the country.

Apprehending that "a day may come in foreseeable future when our own language, our mother tongue, our dearest Bengali language will become threatened," it said that "intimidatory tactics" from certain quarters to impose one language should be resisted.

Sarkar, in a separate statement, said, "I respect Hindi language. But I equally respect Malayali, Marathi, Konkani and all other languages spoken in this country."

No language can be greater or smaller, no language can be superior or inferior to another, he insisted. PTI

Unhappy with Maha CID's Pansare murder probe report: Bombay HC

Mumbai: The Bombay High Court on Monday said it was "unhappy" with the probe report submitted by the Special Investigation Team (SIT) of Maharashtra CID on the killing of CPI leader Govind Pansare.

A bench of justices SC Dharmadhikari and GS Patel noted that the SIT report did not contain any "independent steps" it had taken during the course of its probe and said "things are not moving".

It was hearing petitions filed by the kin of Pansare and rationalist Narendra Dabholkar seeking a court-monitored probe in their killings.

The court said the only reason it was refraining from passing a more critical order was that it realised the officer concerned had failed to make any significant progress in the past few weeks due to floods in Kolhapur.



"The investigating officer has failed to list any independent steps in this report. Whatever you (SIT) have stated here is all resting on the probe in other cases (the probe into killings of rationalist Narendra Dabholkar and journalist Gauri Lankesh)," the bench said.

"We must convey our unhappiness. Things are not moving. We are refraining from passing critical order against the officer only in light of prevailing

conditions of continuous rains in the area. But we hope the SIT will submit a better and comprehensive report next time," the bench said.

Earlier, during the hearing, the CBI, which is investigating the Dabholkar case, also submitted a progress report on its probe.

CBI counsel, Additional Solicitor General Anil Singh, told the court the agency was working on tracing the weapons used in the case and the exercise would take another four weeks.

The HC accepted the CBI's submissions and adjourned the hearing to next month. Dabholkar was shot dead on August 20, 2013 in Pune while on his morning walk. Pansare was shot at on February 16, 2015 in Kolhapur and succumbed to his injuries a few days later on February 20. PTI

Dengue vaccination in India from next year, says ICMR

Kolkata: Dengue vaccination will be introduced in India early next year on a demonstration basis in areas where the prevalence is high, a senior official of the Indian Council of Medical Research said here on Monday.

A serosurvey (a test of blood serum from a group of individuals) in this connection has been done recently in more than 15 states including West Bengal, and the report was published in the medical journal, Lancet Global Health, the official said. "As soon as we get the approval (from the government), as soon as all permissions and documentations are done properly, we will launch the dengue vaccine in India, ICMR Director General Prof (Dr) Balram Bhargava said. "We are looking at the use of demonstration projects for the dengue vaccine for the future in areas of high prevalence," Bhargava said. PTI

MUZAFFARPUR GANGRAPE

Woman's medical report shows no injury: Police

NHRC seeks report, NCW team to visit Bihar

Bettiah/Patna: Efforts were on to nab the accused named by an 18-year-old former inmate of a Muzaffarpur shelter home who has alleged that she was gangraped inside a moving vehicle, the Bihar police said on Monday and noted it was "not ruling out anything" after a medical examination showed "no external or internal injury" to her.

The National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) issued a notice to the Director General of Police (DGP) of Bihar, seeking a detailed report

in four weeks in the matter while the National Commission for Women said it has formed a committee headed by chairperson Rekha Sharma which would travel to the state on September 19-20 to meet the victim.

The woman was admitted to a government medical college on Saturday evening and a medical examination was conducted by a team of doctors on Sunday.

Superintendent of Police, Bettiah, Jayantkant, said that injuries invariably found on the person of a victim of coerced sexual intercourse were absent in the medical tests reports of the complainant, who had alleged that she was sexually

assaulted by four men on Friday night.

"We are not ruling out anything at this point of time, though. The girl has named all the accused in her FIR who were, admittedly, known to her since before. We are on the look out for the accused persons as we need to examine as to whether any type of deception was involved," the SP told PTI over phone.

Asked about an audio clip that has surfaced in social media with the claim that it has voices of the four accused, besides the person driving the vehicle, while the girl was sexually assaulted close to her house, the SP said it sheds no fresh light on the case. PTI

Maharashtra to deploy drones for emergency medical supplies

TN RAGHUNATHA ■ MUMBAI

In first of its kind partnership, the Maharashtra Government has tied up with a private operator Zipline to use its logistics network of drones for delivery of blood products and emergency medicines to people in remote areas in collaboration with Serum Institute of India (SII).

Being touted as world's first and only national-scale drone delivery service, the Maharashtra's Medical Drone Delivery Service (MMDDS) will be launched in early 2020.

The MMDDS, which is being undertaken as part of the Maharashtra Government's vision to use drone delivery, seeks to establish a universal seven-days-a-week access to life-saving and critical medicines for each of its 120 million citizens over the coming years.

Zipline drones will make on-demand and emergency deliveries of blood products, vaccines and life-saving medications.

Under the tie-up, Zipline will establish a total of 10 distribution centres across Maharashtra in phases in the coming years.

"The State Government's goal is to put almost all of its 120 million citizens within minutes of a lifesaving medical delivery by drone. In the first phase of operations, two distribution centres located near Pune and Nandurbar will be established to service public health facilities in those regions beginning in early 2020," an official spokesperson said.

Each of the two Zipline distribution centers in Maharashtra will cover a delivery area of more than 20,000 square km. They will collectively be capable of serving up to 20 million people. PTI

Using drones, AI and big data, India to draw up digital map with 10 cms resolution

Bengaluru: India has initiated a project to digitally map the country with a resolution of 10 centimetres, using drones and technologies such as Artificial Intelligence and big data, a senior Government official said on Monday.

The herculean task was taken up by the Survey of India, part of the Department of Science and Technology, a few months ago and is planned to be completed in two years, the Department's Secretary, Prof Ashutosh Sharma said.

"...Now we are equipping them (Survey of India) with the latest technologies like drones, Artificial Intelligence, big data analytics, image processing and continuously operated reference system", he told



reporters on the sidelines of an event here. Once the project is com-

pleted, the data will be available to citizens and to Gram Panchayats and local

bodies, empowering them to use it in decision making and planning process.

The survey is currently in progress in Karnataka, Haryana, Maharashtra and the Ganga basin.

"The entire Ganga basin from the beginning to the end, 25 km from either sides of the banks is being mapped with an accuracy of 10 cm," said Prof Sharma.

He stressed the need to have such a digital map.

"Even today we don't have a digital map of India of sufficient accuracy, but this (the new digital map being prepared) is (going to be) the basis for everything you do, whether we have to lay down train tracks, lay a road, put up a hospital, cleaning up Ganga, cleaning up Cauvery or any kind of development and planning," he said.

The official clarified to a question that the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) was not part of the programme.

"This is a different technology. Satellite produces image, but this one is based on drones.

This is based on two technologies because you get higher resolution with that. It is not just getting an image by flying the drone.

A map is different from an image. We have to produce a map which takes into account the curvature," Prof Sharma said.

Speaking about the continuously operated reference system, he said the Survey of India has a reference point at every 20 km.

"Now with the digital technology, each of these points you put actually a beacon...A stick...A digital station... with the help of these digital stations, whose coordinates are well-established, even using your smart phones you can do your mapping with an accuracy of 10 cm," according to him.

Digital map is different from GPS (Global Positioning System), he noted.

While the GPS may have an accuracy of a few metres, the planned digital map — with these reference points at every 20 km — increases the accuracy manifold. "So you can do mapping as you go up and down, walk around with a resolution of 10 cm or better," the official said. PTI

MORTAR SHELLING BY PAK

7 jawans escape death

MOHIT KANDHARI ■ JAMMU

At least seven soldiers of the Indian Army had a close shave with death when at least two mortar shells, fired by the Pakistan Army from across the Line of Control, exploded in the close vicinity of an ambush party late Sunday night.

Considering nature of injuries, the injured soldiers were immediately airlifted to a nearby military hospital past midnight. At present, these soldiers were receiving specialised treatment to recoup at the earliest. Official sources claimed all the soldiers were stable in the military hospital.

According to ground reports, "four jawans received splinter injuries while three others had received minor 'bruise' injuries after two mortars exploded nearby."

Initially, 'unconfirmed' reports late Sunday night had claimed Border Action Team (BAT) of Pakistan army comprising Special Services Group (SSG) commandos may have targeted one of the forward posts using rocket launcher to cause maximum fatal injuries to the Indian jawans. These



reports also claimed the rocket attack was carried out from a close range to maximise the impact.

However, early Monday morning, Defence PRO in Jammu, Lt-Col Devender Anand in a statement said, "Pakistan army initiated unprovoked ceasefire violation by firing of small arms and intense shelling with mortars in Balakote, Mendhar sector around 10.30 p.m on Sunday evening. "Indian army retaliated befittingly", he added.

Defence PRO also denied reports of BAT attack on one of the forward Indian post in Balakote area of Mendhar. Defence PRO clarified, only four soldiers suffered minor splinter injuries during intense mortar shelling. He said, all the

soldiers are safe and under treatment in military hospital. Meanwhile, fresh intelligence reports have also alerted the local formation commanders about regular activity of SSG commandos across some of the forward posts of Pakistan army. In the last few days, Indian agencies are observing hectic activity in areas opposite Mendhar sector.

Ground reports also indicated, several forward villages have been vacated by the Pakistan army to accommodate large number of terrorists across 'activated' launching pads in these villages. Top Indian army commanders are also keeping a close watch on the hectic activity of Pakistani army regulars in these forward areas.

CBI prepares to tighten noose as Bengal ex-top cop remains traceless

SAUGAR SENGUPTA ■ KOLKATA

Former Kolkata Commissioner of Police Rajiv Kumar could not be communicated as his mobile phone remained switched off. The mobile phone of his personal security officer was also traceless. The three top offices — Chief Secretary, Home Secretary and Director General of Police — of the Bengal Government had reportedly informed the Central Bureau of Investigation in response to a letter seeking his whereabouts.

The top offices, however, confirmed that the senior officer was on leave till September 25 and that the CBI's letter had been sent to his residential address. Kumar had earlier sought month's time from the CBI for appearance citing his wife's illness for which he was on leave.

The noose around the senior IPS officer and presently the Additional Director General of CID tightened further with the CBI preparing to oppose any move by him seeking anticipatory bail from a CBI

court in Kolkata.

The CBI had directed Kumar to appear before its officials on Friday within hours of his losing the judicial shield against arrest in Calcutta High Court. Kumar is being probed for his role as the chief of the Special Investigating Team former by the Mamata Banerjee Government in 2013 when the multi-crore Saradha chit fund scam became public.

According to sources certain crucial evidences including a red diary, a pen drive, lap top and several CDs and other documents referred to be other accused and witnesses had gone missing after they were reportedly seized by the SIT in 2013.

The Supreme Court handed over the case to the CBI in 2014 following mass protest against the State police for insincere investigation and tampering of evidence.

The CBI had constantly been complaining of lack of cooperation by the State Police including Kumar who had repeatedly ignored its notice to appear before the Agency.

Didi to meet Modi on Wednesday

SAUGAR SENGUPTA ■ KOLKATA

Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee will fly to Delhi on Tuesday where she will meet Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Wednesday to discuss a whole lot of administrative issues, including the unfulfilled financial and other demands of the State Government, sources at State secretariat Nabanna said.

Mamata Banerjee's sudden visit to Delhi comes against the backdrop of ongoing battle between BJP and TMC over National Register for Citizens and mounting CBI pressure on former Kolkata Police Commissioner Rajiv Kumar who reportedly remained "incommunicado" for the third day on Monday after losing the shield against arrest in Calcutta HC. Kumar is being investigated for his role in the preliminary round of investigations in the Sharada chit fund case.

The Prime Minister is likely to meet Banerjee at 4 pm on Wednesday, sources said whereafter she will return to Kolkata on Thursday, Nabanna sources said adding "an appointment was sought by the chief minister's office last week for a meeting with the Prime Minister ... it will take place in New Delhi on Wednesday," sources said adding among a "whole lot of

issues State's long pending demands" could be discussed.

With the Chief Minister being Modi's staunchest of critics the two leaders are likely to meet each other after a yawning gap of about 18 months. The last time they met for a few moments was at Vishwa Bharati (Shantiniketan) in 2018 where the Prime Minister had come to attend an official programme.

The Wednesday's meeting assumes significance not only against the backdrop of steadily deteriorating chemistry

between the two leaders but also against the CBI's tightening noose around senior IPS officer Rajiv Kumar who is currently functioning as the Additional Director General of CID.

On whether Banerjee would also raise the issue of NRC with the Prime Minister TMC sources said "there is nothing new in a Chief Minister of an opposition party meeting the Prime Minister. No politics should be seen in it. Didi will raise a range of issues including State's pending demands."

Mamata saving herself from CBI, mocks BJP

Kolkata: The BJP leadership Monday mocked West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee for seeking an appointment to meet Prime Minister Narendra Modi in Delhi calling it a "classic example of opportunistic politics" and "a desperate attempt to save herself from the clutches of CBI".

The appointment for the meeting was sought by the chief minister's office last week and Banerjee is likely to meet Prime Minister Narendra Modi in the national capital on

Wednesday, state secretariat sources said on Monday.

She will be leaving for New Delhi on Tuesday, the sources said.

BJP national secretary Rahul Sinha said, "We all know the kind of language she (Banerjee) had used against Prime Minister Narendra Modi during Lok Sabha elections and afterwards. She never had any regard for the federal structure and had even said she does not feel the need to respect Modiji as Prime Minister. PTI

Pawar terms deserters 'cowards'

Mumbai: NCP chief Sharad Pawar has termed those who left his party to join the ruling BJP as 'cowards', and said people will show the deserters their place in the upcoming Maharashtra Assembly elections.

In a setback for the NCP, several senior party leaders recently joined the BJP and the Shiv Sena.

"They are cowards... People of Maharashtra will take care of such people in the elections," Pawar said on Sunday, a day after senior leader Udayanraje Bhosale quit the NCP and his



Lok Sabha membership from Satara and joined the BJP.

"There are some people who have lost their self-respect and switched over to the BJP. I think people will show them their place in the Assembly polls," he said.

Pawar, who founded the

NCP in 1999 after walking out of the Congress, said he worked in opposition for 27 years.

"I managed to work in the opposition at times more effectively. But I don't feel like sitting with this kind of opposition (leaders)," he said.

Besides Bhosale, some of the other prominent leaders who quit the NCP recently include former ministers Jaidutta Kshirsagar, Ganesh Naik and Sachin Ahir, and former state unit president Bhaskar Jadhav.

The NCP chief also attacked the NDA government over the

condition of the economy.

"This government has left many people jobless. This time people will give them a strong message," he said.

Pawar also took a dig at state Chief Minister Devendra Fadnis ahead of his scheduled visit to Sangli and Kolhapur districts, which were the worst hit by unprecedented floods last month.

"He (Fadnis) went there (in flood-hit areas) only once just for few hours and never visited again," he said. PTI

Guv sent Registers Bill to Prez, says Mizoram speaker

Aizawl: Mizoram Assembly speaker Lalrinliana Sailo on Monday said the State Governor has informed him that he referred to President Ram Nath Kovind a Bill that seeks to detect foreigners illegally residing in the northeastern state.

The Mizoram Maintenance of Household Registers Bill, 2019, was unanimously passed by the Assembly on March 18.

Mizoram shares an over 700-km border with Bangladesh

and Myanmar and the measures proposed in the Bill are intended to provide a credible individual identification system and to prevent "usurpation" of benefits of developmental schemes by people who are not bona fide.

Sailo told PTI today that he met Governor Prof Jagdish Mukhi on Friday at the Raj Bhavan here to inquire about the fate of the bill.

"The Governor told me that he has referred the Bill to the

President. However, he was yet to officially inform it to the chief minister or the assembly speaker," Sailo said.

According to the Article 200 of the Constitution, he said, if the governor has to return a Bill, it has to be done 'as soon as possible' after the bill was presented to him. Meanwhile, the speaker on Monday again urged President Ram Nath Kovind to appoint a regular governor for Mizoram expeditiously. PTI

Congress condemns Abdullah's detention

New Delhi (PTI): The Congress on Monday strongly condemned former Jammu and Kashmir chief minister Farooq Abdullah's detention under the Public Safety Act (PSA), saying it is the country's "misfortune" that the leaders who fought for its unity and integrity have been put behind bars.

Congress' reaction came as sources said on Monday that Abdullah has now been detained under the stringent Public Safety Act (PSA), which enables authorities to detain any individual for two years without trial.

The 81-year-old patron of the National Conference has been under house arrest since August 5 when the Centre announced abrogation of the special status given to Jammu and Kashmir under Article 370 and bifurcation of the state into Union territories.

The stringent law was slapped on Abdullah on Sunday. Reacting to the development, Congress Rajya Sabha MP and Leader of Opposition in the House Ghulam Nabi Azad said, "I strongly condemn it. It is most unfortunate that a (former) chief minister of one of the oldest political parties in Kashmir (has been detained).

Aarey metro car shed will meet Nanar refinery's fate: Uddhav

Mumbai: A day after Maharashtra Chief Minister Devendra Fadnis batted for a metro rail car shed in the metropolis' Aarey area, principal ally Shiv Sena's chief Uddhav Thackeray has warned the plan could end up like the aborted Nanar refinery in the Konkarn region.

Uddhav's assertion has the potential to further widen the chasm between the two saffron parties which are hassling over the number of seats to contest the assembly elections, due next month.

The car shed plan for Metro 3 (Colaba-Bandra-Seeppz) line is in the midst of an acrimonious debate as the work will see the felling of over 2600 trees in the Aarey area, considered among the city's prime green lungs.

Responding to a question

on the car shed, Thackeray said, "It will meet the fate of the Nanar oil refinery."

Incidentally, Thackeray's son and Yuva Sena head Aaditya Thackeray has been vocal in his opposition to the metro plan.

A proposed ₹3 lakh crore refinery in Nanar in the state's Ratnagiri district had to be scrapped after the Sena put up a stiff resistance.

In March this year, the State Government scrapped a notification issued in May 2017 to acquire 5,932 hectares of land across 14 villages in Ratnagiri district and two villages in Sindhudurg district for the refinery.

On Sunday, Fadnis said the Supreme Court had clarified that the (Aarey) land did not come under forest or bio-diversity. PTI



Workers at the construction site of phase one of Pune Metro Rangehill Depot, Shivajinagar in Pune city on Monday PTI

Kin allege lack of ventilator in Sion Hospital killed man

Mumbai: A senior citizen died on Monday in civic-run Sion Hospital with family members alleging that he was not provided a ventilator and efforts to sustain him with an ambu pump proved futile.

Nabi Ahmed Ansari (65), a resident of Ambernath in neighbouring Thane district, had suffered brain haemorrhage last week and was shifted from a private hospital there to Sion Hospital soon after, the deceased's brother-in-law Noor Ansari said.

"For two days, we could not

arrange a ventilator and were using an ambu pump every two hours as instructed by authorities. We had inquired about ventilators in other civic hospitals as well but in vain," Ansari said.

Sion Hospital Dean Dr Mohan Joshi said he was unaware of the number of ventilators available at the medical facility, among the biggest in Mumbai, but added that the use of ambu pumps, to mimic the work of ventilators, in such cases was common practice. PTI

JD(S) will contest elections alone, says Deve Gowda

Bengaluru: Days after indicating that his party was still open for continuing its alliance with the Congress, JD(S) patriarch HD Deve Gowda on Monday spoke about going it alone, as he predicted mid-term polls in Karnataka.

"There are chances of mid-term polls in the State. If they come, let's contest independently without going for an alliance with anyone," Gowda was quoted as saying in a statement by his office.

"Will not still commit that mistake. Lets face all the elections independently," he said.

After engaging in a blame game over the collapse of their coalition government, Gowda on Thursday indicated his party was still open for continuing its alliance with the Congress.

He had hinted that he was open for an alliance with the Congress in 17 assembly constituencies, where bypolls have been necessitated following the disqualification of rebel MLAs, but said it all depended on the decision of the national party's interim president Sonia Gandhi.

Gowda and Congress strongman in the state

Siddaramaiah had recently blamed each other for the collapse of the HD Kumaraswamy led coalition Government in July after it was rocked by disidence.

