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USUALSUSPECTS SWAPAN DASGUPTA

Disorientation of anti-CAA lobby is understandable

There is little doubt that in her zeal to be wilfully outrageous, the 19-year-old Amulya Leona Noronha seriously embarrassed most of the anti-Citizenship (Amendment) Act fraternity when she chanted 'Pakistan zindabad' from podium at a protest rally in Bengaluru. Certainly, the alacrity with which the stalwarts of the protest, including AIMIM leader Asaduddin Owaisi, snatched the mike from her indicated the panic.

The disorientation of the anti-CAA lobby is understandable. Since December 13 last year when the protests began, the Muslim community - which has been in the forefront of the anti-Narendra Modi stir - has been at pains to demonstrate that their opposition to the changes in the Citizenship Act is grounded in their status as patriotic Indians. The national flag, the Constitution and photographs of both Mahatma Gandhi and Babasaheb Ambedkar have been generously used in the rallies and extended dharnas. The national anthem too has been lustily sung on innumerable occasions. Under the circumstances, the teenager's invocation of Pakistan - whatever may have been its convoluted underlying logic - was clearly outside a set narrative.

Amulya's zindabad to Pakistan also came within a day of AIMIM national spokesperson Waris Pathan's boast that 15 crore of Muslims have the ability to make 100 crore others tremble - a threat that most people will undeniably view as both menacing and sinister. Add to this earlier utterances by different protesters espousing either a form of sectarian separatism or praising Mohammed Ali Jinnah and it is possible to understand why many people detect a hidden agenda behind the anti-CAA protests.

Arguably, such a conclusion may be unfair. The stalwarts of the anti-CAA have been at pains to link their protests to an exalted 'idea of India'. Someone like Owaisi has sought to reinvent himself and detach his organisation from the inheritance of the Razakars who fought against Hyderabad's integration into India in 1947-48.

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Kejriwal not 'Happiness' tour guide for Melania

AAP blames Centre as US Embassy says CM, Sisodia not in invitee list

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI



Kejriwal and Sisodia from the list. The comments actually indicated that there is something fishy, Bhargava said.

Names of Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal and his deputy Manish Sisodia are missing from the guest list for the February 25 event when US First Lady Melania Trump is scheduled to visit a Delhi Government school in the national Capital to watch "happiness classes" and interact with the students, sources said.

The Delhi Government sources said the US Embassy communicated to the city administration on Saturday morning that the names of Kejriwal and Sisodia do not figure in the list of invitees for the school event. When contacted, a US Embassy spokesperson referred the query to the Delhi Government on the matter.

AAP spokesperson Saurabh Bhargava alleged that the names of Kejriwal and Sisodia have been dropped from the list at the behest of the BJP-led Central Government. "The BJP is claiming that it (Centre) did not ask the US Embassy to drop the names of

we to welcome Melania at the school and brief her about rationale behind introduction of "happiness classes" as well as the Delhi Government's overall reform initiatives in the education sector, officials said.

"Names of Kejriwal and Sisodia have been dropped from the list of invitees. We do not know who will receive and brief the First Lady about happiness classes when she visits our school," said a Delhi Government official.

Uncertainty about Modi joining Trump's Taj trip

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Just a couple of days before US President Donald Trump's visit to India, confusion prevails over whether Prime Minister Narendra Modi will accompany the Trumps during their visit to the Taj Mahal in Agra on Monday.

Contrary versions emerged from the Indian and American sides on Saturday with sources in New Delhi saying Modi accompanying the Trump family to Agra is unlikely and reports attributing US officials



Security personnel patrol at Mehtab Bagh in Agra on Saturday PTI

stating otherwise. The Government sources said Modi will not accompany the US President and First Lady Melania Trump to see the Taj Mahal in Agra.

More liquor shops to be set up to boost revenue

STAFF REPORTER ■ BHOPAL

To increase revenue in the proposed excise system for the year 2020-21, total 2,544 country liquor shops and 1,061 foreign liquor shops will be executed with 25 per cent increase in the annual value of the previous year. The execution of shops will be done through the e-tender cum auction process.

Two groups of shops will be set up in the four major districts of the state, Indore, Bhopal, Gwalior and Jabalpur. These groups will include

liquor shops of domestic and foreign in urban and rural areas. In the remaining 12 municipal corporation districts, a group of shops will be formed and execution will be done through e-tender cum auction process.

In the remaining 36 districts, in the year 2019-20, the reserve price will be determined by increasing the annual price of single groups of prevailing liquor shops by 25 per cent. These shops will be executed according to the system prevailing in the year 2019-20 i.e. through renewal / lottery / e-tender (Close bid and Auction).

Sub-shops of domestic and foreign liquor sub shops will

not be opened in the state in the year 2020-21. With a view to increase the income of the grape production farmers of the state and to promote the cultivation of grapes, 15 new outlets will be opened at the tourist places to promote the wine being made from grapes. The annual fees of these outlets will be only Rs 10,000.

The supply of foreign liquor will be done online. In order to keep effective control over the liquor business, an effort will be made to monitor the bottle in addition to the bar code installed in each bottle. The excise policy for the year 2020-21 also includes procedural simplifications.

Modi is versatile genius: Justice Arun Mishra

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Supreme Court judge Justice Arun Mishra on Saturday was all praise for Prime Minister Narendra Modi and termed him as an "internationally acclaimed visionary" and a "versatile genius, who thinks globally and acts locally".

Complimenting the PM and Union Law Minister Kavi Shankar Prasad for doing away with 1,500 obsolete laws, Justice Mishra said India is a responsible and most friendly member of the international community under the "stewardship" of Modi.

Delivering the vote of thanks at the inaugural function of the International Judicial Conference 2020 - "Judiciary and the Changing World" at the SC, he said "We thank the versatile genius, who thinks globally and acts locally, Shri Narendra

Modi, for his inspiring speech which would act as a catalyst in initiating the deliberations and setting the agenda for the conference".

Justice Mishra, who is third in seniority in the apex court, expressed gratitude to the PM for inaugurating the conference.

He said India is the biggest democracy in the world and "people wonder how this democracy is functioning so successfully".

"India is a responsible and most friendly member of the international community under the stewardship of internationally acclaimed visionary Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi", he said.

"India is committed to constitutional obligations and dedicated to a peaceful and secure world, free from terrorism. In the process of development, preservation of environment is considered supreme", he said.

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SHOW TIME

Delightfully cute love story



SHUBH MANGAL ZYADA SAAVDHAN
 *Ing: Ayushmann Khurrana, Jitendra Kumar, Gajraj Rao, Neena Gupta
 Rated: 7.5/10

A movie on gay relationships? Most people would balk at even thinking about going to a film that talks about LGBTIQ community let alone watch two men kiss each other not once but twice. Even though the Government has decriminalised homosexuality by declaring Section 377 IPC as unconstitutional, the society has yet to come to terms with the love same sex. In their mind, it is not normal love. But like Ayushmann Khurrana, who plays Kartik, in the movie rightly said: 'What is normal? We have grown up on a diet to love stories that talk about love between a man and a woman. We have grown up rote learning Jack and Jill poem. Why did the poem not talk about Jack and Johnny? This is the question that we should all be asking ourselves. Fifty years back, nobody would have thought that there would be a device

that allowed wireless communication. But here we are, totally dependent on our smartphones. This is our normal today. People love their cat/dog. They leave properties to them. We call them crazy but do we shun them? Why can't love between same sex people be normal and why can't families accept it? Like Khurrana's character rightly says: *Rec hume ladayi ladni padti hai sindagi mein par jo ladayi parivar ke saath hoti hai woh saari ladayi sabse badi aur khatarnaak hoti hai.* *Shubh Mangal...* touches a cord that plus a cord like no other because it is one of the best love stories that Bollywood has made in the recent past, the last being *Yeh Jawaani Hai Deewani* back in 2013. If only the director, Hitesh Kewalya, had released this film on Valentine's Day because the movie is less about homosexuality and homophobia and more about how two people who are in love should stay together rather be caught in a loveless marriage. The banter and funny dialogues between Gajraj Rao (Shankar Tripathi) and

Neena Gupta, his onscreen wife - Sunaina, among the family members, between Rao and Kartik is what makes *Shubh Mangal...* such a delight. What is even cuter and sweeter are the detailing that has gone into Khurrana's character. It is absolutely impossible to miss the nose ring, the pink dupatta and the cape he wears while proclaiming from the roof top that Shankar Tripathi is a homophobic. Then there are the brilliant performances by the actors. Khurrana has once again proved that is a great actor. His demeanor and expressions are bang on and such a delight to watch. He is the life and soul of this movie. Then there is Jitendra Kumar who plays Aman Tripathi, Kartik's partner who compliments Khurrana. A special mention here for Rao, Gupta, Manurishi Chaddha and even Maanvi Gargoo. While Khurrana helms the movie, the rest of the starcast do their best and make this such a delightfully cute love story. However, if you are a homophobic, stay away! — Shalini Saksena

This is a sinking ship

BHOOT PART ONE: THE HAUNTED SHIP
 *Ing: Vicky Kaushal, Bhumi Pednekar, Ashutosh Rana
 Rated: 3/10

There are a few genres on which Bollywood could should never attempt to make movies. First, of course is comedy. Vir Das has rightly said: Indians have not learnt the art of laughing at themselves. Second, and *Bhoot: The Haunted Ship*, falls under this category is horror. There was a time when Bollywood had some incredible horror movies to its name like *Mahal* and *Bees Saal Baad*. Then came the era of Ramsay Brothers. While these movies had the bhoot, it lacked the scare factor. Not the spine-chilling expression of teenage Damien in *Omen*. One has to understand that everything that goes bump at night and strange clanking noise doesn't constitute horror. That is what ails this latest ghost movie. Bhanu Pratap Singh

may have used a ghost ship to tell his story that haunting has a history of history and the entire crew mysteriously committing suicide, the creepy looking ghost or the victim it has possessed and kept with it for more than 10 years is more on the lines that the bhoot needs psychiatric treatment rather than be exorcised. While Vicky Kaushal may be the only saving grace of this sinking ship, the fact remains why he chose to do this film in the first place given that the storyline and the script of this film is not a patch on the kind of movies Kaushal has picked up in the recent past like *Uri* and *Mannmarziyan*. Sad that Ashutosh Rana who has been in the industry for more than two decades would say yes to this project. There are several loose ends at the climax. If the director had ended with *Bahubali: The Beginning* kind of end, he failed miserably. Only see this one if you are a horror film fan. — Shalini Saksena



Plan Your Sunday

Colour Me Colour You
 Venue: India Habitat Centre, New Delhi
 When: February 23, 2020
 Time: 10 am to 8 pm

What do we all look for meaning, we all search for our goals. Is there really a purpose? Are we all one and together or just wandering soul. In this journey of life, I found a little of myself, in water, in brushes, in paints, and in color, I see, a little of you and a little of me. Expression of feelings and deep emotions through art is a medium for me to find balance in life. Life, which is uncertain and prone to change leaving us to struggle and process complex human behavior and circumstances. Through a string of emotions that tie us together, I truly see a part of me in you and a part of you in me. In this exhibit, the artist have used acrylic colors to evoke the innumerable and uncountable emotions, soulful expressions and the beauty, divinity, and rawness of a woman. Hope that you see in her a little bit of you and a little bit of me.



Around the world in 80 days
 Venue: PVR outlets in Delhi-NCR, Mumbai, Bengaluru and Chennai
 When: February 23, 2020

Take a weekend trip down memory lane with special screenings of the Hollywood Classic, "Around the world in 80 Days (1956)" under PVR's property "The Nostalgic Show". The iconic adventure-comedy drama will be screened at eight locations in four cities today. The Nostalgic Show offers movie buffs an opportunity to enjoy their favourite, handpicked iconic classics on the big-screen. There is an exciting line up of films for this curated show including *Gone with the Wind*, *Bicycle Thieves* and *Stage Coach*. Enjoy handpicked Hollywood classics in your nearest PVR cinema! You can book your seats via PVR mobile app & website.



'Need to have more real stories'

From playing Vishnu to Krishna to Akbar and now a chef, SOURABH RAJ JAIN has donned several hats. He speaks with MUSBA HASHMI about what made him take up the latest role and his favourite pastime, among other things

◆ **What made you say yes to the role?**
 The character, the storyline of course, the concept of the show, and the backstory that my character had intrigued me the most. It was also after my meeting with the producers of the show Kajita Sharma and Vivek Budakoti who are also writers of the show, that I was thoroughly convinced to take it up.
 ◆ **Any similarities that you share with your character?**
 The one similarity that I share with Neil Oberoi is being passionate about whatever I take up in my field. While Neil is a very passionate cook, I am in real life passionate about my acting and whatever I showcase on screen. So that way, my character and I are very similar when it comes to our careers.
 ◆ **What should the audience look forward to in the show?**
 I am showcasing myself in a different genre after very long, so that is something the audiences should definitely look forward to. Other than that the backstory that my character has been unveiling through the course of the show has been very interesting, and something that the audiences too would like to know more about.
 ◆ **From Remix to Patala Babes, how has your journey been?**
 The journey has been overwhelming, amazing and one that I am extremely proud about. Through the years I have got to experiment with so many different genres, roles and concepts, and as an actor there is nothing better that I could have asked for!
 ◆ **You have explored different genres and have done variety of roles. How did the transition happen?**
 Experimentation of course! Because as an actor if you don't experiment with and try out new genres and mediums, you are never going to grow or learn. And for me being diverse with my skills in such a field is extremely important.



