

**OPINION 6**  
BETRAYING  
THE UIGHURS

**WORLD 5**  
HONG KONG RETURNS TO  
VIOLENCE WITH TEAR GAS, MOLOTOVS

**MONEY 10**  
SBI TO MOVE RBI TO OFFER FIXED-  
FLOATING RATE HOME-LOANS

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TIME TO  
TURN THE  
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11 SPORT

## 2K Pak violations kill 21 Indians

### MEA registers strong protest against unprovoked Pak action

**MOHIT KANDHARI/PNS**  
JAMMU/NEW DELHI

With security forces going all out to target the Pakistan-backed terrorists in Jammu & Kashmir, Islamabad has resorted to uninterrupted ceasefire violations through the years to keep the Kashmiri pot boiling. The Pakistani Army has committed more than 2,050 unprovoked ceasefire violations this year in which 21 Indians have been killed, the Ministry of External Affairs said on Sunday.

"We have highlighted our concerns at unprovoked ceasefire violations by Pakistan forces, including in support of cross-border terrorist infiltration, and targeting of Indian civilians and border posts by them," Ministry of External Affairs spokesperson Raveesh Kumar said.

"This year they have resorted to more than 2,050 unprovoked ceasefire violations in which 21 Indians died," he said. India has repeatedly called upon Pakistan to ask its forces to adhere to 2003 ceasefire understanding and maintain peace and tranquillity along the Line of Control and International Border, Kumar said.

Indian forces exercise maximum restraint and respond to unprovoked violations and attempts at cross-border terrorist infiltration, he said. His remarks come amid heightened tensions between India and Pakistan following the abrogation of provisions of Article 370 in Jammu & Kashmir and the bifurcation of the State into Union Territories.



On Saturday, Pakistani troops engaged in heavy firing and mortar shelling on forward posts and villages along the LoC in Poonch district of Jammu & Kashmir. On September 1, an Army personnel was killed when Pakistani army targeted forward posts and villages in Shahpur-Kerni sector, raising the death toll in ceasefire violations by Pakistan in the twin districts of Poonch and Rajouri since July to eight — six soldiers and two civilians.

Meanwhile, with tensions rising along the LoC amid repeated ceasefire violations, the Indian Army has launched a fresh drive to reactivate Village Defence Committees (VDCs) in

the forward areas of frontier Rajouri and Poonch districts. The objective is to improve human intelligence and revive most of the defunct committees to effectively deal with the fresh threat emanating from across the LoC.

"Village Defence Committee training organised at Naoshera to refresh their weapon training and intelligence gathering skills. Session included firing practice & medical examination of the members," tweeted official Twitter handle of Nagrota based White Knight Corps on Sunday.

Similar drills are expected to be organised in several other forward areas of Poonch and Rajouri districts in the coming days.

According to ground reports, the field commanders of various formations in the region have been observing sharp decline in flow of information related to suspected

movement of infiltrators and miscreants moving in the forward areas.

Initially, the flow of information was less due to suspension of mobile calling facilities and later they realised growing sense of alienation among large section of masses in these areas is also impacting the relations between the 'awam' and the Indian Army.

These villagers were under intense pressure not to share or pass on any information to local units to avoid getting caught in the cross fire.

Intelligence reports claimed, "small batches of infiltrators have sneaked inside the Indian territory but Army authorities have so far failed to track them down in the absence of free flow of information from their known sources."

Local police officers, who are part of counter infiltration grid in the area, claimed local residents fear for their lives as

they apprehend some of these infiltrators are camping in the area and if may target them if they would leak information about their whereabouts.

After the abrogation of Article 370 and reorganisation of the State, Pakistan is desperately trying to push a large number of heavily armed infiltrators inside the Indian territory via traditional and non-traditional routes of infiltration via Rajouri and Poonch.

Despite heightened vigil in the area, infiltrators have managed to sneak inside the Indian territory taking cover of firing from nearby Pakistani posts and thick growth of maize crop.

A PTI report said nearly two dozen terrorists are present in the city and its periphery and even openly threatening shopkeepers in some areas, raising serious concern in the security establishment, according to officials. However, security forces are taking all precautions to ensure that the terrorists do not use the situation to cause any flare-up as in the past incidents of stone pelting by youths have occurred during anti-militancy operations, they said.

At many places in downtown Srinagar, the terrorists have been seen roaming freely and even warning shopkeepers to keep their shops shut and adhere to their diktats, the officials told PTI.

Jammu & Kashmir Police Chief Dilbag Singh did not rule out the possibility of presence of terrorists but said to claim that they are roaming freely "is an exaggeration".

## Will implement NRC in State: Haryana CM

### Says Govt working on family identity card & data would also be used

**PNS** ■ CHANDIGARH

Haryana Chief Minister Manohar Lal on Sunday said the National Register of Citizens (NRC) would be implemented in the State.

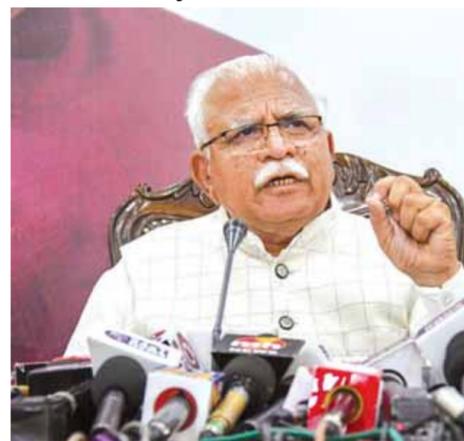
"In Haryana, we will implement NRC along the lines of Assam," the Chief Minister said while talking to the media-persons after meeting Justice (retd.) HS Bhalla, former chairman of Haryana Human Rights Commission in Panchkula.

Manohar Lal, who is seeking his second term as the Chief Minister met several eminent personalities including Justice Bhalla, ex-Navy chief Admiral Sunil Lanba and Lt Gen (retired) Baljit Singh Jaiswal on Sunday.

He met them under his party's "Maha Sampark Abhiyan" ahead of the State Assembly polls in October.

The Chief Minister said, "Justice Bhalla has taken up many assignments after his retirement. He is also working on NRC and will visit Assam soon. We will implement NRC in Haryana and have sought Bhalla's support and suggestion."

The State Government is working on a fast pace on family identity card and its data



would also be used in the NRC, he added.

Haryana CM had previously too supported NRC implementation across the country. Notably, the final NRC in Assam was released on August 31, leaving out 19 lakh people. Following this, several political parties had voiced their dissatisfaction with the final document.

Meanwhile, the Chief Minister also said the Haryana Government will look into the feasibility of setting up a Law Commission.

"He (Justice Bhalla) suggested that a Law Commission should be set up in Haryana. We shall study it and examine this too. The Government will look into the feasibility of setting up of

this commission and if people get benefitted with it, it will be set up," the CM said.

He said social audit system would be implemented so that the audit of development works could be done by the intellectuals in the society, in which ex-servicemen, teachers, engineers or others having special achievement would be included. For this, in the coming time a separate Voluntary Department would also be formed, he said.

Manohar said for last five years he has worked with honesty and in a transparent manner by treating 2.5 crore population of the State as his family. "I have reached out to the people through Jan Ashirwad Yatra in all 90 Assemblies recently," he added.

## Former inmate of Bihar shelter home raped by 4 men in moving car

**PTI** ■ BETTIAH (BIHAR)

A woman, who had been an inmate of the infamous Muzaffarpur shelter home, was allegedly raped by four men in a moving vehicle (car) in Bettiah town of West Champaran district, police said on Sunday.

The Muzaffarpur shelter home had hit the headlines in 2018 after a social audit report highlighted that over 30 girls were allegedly raped at the Government-aided shelter home, run by an NGO.

Bettiah town police station SHO Shashi Bhushan Thakur said 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, he said.

It will be confirmed whether she was raped only after getting the medical examination report, he said.

The woman, in her police complaint lodged with the Bettiah town police station on



Saturday, alleged that four men forcibly took her inside their vehicle (car) while she was passing through the area where she lives on Friday evening, and raped her in a moving vehicle, police said.

The men then dumped the woman in her locality after raping her. All the four men had covered their faces with masks but she could remove the masks and identify them.

While all the four persons belonged to the same family, two of them were brothers, she said. Over 30 girls were allegedly raped at the shelter home run by Brajesh Thakur, the chief of a state-funded NGO.

Continued on Page 4

## 82 ex-MPs may face action for not vacating Lutyens' bungalows

**PNS** ■ NEW DELHI

As many as 82 former MPs are yet to vacate their official bungalows in Lutyens' Delhi despite a stern warning by a Lok Sabha panel. The authorities are planning to take action against these ex-MPs under the Public Premises (Eviction of Unauthorised Occupants) Act for speedy eviction.

According to officials of Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs, most of the ex-MPs have vacated their official bungalows. But, 82 former MPs are, however, yet to vacate their bungalows as per a recent list. Sources in the Lok Sabha Housing Committee said this is not acceptable and that strict action will be taken against such former MPs.

"It was the panel's decision to ask ex-MPs to vacate their official residences. Now, if some of them have not done so, it is not acceptable. Strict action



will be taken against them," the sources in the committee said.

Notices are being sent to these former Members of Parliament, asking them to vacate their bungalows which had been allotted to them in 2014, another source said.

"If they (ex-MPs) do not give up official bungalows, action may be taken against them under the Public Premises (Eviction of Unauthorised Occupants) Act.

"Once the eviction order is passed, power, water and cooking gas connections will be snapped," the source added.

Continued on Page 4

## Cong aims for strong poll pact in Haryana, J'khand

### Party all set to target BJP Govts on 'excesses' in MVA rollout

**PNS** ■ NEW DELHI

After resolving the seat-sharing arrangements with Sharad Pawar-led NCP in Maharashtra, the Congress is now making efforts to stitch a strong alliance in the poll-bund States of Haryana and Jharkhand.

At the backdrop of prevailing economic slowdown, unemployment and job losses, the Sonia Gandhi-led Congress is planning to announce similar sops which helped them to bounce back in State Assembly elections in Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan and Chhattisgarh last December when Rahul Gandhi was head of the party.

AICC sources said the party will also target the BJP Government both at Centre



and States over excesses committed in the implementation of the amended in the amended Motor Vehicles Act.

Sonia has formed a six-member screening committee for Haryana Assembly elections nominating senior party leader Madhusudan Mistry as its chairman. The party has begun talks for a grand Opposition alliance with JMM, RJD, JVM and Left parties in Jharkhand.

Other members of the panel appointed by Sonia Gandhi for Haryana include Haryana Congress chief Kumari Selja, Congress legislative party leader and former Chief Minister Bhupinder Singh Hooda and AICC general secretary State in-charge Ghulam Nabi Azad. Congress leaders Deepa Dasmuni and Devender Yadav have also been

made members of the panel. Hooda is also the chairperson of election management committee.

Launching the elections campaign on Sunday Hooda said the days of the "anti-people" BJP Government in Haryana are numbered and people have made up their mind to throw them out of power in the upcoming Assembly polls. He said the "false promises" made by the BJP have been exposed before the people.

Giving an example where a hefty challan was imposed on a motorcyclist in Gurgaon for violations, Hooda said under the amended act hefty challans were being issued, which were burdening the common people. "A bike is worth ₹15,000, but a challan is issued for ₹15,000," he said.

In the 2014 Assembly polls, the BJP won 47 seats and went on to form its Government. The Congress could only win 15 seats in the 90-member Assembly.

Continued on Page 4

## Bhatt: Facing life threat after disclosure of PDS scam

### Interacts with media after becoming approver of SIT



Raipur: The accused turned approver in the multi-crore Public Distribution System (PDS) scam, Shiv Shankar Bhatt, after claiming that state's former Chief Minister Raman Singh was the kingpin in the scam in which other party bigwigs were also involved, now made another startling claim of facing life threat after the revelation.

Interacting with the media-persons at Raipur Press Club on Sunday, Bhatt accused that as he disclosed about the scam the civil supplies corporation office was raided, but he was falsely implicated and was sent to jail.

"After detention of four and half years in judicial custody the Special Investigation Team (SIT) probing the scam offered me to become an approver which I had gladly accepted," he informed.

Leveling serious allegations against Raman and his kin as well as against the then food and civil supplies Minister Punnulal Mohite and Lilaram Bhojwani, Bhatt claimed that whatever statement he had given before the court in form of affidavits was not under any duress.

Strongly objecting to the allegation of Raman that he was a "habitual criminal", Bhatt further warned of legal action. "I had worked in so many responsible posts, including the Officer on Special Duty (OSD) of the then CM Raman and the allegation of him are ridiculous," he said. "I have faced punishment for the crime I have not committed and now I only want to send the real culprits behind the bars" he added.

SR

## CAPSULE

### TWO NAXALS KILLED IN GADCHIROLI ENCOUNTER

**Nagpur:** Two Naxals, each carrying a reward of ₹4 lakh, were killed and at least five others injured in an encounter with police on Sunday in Maharashtra's Gadchiroli district.

### IMRAN KHAN WARNS OF CONVENTIONAL WAR

**Islamabad:** Pakistan Prime Minister Imran Khan has said there was no question of talking to New Delhi after it revoked the special status of Jammu & Kashmir, as he warned about the possibility of a conventional war with India.

### SAUDI ARABIA RACES TO RESTORE OIL SUPPLY

**Riyadh:** Saudi Arabia raced on Sunday to restart operations at oil plants hit by drone attacks which slashed its production by half, as Iran dismissed US claims it was behind the assault.

# Gir pride saved from 100-foot deep plunge

**PNS** ■ NEW DELHI

Open wells in Gujarat's Gir forest continue to pose threat to the Asiatic lions with four of them, including a lioness, falling in one of them on Sunday. Fortunately, rescue arrived in time for them. They are recuperating from the injuries.

The unused well was about 100-feet deep and was situated on a farm in Manavav, and the four big cats, in the 2-3 year age group, fell into it on Saturday evening, Sarasiya Range Forest Officer MR Odedra said.

"The farm owner alerted us. A forest department team managed to rescue the lions and lioness after working through the night. The well was dry and the four had to be dragged out with the help of residents and equipment we



had carried for the purpose," the forest officer said. Last month, a lion had

died after falling into a well at Kantala village in Tulsishyam Khambha range of the Gir

East wildlife division in Gujarat's Junagadh district. The incident comes with-

in a month after the State Government had informed the State High Court that it has taken care of the open well problem by providing financial subsidy up to ₹16,000 for construction of parapet wall around the wells and so far 37,201 open wells have been covered.

According to officials, there are over 50,000 such wells that pose danger to wild animals.

As many as 222 lions died, most of them due to natural causes, in the Gir forest region in Gujarat in the last two years, the Gujarat Government had told the legislative Assembly recently.

Among them, only 23 lions died because of "unnatural" causes such as getting hit by trains or falling into wells that were built between June 2017 and May 2019.

In a written reply a query by Congress MLA Shailesh Parmar, Forest Minister Ganpat Vasava had stated that 82 lions, including 30 cubs, have died between June 2017 and May 2018 while the number of deaths stood at 140, including 60 cubs, for the June 2018 — May 2019 period.

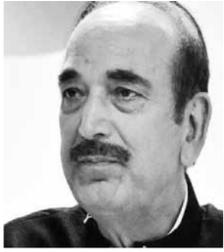
Wildlife activists feel that open wells are like death traps and such incidents (falling of lions in wells) reflect the fact that overcrowding in and around Gir was harming Asiatic lions in more ways than one and that something had to be done to resolve this.

Gir forest is the only abode of Asiatic lions. As per the last census of 2015, it is home to 523 lions. However, the State Government had recently said that the number of lions has gone up to 600.

# Azad moves SC to visit J&K, family members

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Senior Congress leader and former Jammu & Kashmir Chief Minister Ghulam Nabi Azad has moved the Supreme Court seeking permission to visit his home State to enquire about the well being of his family members. His plea is scheduled to be taken up by a bench of Chief Justice Ranjan Gogoi and Justices SA Bobde and S Abdul Nazeer on Monday.



Azad has sought a nod from the top court to visit his family members and relatives. He had tried to visit the State after the abrogation of Jammu & Kashmir's special status but was sent back from the airport by authorities.

In his petition before the top court, he has also sought permission to check on social conditions in the state after the clampdown imposed by the authorities in the aftermath of revocation of provisions of Article 370.

Several opposition leaders, including Congress leader Rahul Gandhi, had sought to visit Jammu and Kashmir, but were not allowed to do so and were sent back from the airport itself. CPI(M) leader Sitaram

Yechury had moved the apex court to see his ailing party colleague Mohammed Yousuf Tarigami, which allowed him to pay a visit but with certain conditions.

The Supreme court had on September 5, allowed former Jammu and Kashmir chief minister Mehbooba Mufti's daughter Iltija to meet her in Kashmir, where she is under detention following the revocation of the state's special status. The top court had allowed Iltija to meet her mother in private but said that as far as moving around in other parts of Srinagar goes, she can do so subject to the permission from district authorities.

The National Panthers

Party (NPP) too on Sunday accused the Centre of ignoring the "genuine concerns and apprehensions" of the people of Jammu and Kashmir following the scrapping of Article 370 last month. NPP chairman and former minister Harsh Dev Singh said it has already highlighted the concerns of the people for protection of their lands and jobs through a memorandum to Prime Minister Narendra Modi and would continue to agitate till the issue is addressed.

Meanwhile normal life remained affected in Kashmir Valley for the 42nd consecutive day on Sunday as most of shops remained shut and public transport was off the roads, even as the weekly flea market opened here, officials said. The weekly flea market opened here on Sunday as several vendors put up their stalls on the TRC Chowk-Polo View axis.

Most of the shops and other business establishments remained closed, while public transport was off the roads across the valley, they added. Internet services remained suspended across all platforms.

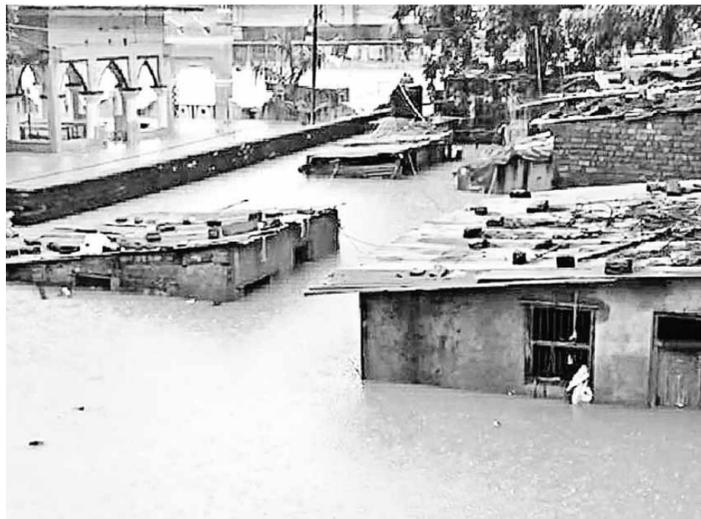
# 1400 killed, 1 cr affected in floods: MHA

RAJESH KUMAR ■ NEW DELHI

As many as one crore people are affected and 1400 people have died in rain-related tragedies across the country and damages to property runs into thousands of crores in 14 States. Taking note of grim situation in the recent floods in Rajasthan and Madhya Pradesh, the National Crisis Management Committee (NCMC), headed by Cabinet Secretary Rajiv Gauba, on Sunday reviewed the prevailing flood situation and directed that immediate assistance be provided to meet the crisis. According to the Home Ministry data, as many as one crore people are affected in floods.

As per the situation report pertaining to floods in India, prepared by the Ministry of Home Affairs, as many as 136 people died and 170 villages are affected in Gujarat while 150 died, 6000 houses damaged and 640 villages are affected in Madhya Pradesh. East Rajasthan recorded 49 percent above rainfall this season while west Rajasthan recorded 16 percent more rainfall till date. MP recorded 54 percent more rainfall this year.

According to flood situation report, this year, floods have wreaked havoc in Assam, Kerala, Uttarakhand, Karnataka, Tamil Nadu,



Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Gujarat, Himachal Pradesh, Bihar, Odisha and among others states. The data shows over one crore people affected in 18000 villages in flood affected states. As far as five lakh hectare crops have been affected in floods. Several states including Delhi, Himachal Pradesh and Uttarakhand have not submitted crops damage data to the home ministry.

According to the Home

Ministry, the Cabinet Secretary took stock of the situation, preparedness, rescue and relief operations and directed that immediate assistance, as sought by the states, be provided to meet the crisis. The NCMC has been informed that action to evacuate and rescue people and livestock has been taken by the states and no loss of life has been reported. Adequate teams of the National Disaster

Response Force and the Army have also been deployed in rescue work.

It was informed by both the states that due to extremely heavy rainfall and the consequent discharge of water from the Gandhi Sagar Dam in Madhya Pradesh and other reservoirs in the two states, there has been flooding in the downstream areas as well as

Department (IMD) conveyed that while there has been very heavy rainfall in the two states over the past few days, the intensity is likely to decline from Monday.

Senior officials of the Ministries of Home and the Defence, as well as those from the IMD, NDRF and Central Water Commission attended the meeting.

The Chief Secretaries and other senior officers from the state governments participated in the meeting through video conference.

According to the agriculture ministry, it is estimated that 40 million hectares of land (roughly 12 per cent of India's geographical area) is prone to floods. While floods occur in India every year, data for the last 65 years show that the scale of their impact, in terms of area affected and damage caused, has been erratic. Between 1953 and 2017, for farmers, the overall damage to crops was Rs 1,11,225.621 crore (nearly 30 per cent of the total damages) and 60,49,349 cattle dead.

India suffered damages worth Rs 37,82,47,04,70,000 (Rs 3,78,247.047 crore) due to floods and heavy rains. Besides this, 1,07,535 people were killed, a total of 8,07,17,993 houses destroyed and an area of 466.335 million hectare affected.

The India Meteorological

# SC to hear pleas against abrogation of Article 370, restrictions in J&K

**New Delhi:** The Supreme Court is scheduled to hear on Monday pleas challenging abrogation of provisions of Article 370 — which gave special status to Jammu & Kashmir, validity of imposition of President's rule and the related restrictions imposed in the State.

A bench of Chief Justice Ranjan Gogoi and Justices SA Bobde and S Abdul Nazeer will be also hearing a bunch fresh petitions, including the one filed by former Jammu & Kashmir Chief Minister Ghulam Nabi Azad seeking permission to visit his family members and relatives. Azad, who had tried to visit the state twice after the abrogation of Article 370 provisions in Jammu & Kashmir but was sent back from the airport by the authorities, has sought a nod from the top court to visit his family members.

Jammu & Kashmir People's Conference party led by Sajjad Lone has also challenged the abrogation of provisions of Article 370 and the validity of the state Re-organization Bill. Child right

activists Enakshi Ganguly and Professor Shanta Sinha have also filed a plea against the alleged illegal detention of children in Jammu & Kashmir since the revocation of special status.

A plea of Rajya Sabha MP and MDMK founder Vaiko is also listed for hearing, in which he has sought a direction to the Centre and Jammu & Kashmir to produce former Chief Minister Farooq Abdullah, allegedly under detention following abrogation of Article 370, before the court.

In his plea, Vaiko has said that 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 C N Annadurai.

The plea of CPI(M) Sitaram Yechury who had moved the apex court seeking to see his ailing party colleague Mohammed Yousuf Tarigami is also among the batch of petitions listed for hearing. PTI

# NCRPB to form committee for sustainable development study

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The National Capital Region Planning Board (NCRPB) is expected to set up a committee of town planners and other experts to carry out a study for sustainable development of "far-reaching" areas of national capital region. The committee is also likely to study the reasons behind variation in population density of the various regions of Delhi and NCR.