Both Congress and JD(S) leaders have also been non-committal over the continuation of the alliance after the fall of the coalition government.

Congress leaders, including state party chief Dinesh Gundu Rao and Siddaramaiah, the Congress legislature party leader, have maintained that continuation of the alliance will be decided by the high command.

However, several top party leaders, speaking on condition of anonymity, had recently said that the entire rank and file of the party were happy to end the partnership with JD(S).

Amid speculations that several JD(S) legislators may quit the party, the former Prime Minister said he was not worried about it and knows how to organise the party. Gowda has also asked party workers to take the message of the 'good work' done by H D Kumaraswamy as Chief Minister in the previous coalition government, to every household.

"Those who have grown

from the party have spoken against it. I have organized the party, believing in party workers. Let anyone quit. Will not feel disheartened," he added.

Recently former Minister G T Devegowda and S R Srinivas had openly commented against the party leadership, especially Kumaraswamy. Predicting the assembly elections in January or February, Gowda said he and Kumaraswamy would undertake a state-wide tour to strengthen the party.

"The good work done by HDK during the coalition Government will help us," he said, as he called on the party workers to strengthen the organisation, setting aside minor differences. Also repeatedly predicting mid-term polls, Siddaramaiah has said that the BJP Govt cannot survive for long as it has come to power with the help of 17 Congress-JD(S) disqualified MLAs.

The absence and resignation of 17 Congress-JD(S) MLAs during the trust vote had led to the collapse of the HD Kumaraswamy headed coalition government in July and helped the BJP come to power. PTI

SGPC 'tool' in Akali hands: Punjab CM

PTI ■ CHANDIGARH

Punjab Chief Minister Amarinder Singh on Monday yet again dubbed Union Minister Harsimrat Kaur Badal as "an ill-informed woman" and asked her to "stop exploiting" the issue of 550th birth anniversary celebrations of Guru Nanak Dev for "petty political gains".

The Chief Minister also described the SGPC as "a tool" in the hands of the Shiromani Akali Dal and alleged that Badal was "going all out to drive a deeper wedge" between the government and the religious body. The Punjab CM reiterated his description of Badal as an "ill-informed woman" within a week after doing so last Tuesday in reaction to her allegation a day earlier that the government was playing politics over the the Sikh founder's birth day celebration.

The Chief Minister on Monday made the counter allegation after Badal reiterated her accusations that the state government was playing politics over the issue and was trying to "weaken" the religion's highest temporal seat Akal Takht.

The Union minister earlier had also taken exception to the state government's insistence to

holding separate function at a "tent city" in Sultanpur Lodhi in Kapurthala on November 12 to mark the occasion, while the SGPC has decided to hold the main event in a stadium near Gurdwara Ber Sahib there.

The Chief Minister on Monday, in a statement, again dubbed the minister an "ill-informed woman" saying she was making "repeated attempts" to "malign" his government with "baseless" accusations as the "brazen lies" of "an ill-informed woman". He said she was trying to "reduce the sacred occasion into a disgraceful saga of fibs and fabrications".

"Instead of asking the SGPC, which was a tool in the hands of her Shiromani Akali Dal (SAD) to extend support to the state-level function, Harimrats Kaur was going all out to drive a deeper wedge between the government and the religious body," alleged Singh. Lambasting Harsimrat Kaur over her "divisive and provocative" statements, Amarinder Singh said, the Akali leader's comments over the last few days had further exposed the party's "cheap mindset and disruptive" political agenda.

Government of India
Ministry of Health & Family Welfare
Department of Health and Family Welfare,
Nirman Bhawan, Maulana Azad Road, New Delhi, 110011

NOTIFICATION

Applications are invited for the post of **Chairman and Members of the National Medical Commission (NMC), President and Members of the Autonomous Boards of the NMC and the Secretary of the NMC.**

- Applicant must be less than 65 years of age as on 01.08.2019.
- The last date of receipt of application shall be **18th October, 2019** no later than **4pm Indian Standard Time.**
- Detailed advertisement and the application format will be hosted on the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare website at www.mohfw.nic.in and may be downloaded.
- Duly filled application in the prescribed proforma along with attested copy of all relevant certificates super-scribing on the envelope "Application for the Post of **Chairman and Members of the National Medical Commission (NMC), President and Members of the Autonomous Boards of the NMC and the Secretary of the NMC**" should be sent to the following address:

**Secretary,
Department of Health and Family Welfare,
Nirman Bhawan, Maulana Azad Road,
New Delhi, 110011,**

- Scanned copies of the applications along with all relevant documents **must be sent on the email address: mepsection-mohfw@gov.in.**
- Both the hard copy and online applications are mandatory** for consideration of candidature. The scanned online copy will be considered as the final application and **must be received by the due date and time at the designated email address.**

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Not Hindi *hain hum*

Amit Shah's proposal to make Hindi the unifying language is unworkable and threatens our federal plurality



Perhaps nobody could have articulated the difference between a transactional language and the tongue you are born with than the great Nelson Mandela himself, who was as rooted as global. "If you talk to a man in a language he understands, that goes to his head. If you talk to him in his mother language that goes to his heart," he said. Our Constitutional fathers understood this and despite their attempt at breaking the colonial shadow with a pan-India language — something which could be argued better during a

pure nationalist surge after Independence — couldn't make either Hindi or Sanskrit the preferred alternative. More than the political opposition that came from regional leaders, our predecessors, in their infinite wisdom, understood that language was more about culture, identity and one of the many concrete embodiments of "unity in diversity" than it was about a tool of communication. As a result, Hindi and all other languages were accorded official language status, a peerage of sorts. And may we say that this policy has neither affected inclusive development, nor changed the national narrative so far. So while English continued to be a link language of economic mobility and global engagement, each State, as is the nature of federal polity, conducted business in it as well as their own familiar words. Besides, language wars or the North versus South debates are well past their expiry date as even the UN has certified that mother languages are intrinsic to human development. These help establish our personalities and relationships with our families, society and the larger world outside, defining the way we express ourselves and establish our confidence. So Home Minister Amit Shah's bold claim that Hindi should be made the national unifier language and a voice to the world is not only ludicrously revisionist but defeats the civilisational idea of India, which functions as a beehive of plurality rather than as a smartcard monolith of "one India, one language." Of course, in the current swell of jingoism, nobody would want to listen to reason. Imagine if a Tamil-speaking farmer had to avail a Government scheme in the back of the beyond and is expected to not only read Hindi but understand the fine print and sign off, then it is all about unfair imposition, cultural dwarfism and centrist exclusivity over an empathetic embrace. The poor farmer will have no option but to rely on interlocutors and unnecessary bureaucratic inefficiencies. Similarly, howsoever much we may want to disown English, it has become our common connector, an asset for global empowerment, a social aspiration and the reason that the offshore business processing industry was one of the first to take off in India. How would one talk the language of science without peppering it with English? How would one change academic discipline in higher institutions where English is the accepted and entrenched medium of instruction? How would one score in the professional space of multinational companies where English is common currency? And rarely have Hindi-speaking people not chosen to pursue English.

By the same logic, the government machinery would be bound to use a single language as a working medium and that privilege would automatically be discriminatory to those officers whose mother tongue isn't Hindi. According to Article 343 of the Constitution of India, "the official language of the Union shall be Hindi in Devanagari script and (2) Notwithstanding anything in clause (1), for a period of 15 years from the commencement of this Constitution, the English language shall continue to be used for all official purposes of the Union for which it was being used immediately before such commencement." Schedule 8 allows reviewing the progressive use of Hindi but doesn't run down English or takes away the State legislature's right to opt for the language of use. Besides, it clarifies that all authoritative texts must be done in English as well. If anybody thinks that enforcing a language code would foster national integration, then one just needs to look back at how language riots in southern India have at one time threatened it instead. In the words of CN Annadurai, "if we had to accept the principle of numerical superiority while selecting our national bird, the choice would have fallen not on the peacock but on the common crow." Bollywood, often cited as a mass catalyst of the Hindi-speaking market, has only 43 per cent of our total box office revenue. The rest of the pie belongs to regional films. Let's not tinker with the avoidable. Homogeneity isn't always an asset.

War clouds

A drone and missile attack on the Abqaiq oil processing facility should send alarm bells ringing across the world



The shock of the drone and missile attack on the Abqaiq oil processing facility should worry everyone. Not only did it take offline half of Saudi Arabian oil production, the development highlights how critical infrastructure facilities can be targeted by drones from an "unknown" entity. Of course, now the spectre of another conflagration in the Persian Gulf looms large, especially after US President Donald Trump said his nation is "locked and loaded" and attributed the explosions to Iran's nefarious designs on American

interests. If this escalates, oil prices might rise dramatically even though the cooling global economy will possibly temper that. Although Saudi firms have affirmed that there would not be any shortage of supply, repairing reservoirs might take time and India would have to look for an alternative then. Early estimates show that around six per cent of global supplies could be hit. We have imported 19 per cent crude and disruptions could impact our volatile economy.

There are major lessons that India should take from all this. The first relates to protecting critical defence and infrastructural sites from drone attacks. As we learnt when the Gatwick Airport in London was shut down for almost a week, thanks to drones overflying the runways, precision strikes do not need to be fiery and violent to damage the economy. Nations will need to figure out how they will be able to combat drones which can do disproportionate economic damage. Analysing the images from Saudi Arabia, repairs will cost millions of dollars while the attack may have taken just a few thousand dollars to execute. It is also extremely puzzling why Saudi Arabia allowed one of its most critical infrastructure sites to be so poorly guarded and vulnerable. However, just as the Saudis will learn from this lapse, so should India. We must also be prepared for the worst possible outcome in the Middle-East, a war. The clinical nature of the attack makes it impossible to have been conducted by a "non-state" actor (to use Pakistan's favourite term). Any conflict in the region will send oil prices soaring, something the Indian economy, mismanaged to the point of disaster, does not need right now. However, citizens should be made aware of the consequences of such a possibility. This attack should also speed up development of alternative fuels and energy sources, which may not be a bad thing indeed. This is by far the worst shock to global supplies than when Saddam Hussein invaded Kuwait in 1990 and the Islamic Revolution in Iran in 1979.

Perils of GM farming

Global agricultural firms have been spreading the myth that GMOs are needed to feed India when actually, the country needs agro-ecological systems to preserve its biodiversity



SANDHYA JAIN

Seventeen scientists, who consistently advocated Genetically Modified (GM) crops in India, are anxious to revive GMs despite the Centre's growing emphasis on organic farming and native cattle breeds to boost nutritional standards nationwide. The Paramparagat Krishi Vikas Yojana and the Rashtriya Gokul Mission are gaining popularity among farmers. Alarmed at the scale of soil degradation in the country, Prime Minister Narendra Modi, in his Independence day address, urged the farmers to reduce consumption of chemical fertilisers by at least 25 per cent.

Almost parallel to this plea, in *Current Science* (Vol 117, No 3, August 10, 2019), the scientists suggest that GM food crops, ie, Bt-Brinjal that was placed under a moratorium by the then Union Environment Minister Jairam Ramesh and GM-Mustard that was almost cleared for field trials when activists scuttled the attempt, be cleared for commercial cultivation. This activism seeks to reverse Dr MS Swaminathan's admission that green revolution technologies had harmed the environment and that Bt (*bacillus thuringiensis*) and Ht (herbicide tolerant) crops are highly unsustainable (*Current Science*, Vol 115, No 10, November 25, 2018). The article created outrage in pro-GM circles.

Claiming that Bt-cotton made India a cotton exporting country, the proponents say the virtual ban on Bt-brinjal and GM-mustard is hurting India's food and nutrition security that is challenged by population growth, availability of land, water and human resources. They point out that major Western science academies insist there are no genotoxic effects in Bt and Ht crops. In 2016, the US National Academies of Sciences, Engineering and Medicine published a 420-page report on GM crops and observed, "Bt in maize and cotton from 1996 to 2015 contributed to a reduction in the gap between actual yield and potential yield under circumstances in which targeted pests caused substantial damage to non-GE varieties and synthetic chemicals could not provide practical control."

This report, the GM champions assert, states that Bt crop actually increased insect biodiversity on farms compared to non-Bt crop farms on which insecticide was sprayed. The report said the emergence of secondary pests and resistant pink bollworm in India is due to the non-implementation of the refuge strategy. A 2010 report of the European Commission noted, "biotechnology, in particular Genetically Modified Organisms (GMOs), are not *per se* more risky than conventional plant breeding technologies."

GM backers claim that 147 original studies based on primary data from farm surveys anywhere in the world, reporting impact of GM soybean, maize or cotton on crop yields, pesticide use and farm profits



showed that on an average, GM technology reduced pesticide use by 37 per cent, increased crop yields by 22 per cent and increased farmer profits by 68 per cent. Regarding livestock, data from publicly available sources from 1997 to 2011, covering over 100 billion animals, did not reflect negative trends in livestock health and productivity from GM crop-feeds.

Pro-GM scientists doubt the finding of the World Health Organisation's International Agency for Research on Cancer that glyphosate is linked to cancer. The fact, however, is that Austria has already banned glyphosate and Germany has decided to ban it by the end of 2023 as part of an insect (bees, butterflies) conservation programme. Nearly 20 French mayors banned it from their municipalities in August 2019 in defiance of the national Government. Pro-GM scientists recommend GM technology in grains (golden rice) and vegetables, along with the risky gene editing technology. Ironically, they have been blocking the release of Bt-cotton hybrids/varieties developed by scientists of the Indian Council of Agricultural Research (which have safer toxic limits than Monsanto) in

the past three years and are trying to influence Government policy for Monsanto/Bayer profits.

The scientists deliberately ignore the fact that the department-related parliamentary standing committee on Science & Technology, Environment & Forests (August 25, 2017) had categorically asserted that no GM crop should be introduced in India until the bio-safety and long-term effects are evaluated by an independent and transparent process. The standing committee discovered that not a single Government agency had ever conducted studies to assess the impact of Bt-Cotton on the environment, bio-diversity, bio-safety, ecosystem (soil), human and animal health.

A former Secretary of the Department of Biotechnology admitted that his department had no independent research on the impact of GM crops and most research was from the seed and insecticide companies, which cannot be relied upon. The department of health research also admitted that it had not examined the impact of GM crops on human health.

Environmentalist Vandana Shiva points out that the green revolution, based on chemicals and hybrid crops, devastated

India in myriad ways — from loss of agro-biodiversity to degraded soils to water emergency. In 2002, the Government legalised the illegal planting of Bt-cotton. Despite energetic marketing, hard official data proves that Bt-cotton has failed, trapped farmers in debt and is implicated in farmer suicides. Worse, Monsanto's HT Roundup Cotton, which has been planted illegally for over a decade, might be legalised.

Illegal planting of Bt-brinjal in many States is extremely dangerous as India has the world's greatest genetic diversity in brinjal (over 2,500 varieties, including wild varieties), which could suffer irreversible contamination. The motive is to gain access to our incredible germplasm. Global agricultural corporations are keen to control our agriculture with their seeds, chemicals and monoculture farming and are spreading the myth that GMOs are needed to feed India.

At a seminar, Beyond Corporate Driven Industrial Agriculture to Climate Resilient Agroecology (September 6, 2019), experts said India does not need genetic engineering as traditional plant breeding and

newer methods "outperform GE hands down." The world needs agro-ecology to overcome climate change and the vicious cycles of hunger, farming stress and poverty. Recent global scientific review (February 2019) warns that the steep decline in insect populations (40 per cent of insects could become extinct in the next few decades) could trigger the collapse of ecosystems worldwide. The main culprit is industrial scale, intensive agriculture with pesticides and fertilisers. Only agro-ecological systems preserve forests and sequester carbon by naturally removing carbon dioxide from the atmosphere, locking it in plants and, thus, mitigate climate change.

Way back in 1940, Albert Howard (*An Agricultural Testament*) noted that Indian peasants led the world in agro-ecology. India must recover this native wisdom by preserving its biodiversity and seed sovereignty so that future generations are free of hunger and in harmony with humanity and nature.

(The writer is Senior Fellow, Nehru Memorial Museum and Library; the views expressed are personal)

SOUNDBITE

Nationalist Muslims vote for BJP but those who are in favour of Pakistan and are traitors think twice before voting for the BJP.



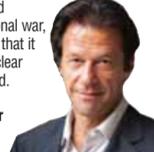
Karnataka Minister —KS Eshwarappa

Everybody's always gonna comment about whatever seems intriguing and he's (Bradley Cooper) one of my best friends in the world.



Actor —Laura Dern

When two nuclear-armed nations fight a conventional war, there is every possibility that it could escalate into a nuclear war and impact the world.



Pakistan Prime Minister —Imran Khan

Why does a former J&K CM (GN Azad) need to seek permission from SC to travel to J&K? It shows that there is no normalcy in Kashmir.



AIMM leader —Asaduddin Owaisi

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Statements that divide

Sir — I love Hindi but imposing it as a national language and creating an unequal advantage for naturalised Hindi speakers is gross discrimination and cannot be a unifier. The Government, having no reform or development measures to boast of, is targeting people's sentiments. But this time, it has scored a self-goal that may cost it electorally in the future. The Congress' history in this regard should be instructive.

Bidyut Kumar Chatterjee
Faridabad

Raking controversy

Sir — The idea of "one nation, one language" mooted by Union Home Minister Amit Shah has expectedly been met with resistance, especially from the southern States. Parties from Tamil Nadu, Karnataka and Andhra Pradesh have been more vocal against the proposal and have accused Shah of running a "divisive agenda" and foisting the "RSS agenda on the country."

While a large number of people in the south do not under-

Accommodation is the key, not imposition

What can be achieved through persuasion should not be imposed through force. Hindi and south India have a peculiar relationship. It is a fact that people in this part of the country are increasingly becoming conversant with this language through Bollywood films and interactions with Hindi-speaking people. Nevertheless, most of us still suffer from the "typical southern slang." Early in June, the Modi Government was caught in the middle of a language storm. The draft National Education Policy had created a perception that Hindi was being made compulsory in all non-Hindi-speaking States. Such was the intensity of the backlash that it was forced to tweak the draft to allay fears. This time, Union Home Minister Amit Shah has test-fired a "one-language" mission, projecting Hindi as the singular choice that can unite the country. Shah should remember that the Constitution does not declare any single language as "national." Hindi is one of the 22 scheduled languages in the country and one of its two official languages at the national level, the other being English.

Many States are more comfortable with English as a link language. The Government should endeavour to ensure that people get quality education and access to speaking skills instead of raising non-issues

stand Hindi, it is gradually penetrating this region due to a number of factors like migration. Yet another reason for the spread of Hindi culture is Bollywood, which is becoming far more popular over there.



like linking language to pride and culture. Using one's native language is no greater marker of tradition or culture, it is a choice. In this globalising world, English opens many doors to students and workers. In countries in the region, there is a thriving industry imparting spoken English to those trying to secure jobs abroad. In India, people prefer a sub-standard English medium school to a vernacular one.

JS Acharya
Hyderabad

Even without any imposition, by far, Hindi as a language has made its presence far and wide. In 1971, 36.9 per cent of Indians spoke Hindi as a first language. In 2011, this increased to 43.6 per cent. In the long run, Hindi may

Hindi States has remained unchallenged until now. The idea of imposing Hindi on non-Hindi speaking people must be buried until people come forward to accept Hindi as the language of communication in lieu of English.

KV Seetharamaiah
Hassan

Diverting attention

Sir — At a time when the country is faced with an economic crisis, it is unfortunate that Union Home Minister Amit Shah has raked up the issue of nationalising the Hindi language. Maybe this is a tactic to divert people's attention from some of the most pressing concerns pertaining to the economy.

Undoubtedly, the call for unity is noble but to think that it can come only out of uniformity is flawed. The BJP's landslide victory must not make it lose its head and cause it to become arrogant, autocratic and non-amenable to reasoning.

Ravi
Via email

Send your feedback to:
letterstopioneer@gmail.com

FIRST COLUMN

The magic of 370 SUVs

I wonder whether the tax department is taking note of the huge amounts being spent by the candidates for the Assembly polls



SHOBHIT MAHAJAN

The cavalcade seemed unending and 10 am on a Sunday morning is an unusual time to be stuck in a traffic jam. The reason, it turns out, is the huge number of Sports Utility Vehicles (SUVs) blocking the road. Each vehicle is adorned with big posters informing us that this is a rally for one of the prospective candidates for the upcoming Legislative Assembly elections due by the end of the year. The rally is to go to Rohtak to impress the party leader who has his own roadshow there. Young lumps wearing saffron T-shirts with the prospective candidate's photograph on it are energetically hanging out of the SUVs, a la Bollywood heroes. Going by the chaos and noise that is already being generated, I shudder to imagine what we are in for over the next few weeks.