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◆ **What was the most challenging role?**
 I have done so many roles in the years gone by and to be honest all of them have been challenging. Every role demands a different side of me, so each of them has actually had me experience a different challenge altogether.
 ◆ **A change that you would like to see in the industry for actors or other working professionals?**
 I feel that our industry needs to open doors to more real concepts and storylines, specially with the youth of today who are always looking out for new things to watch. There has to be a certain section content which caters to them, as they are our biggest critics and the bright future of tomorrow.
 ◆ **Apart from acting what else keeps you busy?**
 Spending quality time at home with my family is something I always look forward to post shoot.
 ◆ **Upcoming projects?**
 As of now I am very caught up with *Patala Babes*, so that's the only thing I am working on at the moment.

TELLYTALE

HIMESH'S PREDICTION COMES TRUE



The finale of India's biggest singing reality show had to be grand and to make this celebration double the cast of the much-awaited movie *Shubh Mangal Zyada Saavdhan* graced the stage of *Indian Idol* to boost the morale of our top 5 contestants and promote their movie. Ayushmann, Jitendra Kumar, Neena Gupta and Gajraj Rao was welcomed by the Indian idol team. Himesh Reshammiya praised Ayushmann for his amazing acting and singing skills. He also remembered that when Ayushmann was hosting a show in 2009 he has predicted something about him. Himesh met him at that time when he came to promote a movie, he foreseen that at that time Ayushmann will become a superstar and this prediction of his came true. Himesh was over overwhelmed to meet Ayushmann and wished him all the luck for his movie.

PUJA TO PLAY VAISHNO DEVI

Star Bharat's mythological show *Jag Jaanani Maa Vaishno Devi* — *Kahani Mata Rani Ki* has mesmerised audiences with its amazing story and star cast. Recently, the show has completed 100 episodes. But a big twist is coming in the story of this show. Maisha Dixit, who played the younger Vaishno Devi in the show, left no stone unturned to win the audience with her spectacular performance. The show is set to take a leap and it is going to excite the audience with it more twist and turns. Puja Banerjee will enter the show after the leap where she will be playing the role of elder Vaishno Devi in the show. We will get to see elder Vaishno Devi who will be more powerful and beautiful. Let me tell you that many popular actresses were being considered for the role of elder Vaishno Devi, for which talented and famous actresses like Diana Khan, Niyati



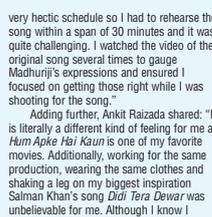
Fatani, Samiksha Jaiswal and Anushka Sen were approached. Finally, actress Puja Banerjee was finalised for the role. Its shooting will also start from next week. The leap will be aired on the Star Bharat channel from the first week of March.

When spoken to the actor Puja Banerjee said that: "It is a great pleasure for me to be selected for this role. Along with this, many of my old memories have also been refreshed as I had done a mytho show with this channel earlier. The previous role in mytho got me a lot of appreciation from the audience. I wish that history would be repeated again through this show. I hope the audience shower the same love."

RECREATING 8-TOWN'S ICONIC JODI

Commitment and dedication are the keys to success & nobody knows it better than the budding talents of Rajshri Productions, Anagha Bhosale, and Ankit Raizada. The actors have been winning the hearts of the viewers with their performance as Shradha and Shik in *Star Plus' Dadi Anna... Dadi Anna Maan Jaan* & are pulling out all stops to get their on-screen avatars right. Recently, the actors had to re-create the iconic and blockbuster *Jodi* — Salman Khan and Madhuri Dixit's chartbuster song on the show and we couldn't take our eyes off them from the few glimpses that we had a chance to see. Taking inspiration from Salman Khan and Madhuri Dixit's styling to shaking their legs and imitating the signature steps, the actors did it all! Commenting on recreating the song, Anagha shares: "It is a dream come true feeling for me. Madhuri Dixit has been my biggest inspiration. Getting to perform on her song and wearing the exact clothes had taken me to cloud nine! Moreover, we had a very hectic schedule so I had to rehearse the song within a span of 30 minutes and it was quite challenging. I watched the video of the original song several times to gauge Madhuri's expression. I can have a balanced meal and focused on getting those right while I was shooting for the song."

Adding further, Ankit Raizada shared: "It is literally a different kind of feeling for me as *Hum Apke Hai Kaun* is one of my favorite movies. Additionally, working for the same production, wearing the same clothes and shaking a leg on my biggest inspiration, Salman Khan's song *Didi Teru Devar* was unbelievable for me. Although I know I



cannot match up to his persona and talent, from my side it's a small tribute to my style icon."

Well, we can't wait to watch the duo's performance on-screen!

AN UNMISSABLE NIGHT WITH VH1

VH1 celebrates 40 years of British brilliance at the BRIT Awards 2020, airing on February 24, 2020 exclusively on the channel. Don't miss out on the best moments from the glitzy awards night. Billie Eilish will be performing at the GRAMMYS, Billie Eilish's performance was the most awaited from a stellar line-up. The starlet from Los Angeles teased audience with a live debut of the new theme song from the upcoming James Bond movie *No Time to Die* creating a frenzy at the O2. Billie signed off the night by taking home the International Female Solo Artist award.

Lewis Capaldi's tribute to his grandmother, Lewis Capaldi's second outing at the BRIT Awards turned out to be historic for him as he swept top awards at the night, winning Best New Artist and Best New Song for his single *Someone You Loved*. He credited his late grandmother for being the inspiration behind the hit single. Dave's larger than life performance: London-based rapper Dave delivered a rare hip-hop performance as he played the piano while performing to his single *Black*. His versatility left fans speechless. Having led the nomination race, Lewis Capaldi, Dave had much to cheer on the night as his album *Psychodrama* was awarded British Album of the Year.

VARUN SHARES WEIGHT LOSS MANTRA

It's true when they say size does not matter, but fitness does! This has been proved by none other than Television's senior actor, Varun Badola, who has been adored by the audiences for his depiction of Amber Sharma in *Sona Entertainment Television's show, Mere Dad Ki Dulhain*. As we all know that Varun was asked to gain 12 kgs for his character, he is also singing down as his character shifts from a grumpy dad to an ideal partner. As he works towards his goal of a fit middle-aged man, Varun shares his weight loss and fitness secrets! Following the path of intermittent diet, Varun Badola eats only twice a day without giving up on his favourite yet healthy food. Sharing his weight loss mantra, Varun says: "It's not easy to follow the intermittent fasting, while the rest of the world follows a particular meal time, I have my first meal of the day at 12 pm which is a mix of everything! Between 12 pm to 8 pm I can have a balanced meal and as much as I want. But from 8 pm to 12 pm I can't have anything. It works very well with my shoot schedule. I work out rigorously over the weekend. This has helped me lose a lot of weight in the past one and a half months. And right now it's the ask of the character." Along with intermittent fasting, Varun is also working out in the gym whenever he gets the time.

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UNICEF stands for ensuring children's rights



STAFF REPORTER ■ BHOPAL

A two-day training of trainers on result based management started at The Bhopal School of Social Sciences. This is being organised in technical collaboration with UNICEF.

Thirty participants from academia and civil society organisations are being trained in result-based management, as trainers in this two-day training programme. Participants include representatives from various departments of BSSS, Makhanlal Chaturvedi National University, DAVV Indore and civil society organisations from Bhopal, Jabua, and Harda.

Michael Juma, Chief, UNICEF office for Madhya Pradesh, while speaking at the inaugural of the training said, "Leaving no child behind, especially the most marginalised, requires analysis of the theory of change, and catalysing concrete actions which contribute to high level outcomes and impacts for children. Overall purpose of

UNICEF is to support the realisation of the rights of children, which largely requires Results Based Programme Planning and Results framework critical for achieving clearly defined and demonstrable results. As such, Results Based Management (RBM) is a tool for monitoring, measuring and reporting results whilst using Results Chain framework.

Strikingly, RBM increases transparency and accountability, and enhances efficiency and operational effectiveness which enable programme interventions to complement each other and avoid overlap and waste.

The TOT on RBM aims at strengthening and reinforcing the comparative advantages and capabilities of CSO Partners and Faculty Members of select Institutions of higher learning on the underlying principles of RBM and their practical applications in programming within the framework of theory of change.

Strategic planning, monitoring and evaluation (M&E),

are key essential components of RBM which can greatly enhance the effectiveness of programme delivery and achievement of high level results," he added.

Fr John PJ, Principal, Bhopal School of Social Sciences (BSSS) spoke on the partnership between BSSS and UNICEF and how it aims at strengthening work for children in the State. He welcomed participants and hoped that this will go a long way in reporting results for children.

Mohammed Nazem is trainer of the training programme. Abraham Varghese, head of department of social work of The BSSS, Rutwik Gandhi, Professor of Social Work Department, The BSSS, Sujay Sarkar, Planning and Monitoring Officer, UNICEF and Anil Gulati, Communication Specialist, UNICEF were part of the Committee who is training the participants on the RBM techniques, which will help them to strengthen their abilities to report and demonstrate results for children.

EGW Capital to tokenize equity shares of LIC

STAFF REPORTER ■ BHOPAL

EGW Capital, the emerging market-focused, US based blockchain investment bank, will tokenize the equity shares of the India's biggest life insurer 'LIC of India' and will issue them over the blockchain as security tokens in an Initial Exchange Offering (IEO).

The IEO will be conducted on the BitLux OTC crypto exchange and few other exchanges in the month of October, 2020 or earlier to the people closer to the transaction.

LIC's IPO is slated for the launch in the second quarter of 2021. The Indian Government, through its disinvestment initiatives, will attempt to raise US \$30 bn by diluting upto 10% of its holding.

Post listing of the equity shares, the LIC will become the India's largest listed company following Reliance Industries Limited.

The blockchain tokenisation is a process of digitising the real world assets like equity shares, land and building and then issuing them on the blockchain in the form of small digitised / fractionalised tokens or shares for an enhanced liquidity and a wider reach.

Overall, in the process of tokenisation, the blockchain based tokens are made to represent the true ownership of the underlying asset and those are traded by the investors without the need of being in the direct possession of the assets, much like as a mutual fund where a investor purchases fund units instead of directly purchasing and managing the portfolio of shares.

Biggest capital of MP is its forest wealth: Nath

STAFF REPORTER ■ BHOPAL

Chief Minister Kamal Nath said that the biggest capital of Madhya Pradesh is its forest wealth and Madhya Pradesh is proud of it. The responsibility of protecting and preserving the forests lies with the people living on forests and every member of the forest department. He said that forests will not be safe if tension and conflicts go on.

Addressing the forestry conference at RCVP Noronha Academy of Administration here today, the Chief Minister said that forest protection is possible only with the active cooperation of forest officers and field officers. He urged officers and employees associated with forest protection to realize the objectives of the Forest Protection Act. He said that today's scenario is completely different from the time when the Forest Protection Act was legislated in 1980. The present circumstances are starkly different from the expectations and aspirations were not so ambitious. It was easier to designate national parks.

Nath said that the biggest challenge is to make the degraded forests green. He said that the forest is deeply associated with Indian culture. The future is dependent on the forest. He stressed the need to protect, conserve and judiciously utilise the forests.

Giving examples of bamboo and millets gaining importance as economic crop, the Chief Minister said that the priorities are changing now. He said that the forest department will have to play the role of an enabler. All possible measures must be adopted to improve the degraded forest areas. He said that forest protection must continue avoiding tension and conflicts in the interest of the people and the State.

The Chief Minister said that biodiversity of Madhya Pradesh is extremely rich. Many researchers are working on this.

Now the world is rapidly moving from chemical-based



Chief Minister Kamal Nath being presented a painting of Tiger by the Indian Forest Officers Association in Vanaki Sammelan during two-day IFS Officers Meet, at Academy of Administration in Bhopal on Saturday. Pioneer photo

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Noted litterateur Sudhir Chandra speaking at a national seminar 'Abhay' during 150th birth anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi at State Museum in Bhopal on Saturday. Pioneer photo

Miscreants fire at 24-year-old, Sagar's campus

STAFF REPORTER ■ BHOPAL

Panic prevailed in the B-Sector area of Pipalpi area of 24-year-old youth in the night on Friday.

According to the victim Deepak he was not willing to withdraw the case and compromise with the accused and in spite of his refusal they attacked Deepak in the night on Friday.

In his complaint, the victim stated that he was near Jain hostel in B-Sector when four bike borne miscreants arrived and two of them opened fire at him. He was shot in his leg while the attackers missed one shot and escaped the spot.

CSP Govindpur Amit Kumar said that the victim identified Deepak as shot by Ujjwal and Shivam but it has to be established that the two were involved in the crime as the victim and accused belong to two different groups and had a fight earlier and case of the

In his complaint, the victim stated that he was near Jain hostel in B-Sector when four bike borne miscreants arrived and two of them opened fire at him.

matter is in the court.

Ujjwal has been booked by Pipalpi police for possessing of arms illegally in the year 2018 while Shivam also had crime record and has been booked by Pipalpi police.

The police have registered a case under sections 302 and 34 of the IPC and have started further investigation. The victim was rushed to Hamidia hospital where he was discharged after treatment.

Victim has provided names of two accused while he failed to identify the two other bike borne miscreants. In the case so far no one has been arrested. Search for the accused have been started by the police.

STAFF REPORTER ■ BHOPAL

Sagar Group of Institutions, Sagar Institute of Science and Technology Ratibad (SISTec-R) Department of Mechanical Engineering organised 'Srijan 2020 Mechanical Innovative Model Competition at its campus.

Over 36 teams with more than 50 models from various engineering colleges participated in the event to demonstrate their real life tech solutions.

The state level mechanical Innovative Model Competition organized by Sister Nivedita Tatkini Shiksha Samiti with Dushyant Sachdeva, Managing Director SEW Govindpur as the Chief Guest & Abhimanyu Chopra, MD of EnnKay Engineering as Guest of Honor.

Projects of recto fitting gasoline vehicle, road vacuum cleaner, retro fitting of e-car, compact multi-purpose farming vehicle, water conservation system etc attracted judges and engrossed the audience present.

Siddharth Sudhir Agrawal - Managing Director, Sagar Group and Jyoti Deshmukh - Principal SISTec Ratibad congratulated the mechanical department team for successfully organising the Srijan 2020.