NCRPB officials said a recent board meeting of NCRPB reviewed the issue of constituting the expert committee.

Asked who will head the panel, the official said the decision has not been taken yet, adding that terms of refer-

ences of the panel will soon be fixed.

In the recent past, h Shamli, Muzaffarnagar, and Hapur districts of Uttar Pradesh and Faridabad, Jind and Karnal districts of Haryana have been included in the NCR.

"In surrounding areas of Delhi like Noida, Gurugram, Ghaziabad, there has been rapid development. The committee will look into aspects of sustainable development in far-reaching areas of NCR and optimization of resources," official also said.

The plan is to ensure equal development in all areas which are part of the National Capital Region so that people don't need to move to surrounding areas of Delhi, official said.

In 2015, the NCRPB had decided to include Muzaffarnagar district of Uttar Pradesh, and Jind and Karnal districts of Haryana.

According to NCRPB's website, National Capital Region (NCR) is a unique example of inter-state regional planning and development, covering the entire National Capital Territory of Delhi, thirteen districts of State of Haryana, seven districts of State of Uttar Pradesh and two districts of State of Rajasthan, with the Nation Capital as its core.

The NCR in India was constituted under the NCRPB Act, 1985 with the key rationale to promote balanced and harmonized development of the region, and to avoid any hazardous development.



President of Air Force Association (AFA), Air Chief Marshal (Retd) Arup Raha pays homage at the National War Memorial, along with other Air Force veterans, on the Annual Day of Air Force Association, in New Delhi on Sunday

# DST to launch 5 technology missions

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

To ensure that the country is ready to meet scientific and technological challenges of the future, the Department of Science and Technology (DST) will soon launch five technology missions - Mission on electric mobility, Mission on promoting research and development in quantum technology, cyber physical systems Mission and last but not the least the Mission on digital mapping.

DST Secretary Ashutosh Sharma told the reporters here recently that the government was working continuously to shape a seamless science, technology and innovation sys-



tem, which was cutting edge, collaborative, inclusive, relevant and aligned to national priorities.

In this regard, the new missions would cover aspects ranging from electric mobility to quantum science and technology.

**The aim is to give a fillip to the manufacturing sector through development of new products and services, creation of skilled human resources at different levels, from technician to researchers and entrepreneurs**

The electric mobility Mission seeks to promote long-term research and development in all aspects of technologies in the wake of climate change concerns while Mission methanol envisages establishment of centres of excellence for production and utilisation of methanol and dimethyl ether using various solid fuels and natural gas and develop knowl-

edge base and trained manpower in the area.

The third mission seeks to promote developments in the area of cyber physical systems, which includes artificial intelligence, robotics, sensors, big data analytics, geographical information systems and advanced materials.

The aim is to give a fillip to the manufacturing sector through development of new products and services, creation of skilled human resources at different levels, from technician to researchers and entrepreneurs.

A mission on promoting research and development in quantum technology and related areas of quantum comput-

ing, quantum cryptography, quantum communication, quantum metrology and sensing, and quantum enhanced imaging will be based on the properties of quantum mechanics.

The fifth mission aims to produce digital maps across the country to a scale of 1:500 with the help of satellites and drones. The entire country would be mapped within the next two years.

Meanwhile, the DST under the Union Science and Technology is also preparing a draft geospatial data policy which puts down in writing who can own geospatial data, how they can use it, and how it can be shared.

# Over 138m harmed every yr by doctors' errors: WHO

ARCHANA JYOTI ■ NEW DELHI

Just when concerns are being raised about increasing incidents of violence against doctors, sometimes leading to grievous hurt or murder by the patients and their relatives, the World Health Organisation (WHO) has brought to the fore other side of the picture by stating that more than 138 million patients are harmed every year by doctors' errors.

On Tuesday, the WHO will celebrate the first World Patient Safety Day, with which it seeks to raise awareness of this ongoing tragedy. It said that globally, at least 5 patients die every minute because of unsafe care such as error in diagnosis, errors in medicine prescriptions and treatments, and the inappropriate use of drugs.

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. Four out of every ten



patients are harmed during primary and ambulatory health care. The most detrimental errors are related to diagnosis, prescription and the use of medicines. Medication errors alone cost an estimated US\$ 42 billion annually. Unsafe surgical care procedures cause complications in up to 25% of patients resulting in 1 million deaths during or immediately after surgery annually.

In India, according to a study published in BMJ journal in 2018, safety of patients in tertiary care hospitals was found to be a big problem. "At least 62.9 per cent of unsafe injections are administered every year in India. Estimated risk of Hospital Care Associated Infections (HCAI) is up to 20 times higher than

industrialised countries and is approx 10 per cent and 15-30 per cent in acute care. 77 per cent of all reported cases of counterfeit and substandard drugs are from developing countries," said the study.

In fact, according to the WHO, only errors related to erroneous medicine prescriptions cost healthcare systems around the world some \$42 billion (37 billion euros).

"These mistakes occur because healthcare systems are not suitably designed to deal with these errors and learn from them," Dr Kumar said, while admitting that many medical facilities hide what they did wrong, which often keeps them from taking steps to make sure these mistakes are

not repeated in the future.

Figures provided by the WHO refer only to countries with medium and low economic status (where 80 per cent of the global population live), so that the real number could be even greater, considering that even in developed countries, one out of every 10 patients is the victim of medical mistakes.

Dr Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, WHO Director-General said that "we need a patient safety culture that promotes partnership with patients, encourages reporting and learning from errors, and creates a blame-free environment where health workers are empowered and trained to reduce errors."

Following demand from the medical fraternity, Union Health Ministry has proposed Healthcare Service Personnel and Clinical Establishments (Prohibition of Violence and Damage to Property) Bill 2019 that makes assault of medical professionals a criminal offence with imprisonment up to 10 years and fine extending up to ₹5 lakh.

# High humidity in north plains to prevail: IMD

**Monsoon shows no signs of withdrawal**

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

With the monsoon showing no signs of withdrawal, north Indian plains are unlikely to get any respite from high levels of humidity this week. According to the India Meteorological Department (IMD), the humidity is expected to be high in the next 15 days as due to high amount of moisture due to the low pressure area, coupled with temperatures, leads to rise in the humidity.

K Sathi Devi, Head of the National Weather Forecasting Centre said that currently, there is a low pressure area of north-west Madhya Pradesh which is causing good rainfall. This also attracts moisture from the easterlies. Several parts of the north Indian plains have been recording high levels of humidity, which is not a usual phenomenon in September. In humid conditions where sur-

rounding air cannot hold further water vapour, sweat evaporates slowly, if at all. As a result the body heats up. It is difficult for the sweat to evaporate and in high humidity conditions we tend to sweat more.

The amount of water vapour present in a column of air determines the Absolute Humidity of air but this principle is not usually preferred by meteorologists. "The concept of Relative Humidity is used whereby the amount of water vapour present in air is calculated with respect to the amount of water vapour the air can hold. During rainy season or conditions of high humidity, the relative humidity is on the higher side which means air cannot hold moisture further," the IMD said.

So far, the country has received four per cent more rainfall than normal. The south peninsula has received 10 per cent more precipitation, while the central India division has recorded 23 per cent more rainfall. Mritunjay Mohapatra, Director General of the India Meteorological Department, said the intensity of the low



pressure will be ebbing from Monday but the effect is likely to remain for the next five days. "Thereafter, we can expect the withdrawal process of the monsoon to commence," Mohapatra said.

The east and north India divisions and the northwest India division have recorded deficient rainfall at minus 18

and minus 8 per cent respectively. Of the 36 meteorological sub-divisions of the IMD, more than three-fourths have received normal or excess rainfall. Sixteen sub-divisions have received normal rainfall, while 11 have recorded excess precipitation. Nine have received deficient rainfall.

# EOW sleuths interrogates Chintamani suspected as 'CM' in PDS scam diary

STAFF REPORTER ■ RAIPUR

Following the startling disclosures indicting previous chief minister Raman Singh in the multi-crore PDS scam by former manager Civil Supplies Corporation Shivshankar Bhatt, the Economic Offence Wing (EOW) has geared up its investigation in the graft case. It detained erstwhile Accounts Officer Chintamani Chandrakar who is suspected to be the 'CM' mentioned in a code name in the diary that was recovered.

Superintendent of Police EOW, I.K. Elesela informed The Pioneer that Chintamani was detained by the EOW on Sunday for interrogation. He was later released in the late evening after interrogation. The investigation will continue and he will again be called for interrogation in a day or two, he said. Notable, Chintamani is a key person in the PDS scam being an accountant at corporation at the time of the scam and is suspected to be the 'CM' referred in code word in the diary recovered by the EOW.



day or two, he said.

Notable, Chintamani is a key person in the PDS scam being an accountant at corporation at the time of the scam and is suspected to be the 'CM' referred in code word in the diary recovered by the EOW.

## CM to visit Dantewada today



RAIPUR: Chhattisgarh Chief Minister Bhupesh Baghel will be on a day-long visit to Dantewada on September 16.

During his visit he will address public meetings at Metapal and Nakulnaar. As per the scheduled programme, Chief Minister will leave Raipur at 11.00 am by plane and reach Jagdalpur by 11.40. He would then take helicopter to village Metapal of Dantewada district and address the public meeting. He would then reach village Nakulnar of Kuwankonda block at 2.25 pm and address the public meeting. Baghel will then return to Jagdalpur by 4.00 pm.

# Four Naxals held in poll bound Dantewada

STAFF REPORTER ■ DANTEWADA

Four Naxals were arrested on Sunday from separate places in poll-bound Dantewada district of Chhattisgarh, police said.

Two of them were held from within Farspal police station limits while the others were caught in Geedam and Katekalyan, an official said.

Dantewada Assembly by-poll is scheduled for September 23 and the arrests came while the District Reserve Guard and Danteshwari Fighters, an all-woman anti-Naxal police unit, were carrying out a joint patrol, Dantewada Superintendent of Police Abhishek Pallava said.

He identified the arrested cadre as Bhime Kowasi (20), a woman member of Mirtur LOS (local organisation squad) with Rs 1 lakh reward on her head, and janmilitia member Ursa Mithu (20), from Kachhe valley, adding that 11 Maoist posters and a set of combat uniforms were seized.

**Dantewada Assembly by-poll is scheduled for September 23 and the arrests came while the District Reserve Guard and Danteshwari Fighters were carrying out a joint patrol**

In a separate operation, a woman janmilitia member, Attami Shanti (18), was arrested from Geedam weekly market when she arrived there to keep an eye on troop movements, the SP said.

The fourth arrest was that of Lakhma Podiyam (28) who was arrested from Parcheli Bandipara village road, he said.

The Dantewada by-poll was necessitated following the death of sitting BJP MLA Bhima Mandavi in a Naxal attack in April this year.

# Conspiracy to malign opposition leaders will be revealed soon: BJP

STAFF REPORTER ■ RAIPUR

Chhattisgarh BJP has come heavily on the scam accused, who are allegedly playing in the hand of the government namely Manturam Pawar and now Shivshankar Bhatt and claimed that the entire conspiracy will come out in the open soon.

BJP State spokesperson and former MLA Shrichand Sundertani raising question over the press conference of PDS-scam accused Shiv Shankar Bhatt, said under pressure of ruling government, the affidavit of the accused is spread in the

media citing it as statement recorded under section 164 before the magistrate.

He said it clearly revealed that there is a conspiracy on the part of the accused to get scot free and that the statement was recorded at the behest of the government. But in court the reality would come out. The BJP spokesperson further claimed that it was a ploy to defame BJP leaders before Dantewada by-poll and that the common man clearly understand this.

Sunderani alleged that a former chief secretary whose name has been mentioned for taking money in

the PDS scam, to save him, had dramatically removed his stenographer and personal assistant and is now involved with the government to hatch the conspiracy. He likes to project himself as super CM, he alleged.

BJP spokesperson said in last 9 months the Congress government has been indulging in vindictive politics but due to which nothing has been gained by the state. The PDS scam accused is being given high profile post.

He stated that Chief Minister Bhupesh Baghel should stop such indecent politics.

# Naxals torch bus, open fire at police party

STAFF REPORTER ■ BIJAPUR

Naxals torched a bus in the insurgency-hit Bijapur district after asking the passengers to alight on Sunday, police said.

The incident occurred at around 4 pm near Sitapur camp of security forces under Usoor police station area when the private passenger bus was on its way to Usoor from Bijapur town, a senior police official said.

Maoists stopped the bus near a nullah and set it ablaze after allowing passengers to get off, he said.

None of the passengers or crew was harmed, he said.

When security forces reached at the spot of the incident after being alerted about it,

**Maoists stopped the bus near a nullah and set it ablaze after allowing passengers to get off, he said**

a group of ultras hiding in forests opened fire on them that led to gun battle, he said.

However, after a brief exchange of fire ultras escaped into dense forests, he said.

No harm was reported to either side in the gunfight, he added.

# Three members of family die of diarrhoea

STAFF REPORTER ■ BALRAMPUR

Three members of a family-- one minor and two women-- died of diarrhoea in village Gaina under Wadrafnagar block on early morning of Sunday.

One more death had occurred this week, making the total death toll four.

The health department has rushed to hold a camp to treat the villagers affected by the disease. Health and family welfare minister T S Singhdeo said the area has been vulnerable to diarrhoea. If any

laxity on the part of health ground staff is found, then action will be taken.

As per reports 15-year-old Rajpati, daughter of Sant Kumar, 70-year-old Phulmati, wife of Bir Singh and 70-year-old Nankur Ram have died one after the other. All of them had been affected by diarrhoea since Thursday. As per health department, the villagers had been drinking water from a well in the village.

Meanwhile, district collector Sanjiv Kumar Jha said that administration is ready to fight any case of

seasonal diseases. With rains still continuing the ground staffs have been asked to tell villagers to drink clean and boiled water and that too only after sieving it. Door-to-door drive is also being undertaken for prevention and providing basic medicines. Bleaching powder is also provided.

Collector said that people instead of using hand pumps have been using the water from well. The villagers are being provided treatment. The health department has been asked to conduct regular tours of different areas.

## 'Sakhi one stop centre' in Korea giving hope to female victims of violence

KOREA: For female victims of violence, Sakhi one stop centre in Korea district has become a place to go as the institution provides support to such women. As per official information, out of 711 cases registered at Sakhi one stop centre, 641 cases have been resolved. The centre was established on April 1, 2017.

"Out of the 711 cases, 305 were directly registered at the centre while 406 were registered through '181-women helpline'. So far, the centre has provided support to 170 women including minor girls," a district administration official informed.

The officials further stated that at this centre the victims have been provided with medical, legal and psychological counseling. Even with victim's consent family counseling was provided, which resulted in amicable settlement of dispute and victim returning to their family. A good number of women who were found straying alone were also reunited with their families. However, those who could not return to their families due to various reasons were sent to Ujjwala home and Nari Niketan. The officials said to avail assistance from Sakhi one stop centre one can either approach the centre directly or call '181 woman helpline' or call 07836-233519.

## Renu Jogi meets Baghel, urges him to take care of his son's health

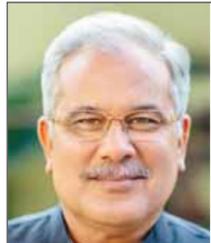
**Son Amit has been sent to jail in judicial custody for 14 days but due to his ill health he has been admitted to a private hospital**

STAFF REPORTER ■ RAIPUR

Janta Congress Chhattisgarh - Jogi (JCC-J) legislator Renu Jogi on Sunday met Chief Minister Bhupesh Baghel and urged him to provide better treatment to her son and JCC state president Amit Jogi.

"It was sheer motherly love which drove me to meet my political rival and Chief Minister Baghel to seek sympathetic intervention from him for better treatment of my son", she told media persons about her meeting with the CM.

"I have lost my daughter 20 years ago and now I am



not in a situation to lose my only son due to any negligence on anybody's part", she said.

Regarding her meeting with the CM, she said after patiently hearing her plea the CM had assured to personally take necessary action

pertaining to Amit's health care, she added.

Notable, Amit has been sent to jail on judicial remand for 14 days and as his health condition was not satisfactory he had been admitted to a private hospital in the state capital.

# Congress burns effigies of Raman Singh, Ajit Jogi

**The protest is against their alleged involvement in Antagarh Tapes Case and PDS scam**

STAFF REPORTER ■ RAIPUR

State Congress on Sunday staged a statewide protest against two of the state's former chief ministers by burning their effigies for their alleged involvement in Antagarh Tapes case and



PDS scam.

Official sources in the Congress claimed that they burnt the effigies in around 300 places across the state.

Claiming overwhelming

response to their agitation, state general secretary of PCC and chairman of its Communication Wing, Shailesh Nitin Trivedi said there was tremendous resentment among the

state populace about the acts of these two former CMs-- Raman Singh and Ajit Jogi.

The wrongful acts of these leaders have come to the fore with the disclosure of Manturam and Shiv Shankar Bhatt in the Antagarh Tapes case and PDS scam respectively by fling affidavits under section 164 in the court, he said.

The corrupt and anti-democratic faces of these two big leaders have now come to fore with the statements of Manturam and Bhatt and to protest their act of maligning the politics of Chhattisgarh the ruling Congress staged the demonstrations, he added.



Tableaux procession for the immersion of idols of Lord Ganesha was taken out on late Saturday night. Chief Minister also performed 'Aarti' of the Lord at the heart of the city, Jaistambh Chowk. Procession continued till Sunday afternoon and later the idols were immersed in specially created immersion pond at Mahadev Ghat on the outskirts of capital city. Photo Santosh Sahu

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# 12 drown as tourist boat capsizes in Andhra

PTI ■ AMARAVATI (AP)

At least 12 people drowned and 17 others were rescued after a tourist boat capsized in the swollen River Godavari in Andhra Pradesh on Sunday, police said. The boat was carrying around 60 people, including nine-member crew, and a search was on for others.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi expressed anguish over the incident. Chief Minister YS Jagan Mohan Reddy expressed shock over the grave tragedy and announced an ex-gratia relief of ₹10 lakh each to the kin of the deceased. The boat, belonging to a private operator, was on its way to the picturesque Papikondalu tourist spot in the middle of the river when it met with the accident, apparently on colliding with a large rock formation, at Kachchuluru in East Godavari District, about 200 km from here, they said. Twelve bodies have been retrieved so far while 17 people were rescued by the locals, police said adding two teams of National Disaster Response Force and State Disaster Response Force, with a total of 140 personnel, have



NDRF and navy personnel carry out a rescue operation after a tourist boat capsized in the swollen Godavari river in East Godavari district of Andhra Pradesh on Sunday

been sent to the accident spot into service from Rajamahendravaram for rescue operations. A special helicopter has been pressed

# 20 yrs on, woman fights for justice against father's killers

Now on dharna in Delhi, appeals for PM's intervention

PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

Seeking justice, a woman of Odisha has been struggling for 20 years to see that her father's killers are duly punished.

Being disappointed by the existing system of law and 'lengthy' administrative procedures, Rukhsana Bano of minority community of Bhawanipatna in Kalahandi district is on a dharna in Delhi demanding punishment for her father Abdul Habib's assassins.

During the last eight months, Rukhsana along with her mother has been staging dharnas at various places in the national capital and appealing to Prime Minister Narendra Modi seeking action against accused persons involved in her father's murder.

Rukhsana, who has used Facebook and YouTube massively to make public her



"As we did not get justice in Odisha, we have come to Delhi. After sitting on dharna for 62 days, a CBI probe was ordered into the case. But Bhawanipatna SP closed the case and forwarded the copy to the CBI. With no option left, we have come here to seek justice," said Rukhsana

protests, was found roaming recently in Noida area with a poster written in Hindi reading '20 saal se laga rahe hain naya ki guhar! kab milega mere papa ke hatyare ko saja?'

According to reports, Rukhsana's parents had a love marriage. However, her father died in 1999 while she and her two other siblings were under three years' of age.

Rukhsana alleged that her father was poisoned to death by his siblings over property dispute. When her mother protested seeking justice, she received murder threat from

the accused persons. "Though we have been leading a very miserable life, we have insisted for justice for the last 20 years," said Rukhsana.

She said though she approached the district Collector, SP, DSP and IIC many times, her demand has still remained unheard. On directive by the Collector, the SP reopened the case and booked the accused persons under sections 302, 506 and 34 of IPC, but nobody was called for interrogation in the case.

"As we did not get justice in Odisha, we have come to Delhi. After sitting on dharna for 62 days, a CBI probe was ordered into the case. But Bhawanipatna SP closed the case and forwarded the copy to the CBI. With no option left, we have come here to seek justice," said Rukhsana

Meanwhile, various voluntary organisations have extended helping hands to provide them food and other facilities during their stay in Delhi. Rukhsana and her mother still hope that they would get justice one day.

# Atal Centres to be set up in backward districts

To support innovations in various fields

PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

The Odisha Government would set up Atal Community Innovation Centres (ACICs) in backward areas of the State to support innovations in various fields, for which the NITI Aayog would extend support.

With a large number of corporate majors operating in Odisha, there is a huge scope for setting up the centres in the State. The ACICs would be set up in public-private partnership (PPP) mode and Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) funds can be routed for the initiative.

CSR funds of private and public sector undertakings would be utilised for the purpose, officials say. In order to tap the opportunities, the NITI Aayog has urged the State Government to pursue such innovations, which would spur the culture of innovation and entrepreneurship.

The centres are launched through the Atal Innovation Mission (AIM) and this is a NITI Aayog flagship programme, which is promoting innovation in a big way.

# 2 hardcore Maoists arrested in Giridih

PNS ■ GIRIDIH

Based on specific inputs, two Maoists were arrested from an area under Bhelwaghati police station of Giridih district on Sunday morning. The arrested cadres were identified as Prem Soren and Sunil Marandi, belonging to Harkund village under Bhelwaghati police station of Giridih district, said ASP Deepak Kumar.

Police informed that there were inputs about these rebels coming on their motorcycle from their house at the local market of Bhelwaghati.

Later they were to visit a nearby construction company with an alleged intention of executing some serious crime and spreading Maoists propaganda.

Following this a police team under ASP Deepak Kumar swung into action. Immediately a joint operation was launched near Harkund village. Both the Maoists were rounded up, ASP said.

He informed that both Prem and Sunil were active members of the Maoist cadre and they were close associates of Sidhu Kandhu. They involved in collection of levy from different parts of Giridih and its surroundings districts, the police official said.

# Former inmate of Bihar shelter home raped by 4 men in moving car

The alleged sexual exploitation of the girls was first highlighted in an audit report submitted by TISS to the state's social welfare department. An FIR was lodged against 11 people, including Thakur, on May 31, 2018. The state government had on July 26, 2018 handed over the case to the CBI. On February 7, 2019, the Supreme Court ordered authorities to transfer the case from Bihar to a Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) court in Saket District Court complex in Delhi, which would conclude the trial within six months by holding preferably day-to-day hearing.

# Cong aims for strong poll pact in Haryana, J'khand

The Indian National Lok Dal (INLD) had 19 legislators. Since then, the INLD has split into two factions. Targeting the Khattar Government, Hooda said, "This Government showed hurry to implement the amended Act because it is an anti-people Government...When we come to power, we will reduce the fines." Appealing to the people to strengthen the hands of the Congress, Hooda said only his party can get rid of "this anti-people Government". Hooda said if the Congress comes to power, it will increase the old age pension, give pay scales to its employees at par with those enjoyed by Punjab Government employees and develop Faridabad at par with Gurgaon.