I shouldn't have been surprised though. For the last couple of months, the whole of Delhi has been humming with election-related activity. The number of ticket seekers for the ruling party's nomination, since that seems a no-brainer, has been growing every day. And each of these prospects is outdoing the other by showering the electorate with incentives as well as plastering the whole city with their hoardings. T-shirts, clocks, badges, caps and saffron scarves are all the rage it seems. Each of these items helpfully has the benevolent donor's photograph along with of course our leader's picture — as if it was not enough to have his face ubiquitously staring at us from billboards publicising the Ujala Scheme, Ayushman Bharat and other sundry welfare programmes. It is the same story with hoardings — there is hardly an electricity pole, or a tree or even a fence left which does not carry multiple posters.

A novelty in this election is the use of the social media. Almost all of them have bought advertising space from Google and Facebook. Open a search page and there you have the smiling mug shot of one or more of these candidates promising to turn the dusty and dirty city into a paradise. Fortunately no one is promising to make the potholed roads as smooth as the cheeks of a baby as yet!

Incentives, hoardings and social media are not the only outlets being used to publicise and woo voters. Some candidates have found innovative methods of luring the electorate. Organising religious sermons and body-building contests seem passé—the latest one is religious tourism. One candidate organised an all-expenses paid trip to Vaishno Devi. Every day, for about a month, several air-conditioned Volvo busses would take people to the shrine. Their food, lodging and, of course, travel all taken care of. The busses carried huge banners with the suitably saffron-attired candidate's photograph. It remains to be seen whether those who earned some religious merit due to his benevolence would reciprocate on election day.

Then there is another candidate who is going about all this with a precision which would make a management guru proud. This gentleman started his campaign early—hoardings with his mustachioed face, suitably air-brushed to soften the obviously macho image have been all over the city for more than two months. The gentleman in question is the scion of an immensely wealthy family—his father, who incidentally has also unsuccessfully contested many elections, owns large swathes of property in and around the city.

The candidate has obviously hired an image consultant as well as a political strategist to appeal to different segments. Thus, for instance, a musical evening is organised with a popular singer to attract teenagers, while a programme honouring ex-servicemen with several mustachioed generals is held to buttress his patriotic credentials. Since one of the largest communities now in the city is from Poorvanchal, a gala extravaganza was organised recently with performances by all the leading lights of Bhojpuri cinema. This event was meticulously planned with camera cranes and mega sized projection screens to showcase the candidate while the audience of migrant Poorvanchalis waited patiently for their favourite stars to make an appearance. These and other events are then also advertised through ads in leading English dailies.

Needless to say, all this costs a large amount of money. Of course, the elections have not been announced and so the model code of conduct is not in force. But I wonder whether the sleuths of the tax department are taking note of tens of crores which are being so obviously spent by the candidates? The next time I get an Income Tax notice to explain an income of a few thousand, I shall be recalling the ubiquitous mustachioed face! I am pondering all this while sitting in the traffic jam while the SUV cavalcade inches along. I notice that the cars are all numbered sequentially and there is another number too on each of them—370. It turns out that the candidate was so enamoured by the recent heroic acts of the present dispensation that he decided to take a caravan of 370 SUVs to welcome the leader. I thanked our founding fathers for restricting the number of Articles in the Constitution to 448 only.

(The writer is a Professor, Department of Physics & Astrophysics, Delhi University)

I WANT TO APPEAL TO PEOPLE TO PROMOTE THEIR NATIVE LANGUAGES BUT ALSO USE HINDI TO MAKE THE DREAM OF BAPU AND PATEL COME TRUE.

—UNION HOME MINISTER
 AMIT SHAH

POINTCOUNTERPOINT



IT'S PART OF THE SANGH PARIVAR'S PLAN TO LAUNCH A NEW BATTLEFIELD IN THE NAME OF LANGUAGE.

—KERALA CHIEF MINISTER
 PINARAYI VIJAYAN

Recovery will take time

The pace of economic reforms indicates that the FM has grasped the problem and we should see a fiscal revival but it may have an impact only from the third quarter



KARAN BHASIN

PRACHI JHAMB

There has been a lot of talk on the economic slowdown ever since we saw the first quarter growth results. The fact remains that the Finance Ministry has been working round-the-clock to address some of the critical concerns on the economic front both in the short and the long-term.

However, as is the case, most such measures are likely to have an impact only from the third quarter onwards. But the pace of reforms indicates that the Government has understood the different contours of the problem — and this should be a positive sign for economic revival.

As far as the second quarter is concerned, now is the time to look at the high frequency indicators and sit down to forecast economic growth. As with any forecasting exercise, it's important to keep in mind that most such exercises are subject to statistical errors and conditional on whatever information is made available at the time of the forecast. In all likelihood, we will update our forecast in the first week of October.

One of the authors had a forecast of 5.0-5.4 per cent of growth for the first quarter while another predicted 5.2-5.6 for the second quarter. Since then we've seen further weakening of consumption data, combined with less than encouraging automobile sales.

The automobiles industry makes up around seven per cent of the country's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) but it has been in the news for slowing down tremendously, leading to loss of jobs and further impacting the slowdown in consumption. The data released by the Society of Indian Automobile Manufacturers (SIAM) on sale of all vehicles in India shows that the growth in sales fell the most post-2018. The data on private vehicles shows the same trend.

However, the data on commercial vehicles shows that growth was the slowest in 2016 and even though it recovered in 2017, growing at about 29 per cent, since then it has slowed down. The growth in sales of two-wheelers and three-wheelers has been falling since the first quarter of 2018. The fact that the automobiles sector is facing a slowdown shouldn't come as a surprise, given that it had a significantly higher growth in the preceding year. So, part of the slowdown is because of the high growth last year while the rest is explained by the Non-Banking Financial Companies' (NBFC) crisis, the shift to BS-VI emission norms and, of course, to the use of Ola/Uber.

Consequently, there is a need to re-imagine the automobile business and many leaders of the industry have expressed this sentiment over the last couple of weeks. Further, the low consumption growth is well reflected in the monthly Goods and Services Tax (GST) collection numbers which have only witnessed a modest growth on a year-over-year basis. Therefore, in all probability, growth in the second quarter is likely to be muted—but, from the third quarter onwards, we may see a swift recovery aided by several measures by the Finance Ministry.

Our forecast for the second quarter has modified since then as recent data show that growth in the second quarter may well continue to be low. Consequently, given that the first quarter



WHILE GROWTH MAY BE LOW FOR THE SECOND QUARTER, ECONOMIC RECOVERY MAY START FROM THE THIRD QUARTER AND WE MAY BE BACK ON THE SEVEN PER CENT PLUS GROWTH TRACK BY THE NEXT FINANCIAL YEAR. IN FACT, IF WE CONTINUE WITH THE SAME TRAJECTORY, THEN VERY SOON WE MAY JUST MANAGE TO PUSH OUR POTENTIAL GROWTH TO 8.5 AND SUSTAIN AN EIGHT PLUS GROWTH RATE FOR A PROLONGED PERIOD



figures were more towards the lower bounds of the forecast, based on recent data, our forecast stands at 4.9-5.3 per cent of growth for the second quarter.

The silver lining is that the Index of Industrial Production (IIP) has shown a very healthy growth and while it covers only a very narrow scope of economic activity, it is a definite signal of revival. Consequently, it is very likely that the forecast is reversed upwards and growth may well be towards the upper limit of the forecast in contrast with the first quarter. What this essentially means is that there are early signs of economic recovery, which are indeed encouraging, given that we had bottomed out at five per cent.

For the third quarter, growth may well be between 5.8 to 6.2, but this is just a preliminary forecast as we wait to see the impact of the current announcements that have been made by Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman.

Some of these announcements have already been implemented and will have a definite positive impact on the economy. One of them relates to GST refunds for Micro, Small & Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) which have been a concern since their introduction. The Government has recognised that there is a need to have a system for time-bound refunds and it has ordered that all existing ones be cleared within 30 days. Going forward, all refunds should be cleared within 60

days. This will have an immediate impact on addressing the working capital constraints in the MSME space which, in turn, will ensure that the system is infused with fresh liquidity. It is likely that this will have an impact as far as growth in this and the next quarter is concerned.

Similarly, the Government has tried to address concerns of the automobile industry by removing the ban from replacing current vehicles, which will try to absorb some of the accumulated inventories over the last couple of months. What is important is to also consider that the Government has committed to the expenditure as stated in the Union Budget and to the Fiscal Responsibility and Budget Management (FRBM) Act. This suggests that expenditure will continue as per plan and any revenue shortfall may be met through increased disinvestments. Both are again a positive sign for the economy — although one needs to further evaluate whether there's any difference between a 3.3-3.5 per cent deficit, especially during a time when growth has been slow.

Similarly, consolidation of banks, combined with several governance reforms and aggressive moves on the relaxation of external commercial borrowings for NBFCs and now even for affordable housing projects, are both progressive decisions that reflect India's demand for foreign capital.

For the first time, there's a pragmatic realisation that India is a capital-deficit country and the only way to

meet our need for investment would be to seek foreign capital. Luckily, low and negative yields elsewhere make India a no-brainer as far as movement of capital is concerned. Harsh Gupta — a hedge fund manager and a financial columnist — has worked extensively on this area as he's documented the need to be progressive in our outlook towards foreign finance.

It is important to have a progressive and pragmatic outlook towards addressing the current crisis. We need to simultaneously focus on reevaluating some of our previous policy choices and think hard on whether they've helped us meet our growth aspirations. The Finance Minister is doing the same with a strong commitment towards reviving economic growth and towards deep structural reforms. The three press conferences have given us a signal that Sitharaman means business and this fact itself makes us extremely optimistic about India's economic prospects over the near term.

While growth may be low for the second quarter, economic recovery may start from the third quarter and we may be back on the seven per cent plus growth track by the next financial year. In fact, if we continue with the same trajectory, then very soon we may just manage to push our potential growth to 8.5 and sustain an eight plus growth rate for a prolonged period.

(Karan Bhasin is a New Delhi-based policy researcher and Prachi Jhamb is a research associate with the Reserve Bank of India)

Right to live happy in the sunset years

With a gradual slowdown in India's population growth, it's imperative to cultivate 'social prescribing' for the elderly to better address their medical and emotional needs. Promoting healthy ageing can help reduce burden on healthcare services



KEWAL KAPOOR

For all the political discourse about a "population explosion," the truth is that India is witnessing a slowdown in its population growth and is expected to start reversing its numbers over the next two to three decades. With the Total Fertility Rate (TFR) down to 2.3 per woman, we are inching closer to achieving replacement levels of population growth. A slowing population automatically implies a higher number of the elderly as against the young. According to the Economic Survey 2019, the country as a whole will continue to enjoy the "demographic dividend" for a few more decades but some States will start transitioning to an ageing society as early as the 2030s. With declining fertility, reduction

in mortality and increasing survival at older ages, the shift in age structure from young to the old is expected to give rise to a major public healthcare burden. Unfortunately, we do not seem prepared to meet the requirements of this shift with little emphasis on improving our elderly care structure, health structure or building a social support system to address this.

The need is not limited to improving healthcare infrastructure and availability of caregivers for the aged but also to create innovative social solutions to enable the elderly population live better, happier and more productive lives. "Social prescribing" is a strategy that ageing countries are now incorporating in their policy to address the physical and mental health needs of senior citizens and finding a way to address the problem of loneliness.

In 2018, the British Government initiated a new strategy to address the growing problem of loneliness among the country's elderly. As part of this strategy that is expected to be fully in



place by 2023, physicians will be allowed and encouraged to refer people to partake in social activities and social groups to combat loneliness. The strategy is aimed at reducing the burden on the British health service and improving patients' quality of life. This approach will be supplemented by investing in community projects such as creating cafes, art spaces or gardens that can become the focal point of the

social prescriptions for the elderly.

This approach originates from the realisation that additional and the medical needs of the elderly mean we give them a good quality of life, happiness and greater social involvement. Currently, society treats the elderly with a peculiar redundancy. However, changing this approach could help convert a large experienced and wise population into valuable social capital, rather than just a healthcare burden.

Promoting healthy ageing can help delay the onset of disease and allow us to have a more productive population in its sunset years. Healthy ageing is essentially a process through which the elderly are enabled to optimise their physical and mental health and are able to take an active part in society. Community referrals are a mechanism to create and utilise social support structures for the elderly. For example, an elderly couple living alone in a city away from their children can enjoy a much better quality of life if they are a regular part

of a community exercise that allows them to pursue their passions and hobbies. This community referral system must also become an intrinsic part of the healthcare structure so doctors are able to refer their elderly patients to the communities held suitable for them.

There is scientific evidence to believe that staying socially active and relevant not only helps fight depression but also improves cognitive function and helps slow down decline in health. Joining communities and interest groups helps the elderly indulge in fruitful discussions, volunteer for social work and gives them hope and passion to live. Community groups can also be effectively leveraged to educate people to adopt healthy lifestyles that can enable them stay healthier longer.

This strategy cannot be achieved singularly by the Government. Rather, it needs active participation of innovative start-ups, social groups and volunteers to create a medical-social network requisite for social prescribing. Efforts are needed on multiple fronts to make this happen by creating community groups and social support networks to work in cohesion with doc-

tors and hospitals. Next come integrated awareness and training programmes, to prepare a workforce that can act as a vital link between doctors and community groups and can play the role of counselors for the elderly. Guidelines would have to be framed to help doctors recommend and refer patients to social networks apart from laying grounds for coordinated and community-referral system at the levels of villages, towns and cities. Last but not the least, we would need to engage the local population, students and volunteers to spread the activities of community groups. According to a 2017 report by the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), around 12.5 per cent of India's population will be 60 years and older by 2030; by 2050 this will increase to one-fifth of the population. Integrating social prescription with the healthcare structure will not only result in a healthier ageing population but also have the potential to reduce the financial burden on healthcare services.

(The writer is director and creative strategist of an advertising and consulting agency)



FOREIGN EYE



CAMERON COST THE NATION DEAR

By the standards of everyday life, ex-British Prime Minister David Cameron seems an unremarkably decent man; by the standards of some of his colleagues, a kind and thoughtful one. But politicians should not be judged by the standards of everyday life. They should be held to higher ones, because it is in their power to make much more damaging mistakes than most people can.

(The Guardian editorial)



HEALTH

TinyButEffective

Researchers have found that tiny bubbles in our body might potentially be used to treat cancer and could fight the disease better than chemotherapy. These bubbly extracellular vesicles could become mini treatment transporters, carrying a combination of therapeutic drugs and genes that target cancer cells and kill them



DOCYARD DR ROHIT BATRA

Dermatologist

SIR GANGARAM HOSPITAL,
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Cheers to healthy skin

While everyone enjoys the rain, it is a great time to plan an outing or a trip and flaunt your skin in beautiful dresses. But at the same time, one needs to pay special attention to the skin as heat, the warmth of the sun, hot winds cause severe skin damage. The season can be quite tricky as it causes digestive and skin problems and infections.

During the monsoon, there is an increase in the temperature and humidity level in our country. The infections occur more in the skin and scalp areas, especially in the skin fold areas like armpit, groin and others. Moisture remains trapped in these areas and cause fungal infections.

Fungal infections are of two types like dermatophyte and yeast infections. Dermatophytes cause superficial infections of the skin, hair and nails. A yeast infection occurs when there is an overgrowth of yeast (a type of fungus) anywhere in the body. The primary symptoms of fungal infection are red itchy skin.

People are more prone to infections during monsoon due to excessive sweating, dehydration, photo-toxic effects of the sun and, of course, humidity.

Common skin infections are caused in areas where the skin folds like armpits, groin, between the fingers, toes, nails, elbow fold and so on. You might experience rashes and fungal infection and bacterial growth in such areas as they don't get sufficient air to dry off. Nail infections are also quite common during monsoon as bacteria find a home inside the nails and causes infection. So trim/cut your nails regularly.

Hygiene is an important factor for skin care in monsoon.

Take precautions that go a long way in keeping the skin healthy & infection-free. Keep yourself hydrated. Look out for anything odd on your body and immediately consult a dermatologist

Take precautions that go a long way in having healthy and infection-free skin. Drink enough water as it will keep your skin hydrated. Also look out for anything odd on your body and immediately see a dermatologist. There are multiple treatment options which an expert can provide you in order to treat the fungal infection.

While the air is cooler, the humidity increases, and this provides the perfect breeding ground for many kinds of skin bacteria. Acne can bother you on your face or even on your body. Follow these simple tips daily for flawless, glowing skin.

Keep your hands off: As tempted as you may feel to break that ugly pimple on your face, try not to. Breaking a pimple or trying to squeeze out blackheads will leave you with scars and even more pimples. Keep your skin clean and let that zit dry out naturally.

Minimise your facials: A facial may be a great way to relax however if you have an acne-prone skin, you need to avoid frequent massages. Moreover, many beauticians don't know the right way to remove blackheads and this can damage your delicate pores. Don't do a facial more than once a month.

Wash your bed linen well: Research shows that pillow covers, and bedsheets are often the least washed items in our laundry. Germs can stick to your pillows, incubate, and cause acne breakouts. Make sure you wash your linen at least once a week and dry it in sunlight.

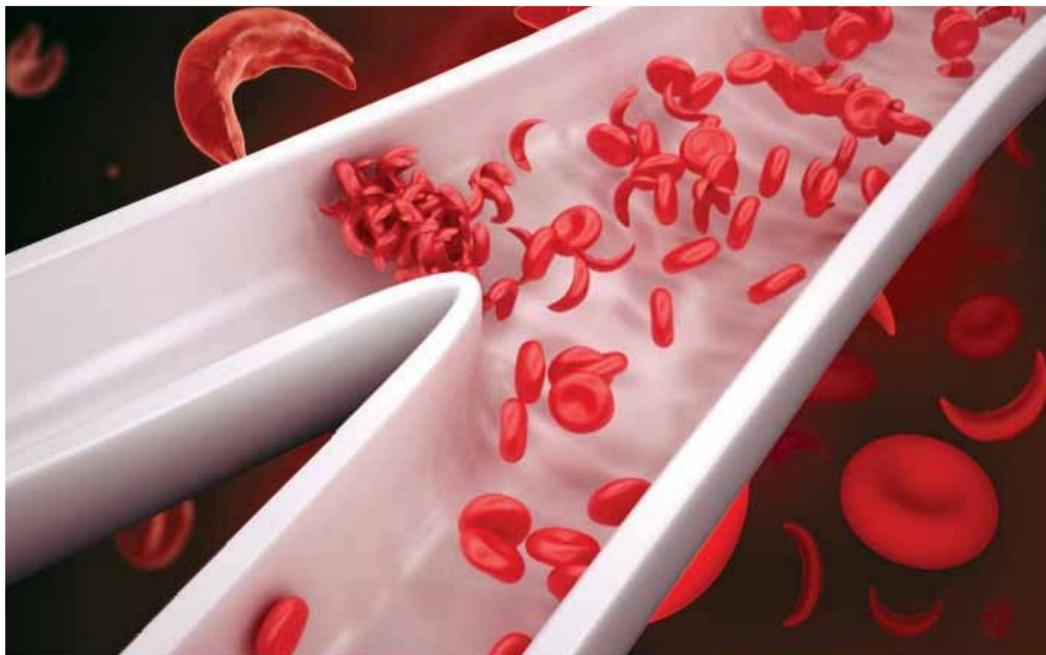
SUMMER COOLERS

GUAVA: A guava is a common tropical fruit cultivated in many tropical and subtropical regions. The fruit is oval in shape with light green or yellow skin and contain edible seeds. The high level of antioxidants, potassium and soluble fiber in guavas are said to help in improved heart health. The fibre content in guava also helps in healthy bowel movement thereby improving the digestive system.

Guava can also help in weight loss as it is low in calories and high in fibre content that may help you feeling full.

Guavas are an excellent source of Vitamin C which may help boost immunity. The wide range of vitamins and antioxidants packed into a guava may work wonders for your skin. Its antioxidants may protect your skin from damage, which can slow down its ageing process, helping prevent wrinkles.