Jyoti Deshmukh, Principal SISTec Ratibad said, "Srijan 2020 ignites the young minds and invoke innovative ideas. It is a unique platform of opportunities to create future technologies."

PIPPY SPINPRO LTD.
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NOTICE

Notice is hereby given that the following Share Certificate(s) issued by the Company are informed to have been lost or misplaced and the registered holder thereof claimant has applied to the Company for issue of Duplicate Share Certificate:

S. No.	Name of Share Holder	No. of Shares	Folio No.	Share Certificate No.	Distinctive No.
1.	Girish Kagrana	100	2943	16975	1697401-1697500
	Kamlesh Kagrana				

Any person(s) who have any claim(s) in respect of the said share certificate(s) should lodge such claim with the Company's Share Transfer Agent at the Registered Office, at the address given below:
ANKIT CONSULTANCY PVT. LTD.
 80, Electronic Complex, Pardihasipura, Indore-452010 (M.P.)
 Within 15 days of publication of this notice, after which no claims will be entertained and the Company will proceed to issue Duplicate Share Certificate.

For Pippy Spinpro Ltd.
 Nisha Sabu
 Company Secretary

Place : Indore
 Date : 22.02.2020

Untimely heavy rainfall disrupts normal life in many districts

STAFF REPORTER ■ BHOPAL

Untimely heavy rainfall disrupted the normal life while hailstorm caused damage to crop in Rewa, Sagar, Jabalpur and Hoshangabad division in the past 24 hours. On Saturday during the day Katri, Satna, Rewa and Panna witnessed heavy rainfall and hailstorm killing one in Katri.

In the past 24 hours Rewa and Gwalior divisions witnessed dense fog in the morning on Saturday.

In Satna rainfall was witnessed for over an hour dam-

aging the crop badly due to massive hailstorm. The Met department has issued Yellow alert in the state for the next 24 hours.

The official said that the system over west Rajasthan and Arabian Sea and north westerly winds has induced the changes in the past two days and in the next 48 hours the activities would fade away.

The night temperatures would witness dip by 1-2 degree Celsius in the next 48 hours while day temperatures would be also witness dip.

The system would not impact over west Madhya Pradesh while east Madhya Pradesh would witness the effects of abrupt changes.

Warning has been issued by Met department regarding thunder activities and thunder lightning in Sidhi, Singrauli, Anuppur and Shahdol districts in the next 24 hours.

The temperatures in the state capital have not witnessed significant change as the day temperature dipped by 2.2 degree Celsius while night temperature dipped by 2.8 degrees Celsius. On Sunday day and night temperatures would be recorded around 28 and 13 degree Celsius.

Abruptness in the weather condition would continue for the next 1-2 days and warning for thundery activities and hail storms would be witnessed.



Visitors go through a cartoon exhibition curated by artist Irfan at Swargi Bhawan in Bhopal on Saturday. Pioneer photo

'Immense potential for improvement in power distribution system'

STAFF REPORTER ■ BHOPAL

Managing Director of Central Region Power Distribution Company, Manish Singh has said that there is immense potential for improvement in power distribution system. Desired improvement in the system is possible by increasing the confidence of consumers and providing better services.

He said that the officers and employees should work hard. Time has to be given for consumer service from 8:30 am to late evening. Manish

The Managing Director instructed to strengthen the feeder revenue management

Singh was reviewing power supply, expansion of consumer facilities and revenue collection in Gwalior region.

The Managing Director instructed to strengthen the feeder revenue management. He told to establish continuous dialogue with the line

staff. He said that constant contact must be maintained with the opinion leaders of the society and the people's representatives for revenue collection and recovery. Singh told to behave well towards the consumers. He directed that action should be taken under Land Revenue Code for recovery of revenue from PDC connection.

Manish Singh said that the line staff should be rewarded for excellent work of revenue collection distribution centre work.

He also gave revenue recovery tips to the line staff.

sonnel is doing good work, he should also be given a letter of appreciation.

Singh, while inspecting the City Centre Gwalior, directed to take intensive action for the expansion of consumer facilities and revenue recovery.

On this occasion Singh held a discussion with the line staff regarding their difficulties and directed them to work under the safe zone and compulsorily use the safety equipments.

He also gave revenue recovery tips to the line staff.

Electronic goods worth ₹1L burgled

STAFF REPORTER ■ BHOPAL

Electronic goods worth ₹1 lakh was stolen from hostel of RCVP Noronha Academy of Administration under Habibganj police station area. A complaint was lodged after goods were found burgled in Friday.

Police said the complainant, Surendra Shukla

who is manager of the hostel found in the morning on Friday that therapy machine was stolen.

In his complaint the victim stated that the staff at the hostel informed him that therapy machine at the hostel was missing.

The therapy machine would be around ₹1 lakh claimed the complainant.

भारत सरकार
 सूचना, पृष्ठ पर अंकित प्रमाण प्रस्तुत करने पर निम्न नए कर्तव्य का विवरण क्रिप्टोग्राफिक्स प्रमाण पत्र दिनांक 28.02.2020 तक वैध रहेगा।

Empanment of Patent & Trademark Agents for Intellectual Property Facilitation Centre

भारत सरकार, एन.एस.एस.टी. भवन, एन.एस.एस.टी. बिल्डिंग, इंदौर को स्थापित Intellectual Property Facilitation Centre में पेटेंट एजेंटों पर देनामों के अंतर्गत निम्नलिखित कार्य करने हेतु क्रिप्टोग्राफिक्स प्रमाण पत्र अंशक आदेश प्रमाण पत्र के तहत जारी है।

पेटेंट एजेंट - 1. प्रमाणित पेटेंट एजेंट एवं बा बा संश्लेषण की तदव्याप्त
 2. सूचनात्मक अनुभव: 07 वर्ष

देनामों एजेंट - 1. प्रमाणित देनामों एजेंट एवं अप्रमाणित
 2. सूचनात्मक अनुभव: 05 वर्ष

आवेदन विधि: उपरोक्त प्रमाण पत्र के पेटेंट एजेंट एवं देनामों एजेंट अंशक स्थापित प्रमाण पत्र एवं निम्न नए कर्तव्य का विवरण क्रिप्टोग्राफिक्स प्रमाण पत्र दिनांक 28.02.2020 तक वैध रहेगा।

संकेत: अनुमति हस्ताक्षर, परिचय संश्लेषण अधिकारी
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अनुमति संख्या: 100/2020/2020

Meet on mines environ, mineral conservation held

EZMA hosts MEMC Week in big way

PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

The Eastern Zone Mining Association (EZMA) hosted the concluding day function of the 22nd Mines Environment and Mineral Conservation (MEMC) Week here on Saturday.

The week, observed under the aegis of the Indian Bureau of Mines, Bhubaneswar Region January 1 to 26, 2020, witnessed various programmes to promote aware-



ness about mines environment and mineral conservation among all sections of the mining employees.

Majority of the important

mines participates in the various competitions. Inspections teams inspected the participating mines and evaluated their performance on

afforestation, waste dump management, top soil management, reclamation and rehabilitation, management of sub grade mineral and installation and use of mechanical beneficiation facilities. Prize winners were distributed prizes at the concluding function.

Steel and Mines Additional Chief Secretary RK Sharma attended the concluding meeting as chief guest. Among others, Forest and Environment Special Secretary Debi Dutta Biswal, MEMC Week organising committee chairman, IBM Controller of Mines (EZ) Pankaj

Kulshrestha, IBM Director (Ore Dressing) Indra Ravindran, Director of Mines Deepak Mohanty and EZMA president RL Mohanty and Environment Controller RK Sinha as guests.

Organising committee vice-chairman Prabodh Mohanty delivered the welcome address while Regional Controller of Mines and organiser convenor Harkesh Meena read out the report.

On the occasion, "Paryavaran Bandhu Award" was awarded to individual personnel in mines for their invaluable contribution in the sector of environment management. Besides, "Best (Ore Dressing) Indra Ravindran, Director of Mines Deepak Mohanty and EZMA president RL Mohanty and Environment Controller RK Sinha as guests.

agement. Besides, "Best Workers" was also awarded to workers of different mines.

A 15-minute video showed the exemplary work done by some mine owners towards environment protection and mineral conservation. About 82 major mines of bauxite, chromite, dolomite, limestone, iron, manganese, fire clay and graphite participated.

The event came to an end with a vote of thanks proposed by organising committee general secretary Sidharth Pradhan. IBM Bhubaneswar DCOM GC Sethi coordinated the programme.

Sai's remand ends; Kalpana's kin summoned

PNS ■ JHARSUGUDA

The Chhattisgarh police on Saturday served notices to relatives of deceased Kalpana Das to appear before them for questioning.

The notices were served to Kalpana's brother and sister-in-law to appear before the Chakradhar Nagar police to record their statements.

The investigators had approached the local court seeking to conduct narco analysis test on former M.A. Anup Sahu to corroborate the evidence.

Sai and his driver Bardhan Toppo during their interrogation gave contradicting statements and are not cooperating with police. For this, the cops are seeking court's permission to conduct the lie-detector test.

The three-day remand of Sai ended on the day following which he was produced before the court. Police have prayed to



the court to take Sai on remand for three more days.

The court has reserved its judgement and would pronounce it on Monday, reports said.

In another development, a team of the Raigarh police left for Gujarat to trace the Mahindra Bolero vehicle used in the crime. A Bolero reportedly used to run over the mother-daughter after killing them has changed hands multiple times. It is currently said to be in Gujarat.

Maoist situation in control in SW region'

DGP hold review meeting with SPs

PNS ■ BHAWANIPATNA

The situation in the Maoist-affected areas is under control as compared to the previous year. Police would focus on the security related development works, said DGP Abhay following a review meeting here on Saturday on the Maoist situation in Kalahandi, Rayagada and Kandhamal districts.

South-Western Range DIG Safeen Ahmad said Leftwing Extremist (LWE) activities have decreased in the three districts in the recent times and steps are being taken for expediting welfare activities in the Maoist-infested areas.

Out of 13 blocks of Kalahandi district, movement of Maoist cadres was witnessed in 10 blocks. However, the Red rebels are gradually losing their hold over the areas due to intensified combing operation by the CRPF and the SOG.

The DIG said some cadres of the CPI(Maoist) operating in

the region have already surrendered before police.

Among others, Director Intelligence Satyajit Mohanty, Special IG Intelligence RK Sharma, DIG (SW) Anirudha Singh, IG Operation Amitabh Thakur and the SPs of Kalahandi, Rayagada and Kandhamal districts were present.

CM urged to pay 5% DA from July

Ganjam retired employees send memo



PNS ■ BRAHMAMPUR

The Odisha Retired Government Employees' Association, Ganjam unit on Saturday sent a memorandum to Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik through the RDC, Southern Division urging to provide them the increased 5 per cent dearness allowance retrospectively from July 2019.

"The Union Government and the State Government had been providing DA to employees and pensioners twice a year, in July and January. But this year, the State

Government delayed announcement the DA payment by six months. It is also disappointing that the DA has not been announced for retired employees yet. When prices of essential commodities have risen, the negligence has hit us," read the memorandum signed by district president Rajani Kant Mandal, State secretary Shyamsundar Lenka and district secretary Rajendra Kumar Panda.

Besides, they demanded health allowance and increase of minimum pension from ₹8,300 to ₹9,000.

Disorientation of anti-CAA ...

From Page 1

The more political of the Muslim clerics who were earlier associated with the Ayodhya stir and the opposition to changes in Muslim personal laws have carefully kept away from the front benches of the anti-CAA protests. Indeed, there has been a conscious attempt to project the stir as something that goes well beyond the Muslim community. The Christian clergy in particular and fast-tracking citizenship to minorities from three neighbouring Muslim countries. They implicitly acknowledged the need to tie up the loose ends of Partition. What the mainstream critics are now seeking is an extension of the amnesty to cover Ahmediyas from Pakistan and including Rohingya Muslims from Myanmar in the list of persecuted minorities. While the case of the Ahmediyas - declared to be non-Muslims in Pakistan - is interesting, it is also national. The fact is that no Ahmediya has actually applied for sanctuary in India. If Ahmediyas are to be included, the Government may as well extend the fast track scheme to Yazidis from Syria and Iraq. No Yazidis has, to my knowledge, applied for asylum in India.

bipartisanship. The net consequence is that India appears far more polarised than it actually is.

The criticism of the CAA presents one of the most interesting Bagh-type movements involving Muslim women have gathered momentum, mainstream political parties have calibrated their criticism. Today, parties such as the Congress are no longer in favour of a blanket denunciation of fast-tracking citizenship to minorities from three neighbouring Muslim countries. They implicitly acknowledged the need to tie up the loose ends of Partition. What the mainstream critics are now seeking is an extension of the amnesty to cover Ahmediyas from Pakistan and including Rohingya Muslims from Myanmar in the list of persecuted minorities. While the case of the Ahmediyas - declared to be non-Muslims in Pakistan - is interesting, it is also national. The fact is that no Ahmediya has actually applied for sanctuary in India. If Ahmediyas are to be included, the Government may as well extend the fast track scheme to Yazidis from Syria and Iraq. No Yazidis has, to my knowledge, applied for asylum in India.

The case of the Rohingya is more complicated. Some Rohingya - estimated at anything near a lakh - have already sneaked into India. Their presence

has aroused fierce antipathy in both Assam and the North-east but also in West Bengal. Unlike the Hindu and Buddhist refugees from Bangladesh who have been welcomed into India's civic society, the Rohingyas stand out and create local tensions. This is recognised by the Congress and the Communist parties. Yet these parties are brazen in demanding their inclusion because it fits a narrative of Muslim exclusion.