In Jharkhand where the party just settled the internal squabbling with appointment of a new state chief Rameshwar Oraon, Congress is certain it would not be able to take on the BJP's might in the Assembly polls without an alliance tough the alliance with JVP and JMM was not rewarding in the Lok Sabha elections. Congress sources said JVM chief Babulal Marandi has committed for an alliance and the crucial talks with major regional parties JMM and RJD

is scheduled for this week. The party has also initiated talks with Left parties which has considerable influence in the State. The five working presidents of the Jharkhand Congress has been entrusted with different divisions to rejuvenate the cadre and get the poll machinery ready. In recent months several RJD leaders have joined BJP, the Opposition is trying to include it in the alliance to mop up every anti-BJP vote. In this year general elections, BJP-AJSU alliance won 12 of the 14 Lok Sabha seats while Congress-JMM settled for two in Jharkhand. For the forthcoming Assembly elections, Congress is planning to raise the shutting down of industrial units including major ones operated by Tatas which incidentally has manufacturing units in Chief Minister Raghubar Das' hometown of Jamshedpur. "While more than 20,000 lost jobs, the Tata factories have on many occasions shut down its production units. We will blame the BJP Government for this. We plan to make it a State-specific campaign and focus on governance. The BJP Government has done nothing to address unemployment, farm distress, economic slowdown, starvation deaths," said a Jharkhand Congress member.

**FORM G**  
INVITATION FOR EXPRESSION OF INTEREST  
(Under Regulation 36A (1) of the Insolvency and Bankruptcy (Insolvency Resolution Process for Corporate Persons) Regulations, 2016  
FOR THE ATTENTION OF THE PROSPECTIVE RESOLUTION APPLICANTS OF  
CITY MALL VIKASH PVT.LTD.

RELEVANT PARTICULARS	
1. Name of the corporate debtor	City Mall Vikash Private Limited
2. Date of incorporation of corporate debtor	07.01.2008
3. Authority under which corporate debtor is incorporated / registered	Registrar of Companies Kolkata
4. Corporate identity number / limited liability identification number of corporate debtor	U45400WB2008PTC121477
5. Address of the registered office and principal office (if any) of corporate debtor	PERFECT CHAMBER 36, GANESH CHANDRA AVENUE KOLKATA WB 700013 INDIA
6. Insolvency commencement date of the corporate debtor	26.02.2019
7. Date of invitation of expression of interest-2-Extended	16.09.2019
8. Eligibility for resolution applicants under section 25(2)(b) of the Code is available at:	Can be obtained by sending email at <a href="mailto:corp.citymallvikash@gmail.com">corp.citymallvikash@gmail.com</a>
9. Norms of ineligibility applicable under section 29A are available at:	Available at website of IIBI ( <a href="http://www.iibi.gov.in">www.iibi.gov.in</a> ) or can be obtained by emailing at <a href="mailto:corp.citymallvikash@gmail.com">corp.citymallvikash@gmail.com</a>
10. Last date of receipt of expression of interest	01.10.2019
11. Date of issue of provisional list of prospective resolution applicants	03.10.2019
12. Last date for submission of objections to provisional list	08.10.2019
13. Date of issue of final list of prospective resolution applicants	10.10.2019
14. Date of issue of information memorandum, evaluation matrix and request for resolution plans to prospective resolution applicants	05.10.2019
15. Manner of obtaining request for resolution plan, evaluation matrix, information memorandum and further information	The same will be made available to Prospective Resolution Applicants, meeting the eligibility criteria set out by the committee of creditors, by the Resolution Professional.  The same shall be provided after taking undertaking of confidentiality under section 29(2) of the Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code, 2016.
16. Last date for submission of resolution plans	04.11.2019
17. Manner of submitting resolution plans to resolution professional	Through Speed Post/Registered Post or hand delivery addressed to Amresh Shukla, Resolution Professional, F-05, Jaideep Complex, 112, Zone-II, M.P. Nagar, Bhopal-462011. Soft copy is required to be mailed to <a href="mailto:corp.citymallvikash@gmail.com">corp.citymallvikash@gmail.com</a>
18. Estimated date for submission of resolution plan to the Adjudicating Authority for approval	08.11.2019
19. Name and registration number of the resolution professional	Amresh Shukla, IIBI/PA-001/PP-P00120/2017-18/10255
20. Name, Address and e-mail of the resolution professional, as registered with the Board	Amresh Shukla, F-05, Jaideep Complex, 112, Zone-II, M.P. Nagar, Bhopal-462011 (M.P.) India. <a href="mailto:insolvencyprofessionalsindia@gmail.com">insolvencyprofessionalsindia@gmail.com</a>
21. Address and email to be used for correspondence with the resolution professional	Amresh Shukla, F-05, Jaideep Complex, 112, Zone-II, M.P. Nagar, Bhopal-462011 (M.P.) India. <a href="mailto:corp.citymallvikash@gmail.com">corp.citymallvikash@gmail.com</a>
22. Further Details are available at or with	Details can be obtained by emailing at <a href="mailto:corp.citymallvikash@gmail.com">corp.citymallvikash@gmail.com</a>
23. Date of publication of Form G	16.09.2019

**Note:**

- EOI was earlier invited in this matter on 12.05.2019, last date of submission of EOI was 27.5.2019 but invited 2<sup>nd</sup> time on 12.07.2019, last date of submission of EOI was 12.08.2019. However the COC in its meeting held on 11.09.2019 decided and accordingly resolved to extend last date for submission of EOI, therefore this invitation is being made.
- EOI submitted by the prospective resolution applicants pursuant to the EOI published earlier and are in final list of prospective resolution applicants would remain valid and be subject to revised timelines mentioned under this Expression of Interest.
- Estimated date of closure of Corporate Insolvency Resolution Process (CIRP) is on 25.08.2019. Further, on approval of the COC pursuant to provisions of Sec. 12 of the Code, the application for extension of CIRP period by ninety days for completion of CIRP will be filed before Adjudicating Authority. Thus the dates mentioned are subject to grant of extension of the CIRP period by the Adjudicating Authority.

Amresh Shukla  
Resolution Professional  
IIBI/PA-001/PP-P00120/2017-18/10255  
F-05, Jaideep Complex, 112, Zone-II,  
M.P. Nagar, Bhopal-462011 (M.P.) India.  
For City Mall Vikash Private Limited

Place: Bhopal  
Date: 16.09.2019

# 82 ex-MPs may face action

From Page 1

On August 19, the Lok Sabha Housing Committee headed by C.R. Patil had ordered around 200 ex-MPs, who did not vacate their bungalows, to give up the facility within a week and disconnect their power, water and cooking gas connections within three days.

According to rules, former MPs have to vacate their respective bungalows within one month of dissolution of the previous Lok Sabha.

President Ram Nath Kovind had on May 25 dissolved the 16th Lok Sabha with immediate effect on the recommendation of the Union

Cabinet after the Modi Government was formed for a second term.

Some newly-elected MPs, who won in the Lok Sabha election earlier this year, have been staying at temporary accommodation as some ex-MPs have not vacated official bungalows.

**IDFC FIRST Bank Limited**  
(erstwhile Capital First Home Finance Limited and amalgamated with IDFC Bank Limited)  
CIN : L65110TN2014PLC097792  
Registered Office: KRM Towers, 8<sup>th</sup> Floor, Harrington Road, Chetpet, Chennai-600031. TEL: +91 44 4564 4000 | FAX: +91 44 4564 4022.

**APPENDIX IV [Rule 8(1)]**  
**POSSESSION NOTICE (For immovable property)**  
Whereas the undersigned being the authorised officer of the IDFC First Bank Limited (erstwhile Capital First Home Finance Limited and amalgamated with IDFC Bank Limited) under the Securitization and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 and in exercise of powers conferred under section 13(12) read with rule 3 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002 issued a demand notice dated 12.06.2019 calling upon the borrower, co-borrowers and guarantors 1. Joga Rao, 2.Sushila Sushila, to repay the amount mentioned in the notice being Rs.20,71,622.74/- (Rupees Twenty Lakh Seventy One Thousand Six Hundred Twenty Two And Paise Seventy Four Only) as on 11.06.2019 within 60 days from the date of receipt of the said notice.

The borrowers having failed to repay the amount, notice is hereby given to the borrower and the public in general that the undersigned has taken Symbolic Possession of the property described herein below in exercise of powers conferred on him under sub-section (4) of section 13 of Act read with rule 8 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002 on this 12<sup>th</sup> day of Sep 2019.

The borrowers in particular and the public in general is hereby cautioned not to deal with the property and any dealings with the property will be subject to the charge of the IDFC First Bank Limited (erstwhile Capital First Home Finance Limited and amalgamated with IDFC Bank Limited) for an amount of Rs. 20,71,622.74/- (Rupees Twenty Lakh Seventy One Thousand Six Hundred Twenty Two And Paise Seventy Four Only) and interest thereon.

The borrower's attention is invited to provisions of sub-section (8) of section 13 of the Act, in respect of time available, to redeem the secured assets.

**DESCRIPTION OF THE IMMOVABLE PROPERTIES.**  
All the piece and parcel of the property consisting of Part of KH No 501/26, Plot No 197, 198, 199, Situated at Somani Bhalai-3, P.C.No.12, Bhalai-3, Teh-Patan, Dist-Durg.

Sd/-  
Authorised Officer  
IDFC First Bank Limited  
Place : Raipur (erstwhile Capital First Home Finance Limited and amalgamated with IDFC Bank Limited)  
Date : 12-Sep-2019  
Loan Account No : 14621966.

**IDFC FIRST Bank Limited**  
(erstwhile Capital First Home Finance Limited and amalgamated with IDFC Bank Limited)  
CIN : L65110TN2014PLC097792  
Registered Office: KRM Towers, 8<sup>th</sup> Floor, Harrington Road, Chetpet, Chennai-600031. TEL: +91 44 4564 4000 | FAX: +91 44 4564 4022.

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**POSSESSION NOTICE (For immovable property)**  
Whereas the undersigned being the authorised officer of the IDFC First Bank Limited (erstwhile Capital First Home Finance Limited and amalgamated with IDFC Bank Limited) under the Securitization and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 and in exercise of powers conferred under section 13(12) read with rule 3 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002 issued a demand notice dated 17.05.2019 calling upon the borrower, co-borrowers and guarantors 1.Dindyal Sahu, 2. Droupati Sahu, to repay the amount mentioned in the notice being Rs.18,39,241.97/- (Rupees Eighteen Lakh Thirty Nine Thousand Two Hundred Forty One And Paise Ninety Seven Only) as on 17.05.2019 within 60 days from the date of receipt of the said notice.

The borrowers in particular and the public in general is hereby cautioned not to deal with the property and any dealings with the property will be subject to the charge of the IDFC First Bank Limited (erstwhile Capital First Home Finance Limited and amalgamated with IDFC Bank Limited) for an amount of Rs. 18,39,241.97/- (Rupees Eighteen Lakh Thirty Nine Thousand Two Hundred Forty One And Paise Ninety Seven Only) and interest thereon.

The borrower's attention is invited to provisions of sub-section (8) of section 13 of the Act, in respect of time available, to redeem the secured assets.

**DESCRIPTION OF THE IMMOVABLE PROPERTIES.**  
All the piece and parcel of the property consisting of Plot No 219, 220 & 221, Kh.No.501/29, Ph.No.12, Bhalai-3, Mouja-Somani, Tehsil-Patan, Dist-Durg (C,G), Durg, Chattisgarh

Sd/-  
Authorised Officer  
IDFC First Bank Limited  
Place : Raipur. (erstwhile Capital First Home Finance Limited and amalgamated with IDFC Bank Limited)  
Date : 12-Sep-2019  
Loan Account No : 15765416.

**IDFC FIRST Bank Limited**  
(erstwhile Capital First Home Finance Limited and amalgamated with IDFC Bank Limited)  
CIN : L65110TN2014PLC097792  
Registered Office: KRM Towers, 8<sup>th</sup> Floor, Harrington Road, Chetpet, Chennai-600031. TEL: +91 44 4564 4000 | FAX: +91 44 4564 4022.

**APPENDIX IV [Rule 8(1)]**  
**POSSESSION NOTICE (For immovable property)**  
Whereas the undersigned being the authorised officer of the IDFC First Bank Limited (erstwhile Capital First Home Finance Limited and amalgamated with IDFC Bank Limited) under the Securitization and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 and in exercise of powers conferred under section 13(12) read with rule 3 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002 issued a demand notice dated 28.05.2019 calling upon the borrower, co-borrowers and guarantors 1.Rakesh Kumar Singh, 2.Pratima Singh, to repay the amount mentioned in the notice being Rs.10,65,384.57/- (Rupees Ten Lakh Sixty Five Thousand Three Hundred Eighty Four And Paise Fifty Seven Only) as on 27.05.2019 within 60 days from the date of receipt of the said notice.

The borrowers having failed to repay the amount, notice is hereby given to the borrower and the public in general that the undersigned has taken Symbolic Possession of the property described herein below in exercise of powers conferred on him under sub-section (4) of section 13 of Act read with rule 8 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002 on this 12<sup>th</sup> day of Sep 2019.

The borrowers in particular and the public in general is hereby cautioned not to deal with the property and any dealings with the property will be subject to the charge of the IDFC First Bank Limited (erstwhile Capital First Home Finance Limited and amalgamated with IDFC Bank Limited) for an amount of Rs. 10,65,384.57/- (Rupees Ten Lakh Sixty Five Thousand Three Hundred Eighty Four And Paise Fifty Seven Only) and interest thereon.

The borrower's attention is invited to provisions of sub-section (8) of section 13 of the Act, in respect of time available, to redeem the secured assets.

**DESCRIPTION OF THE IMMOVABLE PROPERTIES.**  
All the piece and parcel of the property consisting of Part of KH No. 501/26, Plot No. 200 & 201, Situated at Somni (Bhalai-3), P.C.No.12, Teh-Patan, Dist-Durg.

Sd/-  
Authorised Officer  
IDFC First Bank Limited  
Place : Raipur. (erstwhile Capital First Home Finance Limited and amalgamated with IDFC Bank Limited)  
Date : 12-Sep-2019  
Loan Account No : 14320621.

**IDFC FIRST Bank Limited**  
(erstwhile Capital First Home Finance Limited and amalgamated with IDFC Bank Limited)  
CIN : L65110TN2014PLC097792  
Registered Office: KRM Towers, 8<sup>th</sup> Floor, Harrington Road, Chetpet, Chennai-600031. TEL: +91 44 4564 4000 | FAX: +91 44 4564 4022.

**APPENDIX IV [Rule 8(1)]**  
**POSSESSION NOTICE (For immovable property)**  
Whereas the undersigned being the authorised officer of the IDFC First Bank Limited (erstwhile Capital First Home Finance Limited and amalgamated with IDFC Bank Limited) under the Securitization and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 and in exercise of powers conferred under section 13(12) read with rule 3 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002 issued a demand notice dated 16.05.2019 & 06.05.2019 calling upon the borrower, co-borrowers and guarantors 1. Shri Balarka (Prop:Aniruddha Awadhya), 2.Aniruddha Awadhya, 3. Rasik Behari Awadhya, to repay the amount mentioned in the notice being Rs. 31,01,434.25/- (Rupees Three One Lakh One Thousand Four Hundred Thirty Four And Paise Twenty Five Only) & Rs. 62,47,634.61/- (Rupees Sixty Two Lakh Forty Seven Thousand Six Hundred Thirty Four And Paise Sixty Only) as on 10.05.2019 & 06.05.2019 within 60 days from the date of receipt of the said notice.

The borrowers having failed to repay the amount, notice is hereby given to the borrower and the public in general that the undersigned has taken Symbolic Possession of the property described herein below in exercise of powers conferred on him under sub-section (4) of section 13 of Act read with rule 8 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002 on this 12<sup>th</sup> day of Sep 2019.

The borrowers in particular and the public in general is hereby cautioned not to deal with the property and any dealings with the property will be subject to the charge of the IDFC First Bank Limited (erstwhile Capital First Home Finance Limited and amalgamated with IDFC Bank Limited) for an amount of Rs. 31,01,434.25/- (Rupees Three One Lakh One Thousand Four Hundred Thirty Four And Paise Twenty Five Only) & Rs. 62,47,634.61/- (Rupees Sixty Two Lakh Forty Seven Thousand Six Hundred Thirty Four And Paise Sixty Only) and interest thereon.

The borrower's attention is invited to provisions of sub-section (8) of section 13 of the Act, in respect of time available, to redeem the secured assets.

**DESCRIPTION OF THE IMMOVABLE PROPERTIES**  
All the piece and parcel of the property consisting of House No-58/372, KH.No.954 Part Ph.No 106(A)/46 RNM Raipur-1, Ward No.58, Brahma Para Ward, Raipur, Chattisgarh-492001.

Sd/-  
Authorised Officer  
IDFC First Bank Limited  
Place:Raipur.  
Loan Account No: 7264298 (erstwhile Capital First Home Finance Limited and amalgamated with IDFC Bank Limited)  
Date:12-Sep-2019

# Iran refutes US claim it's behind Saudi oil attacks

AFP ■ TEHRAN

Iran on Sunday dismissed US accusations it was behind drone attacks on Saudi oil installations, suggesting the United States was seeking a pretext to retaliate against the Islamic republic.

"Such fruitless and blind accusations and remarks are incomprehensible and meaningless," foreign ministry spokesman Abbas Mousavi was quoted as saying in a statement.

US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo condemned Iran after Saturday's attacks, which knocked out half of Saudi Arabia's oil production.

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 tweeted.

Mousavi said the US allegations over the pre-dawn strikes on Abqaiq and Khurais in Eastern Province were meant to justify actions against Iran. "Such remarks... Are more like plotting by intelligence and secret organisations to damage the reputation of a country and create a framework for future actions," he said.

Tehran and Washington have been at loggerheads since May last year when President Donald Trump pulled out of a 2015 deal that promised Iran relief from sanctions in return for curbs on its nuclear programme.

Since the withdrawal, the

United States has slapped crippling sanctions on Iran as part of a campaign of "maximum pressure" and the Islamic republic has responded by reducing its commitments to the nuclear accord.

"The Americans have taken the policy of 'maximum pressure' which has apparently turned into 'maximum lying' due to their failures," said Mousavi.

The arch-foes were on the cusp of confrontation in June when Iran downed a US drone and Trump ordered retaliatory strikes before cancelling them at the last minute.

In remarks published Sunday, the commander of the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps' aerospace arm said Iran's missiles could hit US bases and ships within a range of 2,000 kilometres (about 1,240 miles).

# Saudi halts production at attacked oil plants: Minister

AFP ■ RIYADH

Saudi Arabia has temporarily halted production at two Aramco oil facilities that were attacked by Yemeni rebels, interrupting about half of the company's total output, the energy minister said Saturday.

The attacks "resulted in a temporary suspension of production at Abqaiq and Khurais plants," Prince Abdulaziz bin Salman, the energy minister said in a statement carried by the official Saudi Press Agency.

It led to the interruption of about 50 per cent of total production, he added.

"These attacks resulted in production suspension of 5.7 million barrels of crude oil per day," the state-owned Aramco said in a separate statement.

# Underfire PM calls up Hulk, claims 'huge' Brexit progress

AFP ■ LONDON

Prime Minister Boris Johnson insisted Sunday that "huge" progress was being made in Brexit talks and declared Britain would break out of the European Union just like the comicbook hero Hulk.

The Conservative leader made the comments ahead of meetings with European Commission chief Jean-Claude Juncker and EU negotiator Michel Barnier in Luxembourg on Monday.

In an interview with the Mail on Sunday newspaper, Johnson said he was "very confident" of getting a divorce deal at an EU summit on October 17, in time for Brexit on October 31.

In an odd analogy, he compared Britain to the comic book character Hulk. "The madder Hulk gets, the stronger Hulk gets and he always escaped, no matter how tightly bound in he seemed to be -- and that is the case for this country," he said.

But Johnson is facing opposition in parliament to his threat to leave the EU without a deal next month if his negotiations fail.

On Saturday night, one of his Conservative MPs defected to the pro-European Liberal Democrats.

Former universities minister Sam Gyimah, who has called for a re-run of the 2016 Brexit referendum, condemned Johnson for "veering towards populism".

Meanwhile former prime minister David Cameron, who led the failed campaign to stay in the EU in 2016, accused Johnson in his memoirs of only pursuing Brexit out of political ambition.

The turmoil comes ahead of another crucial week, as the Supreme Court considers the legality of Johnson's decision to suspend parliament earlier this month until October 14.

Johnson was a leading "Leave" campaigner in the referendum, and took office in July promising to deliver Brexit no matter what.

He wants to renegotiate the terms struck by his predecessor Theresa May, which MPs have rejected, but EU leaders have so far refused.

He told the Mail there was a "very good conversation" going on about the key sticking point, the issue of the Irish border.

"A huge amount of progress is being made," he said.

Much of the opposition in London to the current Brexit deal is focused on the so-called backstop plan to keep open the Irish border.

It could keep Britain indefinitely tied to EU trade rules to avoid frontier checks between British Northern and EU member Ireland.

"The talks tomorrow will be an important step forward as part of that and they build on significant discussions that have been happening at a technical level."

Johnson repeated that "under no circumstances" would he delay Brexit. However, he may have no choice after MPs last week passed a law to postpone until January if he does not get a divorce deal by the EU summit.

Twenty-one Conservatives rebelled to back the law and were expelled from the party, leaving Johnson without a majority in the House of Commons. One of the rebels was Gyimah, who becomes the Lib Dems' 18th MP in the 650-seat chamber.

The 43-year-old was once viewed as a rising star in the Conservatives and briefly ran against Johnson for the party leadership. But he said Johnson had left moderates like him with a "stark choice... To accept a no deal Brexit or walk away from public life".

# HK returns to violence with tear gas, Molotovs

AFP ■ HONG KONG

Hong Kong riot police fired tear gas and water cannons at hardcore pro-democracy protesters hurling rocks and petrol bombs on Sunday, tipping the violence-plagued city back into chaos after a brief lull in clashes.

Tens of thousands of people defied authorities to march through the streets of the city in an unsanctioned rally on Sunday, the latest expression of a popular revolt that has raged for the last 99 days.

But the rally descended into violence when small groups of hardcore activists -- known within the movement as "braves" -- tried to attack the city's main government complex.

Police fired repeated volleys of tear gas and deployed water cannon trucks after Molotov cocktails and rocks were thrown over security barriers surrounding the complex, which has become a frequent flashpoint in the ongoing protests.

Local television networks



An anti-Government protester throws a Molotov cocktail during a demonstration near Central Government Complex in Hong Kong on Sunday

broadcast footage of protesters tearing down and burning a banner celebrating the upcoming 70th anniversary of the founding of communist China -- as well as burning a Chinese flag. As evening set in, protesters retreated, chased by riot officers and water cannon firing blue-dyed water.

Some demonstrators built barricades, set fires and vandalised subway stations but the crowds avoided further

direct clashes and largely ran away when ranks of police officers got close.

The clashes ended a relative lull in recent days in the intensity of skirmishes between police and protesters.

The once-stable international hub has been convulsed by weeks of huge, sometimes violent rallies calling for greater democratic freedoms and police accountability.

# Hard Brexit threat looms over French fishing fleet

AFP ■ GRANVILLE (FRANCE)

The waters for French fishermen are being stirred up by uncertainty of what will happen if Britain leaves the EU without a deal on October 31 and their boats barred from British waters.

A no-deal Brexit would likely end access for French boats to British waters and, in France, fishing industry players fear this will not just increase tensions with rivals across the Channel but between themselves.