The fruit also contains high water levels that help you feel energetic throughout the day.



ALL ABOUT SICKLE CELL DISEASE

According to the Indian Council of Medical Research survey, about 20% children with Sickle Cell Disease died before attaining the age of two. DR SHEETAL SHARDA tells you what one can do to prevent the complications of this disorder

Sickle cell anaemia (SCA) or sickle cell disease (SCD) is an inherited blood disorder in which the red blood cells take an abnormal sickle shape instead of the normal spherical form. The hemoglobin in our body consists of four proteins sub-units, typically, two subunits called alpha globin and two subunits called beta-globin encoded by the HBA and the HBB gene respectively. A mutation or change in the HBB gene leads to blood disorders like beta-thalassaemia and sickle cell. A specific mutation in the HBB gene encodes for an abnormal hemoglobin which causes the RBCs to take an abnormal shape.

In a normal person, the red blood cells (RBCs) have a lifespan of about 90-120 days. However, in a SCA patient, the RBCs do not last long and break down, due to the abnormal sickle shape. This lack of RBCs in the blood leads to anaemia, which may manifest as swelling of the hands and feet and fatigue. In a SCA patient, the sickle shaped RBCs may block the small blood vessels, which over time leads to complications like delayed growth, frequent pain crisis and can cause multiple organ damage. Patients may require blood transfusions to overcome the acute crisis and to keep the hemoglobin in normal range.

Sickle cell anemia is very common among people of African, Arabian and Indian origin. The first evidence of SCA in India was seen in the tribal population in the

Nilgiri Hills in South India. Based on certain surveys, prevalence of sickle gene is found to be 0-18 per cent in north eastern India, 0-33.5 per cent in western India, 22.5-44.4 per cent in central India and 1-40 per cent in southern India. Wide variability in the prevalence of Hb-S trait is observed in population groups within small geographical areas.

Sickle cell disease is inherited in an autosomal recessive pattern, which means that both copies of the HBB gene have to be mutated in order for the disease to manifest. Carriers or persons with a single mutated copy may be asymptomatic and are called sickle cell traits. If both parents carry a copy of the mutated gene, then their child will have a 25 per cent chance of being affected with SCD.

To prevent the complications of sickle cell anaemia, early diagnosis of the disease is very necessary. Patients who test positive for abnormal haemoglobin by biochemical testing, need to undergo genetic testing to confirm their diagnosis. Screening for SCA can also be done in newborn period with a simple blood test that detects the presence of the abnormal haemoglobin. Being picked up during an asymptomatic period, such children can have timely and early intervention in case of a crisis and thus prevent secondary complications.

Carrier screening is a good way to assess if an individual is a carrier of the disease. Usually it is undertaken on individuals who

IN A NORMAL PERSON, THE RED BLOOD CELLS (RBCs) HAVE A LIFESPAN OF ABOUT 90-120 DAYS. HOWEVER, IN A SCA PATIENT, THE RBCs DO NOT LAST LONG AND BREAK DOWN, DUE TO THE ABNORMAL SICKLE SHAPE. THIS LACK OF RBCs IN THE BLOOD LEADS TO ANAEMIA, WHICH MAY MANIFEST AS SWELLING OF THE HANDS AND FEET & CAUSE FATIGUE



have a family history of SCD or thalassaemia and in certain ethnic groups with an increased risk of SCA. But in some cases there may be no family history and carrier status is confirmed only after the birth of an affected child, which is then too late to prevent the disease and its complications. Hence, carrier screening for SCA and thalassaemia should be offered to every couple who are planning pregnancy, in order to prevent the birth of an affected child or even to take decision of giving birth to an affected child but being prepared for the future management required. Screening of such couples at the right time (pre-conceptional carrier screening) can help them take informed decision regarding their future children. Some couples also opt for pre-marital genetic counselling and genetic testing when they are aware of such genetic conditions in their family.

Let's make it a point to create awareness on the need for effective and early diagnosis of SCD, so that appropriate management can be offered to patients and families suffering from SCD.

Prevention of genetic diseases causing high morbidity and mortality is possible based on genetic testing and availability of prenatal diagnosis. This can help decrease the incidence of genetic disorders in India and help us to reduce the psychological and financial burden on the families.

The writer is Consultant Clinical Geneticist, MedGenome Labs, Bengaluru

UNDER THE LASER

Going for a laser treatment comes with a lot of questions. DR AJAY RANA bursts myths related to it & dos and don'ts that follow



As we move into the new millennium, it is becoming increasingly clear that the usage of laser and modern technologies are entering the most exciting phase of their development. Laser treatment is commonly used for removing facial wrinkles and skin irregularities. The pulsating beams of light are concentrated on the irregular skin which removes the unwanted skin layer by layer. In short, it helps in improving the skin texture and the appearance as a whole. Laser treatment should always be performed by trained and certified practitioners under the supervision of the dermatologist maintaining strict hygiene standards.

Laser treatments are different from laser surgery. Laser treatment for beautification does not involve any kind of surgery. Laser surgery is generally related to stone removal and for eye diagnoses.

Below some popular myths related to laser treatment and the truths behind it:

Myth 1: Laser treatments expose you skin to infections

Fact: Laser treatments don't cause infections as the skin is not cut open to expose the internal layers or veins. There is very little risk of infection as the treatment's nature is very different.

Myth 2: Lasers expose you to radiation

Fact: Laser treatments are safe as only light is used in the process and no harmful ionising radiation. In fact, normal sunlight contains more radiation than most modern lasers used for medical practices.

Myth 3: Lasers can cause burns

Fact: All modern lasers use the theory of selective photo-thrombolysis formulated at the famous Harvard medical school. This actually means that laser light specifically searches and destroys only the intended target and acts like magic bullets.

Myth 4: Lasers cause thinning of the skin

Fact: In contrary, skin thickens after Lasertreatments. Skin is a living tissue and due to laser treatment controlled gentle heating in the dermis induces new collagen and elastin formation, replacing the older damaged tissue. That is why laser treatments have a rejuvenating effect on the skin, reducing wrinkles to become plumper. Of course, your laser therapist should have in-depth knowledge of laser physics to achieve the desired results.

Myth 5: Lasers are unnecessary

Fact: There are many physical problems and diseases for which lasers are indispensable. There are no medications or creams which can permanently remove scars, birthmarks, tattoos, remove unwanted hair, varicose veins, port-wine stains and others. Laser technology is similarly indispensable for many other internal medical conditions too.

Myth 6: Lasers cause cancers

Fact: Lasers are used to remove all kinds of skin and other cancers. Laser light does not contain wavelengths which can trigger cancers.

Myth 7: Laser hair treatment is harmful to health

Fact: The depth of laser penetration is 1-4 mm; it reaches only the hair follicles, and then is completely dissipated and does not penetrate deeper! Laser destroys only the hair bulb.

Myth 8: Laser hair reduction hurts

Fact: A little pin-prick, that's all the pain involved in this treatment. But this depends on individual pain barrier. For particularly sensitive parts of the body like bikini and underarms, an anaesthetic cream can be used. It can be applied everywhere. If your pain threshold is less.

The writer is Founder & Director of ILAMED

DadiKaKehna

Most people rely on medicines to treat headaches.

ROSHANI DEVI shares home remedies that can be just as beneficial to get rid of that pounding in the head



A bad day at work, Monday blues, lack of proper sleep and or getting stuck in traffic jams for hours on end are some of the reasons why one may end up with a pounding in the head. While people reach out for medicine, there are several home remedies that can do the trick.

Ginger is a great stress buster. Prepare tea with ginger and drink that. One can even mix two tablespoons of ginger juice and two table spoons of lemon juice and drink this. You can consume this once or twice a day. Make a paste with two table spoons of water and ginger powder and apply it on the forehead. Leave it on for a few minutes to pro-

vide quicker relief. Have some tea, coffee, or something with a bit of caffeine. But don't over do it. It could ease your headache pain. Drink water. Sometimes, one gets a headache because one has not had enough water. Drink ample amount of fluids like fresh juices, water and coconut water.

Another way to treat and prevent headache is to sleep for seven-eight hours every night. Lack of sleep can disrupt healthy lifestyle and lead to various diseases. Not getting proper sleep can lead to stress which may become the reason for a throbbing headache.



TIPTOP

On September 6, 2019 Dr Harsh Vardhan, Minister of Health and Prahlad Singh Patel, Minister of State (I/C), Ministry of Culture jointly inaugurated the exhibition **Superbugs: The End of Antibiotics?** at National Science Centre, Delhi. The exhibition has been organised by National Council of Science Museums (NCSM) in collaboration with Science Museum, Group, London, Wellcome(UK) and supported by ICMR.

The exhibition explores how society is responding to the enormous challenge of antimicrobial resistance (AMR) and antibacterial resistance (ABR) in particular featuring scientific research from across the globe and personal stories of those waging war on Superbugs.

Bacteria, tiny organisms capable of causing disease are becoming resistant to our most powerful weapon against them, antibiotics and turning into superbugs.

Today antibiotic-resistant superbugs kill up to 7,00,000 people a year. By 2050 that could rise to 10 million.

The exhibition has three major sections: Microscopic, Human and Global. Microscopic Section explores the hidden world of bacteria. Be it their size or characteristics, evolution of superbugs or history of antibiotics; the exhibits of this section will take you on a journey in which you can zoom into the world of microbes, explore the touchscreen multimedia to understand how bacteria evolve into superbugs or flip a digital e-book to know the history of antibiotics.

SLIMLINE

More than 138 million patients are harmed every year by doctors' errors, the WHO warned, just a few days before celebrating the first World Patient Safety Day, with which it seeks to raise awareness of this ongoing tragedy. Errors in diagnosis, errors in medicine prescriptions and treatments, and the inappropriate use of drugs are the three main reasons why so many patients harmed, WHO patient-safety coordinator Dr Neelam

Dhingra-Kumar said at a Press conference. "These mistakes occur because healthcare systems are not suitably designed to deal with these errors and learn from them," Dr Kumar said. Examples of errors are the application of medications in ways they were not designed for, errors in blood transfusions, taking X-rays and in dramatic cases, indicating that the wrong limb needs to be amputated or that the wrong side of the brain requires surgery. — IANS

STUDYCENTRE

Researchers have found that a drug, donepezil commonly used to manage symptoms of Alzheimer disease and other forms of dementia, is associated with a two-fold higher risk of hospitalisation.

According to the study published in the journal Canadian Medical Association Journal, using donepezil increases the risk of hospital admission for rhabdomyolysis, a painful condition of muscle breakdown, compared with several other cholinesterase inhibitors.

Dementia is a growing problem, with almost 10 million newly diagnosed cases every year around the world. "The findings of this population-based cohort study support regulatory agency warnings about the risk of donepezil-induced rhabdomyolysis," said study researcher Jamie Fleet from McMaster University in Canada.

The study, led by researchers at Western University, looked at ICES data from 2002 to 2017 on 2,20,353 patients aged 66 years or older in Ontario, Canada, with a new prescription for donepezil, rivastigmine or galantamine, three cholinesterase inhibitors used to manage dementia and Alzheimer disease.

The researchers found that donepezil was associated with a two-fold higher risk of hospitalisation for rhabdomyolysis, a serious condition that can result in kidney disease. According to the findings, the relative risk was small but statistically significant. — IANS

Saudi assures India of no oil supply shortage: Min

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

India, the world's third-largest oil consumer, will not face any supply disruption after a reduction in production at its No. 2 supplier Saudi Arabia, Oil Minister Dharmendra Pradhan said on Monday. "Following the attacks on the oil stabilisation centres of @Saudi_Aramco, top executives of Aramco have been contacted," he tweeted. "We have reviewed our overall crude oil supplies for the month of September with our OMCs. We are confident there would be no supply disruption to India. We are closely monitoring the evolving situation."

OMCs are oil marketing companies. A massive drone strike on the world's largest crude-processing facility operated by Saudi Arabia's Aramco has driven oil prices to their highest level in nearly four months. The attack has knocked out over half of Saudi Arabia's production as it cut 5.7 million barrels per day or over 5 per cent of the world's supply.

India imports 83 per cent of its oil needs. Saudi Arabia is its second-biggest supplier after Iraq. It sold 40.33 million tonnes of crude oil to India in 2018-19 fiscal, when the country had imported 207.3 million tonnes of oil. Oil prices surged



the most on record on Monday, with Brent crude rising by as much as 19.5 per cent to USD 71.95 per barrel - the biggest gain in dollar terms since futures started trading in 1988. US West Texas Intermediate (WTI) futures climbed 15.5 per cent to USD 63.34, the biggest intra-day percentage gain since June 1998. Earlier in the day, Oil Ministry in a statement said: "Yesterday (September 15), Saudi Aramco officials informed the Indian refiners that there would be no shortage of supplies to them. Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas is closely monitoring the situation in consultation with Indian refiners and Saudi Aramco."

Officials at state-owned oil refiners said Saudi Aramco has informed that there would not be any major disruption, but has sought flexibility for switching to different grades for continuing supplies. Wood Mackenzie VP for Refining, Chemicals and Oil Markets, Alan Gelder said, "This attack has material implications for the oil market, as a loss of 5 million barrels per day of supplies from Saudi Arabia cannot be met for long by existing inventories and the limited spare capacity of the other OPEC+ group members. A geopolitical risk premium will return to the oil price."

Commenting on the situation, Kotak Institutional Equities said the largest-ever

disruption of crude production in Saudi Arabia may keep oil prices elevated in the near term. "Global oil supplies may be adequately met through large inventories and strategic reserves; however, moderation in oil prices will depend on full restoration of Saudi's production, which may at least take a few weeks," it said, adding that any further escalation of geopolitical tensions in the Middle East region may add to the woes. Spike in crude prices, even if temporary, will be negative for Indian oil marketing companies and positive for upstream PSUs and GAIL, it said.

"Any further escalation of geopolitical tensions in the Middle East region, which cannot be ruled out for now, may add to the woes of global oil supplies for now given lack of buffer from Saudi's significant spare production capacity," Kotak said. Crude supplies from Iran and Venezuela have already been curtailed significantly amid sanctions from the US, it added. Wood Mackenzie research director Vima Jayabalan said Abqaiq and Khurais are main processing centres for Saudi Arabia's Arab Extra Light and Arab Light crude oil.

Sensex, Nifty slip as crude oil surges after Saudi attacks

PTI ■ MUMBAI

Indian equity benchmarks slipped on Monday due to panic sell-offs by investors who were caught off guard by soaring crude prices after drone attacks on Saudi Arabia's oil facilities. Marking its worst fall in over two weeks, the BSE gauge Sensex settled 262 points, or 0.70 per cent, lower at 37,123.31. The 30-share index plunged about 356 points in intra-day trade.

Likewise, the broader NSE Nifty closed 79.80 points, or 0.72 per cent, down at 10,996.10. Fresh geopolitical tensions in the Arabian peninsula diverted investors' attention from the struggling Indian economy for which the Indian government came out with another set of relief measures, including for the housing and exports sectors, over the weekend. Tracking oil prices movement, the Indian rupee too came under a tremendous selling pressure, nosediving 67 paise to close at 71.60 against the US dollar.

On the Sensex chart, 24 scrips closed in the red and only 6 ended in the green. Top losers in the Sensex pack included M&M, SBI, Yes Bank, Asian Paints, HDFC, Tata Steel and L&T, shedding up to 2.55 per cent. On the other hand, TechM, ONGC, Sun Pharma, HUL, TCS and Bharti Airtel

rose up to 1.44 per cent. Hit by Saudi oil turmoil, sectoral indices like BSE oil and gas and energy fell the most, losing 1.61 per cent and 1.33 per cent, respectively. Other major sectoral losers were finance, banking, realty, auto and capital goods indices.

Broader BSE midcap index ended 0.27 per cent lower, while BSE smallcap index jumped 0.64 per cent. Crude oil benchmark, Brent Futures, surged by almost 20 per cent to USD 71.95 per barrel (intraday) on Monday after twin drone attacks on Saturday wiped out more than half of Saudi Arabia's crude supply. It was also the biggest gain in Brent in dollar terms since futures started trading in 1988.

However, Brent Futures saw some moderation and was trading at USD 66.63 per barrel, still up 10.59 per cent over the previous close. Shares of oil and gas companies HPCL, BPCL, IOC, Castrol India and Reliance Industries plunged as much as 7 per cent. Stocks of aviation firms SpiceJet, InterGlobe Aviation and Jet Airways also cracked up to 3.95 per cent.

"Over the weekend, the drone strikes on Saudi have added to the trade war related uncertainties and deteriorated market condition globally," said Gaurav Dua, Sr VP, Head - Capital Market Strategy &

Investments, Sharekhan by BNP Paribas. "Moreover, the Indian economy will also get impacted due to surge in crude oil prices. No wonder, the Indian equity market ignored the important initiatives announced by the government to the support housing sector and boost exports, he added.

Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman on Saturday unveiled over Rs 70,000 crore of measures for exporters and the real estate sector, including about Rs 30,000 crore new spending in plans such as setting up of a stressed asset fund, as part of efforts to boost economic growth from a six-year low. Further, government data on Monday showed that wholesale price-based inflation remained unchanged at 1.08 per cent in August. Inflation in food articles rose to 7.67 per cent in August from 6.15 per cent in July.

"Going ahead, if the tensions in Middle East worsen, it will have adverse impact on inflation prints," said Rahul Gupta, Head of Research - Currency, Emkay Global Financial Services. Elsewhere in Asia, Shanghai Composite Index and Hang Seng ended in the red, while Kospi settled in the green. Stock exchanges in Europe were also trading on a negative note in their respective early sessions.

WPI inflation unchanged at 1.08 pc in Aug

New Delhi (PTI):

Wholesale price based inflation was unchanged at 1.08 per cent in August, reinforcing the expectation of a rate cut by the RBI in the October policy review. Although the RBI takes into account the consumer price index based inflation while deciding its monetary policy stance, the decline in core inflation has strengthened the case for a rate cut, said an expert.

According to the data released by the Ministry of Commerce & Industry on Monday, the increase in prices of certain food items was partially neutralised by static prices of manufactured goods during August 2019. The WPI (wholesale price index) inflation was 1.08 per cent in July and 4.62 per cent in August 2018. Inflation in food articles rose to 7.67 per cent during the month as against 6.15 per cent in July mainly on account of rise in prices of vegetables and protein-rich items.

Vegetable inflation went up at 13.07 per cent from 10.67 per cent in the previous month. Inflation in protein-rich items like egg, meat and fish rose to 6.60 per cent last month from 3.16 per cent in July. However, fuel and power basket continued to witness deflation at 4 per cent in August as against 3.64 per cent in July.