The Kashmir issue is another case in point. That the fallout of the abrogation of Article 370 would present a challenge to the Government was never in doubt. Some tough action - which would be unwarranted in normal circumstances - was also inevitable. This was also the case in the mid-1990s when the Congress was in power. Yet, an attempt has been made to link the attempts to restore normalcy in the Kashmir Valley with some imaginary targeting of Muslims. The Opposition has tried and may have made Kashmir a Muslim issue.

Particularly irksome is the attempt by the Opposition to invite foreign criticism of India. This is not only deplorable but suggests an attempt to increase communal polarisation in India - in the hope that this will eventually backfire on Modi. It may but it could also harden nationalist resolve.

'Feel proud as Odia, promote mother tongue'

Mother Language Day held in B'pada



PNS ■ BARIPADA

A meeting was held in the local Universal Coaching Point premises to mark the International Mother Language Day on Friday.

The function attracted many lovers of Odia language and literature of the town. The speakers participating in the programme called for Odia's self-respect and emphasised on the need for feeling proud of being Odias. They urged for popularising Odia language in all spheres and particularly among English-educated Odia people.

The meeting, organised by the Mayurbhanj Pustak Mela and convened by its secretary Manoj Dalbehera, was presided over by Pustak Mela vice-president Ajit Kumar Kabat. While Dr Brameswar Sekhar Das, Chief guest on the occasion, poet Brundavan Dash and Jain Kumar Das were the special guests.

The programme was attended by leading intellectuals like Himansu Sekhar Das, Kavi Vishnu Satpathy, Kaveri Mishra, Sunil Jena, Sudhamayee Das, Bichitrnanda Sahu, Shankar Jena, Swarupnandan Biso, Dinabandhu Bhanj, Kalyan Chakrabarti, Samarendra Basa, Jayant Dhwari, Narasingh Barik, Vishwara Divedy, Bharati Bebrata and Kaivalya Prasad Mohapatra.

Samarpan music fest celebrates unity in diversity

SHYAMHARI CHAKRA ■ BHUBANESWAR

Celebrating diversity and highlighting the true spirit of secularism in Indian society and culture, a three-day Samarpna music festival commenced at the Rabindra Mandap here on Friday evening. The event, exclusive to spiritual and devotional music, is being staged by the famed city-based six-decade-old Bhubaneswar Music Circle.

The inaugural evening commenced with a concert of New Delhi based Ghazal, Sufi and Bhajan singer Jitender Singh who hails from a cultured and educated Dogra Rajput family. Son of a classical singer, his gifted voice prompted his father to send him to Delhi for professional training after the son graduated in science from Jammu University and has opted for study of law.

Delhi, he was groomed in Khyal singing by Pandit Mani Prasad of Kirana gharana and later on he evolved his own style of singing inspired and influenced much by ghazal maestros Mehdi Hassan and Usha Mangeshkar. The influence of ghazal on his style was evident from his "Sufi Musings" concert here.

He picked up Sufi songs of two iconic Sufi poets of Indian sub-continent belonging to different periods but to the same Sufi sentiments - Hazrat Amir Khusrau from 13th century and Buleh Shah of 17th century. The songs extolled how spiritualism and the essence of any faith and religion is the same. The influence of the mosque here the same significance for a devotee.

Jitender Singh was superbly supported by Rahul



Vishwakarma on tabla and Ratan Prasanra on Rabab while Bhabatosh Mohanty was on guitar.

Aptly titled "Music of the Soul from Bengal", the second session of the evening featured well-known Baul artist Rajparvathy Baul from Birbhum district of West Bengal. Winner of the prestigious Sangeet Natak Akademi Award, her special appeal has been her solo recitals with dance in trance that she does alongside singing and playing of three instruments herself - Duggie, Ektara and Nupur - all played simultaneously.

Educated enough to explain the songs and the tradition in English, she has this added advantage of reaching out to larger audience beyond Bengal.

The evening being celebrated as Shivratri, Parvathy has carefully chosen the first three songs for Lord Shiva from the rich repertoire of different periods but to the same Sufi sentiments - Hazrat Amir Khusrau from 13th century and Buleh Shah of 17th century. The songs extolled how spiritualism and the essence of any faith and religion is the same. The influence of the mosque here the same significance for a devotee.

Jitender Singh was superbly supported by Rahul

IN BRIEF

CROP LOANS WORTH MORE THAN ₹ 264 CR WAIVED
Bhopal: Public Health Engineering Minister Sukhdip Panse has said that ₹ 264 crore have been waived of more than 78,000 eligible farmers in Betul district. In the first phase, crop loans worth ₹183 crore of 65 thousand 947 farmers and ₹81 crore of 12 thousand 212 farmers have been waived in the second phase. He said that under the second phase the process of presenting loan waiver certificates and citations to the farmers is in progress. Panse was addressing the farmers' crop loan certificate distribution programme at Malegaon in Multai tehsil. Minister Panse dedicated slab culvert, bridge, choupal, motor pump and drinking water pipeline expansion works costing about ₹30 lakh during the programme. He also distributed compensation amount of ₹40 lakhs to 16 beneficiaries of Naya Saveri Yojana. Local people's representatives, dignitaries and a large number of villagers were present in the programme.

TRAINING FOR PHOTO-ELECTORAL LIST TO BE PREPARED
Bhopal: Training related to the photo-electoral list to be prepared for the general election of the upcoming urban bodies and three-tier panchayats will be imparted to the officers of the district on February 25, 26 and 27 from 10 am in the State Election Commission. From each district, the officers of the District Election Office, one Tahsildar, 2 Master Trainers and Data Entry Operators will be trained by state-level Master Trainers. These officers/employees will be master trainers for the district and will impart training to the authorised officers/employees. Secretary State Election Commission DV Singh has informed that on February 25, officers of Bhopal, Ujjain, Narmadapuram and Chambal divisions will be imparted training. Similarly, training will be imparted to the officers of Indore, Sagor, Jabalpur and Jabalpur, Rewa and Shahdol divisions on February 27. All the trainees have been instructed to appear at the State Election Commission Bhopal at the scheduled time.

Feedback collected from women victims of different crimes

STAFF REPORTER ■ BHOPAL

Crime Branch of Madhya Pradesh police has collected feedback from 200 women victims of different crimes to ensure that the women victims when approach police get justice in time.

Official sources said that 95 percent of victims of crime against woman provided positive feedback in the feedback form. On the instructions of DGP VK, this innovative system has been implemented with a view to resolve problems of the victim women, to increase the confidence of the police action among the women and providing legal assistance to the women. This feedback is taken by the staff of the Women's Helpline-1090.

In the initial phase, 200 women victims were contacted to take feedback. They have been satisfied with the police action or not, problems are resolved by police. This innovative system has been implemented with the aim of ensuring police action in crime registration and investigation as per Model Action Plan and SOP (Standard Operating Procedure), especially to address the problems faced by women while writing the report.

To get feedback from the victim women, 10 standard questionnaires have been set by the women crime branch of the state police headquarters. About 95 percent of these women expressed satisfaction with the police action. He has also expressed satisfaction with the police action of the counselors.

The first feedback from the victim woman is being taken within 48 hours of the registration of the case. The second feedback would be taken within one month of registration of the offense and third at the time of filing of charge sheet.

Two property developers booked for duping woman

STAFF REPORTER ■ BHOPAL

The MP Nagar police has booked two property developers for duping a woman to the tune of ₹16 lakh. The woman, who had obtained a sanctioned loan by making false claims of completion of flat.

According to the police, Kavita Jain was sold a flat at Obhaddalghanj by the property developer and accused Rishabh Jain and Manish Jain at ₹16 lakh in the year 2019 and she was assured that flat would be provided but it was never done.

The victim lodged a complaint with the senior police officer and a case was registered by the police. A complaint was filed regarding the fraud and after completion of the investigation the police have registered a case under sections 420 and 406 of the IPC.

The police have started further investigation and have claimed that there is a possibility that the accused property developers have cheated other victims also.

SHO MP Nagar police Manish Kumar Rai said that the victim purchased a flat developed by the accused in the year 2019 but without completing the property and providing possession to the victim based on sanctioned loan amount and the accused claimed with the bank that the flat was completed and loan amount was disbursed to her, he added.

In the case no arrests have been made. The two accused would be tracked and nabbed based on the details provided by the victim.



A scene from play 'Gatardhi Chorah Ke Mar', directed by Tanveer Akhtar, staged at Bharat Bhavan on Saturday. Pioneer photo

U Sammilani holds Bhanjdeo death anniv

PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

The Utkal Sammilani Central Committee and Mancheswar-

Silpanchal Branch observed the 108th death anniversary of Sriram Chandra Bhanjdeo here on Saturday.

'Women key to economic dev'

Says BJP Morcha chief

PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

The role of women who comprise 50 per cent of India's population in building a 5-trillion Dollar economy of the country is important, told BJP Mahila Morcha national president Vijaya Rathakur here

on Saturday. Joining a Morcha Sammilani at the BJP State headquarters office, Rathakur said the women Self-Help Groups (WSHG) at the grassroots should not be limited to slogan only.

Efforts need to be made to provide market-linkage to their products. She further said the Modi



MUDRA for easy loan besides giving stress on MSMEs, weaving, IT and tourism.

Among others, BJP State president Samir Mohanty, Prakash Prasad, former Minister Suram Padya and Morcha State president Pravat Parida were present.

PTI ■ WELLINGTON

Ishant Sharma's lion-hearted bowling effort met its match in Kane Williamson's elegance as New Zealand ended an attritional second day of the opening Test against India with a slight upsurge, here at Basin Reserve on Saturday.

After another lower-order collapse that saw get India bundled out for 165, Ishant, coming straight back from an ankle injury, took three for 31 in 15 overs despite Williamson's effortless win New Zealand's day-end score of 216 for 5.

New Zealand now lead by 51 runs.

Mohammed Shami (1/61 in 17 overs), during his final spell of the day, removed Williamson, who couldn't check an uppish drive. Henry Nicholls' (17 off 62 balls) struggle seemed to have hampered Williamson's rhythm.

During the final hour, Ravichandran Ashwin (1/60 in 21 overs), who also bowled beautifully throughout the day, relieved Nicholls of his agony with a delivery that had drift and a hint of turn as India skipper Virat Kohli snapped the low catch at second slip.

Williamson looked good as he hit some delightful strokes square off the wicket. The square drive on the rise off Jasprit Bumrah (0/62 in 18.1 overs), followed by a cover drive, showed his class.

In all, the New Zealand skipper hit 11 boundaries off 158 balls. Bumrah, in particular, was punished by Williamson. Either Bumrah bowled too full and drivable length deliveries or too short that even Rishabh Pant failed to gather the ball over his head.

This was where Ishant came into the picture. While he failed to get opener Tom Latham out with

Kane keeps Kiwis ahead

Williamson's leads charge with gutsy 89 after Ishant's triple strike



Kane Williamson returns to pavilion after he was caught out by Ravindra Jadeja off Mohammed Shami on second day of 1st Test at Basin Reserve

a delivery drifting on leg-stump, the other opener Tom Blundell (30) had a typical Ishant dismissal written all over it. "Actually, the wicket became slow. It had tennis ball bounce at the start but when we bowled, there was no seam movement available," Ishant said after the end of the day's play. Williamson and Taylor then

"We have confidence that we can make a comeback. That has been the speciality of this team."

— ISHANT SHARMA

"If we can carry on tomorrow (Sunday) morning, get a couple of partnerships together and try and build that lead, then going into the second innings it will be nice."

— TIM SOUTHEE

proved to be an easy catch for Cheteshwar Pujara at short-leg. Looking good for his 22nd Test hundred, Williamson, in his bid to get another boundary, couldn't check a cover drive and the low catch was taken by substitute fielder Ravindra Jadeja.

Earlier, New Zealand's debutant Kyle Jamieson (4/49) and veteran Tim Southee (4/49) took four wickets apiece as Indian innings folded in 68.1 overs. The duo took four of the five wickets that fell on the second morning with India adding only 43 runs to their overnight score of 122/5.

Rishabh Pant (19) started with a six but then a horrible mix-up with senior partner Ajinkya Rahane (46) resulted in a run-out and the little chance of recovery was gone for good.

Southee then got rid of Rahane when he tried to shoulder-arm a delivery that made a late inward movement. Mohammed Shami's entertaining 21 then enabled the visitors to cross the 150-run mark.



Ishant comes to Bumrah's defence: 'Funny how perceptions change quickly'

PTI ■ WELLINGTON

India's seniormost player Ishant Sharma finds it "funny" that people are questioning Jasprit Bumrah's "ability" just after a few matches, ignoring his performances over the past two years. "It's funny that perceptions changed after one innings.

For two years, we have always taken 20 wickets, myself, Boom (Bumrah's nickname in Indian dressing room) and Shami along with Ash or Jaddu (at home). How can people question on the basis of one innings (Test)? Ishant asked while defending his colleague. "I don't think anyone doubts Boom's ability. Since his debut, what

he has achieved for India, I don't think anyone should raise any questions," said Ishant. Bumrah also had support from New Zealand pacer Tim Southee, who called him a "world class bowler" and found nothing wrong in his execution. "I don't think there's anything wrong. He is a world-class bowler. He is obviously coming back from injury, but he is a quality player and we know a great performance is never far away when you're a quality player," Southee said.

SINGLES

SHARAN-SITAK LOSE IN DELRAY BEACH QF
FLORIDA: India's number two doubles player Divij Sharan and his partner Kirti Joshi lost to top-seeded defending champions Mike and Bob Bryan in the quarterfinals of the Delray Beach Open. The Indo-Kiwi duo lost 2-6, 6-4, (3-10) to the Bryan brothers who are playing their last Delray Beach open as they are set to retire post the US Open this year.