Sophie Leroy, whose Armement Cherbourgeois company operates three fishing vessels off the northwest coast of France, says there have been almost daily checks of their boats by the British authorities.

Earlier this month, her boats were stopped for what she described as an interminable set of checks 21 miles off the English coast.

Her boats were also surrounded by 15 British fishing vessels, she said. "And they were saying, 'We are going to do

the same as what the French did to us last year'."

The "Scallop Wars" in 2018, when French and British fishing vessels clashed over access to scallops off France's Normandy coastline, was finally settled by the two sides in a deal last September.

While a Brexit deal would help put a framework in place, Britain anticipates the possibility of more clashes between rival fishing vessels if the country pulls out of the EU with no agreement in place. The government last week released a study of that scenario, code-named "Operation Yellow hammer", after a copy of the document was leaked to the press.

One issue it addressed was the possibility that EU vessels could illegally enter British waters, leading to "clashes between vessels", "violent disputes" or even the "blockading of ports". So far this time around the two sides have not actually come to blows. But Leroy referred to what she called a "war of nerves" online.

# Jeddah-bound PIA flight makes emergency landing

PTI ■ LAHORE

A major tragedy was averted on Sunday when an agile pilot successfully landed a Pakistan International Airlines flight carrying about 200 passengers onboard after one of its engines caught fire minutes after take off.

The Jeddah-bound flight PK-759 was forced to make an emergency landing back to Allama Iqbal International Airport Lahore after one of its engines caught fire during take off. "One of the engines of the aircraft caught fire during the take off Sunday morning and the pilot alerted the control room about it and sought for emergency landing," an official of the airlines told PTI.

He said the pilot successfully landed the plane and no passenger was injured.

The passengers were sent to Jeddah on another aircraft in the afternoon while the plane has been grounded for repair work.

PIA spokesperson Mashhood Tajwar, however, claimed that the plane had not caught fire.

# Decks collapse during firefighter event; 22 injured

AP ■ WILDWOOD, (NEW JERSEY, US)

A home's multilevel deck collapsed Saturday evening at the Jersey Shore during an event weekend, trapping people and injuring at least 22, including some children, officials said.

No deaths were reported. The collapse happened around 6 p.m. Saturday in Wildwood during the annual New Jersey Firemen's Convention.

It was unclear how many people were on or under the decks at the time, or how many were firefighters, but authorities said those who were trapped were quickly removed. The annual convention attracts thousands of current and former firefighters to the resort town. Firefighters were likely among those hurt or trapped.

Cape May Regional Health System said 21 people were taken there, at least three of them children. Eleven patients had been released by 10 p.m., including all the children who

were admitted, hospital spokeswoman Susan Staeger said.

AtlantiCare Regional Medical Center in Atlantic City said at least one additional person was taken there.

The conditions of the remaining hospitalized people wasn't known.

Photos and video on social media showed firefighters trying to lift a piece of decking.

Images showed multiple levels of decking ripped away from the building and reduced to beams and splintered wood.

The decks appeared to have been attached to a three-story building and topped by a fourth-floor overhang.

The second and third levels appeared to have pancaked onto a first-floor deck. The overhang looked intact.

Nearby resident Joann Devito saw the collapse from a deck across the street.

"I was sitting on the deck up there, and I heard this noise, so I turned and looked and saw the whole thing caving in," she said.

"I saw two women running and screaming. It was horrible."

# Over 2,000 fetal remains found at ex-abortion doctor's home

AP ■ JOLIET (ILLINOIS, US)

More than 2,000 medically preserved fetal remains have been found at the Illinois home of a former Indiana abortion clinic doctor who died last week, authorities said.

The Will County Sheriff's Office said in a news release late Friday that an attorney for Dr Ulrich Klopfer's family contacted the coroner's office Thursday about possible fetal remains being found at the home in an unincorporated part of Will County in north-eastern Illinois.

The sheriff's office said authorities found 2,246 preserved fetal remains but there's no evidence medical procedures were performed at

the home. The coroner's office took possession of the remains. An investigation is underway.

A message left Saturday seeking additional comment on the discovery was not returned by the Will County Sheriff's Office investigations department.

Klopfer, who died September 3, was a longtime doctor at an abortion clinic in South Bend, Indiana. It closed after the state revoked the clinic's license in 2015.

The Indiana State Department of Health had previously issued complaints against the clinic, accusing it of lacking a registry of patients, policies regarding medical abortion, and a governing body to determine policies.



Israeli soldiers chat as they stand guard for a weekly cabinet meeting, in the Jordan Valley, in the Israeli-occupied West Bank, Sunday

# Cleanup resumes in Bahamas as Humberto swirls away

AP ■ MCLEAN'S TOWN (BAHAMAS)

Jeffrey Roberts lifted a mustard-yellow curtain from the ground as he looked for passports and other documents at the site where his family's home once stood in Grand Bahama.

He then moved the cloth aside, picked up a pair of old, rusty pliers, and continued his search.

"We got to take what God gives us," Roberts said in reference to Tropical Storm Humberto, which narrowly missed the island over the weekend as it continued on its northward trajectory well offshore of Florida's east coast.

By early Sunday morning, the US National Hurricane Center said the storm was located about 137 miles (220 kilometers) north of Great Abaco Island and was moving at 7 mph

(11 kph) north-northwest with maximum sustained winds of 60 mph (97 kph).

Weather forecasters said it would likely become a hurricane by The storm briefly shuttered a couple of small airports, sent people in damaged homes to seek shelter and threatened to interrupt the distribution of sorely needed supplies including food and water.

As the storm barely passed the northern Bahamas, however, Roberts and others were already returning to the task at hand: resuming their cleanup and recovery efforts in communities devastated by Hurricane Dorian two weeks ago.

On Saturday, UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres visited the island of Great Abaco to support humanitarian efforts in the wake of the storm, which left thousands in need of food,

water and shelter. "Hurricane Dorian has been classified as Category 5. I think it's Category Hell," said the secretary-general, adding he was horrified by the "level of systematic devastation."

The death toll from the hurricane stands at 50 and the number of missing at an alarming 1,300 people, although officials caution the list is preliminary and many people could just be unable to connect with loved ones. Meanwhile, detritus was piled high as Bahamians attempted to continue salvaging what was left behind.

On Saturday, Patrice Higgs stood barefoot in her backyard with grey mud caked on her feet. She stared listlessly at the horizon as she occasionally pointed at some of her belongings that remained tangled in the debris and out of reach, including a cream-colored loveseat?

# Italy: Rescue boat with 82 migrants can sail to Italian isle

AP ■ ABOARD THE OCEAN VIKING (ITALY)

Italy allowed a charity rescue ship to sail Saturday to a tiny southern island so that 82 migrants aboard could be transferred to shore, but the country's foreign minister cautioned against interpreting the move as a sign the new government is easing a crackdown on humanitarian vessels.

Shortly before midnight, all the migrants had been transferred off the Ocean Viking after several days stranded at sea prior to being given permission to sail to Lampedusa island.

Women, children and unaccompanied minors were put on an Italian coast guard vessel, while men were taken aboard a customs police boat, so all could be brought to Lampedusa's dock.

The Norwegian-flagged ship, which had appealed for days for a port of safety, is operated by two humanitarian groups, Doctors Without Borders and SOS Mediterranee.

Ocean Viking carried out its first rescue, of 50 migrants who were struggling in an unseaworthy rubber dinghy launched by Libyan-based migrant smugglers, on September 8.

The others were rescued the next day. Among the migrants is a 1-year-old boy from Somalia.

"We just heard that we have been assigned a place of safety, we are now on our way" to Lampedusa, Erkinalp Kesikli of Doctors Without Borders said earlier in the day after the ship received a call from Italian authorities about the permission.

Migrants clapped with joy

and excitement.

"We are very happy about the news this morning. It amazes us. This news amazes us," said Myriam Annie Malang, one of the migrants.

"We are arriving at a place where people understand and listen to us. We are very happy to learn that we are disembarking in Lampedusa."

Malang said she had been beaten while detained in Libya, a common account of suffering among migrants waiting to depart the northern African country on smugglers' boats.

She said she had fled conflict between English- and French-speaking communities in Cameroon.

The previous government, under a rigid anti-migrant policy led by right-wing leader Matteo Salvini, banned charity rescue boats from entering Italy's waters and disembarking

migrants on Italy's shores.

Premier Giuseppe Conte's week-old coalition now contains the center-left Democrats, whose leaders have called for a more humane policy on the rescue boats. Italy's current and previous governments have insisted on more solidarity from fellow European Union nations, saying the migrants set out on their journeys seeking asylum or better economic conditions in Europe as a whole, not necessarily in Italy.

Italy's new foreign minister, Luigi Di Maio, leader of the coalition's senior partner, the populist 5-Star Movement, cautioned against concluding his government was softening its stance on private rescue boats.

"I believe there's a big misunderstanding about a safe port given to Ocean Viking," Di Maio told reporters. "It was assigned a port

because the EU adhered to our request to take the great share of the migrants."

Germany's interior minister said in a report published on Saturday his country is prepared to take in a quarter of migrants rescued off the Italian coast as the European Union tries to find a solution to repeated standoffs involving humanitarian groups' ships.

The Italian news agency ANSA said Germany, France, and Italy were expected to take about 24 migrants each, while the other 10 would go to Portugal or Luxembourg.

While Di Maio insisted that Italy wasn't lifting the ban, championed by former Interior Minister Salvini, on docking by charity rescue boats, lawmakers from the left praised the resolution of Ocean Viking's situation as a break with the previous government's hard line.

# Afghan Taliban rescind ban on Red Cross

AFP ■ KABUL

The Afghan Taliban rescinded a months-long ban on the International Committee for Red Cross (ICRC) working in areas under their control Sunday and restored security guarantees for those working for the organisation.

The militants and the ICRC "consented to following the old agreement on top of new promises in humanitarian aid leading to the Islamic Emirate granting ICRC permission of resuming their activities," said Taliban spokesman Zabihullah Mujahid in a statement.

# S Africa dispatches emissaries to calm xenophobia fears

AFP ■ JOHANNESBURG

South African President Cyril Ramaphosa has sent high-ranking emissaries on a mission to reassure African countries after a wave of xenophobic attacks, the presidency said on Sunday.

At least 12 people have been killed in the surge of mob violence targeting foreign-owned businesses and homes, mainly in and around Johannesburg since the start of the month.

Hundreds of economic migrants from neighbouring Zimbabwe and Mozambique

have fled to shelters and Nigeria has flown 600 of its citizens back home after they were targeted in the violence.

The mission, led by former minister Jeff Radebe, left South Africa on Saturday and will visit Nigeria, Niger, Ghana, Senegal, Tanzania, DR Congo and Zambia, the presidency said.

Ramaphosa was jeered at on Saturday during his speech at Zimbabwe ex-leader Robert Mugabe's funeral in Harare before he apologised for the attacks, which have been prompted by unemployment and poverty.

## Odd-even blues

As Delhi CM Arvind Kejriwal proposes the controversial vehicular restriction, we must question its feasibility



**B**efore we start a debate on vehicular curbs in the city, we need to recognise a few things. First, vehicular congestion is a problem and is impacting economic prospects with millions of man-hours lost in fruitless traffic jams in the city. The second is that while vehicular pollution is not the worst sort of pollution, it does create a whole host of noxious gases, particularly nitrous oxides, which are unique to the burning of petroleum products.

In that light is the proposal by the Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal to reintroduce the "odd-even" vehicle rationing scheme after the Diwali festivities to control the November smog practical or not? There is after all, little evidence to show that previous "odd-even" schemes have worked significantly and one must remember that the last time it was planned, the scheme was shot down by the courts. Besides, pollutants have been going down this year. But Kejriwal has cited an issue that he has no control over, namely stubble burning in neighbouring States.

While a vehicular restriction scheme is not a bad idea per se, something like "odd-even", which is heavy-handed, needs to be fine-tuned. In this context, Delhi-NCT should take inspiration from other cities where such practices are followed, notably London and Beijing. In Beijing for example, on weekdays numberplate based restrictions affect just 20 per cent of vehicles. In London, a heavy congestion charge on bringing vehicles into the city has resulted in a dramatic decline in inner-city pollution. However, in both cities, both local and regional public transport services, are far superior to that in the Delhi-NCT. The capital of India still suffers from a dramatic shortage of buses for example, something that has not been solved. And while the city has one of the most extensive mass-transit systems in the world today in the form of the Delhi Metro, it barely scratches the surface and one wonders where Delhi would have been minus it. Possibly once the Regional Railway Transit System (RRTS), that will connect Delhi to nearby cities alongside Phase-IV of the Delhi Metro, takes off, there could be potentially be a more planned offloading of vehicles from the city's roads. One other problem with "odd-even" plan before was the huge number of exemptions, particularly for two-wheelers and for women. If a scheme is to be successful, not only should all private vehicles be covered, no exemptions must be made. But Delhi-NCT should look at long-term and permanent solutions to vehicular congestion and pollution. A congestion charge in Central Delhi, alongside a steep increase in parking charges for example, could be considered. This could be followed up with building parking towers outside and not just rely on inefficient surface parking. Also the government can look at a "pollution charge." New BS6 capable vehicles, particularly BS6 diesels, are cleaner than their BS3 and BS4 brethren, and since registration data includes such details, these vehicles should be charged extra to enter the congestion zone or at parking bays. Most importantly, just like the Delhi Traffic Police has installed hundreds of cameras across the city to monitor traffic, the State transport department should use the funds raised from the new fines under the Motor Vehicles Act to install more cameras and automated systems for traffic management. As for Diwali, it would be better to crack down on firecrackers as well as increasing awareness drives for the public about the dangers of the toxic gases that these produce.

## Myth versus reality

ASCI ticks off misleading ads featuring celebrities as claims are grossly exaggerated



**A**d guru Leo Burnett once said how advertising does not just circulate information, it penetrates the public mind with desires and belief. And at a time when lifestyle choices are aplenty and we seek to govern our lives with the right one, advertisements, especially those helmed by celebrities and their

gone-in-60-seconds wisdom, have a profound impact. Artful lying it is, but when it is outright falsehood, there's a problem. That's why the Advertising Standard Council of India (ASCI) has decided to verify tall claims made by companies in mass media campaigns and banned 106 of 334 ads for violating consumer rights and interests. Most of these campaigns were by topline brands and found to be selling mistruths concerning crucial sectors like healthcare, home appliances, personal care, housing, food and beverages and education, in short our everyday life and well-being. The ASCI said the commonest reason for pulling out ads was their unsubstantiated and exaggerated claims that exploited the consumers' lack of knowledge. Besides, some of the products made unverifiable leadership claims, improper use of Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) logo in contravention of the FSSAI advisory and labelled products organic without fact-checks. One ad claimed an endorsement by the Indian Medical Association (IMA) which had supported the technology but never the product. It also came down heavily on celebrity campaigns, considering their mass popularity and impact, suggesting that each brand ambassador should, while endorsing products, at least ensure that all description, claims and comparisons made in the advertisement are genuine. The misleading advertisements include those of Asian Paints, featuring actors Ranbir Kapoor and Deepika Padukone; Fena Superwash Powder peddled by Preity Zinta, cricketers KL Rahul and Ravichandran Ashwin; Eureka Forbes RO hawked by Madhuri Dixit; CricPlay online game by cricketer-turned politician Gautam Gambhir and housing firms ads by actress Vidya Balan.

Earlier, too, products that falsely claim doctoral research or clinically proven results had been pulled out, be it enriching clay shampoos, chemical-free hair colours or pure *atta* noodles, all of which have a certain ratio of concentrates and ingredients that they claim to have done away with. For example, *atta* noodles have *maida* or refined flour, too, and 100 per cent dandruff-free shampoo is never a possibility. Consumer awareness and rights are anyway not scaled up in this country and without questioning, such products are not only misleading and overrated but cheating the consumer of his expectation and right to a good and healthy life. Going by the list, most of the products prey on the consumers' health insecurities instead of addressing them through scientific corroboration. Of course, there are consumer laws and various codes about advertisement in general to curb malpractices. And though food safety norms have made labelling with details mandatory, the same does not extend to other product categories with equal seriousness. However, the absence of a single statutory, regulatory body further aggravates the problem. But hopefully this will be taken care of by the Consumer Protection Bill 2019, which seeks to penalise deceptive advertisements. Disclaimers should run as tickers on both audio, print and video campaigns. Of course, the core of the advertising industry is based on tempting the consumer, capturing their mindspace and then driving up sales. True, it is hard to expect the creators to be "conscience-oriented," but given the social cascade of information flow, they have to be self-regulatory, considering their rule cultural sensibilities.

# Betraying the Uighurs

The deafening silence of nations towards the oppressed Muslims in China exposes a potent combination of greed, fear and insincerity that has been guiding them



BHOPINDER SINGH

**T**here is a deafening silence that surrounds the ongoing fate of the beleaguered Uighurs, incarcerated in Chinese detention centres. This indifference is especially ironical from the affluent Gulf sheikhdoms, who themselves cry hoarse on issues like Palestine, Rohingya, Bosnia or even Kashmir, albeit unsuccessfully. Countries like Saudi Arabia, who have used religion to legitimise their own regime, political standing and global efforts pertaining to the matters of Ummah, are conspicuous by their feeble and pusillanimous stand against the Chinese for their treatment of the Uighur Muslims. Even the theoretically-powerful multilateral forum (world's second-largest organisation with 57 member countries representing 1.8 billion people) like the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC), which positions itself as "the collective voice of the Muslim world", has been equally fearful of slamming Beijing.

On the contrary, the OIC had incredibly passed a resolution at the Abu Dhabi declaration to "commend the efforts of the People's Republic of China in providing care to its Muslim citizens." Whereas voluble and belligerent nations like Pakistan, who are virtually surviving (economically and diplomatically) on the Chinese doles and bail-out packages, are expectedly mum on the Uighur affairs and are only selectively pitching Kashmir. Matters like the fate of the besieged and oppressed co-religionists like the Uighurs are not allowed to vitiate the "all-weather friendship" with China. On the contrary, it was left to the 22-odd countries, including Australia, Canada, Japan, the UK, France, Germany and the US among others, to jointly write to the United Nations Human Rights Council (UNHRC) stating: "We also call on China to refrain from the arbitrary detention and restrictions on freedom of movement of Uighurs, and other Muslim and minority communities in Xinjiang."

The undeniable reality is that a lot of public posturing, cause-espousal and haranguing that is routinely done by Islamic countries is only on account of convenience, selfish considerations and not on account of morality or conscience. As Pakistan wraps itself up as the self-appointed custodian of the Kashmiris, its embarrassing silence on the Uighurs and the state-sponsored complicity against its own Balouch populace or other minority denominations like Hindus, Christians and even the sectarian "others", like the Shias and the Ahmediyas among others, makes a mockery of its self-righteousness. Pakistan's patent two-facedness has earned it the ire of its own Islamic neighbours like Iran and Afghanistan.

Even though Pakistanis play up the rote "brother-Islamic-nation" card with both Iran and Afghanistan, the former fumes at the sectarian intolerance that is "allowed" within Pakistan, whereas the Afghans bristle at the active support that Islamabad bestows on Afghan-facing terror organisations. Whereas "Kashmir" unites the polity of Pakistan like



nothing else can, it is the singular societal unifier that legitimises the unwarrantedly generous budgets of the Pakistani military. The poison of the Pakistani clergy emerges as the pivotal rallying cry for Pakistani civil politicians. "Kashmir" is the ultimate weapon of distraction that can sway mood, deflect attention and cobble together the semblance of a unified nation. No such tears are even pretended on the hapless Uighurs even though the situation, treatment and Constitutional status of the Kashmiris and Uighurs cannot even be compared. Kashmiris are entitled to all Constitutional rights, guarantees and opportunities as is applicable to others. Clearly, realpolitik and commerce overrides all other considerations in the Middle East. China is the high-temple of transactional relationships and is flexing its "scale" muscle to extract its own pound of flesh. Beyond beholden or vassal nations like Pakistan (owing to the \$60 billion China-Pakistan Economic Corridor investment) or pathologically anti-US countries like Iran for whom China has a natural traction, others like Saudi Arabia, the UAE, Kuwait and Qatar are engaged in very high-stakes trade and commerce with Beijing. That is perennially at the risk of earning China's ire, should these countries speak out against the Uighurs. Reciprocally, China never

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**AS PAKISTAN WRAPS ITSELF UP AS THE SELF-APPOINTED CUSTODIAN OF THE KASHMIRIS, ITS EMBARRASSING SILENCE ON THE UIGHURS AND THE STATE-SPONSORED COMPLICITY AGAINST ITS OWN BALOUCH POPULACE OR OTHER MINORITY DENOMINATIONS MAKES A MOCKERY OF ITS SELF-RIGHTEOUSNESS**  
 ”

expresses any concern with state actions like the Jamal Khashoggi episode, Balouch insurgency or other human right issues in the region. It is a mutually-beneficial silence maintained by both China and these nations that selectively bury some issues like the blatant Uighur exploitation, while allowing for some others.

Even when the United Nation forums were taking up the Uighur issue against China (often by Western powers on account of their own realpolitik considerations against China), the visiting Saudi Arabian Crown Prince Mohammad Bin Salman endorsed the Chinese "counter-terrorism" strategy against the Uighurs in Xinjiang by stating, "We respect and support China's rights to take counter-terrorism and de-extremism measures to safeguard national security. We stand ready to strengthen cooperation with China." He added for good measure that the Saudis oppose "interference by external forces in China's internal affairs."

Shortly thereafter, a multi-billion Saudi-Chinese oil deal and agreement to partake in the gargantuan "One Belt, One Road" initiative was promptly confirmed. Independent bodies have consistently called the bluff on Chinese camps that forcibly host up to one million Uighurs in what the Chinese regime calls "boarding schools", "vocational centres" and even "re-education centres". Independent researchers

have described the same as "wartime concentration camps" that are part of a "systematic campaign of social re-engineering and cultural genocide."

Reports of torture, forced sterilisation and political re-education are commonplace, yet there is not a twitch of condemnation from major Islamic nations. Already, the Chinese have brazenly forbidden people from practising Islam in certain areas and banned elements of religiosity like keeping fasts, wearing hijab, growing a beard or even retaining "Muslim" sounding names. The Chinese Government has openly announced its five-year to "Sinicize" Islam via a virtual denouncement of religion. The ingenious attempt to "guide Islam to be compatible with socialism and implement measures to Sinicize the religion" is a barely concealed socio-cultural genocide that has escaped any tangible condemnation from Islamic nations. The sheer hypocrisy of silence surrounding Uighur suppression exposes a potent combination of greed, fear and insincerity that guides some of these nations, who often shroud themselves with fake emotions about issues that do not earn them either petrodollars or the wrath of countries like China.

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

## SOUNDBITE

We reiterate our commitment to the welfare of (Singur) farmers, alongside promoting industry. My humble pranam to *Maa, Mati, Manush*.

West Bengal CM — Mamata Banerjee



FM's measures will help make exports competitive & especially benefit MSME exporters with a new scheme for reimbursing taxes & ease of doing business.

Commerce Minister — Piyush Goyal



I want to appeal to people to promote their native languages but also use Hindi to make the dream of Bapu and Sardar Patel of one language come true.

Home Minister — Amit Shah



As an actress, I am okay with constructive criticism from film critics because it is a part of my job to take it all in my stride.

Actor — Kangana Ranaut



## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

### Fix driving culture

Sir — Looks like Union Road Transport and Highways Minister Nitin Gadkari will not relent easily. Undaunted by opposition from BJP-ruled States to the hefty road penalties, he has boldly asserted that he is not afraid of street protests, explaining, "My responsibility is to save the lives of 1.20 lakh people who die on road in accidents."