BSE 500

NIFTY 50

SCRIP	OPEN	High	LOW	LTP	CHANGE
NIFTY 50	10994.85	11052.70	10968.20	11003.50	-72.40
TITAN	1123.90	1152.00	1115.40	1147.50	24.10
BRITANNIA	2660.00	2730.00	2646.10	2722.85	48.25
TECHM	710.10	723.25	710.10	719.90	9.50
ONGC	130.95	133.25	128.60	130.50	1.65
COALINDIA	197.65	201.20	196.60	200.55	2.35
SUNPHARMA	421.00	429.50	419.95	425.75	2.90
WIPRO	245.10	247.85	244.10	246.90	1.55
HINDUNILVR	1801.00	1824.75	1800.00	1814.00	8.45
HINDALCO	198.10	201.25	197.95	201.15	0.80
TCS	2159.95	2173.40	2126.40	2150.00	8.05
BHARTIARTL	343.00	345.40	338.40	344.15	1.10
GAIL	130.40	132.65	128.60	129.55	0.30
CIPLA	467.00	472.00	464.10	470.00	1.00
EICHERMOT	16580.00	16834.35	16351.00	16700.85	11.45
BAJAJ-AUTO	2859.00	2887.70	2850.00	2874.00	-4.20
HCLTECH	1079.00	1078.95	1057.00	1066.90	-1.60
INFY	832.05	837.90	825.55	827.60	-1.70
GRASIM	715.05	726.55	710.05	716.00	-1.55
JSWSTEEL	222.50	227.50	222.50	225.00	-0.75
BAIFINANCE	3395.00	3449.95	3382.30	3416.50	-10.80
POWERGRID	201.00	204.00	200.85	202.00	-0.65
ITC	239.20	240.85	238.30	239.05	-0.85
VEDL	147.95	151.00	147.15	147.75	-0.55
DREDDY	2731.00	2766.40	2703.10	2720.00	-11.55
ICICIBANK	408.50	415.65	406.75	411.35	-2.05
AXISBANK	666.40	674.40	664.95	670.75	-3.50
TATAMOTORS	128.00	130.30	126.50	128.80	-0.75
HDFCBANK	2251.90	2262.65	2241.00	2243.95	-13.50
MARUTI	6349.90	6489.00	6340.10	6399.65	-50.55
NTPC	123.35	124.15	121.85	123.00	-1.00
KOTAKBANK	1474.00	1491.85	1465.00	1471.00	-13.25
ULTRACEMCO	4019.70	4056.00	3975.00	3990.60	-40.55
HEROMOTOCO	2755.00	2794.00	2722.40	2744.00	-32.60
RELIANCE	1189.00	1219.10	1186.10	1210.80	-14.80
INFRAEL	252.05	254.60	248.75	251.05	-3.35
IOC	126.00	129.55	124.65	128.30	-1.80
ADANIAPORTS	373.00	373.80	368.10	368.85	-1.55
INDUSIND	1354.00	1356.95	1338.60	1342.50	-20.95
INDUSINDBK	1380.05	1395.00	1365.00	1376.80	-21.85
ZEE	348.40	356.80	344.35	344.60	-5.90
BAJAJFINSV	7314.85	7385.00	7252.90	7264.65	-124.10
TATASTEEL	362.00	366.40	358.60	360.80	-6.55
HDFC	2080.00	2083.00	2038.00	2044.80	-39.05
ASIANPAINT	1510.00	1526.95	1502.10	1519.00	-29.20
YESBANK	67.60	68.20	65.95	65.15	-1.40
IBULHSGFIN	445.00	456.70	430.75	431.70	-10.55
UPL	570.00	575.00	561.10	564.00	-14.15
SBN	288.20	290.45	283.80	284.35	-7.35
M&M	345.00	350.50	335.65	335.95	-15.30
BPCL	388.00	391.45	378.50	378.80	-29.75

NIFTY NEXT 50

SCRIP	OPEN	High	LOW	LTP	CHANGE
NIFTY NEXT 50	26282.15	26494.60	26163.40	26431.20	-28.90
PAGEIND	18650.00	19682.05	18425.00	19355.00	901.05
COPAL	1253.70	1326.40	1250.00	1313.00	59.30
GICRE	178.80	188.00	175.00	185.80	8.35
GODREJCP	620.50	642.50	618.10	639.00	15.45
L&TH	92.80	96.40	91.55	95.05	10.45
BOSCHLTD	14080.00	14290.00	13846.00	14290.00	216.30
AJANTHAPHARMA	628.00	639.30	626.15	637.30	8.05
DIVISLAB	1618.35	1659.50	1615.30	1645.60	16.65
SHREECEM	18700.00	19037.85	18573.55	18945.00	146.55
DMART	1566.40	1608.00	1560.00	1580.00	10.40
PETRONET	267.00	270.70	262.20	268.00	1.75
DABUR	449.90	457.30	449.00	455.80	2.80
HINDZINC	217.00	220.65	217.00	219.10	1.30
CONCOR	529.95	536.00	520.80	535.20	2.70
LUPIN	764.10	780.00	760.70	767.60	3.50
ACC	1514.80	1539.90	1502.55	1530.00	3.35
AMBUJACEM	199.50	203.00	197.35	201.45	0.45
SRTANSFNC	1040.10	1070.00	1038.55	1053.00	0.70
CADILAC	240.10	248.00	239.55	242.00	0.10
SIEMENS	1235.00	1258.60	1230.60	1246.65	0.35
PEL	1899.50	1934.80	1875.50	1904.00	0.50
PGHL	10326.75	10423.90	10200.00	10325.00	-1.75
MOTHERSUMI	106.95	107.90	105.15	107.00	-0.05
NHPC	23.90	24.15	23.85	24.10	-0.05
UPL	1272.15	1285.85	1242.95	1271.00	-5.65
NMDC	84.75	87.45	84.75	85.80	-4.00
SBLIFE	785.90	798.75	785.00	794.65	-3.65
HAVELLS	669.45	677.30	665.75	670.00	-3.10
ICICI	1133.50	1139.00	1101.00	1130.00	-5.35
ICICIPRULI	415.00	422.80	412.65	415.00	-2.40
ABB	1357.85	1369.90	1331.00	1340.05	-8.00
HDFCLIFE	537.00	540.00	533.55	537.10	-3.30
MARICO	380.75	385.30	378.55	379.80	-2.45
HDFCAMC	2664.95	2679.90	2618.85	2647.85	-17.35
NIACL	107.00	108.00	105.45	106.70	-0.75
BIOCON	230.55	234.70	228.75	230.55	-2.10
BANDHANBNK	454.00	454.00	448.70	450.05	-5.10
MCDOWELL-N	612.00	614.95	608.85	608.95	-7.05
KRF	59799.00	59980.00	59300.05	59400.05	-719.90
SAIL	33.55	33.80	33.15	33.35	-0.45
ONFL	2950.00	2950.00	2654.00	2905.00	-41.90
BANKBARODA	98.95	102.25	97.50	98.50	-1.45
ASHOKLEY	62.75	63.45	62.25	62.45	-1.00
PIDILITIND	1364.00	1365.00	1335.65	1354.50	-23.80
BAJAJHLDNG	3389.00	3399.00	3301.60	3310.00	-66.00
BHEL	51.00	51.35	50.45	50.55	-1.10
DLF	162.95	165.50	160.10	161.50	-4.55
IDEA	5.30	5.50	5.20	5.25	-0.15
INDIGO	1669.95	1681.90	1652.10	1669.80	-49.05
HINDPETRO	260.00	260.00	250.40	255.40	-15.75

Script	Open	High	Low	LTP	TVSMOTOR	384.90	390.40	378.00	386.70
KOTAKBANK	1478.70	1491.75	1465.10	1472.60	SRF	2770.00	2804.25	2731.35	2796.95
HDFCBANK	2256.25	2259.00	2240.65	2243.15	BAJAJ-AUTO	2877.90	2887.00	2850.10	2874.10
BIOCON	231.65	234.75	228.40	230.70	BHARTIARTL	341.15	345.30	338.70	343.90
GRAPHITE	309.00	374.00	306.65	371.95	BRITANNIA	2674.00	2728.95	2652.60	2717.20
HDFC	2080.00	2081.40	2038.25	2046.30	ICICIPRULI	416.90	422.80	413.00	414.65
YESBANK	67.90	68.25	66.00	67.10	DBL	437.00	467.70	431.65	441.20
RELIANCE	1191.00	1218.15	1188.50	1210.80	UPCL	577.90	577.90	561.35	564.00
IBULHSGFIN	445.25	456.90	431.00	435.20	DREDDY	2731.95	2762.00	2703.75	2725.10

Johnson finally meets EU's Juncker

AFP ■ LUXEMBOURG

Six weeks after he took office and six weeks before he is due to lead Britain out of the European Union, Prime Minister Boris Johnson is to meet Jean-Claude Juncker.

On Monday, after comparing himself to berserk comic book super-smasher Hulk, the British leader will enjoy a genteel working lunch with the EU Commission president.

Downing Street has confidently billed the Luxembourg visit as part of efforts to negotiate an orderly divorce from the union before an October 17 EU summit.

But Brussels has played down talk of a breakthrough, insisting Johnson has yet to suggest any "legally operable" proposal to revise a previous withdrawal accord.

Chief EU negotiator Michel Barnier, who will join the leaders for their talks in Juncker's native Grand Duchy, has said he has "no reason to be optimistic".

And the European Parliament will this week vote on a resolution rejecting Johnson's demand that the so-called "Irish backstop" clause be stripped from the deal.

Johnson insists this measure, which temporarily keeps the UK in the EU customs



European Commission President Jean-Claude Juncker (right) reaches out to shake hands with British Prime Minister Boris Johnson prior to a meeting at a restaurant in Luxembourg on Monday. British Prime Minister Boris Johnson was holding his first meeting with European Commission President Jean-Claude Juncker on Monday in search of a longshot Brexit deal. AP

union, has to go if he is to bring the agreement back to the House of Commons.

But the accord will also have to win the support of the other 27 EU leaders and the European Parliament if Britain is not to crash out with no deal on October 31.

Johnson, in turn, boasts that he would rather be "dead in a ditch" than ask his European counterparts to post-

pone Brexit for a third time into next year.

"Be in no doubt that if we cannot get a deal — the right deal for both sides — then the UK will come out anyway," Johnson said, writing in the Daily Telegraph on Monday.

It is difficult, then, to see what might come from the lunch, which will be held behind closed doors with no plan for a joint statement after-

wards. Nevertheless, Johnson told the Mail on Sunday he remains "very confident" of getting a new deal before the October 17 summit.

"A huge amount of progress is being made," he said, referring to "technical talks" on border procedures between his Brexit adviser David Frost and Barnier's team.

Speaking to the BBC Sunday, Brexit Secretary

Stephen Barclay indicated that any post-Brexit transition period could be extended past 2020 in order to resolve issues with the border.

Johnson compared himself to Marvel comics hero Hulk, the rampaging mutant alter-ego of a mild-mannered nuclear scientist whose catchphrase is "Hulk smash!" "The madder Hulk gets, the stronger Hulk gets and he always escaped, no matter how tightly bound in he seemed to be," Johnson told the paper. Johnson's strategy faces opposition at home, where rebel and opposition MPs have passed a law aimed at forcing him to seek a Brexit delay.

Britain's Supreme Court will rule this week on a bid to overturn Johnson's decision to suspend parliament and limit time to debate the crisis.

Barnier will address the European Parliament session in Strasbourg on Wednesday as MEPs vote to reaffirm and reinforce the EU Brexit stance.

Barnier previously briefed the leaders of political groups in the assembly on Thursday last week, and he had a downbeat message.

"I can't objectively tell you whether the contacts we have undertaken with Mr. Johnson's government will lead to an agreement between now and mid-October," he said.

No-deal Brexit would be 'disaster' warns EU biz lobby

AFP ■ BRUSSELS

A shock exit by Britain from the EU without an agreement would be "a disaster", the European employers' organisation, Business Europe, warned on Monday.

One of the EU's most powerful lobbies, Business Europe issued the warning just hours before British Prime Minister Boris Johnson is scheduled to meet European Commission President Jean-Claude Juncker in Luxembourg. Both sides are under intense pressure to mend fences just a month and a half before the Britain's scheduled departure on October 31.

But Johnson, unlike his predecessor Theresa May, has said he is determined that the United Kingdom will leave the EU on October 31, with or without agreement.

"No deal is a recipe for disaster and should be definitely ruled out. A disorderly, no deal exit of the UK would be extremely harmful for all sides," said Markus J. Beyrer, CEO of Business Europe in a statement.

Johnson on Friday said he was "cautiously optimistic" before his meeting with Juncker.

US hints at military response to Saudi attacks as oil surges

AFP ■ LONDON

Oil prices made their biggest jump since the Gulf War on Monday after President Donald Trump warned that the US was "locked and loaded" to respond to attacks on Saudi oil infrastructure that Washington blamed on Iran.

It is the first time the president has hinted at a potential American military response to the drone attacks, which slashed Saudi oil production by half and led both the kingdom and the United States to announce they may tap their strategic reserves.

"Saudi Arabia oil supply was attacked. There is reason to believe that we know the culprit, are locked and loaded depending on verification, but are waiting to hear from the Kingdom as to who they believe was the cause of this attack, and under what terms we would proceed!" Trump tweeted.

China on Monday urged the US and Iran to "exercise restraint... in the absence of a conclusive investigation or verdict".

The Tehran-backed Huthi rebels in Yemen, where a Saudi-led coalition is bogged down in a five-year war, claimed Saturday's strikes on two plants owned by state energy giant Aramco.

But US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo pointed the finger squarely at Tehran, saying there was no evidence the "unprecedented attack on the world's energy supply" was launched from Yemen.

"The United States will work with our partners and allies to ensure that energy markets remain well supplied and Iran is held accountable for its aggression," the top US diplomat said.

That drew an angry response from Tehran, where foreign ministry spokesman Abbas Mousavi said: "Such fruitless and blind accusations and remarks are incomprehensible and meaningless."

The White House said on Sunday that Trump may still meet Iran President Hassan Rouhani at the UN meeting in New York next week, but Tehran said Monday it did not think "such a thing would happen".

Baghdad, caught between its two main allies — Tehran and Washington — also denied any link to the attacks amid media speculation that the

drones were launched from Iraq.

Saudi de facto ruler Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman has said the kingdom is "willing and able" to respond to this "terrorist aggression." But a tit-for-tat strike on Iranian oil fields is "highly unlikely," Middle East expert James Dorsey told AFP.

"The Saudis do not want an open conflict with Iran. The Saudis would like others to fight that war, and the others are reluctant," said Dorsey, from the S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies in Singapore.

The attacks sent oil prices sky-rocketing on Monday, with Brent futures up \$12 — or nearly 20 percent — in the first few minutes of business, while WTI jumped more than \$8, or 15 per cent.

It was the biggest rise since the 1990-1991 Gulf War.

Saturday's explosions set off fires that engulfed the Abqaiq plant, the world's largest oil processing facility, and nearby Khurais, which hosts a massive oil field.

Saudi's energy infrastructure has been hit by the Huthis many times before, but this strike was of a different order, abruptly halting 5.7 million barrels per day (bpd) or about six percent of the world's oil supply.

"The genie is out of the bottle," said Bill Farren-Price, director of the London-based RS Energy Group.

"It is now clear that Saudi and other Gulf oil facilities are vulnerable to this kind of attack, which means that the geopolitical risk premium for oil needs to rise." No casualties were reported but the full extent of the damage was not clear.

Aramco also said it will dip into its reserves to offset the disruption. On Saturday, CEO Amin Nasser said that "work is underway" to restore production, but the incident could affect investor confidence ahead of Aramco's stock market debut.

The company would need weeks to reach full output again, Bloomberg News reported Sunday, citing unnamed sources.

Trump tweeted that he had "authorized the release of oil from the Strategic Petroleum Reserve, if needed, in a to-be-determined amount" that is "sufficient to keep the markets well-supplied."

Israeli PM vows to annex 'all the settlements' in West Bank

AP ■ JERUSALEM

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu vowed Monday to annex "all the settlements" in the West Bank, including an enclave deep in the heart of the largest Palestinian city, in a last-ditch move that appeared aimed at shoring up nationalist support the day before a do-over election.

Locked in a razor tight race and with legal woes hanging over him, Netanyahu is fighting for his political survival. In the final weeks of his campaign he has been doling out hard-line promises meant to draw more voters to his Likud party and re-elect him in Tuesday's unprecedented repeat vote.

"I intend to extend sovereignty on all the settlements and the (settlement) blocs," including "sites that have security importance or are important to Israel's heritage," Netanyahu said in an interview with Israeli Army Radio, part of an eleventh-hour media blitz.

Asked if that included the hundreds of Jews who live under heavy military guard amid tens of thousands of Palestinians in the volatile city of Hebron, Netanyahu responded "of course." Israelis head to the polls Tuesday in the second election this year, after Netanyahu failed to cobble together a coalition following April's vote, sparking the dissolution of parliament.

Netanyahu has made a series of ambitious pledges in a bid to whip up support, including a promise to annex the Jordan Valley, an area even moderate Israelis view as strategic but which the Palestinians consider the breadbasket of any future state.

Critics contend that Netanyahu's pledges, if carried out, would enflame the Middle East and eliminate any remain-

"I intend to extend sovereignty on all the settlements and the (settlement) blocs, including sites that have security importance or are important to Israel's heritage"

ing Palestinian hope of establishing a separate state. His political rivals have dismissed his talk of annexation as an election ploy noting that he has refrained from annexing any territory during his more than a decade in power.

Israel captured the West Bank and east Jerusalem from Jordan in the 1967 war.

Over 2.5 million Palestinians now live in occupied territories, in addition to nearly 700,000 Jewish settlers. Israel already has annexed east Jerusalem in a move that is not internationally recognized. The international community, along with the Palestinians, overwhelmingly considers Israeli settlements in the West Bank and east Jerusalem illegal.

Tuesday's vote will largely be a referendum on Netanyahu, who this year surpassed Israel's founding prime minister as the country's longest-serving leader.

He has cast himself as the only candidate capable of facing Israel's myriad challenges. But his opponents say his legal troubles — including a recommendation by the attorney general to indict him on bribery, fraud and breach of trust charges — loom too large for him to carry on.



In this Sunday photo released by Saudi Press Agency, SPA, Saudi Energy Minister Prince Abdulaziz bin Salman (centre) shakes hands with staff during his visit of the Saudi Aramco plants one day after the attacks in Abqaiq, Saudi Arabia. Saudi Press Agency via AP

Aramco attacks show company entangled in Saudi politics

AP ■ DUBAI (UAE)

The weekend drone attack on one of the world's largest crude oil processing plants that dramatically cut into global oil supplies is the most visible sign yet of how Aramco's stability and security is directly linked to that of its owner — the Saudi government and its ruling family.

The strikes, which US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo blamed on Iran despite staunch denials by Tehran, led to suspension of more than 5 per cent of the world's daily crude oil production, bringing into focus just how vulnerable the company is to Saudi Arabia's conflicts outside the country's borders, particularly with regional rival Iran.

That matters greatly because Aramco produces and exports Saudi Arabia's more than 9.5 million barrels of oil per day to consumers around

the world, primarily in Asia.

It also comes as the state-owned company heads toward a partial public sale. To prepare for an initial public offering, the company has recently taken steps to distance itself from the Saudi government, which is controlled by the Al Saud ruling family.

The plan to list part of Aramco is key to Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman's economic diversification efforts that are aimed at preparing the kingdom for a future less reliant on oil exports for revenue.

As he races to overhaul the economy, he's also led Saudi Arabia as its defense minister into a war in Yemen that appears to have made the kingdom, and by extension Aramco, more vulnerable to attacks.

The pre-dawn attacks Saturday were claimed by Iranian-backed Yemeni rebels, although there are questions about whether the drones were

launched from Yemen.

Saudi Arabia has been at war with the Houthi rebels in Yemen since early 2015, but this is by far the most infra-structurally devastating attack inside the kingdom since the conflict began.

Eurasia Group notes that Saudi Arabia's air defense systems are designed to defend against traditional threats but are ill-equipped to tackle asymmetrical aerial threats from drones.

The attacks targeted Abqaiq processing facility and the Khurais oil field.

Abqaiq is home to the world's largest oil processing facility and crude oil stabilisation plant, where oil is made safe for transport on ships.

Aramco's handling of the incident is being watched closely, particularly amid reports of a local listing of 1 per cent of the company as soon as November.

The public first learned of

the attacks from residents of the area who uploaded videos and photos of the massive fires at the processing facility in the eastern city of Buqayq.

It wasn't until 22 hours later that Aramco issued its own statement, acknowledging its plants had been attacked and that daily production of 5.7 million barrels of crude had been disrupted.

Aramco CEO Amin Nasser was quoted in the brief statement as saying work was under way to restore production and a progress update would be provided in around 48 hours.

The Wall Street Journal cited Saudi officials as saying a third of output would be restored on Monday, but a return to full production may take weeks.

What commodity traders are most looking for now is how long the suspension of production will last.

Aramco has not said what that timeframe might be.

Crude oil futures shot up 9.5 per cent to USD 60 after trading opened Sunday evening in New York, a dramatic increase.

The sustainability of the rally will hinge on an assessment of the magnitude and duration of the supply shortfall, said Vandana Hari, founder of Singapore's Vanda Insights.

Hari said potential investors in Aramco are going to be looking at the company's transparency and communication practices in this current crisis. "Having said that, it's clear that Aramco does not operate independently from the government and is not free to manage its own messaging," she said.

"It is the whole world's concern. With that in view, the official communication on the matter has fallen woefully short so far."

Hasnain Malik, head of equity strategy research at the Tellimer investment research and advisory firm, said the attacks demonstrate the security risks "which should be baked into the valuation of Aramco." The Saudi crown prince has set Aramco's valuation at around USD 2 trillion, but many estimates put it at closer to USD 1.5 trillion.