SAMMY TO GET HONORARY PAK CITIZENSHIP
KARACHI: The Pakistan government will confer honorary citizenship on former Windies captain Darren Sammy for his role in bringing international cricket back to the country. Sammy, who is presently leading Peshawar Zalmi in the fifth PSL season, will be given the honorary citizenship and Pakistan's highest civilian award, Nishan-e-Haider, on March 23 by President Arif Alvi. Sammy, who has appeared in the PSL since its inception, played an important role in helping the PCB bring back cricket to the country when in 2017 he agreed to come to Lahore and play in the PSL final.

ROJAS SETS NEW INDOOR TRIPLE JUMP WR
BUENOS AIRES: Venezuela's Yulimar Rojas set a new indoor women's triple jump world record of 15.43m at a meeting in Madrid. The 24-year-old world champion bettered the previous world record of 15.36m set by Russia's Tatyana Lebedeva in Budapest in March 2004. Rojas's new mark also left her just seven centimetres short of the outdoor world record of 15.50m set by Ukraine's Inessa Kravets at Gothenburg back in 1995.

BAYERN EDGE PAST PADERBORN 3-2
MUNICH: Bundesliga leaders Bayern Munich squeezed past bottom side Paderborn 3-2 on Friday as Robert Lewandowski netted twice to spare goalkeeper Manuel Neuer's blushes in their final game before facing Chelsea in the Champions League. Bayern now has a league-leading tally of 25 goals in the top flight, illustrating its importance to the team ahead of Tuesday's 16, first-leg tie in London. Bayern twice surrendered the lead in Munich before securing the win which leaves them four points clear.

ROONEY SCORES IN SOUTH LEAGUE GAME
LONDON: Wayne Rooney celebrated his 500th appearance in English league football with a goal before Aleksandar Mitrovic saw second-tier high-flyers Fulham to a 1-1 draw away to Derby. Former Manchester United star and England national side's all-time leading goalscorer, Rooney struck from the penalty spot after Tim Ream headed early in the second half at Pride Park when he cheekily chipped the ball over Fulham goalkeeper Marek Rodak.

SIMON STUNS TOP SEED MEDVEDEV
MARSEILLE: Two-time Champion Gilles Simon stunned top seed and world number five Daniil Medvedev 6-4, 6-0 in just 67 minutes to reach the semis in Marseille. The 35-year-old Frenchman, who was champion at the tournament in 2007 and 2015, will face Canadian seventh seed Felix Auger-Aliassime for a place in the final after securing a third win in three meetings with Russia's Medvedev. Auger-Aliassime defeated Egor Gerasimov of Belarus 7-5, 6-2 to move to within one line of a fifth career final.

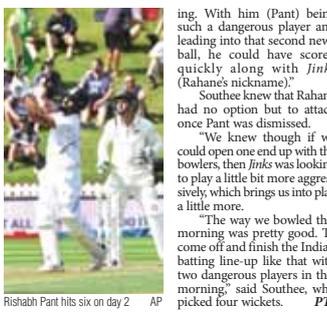
LYON CLINCH KEY WIN AHEAD OF JUVE TEST
LEON: Five days out from facing Juventus in the Champions League last 16, Lyon clinched a morale-boosting 2-0 win at Metz in Ligue 1. A penalty from Moussa Dembelle in the eighth minute of injury time at the end of the first half and a goal from Housssem Aouar after three minutes of stoppage time in the second half gave Lyon the three points on Friday. It was a first win for Lyon after two draws and two losses.

Pant's run-out was turning point: Southee

WELLINGTON: New Zealand pacer Tim Southee believes that Rishabh Pant's break run-out went a long way in changing the course of the Indian innings that eventually folded up for 165.

Pant, who started the day with a six in the first over suffered because of Ajinkya Rahane's poor call and India lost five wickets for 33 runs from that point. Rahane himself fell to Southee as he inside edged to the keeper trying to shoulder arms and late inward movement became his undoing.

Asked if there was any strategy to dismiss Rahane, Southee replied: "No, the run-out of Pant was a big this morning."



Rishabh Pant hits six on day 2

ing. With him (Pant) being such a dangerous player and leading into that second new-ball, he could have scored quickly along with Jinks (Rahane's nickname). "Southee knew that Rahane had no option but to attack once Pant was dismissed. "We knew though if we could open one end up with the bowlers, then Jinks was looking to play a little bit more aggressively, which brings us into play a little more. "The way we bowled this morning was pretty good. To come off and finish the Indian batting line-up like that with two dangerous players in this morning," said Southee, who picked four wickets.

ERVINE KEEPS ZIM ON TRACK
DHAKA: Skipper Craig Ervine scored a dogged century as Zimbabwe shared the honours with Bangladesh on the opening day of the one-off Test here on Saturday. Ervine hit 107 off 227 balls — his third century in Tests — as the visitors reached 228-6 at stumps after opting to bat first in what is the 100th international match between two teams. Off-spinner Nayeem Hasan bowled Ervine, who struck 13 fours, shortly before the stumps before finishing with 4-68, the best return for the home side on the opening day.

PTI ■ VALSAD
Medium-pacer Chintan Gajra grabbed a five-wicket haul before Gujarat stretched their overall lead to a mammoth 587 runs against Goa in their Ranji Trophy quarter-final here on Saturday.

On the third day, led by the 25-year-old Gajra (5-19), Gujarat came up with a clinical performance to bowl out Goa for a meagre 173 in 57.5 overs. With two days to go, Goa would need nothing short of a miracle to escape a humiliation. In the second innings, Gujarat opens Samit Gohel (70 not out) and Priyank Panchal (37) added 72 for the first wicket as their lead swelled beyond 500. Gohel and

Agar takes hat-trick in Proteas rout

AFP ■ JO'BURG

Left-arm spinner Alistair Agar took a hat-trick as Australia crushed South Africa by 107 runs in the first T20I at the Wanderers Stadium on Friday. Steve Smith, back in South Africa for the first time since the 2018 ball-tampering scandal, hit a top score of 45 for Australia, who made 196 in six after being sent in.

South Africa made a bad start against the pace of Mitchell Starc and Pat Cummins before Agar's triple strike sent them hurtling to their all-time lowest T20 total of 89.

It was also the host country's biggest defeat in the format. Man of the match Agar finished with career-best figures of five for 24. "It was really exciting, a highlight of my cricketing life," he said.

But he gave praise to the fast bowling attack of Mitchell Starc, Kane Richardson and Pat Cummins who started South Africa's collapse. South Africa were reeling at 40 for four when Agar came on to bowl. He had Faf du Plessis caught at deep cover with his fourth delivery; trapped Andile Phehlukwayo leg before next ball and Dale Steyn superbly caught at slip by captain Aaron Finch to complete the hat-trick.

Earlier, Smith and Finch (42) set up Australia's big total with an aggressive second wicket stand of 80 off 52 balls, benefitting from some loose South African bowling. The win extended Australia's unbeaten run in the format to nine matches, with eight wins and one no-result. Their last defeat was in November 2018. The second match of the series is at Port Elizabeth today with the third and final game in Cape Town on Wednesday.



Hasaranga's cameo takes SL home

AFP ■ COLOMBO

A late cameo by Wanindu Hasaranga helped Sri Lanka pull off a thrilling chase to edge out West Indies by one wicket in the first ODI on Saturday. Hasaranga held his nerve after Sri Lanka slipped to 253 for seven following the departure of Thisara Perera for 32 to register his highest ODI score. He built crucial partnerships including a 38-run stand with Perera and then put on 27 runs with Lakshan Sandakan for the ninth wicket. With one to get off the last six ball Sandakan was run out but Keemo Paul bowled a no ball. "Of course, winning is the ultimate thing but we made couple of mistakes that we have to learn from," skipper Dimuth Karunaratne, who top-scored with 52, said after the victory.

For the West Indies, Alzarri Joseph claimed three wickets after Shah Hope made 115 in his team's 289 for seven.

Ervine keeps Zim on track

DHAKA: Skipper Craig Ervine scored a dogged century as Zimbabwe shared the honours with Bangladesh on the opening day of the one-off Test here on Saturday. Ervine hit 107 off 227 balls — his third century in Tests — as the visitors reached 228-6 at stumps after opting to bat first in what is the 100th international match between two teams. Off-spinner Nayeem Hasan bowled Ervine, who struck 13 fours, shortly before the stumps before finishing with 4-68, the best return for the home side on the opening day.

PTI ■ VALSAD
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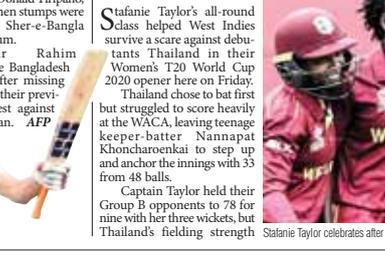
On the third day, led by the 25-year-old Gajra (5-19), Gujarat came up with a clinical performance to bowl out Goa for a meagre 173 in 57.5 overs. With two days to go, Goa would need nothing short of a miracle to escape a humiliation. In the second innings, Gujarat opens Samit Gohel (70 not out) and Priyank Panchal (37) added 72 for the first wicket as their lead swelled beyond 500. Gohel and

Taylor too good for Thai

PTI ■ PERTH

Stafanie Taylor's all-round class helped West Indies survive a scare against debutants Thailand in their Women's T20 World Cup 2020 opener here on Friday. Thailand chose to bat first but struggled to score heavily at the WACA, leaving teenage keeper-batter Nannapat Khoncharoenkai to step up and anchor the innings with 33 from 48 balls. Captain Taylor held their Group B opponents to 78 for nine with her three wickets, but Thailand's fielding strength

came to play with Lee-Ann Kirby, Hayley Matthews and Deandra Dottin all departing before the seventh over to spark thoughts of an upset. But Taylor and Shemaine Campbelle stayed firm and their unbeaten fourth-wicket partnership of 53 sealed the win. Taylor (26 not out) brought West Indies up to 50 with three boundaries and Campbelle (25 not out) swept their own to their first WT20I victory in nine games.



Gujarat all over Goa

STAR SPORTS 2 NETWORK

Ranjit Trophy quarterfinals Live from 9:30am IST

Bhargav Merai (49 not out) kept attacking the Goa bowlers and at stumps, the hosts were comfortably placed at 158/1, a staggering overall lead of 587 runs. **BENGAL TAKE LEAD** TANGI: Bengal rode on a disciplined pace attack to secure a first innings lead against Odisha. The pace trio of Ishan Porel (3/72), Nilkantha Das (3/42) and Mukesh Kumar (3/51) shared nine wickets among them to bundle out Odisha for 250 to secure an 82-run first innings lead and put one foot in the semifinals. At close of day three, Bengal were 79 for two, extend-



Bengal players celebrate the wicket of Odisha's batsman Biplab Samantaray



Poonam Yadav celebrates after wicket

Aus win will give India huge confidence: Mithali

PTI ■ SYDNEY

India's demolition of a formidable Australia in the Women's T20 World Cup opener will give them a huge boost going forward, said star batswoman Mithali Raj, who also landed leggie Poonam Yadav for her magical performance. Poonam took four for 19 to help India complete a 17-run victory against defending champions Australia on Friday. "Everyone has been talking about how much batting depth Australia have, yet they couldn't chase 132," Raj, a former India Test and ODI captain, said. "India will take so much confidence from that victory, but this World Cup is still very open. The match between Australia and India proved how competitive the tournament will be. It proves it does not matter where you stand in the ICC rankings. "We will be seeing more of the same drama yet. This victory proves every team has a chance," said Raj, who has retired from T20 cricket.

The 37-year-old veteran batswoman said "the opening match definitely lived up to the hype of the tournament."

"It was a whirlwind. There were so many ups and downs. It was a great start to the tournament not only because India beat the defending champions on home soil, but also because of how the game progressed altogether.

"At no point could you say it was going in one's favour. First we saw our early wickets fall, then we recovered and Australia had to chase 132 before their middle-order collapsed. India and Australia both took the game their own way at different points which made it fascinating for spectators to watch."

Raj said Poonam's spell was the turning point. "She's been one of the main spinners for India for quite some time now, and her style worked again. Getting their (Australia) middle-order out really helped the match towards India, she was brilliant.

"Although we recovered our innings through Deepti Sharma and her partnership with Jemimah Rodrigues, it was Poonam's flurry of wickets against Australia's megastars, which completely changed the game," Raj said. Raj also praised 16-year-old Shafali Verma for scoring 29 off 15 on her World Cup debut.

"Shafali Verma impressed me too on her debut. She gave India's middle order the cushioning they needed to regain momentum. Verma has stuck with stroke play that she demonstrated in the tri-series," she said. "I think she should be given that free range in the first five overs because when you're playing a top team, the runs in the first six overs are so important. It was great to be 40 up after just a few overs thanks to her contribution — Australia couldn't replicate that."

WAR AGAINST MAFIA



CRACKDOWN ON FOOD ADULTERATION, SPURIOUS GOODS & MATERIALS AND DRUG MAFIA

Anti-Drugs Campaign

A Historic Movement in Madhya Pradesh



Kamal Nath
Chief Minister
Madhya Pradesh

Chief Minister Kamal Nath leads from front as citizens join charge to free the state from the clutches of malafide profiteering at cost of human health and life.

New Sand Policy of MP comes down on illicit sand mining

Besides destroying the organized mining racket, the policy earned a five-fold increase in mining allocation revenues for the state exchequer. Sand Mining Revenue touches Rs. 1234 crore from the previous Rs. 200 crores. Altering characteristics of the River and Riverbed, illegal mining causes irreparable damage to the ecosystem.

Action Against Spurious Farm Supplies

State-wide crackdown on those involved in the trade of spurious or adulterated fertilizers, seeds and pesticides. District level inspection teams collected and tested nearly 7000 samples. 1313 fertilizer shops and godowns inspected as part of campaign. Action initiated against 110 errant traders.