He further reasoned that it is everyone's responsibility to save people's lives besides underscoring "the duty of the State as well." We can blame successive Governments for failing to stem the rot at the "rogue" transport office but what about the way we have chosen to drive?

Frankly, in India, one can procure a vehicle, learn to drive and get licence from a tout. It could be a truck, a light commercial vehicle or a motorbike. Which means that just about anyone can start driving on the road in real traffic.

The dangers are immense, for what one is driving has the ability to kill. The working presumption is not a scientific one: That everyone's life is dear to

### The need for an anti-lynching law

**A**ttempts being made to help those who committed the murder of Tabrez Ansari in cold blood amount to subversion of justice. Ansari was attacked by a mob on June 17 after he was accused of being a thief. Like the Pehlu Khan case, the Ansari case now does not credit to India's criminal justice system. Something must be terribly wrong if even open-and-shut cases go the way they do without a glimmer of hope for justice to the victims of hate crime. By dropping the murder charges and choosing to slap culpable homicide not amounting to murder, the Jharkhand police has shown utter lack of professionalism and naked partisanship.

The footage of the mob lynching a person clearly establishes the identity of the killers; yet the ruling dispensation has been far too lenient with them. In both the cases of lynching, heart attack was cited as the cause of death. The logic is that the lynching (captured on camera) does not matter because the alleged victims would have been dead anyway due to cardiac arrest.

The attribution of heart attacks to stress, drug and injuries is a vain attempt at impartiality. Obfuscation, by mixing up head injuries with heart attack and vice versa,

drive so they will by default drive carefully, learn to swim quickly than sink. Along with fear, Indians need to learn how to make the process of driving a pleasurable one.  
**KS Jayatheertha**  
 Bengaluru



convinces nobody. The adjectives "light" and "minimal" introduced by the police to describe the brain haemorrhage sustained by Ansari in the mob attack says it all. By the prosecution's logic, death must occur on the spot for a crime to be treated as murder. The way the lynching cases are going, there's a dire need to formulate a special anti-lynching law.

G David Milton  
 Maruthancode

### Solution for Kashmir

Sir — Irrespective of its merits and demerits, a step at unravelling the Gordian knot in Kashmir has been taken. A pause should certainly be in order but it can-

not prolong beyond a point. Restoring normalcy, even in calibrated stages, must be visibly seen to be prompt and earnest. We cannot increasingly be circumspect as the structure and strategy are in place, built all these years as we countered militancy

and unrest in the Valley.

International opinion has always been counted in our diplomatic stances and initiatives and it tends to be in our favour. But there always exists the probability of a tilt towards an abrupt change. Besides, we must also factor in the reality that ensuing socio-economic imbalances post the abrogation of Article 370 would be onerous to tackle. The sooner we move on to the next phase, the quicker we can put the Kashmir episode behind us.

R Narayanan  
 Navi Mumbai

### Suppressing voices

Sir — This refers to the editorial, "Grudge wars in Andhra" (September 14). The house arrest of N Chandrababu Naidu and his son was unwarranted. Leaders have the right to take out rallies to express their dissatisfaction with the Government. Resorting to such tactics amounts to curtailment of Constitutional rights.

Shambhavi  
 Via email

Send your feedback to: letterstopioneer@gmail.com

FIRST COLUMN

The gains of sustainability

It's time to prepare for the future before the nature of raw materials and inputs changes so drastically that a new civilisational order is required



VINAYSHIL GAUTAM

There comes a time in management of knowledge when phrases become clichés and are repeated ad nauseam, without many pausing to think about their meaning or significance. One such phrase is "The world is changing."

What is often not clear is what is changing, by how much and in which direction? Unfortunately though, this does not even bother people sufficiently for them to pause. This is also true about the watershed times that we live in. Fossil fuel is now nearly passé. Hydrocarbon-based energy, to move vehicles and generate heat, is given a lease by the most optimistic of forecasters of not more than 30 to 40 years. The rest of the debate is known too well to bear recount.

Yet, there are obvious aspects which never figure in the debate. The overall consumption would indeed go down if the population was to remain a constant. The reduction in the quantum of the demand of the existing population is more than made up by the rise in demand from the population which is subsequently added. To bridge the gap between past consumption of the horizon year and current year of reckoning, therefore, becomes a methodological requirement. New consumers keep the level of consumption constant.

Similarly, developments of one sector are very often serenaded without factoring a composite picture. Consider the way a particular Minister has been propagating electrical vehicles. These, in their present state of research and development (R&D), are at best a showpiece purchase by those who can afford a third or fourth car. The battery of an electrical vehicle is not only exorbitant and with a short life but cumbersome to maintain and tricky to deal with. Yet, coming as it does from the exalted office of the Minister-concerned, it has had a dampening influence on the enthusiasm for petrol or diesel vehicles. Inter se parity rarely passes the mind of those whose careers depend on attention-grabbing statements or positioning themselves as 'innovative'!

No less dramatic is the threatening effect of climate change: the melting glaciers, sometimes the change in nature of the rivers. Not unknown is the level of the sea water rising in certain parts of the world, at certain times.

Not only is there a fight for the forest cover but there are lifestyle issues related to forest produce. Typical of the products would be Gum Karaya. This product is used in food industries as a thickener and emulsifier of food. It can be used in concentration as stabiliser for aerated dairy products and frozen dessert. It can also be used for controlling the formation of ice crystals. Clearly it is an input to lifestyle issues of many urbanised folks. The examples can be multiplied.

The snag is people are not talking of this enough and not enough R&D is going into it. These are big issues. Perhaps so big, that they get trivialised. Whereas all the structures are there to pay attention to these concerns, the outcomes are difficult to locate or for that matter even draw significant attention. The non-descript of the urban elite is likely to yawn over all this, shrug his shoulder and say "well... these are complicated issues." In one breath the line of thought has been both mystified and de-constructed and the bandwagon rolls on.

For the sake of argument one can be tolerant about this attitude and one can talk of lesser rarified things like forest cover. There are silent workers, say in Manipur, who are working to not only save the forest cover but to extend them. One such person is Moirangthem Loiya. He works silently to clear the roots of the trees and plant fresh saplings to keep the acreage of the forest cover growing. He has not been recognised by any award. Apparently he does not even care. Even comparatively more experienced people in forestry have testified to his having saved flora and fauna by replanting 300 acres of forests. Indeed, he quit his job to plant different types of plants in Punshilok forest in Langol hill range of Manipur. It took him nearly two decades and, of course, Punshilok has become a plastic-free zone. He claims that he does not want to buy land and own it. The Chief Conservator of Forests, Manipur, Kerelhouvi Angami claims that anyone else is equally welcome to replicate Loiya's feat. There are reserved forests, there are protected forests and there is a whole typology of forests entirely lost to the learning of avant garde curriculum of so-branded elite schools. The proposition is simple: What is the kind of generation we are preparing for the future? In the meanwhile, the water table keeps receding and water conservation is more talked of than acted upon. It's time to think of the future and prepare for it before the nature of the raw materials and the inputs changes so drastically that a new civilisational order is required.

(The writer is a well-known management consultant)

POINT COUNTERPOINT

INFLATION HAS BEEN KEPT VERY MUCH BELOW THE FOUR PER CENT MARK AND THERE ARE CLEAR SIGNS OF REVIVAL IN THE ECONOMY.  
 —FINANCE MINISTER  
 NIRMALA SITHARAMAN



THE STEPS ANNOUNCED TODAY WILL NOT REVIVE THE INDIAN ECONOMY, THEY ARE PURELY COSMETIC AND PIECEMEAL.  
 — CONGRESS SPOKESPERSON  
 ANAND SHARMA

Powerless, cosmetic moves

Given the extant tariff policy and Power Purchase Agreements, the Centre's plans to reform PPAs to provide power at competitive prices and make discoms viable fall far short



UTTAM GUPTA

The Union Government has set up a committee to reform Power Purchase Agreements (PPAs) to ensure power availability at competitive prices and make distribution companies (discoms) viable. A PPA is a contract between a generation company (genco) and discom which lays down the terms of electricity purchase by the latter from the former, including the tariff, which is subject to approval by the State Electricity Regulatory Commission (SERC).

The Cabinet is also considering a new tariff policy which will inter alia require discoms to pay a surcharge to the genco for delayed payment, which would be equal to the commercial rate of interest. The Government has already made it mandatory for discoms to open Letters of Credit (LoC) for getting supply from genscos from August 1, 2019. However, State-owned genscos are not covered by this dispensation.

The discoms would be allowed to recover only up to 15 per cent of under-recovered power supply cost from other consumers implying they need to absorb the remaining 85 per cent. Also, they won't get any grant or loan if they don't reduce losses.

When seen in juxtaposition with the extant tariff policy environment as also the architecture of PPAs, the intended reforms and proposed measures are laughable.

On tariff policy, under directions from the State governments, discoms sell electricity to poor households and farmers at heavily subsidised rates, even free in some States. To make up for the under-recovery, they charge exorbitant rates from industries and businesses; yet they continue to incur losses forcing the Centre to come out with packages to bail them out. Three packages have already been given since 2000, with the latest being Ujjwal DISCOM Assurance Yojana (UDAY) launched in 2015 and the fourth is in the offing as alluded to by Power Minister RK Singh.

In this backdrop, if discoms' recovery of under-recovered power supply cost from others (industries) is restricted only to 15 per cent, their losses will multiply.

Instead of allowing proper pricing of supplies to households and farmers and curb theft (the only logical way to cut under-recovery), the Government wants discoms to absorb losses. Do they have Alladin's lamp? Penalising them by charging commercial rates of interest, insisting on LoC or denying them loans, for not reducing losses, amount to adding insult to injury.

Yet another factor adding to the woes of discoms is the unusually high price they are forced to pay to genscos under long-term PPAs which account for nearly 86 per cent of the power sold (of the balance, ten per cent is covered under short-term agreements and four per cent sold on trading platform). Herein, two extreme scenarios are discussed to show how discoms and eventually the consumer and the taxpayers are taken for a ride.

First, in consonance with Prime Minister Narendra Modi's plan of giving a big push to renewable energy, in Andhra Pradesh, promoters of 139 power plants based on solar and wind energy had signed agreements with the discoms during the last five years under the erstwhile dispensation led by N Chandrababu Naidu. Under

PPAs SHOULD HAVE A CLAUSE TO PROVIDE FOR CANCELLATION OF THE CONTRACT IF ANY IRREGULARITY INVOLVING CORRUPTION IS NOTICED. ON THE CONSUMPTION SIDE, THEY SHOULD DO AWAY WITH SUBSIDISED OR FREE SUPPLY AND BRING DOWN POWER THEFT TO ZERO. SANS THESE REFORMS, THERE IS NO WAY OF SALVAGING DISCOMS AND PROTECTING INDUSTRIES AND BUSINESSES FROM HIGH TARIFF



the PPAs, the discoms had agreed to pay to the genscos ₹4 to 6 per unit which is almost double the cost of supply, about ₹2.4 per unit. At such high tariff, discoms are incurring huge losses. Of the total loss of close to ₹7,000 crore in the last five years, an overwhelming ₹5,500 crore was on account of excess payments to the generators of renewable energy.

This prompted the new Government led by YS Jaganmohan Reddy to set up a high-level committee in July, to review those agreements with a view to bring down the tariff. But the decision has been stayed by the Andhra Pradesh High Court (APHC). The issue is heading for a protracted legal battle and it will be some time before the proceedings get concluded and final pronouncement from the Supreme Court comes.

Meanwhile, investors in these projects (mostly foreign investors) have raised the pitch, arguing that any review will dent the sanctity of contracts, thereby eroding their confidence in India as an attractive investment destination. The countries from where these companies come have taken up the matter with the Centre, which in turn, has asked the AP Government to honour the PPAs. The way events are unfolding, it is unlikely that the issue will get settled in favor of discoms.

At another extreme, genscos had agreed to charge from discoms low tariff — using the Tariff-Based Competitive Bidding (TBCB) method. Under the long-term PPAs signed by

Tata Power Ltd (TPL) and Adani Power Ltd (APL) with regard to their Ultra Mega Power Projects (UMPP) in Gujarat, these companies had committed to sell at ₹2.26 per unit and ₹2.35 per unit respectively for supplies to discoms in the State. Both projects are based on coal; TPL is entirely on imported coal, APL uses 70 per cent domestic and 30 per cent imported coal. Unlike all other PPAs wherein increase in the cost of fuel is pass-through, for supplies from these UMPPs, the consumers were fully shielded. In fact, TPL/APL had arrangements in place to ensure that they got coal supplies at a fixed price all through the project life.

These included TPL acquiring 25-30 per cent equity in three Indonesian mines. Likewise, Adani acquired a coal mine in Queensland, Australia in 2010. But, this turned out to be an illusion.

In 2012, TPL/APL petitioned the Central Electricity Regulatory Commission (CERC) seeking 'compensatory tariff' — a sophisticated nomenclature for hike in tariff. They argued that following an order of the Indonesian Government in September 2011, fixing a Minimum Export Price (MEP) of coal, they were forced to pay more which should be compensated. This was instantly allowed by the CERC and confirmed by the Appellate Tribunal for Electricity (APTEL) in December 2016.

The Supreme Court (SC) after initially rejecting the claim (order of

April 2017), finally directed CERC "to amend the PPAs to enable pass-through of fuel price escalation subject to a cap" (order dated October 29, 2018).

We see a typical syndrome of "head I win and tail you lose." While, on one hand, there are PPAs which allow genscos to charge more from day one, even where the agreements were crafted to charge low tariff, those were subsequently altered to provide for escalation (TPL and APL).

For the discoms being squeezed at both the ends by having to pay more to genscos and compelled to charge less from preferred users (farmers and poor households), any talk of making them financially viable or reduce tariff burden on industries — as contemplated in the new tariff policy — is meaningless.

The Government should look at as to why cost of supplying power is high; especially aspects such as 'gold plating' (a euphemism for claiming higher investment than actual), over-invoicing of fuel bills need to be seriously examined and remedial steps taken. For instance, PPAs should have a clause to provide for cancellation of the contract if any irregularity involving corruption is noticed. On the consumption side, they should do away with subsidised or free supply and bring down power theft to zero. Sans these reforms, there is no way of salvaging discoms and protecting industries and businesses from high tariff.

(The writer is a New Delhi-based policy analyst)

Pakistan and the Muslim Ummah

With the Saudi monarchy and Gulf Arabs making unprecedented and self-interested political moves, Islamabad should also refigure its nationhood in the context of its South Asian heritage



NADEEM PARACHA

On August 31 this year, former chairman of the Senate and long-time member of the Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP), Raza Rabbani was quoted in the media as saying it is high time for Pakistan to pull out of the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC). He then added that the "bubble of an Islamic ummah (global Muslim community) had burst."

Rabbani was echoing the thoughts aired by many Pakistanis — especially on social media sites — who are incensed by the manner in which Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates (UAE) reacted to India's move to controversial-

ly remove Article 370 from India's Constitution and thus nullify the 'special status' that the article provided to India-Occupied Kashmir.

The Saudi monarchy went ahead with a \$15 billion investment deal with an Indian business giant, whereas the UAE Government bestowed Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi with the UAE's highest civilian award.

The English weekly *The Friday Times* had reported on August 9 that Pakistani Prime Minister Imran Khan was not happy with Saudi Arabia and the UAE's passive stance on Kashmir. But when, in mid-August, news of Saudi investment in India became common knowledge, and later, when Modi was bestowed with an award by the UAE, Imran Khan didn't say much. In fact, his Foreign Minister went to the extent of suggesting that "international relations are above religious sentiment."

Of course, Pakistan was never given this privilege by the same Arab monarchies. In the 1970s when Saudi/UAE jobs, money and

oil began to arrive in Pakistan it was with the condition to gradually roll back the manner in which the state and governments of Pakistan had advocated Islam — sometimes by merging it with Islamic modernism and sometimes fusing it with socialism.

After the Shia clerics came to power in Iran in 1979, Pakistan could still not claim that foreign relations are above religious sentiment as the state of Pakistan gladly embraced militant Saudi proxies in Pakistan against the country's Shia minority, segments of which eventually became Iranian proxies.

Nevertheless, there is nothing incorrect about what the Foreign Minister says. Indeed, foreign relations are almost entirely based on geopolitical and economic interests of states. Yet, for over 40 years or so, the Pakistani state and governments have been passionately lecturing their citizens about the notion of a "Muslim ummah" and that Pakistan was at the core of it.

The more immediate roots of this claim can be found in the mid-

1970s when oil-rich Arab countries began enjoying windfall profits due to an unprecedented rise in oil prices, and when Saudi Arabia successfully replaced Egypt as the most influential Muslim country.

The Pakistani state's thinking also began to transform after the country lost its eastern wing in 1971. Pan-Islamist ideas and the word "ummah" became a lot more common in the post-1971 state narrative, mainly to offset the creeping paranoia that Islam alone could not keep an ethnically diverse Pakistan together.

The perception that there was an ummah and Pakistan was an important part of it was bolstered when Pakistan was made the launching pad for an armed jihad against the Soviet-backed regime in Kabul.

Saudi Arabia (along with the US) became the largest donor of financial and military aid to Pakistan during this period. Their reasons were geopolitical in nature but, of course, Saudi Arabia and Pakistani dictator General Zia

explained the endeavour as a jihad by the ummah against the godless Soviet Union. What's more, it also gave Zia the excuse to start defining himself as 'Mard-i-Momin'.

Former senator Rabbani is right in saying that this bubble has burst — especially when the Saudi monarchy is making some unprecedented political and social moves to change the geopolitical and ideological complexion of the Kingdom.

Pakistan, on the other hand, is left lamenting that it was made a proxy of the Arabs when they needed to enhance their political clout in the Muslim world through the ummah narrative.

Fact is, the roots of the idea of an ummah run even deeper than when the populist ZA Bhutto regime first floated the idea in 1974 to get close to oil-rich Arab monarchies. According to historian Mubarak Ali and celebrated sociologist Hamza Alvi, in the 19th Century, when the already depleted Muslim rule in India completely collapsed, many Muslims became

aware of their minority status vis à vis the Hindus.

In his 2011 book *Pakistan In Search of Identity*, Ali writes that this is when some members of the fading Muslim elite began to claim that the Muslims of India were a part of the larger Muslim universe, the ummah. In a 1997 essay "Ironies of History", Alvi explains that the idea of the ummah was proliferated among India's Muslims by 19th Century pan-Islamists, many of whom had the backing of the last remaining caliphs of the Ottoman Empire.

Interestingly, according to Christopher Jaffrelot's *The Pakistan Paradox*, Sir Syed Ahmad Khan, actually discouraged the whole idea of the ummah because he believed it diluted his idea of forming a concrete Indian Muslim identity.

Muhammad Ali Jinnah, too, aired similar concerns when he refused to join the Khilafat Movement (1919-24) led by pan-Islamists and the ulema.

Yet, some 25 years after

Pakistan's birth, the state reinstated the idea of the ummah. Just as this idea had emerged in the 19th Century to appease Indian Muslims who had suddenly become conscious of their minority status, in the 1970s, the shock of losing East Pakistan because of ethnic divisions, reinvigorated the same idea to (albeit artificially) lift Pakistan from its South Asian roots and place it at the core of the larger Muslim world.

This diluted Pakistan's identity and the manner in which it described itself as a Muslim majority state. It began looking for validation from Arab monarchs to the extent of sometimes changing the way its South Asian Muslim ancestors had practised their faith for centuries, and adopting the behaviours of rich Arabs.

It is time to refigure Pakistani nationhood in the context of its rich South Asian heritage, especially now that India is digging exactly the kind of hole that we once dug and then fell into.

(Courtesy: *The Dawn*)

# 'Terrorists present in Srinagar, threatening shopkeepers'

**Srinagar:** Nearly two dozen terrorists are present in the city and its periphery and even openly threatening shopkeepers in some areas, raising serious concern in the security establishment, according to officials.

However, security forces are taking all precautions to ensure that the terrorists do not use the situation to cause any flare-up as in the past incidents of stone pelting by youths have occurred during anti-militancy operations, they said.



There have been only stray protests since the government imposed severe restrictions on communication channels and movement of people after it announced its decisions to abrogate the special status accorded to Jammu & Kashmir and split the state into two Union territories on August 5.

Restrictions have subsequently been eased, but the situation in Kashmir Valley seems "far from normal", particularly with a high presence of terrorists, they said.

At many places in Downtown Srinagar, the terrorists have been seen roaming freely and even warning shopkeepers to keep their shops shut and adhere to their diktats, the officials said.

Jammu & Kashmir Police chief Dilbag Singh did not rule out the possibility of presence of terrorists but said to claim that they are roaming freely "is an exaggeration".

From interactions with several officials of the state as well

as the Centre, it is estimated that around two dozen terrorists are well-entrenched within the city limits, while their movement and visibility in rural areas have become a routine.

The officials, speaking on condition of anonymity, said counter-militancy operations have taken a severe hit ever since August 5 when the Government announced its decisions on Jammu & Kashmir.

Only two operations have taken place since August 5 — one in Baramulla on August 20 and another chance encounter in Sopore on September 9.

The terrorists have erected blockades in certain parts of the city, including in areas adjoining Anchar Lake and Soura.

The officials said that the administration has ensured that there is no civilian death till now and apprehends that any strong action may provide

a trigger for violent protests. Search-and-cordon operations and imposition of night restrictions in the city area had ended in early 2000s and it had been declared as militancy free in 2012, they said.

The officials believe the terrorists have "a deeper game plan" as the violence level has come down despite their "heavy presence". At many places in the city, including the highly secured Civil Lines areas of Raj Bagh, Jawhar Nagar and Lal Chowk, shopkeepers were threatened at gunpoint to keep their shops shut and ensure a complete hartal.

The shopkeepers and some media outlets have also been asked to keep their peripheral CCTV cameras off, the officials said. In the militancy-hit areas of Shopian, terrorists burnt down an automobile workshop as it was repairing vehicles on Saturday, they said. **PTI**

# Journalists in J&K hard-pressed due to restrictions

**Srinagar:** With no internet and mobile services in Kashmir for over 40 days now, journalists in the Valley have been hard-pressed as a make-shift media centre set up here by the Government continues to be the only connection for many with the rest of the world.

The restrictions were imposed across Kashmir on the evening of August 4 — a day before the Centre announced the abrogation of Article 370 provisions and bifurcation of Jammu & Kashmir into two Union territories.

Even though landline phones have been restored early this month, mobile services and internet — on any platform — remain snapped. Harried journalists are now demanding that the Government should at least restore broadband connections of media houses.

"We have minimal contact with our head office. We are often outside our offices here for assignments or something else and it is difficult for the head office or even our family to reach us in the absence of mobile phone services," Irfan Ahmad, a senior photojournalist, said.

Another local journalist, Mudasir, who works for a daily newspaper, said information gathering has suffered due to the communication restrictions.



"We often do not know what is happening in the city and information from other districts is hard to come by. We have to rely on official versions of the events or incidents. Reaching officials or sources especially in the other districts is very difficult," he said.

During the first few days after the restrictions were imposed, the journalists could not file any stories except for the TV reports using the channels' outdoor broadcast vans here.

In the absence of any medium to send the news-reports across the country or outside, some journalists would send their reports on pen drives

through flyers at the airport. The flyers would then contact the offices of the media houses which would collect the drives from him.

Most media organisations, especially TV channels, sent journalists from Delhi to the Valley as their reporters were incommunicado.

Around a week later, the state government's Department of Information and Public Relations set up a 'Media Facilitation Centre' at a conference hall of a local hotel here.