Ranjith Raja, a lead analyst at Refinitiv, said a major disruption to Aramco's processing plant will have an effect on the company's ability to meet client expectations and contract requirements.

Already, ship tracking data shows some 16 tankers that can carry 2 million barrels of crude anchored off Saudi Arabia's eastern coast until further notice. About four ships are loaded each day from Saudi Arabia's main eastern port, but since the attack only two have been loaded and left their docks, Raja said.

Gandhi Circle in Israel moved to more prominent location

PTI ■ KIRYAT GAT (ISRAEL)

A Gandhi Circle was inaugurated on Monday at a more prominent junction in Israel's southern town of Kiryat Gat to mark the 150th anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi.

The Gandhi roundabout, the first in Israel, was earlier inaugurated in Kiryat Gat in January 2016 to mark 60 years of the establishment of the township.

Kiryat Gat is a small township in the south of Israel with about 3000 Indians from the Bene Israel community living

here. They are primarily immigrants from the Mumbai region.

At a ceremony organised at the town's community hall, Mayor Aviram Dahari called it a "historic day" when people in Israel were showing "respect for a great soul".

"It's a historic day. During the last sixty years, Kiryat Gat absorbed Jewish immigrants from all over the world, while carefully preserving their uniqueness and cultural heritage. The monument of Gandhi here is a sign of respect that we feel here for the Indian

community in Kiryat Gat and in the world", Dahari said.

India's Ambassador to Israel, Pavan Kapoor, described it as another "landmark event in the relations" between India and Israel.

"It is very special that in the 150th birth anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi the circle is being moved to a more prominent junction. This is something unique in Israel and it is something unique which we hope will be seen in many different forms as part of the India-Israel partnership as we go along", Kapoor noted con-

gratulating the Indian community members assembled from different parts of the country whom he called a "bridge" between the two countries. "You talked about the values of Mahatma Gandhi. About truth, about non-violence, peace, compassion, upliftment of everyone, dignity to everyone. In India we have caste and people have been treated differently. He talked about bringing them all to the same level. In the same way with the Jewish people coming from all over it becomes important that everyone is treated

equally and is empowered", the Indian envoy stressed.

"These are values that he talked about which are universal and I am sure that with the kind of monument that you have in Kiryat Gat today, his eternal messages will carry on for times to come", he emphasised.

The Kiryat Gat municipal officials, Mayor Dahari, Indian Ambassador and the community members also applauded the efforts of an Indian community member, Roger Judah, who has been the driving force behind realising the project

your actions, for they have become your habits.

Acknowledge and watch your habits, for they shall become your values. Understand and embrace your values, for they become your destiny".

The other side has a picture of the Mahatma with a quote, "satisfaction lies in the effort, not in the attainment", inscribed under it.

"It is a symbol of the warm friendship enjoyed between the people of India and Israel. It is a proud moment for us, Indian Jews in Israel, to be hon-

ouring a leader whose message remains relevant till today", Aharon, a community member from Ramle, told PTI.

Students from a near by school also participated in the function. Dahari emphasised that it is also an "educational initiative for local children to learn about other cultures and their greatness". The ceremony was conducted in Marathi, English and Hebrew with the participation of the Indian Jewish community members. The Indian embassy has also been organizing a series of functions to commemorate Gandhi's 150th birth anniversary.

Muslim nations ask Pak to engage in backdoor diplomacy with India

PTI ■ ISLAMABAD

Some influential Muslim nations have asked Pakistan to engage in backdoor diplomacy with India and requested Prime Minister Imran Khan to tone down his rhetoric against his Indian counterpart to de-escalate tensions between the two nations over Kashmir, according to a media report on Monday.

When Saudi Deputy Foreign Minister Adel Al-Jubeir and UAE Foreign Minister Abdullah bin Al-Nahyan travelled together to Islamabad on September 3, they came with a "message" on behalf of their leadership as well as some other powerful countries, The Express Tribune reported.

They asked Pakistan to engage in backchannel diplomacy with India.

They met Prime Minister Khan, Foreign Minister Shah Mehmood Qureshi and Chief of Army Staff General Qamar Javed Bajwa during their day-long trip.

"The discussions were so confidential that only top officials of the foreign ministry were allowed to sit in those meetings," an official told The Express Tribune requesting anonymity.

According to the official, both Saudi and UAE diplomats conveyed their willingness to play a role in defusing tensions between Pakistan and India, the report said.

One of the proposals on the table was to encourage both countries to hold backdoor talks with each other.

While the international



Pakistani tribal people chant anti-Indian slogans to express solidarity with Indian Kashmiris in Peshawar (Pakistan) on Monday. AP

interlocutors were willing to persuade India to ease some of the restrictions imposed in Kashmir, they requested Pakistan to stop targeting Prime Minister Narendra Modi. Prime Minister Khan was requested to tone down his verbal attacks against his Indian counterpart Modi, the report said.

However, Pakistan has turned down the requests and made it clear that it would only engage with India through quiet or conventional diplomacy after New Delhi was persuaded to meet certain conditions, officials privy to the development told the paper.

"These conditions include lifting of the curfew and other restrictions imposed in Kashmir," the paper reported.

Tensions between India and Pakistan spiked after New Delhi abrogated provisions of Article 370 of the Constitution to withdraw Jammu and Kashmir's special status and bifurcated it into two Union Territories.

Pakistan downgraded its diplomatic relations with India and expelled the Indian high commissioner following the revocation of Article 370 in Jammu and Kashmir on August 5.

Asserting that abrogation of Article 370 was its internal matter, India has strongly criticised Pakistan for making "irresponsible statements" and provocative anti-India rhetoric over issues internal to it.

Since August 5, Khan has repeatedly targeted Modi, ques-

tioning his links with Hindu extremist organisations.

Foreign Office spokesperson Muhammad Faisal, at his last weekly briefing, had also said there was no backdoor diplomacy under way with India to normalise the situation. The Kashmir issue is expected to figure prominently during Khan's two-day trip to Saudi Arabia that will start from September 19.

Saudi Crown Prince Muhammad Bin Salman has spoken with Khan at least four times since August 5.

Given the Saudi crown prince's close ties with both Imran and Modi, he is likely to offer his "good offices" to reduce tensions between the two neighbours, the report said.

N Korea demands security guarantees for nuclear talks

AFP ■ SEOUL

North Korea on Monday demanded the United States provide security guarantees as a precondition to resuming deadlocked nuclear talks, dampening hopes for progress at a working-level dialogue expected in the coming weeks. Negotiations between Pyongyang and Washington have been gridlocked since a second summit between the North's leader Kim Jong Un and US President Donald Trump in February ended without a deal.

The pair agreed to restart working-level dialogue during an impromptu meeting at the Demilitarized Zone dividing the two Koreas in June, and Pyongyang last week offered to hold those talks in late September, a move the US said was "encouraging".

But hours later, Pyongyang carried out the latest in a series of weapons tests.

A senior official from the North's foreign ministry said Monday that "discussion of denuclearization may be possible

Talks with US could take place in 'few weeks'

Seoul (AP): North Korea says diplomatic talks with the United States could resume in a "few weeks" but it will not consider abandoning its nuclear weapons unless external threats are fully removed. A statement Monday attributed to a North Korean foreign ministry official says the upcoming working-level talks will be decisive in determining the fate of the country's diplomacy with Washington.

Negotiations have stalled since a February summit between North Korean leader Kim Jong Un and President Donald Trump in Hanoi, Vietnam, collapsed over disagreements over sanctions relief in exchange for disarmament measures.

The statement says discussions of North Korea's denuclearization will only be possible when "threats and hurdles endangering our system security and obstructing our development are clearly removed beyond all doubt."

When threats and hurdles endangering our system security and obstructing our development are clearly removed beyond all doubt?

North Korea has always insisted that security guarantees would be necessary as part of any deal — but it has not generally demanded them as a precursor to negotiations.

precipitate crisis", he added.

"A proposal that the US put forward at the negotiations may improve the relations and, on the contrary, may add to the hostility towards each other." Pyongyang has also threatened to pull out of talks with Washington and has blasted senior US officials in recent months.

Despite the escalation in tensions, Trump has insisted his relationship with Kim remains unharmed, and the pair have exchanged personal letters in the absence of talks.

The North Korean leader asked Trump to visit Pyongyang in a letter sent last month, South Korea's JoongAng Ilbo newspaper reported Monday, repeating an invitation issued at their last meeting in the DMZ.

At their first summit in Singapore last year, Kim and Trump adopted a vaguely-worded statement on the "complete denuclearisation of the Korean peninsula" but little progress has since been made on dismantling the North's nuclear programme.

Russia deploys S-400 missiles in Arctic

AFP ■ MOSCOW

Russia has placed S-400 missile defence systems at the Novaya Zemlya archipelago as Moscow seeks to increase its military presence in the Arctic, the defence ministry said on Monday. The surface-to-air-missile regiment of the Northern Fleet's air defence forces based on the archipelago's southern Yuzhny Island has been fully equipped with new S-400 systems, the fleet said.

The regiment was earlier equipped with S-300 systems, a previous version of the missile.

The S-400 is one of the most advanced missile defence systems in the world and can hit enemy targets at up to 400 kilometres. Over the past few years Russia has significantly upgraded its military infrastructure in the Arctic.

In addition to the Novaya Zemlya forces, the country has stationed troops in the Franz Josef Land, the New Siberian Islands and several other places.

Russia has increasingly asserted itself as an Arctic nation, proclaiming the region as a top priority due to its mineral riches and strategic importance.

Trump defends SC judge over misconduct claim

AFP ■ WASHINGTON

US President Donald Trump mounted an angry defense of Supreme Court Justice Brett Kavanaugh on Sunday as the controversial judge faced calls for an investigation, or even impeachment, over fresh allegations of sexual misconduct.

Trump blasted the media and "Radical Left Democrats" after a former Yale classmate of Kavanaugh alleged that the jurist — one of the most senior judges in the land — exposed himself at a freshman year party.

The latest allegation in The New York Times came after Kavanaugh denied sexual misconduct accusations leveled against him by two women during his confirmation to the Supreme Court last October.

"Now the Radical Left Democrats and their Partner, the LameStream Media, are after Brett Kavanaugh again, talking loudly of their favourite word, impeachment," Trump tweeted.

"He is an innocent man who has been treated HORRI-

BLY. Such lies about him. They want to scare him into turning Liberal!"

The new allegations came from Max Stier, who runs a non-profit in Washington.

His concerns were reported to the FBI during Kavanaugh's 2018 confirmation process but not investigated, according to the Times.

Stier said he saw his former classmate "with his pants down at a different drunken dorm party, where friends pushed his penis into the hand of a female student." Stier has not spoken publicly about the incident but his story was corroborated by two officials, the Times said.

It is the latest in a string of accusations of unwanted sexual contact or assault against Kavanaugh since Trump nominated him to the Supreme Court.

Christine Blasey Ford testified before Congress that Kavanaugh sexually assaulted her in the 1980s, while Deborah Ramirez told The New Yorker that Kavanaugh had waved his penis in front of her face at a 1980s dormitory

party. The latest allegation surfaced during a 10-month investigation by Times reporters Robin Pogrebin and Kate Kelly, and features in their upcoming book, "The Education of Brett Kavanaugh: An Investigation."

Trump called on Kavanaugh to take legal action over the claims, suggesting also that the Department of Justice should intervene on the judge's behalf and "come to his rescue."

But Democrats seeking to be Trump's opponent in the 2020 election said the judge should be investigated — and three of them called for his impeachment.

"These newest revelations are disturbing," Senator Elizabeth Warren said on Twitter. "Like the man who appointed him, Kavanaugh should be impeached."

Senator Kamala Harris, whose tough questioning of the high-court nominee during his confirmation hearings raised her public profile, tweeted that Kavanaugh had "lied to the US Senate" and "must be impeached."

Kuwait probes drone that 'intruded' on day of Saudi refinery strike

AFP ■ KUWAIT CITY

Kuwait is investigating accounts that a drone intruded its airspace and flew over the royal palace Saturday, the same day a devastating strike was launched on Saudi oil infrastructure.

Yemen's Huthi rebels — who are aligned with Tehran — claimed the attack on two oil facilities which cut Saudi production by half, but the United States has blamed Iran and there is also speculation the assault may have been launched from Iraq.

Baghdad on Sunday denied any link to attacks on Saudi oil plants, saying it is "constitutionally committed to preventing any use of its soil to attack its neighbours".

But Iraq is home to several Iran-backed militias and paramilitary factions, putting it in an awkward situation amid rising tensions between its two main sponsors, Tehran and Washington.

Media reports speculated that a drone travelling south from Iraq to the eastern oilfields of Saudi Arabia could have travelled over the sea or

through Kuwait's airspace.

Kuwait's Alrai newspaper said that at dawn on Saturday, an unmanned drone about the size of a small car came down to a height of about 250 metres over the palace, before turning on its lights and flying away.

Kuwait's Prime Minister Sheikh Jaber Mubarak Al-Sabah has ordered the beefing up of security measures around vital installations in the country, according to a government statement posted on Twitter on Sunday. "Security officials have

started the necessary investigation regarding the drone that was seen flying over the coastal area of Kuwait City," it said.

Another newspaper, Al-Rai, said that the drone continued for a considerable period of time and flew over the seaside residential palace of Emir Sheikh Sabah al-Ahmad Al-Sabah who is undertaking medical tests in the United States.

Kuwait is an OPEC member which has land borders with Iraq and Saudi Arabia and shares sea borders with Iran.

More than half of 147 tigers dead after confiscation from Thai temple

AFP ■ BANGKOK

More than half of the 147 tigers confiscated from a controversial Thai temple have died, park officials said Monday, blaming genetic problems linked to in-breeding at the once money-spinning tourist attraction.

For years, the Wat Pha Luang Ta Bua temple in the western province of Kanchanaburi pulled tourist hordes who could be photographed — for a fee — next to scores of tigers.

But in 2016 park officials began a lengthy operation to remove the big cats amid allegations of mismanagement, and claims the creatures were being exploited.

Dozens of dead cubs were

found kept in freezers, sparking claims the carcasses were being sold by a temple roused to have raked in hundreds of thousands of dollars each year from visitors.

Tiger parts can fetch enormous sums in China and Vietnam, where they are falsely believed to have medicinal properties.

The surviving adults were taken to two breeding stations in nearby Ratchaburi province but only 61 of the 147 have survived so far, parks officials told reporters.

"It could be linked to in-breeding," Pattarapol Manecon, of the Department of National Parks, Wildlife and Plant Conservation said.

"They had genetic problems which posed risks to body

and immune system." Many suffered from tongue paralysis, breathing problems and lack of appetite that led to fatal seizures.

"Most of the tigers were already in distressed state stemming from the transportation and change of location... later their health problems emerged," Sunthorn Chaiwattana, another department official said.

Legal cases against the temple are ongoing. Conservationists questioned whether authorities had looked after the seized animals appropriately, with small, cramped cages enabling the spread of disease. "To be very honest who would be ready to take in so many tigers at once?" said Edwin Wiek, founder of

the Wildlife Friends Foundation Thailand.

Conditions at the enclosures were "not good enough to house so many tigers and the set up was wrong", he added.

Tens of millions visit Thailand every year, and a lucrative wildlife tourism industry has grown in-step with visitor numbers.

But critics say cash often trumps animal welfare at many attractions.

For a price, visitors can ride and bathe with elephants, hold monkeys and pose for selfies with tigers.

Animal rights groups have long criticised the industry, with chained up animals kept in small quarters with inadequate veterinary care, or forced to perform tricks for tourists.

NKorean-themed restaurant in Seoul removes Kim images

AP ■ SEOUL

You can sell North Korean food in South Korea. But you'll get into trouble if you decorate your restaurant with something deemed praising North Korea. Authorities say the owner of a Seoul restaurant under construction removed signs with the portrait of North Korean leaders and the image of a North Korean flag from the restaurant's exterior wall on Monday. The restaurant had been criticized over the weekend after local media published those signs. Police say they are looking at a possibility that the owner violated South Korea's security law that punish an act of praising North Korea with up to seven years in prison.



Empty frames, right top and right centre, are seen after the removal of the signs with the portrait of North Korean leaders and the image of a North Korean flag from the restaurant's exterior wall of the North Korea-themed restaurant under construction in Seoul, South Korea. North Korea-themed restaurant in Seoul removes Kim portrait and flag image as police look into whether owner violated security law. AP

Whites can never fully understand: Biden

AP ■ BIRMINGHAM

Visiting a black church bombed by the Ku Klux Klan during the civil rights era, Democratic presidential candidate Joe Biden has framed current racial tensions as part of an enduring struggle that is older than the nation.

"In a centuries long campaign of violence, fear, trauma, brought upon black people in this country, the domestic terrorism of white supremacy has been the antagonist of our highest ideals since before the founding of this country," Biden told the 16th Street Baptist Church congregation in

downtown Birmingham as they commemorated the 56th anniversary of the bombing that killed four black girls in 1956.

"It's in the wake of these before-and-after moments," Biden added, "when the choice between good and evil is starkest." Biden's appearance comes at an inflection point for Democrats' 2020 leader in the polls.

He is trying to capitalize on his strength among older black voters while navigating criticism from some African American and other nonwhite leaders, particularly younger ones, who take a skeptical view

of the 76-year-old white man's willingness and ability to address systemic racism.

During his 20 minutes at the pulpit, Biden condemned institutional racism as the direct legacy of slavery and lamented that the nation has "never lived up to" the ideals of equality written into its founding documents.

But then he added a more personal note — perhaps the closest he would come to addressing his detractors. "Those who are white try," Biden said, "but we can never fully understand."

The former vice president called out the names of the

bombing victims — Addie Mae Collins, Denise McNair, Carole Robertson and Cynthia Wesley — and he drew nods of affirmation as he warned that "the same poisonous ideology that lit the fuse on 16th Street" has yielded more recent tragedies, including in 2015 at a black church in South Carolina, in 2018 at a Jewish synagogue in Pittsburgh and in August at an El Paso, Texas, Wal-Mart frequented by Latino immigrants.

The Birmingham church, Biden said, offers an example to those communities and a nation he said must recommit itself to "giving hate no safe harbor — demonizing no one, not

the poor, the powerless, the immigrant or the 'other'."

From his long time in government, first as a senator and then vice president to Barack Obama, the first black president, Biden has deep ties in the black community. Though Biden didn't mention President Donald Trump in his remarks, he has made withering critiques of the president's rhetoric and policies on race and immigration a central feature of his candidacy. Yet Biden sometimes draws searing appraisals from younger nonwhite activists who point to complexities in his record. That includes his refer-

ences to working productively alongside segregationist senators in the 1970s to distrust over his lead role in a 1994 crime law that critics frame as partially responsible for mass incarceration, especially black men.

The dynamics flared up again Thursday after Biden, during a Democratic debate, offered a sometimes incoherent answer when asked how the nation should confront the legacy of slavery. At one point, Biden suggested nonwhite parents use a play a record player to help their children with verbal and cognitive development.

Attacks ahead of elections kill 7 more people in Afghanistan

AP ■ KABUL

Militant attacks and more violence killed at least seven people across Afghanistan as the country prepares for presidential elections later this month, Afghan officials said Monday.

At least five civilians, including women and children, were killed when their vehicle struck a roadside bomb in western Farah province on Sunday, according to Mohibullah Mohib, spokesman for the provincial police. No one immediately claimed responsibility for the bombing,

which occurred near the city of Farah, the provincial capital, but the Taliban are active in the province. Earlier this month, the Taliban launched an attempt to take the city of Farah, briefly seizing an army recruitment center and setting it on fire. Airstrikes were called in and the Taliban were eventually forced out of the city. And on Monday, a sticky bomb attached to a mini bus belonging to the university in Ghanzi province, exploded and killed the bus driver. Arif Noori, spokesman for the provincial governor, said five Ghazni University students were also wounded in the blast.

Trend Slazer

Ranveer reveals his fitness secrets

Actor **RANVEER SINGH** has been wooing the audience not only with his feisty screen presence and acting skills, but also with his look — particularly his toned, fit physique. For his forthcoming release *83*, the 34-year-old has undergone a massive workout and physical training to get into the character of former cricketer Kapil Dev.

But apart from intense workout, nutritional diet is one of his major “secrets” behind his chiseled physique.