- ❖ Massive awareness campaign reaches Schools, Colleges, Hostels.
- ❖ Over five lakh youths contacted as part of campaign in 2019.
- ❖ In a concerted drive against drug peddlers, 3270 cases resulted in the arrest of 4051 accused.
- ❖ 11.71 kg brown sugar seized from 426 accused.
- ❖ 171 kg opium seized from 134 accused.
- ❖ 9310 kg cannabis confiscated from 2903 accused.
- ❖ 6 kg hashish found in possession of 24 accused.
- ❖ 34875 kg poppy shell powder found with 339 accused.
- ❖ 1,13,448 units of chemical drugs seized with 121 accused.

SHUDDH KE LIYE YUDDH

Utilising powers conferred by the Constitution of India, Chief Minister Kamal Nath has taken up the fight against food adulteration as a top priority for his government. The constitution of India describes improvement of public health as one of the primary responsibilities of the State. Adulterated foods cause havoc on Public Health. While victims suffer

ailments ranging from bouts of food poisoning to heart ailments, continuing intake of contaminated edibles also leads to diseases like Cancer and a host of Renal complications. Besides destruction of citizen health, the adulterated food industry stresses public health and welfare budgets as most victims belong to socially and economically weaker sections.

Fight Against Food Adulteration



Highlights

- ❖ Formation of Division-level Flying Squads.
- ❖ Strengthening picketing at interstate borders.
- ❖ Consultations with citizens and traders in every district to create awareness for anti-adulteration campaign.
- ❖ 12089 samples of milk products, edibles and Pan Masala collected.
- ❖ 117 FIRs lodged against errant manufacturers.
- ❖ 42 offenders booked under stringent National Security Act (NSA).
- ❖ Rs. 24 Crore worth spurious goods confiscated.
- ❖ Rs. 25 Lakhs worth adulterated edibles destroyed.
- ❖ 835 cases filed.
- ❖ Rs. 4.56 Crore Penalty levied.

Umeenden Rang Layt, Tarakkie Muskurai

OUR SPEAKERS



NITIN GADKARI
Union Minister of Road Transport and Highways



PIYUSH GOEL
Union Minister of Railways and Commerce



PRAHLAD S PATEL
Union Minister of State for Tourism & Culture



BHARAT BALA
Filmmaker and Storyteller



RITU BERI
Indian heritage and luxury entrepreneur, fashion designer



AMAN NATH
Co-chairman, Neerana group, architectural restore



ROCKY AND MAYUR
Highway travellers, writers, TV show hosts



ZORAWAR KALRA
Restaurateur and progressive cuisine specialist



ASHWANI LOHANI
Ex-CEO, Air India



PRABIR SARKAR
IATO President



ANIL CHAUDHA
COO, ITC Hotels



MANDIP SINGH SONI
Founder, Best Expositions and Founder President, Responsible Tourism Society of India



SUMITRA SENAPATHY
Founder, Women on Wanderlust



SUMANT BATRA
Boutique museum hotels



SHILPA SHARMA
Curated travel expert



SUBHASH GOYAL
Tourism policy specialist



ANUP KUTTY
Co-founder, Ziro Festival of Music



ABU SURYAN
Founder, Purani Gili Wala Ki Baitan



RAVEE SINGH AHLUWALIA
Chief Functionary, Pitfalls Foundation



HARKIRAT AHLUWALIA
Founder, Citrus County Farmstays



SAMIL MALHOTRA
Travel Travel Marketing



February 26, 2020
Hotel Shangri-La, New Delhi



the pioneer agenda

The most important lesson I've learned in this business is how to say no. I have said no to a lot of temptations, and I am glad I did
— Penelope Cruz



Mughal prince with a heart
Avik Chanda's book offers a view on the life and times of Dara Shukoh, the designated heir of Shah Jahan

2



4

Shiva: Existence personified
The concepts underlying Shiva can be seen in different perspectives — as Adi Guru, Nataraja and metaphysical being

Over the past two decades, India's approach takes into account the political, economic, social and environmental issues and concerns under which the energy security policy is being pursued today, writes DR ASHOK SHARMA

INDIA'S QUEST FOR ENERGY SECURITY



Energy security has been significant to the economic transformation, global prosperity and well-being of the human kind. Energy security will continue to be detrimental to the existing life and much more crucial to the developing countries than the developed world. The world's demand for energy grew by 95% in the last 40 years and the future demand, estimated to be more than 90%, to be because of huge growth in demand from India and China. These resources are finite, and the direct links between energy supply and economic growth have pushed the issue of energy security at the core of the policy debate with a considerable impact on the geopolitics.

India, one of the fastest growing major economies, is also the fastest growing energy consumer in the world. And set to become the most populous nation, it is not well endowed with energy reserves. India has mammoth task of meeting its economic and social developmental goals, and lift its millions of people out of poverty. The country has no option but to strive for sustained growth rate of 8-10% to achieve this. India's economy in all likely will continue to supersede the growth rate of all other major economies in the world in the foreseeable future. The demand for energy in the coming years will accelerate further as India embarks on manufacturing through Modi Government's much vaunted 'Make in India' programme, developmental projects and access to electricity to all. Consequently, energy security has emerged as one of the salient policy issues over the past decade and a half, and the successive Indian governments have emphasised on addressing the impending energy crisis challenges.

In the past, India's energy security has been narrow in its approach, mainly aimed at managing supply. But over the past two decades, India's energy security policy has evolved and approach is much more inclusive which takes into account the political, economic, social and environmental issues and concerns under which the energy security policy is being pursued today internationally. India's quest for energy security could be seen under the framework of four 'A's: availability, accessibility, affordability and acceptability, which is to make energy accessible to all the sections and sectors at an affordable price in a socially and politically acceptable carbon-controlled environment.

India's more than 50% of energy needs is derived from domestic stocks of coal, mainly for the electricity. Coal shall remain India's most important energy source and critical to its growth for the decades ahead. However, the percentage of coal in India's energy mix

will decline in the future. India, with 17% of the world's population, has just 0.8% of the world's known oil and natural gas resources. Today, oil accounts for 36% of the country's primary energy use. This figure is set to rise both in absolute and in percentage terms. India's domestic production is not sufficient to meet its demand. As a result, India already imports 80% of its crude oil needs. Without new and substantial domestic discoveries, imports will continue to increase. By contrast, natural gas currently provides only 8% of India's primary energy supply, and most of that gas comes from domestic sources, onshore and offshore. But the position is likely to change drastically as India plans towards the world average for the use of natural gas.

To promote oil and gas production at domestic level, the Indian Government has been taking several steps which range from encouraging the Indian companies to increase their domestic activities and widening its engagement with multinational companies, broadening opportunities for them to participate in oil and gas exploration in India. Also, to stimulate the investments and development in the exploration of hydrocarbon sources of energy, some of the steps have focussed on regulatory changes, a transparent gas pricing policy and redevelopment of uneconomical assets. The domestic efforts have also seen a concerted focus on exploring various alternative sources of energy which are infinite, renewable and environment-friendly. The government has given a massive push in this regard in the energy production through solar energy, wind power, hydroelectricity power, and biomass, and nuclear energy.

At the domestic level, the challenges are puzzling and often at odds such as increasing energy access, building a smart system for drawing investment in energy infrastructure and pricing of energy to facilitate the economic and environmental competence. Unlike the past policy of self-reliance, India's energy policy has shifted to position itself to address its new dependence on international markets, diversify its sources of energy abroad, look for alternative sources of energy, and increase its domestic production which continues to be in line with its earlier commitment to self-sufficiency. India's domestic exploration and production push is not very promising. As a result, India continues to rely on the foreign sources for its energy needs especially for petroleum.

Since increased domestic production alone will not be sufficient to meet the projected needs for either oil, gas or coal, India is also expanding its efforts abroad. Eventually, this has made energy security one of the top foreign policy

priorities. Despite the Indian government's emphasis on domestic production of coal and efforts to diversify the sources of energy, the demand for imported coal is likely to continue. India's energy demand, both for consumer and industry, cannot be done in the near future without the help of imported coal. There is no substantial proof that India can address its energy demand without the use of imported coal to supplement its domestic supply. For example, the energy security has been an important aspect of India-Australia relationship in which import of Australian high calorific value coal remains crucial.

Subsequently, energy security has emerged as one of the top foreign policy priorities of the Modi Government. This becomes significant as Modi Government embarks to make India a manufacturing hub through its much vaunted 'Make in India' initiatives. Energy security's primacy in Modi government's foreign policy is reflected in his record number of high-profile foreign visits during which he has been cutting energy deals with energy rich countries.

India's energy security pursuit becomes more challenging with the growing concerns of global climate change and political instability in the energy rich regions of the world. India has been relying mainly on coal and petroleum for its energy sources. India's move towards renewable energy sources will not be sufficient for its mounting energy demand. India has to look towards energy sources with less carbon emission and provide base load power. In this context, gas and nuclear energy figure significant. Gas is less carbon emitting source of energy. India's gas utilisation is far below the world average. Modi government has also given priority to enhance the gas utilisation and move towards gas based economy. India is planning to set up gas pipelines for import of gas from its neighbouring nations. A number of gas pipelines are proposed and are in the construction phase. Majority of them involve intense geopolitics as some of the proposed gas pipelines will pass through Pakistan and China.

Since the two-thirds of India's oil imports come from one single region, that is, the Gulf Co-operation Council (GCC) countries, India is following in the footsteps of other major oil-importing economies and making significant efforts to obtain supplies from sources outside the Gulf. In addition, the possibility of disruption from unseen political instability, religious extremism, terrorism, and threats to supply lines have pushed India to look for new hydrocarbon destinations abroad.

India has taken steps to diversify its hydrocarbon exploration in the regions

of Latin America, Africa, Caspian Basin, Russia and in the waters of Indo-Pacific region.

Problems of diversification of energy sources for India arises from the political volatility, geopolitics of these regions and above all it puts India in the direct competition with China particularly in the Non-Middle Eastern and Non-Gulf region as the new destination of energy source which further sparks a geopolitical competition and adds more complexities to an existing competitive and often conflicting India-China relationship.

Nuclear energy has the potential to become an important source of India's energy mix given its economic affordability in the long run and environment friendly. Currently, nuclear energy makes up around 3% of India's energy mix and has the potential to become 20 to 25% of India's energy mix by 2050. The lack of enriched uranium, light water reactors, and advanced technology hampered India's nuclear energy capability. But after the conclusion of India-US nuclear agreement, India's nuclear apartheid ended and unchained India from the technology denial regimes of the Nuclear Non-proliferation Act of 1978 which came in the wake of India's first atomic test in 1974. The nuclear deal was aimed to help India to meet its looming energy crisis by enabling it to access to safeguarded nuclear fuel, advanced light water reactors and civilian nuclear technology.

ENERGY SECURITY HAS EMERGED AS ONE OF THE TOP FOREIGN POLICY PRIORITIES OF THE MODI GOVERNMENT. THIS BECOMES SIGNIFICANT AS MODI GOVERNMENT EMBARKS TO MAKE INDIA A MANUFACTURING HUB THROUGH ITS MUCH VAULTED 'MAKE IN INDIA' INITIATIVES. ENERGY SECURITY'S PRIMACY IN MODI GOVERNMENT'S FOREIGN POLICY IS REFLECTED IN HIS RECORD NUMBER OF HIGH-PROFILE FOREIGN VISITS DURING WHICH HE HAS BEEN CUTTING ENERGY DEALS WITH ENERGY RICH COUNTRIES



The India-US nuclear deal pushed the energy security to the core of India's foreign policy. After the India-US civilian nuclear deal, India has sealed the civilian nuclear agreements with a number of countries including France, Russia, Canada, Australia, Japan and the UK. Given India's non-signatory status of Nuclear-Non-Proliferation Treaty, for any country dealing with India in nuclear energy and technology trade becomes an issue of mutual trust and confidence which required delicate diplomacy from India. Though aimed to address India's energy security, the US-India nuclear deal was viewed by China as part of the United States' grand strategy to contain the growing power and influence of China in Asia. As a result, the Chinese and Pakistani lobbying along with 'Nuclear Ayatollahs' put a concerted lobbying effort to block the nuclear deal at Capitol Hill, though failed. The India-China energy geopolitics resurfaced during India's bid to membership in the Nuclear Suppliers Group (NSG) recently. China used its clout and prerogatives to block India's case for the inclusion in the NSG. The nuclear energy is significant for India's efforts to shift to an environmentally friendly energy sources and alternate sources of energy sources.

India's push towards renewable energy has been remarkable which is reflected in Modi Government's schemes to give a boost to renewable energy sources. But even the renewable energy sources are not free from the competitive geopolitical environment. India-China energy geo-politics is also reflected in renewable energy space. Renewable energy's geographic and technical characteristics are fundamentally different from those of coal, oil and natural gas. Though still in the formative stage, international norms are being built towards the renewable energy, and India-China energy geopolitics will enter this new energy space as both are striving to influence the renewable energy space. The inevitability of renewable energy is undeniable and countries are gearing up for an increased share in their energy mix. Those that dominate the markets in these new technologies will likely have the most influence over the development patterns of the future. As other major powers find themselves in climate denial, China and India both are moving to use and exploit the global renewable energy space, though China is ahead.

India is emerging as a new normative player in the renewable energy regime. Prime Minister Modi has pursued unwavering commitment to energy security by constructing 175 GW of renewable capacity by 2022 and India is committed to its unflinching commitment to combat global warming irrespective of what happens in the rest of the world. Prime Minister Modi being awarded the "Champion of Earth" by the UN Secretary General in 2018 is additional power to India's growing normative leadership in this new energy source regime that translates into geopolitics as it helps India to enhance its image internationally.

India's energy policy is being pursued in a much more inclusive manner in its domestic and international settings to address its fast-growing energy demand in a competitive geo-political environment. India energy exploration abroad in the new regions is putting in direct competition with China. Unlike the US-Soviet Union energy geopolitics, the India-China energy competition has been mostly confined to the commercial and diplomatic level tussles, though both remain vulnerable to conflicts which may get aggravated due to their competitive and conflicting relations and the emerging strategic geometry in the Indo-Pacific region.