Four computers and a lone cell phone were available to cater to hundreds of journalists — both local as well as from out-

side the State.

"One often had to wait for more than half-an-hour to get a (computer) system. Then the speed was so irritating that the email would take ages to open," Firdous Ahmad, a local journalist, told PTI.

Journalists have to register themselves before making a call from the cell phone and more often than not, the waiting period would stretch for hours because of the rush.

"We have to write down our names on a register before making a call and then wait for our turn," Ahmad said.

However, after frequent complaints by journalists, few

more computers were added to the centre and the network speed was also upgraded, bringing some relief.

Irfan Ahmad said while the addition of more computers and speed upgrade was a welcome step, media persons are still grappling with a number of problems. "After completing our assignments and capturing pictures, we have to first go to our respective offices to select and re-size the pictures. Then copy them in a flash drive and head to the media centre to send them. This is so hectic," he said.

Mudasir said it has been the "longest-ever blockade" of services faced by journalists in the Valley and the Government should at least restore broadband or leased-line internet connections of media houses.

"We have seen mobile and internet suspensions, but never before has it been this long for journalists. It has been over 40 days now that we have been deprived of the facilities. In an era when government agencies can monitor anything, why is it so difficult to restore internet lines of media houses?" the journalist said.

While the television channels have outdoor broadcast vans for their reportage, the work of their stringers from other districts across the Valley has been hit. **PTI**

## LORD NATARAJA TEMPLE

# Cuddalore: Priest sacked for allowing marriage ceremony

**Cuddalore (TN):** A priest of the famous Lord Nataraja temple at Chidambaram in this district has been suspended for arranging the recent marriage of a Sivakasi-based businessman at the shrine's 1,000-pillar hall in violation of "Agama sastras".

Trustees of the temple, including Ayyappan Deekshathar, told reporters that the priest had violated the "Agama sastras" (rules Governing the poojas and other temple rituals) and the industrialist family had converted the entire hall into a luxurious wedding hall with flower decorations, festoons

and illuminations. The grand decorations had converted the holy atmosphere of the temple into a private wedding hall and this had hurt the sentiments of devotees, they said.

Though weddings were performed in the Pandiyanayakar Sannathi in the temple, the 1000-pillar hall was used only for the special festival occasions such as celestial marriage of the deities and "Arudhra darshan".

As per Agama rules, the place where celestial wedding is held should not be used for the marriage of humans, a priest of the temple said. **PTI**



Members from Gujjar tribe lead a herd of horses along the Jammu-Srinagar highway at Ramban 150km from Jammu on Sunday **PTI**

# BJP leader demands fresh socio-economic survey in Kashmir

**Jammu:** There should be a fresh socioeconomic survey in Jammu & Kashmir for the welfare of members of schedule caste communities, a senior BJP leader said on Sunday, claiming that they were living in "sub standard conditions".

BJP state SC morchha president Jagdish Bhagat also claimed that the existing socioeconomic survey, which was conducted in 2011, was inexact.

"The fresh socioeconomic survey should be conducted as it is a must for improving the living conditions of members of the SC community who are living in sub-standard condi-

tions," he said at a meeting at the BJP headquarters here.

Bhagat also appealed to Prime Minister Narendra Modi for early implementation of laws favouring schedule caste (SC) communities in Union territories of Jammu & Kashmir, and Ladakh, which would come into being on October 31.

Hailing the Centre for scrapping the special status to Jammu & Kashmir and its bifurcation into the two Union territories, he said people belonging to the SC community are victims of Article 370 that proved a major hurdle in their overall development. **PTI**

# Army destroys live mortar shell along LoC in J&K's Poonch

**Jammu:** A 120-mm mortar shell, fired by Pakistani forces, was destroyed by the Indian Army in a forward village near the Line of Control (LoC) in Poonch district of Jammu & Kashmir on Sunday, officials said. The shell had landed near a house in the Balakot area of Mendhar sector during cross-border shelling on Saturday and was noticed by some villagers, who informed the Army, the officials said.

They said Army experts immediately rushed to the spot and destroyed the unexploded shell safely.

Pakistani troops violated the ceasefire by targeting forward posts and villages at several places, including Balakot, on Saturday, prompting strong and effective retaliation from the Indian Army. **PTI**

# Dearth of quality people in north India: Labour Minister on unemployment

**Santosh Gangwar's comment draws scathing attack from Opposition**



**Lucknow:** Union Labour Minister Santosh Kumar Gangwar has said there was no dearth of employment opportunities in the country, but recruiters visiting north India complain of lack of "quality people" to fill vacancies, drawing flak from Opposition leaders who accused him of insulting people of the region.

The comments came amid criticism of the Government over India's unemployment rate rising to a 45-year high of 6.1 per cent in 2017-18, data of which was released in May.

"The issue of employment keep figuring in newspapers these days. I am handling the same Ministry for labour and

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 said.

"Youths are looking towards the government hoping that it will do something good for them," the Congress general secretary said.

Bahujan Samaj Party chief Mayawati said such comments are laughable. "After the different laughable statements by different Union ministers on the serious issue of economic slowdown, instead of removing unemployment in the country now it is being said that there is no shortage of jobs, but of competence, especially amongst north Indians.

"This is extremely shameful and an apology should be tendered to the nation," she tweeted. **PTI**

## MAMATA ON INTERNATIONAL DAY OF DEMOCRACY

# 'Protect rights in Super emergency era'

SAUGAR SENGUPTA ■ KOLKATA

Attacking the BJP for imposing a super emergency-like situation in the country, Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee on Sunday called upon the people of India to unite and fight against the saffron outfit so that their rights and freedom guaranteed by the Constitution can be preserved and protected.

Tweeting on the occasion of International Day of Democracy, Banerjee said "on International Day of Democracy today, let us once again pledge to safeguard the constitutional values our country was founded on."

Lashing out at the Centre for imposing a super-emergency-like situation she said "in this era of 'Super Emergency', we must do all it takes to protect the rights and freedoms that our



Constitution guarantees."

Banerjee's Sunday's tweet wishing the people good came a couple of days after she warned the Centre against bringing Bengal within the ambit of National Register for Citizens.

In an earlier meeting on Thursday, she lambasted the Centre for subjecting the people of Assam to untold misery

through NRC. "Their (BJP) version of NRC is nothing but a political vendetta on those who oppose their politics," she said adding "in the guise of NRC the Government has struck out the names of more than 11 lakh Bengali Hindus, four lakh Muslims, one lakh Gorkhas and Bihari and UP wallahs."

This was all a part of BJP's

**They are not only mixing religion but also linguistic divide in the name of NRC which is dangerous for the future of the country**

—Mamata Banerjee

electoral politics in Assam, she said. "They are not only mixing religion but also linguistic divide in the name of NRC which is dangerous for the future of the country," she said it was "for the sake of Hindus, Muslims, Sikhs, Christians and others that I have rejected NRC."

On the BJP's proposal of involving NRC in Bengal she

said "let them touch Bengal and then see what happens."

While the Bengal BJP president Dilip Ghosh said that his party was determined to invoke NRC in the State after the ouster of the State Government, BJP legislator from Ballia in Uttar Pradesh Surendra Singh said lashed out at Banerjee for criticising NRC saying she was more interested in preserving her vote bank than preserving the interests of her motherland. He asked her to shift to Bangladesh and become that country's Prime Minister.

He said "Mamata Banerjee's bad days are about to come and she should change her language. If she wants to do politics with the support of Bangladeshi people, she should go to Bangladesh. It will be good if she becomes Prime Minister of Bangladesh if she has courage for it."

# Education worst hit during 42 days of clampdown in Valley

**Srinagar:** While schools, colleges and universities are functioning normally in the Jammu and Ladakh divisions of the two Union Territories, the same cannot be said for the Kashmir Valley where education has taken the worst beating because of the clampdown.

Authorities have opened schools up to the 10th standard in the Valley, but the attendance of children in these educational institutions has been disappointing so far.

"All the teaching staff have been attending their duty regularly in the Valley's government-run schools, though the attendance of children has not improved," said an official of the School Education Department.



Parents have been reluctant to send children to school as they are unable to keep track of them because of the suspension

of mobile phone services.

"During normal days we would keep a track of our children through mobile phones by

calling the school authorities, or the bus drivers in case of private schools.

"In the present uncertain situation, no one wants to take a chance with the child's safety especially when mobile phones are not working," said Javid Shah father of two school-going children in Srinagar old city.

Submission of examination forms for the 10th class has already started in the Valley even though the students said they had not covered all the topics of their academic syllabus.

"We have not yet been taught many topics in Physics, Chemistry, Biology and Social Sciences. How can we answer all the questions unless they ignore the untaught topics?" said a class

10th student.

The general demand of the class 10th student for curtailment of the syllabus has not yet been accepted by the authorities.

Farooq Ahmad Khan, the advisor on education to the Governor, has said all school exams will be held in the Valley even if their conduct is delayed by some days.

Khan also dispelled rumours of any mass promotion of students to higher classes on account of the prevailing uncertainty in the Valley.

Colleges and universities, however, continue to remain shut for the last 42 days.

"All colleges and universities will start functioning soon in the Valley as the situation is fast

# Building of Ayodhya Temple to start after Nov: Swamy

**Ayodhya:** Senior BJP leader Subramaniam Swamy has claimed that the construction of the grand Ram temple in Ayodhya will commence by November.

He also stated that the decision of the Supreme Court, which is hearing the Ram Janambhoomi-Babri Masjid title suit, will be in favour of the Ram temple.

Swamy, who was in Ayodhya on a two-day visit, further said that the right to worship is a fundamental right and cannot be taken away by anyone.

"The temple which is at the spot of Lord Ram's birth cannot be removed," he said. **IANS**

The remark by the BJP leader comes just days after NDA constituent Shiv Sena chief Uddhav Thackeray called for action by Prime Minister Narendra Modi-led central government to enable speedy construction of the grand Ram temple in Ayodhya.

The Shiv Sena chief had said that with abrogation of Article 370, which granted special status to Jammu and Kashmir, the Modi government had shown that it was decisive in nature.

He added that after the Article 370 move, it was now time for construction of Ram Mandir and introduction of uniform civil code. **IANS**

# Maha CM hints revision of MV Act; pulls up Sena Min

**Mumbai:** Maharashtra Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis on Sunday expressed displeasure over Shiv Sena leader and State Transport Minister Diwakar Raote's "unilateral" announcement to keep on hold the implementation of the Centre's amended Motor Vehicles (MV) Act which stipulates steep fines for violation of traffic rules.



supporting the amended provisions.

"Earlier provisions in the Motor Vehicles Act were not stringent enough. There were instances where people threw the fine amount at officials because it was so low. There have been major accidents and complaints of traffic violations. Such a strong deterrent is needed," he said.

The CM said the Act would be implemented notwithstanding differences over the quantum of fines.

"Maharashtra is going to accept and implement the Act. There may be a difference of opinion about the fine amounts. Whether to reduce the fine amount, so that it is not a burden of the common man, can be considered. It can be worked out and fine amount can be revised to make it less harsh," Fadnavis said.

He, however, added that such reduction in the fine amounts must not "compromise on its deterrent value". **PTI**

it should have been discussed with me and the entire Cabinet," the Chief Minister told PTI.

The amended Motor Vehicle Act was passed by Parliament in July-August this year, but its steep fines have been at the Centre of a debate, leading to some states deciding to give breathing time to the public before enforcing it.

While Gujarat and Uttarakhand have announced a cut in penalties for traffic violations under the Act, few states have adopted it in its entirety while several others have put it on hold.

Fadnavis went on to say that he was "whole-heartedly"

Speaking to PTI, he also indicated revision in the amount of fines to make it less harsh on the common man, without compromising on the "deterrent value" of the Act.

Days after Raote requested the Centre to reconsider the hefty fines under the amended provisions and announced holding their enforcement, Fadnavis said sometimes he had to "cover" his colleagues from allied parties for certain decisions.

"At times, some of my Cabinet colleagues, from allied parties, take decisions which I have had to cover. Raote's decision was about a policy. Hence,

## SWAMI CHINMAYANAND CASE

# SIT examines rape victim's male friends, college staff

## Leakage of video a conspiracy, says father of rape victim

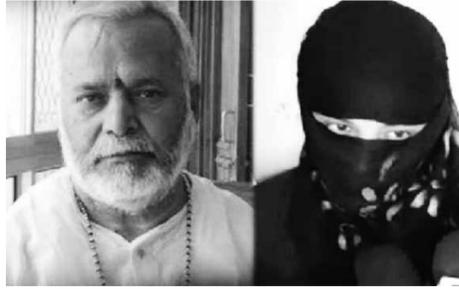
**Shahjahanpur (UP):** The SIT probing the alleged rape of a law student by BJP leader Swami Chinmayanand on Sunday examined three male friends of the victim, besides some employees of her college.

The victim's friends who were examined included the one who was with her when she was located in Rajasthan after having gone missing from here late last month.

He and the two others were also present inside the car in which the girl had made her video recording, narrating about her ordeal.

The apex court-appointed Special Investigation Team called them to the Police Lines here and recorded their statements, official sources said.

The SIT also examined the principals of girl's alma mater — a law college and a post-graduate college — both located on the campus of Mumukshu Ashram of former



Union Minister Chinmayanand.

The SIT also examined two other college employees, who had been summoned on Saturday but had failed to turn up for recording of their statements.

The girl's father, meanwhile, termed the leakage of the video footage given to the SIT by his daughter as a "conspiracy" and said he would request

the Supreme Court to order a probe into it.

"From where have the screenshots and videos come to the social media? The screenshots have been posted even on various social media platforms. These were given to the SIT by my daughter. This is a conspiracy," he said.

He said he would inform the Supreme Court about it and seek a probe in the entire matter.

**From where have the screenshots and videos come to the social media? The screenshots have been posted even on various social media platforms. These were given to the SIT by my daughter. This is a conspiracy**

—Girl's father

A beleaguered Chinmayanand, meanwhile, got support from self-styled godman Swami Omji who threatened with rebellion by Hindu society if a case is registered against the BJP leader.

"If any false case is registered against Chinmayanand, then crores of Hindus will hit the streets throughout the country and rise in rebellion," said Omji, who was also a contestant in reality TV show Bigg Boss.

"The UP Government must not register any case of rape against Chinmayanand and if it has been lodged, it must be withdrawn," he said.

Omji claimed the girl student had met Congress president Sonia Gandhi and party leaders Rahul Gandhi and Priyanka Gandhi Vadra in Delhi and it was at their behest that a zero FIR was lodged against Chinmayanand.

The law student had on Saturday given a pen drive containing 43 videos to the SIT to support her allegations after the sleuths asked her to submit whatever evidence she had against the former Union minister. The SIT, set up on Supreme Court orders, had taken the woman to Chinmayanand's bedroom on Friday morning and had collected various pieces of evidence. The special investigation team had quizzed the student's mother on Saturday, they said. **PTI**

# CBI seeks info on missing Kolkata ex-CP Rajiv Kumar

SAUGAR SENGUPTA ■ KOLKATA

The Central Bureau of Investigation on Sunday sent letters to Bengal Chief Secretary, Home Secretary and Director General of Police seeking the whereabouts of senior IPS officer Rajiv Kumar even as the former Kolkata Commissioner of Police continued to remain "untraceable and uncontrollable" even two days after the Calcutta High Court lifted the shield against arrest of him.

Informed sources in the Bengal Police said Kumar, presently the Additional Director General of CID who failed to present himself before the CBI officials for the second day on Sunday after losing the protective cover against arrest on Friday, was planning to file a Special Leave Petition in the Supreme Court.

After summons were sent

to him on Friday, the former top cop had reportedly wrote to the CBI seeking a month's time as he was on leave tending to his ailing wife a senior IRS official herself.

About the contents of the letters sent to the senior State Government officials, sources in the Agency said the CBI wanted to know through the letters that whether Kumar was genuinely on leave, if so when he applied for the leave, what was the reason for the leave taken and when was he supposed to join back. Information was also sought about the reason of leave taken and the address he was to be found during the leave period.

Meanwhile, senior CBI counsel RJ Dastoor on Sunday rushed to Delhi to meet the top officials. "He has been asked to visit Delhi where legal consultations will take place for further steps tomorrow," sources said.



A view of a damaged building in Bowbazar area, where several houses have been damaged owing to tunnel boring for East-West metro corridor in Kolkata on Sunday **PTI**

# DK Shivakumar appeals to supporters not to visit Delhi

**Bengaluru:** Arrested Congress leader DK Shivakumar has appealed to his supporters not to come to New Delhi to express solidarity with him, in the backdrop of a large number of them barging into a court there on Friday, when he was produced in connection with a money laundering case.

Conveying this in a press release, his brother DK Suresh said Shivakumar has asked his supporters not to come to Delhi on Tuesday when he is likely to be produced in the Special Court dealing with cases relating to ED.

A Delhi court on Friday had extended the custodial interrogation of Shivakumar by the Enforcement Directorate (ED) by four days till September 17 in the case.

"I request all party workers, supporters and well wishers of Shri D K Shivakumar to not to come to New Delhi on Tuesday (17.09.2019). This request is on behalf of

my brother DK Shivakumar too," Suresh said in a press release.

He said, "We request everyone to be in their respective places in the state and arrival of more people in Delhi will cause inconvenience to the administration and judiciary."

"As law abiding citizen, its our responsibility to maintain smooth functioning of administrative and judicial systems. Therefore we request and expect everyone's cooperation and support in this regard," he added.

Shivakumar, 57, sitting Congress MLA from Kanakapura assembly segment, is in the ED custody since his arrest on September 3.

On Friday, when Shivakumar was produced before the court on the expiry of his 9-day custodial interrogation by the agency, additional forces from Delhi police and CRPF were deployed inside

and outside the courtroom to control the large number of supporters who had gathered.

But even the heavy deployment of security personnel could not stop the supporters from barging inside the courtroom.

Before being escorted out of the court on Friday, Shivakumar had reportedly asked his supporters present at the premises, to go back home.

The ED had in September last year registered the money laundering case against Shivakumar, Haumanthaiah, an employee at the Karnataka Bhavan in New Delhi, and others.

The ED had filed the PMLA case against him and others based on a charge sheet (prosecution complaint) filed by the Income Tax Department against them last year before a special court in Bengaluru on charges of alleged tax evasion and hawala transactions worth crores. **PTI**

# Patriotic Muslims will vote for BJP: Karnataka Minister

**Bengaluru:** Karnataka Minister for Rural Development and Panchayat Raj KS Eshwarappa, who ahead of the LS polls made a controversial comment that Muslims won't be given tickets by BJP, on Sunday said patriotic Muslims will vote for the saffron party while those who are pro-Pakistan will hesitate.

The senior BJP leader also announced that the party-led government will ban slaughter of cows in the state.

"Every one has a wish for Akhanda Bharat, why it is not happening is because of fear that they (section of politicians) may not get Muslim votes," Eshwarappa said.

Speaking at an event here, he said, "Before BJP government came to power I happened to meet couple of Congress MLAs who expressed desire to come to BJP, but claimed that they have over 50,000 Muslim votes in their

constituencies and may face defeat if they lose that, which is kind of a 'Hijada' (eunuch) behavior."

Eshwarappa also claimed that in his constituency in Shivamogga, there were over 50,000 Muslim voters and he has never gone to them seeking votes.

"I told them (Congress MLAs) that in my constituency, my community- Kuruba vote is about 8,000-10,000 and there is more than 50,000 Muslim votes. I have till today not gone to a single Muslim saluting him for vote. I have won by a lead of over 47,000 votes," he said. "Why I'm saying this-Journalists write down this."

A rashtra bhakta (patriot) Muslim will vote for BJP, and those who are pro Pakistan and rashtra drohis (traitors) will hesitate to vote for BJP," the Minister added. Ahead of the Lok Sabha polls in April,

Eshwarappa had said the BJP would not give tickets to Muslims to contest the elections as they do not believe in the party.

On banning cow slaughter in the state, he said, "Cow slaughter is banned in a way, but it has to be done completely. When there was BJP government in the past we had done it, but Congress government came to power and removed it."

I'm saying this in this meeting, in front of holy seers that this government will ban cow slaughter, let there be no doubt."

Despite resistance from opposition, the then BJP Government led by BS Yediyurappa in 2010 had got the controversial Prevention of Slaughter and Preservation of Cattle Bill passed that proposed to replace the Karnataka Prevention of Cow Slaughter and Cattle Preservation Act, 1964. **PTI**

# Kota flooded after release of dam water, thousands evacuated

**Kota (Raj):** Over 5,000 people were evacuated while many others remained stranded on rooftops on Sunday as large areas were flooded in the city due to discharge of 6.93 lakh cusecs of water from Kota barrage, officials said.

Schools have been closed and Army, NDRF, SDRF and teams from Kota municipal corporation engaged in rescue operations in areas along the river Chambal.

"Over 5,000 people have so far been shifted to shelter homes and safe places. However, people are still trapped in many areas and efforts are being made to evacuate them with the help of Army and rescue personnel," Kota district collector Muktanand Agrawal told reporters on Sunday evening.

No causality has been reported so far, he said. The official said Kota was facing an unprecedented situation as it is the first time since the construction of Gandhi



Army personnel carry out rescue operation in a flood affected area in Kota, Rajasthan on Sunday **PTI**

Sagar dam that a record 6.93 lakh cusecs of water was discharged from 19 gates of Kota Barrage in a day.

He said more water is likely to be discharged from Gandhi Sagar dam which is currently overflowing at 1,314 ft and needs to be brought down to 1,308 ft.

and 200 NDRF, SDRF and civil defense personnel have been deployed.

Meanwhile, additional chief secretary and Kota district in charge secretary P K Goyal, along with divisional commissioner LN Soni and Kora range IG Vipin Panday, visited the flood affected areas.

Collector Agrawal too reviewed the flood situation with officials.

The down stream localities in the city were the worst affected by the deluge, as water reached even the second floor of houses and people were taking shelter on the third floor of buildings to save themselves, officials said.

"The situation following release of 7.50 lac cusec water from Kota barrage is very serious and grave," said assistant fire officer, KMC, Devendra Gautam, who is engaged in the rescue operation.

People are being asked to evacuate, but most of the them are not ready to leave their

houses and have climbed on rooftops to save themselves, he added.

Meanwhile, the situation improved in downstream areas of Jhalawar district which were flooded due to discharge of about 5 lakh cusecs of water from Kalisindh dam in the district.

As the discharge was brought down to 2 lakh cusecs, flood waters receded.

"The flood situation is under control. No one in the district is reported trapped," Jhalawar district collector Siddharth Sihag said.

In Baran, district collector Indra Singh Rao has declared a holiday in schools on Monday.

Bundi district collector Rukmani Riyad Sihag also appealed the people to move away from areas near Chambal.

Meanwhile, Lok Sabha Speaker and Kota-Bundi MP Om Birla remained in touch with senior state officials on the flood relief operations. **PTI**

# Two Naxals killed in Gadchiroli encounter

**Nagpur:** Two Naxals, each carrying a reward of ₹4 lakh, were killed and at least five others injured in an encounter with police on Sunday in Maharashtra's Gadchiroli district, an official said.

The gun-battle took place in Narkasa forest area, located around 170 km from here in east Maharashtra, when C-60 commandos, a specialised anti-Naxal unit of State police, were combing the area, he said.

On a specific information received by district SP Shailesh Balkawde about a naxal build-up in Gyarapatti area in Dhanora taluka the security personnel rushed to the spot when they came under heavy fire from a group of 20-25 ultras around 7:30 am,

Gadchiroli Police said in a release.