Ranveer’s meticulous diet has been taken care of by Anmol Singhal and Mohit Savargaonkar, co-founders of Personal Optimised Diet (POD Supply) over the past five years.



‘I tried to explore more with Dream Girl and tried my hand at doing a mass

entertainer. I am happy that the audience across the country have accepted me as an entertaining hero. As an artiste, I have always tried to back projects that I felt had the potential to break out in their own genres and this response is a strong validation of that.’

—Ayushmann Khurrana

Actor **MAHESH SHETTY**, a known name in the telly world, will be playing **AJAY DEVGN**’s

younger brother in the forthcoming film *Bhuj: The Pride of India*.



Mahesh calls it a very special film. “I am grateful to be a part of such an incredible story. This film celebrates the bravery and dedication of the women of India. It was a pleasure working with Ajay Sir and the entire team of *Bhuj: The Pride of India*,” he added.

According to sources, Mahesh will be playing the role of an Air Force pilot. The Abhishek Dudhaiya directorial is slated to release next year.

Downey Jr will be back as Iron Man

Actor **ROBERT DOWNEY JR** will be back as a superhero Iron Man in the Marvel Cinematic Universe with *Black Widow* which will release in 2020.

Downey Jr, who won hearts all across the world as enigmatic superhero Iron Man, bid adieu to his superhero avatar with *Avengers: Endgame* this year. In fact, Scarlett

Johansson’s *Black Widow* aka *Natasha Romanoff* also died in the film.

The characters will be back as *Black Widow* is a prequel taking place ahead of the events of *Endgame*. It is yet to be seen how big Downey Jr’s role in the film will be.

The film will trace the story of *Romanoff*, who will confront her past.



At the *Lecture Series With Deepika* for the first edition of the Live, Love, Laugh foundation, Dr **SIDDHARTHA MUKHERJEE** speaks about how we need to address the stigma around mental health the same way we dealt with the taboo around cancer in the 1950s

You matter

There has been a long standing debate on mental health in our country and actor **Deepika Padukone**, who has been active in talking about her battle with depression at the peak of her career, believes that there is still a long road ahead in terms of creating more awareness on the issue. Though she is happy to see that a conversation on the topic has opened up. The 33-year-old actor, who was in the capital for the first edition of The Live, Love, Laugh foundation — *A Lecture Series With Deepika*, opened up about her struggles.

The maiden lecture was delivered by Pulitzer Prize-winning author and Padma Shri Dr Siddhartha Mukherjee. In his talk, Dr Mukherjee spoke about how cancer in the 50s, was a stigmatised illness as patients faced potent forces of discrimination, fear and neglect. “When anyone was diagnosed with cancer, the blame for the disease was carried by the person themselves. Patients with cancer were pushed to the back of the hospital. Mental health issues carry a similar stigma,” he said.

His talk was centered around

three forces, which he felt were needed to be addressed. The first force is political — for mental health to be recognised as a public health crisis, a national issue, there is a need to create national institutes for mental health. Stakeholders in the political domain must come together and work towards this common goal. The second force is social — this will entail advocacy and awareness around destigmatising mental health. The idea is to remould another disease with the learnings around destigmatising cancer. The third and final set of forces is biological, genetic or pharmaceutical, to an extent. This entails making efforts and carrying out research to understand the molecular mechanism so that people would not be victimised.

He shared an anecdote, “In 1950, Fanny Rosenau, a journalist, who was suffering from breast cancer, called up the



New York Times to place an advertisement to create a social support group for women with breast cancer. One of the editors said that we can’t publish the word ‘breast cancer’. How about we say social support group of women with chest diseases? So this is death by euphemism because it creates a culture where you become the victim of the disease. In the 50s, if you spoke to oncologists, they would remember the times when patients with cancer were pushed to the back of the hospital. Once a woman with ovarian cancer asked the medical establishments that ‘will you throw me out if I don’t get better?’ because all you care about is the success of your therapy and not the empathy that you deliver to patients.”

He added, “Today, biological insights are being extended to mental health. For instance, there are 100 gene variances that contribute to schizophrenia yet there is a clear environmental aspect to this. The same is true for other mental illnesses as well. The challenge for the next generation thus lies in understanding these two components. I call this the Yin/Yang puzzle. While the Yin — the genetic — part is solved, the Yang — or the environmental milieu — still needs to be addressed.”

Dr Mukherjee noted that progress was being made and that there is more conversation, advocacy and philanthropy around mental health.

“There’s not much stigma as there used to be four years ago. But we certainly have a long way to go in terms of creating more

awareness. I think that’s where we need to keep the conversation alive,” Deepika, who looked stunning in a pristine white ensemble paired with shimmering danglers and minimal make-up, said.

The *Piku* star described her journey and said, “It’s been an incredible journey since we developed our foundation. I think media has had a huge role in opening up the conversation in various ways, whether through interviews, write-ups or articles but we certainly have a long way to go and that’s why we have the lecture series today,” she said and added, “Four years ago, we wouldn’t even talk to our families about

Health and Family Welfare, Government of India, who said, “According to WHO, health is defined as a state of physical, mental, social and psychological well-being of an individual. It is not merely the absence of disease and infirmity. The definition itself makes it amply clear that mental health is an important component of the overall health spectrum. I wish to congratulate the foundation and Deepika Padukone, of course, for flagging this issue before the Indian society.”

Dr Indu Bhushan, CEO of Ayushman Bharat pointed that the country’s national health protection scheme covers all secondary and tertiary health states, including a large number of mental health condition. Anyone with those conditions is provided free treatment. It also covers the poverty-stricken population of the country, which is 40 per cent. This is the segment where mental health issues go unnoticed and the scheme is going to help those who may have not received treatment for mental health so far.

The lecture was attended by decision makers including Dr Indu Bhushan, CEO, Ayushman Bharat; Amitabh Kant, CEO, NITI Aayog; Dr Renu Swarup, Secretary, Department of Biotechnology; Dr Balaram Bhargava, Director General, Indian Council of Medical Research; Professor Gagandeep Kang, Executive Director of the Translational Health Science and Technology Institute; Sanjeev Sanyal, Principal Economic Adviser in the Ministry of Finance, Government of India and Shakti Sinha, Director, Nehru Memorial Museum and Library.

The event was also graced by Deepika’s parents Prakash Padukone and Ujjala, sister Anisha Padukone, actor Sharmila Tagore, key stakeholders and decision makers from different sectors.

Photo: Pankaj Kumar

‘MEDIA HAS HAD A HUGE ROLE IN INITIATING THE CONVERSATION ABOUT MENTAL HEALTH IN VARIOUS WAYS, WHETHER THROUGH INTERVIEWS, WRITE-UPS OR ARTICLES BUT WE STILL HAVE A LONG WAY TO GO’

Dreamy and confident

The London Fashion Week set the tone for an elegant collection that ran the gamut from poised sophistication to joyful exuberance and sensual femininity



Fashion devotees basked in sunny weather and strong, whimsical collections as London Fashion Week neared its climax with runway shows by Roland Mouret, Victoria Beckham, Simone Rocha and others throughout the city.

A fleet of black chauffeured Mercedes whisked VIPs from venue to venue, but those who preferred to walk saw the British capital at its best, with glimpses of the street style that helps give London its credibility in the fashion competition with Paris, New York and Milan.

ROLAND MOURET’S COLLECTION FULL OF OPTIMISM, DESPITE WOES

Roland Mouret’s spring 2020 collection was inspired by his observation of a worrying symmetry between New York in the 80s, enamoured of its own affluent progressiveness while on the verge of bankruptcy and today’s social, environmental and political turbulence.

“It was a time when people were dressing up amazingly while on the other hand people were dying on the street. Now we have the same kind of interaction through our media. You go from the new launch at Selfridges and the next day there’s someone dying,” he said after the

show in a rarely seen courtyard at the Royal Academy of Arts.

Despite that bleak starting point, his show was full of optimistic, even dreamy colours cut in relaxed silhouettes, with lots of shimmering sequins.

The designer, who made his debut in 2005, and made his name with the figure-hugging galaxy dress which is still in production today, sent out a collection that nodded to the 80s via soft tailoring (a revolutionary concept led by Giorgio Armani and made famous by Richard Gere in *American Gigolo*), wide shoulders and relaxed American sportswear staples. Those were reframed by Mouret as a low-slung blue sequin skirt worn with a white blouse and a rope belt that looked like it was filched from the nearest yacht.

The wolves of Wall Street were alluded to through the corporate appeal of checked suits, the double-pleated fronts on gorgeously fluid wide-legged trousers and stock broker-approved wide lapels that were deployed across jackets and coats. The motif especially stood out on an oyster sequin blazer with a contrasting blue lapel, which was teamed with a blush pink sequin skirt and a white bohemian blouse.

SIMONE ROCHA SHOWS SERENE, OFFBEAT COLLECTION

Simone Rocha continues to impress and draw new admirers as her collections grow in sophistication without sacrificing the look that has made her unique. Her colour palette is simple. It blends white colour with blue, red, and black. But the embroidery and layering are remarkable.

The models hair seemed sculptural, adding texture and depth to the outfits, as did the elaborate braided straps to some of the handbags, which were similar to detailing on various outfits. Rocha also is improving her staging. With her designer father, John Rocha, watching from the front row, the show unspooled with a certain dignity and serenity, the models walking slowly in a circle on the stage of the Alexandra Palace, a 19th century landmark in north London.

Rocha continued what has become her tradition, employing some older models and some who were not rail-thin. Some of the models also broke with tradition by smiling at the audience, and one blew a kiss to a friend near the end of the show. It added to the celebratory feel.

STILL BUZZING ABOUT NAOMI CAMPBELL’S GALA

Much of the buzz focussed on the suc-

cess of Naomi Campbell’s Fashion for Relief gala the night before, which continued for hours after the late-night show with a dinner in the heart of the British Museum.

Campbell has become a master at organising big, complex events for her charity efforts, and this was no exception. She managed to procure one of the most prestigious sites in London and filled it with a glamorous crowd.

She even returned to the runway, proving without a doubt she can still model any time she chooses.

EMILIA WICKSTEAD PAYS TRIBUTE TO LOUISA MAY ALCOTT

Emilia Wickstead paid homage to Louisa May Alcott’s classic novel *Little Women* for spring 2020, a timely reference given a forthcoming film directed by Greta Gerwig which stars Emma Watson as Meg and Saoirse Ronan as the headstrong Jo March.

Debussy’s soothing *Arabesque No 1 Andantino con moto* played as Wickstead’s guests climbed the stairs of the Royal Albert Hall, setting the tone for an elegant collection that ran the gamut from poised sophistication to joyful exuberance and sensual femininity. There was a focus on volume, with bunches of fabric at the back of dresses echoing the bustles prevalent in Alcott’s time.

One jumpsuit had a crisp collar and midriff cutout placed to accentuate a high waistband. Another dress had wide cuffed sleeves and panels reminiscent of 19th century shirt bibs. The palette of saccharine pinks, yellows, lavender, and tangerine was sharpened by red and black, while a print offering was comprised of delicate hand-painted blue roses imposed on a mint colour. Hats, a big motif in the novel, were used to give dramatic effect, especially one wide black visor-like piece that was perched and worn with a slim cap-sleeved black dress with a sternum-exposing cut-out.

Other moments of high drama appeared via a billowing cloud of black organza, fashioned into a balloon-sleeved gown. The closing look elicited raised eyebrows and naked admiration in equal measure — a full-length pink gown with copious bunches that could best be described as a boat-necked marshmallow.

—AP



Sara to bring Saif, Amrita’s hits at IIFA

Sara Ali Khan is excited but nervous about performing at the 20th edition of International Indian Film Academy (IIFA) Awards. She said that she will dance on hit songs of father Saif Ali Khan and mother Amrita Singh at the show.

“I have been watching IIFA Awards since childhood and have travelled with my father to watch it. She recalls an incident of two years ago when IIFA was held in New Jersey and she was in New York with Saif. She said, “I couldn’t attend the function because my father said, ‘why do you want to attend, you haven’t been invited?’ So, this year’s IIFA is really special to me because I have been invited. And I will be performing too. So I feel I have become a part of this industry.”

She will perform with Ranveer Singh and Madhuri Dixit Nene at the show. “I am rehearsing for my performance and simultaneously shooting for *David* (Dhawan) sir too. So, I don’t get enough time to rehearse but whatever time I get I try to make the most of it. It is pretty obvious that I am nervous about performing at the awards because it is the first time and that too with such big stars,” said she.

When questioned about the songs that were on her playlist for the performance, Sara said, “I will perform on my songs. Since it’s my first performance, I will also perform on the songs of my father and mother.”

Sara will be seen in *Coolie No 1* opposite to Varun Dhawan, and in *Imtiaz Ali*’s next, in which she co-stars with Kartik Aaryan. When asked about the filmmakers she wants to work with, she said, “I am working with David sir and Imtiaz (Ali) sir as of now. But I would also like to work with other filmmakers. I wish them to consider me in their films.”

Sara’s last release, *Simmba* opposite to Ranveer Singh in December 2018, was a box-office success. —IANS

PTI ■ CHANGZHOU (CHINA)

World champion P V Sindhu will look to reassert her supremacy when she spearheads the Indian campaign at the USD 1,000,000 China Open World Tour Super 1000 tournament beginning here on Tuesday.

The World No.5 Sindhu ended India's long wait for a world championship gold at Basel, Switzerland last month.

She achieved the historic feat after her third successive final appearance. The performance also turned around her erratic season during which she had reached the finals at the Indonesia Open Super 1000 event.

Life after that historic gold has been all about felicitations and the Indian will now have to quickly turn her focus back on badminton as she remains the country's best bet at the China Open, a title she had won in 2016.

The 24-year-old from Hyderabad will begin her campaign against China's Li Xuerui, a former Olympic gold medalist and World No.1.

Interestingly, Sindhu had announced her arrival on the international scene when she had stunned the then Olympic champion Li at the China Masters in 2012.

Since then, Sindhu has reached the highest echelons of international badminton, while Li has been dealing with a career-threatening knee injury that she suffered at the Rio Olympics.

The Chinese is currently ranked 20th but has a 3-3 record against Sindhu.

Sindhu had beaten Li at the Indonesia Masters earlier this year and if she can cross the opening hurdle, she is likely to face Canadian Michelle Li, who hasn't beaten the Indian since 2014.

If everything goes well, then she might be up against China's third seed and All England

Sindhu eyes China Open



PV Sindhu reacts after getting a point

File photo/Twitter

champion Chen Yufei in the quarter-final.

World No.8 Saina Nehwal, who had won the Indonesia Masters this year, will also look to put up a good show following her recovery from injuries which bogged her down this season.

The former World No.1 looked good at the world championships before a few controversial umpiring decisions ended her run when she lost to Mia Blichfeldt of Denmark in second

THE 24-YEAR-OLD FROM HYDERABAD WILL BEGIN HER CAMPAIGN AGAINST CHINA'S LI XUERUI, A FORMER OLYMPIC GOLD MEDALLIST AND WORLD NO.1 SINDHU HAD ANNOUNCED HER ARRIVAL ON THE INTERNATIONAL SCENE WHEN SHE HAD STUNNED THE THEN OLYMPIC CHAMPION LI AT THE CHINA MASTERS IN 2012

round. Saina will face Thailand's Busanan Ongbamrunphan in the opening round and is expected to clash with former world no.1 and her nemesis Tai Tzu Ying of Chinese Taipei in the quarterfinals.

China Open, the last Super 1000 event of the World Tour season, will also see the return of two superstars -- Olympic champion and three-time world champion Carolina Marin and 2017 World Champion Viktor

Axelsen. Both the bigwigs will be back after recovering from their respective injuries.

The Indian campaign lost a bit of sheen with the withdrawal of Kidambi Srikanth and H S Prannoy.

While Srikanth's knee injury flared up during the world championships, Prannoy is down with dengue.

All eyes will be on B Sai Praneeth, who ended India's 36-year wait to become the first Indian male shuttler to claim a medal at the World Championships.

The talented shuttler will open against Thailand's Suppanyu Avihingsanon and is likely to face China's third seed Shi Yu Qi in the second round. Former Commonwealth Games champion Parupalli Kashyap too will be in the fray, taking on France's Brice Leverdez in the first round.

Returning to action after an injury lay-off will be the pair of Satwiksairaj Rankireddy and Chirag Shetty, who became the first men's pair from the country to win a super 500 event at Thailand Open last month.

The duo, who had broken into the top 10, will open against Canadian combination of Jason Anthony Ho-Shue and Nyl Yakura.

In mixed doubles, Satwik will pair up with Ashwini Ponnappa and meet Praveen Jordan and Melati Daeva Oktavianti, the Indonesian sixth seeds.

The other men's pair of Manu Attri and B Sumeeth Reddy will square off against the second-seeded Indonesian pair of Mohammad Ahsan and Hendra Setiawan.

Ashwini and N Sikki Reddy, the Commonwealth Game bronze-medallists, will fight it out against the Taiwanese combination of Cheng Chi Ya and Lee Chih Chen in women's doubles, while Sikki and Pranaav Jerry Chopra will lock horns with Germany's Mark Lamsfuss and Isabel Herttrich.

My hunger, passion hasn't diminished at all: Pankaj

IANS ■ NEW DELHI

Ace cueist Pankaj Advani, who just registered his 22nd world title, insists he is not done yet and is motivated enough to win more titles and bring laurels to the country in the future.

"To be honest, I feel as hungry and motivated to win as I was when I won my first world title. The hunger and passion hasn't diminished at all. It feels special to be able to maintain that position consistently and win title after title over the last one and half decade. I am glad that it's happening more often than not," Pankaj told IANS.

On Sunday, Pankaj won a fourth straight final in the 150-up format at the IBSF World Billiards Championship. In a repeat of last year's final against local favourite Nay Thway Oo, he re-enacted the one-sided match with the same eventual outcome as well as identical scorelines of 6-2.

In the short format of billiards, this was Pankaj's fifth title in the last six years.

"This 150-format, which is a shorter format in billiards, is very unpredictable. To maintain consistency in this format especially is an incredible feeling and winning the title for four years in a row," he said while talking about the challenge he faced throughout the tournament.

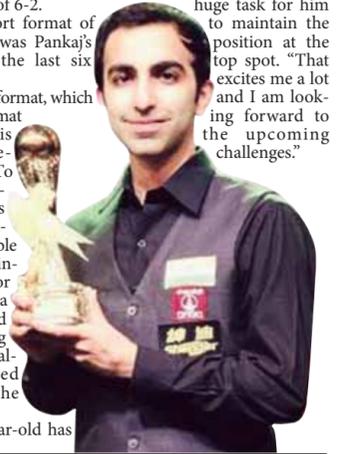
The 34-year-old has

brought home a world trophy every year ever since returning from a professional stint in the UK in 2014. The ace Indian cueist has been awarded with both Padma Bhushan (2018) and Rajiv Gandhi Khel Ratna Award (2005-06) and has proven to be the most consistent Indian athlete, prevailing in world championships since 2003.

He has won more world titles in cue sports than anyone in the world making him the greatest cueist of all time.

"I think this sport is very psychological in nature and it really helped that I started winning at an early age. That instilled tremendous amount of self belief in me because when you start winning early in your life, it just gives you the confidence to go forward from strength to strength," said Pankaj.

The ace cueist is expecting tough challenge in the years to come and acknowledges that it will remain a huge task for him to maintain the top position at the top spot. "That excites me a lot and I am looking forward to the upcoming challenges."



Vinesh Phogat in a file picture

In her quest for World title, Vinesh gets toughest possible draw

PTI ■ NUR-SULTAN (KAZAKHSTAN)

Tension was palpable in the Indian camp after the country's biggest medal hope Vinesh Phogat was pitted against Olympic bronze medallist Sofia Mattsson in the "toughest possible" draw for the World Championships here on Monday.

Vinesh had recently beaten Sofia, a six-time World Championship medal winner, on way to the Poland Open title-win last month, but facing the formidable Swede in the very first round is a different proposition.

The 29-year-old Sofia won the last of her fourth European Championship gold medal in 2016 and the seasoned campaigner will surely be a threat to India's hopes.

She is ranked five in the world in 55kg, which is a non-Olympic category.

If Vinesh, who is ranked sixth in 53kg, manages to get past Sofia, she will likely have to lock horns with world number two (in 55kg) and reigning world champion, Mayu Mukaida.