— Dr Ashok Sharma is a Visiting Fellow at the University of New South Wales at the Australian Defence Force Academy and the author of the book 'India's Pursuit of Energy Security: Domestic Measures, Foreign Policy and Geopolitics' (Sage Publications, 2019)



THE CHIEF REASON FOR GOING TO SCHOOL IS TO GET THE IMPRESSION FIXED FOR LIFE THAT THERE IS A BOOK SIDE FOR EVERYTHING — ROBERT FROST

Avik Chanda's book, *Dara Shukoh: The Man Who would be King*, is an ideal read, not only for aspiring historians but also for those interested in Indian history, writes KUMAR CHELLAPPAN

Mughal prince with a heart

A frequently heard complaint from a section of Indian historians is that vested interests have played havoc with the sub-continent's history, traditions and culture. If one goes through the history books taught in the Indian schools and universities, it will be found that those lamenting over the tampering of India's history are not exaggerating. Some sections of the country's valuable history have been suppressed from the new generation, especially from those who were born after 1950.

How many among those who were born after 1950 are familiar with the great Maratha ruler Shivaji, the valiant fighter Jantia Tope, the great social reformer Mahatma Phule, the all time great of the 19th century South India by name Chattampi Swamikal and his colleague Sree Narayana Guru?

We cannot put the entire blame for distorting history upon previous regimes alone. It is a strategy deployed since time immemorial to misinterpret historical facts by groups with vested interests. "History is written by victors," Sir Winston Churchill, former British Prime Minister who is known for his erudition and knowledge had said. In modern times, it was proved by the British colonialists. The best example is Louis Mountbatten's decision to destroy even the last vestiges of victory symbols of the Japanese army from Singapore and Malaysia.

"After re-taking Singapore, Mountbatten's (who was the Supreme Commander, South East Asia during Second World War) first act was to order the demolition of the war memorial honouring slain heroes of the Indian National Army. The INA War Memorial at Singapore to commemorate the "Unknown Warrior" was started on July 8, 1945 at Esplanade Park. It was razed to the ground by Mountbatten's allied troops when they reoccupied the city. Demolishing memorials, war memorials and other revered symbols of defeated people is habitual Christian triumphalism as is desecrating the tombs of the rulers of conquered people," writes Radha Rajan, one of the highly respected thinkers of our times.

Most Indians are not really serious about learning history. It is not even bothered about recent history as can be seen by the attitude of the new generation towards the dark days of



emergency declared by the former Prime Minister Indira Gandhi in 1975.

I was shocked to see the larger than life flex boards with pictures of Fidel Castro and Che Guevara greeting the delegates of Indian Science Congress during the 2009 Indian Science Congress held at Thiruvananthapuram. There were no pictures of Sir C V Raman, Prof J C Bose, S N Bose and the likes who took Indian science to new heights. But for ISRO, which co-sponsored the event, there would not have been a single picture of that prince of Indian Space Science, Vikram Sarabhai.

This is not the case with science alone. How many among our new historians are familiar with the works of the great Acharya Ramesh Chandra Majumdar, whose seminal work the

eleven-volume *History and Culture of Indian People* preserve and protect the great history of this great nation from getting tampered by the evil designs of people following imported and outdated ideologies?

Dara Shukoh, son of Shah Jahan, was the unsung hero of the Mughal Dynasty. Dara, the eldest son of Shah Jahan lived only up to the age of 44 years but left indelible marks in the history of the sub continent.

What makes him dear to the people in Mughal empire was his tolerance towards other religions and humane nature, unlike his younger brother Aurangzeb, who went on to become the Mughal ruler presiding over the kingdom till the ripe age of 89!

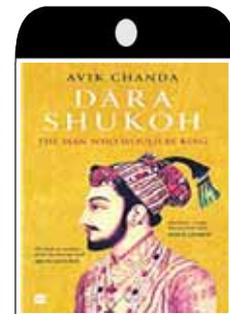
Aurangzeb was known for his hatred

towards Hindus and went on demolishing and destroying the Sanatana Dharma and its symbols like temples, ashrams and monasteries. Though the secularists tried to portray him as a philanthropist by hiring the services of Audrey Truschke to come out with a volume by name *Aurangzeb: The Man and Myth*, it fell all flat as she could not counter the eye witness accounts of Francois Bernier (a European physician and traveller in Shah Jahan's court) and Niccolao Manucci (a military strategist for Dara, who continued to work with Aurangzeb after the fall of the former).

Dara in his brief tenure as prince had got the Vedas and Upanishads translated into Persian and French and this itself speak volumes about his compassion for anything that originated in the

sub continent. Who in India would have heard about Bernier and Manucci if it had not been for S L Bhyrappa who in his famous work *Avanara* told the readers about the official eye witness accounts of these two Europeans? Avik Chanda, a business advisor with degrees from Delhi School of Economics, has taken from where Bhyrappa left.

Chanda's book "*Dara Shukoh: The Man Who Would Be King*" is a refreshing experience. Chanda gives the readers a bird's eye view on the life and time of Shukoh, the designated heir of Shah Jahan. Even as a young prince, Shukoh wanted the common man to know more about the Islamic saints and for that he opted words instead of swords unlike Aurangzeb and Tipu Sultan. "What Dara



DARA SHUKOH: THE MAN WHO WOULD BE KING
Avik Chanda
HarperCollins, ₹699

was striving for was not linguistic and literary brilliance but a tone of simplicity, an idiom that would induce faith in the reader who was a common man," writes Chanda (Page 51). Thus was born *Safinat-ul-Aulia*, an account of the lives of over 400 saints!

The account of Dara Shukoh once again underlines the fact that the Muslim invaders who occupied the thrones in New Delhi and elsewhere in the subcontinent chose this land only to loot and proselytise. The Sufi saints were Islamic evangelists who went ahead with their mission by singing about love and preaching the message of anarchy. Despite the fact that he belonged to the Mughal dynasty, Dara had some civility in his heart unlike his forefather Babar or sibling Aurangzeb. Those who are out to paint Aurangzeb with divinity may need more self styled historians like Audrey Truschke because we have writers like Avik Chanda for digging out the truth.

Dara Shukoh: The Man Who would be King is an ideal work not only for aspiring historians but for general readers interested in Indian history.

NEW ARRIVALS

MISSING IN ACTION: THE PRISONERS WHO NEVER CAME BACK
Chander Suta Dogra
HarperCollins India, ₹699

The story of India's soldiers missing in action is one that remains unfinished, a spillover of the wars with Pakistan. These are men who went missing in enemy territory while on daring missions during the 1965 and 1971 Indo-Pak wars. The nation has forgotten them, though successive governments continue to make token acknowledgements about their missing status. Over the last five decades, there have been scattered reports offering information piecemeal, but this is the first time the saga has been fully told. The result of years of research, the book unearths startling revelations that shed new light on the subject.

SO ALL IS PEACE
Vandana Singh-Lal
Penguin, ₹499

A richly atmospheric, deeply claustrophobic story with a stunning denouement, of two women confronting the everyday realities of their city and country. So all is Peace provides an unflinching insight into love, lust, fear, grief, and the decisions we make, through a cast of sharply drawn characters brought together by an unspoken wrong.

BIRDS IN YOUR BACKYARD & BEYOND
Arthy Muthanna Singh,
Mamta Neiry, and
Kausubh Srikanth
Red Panda, ₹299

An easy handbook on bird-watching for children and the uninitiated - take the journey with Binee into the magical world of Birds Colourful illustrations and information, interesting nuggets of information, practical things you should know and much more!

Raghupati Raghav on the Banjo

'There is no such thing as a wrong note as long as you can sing it,' Pete Seeger said, his gentle tone immediately endearing him to an audience that had spilled, recalls SHANTANU DATTA in his book. Excerpt:

They all sang along. With Pete Seeger it is difficult not to. Embellishing his selection with high-note harmonies by grandson Tao Rodriguez, Pete strummed his banjo and guitar to strike up the ever-popular *If I had a hammer* question, reminiscence Jose Marti's *Guantanamera*, count *J,2,3* on the *Vietnam Song* and run through the *Midnight Special*. But refuted there were stories, lots of laughter, more stories and a knee-slapping, foot-stomping jingle that had the 77-year-old bringing the house down with thunderous applause.

And they all sang along. The money tune came next. It was zesty, what with Tao's freewheeling harmonies aided by the snappy guitar rhythm: *...Money can still be handy too (but) let's not allow 'king money' to rule.*

The audience, essentially 30-plus, was loving it. "How does he do it?" "What energy, it's amazing... were all that the chattering classes could manage. But it was truly magical. How could one man, 77 years old, and helped only by a guitar and a grandson, captivate his listeners thus? And that too when there are none of the now-generation psychedelic pyrotechnics, no multi-coloured lights and no fancy bass-boosting sound system.

The truth is Pete doesn't need all that. He never did. For having spent over five decades

directing music towards social change for peace, equality and decency, his philosophy was always about heart-and-soul, and about the power of simplicity. No wonder they always sing along.

During the early '60s, after he was able to reorganise the Newport Folk Festival to use profits to help folk performers, he privately published *How to Play the Five-String Banjo* but refused to copyright the book because the 'banjo belongs to everyone'. Pete's humanity was so unusual it seemed threatening. Always a popular target of the US witch-hunt he was sentenced to prison and blacklisted during the McCarthy era-particularly suspicious was his custom of learning songs from every country where he gave concerts.

Back at Siri Fort, Tao held on to this tradition as he rendered an Argentinian song about god, war and the future. Pete was on harmony this time as the grandson's soul-stirring high-pitched singing had the audience fall head over heels. A standing ovation was the young man's reward.

A slow and soft tune on Pete's recorder helped the ever-cooperating audience hum one note for effect, which was then followed by what the Guru had picked up from an Indian student, *Ram Dhun*. Tao dwelled on the high notes once again as Pete celebrated his comeback.

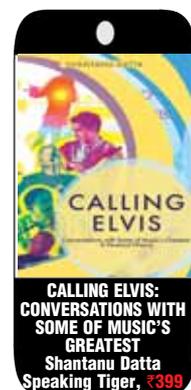
Raghupati Raghav Raja Ram/Patita Pavan Sita Ram... And they all sang along.



WE SHALL OVERCOME: Pete Seeger by E.P. Uhny (author's personal collection)

Over two hours had spilled by rather quickly. By then there were more songs with tabla player Ashim Chakraborty join-

ing the duo. But the audience was getting restless. Some of the favourites were yet to come. "Turn, Turn", someone screamed



CALLING ELVIS: CONVERSATIONS WITH SOME OF MUSIC'S GREATEST
Shantanu Datta
Speaking Tiger, ₹399

And they all sang along.

I learnt that song in Bangla in the '70s as a ten-year-old while living on a college campus on Beldola Road in Bhawanipore, hearing students sing it with zest, welcoming a group of families from Bangladesh who had fled the war of 1971 and had been sheltered there, courtesy my aunt, the principal of Beldola Basic Training College. Not sure if I grasped its true import then, but as the years passed I realised how my mother and I could well have been among them. Not fleeing war but finding ourselves without a roof over our heads after life in Agartala took an unexpected turn.

That song, an anthem really, would be heard on various occasions in Calcutta; at student marches protesting too few teachers in government colleges, at Left Front political rallies against the bourgeoisie Press or funnily enough, at residents' meetings to demand, not eight-hourly, but four-hourly, water supply from Calcutta Corporation and at a Dharmanita sit-in defence of the Bengal's inalienable right not to work and enforce a state-wide shutdown (bandh). Calcutta still loves a good protest. We had to take it on our stride. Still do.

But Delhi is way different. *Calling Elvis: Conversations with Some of Music's Greatest: A Personal History*, written by Shantanu Datta is published by Speaking Tiger

Trump's jamboree in Delhi for regional equations

The American national interest is served by US President Donald Trump's visit to New Delhi as both the nations are striving hard for a newly discovered "ally-hood" which might be a step towards a closer and a more fruitful relationship, as an aftermath of President Trump's visit to New Delhi which can be considered as significant summitry with all its ebullient expectations.

It was President Trump only, in the run up to the National Security Strategy Document in 2017, who declared that India needs to assume novae roles in the international system going by its rising pelf, geo-economic influence and strategic might. This gets well with the avowed ordering principle of "Vishva guru" which India adheres to as a functional aspect of its foreign policy though the dictum needs much more of an elaboration in the light of the ebb and flow of the tide of International Relations. Such an American perception will be the key theme when President Trump visits New Delhi.

Perceived in the context of President Trump's visit, a few pointers need to be elucidated. The foremost being the step which is much awaited in New Delhi that the US ought to disown the arch antagonist Pakistan and a kind of a reassurance to New Delhi can be given to Prime Minister Narendra Modi, though all military aid has already been curtailed to Islamabad. Secondly, New Delhi will air its concern about the outbreak of

coronavirus and also as an attendant fact, China's extended ministration in the Indian Ocean Rim-Association for Regional Cooperation (IOR-ARC) region and the Malacca straits should be another theme to be deliberated upon by the summities.

Also, PM Modi can insist upon President Trump that in the case of other peaceful nuclear explosions (PNEs) and in the context of the Civilian Nuclear Liability Bill, more of a clearer comprehension can be reached between the twin nations in New Delhi, which falls in the criterion of the of PM Modi being a "Good Friend," as elucidated by President Trump in one of his latest statement on the soil of the United States of America. Also, the Indian negotiators can look forward to a novae appreciation of the fact that India has waged a successful war against terrorism and a more practical and reflective collaboration can be materialised between New Delhi and Washington in tougher times to come. The deliberations might include the trade differences in relation with stemts, knee implants, information and communication technology products along with the cess which the United States imposes on the sale of Harley Davidson bikes in India.