"The firing continued for about half an hour. We later found bodies of two Naxals, including a woman. We also found a carbine, a one-bore rifle, several rounds of ammunition, binoculars, walkie-talkie set, a transistor, and items of daily use," the official said.

He said that around four to five Naxals were apparently injured in the skirmish.

The slain ultras are identified as Lalsu alias Shantaram Devrao Gawde, a resident of Dhanora and platoon party committee member of company No 4, and the woman cadre as Samila from Bastar in Chhattisgarh. **PTI**

# Siddaramaiah slams Centre, K'taka Govt over flood relief

**Bengaluru:** Hitting out at the BJP Government in the State and at the Centre over the delay in announcing flood relief for Karnataka, senior Congress leader Siddaramaiah on Sunday termed BS Yediyurappa as the most weakest Chief Minister.

The Centre had not given even a single rupee since the floods caused havoc last month despite a Central team visiting the affected places and the state government submitting a memorandum putting the loss at ₹38,000 crore, he told reporters here.

Stating that the central Government had sent back the states memorandum, seeking some clarifications, he asked what was the difficulty in announcing interim relief and

pointed to the largescale destruction caused by the floods that hit several districts, especially in the northern parts of the state.

"I have been in politics for 40 years, I had never seen such large scale floods, coupled with drought in some districts, he said. As many as 103 taluks of 22 districts were affected by recent floods for which the State Government has sought a relief of ₹38,000 crore from the Centre. Around seven districts were reeling under drought.

Questioning as to why the Prime Minister has not visited the affected areas, he asked, doesn't Narendra Modi have any responsibility? He would have come if he had cared for farmers and poor." **PTI**

Attacking the BJP leaders from Karnataka as coward for not demanding central relief, he said: "According to me none of them has the courage. Our Chief Minister Yediyurappa is the most weakest Chief Minister."

The Congress leader also alleged that BJP was trying for another round of operation lotus (poaching of opposition MLAs), but expressed confidence that none from Congress will leave the party.

Absence and resignation of 17 rebel Congress-JD(S) MLAs during the trust vote had led to the collapse of the HD Kumaraswamy headed coalition Government in July, paving the way for the BJP to come to power. **PTI**

# Mend your ways or meet same fate as Chidambaram: BJP MLA warns Didi

PTI ■ BALLIA

An Uttar Pradesh BJP MLA has warned West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee to mend her ways or get ready to meet the same fate as former Finance Minister P Chidambaram who is currently lodged in jail.

The MLA from Bairia Assembly constituency Surendra Singh said the Trinamool Congress supreme should "become the Prime Minister of Bangladesh" as she was opposed to the National Register of Citizens (NRC).

"The statements made by Mamata Banerjee against the NRC show that she is backed by foreign forces," Singh told reporters here on Saturday on



the sidelines of a 'krishi mela'.

"It seems that Mamata is forgetting that bad days are approaching here. She should change her language and behaviour otherwise she will meet the same fate as Congress leader P Chidambaram," he said.

On September 13, Mamata

Banerjee took out a rally in Kolkata against the NRC in Assam after the final list was released on August 31 which left out 19 lakh people.

After the rally, the TMC chief had said that she would never allow the Centre to conduct a similar exercise in West Bengal.

Singh, however, said: "If Mamata wants to do politics by protecting the infiltrators from Bangladesh then she should become the Prime Minister of Bangladesh."

"In Bengal, lord Ram and lord Hanuman respectively in form of Amit Shah and Yogi Adityanath have appeared, and in the next Assembly elections, there will be a change of power in the state," he added.

## SBI to move RBI to offer fixed-floating rate home-loans

PTI ■ LEH

The largest lender State Bank of India will be seeking clarifications from the Reserve Bank whether it can offer long-term home loans with fixed rates in the beginning and convert the same into floating rates later, chairman Rajnish Kumar has said.

The move comes after the Reserve Bank has mandated banks to shift all retail lending to floating rates that will be determined by external benchmarks like the repo rate. Kumar said there is a lack of clarity on how it can go ahead with the fixed rate products, after the RBI's new regulations on floating rates.

Hinting at the volatility in the repo rate, he said some home buyers may want their loans to be fixed.

For such buyers, it can offer a 'fixed-floating' product, wherein the rates are locked in for an initial period of say five to ten years, and then turns floating.

The need for making the product floating in the latter part arises out of the bank's inability to project the liability movements in the future, he said, adding typically, home loans are for about 30 years.

It can be noted that the repo rate at which the central bank lends to the system is at a nine-year low of 5.40 per cent.

Speaking to reporters here over the weekend, Kumar said the central bank's recent guidelines on floating rate products



for the retail segment has necessitated the need for the clarity.

Kumar has clarified that from an asset liability management perspective, it is difficult to have a fixed rate product for a long term like 30 years, the maximum tenor of a home loan now from the bank now. Some private sector peers offer up to 35 years of home loans depending on in the age of the borrower, though.

At present, SBI has a floating rate home loan product linked to its marginal cost of funds-based lending rate and it recently withdrew one linked to the repo rate. It does not have a fixed rate home loan product at present.

As of now, under the marginal cost of funds based lending, floating rate loans are reset as when the interest rates fall or rise, but fixed rate loans are reset in 9-12 months. But when the loans are linked to the repo rate, the rates can change sharply, depending on how RBI acts on the rate front.

Many mortgage borrowers

normally choose fixed rates, as that helps them better manage their finances because of the certainty about the EMI outgoes.

Kumar said the bank does not have adequate liabilities linked to the floating rate which makes such a floating product difficult.

Speaking on the RBI-mandated systemic shift to external benchmarked lending rates, he said SBI will have minimal issues with the same. He said the industry leader was the first to move on to the repo-linked loans and deposits since May, and has many of its products aligned to the external benchmarks now.

However, he said such shifts make asset liability management "challenging" as there lack of floating rate liabilities now.

About the impact of the mega bank mergers on SBI, he said it will not impact the nation's largest bank as SBI has specified business model and target segments, and will continue with the same.

## MoS Meghwal for voluntary action to avoid single use plastic

PTI ■ CHENNAI

Union Minister Arjun Ram Meghwal on Sunday said people on their own should avoid single use plastic to help protect environment.



Prime Minister (Narendra Modi) has called for ban on single use plastic. Can we discontinue single use plastic? We have to take oath that I will not use single use plastic one day in a week" the Minister of state for heavy industries and public enterprises said here.

Addressing "Vision New India 2022-Development Through Technology for All" conclave jointly organised by his Ministry and the Indian Institute of Technology, Madras, he said an alternative should be invented to replace single use plastic.

"India is one of the signatories of the Paris Agreement. We have to protect the environment and take suo motu action to reduce carbon emission," he said.

Members of the United Nations negotiated and adopted the Paris Agreement in which India has made four commitments, including reducing greenhouse gas emission intensity of its GDP by 33-35 per cent below 2005 levels by 2030.

Referring to the last public speech by former president A P J Abdul Kalam at IIM Shillong in 2015, Meghwal said the late leader had spoken about the need to save the Earth.

"It is the duty of the present generation to follow his words to save the earth. We follow the ideas of APJ Abdul Kalam. But we do not follow his words. We have to follow," the minister said.

Meghwal also mooted the idea of collaboration between corporates and academia on tapping renewable energy at Chennai Airport and referred to the example of the airport in Kochi, which uses solar power.

"Why cannot we introduce this (concept) in Chennai, Kolkata (airports) or in any other parts of the country? We have to take some suo motu action and it can be done under CSR activity," he said.

He said companies can form a consortium to take up the initiative and can collaborate with institutions like IIT Madras.

## Markets to eye global factors, macro data; stimulus measures may lift sentiment: Analysts

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Equity markets will take cues from global developments and wholesale inflation data this week, while the third tranche of stimulus measures announced by the government may bolster sentiment, analysts said.



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.

"The new measures announced by the FM send the clear message that the government is giving top priority to reviving growth in the economy. The measures relating to housing and export promotion like textiles will provide a big boost to employment too since these are labour intensive industries.

"The Rs 10,000 crore fund for providing last mile funding for stalled non-NPA, non-NCLT (housing) projects needs to be specially appreciated," said V K Vijayakumar Chief

Investment Strategist at Geojit Financial Services.

On the global front, geopolitical tensions in the Middle East ratcheted up after Yemen's Houthis rebels carried out drone attacks on two major oil plants in Saudi Arabia, affecting more than half of the Kingdom's output and putting upward pressure on global oil prices.

Any spike in crude oil rates will affect the fiscal position of net energy importers like India. Brent crude has been trading at USD 60 per barrel levels.

Participants will also track WPI inflation data scheduled to be announced on Monday.

"Going ahead, we have important numbers such as WPI inflation, food and fuel, but we see trade war, global markets taking the spotlight. The market is poised to follow the path of how global markets respond and move," Mustafa

Nadeem, CEO, Epic Research said.

Factors such as movement of rupee against the US dollar and foreign capital flows will also influence trading sentiment in the market.

Meanwhile, global markets will also focus on the US Federal Reserve's interest rate decision and Federal Open Market Committee (FOMC) economic projections.

Signs of easing US-China trade tensions boosted the domestic equities last week. During the last week, the Sensex advanced 403.22 points or 1.09 per cent. On Friday, it closed at 37,384.99, up 280.71 points.

Jimeet Modi, Founder and CEO, SAMCO Securities and StockNote, said markets are waiting for the festive season to gauge how consumer spending pans out and whether there is a change in sentiments at the bottom of the pyramid.

## FPIs turn net buyers, infuse ₹1,841 cr in first half of Sept

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Foreign portfolio investors turned net buyers in the first half of September, pumping in ₹1,841 crore into the capital markets, after remaining sellers for the previous two months.

The latest inflows have been triggered by improving investor sentiment on the back of easing US-China trade war and supporting macroeconomic data, experts said.

According to the latest depositories data, foreign portfolio investors (FPIs) withdrew a net amount of ₹2,031.02 crore from equities but put in ₹3,872.19 crore in the debt segment during September 3-13, translating into a total net inflow of ₹1,841.17 crore into the capital markets.

Prior to this, FPIs pulled out a net ₹5,920.02 crore in August and ₹2,985.88 crore in July from the domestic capital markets (both equity and debt).

"The markets have been largely positive on back of cooling US-China trade war. Besides, the July IIP came out at 4.3 per cent which could have helped with the investor's sentiments," said Harsh Jain, COO at Groww.

## Sebi mulls new whistle blower mechanism for auditors, other 'gate-keepers'

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

With an aim to unearth financial irregularities and other fraudulent transactions at listed companies, capital market regulator Sebi is planning to set up a new whistle-blower mechanism for auditors and other 'gate-keepers' to report such cases.

The proposed move assumes significance in the wake of several auditors in the recent past decided to exit from their audit mandate after certain listed companies failed to take remedial actions despite financial wrongdoings having been flagged in their auditors' observations.

Officials said most of these auditor exits have taken place at a much later stage, but a confidentiality mechanism can help in cases of financial frauds being reported at an early stage by auditors, independent directors and others considered to be 'gate-keepers' or 'conscience keepers'.

Regulators and enforcement agencies have often stressed that auditors, independent directors, investment bankers, valuers and other such entities have a greater responsibility to ensure compliance to regulations and

safeguard the interest by minority shareholders.

While Securities and Exchange Board of India (Sebi) has announced a new mechanism to reward informants with up to Rs 1 crore cash for any credible inside information for providing information on insider trading at listed companies, this is not applicable to corporate entities and professionals such as auditors and lawyers.

While there were suggestions from some quarters that auditors, lawyers and consultants on behalf of their firms should also be allowed to avail the 'informant mechanism', Sebi was of the view that corporate entities were as such under a duty to report.

Besides, lawyers are bound of confidentiality and it would considered unethical for them to complain against their clients.

"However, as far as gatekeepers such as auditors are considered, a separate confidentiality mechanism is being proposed," a top official said.

The proposal is in early stages as of now and a final decision would be taken only after a detailed consultation process with all the concerned stakeholders, the official added.

## Facebook global exec moots 'prospective' solution on WhatsApp issue

### GOVT STANDS FIRM ON TRACEABILITY

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Facebook global executive Nick Clegg has proposed a 'prospective' mechanism for WhatsApp to act on cases flagged by law enforcement agencies, but the government has refused to budge on its demand for traceability of messages.

The issue of traceability has been a flashpoint between the government and WhatsApp, and the Facebook-owned messaging platform has so far resisted India's demand for identification of message originators, arguing that doing so would undermine its policy on privacy and end-to-end encryption.

A senior government official told PTI that Facebook Vice-President, Global Affairs and Communications, Nick Clegg, during his meeting with IT Minister Ravi Shankar Prasad last week mooted alternatives to absolute traceability of messages, including use of 'meta data' and machine intelligence for dealing with the issue, even offering to harness

WhatsApp, Instagram and Facebook linkages to provide assistance to law enforcement agencies.

When contacted, a Facebook spokesperson said: "Facebook cares deeply about the safety of people in India and Nick's meetings this week provided opportunities to discuss our commitment to supporting privacy and security in every app we provide and how we can continue to work productively with the Government of India towards these shared goals."

A person aware of WhatsApp's position on the matter emphasised that the platform cannot read messages exchanged as they are encrypted. It is learnt that Clegg in meetings with top authorities, including Home Minister Amit Shah, National Security Advisor Ajit Doval as well as IT Minister Ravi Shankar Prasad on September 12, reiterated the US tech giant's stance that it will abide by any lawful request for information by the Indian government, but it cannot read messages exchanged on its platforms.

Clegg told the officials that the company can provide 'signals' and meta data such as who calls and meta data to and duration, among others, of lawfully identified users, a source said.



The US social media giant has agreed to provide India with 'meta data' of any user of its platforms, including WhatsApp, that the government lawfully identifies but has insisted it cannot look into messages exchanged as they are encrypted.

India is home to 400 million WhatsApp users and more than 328 million Facebook users. Social media companies in India have drawn flak from the government in recent past over instances of circulation of fake news, breach of user confidentiality, unauthorised data sharing by the apps and concerns over privacy and data security.

WhatsApp in particular has been under fire over users misusing the platform for circulation of fake news that have incited mob fury. The Indian government has made it clear that it intends to strengthen the legal framework and make social media platforms more accountable under law.

## Disappointed with Govt's measures to boost real estate: CREDAI

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

India's apex realtors group said it is disappointed with the government's measures to support the sector, as it did not address the key demands such as tax rebate and lower interest rate for home buyers and developers.

CREDAI's National Chairman Jaxay Shah said the fund created for completing the stalled real estate projects will have limited impact as it excludes those projects which are either facing insolvency proceedings or become non-performing assets (NPAs).

"Last month, we had met the finance minister and made several demands to improve liquidity and boost demand in the real estate sector. But, unfortunately our demands have not been met," Shah told PTI on Sunday.

Reiterating the demand of the association that has about 12,000 members, Shah said the Government should withdraw its decision to ban subvention scheme as it was for the benefit of home buyers and helped generate demand.

## Poor decisions taken by AI may affect its stake sale targets

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Narendra Modi-led Government's plan to sell debt-laden airline Air India is well on track but the sale may not mop up the targeted yield owing to its value erosion over last several months since it decided to stop selling tickets on the platform of global ticketing distribution company Amadeus.

In October last year, Travelport had announced that it had "won competitive tender process undertaken by Air India for the sole provision of distribution of its domestic flight content in the airline's home market."

The national carrier had decided to shift to Travelport despite several senior officials raising objections against the move. Joining hands with Interglobe Technologies Quotient, a strategic business unit of InterGlobe Enterprises which is the parent company of IndiGo, India's largest airline by market share and Air India's biggest competitor.

It is understood Amadeus managed about 50 percent of Air India's ticket sales through



its GDS network.

GDS is a globally connected computerised reservation network offering a one-point access to airline bookings, hotel reservations as well associated travel-related areas including car rentals.

Dr Sanat Kaul, Chairman International Foundation for Aviation Aerospace and Drones said "Air India has been on the proverbial ventilator for long time. Divesting it's saleable assets and properties is not the answer to this mess. Reducing it's vast GDS distribution network to one vendor is shrinking its catchment area of passengers. The government policy of appointing one CMD after another who have no background in aviation or air-

lines business shows its lack of seriousness. Taxpayers are the victims of this policy unlike other airlines which go in for liquidation."

The committee of secretaries (CoS) headed by Cabinet Secretary PK Sinha has given the green signal to offload 95 per cent stake in the national carrier. Last year, the Centre had invited bids to sell a 76 per cent stake in the ailing airline, along with the transfer of management control.

The divestment proposal is presently with group of ministers (GoM), headed by Union Home Minister Amit Shah. It is understood the GoM will shortly take a final call on the timing, price and amount of shares of Air India to be sold.

The government took multiple measures to make Air India competitive by way of bringing down debt and raising resources by selling land assets and other subsidiaries. However, Air India's net debt peaked to ₹58,351.93 crore in FY19 from about ₹55,000 crore in FY18. The national carrier received an equity infusion of ₹30,520.21 crore from the government till date as a part of its 2012 Turn Around Plan.

Last month, in a major admonition to state-run Air India, Delhi High Court has directed national carrier to present its reasons behind its decision to shift domestic ticket-booking business "exclusively" on Travelport, and abruptly discontinuing using the services of global ticket distribution firm Amadeus.

In its order dated July 25 the High Court ruled, "time is sought to file counter affidavit. Let the counter affidavit be filed within four weeks. Rejoinder, if any be filed within four weeks thereafter". The HC is slated to hear the case on September 26.

## Bajaj Finserv comes up with Wallet Care to combat fraudulent

PNS ■ PUNE

Bajaj Finserv offers Wallet Care, which will help customers block their credit cards and debit cards with a single phone call without any hassles. The card protection plan gives coverage upto ₹2 lakh at just ₹599. Emergency travel and hotel assistance and as well as get free replacement of important identity proofs like your PAN card are also possible through it.

Wallet Care offers instant card blocking facilities. People can report a loss 24x7 from anywhere in the world by dialling the helpline number. Once a call is made to report damage, fraud, or loss, all your cards will be blocked at once. Along with carrying out your credit and ATM card block, you can ask for replacement of your lost PAN card too.

Pocket Insurance ensures that small losses in life do not keep adding up to make a big dent in wallet.

## Maruti Suzuki's PV mkt share shrinks in April-Aug; Hyundai, Mahindra gain

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Auto-makers Maruti Suzuki India and Tata Motors' domestic passenger vehicle market share declined in April-August this year, while Hyundai and M&M witnessed gain in the same period, as per data compiled by industry body SIAM.

The country's largest carmaker Maruti Suzuki India (MSI) saw its market share dip by over 2 percentage points during the period under review and slip below 50 per cent in the domestic passenger vehicle segment in April-August.

The company sold 5,55,064 units this fiscal as compared with 7,57,289 units during April-August previous year. Its market share has come down from 52.16 per cent last year to 49.83 per cent in the April-August this fiscal.

Overall PV sales during the April-August of the current fiscal stands at 11,09,930 units as compared to 14,51,647 units.

When contacted MSI executive director (marketing and sales) Shashank Srivastava told PTI that while cars and vans (A and C segment) have performed well, there has been a drop in sales of utility vehicles (B segment).

"This is because of constraint in supply of Ertiga having a large waiting period," he added.

Besides, there is a shift in consumer preference in SUV segment towards petrol where currently the company does not have a variant, Srivastava said adding that MSI plans to introduce petrol variants of Vitara Brezza and S-Cross BS-VI later this fiscal.

Similarly, Tata Motors has reported sales of 60,093 units this fiscal so far as against 98,702 units last year. Its market share has fallen by 1.39 percentage points to 5.41 per cent

in the current fiscal as against 6.79 per cent last year.

On the other hand, Hyundai Motor India saw its market share go up by 2.77 percentage points in the April-August this year. The company sold a total of 2,03,729 units this fiscal as compared to 2,26,396 units.

Despite selling less this fiscal, the company's market share has risen from 15.59 per cent last fiscal to 18.36 per cent.

"2019 is a milestone year for Hyundai Motor India as we launched three products in three different segments...The new launches have led to increase in customer traction, footfalls in showrooms and market share," Hyundai Motor India Ltd National Sales Head Vikas Jain said.

Similarly, Mahindra & Mahindra (M&M) sold 89,733 units this fiscal so far as compared with 1,00,015 units in April-August last financial year, still its market share has risen by 1.19 percentage points this fiscal to 8.08 per cent from 6.89 per cent.

Likewise, Toyota Kirloskar Motor sold 53,977 units this fiscal so far as against 67,051 units in the same period previous year. Its market share rose to 4.86 per cent from 4.62 per cent earlier.

Other players like Renault India, Skoda Auto, Volkswagen India saw their market shares increase marginally during April-August this year.

Honda Cars sold 51,569 units as compared to 79,599 units last year, shrinking its market share marginally to 4.64 per cent this fiscal as against 5.48 per cent in the same period last fiscal.

Similarly, Ford India saw its market share go down marginally to 2.7 per cent from 2.81 per cent in April-August last year. It sold 30,010 units this year as against 40,799 units.



TC Limited enabled installation of 'Community Wet Composting Unit' was inaugurated by Meenakshi Lekhi, member of Parliament in the presence of Rashmi Singh, Secretary New Delhi Municipal Council (NDMC), residents of the society and RWAs of other municipal corporation members on Sunday. ITC's WoW Initiative is aligned with the Government of India's Swachh Bharat mission where the objective is to create end-to-end sustainable and scalable solutions for municipal waste. The initiative also includes public education and awareness for improving hygiene, creating a cleaner and better environment so that there is reduction in landfills.

# SOURABH WINS VIETNAM OPEN

PTI ■ HO CHI MINH CITY

India's Sourabh Verma registered a thrilling three-game win over China's Sun Fei Xiang to claim the men's singles title at the USD 75,000 Vietnam Open BWF Tour Super 100 badminton tournament here on Sunday.

Second seed Sourabh, who has won the Hyderabad Open and Slovenian International earlier this year, recovered from a mid-game slump to beat Sun 21-12 17-21 21-14 in the summit clash which lasted an hour and 12 minutes.

"I am very happy with the way, I played this week. I played three Japanese and these players have similar kind of style. Most like to attack and the little differences in their style is something you have to figure out on the court. So it was nice to beat them," Sourabh told PTI.

He beat three Japanese shuttlers -- Kodai Naraoka, Yu Igarashi and Minoru Koga -- on way to his title win.

"The final was a tough match but I am happy I could play my game and come out victorious. This title will give a boost to my confidence," the Indian said.

It was a third career meeting between Sourabh and Sun. The duo has faced off twice this year at Canada and Hyderabad with the Indian coming up trumps on both the occasions.

Talking about the final



match, the world no 38 Indian said: "In the first game, I waited for his weak returns. I realised his defence was a little weak, so I looked to exploit that. He committed too many unforced errors and it helped me.

"In the second game, I was

troubled by the drift from one side and he jumped into a huge lead. But after the change of side in the decider, I went back to the strategy that worked for me and I am happy I could win," added the National champion.

Asked if he will play the

**The final was a tough match but I am happy I could play my game and come out victorious. This title will give a boost to my confidence**

USD 400,000 Korea Open World Tour Super 500 event to be held from September 24 to 29, Sourabh said: "I will head back home now and depending on the condition of my body and the time required to recover, I will take a call if I want to go to Korea or not."

In the finals, Sourabh dominated the proceedings in the opening game as he jumped to a 4-0 lead early on and kept moving ahead. He enjoyed a 11-4 cushion at the break and surged to a 15-4 advantage after the breather.