If that hurdle is crossed, world number one and last edition's silver medallist Sarah Ann Hildebrandt will await the Indian in the quarter-finals.

That she is a bit worried could be felt as Vinesh walked into the training area grim-faced. The coaches around her did their best to keep her cheerful.

"If you want to be World Champion, you will have to beat the best in business. Why fear?" said Vinesh's personal coach Woller Akos.

India's national coach Kuldeep Malik, too, looked a bit tense but remained hopeful.

"Whenever she has got a tough draw, she has ended up winning a medal. Lets see," he said.

India's foreign coach Andrew Cook was of the view that facing tough opponents early would enhance Vinesh's prospects to reach the medal round.

"One of those girls will surely be in final," said the American.

In the other Olympic category, Seema Bisla, the world number three, will clash straight in the 50kg pre-quarterfinals.

She will face the winner of Qualification match between Nigeria's Miesinnei Mercy Genesis and Azerbaijan's Mariya Stadnik.

Jordan free-kick fires Sevilla to top in La Liga

AFP ■ MADRID

Sevilla moved to the top of the Searly La Liga table on Sunday as Joan Jordan's brilliant free-kick helped them seal a 1-0 win at Alaves.

Julen Lopetegui's side continued their excellent start to the campaign, remaining unbeaten and moving a point clear of Atletico Madrid, who lost 2-0 at Real Sociedad on Saturday, at the summit. Sevilla host Real Madrid next Sunday in a meeting of two sides yet to taste defeat.

"That means nothing (being top)," said Sevilla coach Lopetegui, whose team next face a marathon trip to Baku to play Qarabag in their Europa League opener on Thursday.

"The only thing that (being top) tells me is that the team is doing things well. We have to keep improving before going to Baku, where they will make it very difficult for us."

It was a first defeat of the season for Alaves, who slipped to 11th in the standings. Lopetegui, who joined Sevilla for his first job



Joan Jordan celebrates after scoring a goal

Twitter

since being sacked in quick succession by both Spain and Real Madrid, saw one of his close-season signings produce the game's defining moment.

Midfielder Jordan, who arrived at Sevilla from Eibar for a reported 14 million euros (\$15.62 million), curled home a wonderful free-kick in the 37th minute which flew into the top corner to give him his second goal of the season.

The visitors comfortably saw out the match to claim their third league win this term, as Alaves failed to muster a shot on target.

Elsewhere on Sunday, Robert Ibanez's 81st-minute equaliser kept Osasuna unbeaten after a 1-1 draw at Valladolid, while Granada moved up to seventh with a 2-0 success at nine-man Celta Vigo and Espanyol won at Eibar.

Real Betis claimed a 1-1 draw with fellow strugglers Getafe despite also being reduced to nine men, as 38-year-old club stalwart Joaquin netted a 73rd-minute penalty at the Estadio Benito Villamarin.

Nagal reaches career-best ranking



Sumit Nagal returns a shot during a match

Twitter

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Continuing his good run, India's Sumit Nagal jumped 15 places to achieve a career-high ranking of 159 in the latest ATP rankings released on Monday.

The 22-year-old from Haryana ended runners up in the Banja Luka ATP Challenger following a first round appearance at the US Open last month.

He had leapfrogged 16 places after his first-round exit in the US Open where he took a set off Swiss maestro Roger Federer before losing the match.

Meanwhile, Prajnesh Gunneswaran continued his run in the top-100. He rose three places to be world no. 82. Ramkumar Ramanathan slipped three spots to be 179th, rounding up the top-three Indians in the men's singles.

In doubles, Rohan Bopanna and Divij Sharan maintained their 43rd and 49th position, while Leander Paes moved one spot to be placed 78.

In the WTA rankings, Anika Raina continues to be India's top-ranked player at 191 and is followed by Pranjala Yadlapalli, who is placed at 338.

Atalanta, Roma back winning as Lazio fall in Serie A

AFP ■ MILAN

Duvan Zapata struck late as Atalanta warmed up for their Champions League debut with a last-gasp 2-1 victory over Genoa in Serie A as Roma got their first win this season against Sassuolo, but city rival's Lazio fell at SPAL.

Colombian international Zapata rifled in the winner on 95 minutes in Genoa on Sunday to seal all three points for Atalanta who qualified for the Champions League by finishing third last season, but lost last week to Torino.

Colombian striker Muriel's 64th-minute penalty had put the Bergamo side ahead in western Italy but Genoa captain Domenico Criscito levelled from the spot after 91 minutes.

Zapata had the final say to give Gian Piero Gasperini's side, who are sixth, a confidence boost as they travel to Dinamo Zagreb for their first ever Champions League game next week.

AC Milan are just

behind Atalanta, also with six points, after Polish striker Krzysztof Piatek got back scoring with a 68th-minute penalty in a hard-fought 1-0 victory over 10-man Verona.

Roma are just behind in eighth after new coach Paulo Fonseca got his first win, a 4-2 defeat of Sassuolo, for the capital side.

The hosts were four goals up at the break after Bryan Cristante, Edin Dzeko, Henrikh Mkhitaryan and Justin Kluivert all found the net in a 21-minute spell with Lorenzo Pellegrini providing three assists.

But Domenico Berardi's brace for Sassuolo on 53 and 72 minutes rattled the hosts who are back in the Stadio Olimpico during the week for Europa League action against Istanbul Basaksehir.

"I hope that this will be the first of a lot of victories," said Portuguese Fonseca.

"I realised that I had to



adapt to the dynamics of the Italian championship.

"Today we showed our ability to press high, and while we scored four goals it could have been seven or eight."

"Defensively it was our best performance so far."

Lazio suffered their first defeat this season as they paid for their complacency following a 1-0 loss to Lazio. Lazio's 17th-minute penalty against SPAL, losing 2-1.

An Andrea Petagna volley just after the hour mark in Ferrara and Jasmin Kurtic's late winner sealed all three points for SPAL.

The Romans are ninth with four points from three games.

Bologna go second - Bologna moved second after a gutsy 4-3 comeback win over promoted Brescia, inspired by coach Sinisa Mihajlovic who gave instructions from hospital as he undergoes chemotherapy.

"At the end of the first half we heard Mihajlovic's

crucial errors which helped the Thai claw his way back. But the experienced Indian didn't yield any ground and sealed the game.

In the second tie, G Sathiyar consolidated India's position further beating Supanut Wisutmaythangkoon 9-11, 11-6, 11-9, 11-1.

With a 2-0 cushion, it should have been easy for Harmet Desai, but the Surat lad struggled before overcoming Yanapong Panagitgum 11-3, 9-11, 5-11, 13-11, 13-11 to put India in the final. But, most importantly, it earned India a quarterfinal berth in the Champions Division where they will run into either Japan or Chinese Taipei after the draw.

The Indian women, who did well to enter the 1st Division after winning their group stage matches yesterday against Lebanon and Jordan with 3-0 verdicts. They managed to register a 3-0 win against Uzbekistan before losing to Thailand 0-3. Now they will play Malaysia with the winner finishing at Position 9.

anger on the phone and this shook us," said Bologna forward Rodrigo Palacio.

"We talked to him before the game, for us it is very important and we miss him. We play like this thanks to his mentality."

Sunday's game was the first the 50-year-old Mihajlovic has missed despite his condition.

A quick-fire Alfredo Donnarumma double saw Brescia -- playing their first home match in eight years -- lead after 19 minutes.

Mattia Bani headed Bologna back into the game on 36 minutes, with the visitors trailing 3-1 before Brescia were hit by Daniele Dessena's sending off for a second yellow card just after the break.

Bologna came back with goals from Palacio on 56 minutes, Stefano Denswil four minutes later and a Riccardo Orsolini winner 10 minutes from time.

Mihajlovic's side, who finished 10th last season, are now two points behind Inter Milan and ahead of champions Juventus on goal difference after three games.

Aussie's mission accomplished



Australia's cricket team poses for photographers with the Ashes Urn

AFP ■ LONDON

Australia captain Tim Paine said it was mission accomplished even though his team lost the fifth and final Ashes Test against England to draw the series 2-2.

The tourists came into the match at the Oval seeking their first series victory in England since 2001 but came up short, losing by 135 runs on Sunday.

But Paine said Australia, who won at Edgbaston and Old Trafford but lost agonisingly to a Ben Stokes-inspired England at Headingley, had achieved their main objective in retaining the urn.

"We're taking the urn home so that's certainly what we came to

WE CAN BE REALLY PROUD OF THE WAY WE'VE COME OVER HERE, WHICH IS A CHALLENGING PLACE FOR AUSTRALIANS TO COME AND PLAY AND WIN WE'RE TAKING THE URN HOME

do," he said.

"We're thrilled by that, a little disappointed by this game obviously, puts a bit of a dampener on it."

"We can be really proud of the way we've come over here, which is a challenging place for Australians to come and play and win," he added. "To win two Test matches pretty convincingly, should have won a third (at Headingley) — let that slip no doubt."

Paine said winning the first Test at Edgbaston, where Australia triumphed by 251 runs, had been crucial for his side's confi-

dence.

"There was so much talk about that being a fortress and how difficult a place it was going to be for us to start the series, probably by design, so for us to come over and win that first Test, and win it, in the end, quite convincingly gave us the belief that we could do it," he said.

And the skipper said he still felt he had a role to play in taking the side forward.

"We've still got a way to go," he said. "Obviously Steve (Smith) had an unbelievably good series and won us a couple of Tests by himself so we've got some parts that we need to improve."

"But if we click them into gear while we've got Steve at the height of his powers and with the pace attack we've got, in the next few years we're going to be a very hard team to beat."

"There's plenty of improvement in this side," Paine added.

"I still feel I've got a little bit to give in that space and we're always trying to develop more leaders within our group as well."

Smith, who scored 774 runs in just seven innings, said he was exhausted after a long tour, which also included the World Cup.

The former captain, who returned to international cricket in June after a ban for ball-tampering, received a standing ovation from the crowd in south London when he was out.

"It was a nice reception as I walked off," he said.

"It would have been nice if I'd had a few more runs under my belt in this game."

"I've given it my all since I've been here for the last four-and-a-half-months in every Test match that we've played and I didn't have much left to give today."

"I'm pretty cooked to be honest, mentally and physically. I'm looking forward to a nice couple of weeks' rest now before getting into the Australian summer."



Steve Smith poses with Ashes trophy

Twitter

Smith proud after summer of Ashes redemption

LONDON ■ (AFP)

Steve Smith returned to international cricket to a chorus of boos but he walked off the pitch at the Oval to a standing ovation after a summer of Ashes redemption.

The former Australia captain enjoyed a remarkable series in England, scoring a total of 774 runs in just seven innings and played a pivotal role in his side's two victories in the drawn series.

The catch by Ben Stokes that sent Smith on his way on Sunday ended an astonishing run of scores — 144 and 142 at Edgbaston, 92 at Lords, 211 and 82 at Old Trafford, and 80 and 23 at the Oval.

The 30-year-old made his official return to international cricket in June at the World Cup after serving a year-long ban for ball-tampering and was booed by the crowd in Bristol.

Smith had a decent campaign in the 50-over showpiece but did not set the world alight as Australia reached the semi-finals, where they were beaten by eventual champions England.

But he changed gear when the Ashes started, seemingly hungry to make up for lost time as he dominated the England attack, making two centuries in Australia's comfortable win in the first Test at Edgbaston.

Asked when he felt he was back to his best, an exhausted but "proud" Smith said it was after his first innings at Edgbaston, when he rescued his side, who had stumbled to 122-8.

"That gave me a lot of confi-

dence," he said. "That was probably my favourite innings of the whole series that I played."

"The first Test match, as we know, is always incredibly important in an Ashes series and to sort of pull the team out of a bit of trouble at the time and give me that confidence straight up that I could slot back in and perform, that gave me a lot of confidence."

"It was a long 18 months out of the game and I've got a lot of people to thank, in particular my wife." Smith's series was interrupted after he was felled by a Jofra Archer bouncer in the second Test at Lord's, forcing him to miss three innings.

WINNING RETURN

But he returned at Old Trafford to make a monumental double century in another victory for Australia. His 80 in the first innings in the final Test at the Oval was his 10th consecutive fifty in Ashes Tests.

Australia were chasing 399 to win the series in London but it was always a tall order and Smith was unable to produce a miracle, falling for 23.

His run haul is fifth on the list of highest tallies in an Ashes series.

The man at the top of that list, inevitably, is his late compatriot Donald Bradman, who scored 974 in seven innings in 1930. But the fact that Smith is even in the same conversation as the man widely regarded as the greatest batsman in history is testament to his genius.

Smith, Cummins retain top position

PTI ■ DUBAI

India captain Virat Kohli has managed to hold on to his second position behind Australia's Steve Smith in the ICC Test Rankings for batsmen released on Monday.

Kohli, with 903 rating points, is 34 points behind Smith (937).

Besides former Australia captain Smith, compatriot Pat Cummins has also retained his one position in the ICC Test bowlers' rankings.

Both Smith and Cummins played key roles in helping Australia retain the Ashes.

The Ashes culminated with a 135-run victory for England in the fifth and final Test on Sunday. The series ended in a 2-2 draw with Australia retaining the Urn.

Smith's scores of 80 and 23 in the two innings in the final Test helped him remain at 937 rating points, an incredible effort since he



Pat Cummins and Steve Smith

Twitter

started the series in fourth position with 857 points before his surge that came courtesy 774 runs in four Tests.

Cummins too is well clear of other bowlers as he enjoys a lead of 57 points over second-placed Kagiso Rabada after finishing as the top wicket-taker with 29 scalps. India's Jasprit Bumrah is in third place.

Other players from Australia to make notable gains are Matthew Wade and Mitchell Marsh.

Broad got into Warner's head, says Justin Langer

AFP ■ LONDON

Australia's cricket coach Justin Langer said David Warner allowed England paceman Stuart Broad to "get into his head" during a miserable Ashes series for the opener.

Warner ended with the unwanted record of the fewest runs scored by a Test opener across 10 innings of a series.

The 32-year-old, who registered a cumulative total of just 95, was dismissed seven times by Broad during the drawn contest and encountered jeers from home crowds following his role in the 2018 ball-tampering scandal.

Langer plans to persist with the experienced batsman heading into the Australian summer but expressed some doubt that he would fully recover from a dismal Ashes display.

"I've learned over a long period you never write off champion players, it doesn't matter what sport, you never write off champion players," said Langer, whose side retained the urn following the 2-2 draw.

"He had this series, it didn't go to plan, but he's seen how successful he's

I'VE LEARNED OVER A LONG PERIOD YOU NEVER WRITE OFF CHAMPION PLAYERS, IT DOESN'T MATTER WHAT SPORT, YOU NEVER WRITE OFF CHAMPION PLAYERS

been and the impact he can have on Australian cricket teams winning, so I'm confident he'll come good.

"Actually, I'm hopeful he comes good. Talking frankly, I thought he let Stuart Broad get into his head and I think he thought way too much about it."

Langer feels Warner, who was the second-highest run scorer at the World Cup, will be pleased to be returning home.

"In this instance I don't think David solved the puzzle, and he'll be the first to admit that," said.

"He'll probably be very relieved (when) he gets on the Qantas flight knowing he doesn't have to face Stuart Broad for a while, I reckon."

Aus better team in Ashes: Ponting

LONDON ■ (IANS)

Former Australia captain Ricky Ponting believes Tim Paine's men were the better side in the recently-concluded Ashes series against England which ended in a 2-2 stalemate.

Australia retained the Ashes with a comprehensive 185-run victory in the fourth Test but let slip a golden chance to win their first Ashes series in England since 2001 as they conceded a 135-run loss in the tour finale at the Oval on Sunday.

"Australia will look at it as a series of missed opportunities," Ponting told *cricket.com.au*.

"I think they've clearly been the better team. They've clearly played better cricket throughout the series. They should have won at Headingley."

He also said that the 2-2 result was not a clear reflection of how the series was

played and how the visitors performed in the five-match rubber.

Australia were knocked out of the World Cup in the semi-finals by eventual champions England and retained the urn in England for the first time in 18 years.

Ponting said the efforts of Paine's side should be congratulated even though they didn't manage to win the coveted series.

"We shouldn't undersell how well Australia have played, and on the back of a pretty successful World Cup campaign," he said.

"The boys have been on the road for five months. Making a World Cup semi-final and retaining the Ashes 2-2, it's been a good few months for Australian cricket."

Australia will next face Sri Lanka in the three-match T20I series at home beginning October 27.

Sarfraz confident of good showing in World Test Championship



Pakistani batsmen walk into the ground

Twitter

PTI ■ KARACHI

Pakistan's captain Sarfraz Ahmed is confident that his team is ready to make an impact in the ICC World Test Championship after struggling for form in this format in the last two years.

"After in-and-out performances in the last two years since the retirements

of Misbah-ul-Haq and Younis Khan, I think we are now ready to challenge other teams in the World Test Championship," he said.

Pakistan's first challenge will be a tour to Australia in November where they play two Tests followed by home Test series against Sri Lanka and Bangladesh. Pakistan is presently placed 7th among 12 Test teams in the ICC World Rankings and Sarfraz admitted his team had neither been consistent nor convincing in the longer format for a while now.

"We have struggled after losing Misbah and Younis and we are in a rebuilding process. But now I think our batsmen are ready to fill the gaps and take responsibility," he said.

"We have Shaan Masood, Imam-ul-Haq, Azhar Ali, Asad Shafiq, Haris Sohail and Babar Azam who have gone through the grind and can do well at the Test level. There is also lot of experience now behind Azhar and Asad."

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Kuldeep Yadav and Yuzvendra Chahal — the famed 'KulCha' of Indian cricket — may not be the flavour of the season anymore but experts believe it is too early to write them off in the shortest format ahead of the T20 World Cup next year.

Both Kuldeep and Chahal, who had cemented their place in the two shorter formats with impressive performances over the past 24 months, have not been picked for two straight T20 series, including the ongoing home assignment against South Africa.

Ahead of the opening T20 in Dharamsala, captain Virat Kohli said the team is trying out the likes of Rahul Chahal and Washington Sundar as it is looking to bat deep and post 200 plus totals consistently.

Former India opener Aakash Chopra feels the decision to exclude Kuldeep and Chahal could be a double-edged sword.

"The idea is if you have that much depth in batting you bat a certain way. You can't bat conser-

'Too early to look beyond Kuldeep, Chahal'



Kuldeep Yadav and Yuzvendra Chahal chats during practice session

Twitter

vatively if you have that kind of depth. That is what England did. They changed the template completely. They focused on batting deep as they wanted to score 400 (in ODIs) and they achieved it many times," Chopra told PTI.

"It looks India is wanting to take the same aggressive approach

in T20s and there is nothing wrong in that. Now, they need to start showing the intent of scoring 220 consistently."

"Batting till 8, 9 and 10 is still ambitious (as you don't need them at all in a 20 over game) but if you are trying to score 220 it is fine," he explained.

Chopra felt if the team decides to compromise on its wicket-taking ability, then it to score more.

However, he foresees Chahal making a T20 comeback very soon. Chahal, at the moment, is only part of the ODI team while Kuldeep is part of both the 50-over and Test squads though not a sure starter in the eleven.

"Chahal will be back. Rahul Chahal is more or a bowler and Washington Sundar's batting at number 8 may not be needed anyway," Chopra added.

Kuldeep and Chahal's inclusion has become a talking point just like finger spinners Ravichandran Ashwin and Ravindra Jadeja, who where shown the door in the shorter formats following the 2017 Champions Trophy. Jadeja made a comeback but Ashwin couldn't.

Former India spinner Sunil Joshi, who is now a well-known spin coach, welcomed the move to try out youngsters before caution-

ing against the confusion the situation might create in the mind of the spinners.

"I would suggest that Kuldeep and Chahal should go back to domestic cricket when they are not on national duty. Finger spinner or wrist spinner is not the question here. It is about having the tactics to outclass the batsman besides technique and temperament," Joshi told PTI.

"Let's see how the young spinners do and ample opportunities should be given to them but at the same time if Chahal and Kuldeep are playing only one format it could disturb their rhythm. White ball cricket is all about rhythm."

"The conditions will be different in Australia for the T20 World Cup with the bigger grounds. Overspin will come in handy. All the spinners who are in the hunt should be told about their roles clearly else it might cause confusion in their minds," Joshi added.