Sun tried to recover but the gap was too wide to be bridged as Sourabh pocketed the first game comfortably.

The Chinese came out all guns blazing in the second game, zooming to a 8-0 lead. He led 11-5 at the interval and even though the Indian tried to make a comeback, it proved an uphill task as Sun roared back into the contest.

In the decider, Sun had a slender 4-2 lead initially but Sourabh ensured he enjoyed 11-7 advantage at the breather. The Indian then maintained his lead, despite the Chinese snapping at his heels.

Leading 17-14, Sourabh blasted off the next four points to shut the door on his opponent and win his third title of the year.

The 26-year-old from Madhya Pradesh had won the Dutch Open and Korea Open last year



## Fati lights up Barca

AFP ■ MADRID

composure.

Arsu Fati, the 16-year-old starlet from Guinea Bissau, scored his second goal of the season as Barcelona breezed to a 5-2 win against Valencia on Saturday.

Karim Benzema netted twice for Real Madrid as they fought off a late comeback to beat Levante 3-2 as Eden Hazard made his La Liga debut.

Atletico Madrid retained their place at the top of the table, but only by one point from Real Madrid after their first defeat of the season when they lost 2-0 at Real Sociedad at the Basque club's newly refurbished stadium.

With Lionel Messi still out and watching from the stands at the Camp Nou it was left to Fati take the plaudits.

Fati, who became the third youngest scorer in La Liga history when he came off the bench to net in a 2-2 draw at Osasuna this month, scored in the second minute, before providing the assist for Frenkie de Jong's seventh minute goal.

Barca coach Ernesto Valverde marvelled at Fati's

"It's not usual that on his first touch he scores, and on his second he sets up a goal," he said.

The defeat left Valencia with just four points from four matches, leaving new coach Albert Celades -- a former Real Madrid assistant coach -- with a huge amount of work to do before the club play their first Champions League group game against Chelsea on Tuesday.

Real show frailties -- At a rain-drenched Santiago Bernabeu, Benzema's goals came just six minutes apart in the first half before Casemiro put Real 3-0 up.

However Levante, who had won their previous two outings, made a fight of it in the second half as they pulled goals back through Borja Mayoral and Gonzalo Melero.

Hazard also came off the bench for the final half-hour to make his first La Liga appearance after a thigh injury had interrupted the start of his Real career following his 100 million-euro (\$110 million) move from Chelsea.

## SINGLES

KAUSHAL WINS MYANMAR INT'L SERIES



**YANGON:** Indian shuttler Kaushal Dharmar clinched the Myanmar International Series with a come-from-behind win over Indonesia's Karono in a thrilling men's singles final here on Sunday. The 23-year-old from Mumbai, who had won the Hatzor International in October last year, recovered after dropping the opening game, to outwit Karono 18-21 21-14 21-11 in a match that lasted an hour here. A trainee of Uday Pawar Badminton Academy, Kaushal, who has been troubled by injuries for almost two years, is currently ranked 187th.

### KAVINDER BISHT MOVES AHEAD

**EKATERINBURG (RUSSIA):** Asian silver-medallist Kaver Singh Bisht (57kg) advanced to the pre-quarterfinals with a hard-fought win over China's Chena Zhihao in the World Men's Boxing Championships here on Sunday. The fifth seeded Indian left his rival with a bloodied face before the judges ruled 3-2 in his favour after an exhausting bout during which both the boxers managed to connect very few impactful punches. The 26-year-old Indian Air Force man, who was a quarterfinalist in the 2017 Hamburg edition and is among the strongest contenders for a medal this time around, stood out for his pace and endurance during Sunday's bout.

### GR WRESTLERS CONTINUE STRUGGLE

**NUR-SULTAN (KAZAKHSTAN):** Ravi won India's first bout at the World Championships before suffering a defeat by fall as the country's Greco-Roman wrestlers continued their disappointing show on Sunday here. The Olympic qualification was at stake in three categories but all three Indians cut a sorry figure as Manish (67kg), Sunil Kumar (87kg) and Ravi (97kg) exited without a fight. The four wrestlers in action on the opening day had not won a single bout and three of them did not even score a point but Ravi managed to win a bout against Chinese Taipei's Cheng Hao Chen.

### ANJUM 3RD IN NATIONAL TRIALS

**NEW DELHI:** World championship Silver medalist Anjum Moudgil swept the women's 50m Rifle 3 Positions (3P) national trials, winning the T7 trial at the Dr Karni Singh Shooting Range here on Sunday. Anjum, thus, added to the T6 title she won in the same event on Saturday. With this, the Punjab girl has won four trials in all in this outing, claiming both the T6 and T7 Rifle Prone events before landing both the women's 3P titles. Anjum shot 460.2 in the T7 final to improve upon her 456, which she shot to win the T6 on Saturday.

### GILL MAKES MARK IN TURKEY

**NEW DELHI:** India's top rally driver Gaurav Gill won praise of his co-competitors by overcoming mechanical failures and a series of punctures before it ended in a heartbreak for him in the gruelling Rally of Turkey, the first event of the FIA World Rally Championship 2 on Sunday. Going into the final day with a top-five finish firmly in sight, the JK Racing ace underlined his mettle by finishing second in the first stage of the day. He continued in the same vein, taking the third place in the next stage too, demonstrating phenomenal speed and control to post spectacular timings to inch up the leader-board.

AGENCIES

## Inter Milan top Serie A as Juventus held in Fiorentina

AFP ■ MILAN,

Inter Milan reclaimed top spot in Serie A after a 1-0 win over 10-man Udinese on Saturday as Juventus lost three players to injury in a painful goalless draw at Fiorentina to complicate preparations for next week's Champions League opener.

Stefano Sensi's diving header was enough to seal a maximum nine points for Antonio Conte's Inter ahead of their European opener against Slavia Prague in the San Siro next Tuesday.

But as Maurizio Sarri made his debut on the Juventus bench after recovering from pneumonia, the Italian champions showed signs of weakness four days before their trip to Atletico Madrid.

Juventus are trailing two points behind Inter Milan after three games and could be overtaken by city rivals Torino who host promoted Lecce on Monday.

Napoli meanwhile warmed up for European holders Liverpool on Tuesday with a Dries Mertens double sealing a 2-0 win over crisis club Sampdoria, to move up to fourth in the table.

The reigning eight-time Serie A champions are already missing injured captain Giorgio Chiellini, Mattia De Sciglio and Marko Pjaca.

And Brazilian Douglas Costa pulled up with a hamstring problem minutes into



the game in Florence, followed by Miralem Pjanic with a muscular issue with Danilo later suffering cramps in the heat.

- 'Better than Ronaldo' - Ribery, 36, went off to a standing ovation from the crowd at the Artemio Franchi Stadium after an hour as his team earned their first point this season.

Ribery "played better than Ronaldo," insisted Fiorentina's new owner Rocco Commisso, as the former Bayern Munich midfielder did well to neutralise Ronaldo, who had scored four goals for Portugal in European qualifiers this week.

Ronaldo failed to add to his tally with an acrobatic bicycle kick in the 85th minute flying over the bar.

## TIME TO TURN THE PAGE: NEYMAR

AFP ■ PARIS

Neymar shrugged off a hostile reception as he marked his return to action for Paris Saint-Germain with a stunning injury-time winner, and then insisted it was time to move on from the saga of his aborted return to Barcelona.

The world's most expensive player was booed and insulted by sections of the PSG support in the Ligue 1 match against Strasbourg at the Parc des Princes.

That seemed set to be the only story of the afternoon until the second minute of added time when, with the game still goalless, the Brazilian met Abdou Diallo's cross with an acrobatic effort that sent the ball arcing back over his own head and in off the post, sealing a 1-0 win.

It was a remarkable goal and a reminder of why PSG paid a world record 222 million euros (\$264 million at the time) to sign Neymar in 2017. It also leaves them two points clear of Rennes at the



top of Ligue 1.

"I made it clear that I have nothing against the fans, nothing against Paris Saint-Germain as a club. Everyone knows I wanted to leave. I am not going to get into the details of what happened," he said after the game.

"It is time to turn the page. Today I am a Paris Saint-Germain player and I am going to give everything on the field."

He had not played for his club since May and had been left on the sidelines in their first four league games of the campaign because of the uncertainty surrounding his future.

However, having been resigned to a third season in France, he was handed a start by coach Thomas Tuchel here, and loud jeers greeted his name as the teams were read out. He was also regularly whistled by

fans when he touched the ball. "It is not the first time I have been booed by everyone," Neymar admitted.

"I played in Brazil away from home, I was widely booed. I have played in finals and been booed, I have played here in France, away from home, and also been booed."

"It is sad but I know that, from now on, every game I play will be an away game." One banner unfurled in Portuguese, aimed at Neymar's father who is also his agent, read: "Neymar Senior, sell your son in the Vila Mimosa".

Vila Mimosa is a district of Rio de Janeiro notorious for prostitution. Another banner mockingly called Neymar "Calimero", a reference to the always unlucky Italian cartoon character.

Certainly not much was going right on the field for the 27-year-old or for his team, who had been held by Strasbourg twice in the league last season.

## Barua's sensational charges divide Indian chess

NAVIN UPADHYAY ■ NEW DELHI

Indian chess bosses have swung into action to contain the damaging fallout of the sensational corruption charges leveled by Grandmaster Dibyendu Barua, a chess legend in his own right, against the Bengal Chess Association (BCA) secretary, Atanau Lahiri.

The latest reaction of the All India Chess Federation (AICF) in dealing with Lahiri, who has been caught with his hands literally in the till, shows the Federation has done a rethink on tacking an alleged offender, who is also one of their own officials. Lahiri is a member of the AICF trainer's committee and perceived to be close to the Federation bosses.

Barua had accused Lahiri of routing huge amount of fund received from the state government to his own chess promotion company in a clear case of conflict of interest. Barua produced documents to show that Rs 23 lakh in cash was withdrawn from Lahiri's comp[nay]-Global Chess- in around 53 weeks.

Barua also accused Lahiri of not allowing him to hold a youth tournament and banning two of India top players, Grandmaster Surya Sekhar Ganguly and Deep Sen Gupta, from taking part in Bengal Chess events. Lahiri also barred under-9 national girls' champion Sneha Halder from playing in a tournament on disciplinary grounds.

Barua has reportedly also

met with State Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee and brought to her notice serious financial irregularities in conduct of state chess association.

Barua's charges of corruption are in sync with an allegation leveled by an office bearer of the BCA that signature of a chartered account was forged to manipulate the accounts.

There are also serious allegation that Lahiri conducts all profitable tournaments under Global Chess and all non-profitable ones under BCA. Lahiri is a partner and main signatory in Global Chess.

In its first reaction AICF secretary Bharat Singh Chauhan on August 30 issued a statement taking cognizance of Barua's complaint and promised to set up a three-member committee to probe the charges.

"The AICF will initiate a thorough enquiry into the affairs of Bengal Chess Association and its secretary Atanau Lahiri on the charges leveled by Dibyendu Barua. We will set up a committee soon to look into the matter."

Stopping chess activity is perceived as a serious offence by us in AICF," the statement added. Chauhan's letter also slammed BCA's decision to stop nine-year-old Sneha Halder - the state and national U-9 champion - from taking part in state-level tournaments.

The tone of Chauhan's statement was highly critical of Lahiri's conduct and gave the impression that the AICF was determined to do justice in this



case. Chauhan statement created a flutter in the chess circle, because Lahiri is seen as a blue-eyed boy of the AICF bosses, who allowed him to control the destiny of Bengal chess despite presiding over an association which didn't even have a fulltime president in the last three years.

It didn't take long before differences cropped up in the AICF over this issue. On September 6, AICF president P.R. Venkatarama Raja issued a state-

ment in which he virtually criticized Bharat Singh Chauhan accusing him for taking side in the matter and arguing for impartial probe.

Rebuffing Chauhan for backing a serious issue tossed by India's foremost chess player, the AICF president Venkatarama Raja said, the Federation should act impartially in this matter and Chauhan "went beyond the brief" while issuing the press statement regarding the allegations leveled by Barua.

Raja said he had agreed that a press release be issued, saying players' interest would be protected and the matter would be investigated.

Stating that Chauhan created unnecessary emotions, Raja said, "It is important that we in the AICF be seen as impartial till all allegations are verified and a chance is given to all parties. I see some members of the BCA have already called a meeting to initiate action against Lahiri even before the AICF has done the investigation."

When Barua first held the Press conference on August 26, the AICF president phoned him up and expressed regret over what had transpired in West Bengal. Sources said in his talk with Barua the AICF boss also disapproved of Lahiri's conduct. The tone of the AICF president's statement clearly shows that the chess bosses are not with the Federation's secretary on this matter.

Has Raja changed his mind? Was there a lobby which was trying to prevent the wheels of justice from moving in the right direction?

Raja directed the BCA to hold its annual general meeting and conduct its elections under the supervision of an AICF-appointed committee in early October. The million dollar question is: How can state association's election be held under Lahiri when he is facing such grave charges? The AICF has given no indication that the probe will be completed before

the state elations. Raja nominated a three-member committee, comprising senior AICF office-bearers A. Narasimha Reddy (chairman), D.V. Sundar and Kishor Bhandekar, to oversee the election process, probe the complaints made by Barua against Lahiri and submit a report within three months.

Senior chess players and organizers are already wondering how such grave charges could be probed by an in-house committee. Will inter-personal relation not influence decision making, especially in a case where the man being probed in also a member of the AICF. Was not an expert from outside the cricket entrusted with the task of probing cases of corruption and conflict of interest in cricket?

"This is eyewash. Why should they take three months to probe such simple case which can be concluded in a few days. The charges are based on documents. If AICF was serious, it could have appointed a committee of experts from outside and decided the matter in one week," said a Grandmaster.

Incidentally, soon after Barua raised red flag against Lahiri conduct, the BCA meeting decided to serve show cause notice to Lahiri and hold election in three months.

"The letter of the AICF president has clearly come as damper to the chess lover who wanted stern action against Lahiri and the likes of him," said a senior chess player.

# Dream didn't come true for Aussies

Broad and Leach pick four a piece as England win fifth Test to square Ashes series

AFP ■ LONDON

England crushed Australia by 135 runs in the fifth and final Ashes Test on Sunday to level the series at 2-2, ending their historic World Cup-winning season on a high.

Victory for the home side means the Ashes ends in a draw for the first time since 1972, although holders Australia retain the urn.

The tourists, chasing an unlikely 399 to win in a shade under two days, were in trouble early in their second innings when England paceman Stuart Broad removed openers Marcus Harris and David Warner cheaply.

While former captain Steve Smith was at the crease, Australia retained a faint hope sealing their first Ashes series win in England since 2001.

But when Ben Stokes dived to his left to catch Smith for 23, giving Broad his third wicket of the innings, England knew they had removed the biggest obstacle in their victory charge.

Smith, who scored an astonishing 774 runs in just seven innings, was out for a score of less than fifty for the first time in the series.

The Oval crowd gave him a standing ovation as he walked back to the dressing room in the September sunshine, with Australia in deep trouble at 85-4 in the post-lunch session.

Matthew Wade offered brave resistance, scoring 117 as man-of-the-match Jofra Archer cranked his speed up to 95 miles-per-hour in the evening sunlight, eye-balling the Australian batsman in an attempt to intimidate him.

England captain Joe Root finally got his man, luring him forward as Jonny Bairstow whipped off the bails.

Nathan Lyon and Josh Hazlewood went in successive balls, meaning England finished their season on a high two months after winning the one-day World Cup for the first time.

Broad and left-arm spinner



England's Stuart Broad, second left, celebrates taking the wicket of Australia's David Warner during the fourth day of the fifth Ashes test

Jack Leach both finished with four wickets.

"A very good performance," said Root. "I thought we were brilliant. To bounce back from a very difficult emotional week, to come and play in the manner we have, the team has character in abundance.

"This was more of a template of how to play moving forward. It is a step in the right direction. I am very proud of everyone's effort throughout the summer."

- Broad strikes - Earlier, England added 16 runs to their overnight tally, with Archer and Leach the last men out. Broad then pounded in,

roared on by a packed crowd, who raised the roof when he demolished Harris's off-stump in the fifth over of the Australian innings.

In his following over, Broad ended Warner's miserable series, with the opener edging to Rory Burns in the slips and departing for 11.

Warner, who returned to international

cricket in June after a 12-month ban for ball-tampering, had a good World Cup but has endured a torrid time in the Ashes.

The attacking batsman, who was booed after his dismissal for his part in the cheating scandal, scored just 95 runs in 10 innings and was dismissed by Broad seven times.

Warner's dismissal brought Smith to the crease and he opened his account with a sweet drive through the covers for four off Archer but this time he could not find the magic.

The exit of Smith, also banned over the ball-tampering scandal, led to one or two isolated boos but they were drowned out by applause from the crowd in appreciation of his

run-scoring feats.

His run haul put him fifth on the list of highest tallies in an Ashes series behind Don Bradman's two entries, England's Wally Hammond and former Australia skipper Mark Taylor.

Australia were seeking their first Test series win in England for 18 years but only once before had they scored 399-plus runs in the fourth innings to win a Test match, against England at Headingley in 1948.

The tourists won the first Test at Edgbaston and the fourth at Old Trafford while Ben Stokes inspired England to victory in the third Test at Headingley.

The second match, at Lord's, was drawn.

## Australia having a 'mare' with Ashes DRS calls

AFP ■ LONDON

Australia captain Tim Paine admitted he was having "a mare" after twice failing to review umpiring decisions in the fifth Ashes Test even though the challenges would have brought wickets.

England, seeking to level the series at 2-2, are firmly in control of the final Test with two days to go, 382 runs ahead with two second-innings wickets left.

Australia toiled in the field at the Oval on the third day of the match on Saturday and were not helped by Paine's misjudgements.

Joe Denly, who went on to score 94, should have been out lbw to Mitchell Marsh when he was on 54 but Australia opted not to review the not-out decision.

Later on the skipper, who is the team's wicketkeeper, failed to review a not-out decision against Jos Buttler after an appeal for lbw, with replays showing Nathan Lyon's delivery would have hit the stumps. Buttler, then on 19, went on to score 47.

"I'm getting it wrong," said a tetchy Paine.

"I don't know what else to say. We're having a mare (nightmare). We've got it wrong."

"It's fast," he added. "It's a tough job as I've said throughout the whole Test series. I've got a new respect for umpiring, particularly in Test cricket because it's a hard job."

When asked what he could do about it, he said sarcastically that he would enrol in "umpiring school" when he returned home to Australia.

Paine said after his side's defeat in the third Test at Headingley that he would be putting someone else in charge of the team's reviews.

During the closing stages of that match, Lyon had a huge appeal for lbw against Ben Stokes but the England vice-captain was given not out and Australia could not challenge that verdict as they had used up all their reviews.

Their misery was compounded when replays revealed that Stokes would have been given out.

Paine said it was sometimes difficult to judge from behind the stumps, saying he was not sure where the ball



hit Denly, for example.

The skipper said his team, guaranteed to retain the Ashes urn, still had a chance to win the series outright.

"The only thing that's been a bit upsetting this Test match is our catching and our referrals but that's not anything new," he added.

He described his top-scorer Steve Smith as a "freak" after he took a stunning diving slip catch late on to see the back of Chris Woakes.

"Cricketers like him, I think Stokes is the same, they're just in the contest and in the game all the time," he said.

"That's what makes great cricketers great because they're always in the contest, they're always aware of what's happening. It was a pretty special catch."

## 'Youngsters need to prove themselves'

PTI ■ DHARAMSALA

India captain Virat Kohli has made it amply clear that the youngsters drafted into the squad ahead of the T20 World Cup next year will have to prove themselves in the "four or five" opportunities they get.

Giving his own example, Kohli, who made his India debut in 2008, said he never expected to get a bagful of opportunities in his early days as an international cricketer.

"We have 30 odd games (before T20 World Cup). From team's point of view, it is very clear. Even when I got into the team it is not like I was expecting 15 opportunities. You get four to five opportunities and you have to make the most of it. That is the level we are playing at," Kohli told Star Sports.

"I think individuals coming in need to have the mindset (of limited opportunities) because team definitely has that mindset.



The first T20 International match between India and South Africa at Himachal Pradesh Cricket Association (HPCA) stadium on Sunday was called off without being a ball bowled due to rain. The consistent showers throughout the day didn't even allowed the toss to take place and both the team had to walk away without any action on the field

## Pant has unquestionable talent: Shastri

PTI ■ DHARAMSALA

India head coach Ravi Shastri has made it clear that Rishabh Pant will be "rapped on the knuckles" if he keeps on playing rash shots like the one he did against the West Indies recently.

Shastri did not mince words as he pointed out that the young wicketkeeper-batsman has let the team down during India's recent tour of the West Indies where he was dismissed first ball in an ODI game.

"We'll let him be but at times when you see a shot, like the first ball dismissal in Trinidad, if he repeats that, then he will be told. There will be a rap on the knuckles, talent or no talent," the head coach said.

"As simple as that. Because you are letting the team down, forget letting yourselves down. In a situation where you have the captain at the other end, a target to chase, the need of the hour is sensible cricket," Shastri was quoted as saying in an interview with Star Sports.

Shastri said Pant has unquestionable talent but if he



can sort out his shot-selection and decision-making, he will be unstoppable.

"No one will even think of changing his style. Like Virat said, reading the situation, match-awareness and shot-selection becomes crucial. If he can fathom that, he could be unstoppable.

"It could take one game, it could take four games. He has played so much IPL cricket, he will learn. It's time now for him

to step up and show how devastating he can be," Shastri said with captain Virat Kohli by his side. Kohli, on his part, said he wants Pant to play according to situations.

"The only expectation from Rishabh is that he read situations well," Kohli said.

"We don't expect him to play the way you might be thinking. It is about analysing a situation and dealing with it in your own way."

# Dabang Delhi beat Gujarat Fortune Giants

PTI ■ PUNE

Naveen Kumar was once again the hero for Dabang Delhi KC as they beat Gujarat FortuneGiants 34-30 in a Pro Kabaddi League match here on Sunday.

Naveen Kumar picked up another Super 10 (13th consecutive) as Delhi produced a composed performance, despite being closely challenged in the second half by FortuneGiants, to pick up five points and consolidate their stay at the top of the points table.

The initial minutes of the match suggested it would be a closely-fought encounter with both defences looking sharp.

Ravinder Pahal pulled off two successful tackles for the Delhi side while, at the other end, Rituraj Koravi was looking in form.

But Naveen had other plans, as

**The initial minutes of the match suggested it would be a closely-fought encounter with both defences looking sharp**

he unlocked the Gujarat defence with a five-point raid in the ninth minute to clinch an All-Out for Delhi.

The restart didn't bring good fortunes for FortuneGiants, with their raiders looking rather one-dimensional against a Delhi defence that was slowly growing in stature.

The first half ended with Naveen claiming another two-point raid that reduced Gujarat to



a single player and gave Delhi an 11-point lead (20-9).

Sadly for Delhi, both Meraj Sheykh and Anil Kumar had to be substituted due to injuries.

Delhi secured their second All-Out in the first move of the second half but the restart marked the revival for last season's runners-up FortuneGiants.

Pankaj, playing in the left corner for Gujarat, ensured Naveen Kumar had no influence in the game, while Rohit Gulia produced a quick-fire Super 10 to inflict an All-Out on Delhi (sixth minute of the second half) and reduced the margin.

Sachin also got into the act for Gujarat as the team kept pace with the Delhi side.

But Naveen's clinical Super 10 and a dash by Vishal Mane on Gujarat's Sachin was enough for Delhi to pick up a victory