Perceived in such an interesting and illuminating light, the entire world looks forward to the upcoming jaunt of President Trump to New Delhi as both he and PM Modi share special chemistry with each



other as has been evident during their various rendezvous. The Indian support to President Trump can be the order of the day on February 24, 2020, in relation to his electioneering in the American homeland. The summitry need not be dwelt upon as a promotional election event for President Trump, but, as a significant course corrective in the larger spectrum of the relationship between both the nations.

All in all and in toto, the negotiators from India and the United States are engaged fervently to reach a micro trade deal before President Trump lands in Delhi. If a well-nounced trade and investment quid pro quo is not arrived at by the twin interlocutors then a fledgling trade alliance is on

cards as a prologue to the President's jaunt to New Delhi. Such a biz takeover will be the cognizant quid pro quo in the commercial trust with each other. Also, despite the divergences in the context of aluminum trade and the retaliatory Generalized System of Preferences (GSP), both the heads of Governments are well suited to negotiate hard for trade deal in lines with the characteristics of shared values, democratisation and attendant principles of a liberal trade ecosystem. Also, President Trump would do well to heed the concerns of PM Modi. Also, as an attendant fact the United States is expected to discuss the idiom of protectionism which the New Delhi denomination is adhering to in the light of a cyclical domestic

downturn in the Indian economy. The US-based GSP refers to through the instrumentality of the US Customs and Border Protection that, "The Generalized System of Preferences (GSP) provides duty-free treatment to goods of designated beneficiary countries. The programme was authorised by the Trade Act of 1974 to promote economic growth in the developing countries and was implemented on January 1, 1976." It has been observed that a trade fight overshadows the dictum of the larger Strategic relationship in the specificities of the Trump-Modi meet in the Raisina Hill. The strategic collaborative exercise has germinated between both the nations since the last decade but this strategic partnership in the

context of the Asiatic Space and the Indian Ocean Rim nations is all set to be discomfited in the aftermath of a trade war like scenario between India and United States of America.

The US Trade representative, Robert Lighthizer is already negotiating a hard ball Indian negotiating side to ramp up the Presidential visit with a prized micro deal to serve it up for the American electorate which is also in the larger protectionist national interest of President Trump's blue collar America. The Indian concern at the Trump-Modi itinerary might be the chances of reprisals that New Delhi might have to confront if all do not go well with the larger trade talks in New Delhi. The allegation from the American industry and corporate is that India is still evading the liberal trade regime and ratcheting up the guillotine of strait-jacketed protectionism. The Foreign Policy, FP trade report, contends and informs us that President Trump is more concerned with the trade imbalance which the United States trade structure has with India and China, but that might be truer with the People's Republic of China, then, with India. As a recent U-turn, President Trump has indicated that no big trade deal will be signed between both the nations in his visit to India though his negotiators had done the spade work before the President's visit, which comes as a rude shock to the twin negotiating sides being engaged in trade negotiations. Though, the trade

deal which will be limited in context, aims to achieve waivers for the American farm products along with the homeland's dairy products, the refusal to ink trade deals points at the underlying tensions between both the nations. The US President has stated that he is looking forward to a limited trade deal while the wholesome agreement can wait for the future which might not augur well for New Delhi.

Apart from the trade optics of the Trump-Modi summitry, the diplomatic factoid of Xi Jinping ceremoniously inking trade agreements with Myanmar and establishing a deep water port in Myanmar, is a stately and crafty striving to sideline both India and the United States in the Indian Ocean Rim. It also aims at isolating India, which does not augur well for the United States, which now feels the squeeze of an overtly aggressive China in the contested waters of Indian Ocean. This theme, along with the threat for an Indo-US detente, might turn out to be a key part of deliberations in the President-Prime Minister summitry in New Delhi on February 25. Still, the epithet of being the "Tariff King" which the American President has utilised for India reflects the expected concessions from the side of the New Delhi fence as an aftermath of the February summitry.

(The writer teaches at International Relations and International Organisations, IIPA, New Delhi)

The entire world looks forward to the upcoming jaunt of President Trump to New Delhi as both he and PM Modi share special chemistry with each other as has been evident during their various rendezvous



MANAN DWIVEDI

PERSPECTIVE

Syrian endgame solidifies Assad's grip

Is there an alternative form of coalition, minus Assad, which can govern unstable Syria? It seems unfeasible, as the US and major powers involved in West Asia have seen the disasters that unleashed in countries such as Libya, Egypt, Yemen, and particularly in Iraq, after the departure of their longest-standing autocrats

The Syrian war is just going to complete nine years of devastation, displacement and a new power play in the restive West Asian region. The war that started in 2011 has witnessed for the first time the direct involvement of Russia at an equal pace against the US-led coalition. Though Bashar al-Assad has been threatened by anti-Government forces since the beginning, he has managed to survive till date. Now only the last rebel redoubt of Idlib is yet to be brought back to the fold of Government forces.

The biggest challenge is ending the ongoing civil war. It is one of the most serious humanitarian disasters in recent political history of the world, with the gravest refugee predicament since the World War II. More than half a million people have so far lost their lives. Almost half the population of Syria has been displaced. The number of refugees who have fled the country now exceeds five million, including more than 2.5 million children.

Turkey continues to host the largest chunk of refugees numbering nearly four million.

Looking at the current scenario in Syria, a completely war-ravaged nation, the worst comes for the internally displaced and for the refugees as they all would keep fighting for their survival. Normally a refugee is a person who is forced to leave his home and his country because his life and liberty are in danger. But the 1951 Geneva Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees describes a refugee as one person who, owing to well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion, is outside the country of his nationality and is unable, or owing to such fear, is unwilling to avail himself of the protection of that country.

However, this typical definition of refugees have been broadened to include people who are forced to leave their countries because of widespread violence, war and foreign occupation that has put



In this Feb 9, 2020, file photo released by the Syrian official news agency SANA, Syrian Army soldiers flash the victory sign in the village of al-Eis, in Aleppo province. Syria's civil war has long provided a free-for-all battlefield for proxy fighters. But in its ninth year, the war is drawing major foreign actors into direct conflict, with a threat of all-out confrontations becoming a real possibility

their lives at risk in their own homeland.

As of today, the Syrian refugees have crossed over to countries such as Turkey, Lebanon, Jordan, North Africa, Iraq, Egypt, the US, Canada and to large parts of Europe. And out of the total refugees those who are asylum seekers are about a million. And a large number of them are in Germany and the rest of them are spread across Sweden, Canada and in the US.

The cumulative loss to gross domestic product from the starting of the war, i.e. 2011, through the early part of 2017 has been estimated by the international agencies, including the World Bank, to an amount of \$226 billion. So far there has been no definitive cost of reconstruction worked out, but the Assad regime has wishfully mentioned it as near-

ly \$400 billion. Thus, rebuilding Syria would be a daunting task both for the Syrian Government and international aid agencies.

Today the victory of the Assad regime over the rebel forces across Syria is a reality. Mainly, the rebel-held strongholds and large swaths of territories in the southern parts of Syria have been retaken by the Government forces in recent months. The main cities under the Government control are Damascus, Homs, Hama, Aleppo, Latakia, Tartus, Palmyra and Albu Kamal. And the Free Syrian Army (FSA) — a loose organisation of armed brigades — was formed in the beginning of 2011 by defectors from the Syrian Army. Also many disgruntled civilians who want to topple the Assad's family rule had also joined the FSA. But what is striking is that since

the battle of Aleppo, the FSA has been only able to retain its control over limited areas in north-western Syria. The main area that it controls is the Idlib province wherein the final battle now is between the rebels and the Government forces.

On the other hand, the Kurdish forces have occupied much larger areas, than any other rebels, which include Raqa, Qamishli and Hasakah. In fact, reclaiming Raqa from the grip of ISIS was a historic win for the Kurdish Army. After the battle of Raqa, the ISIS has been confined to an area near Albu Kamal.

Unfortunately, these areas are surrounded by the Assad forces from the west and the Kurdish from the east. And the rest of rag-tag militias who are battling the Syrian Army for their survival are Jabhat Fateh al-Sham, Iran backed

Hizbollah and the Syrian Democratic Forces, largely dominated by the Kurdish Peoples Protection Units known as the YPG.

So far, more than five series of ceasefire agreements have been concluded between different parties, including the US, Russia, Jordan, Assad Government and the major rebel groups. It first started in 2016 by the UN known as the Geneva Syria peace talks. In fact by February 26, UN Security Council unanimously adopted Resolution 2268 that demanded all parties to comply with the terms of the agreement. As no single party had adhered to the terms of the deal violence surfaced once again. By the end of September 10, the US and Russia concluded deal bringing ceasefire between the Assad Government and an American

backed coalition of rebel groups. Both the parties and their allies violated the deal hence the war took an ugly turn.

The third peace agreement signed between Turkey and Russia in Astana led to complete ceasefire across Syria. This effort continued despite the non-participation of the ISIS, YPG and the al-Nusra Front and constant eruptions of violent clashes in different parts of Syria.

The fourth ceasefire effort came into being on May 6, 2017, among Russia, Turkey and Iran in Astana to divide Syria into four de-escalation zones. However, some rebel groups alleged that intention behind the truce is simply to divide Syria into several sectarian zones so as to escalate the crisis. In a way, such partition would allow the Damascus to divide the anti-Government forces and pound on them separately. And by July 2017, the Trump Administration, Moscow and Amman (Jordan) made an effort to broker a peace deal in southern Syria. This agreement is valid despite continuous exchange of fire between the Government forces and various rebels.

The war in Syria is definitely going to wind down. The reason behind it is that the rebels are fast losing their ground. Among them the most powerful ISIS which is almost dying down with its leader's death and mostly breaking down to splinter groups with diverse aims and objectives.

This is accompanied by constant reinforcements from Russia with man and material towards the Government forces. And in a situation where in America is busy preparing for the next round of presidential polls, Trump is hardly sparing anytime for a definitive solution in war-torn Syria. But the Kurdish stronghold in the North of Syria is going to continue unless there is a global understanding to either recognise their homeland or to completely vanquish them, provided Washington backs such a deal. All the anti-Government groups have now consolidated in the Idlib province. The sad part is that

all of them do not have a feasible strategy to fight the Russian-backed Assad force which might lead to a sure victory for Assad.

Finally, since the end of the Cold War, what we have seen is that ceaseless efforts led to end of most of the wars along with warring groups laying down their arms. With other major conflicts and international hot spots rising such as Iraq, Afghanistan, Somalia, Nigeria, Yemen, etc, the Syrian issue has been substantially moved to the sidelines despite having serious refugee problems spanning from the West Asian region to Europe. Besides, the efforts to bring the warring groups under a major powers to the negotiation table are seemed to be stalled. What is ultimately pushing Assad to near victory is the fast rising symptoms of fractured insurgency. On the other hand, the Government forces over the period of almost nine years have regained its strength despite having major setbacks in the past.

Now what lies ahead for Assad? Is he going to continue in the seat of power? Minus Assad, is there an alternative form of coalition that can continue holding onto the current level of stability in Syria? Certainly, Assad would continue for now. Simply put this seems not possible as the US and major powers involved in West Asia have seen the disasters that unleashed in countries such as Libya, Egypt, Yemen, particularly in Iraq, after the departure of their long held autocrats. Keeping this in mind, Assad must continue and his immediate removal could herald total anarchy in Syria. Clearly, no plausible alternative is emerging to Assad regime as most of the splinter rebel groups do not agree to a common agenda of governance. Their only aim is to have control over their own territory and assets, and fighting the corrupt Assad regime is just an excuse. Therefore, the brutal war may come to an end sooner or later, permanent peace seems to be elusive in Syria.

(The writer is an expert on international affairs)



MAKHAN SARKIA

YOUR WEEK AHEAD

MADHU KOTIYA



ARIES March 21-April 19
Bring positive changes in your lifestyle, and make efforts to improve your health situation. You need to exercise under an expert or go for nutritional education to make sure that you are eating better. Outdoor activities will draw your attention. At work, you will receive admiration from superiors and colleagues. The working environment will be friendly, cohesive and that would increase your efficiency. Promotion/hike in salary is indicated. Work on improving your knowledge and skills. On the personal front, you are strong, courageous and confident. At home, your domineering attitude could irritate others, and you may find yourself alone. This is the time to tame your tongue and bring compassion and concern for the loved one.

Lucky number 6
Lucky colour Purple
Lucky day Saturday



LEO July 23-Aug 22
Your physical strength is beyond comparison this week and you must be aware of it. Some of you may embark on an overseas trip or may get an opportunity to work, study, or live overseas for an extended period of time. You will encounter new experiences and welcoming hosts who will support you unconditionally. Overall, this is a good week. On the career front, an enhanced status, promotion or designation is on the cards. You can take important decisions related to your career as you are in a very sound and grounded position. The abundance of energy and self-confidence will give you a boost to move ahead. On the personal front, you may meet a romantic person. A good news is expected to come your way. Be open to exploring your feelings.

Lucky number 13
Lucky colour Brown
Lucky day Saturday



SAGITTARIUS Nov 22-Dec 21
You will enjoy good health and vitality this week. Those who are dealing with a serious illness, a new health modality or a healer will prove helpful. Stay positive and expect the best. It is important to share your spiritual understandings with others. Your life will improve immensely if you reach out. Career-wise, learn to delegate responsibilities, especially if you are overloaded with work. A dilemma at the workplace will demand action or decision. Analyse all available information before you arrive at a conclusion. In love, you are likely to question whether you and your long-term partner should stay together. You may choose to go your separate ways. Singles, this may be the time when you finally commit to settling down.

Lucky number 17
Lucky colour Grey
Lucky day Saturday



TAURUS April 20-May 20
Your health will be very good. You will feel exceptionally well and upbeat about your future. You need to consider ways to maintain your good health. You will enjoy peace, joy, and prosperity this week and would be filled with positive energy. Those who have recovered from a serious ailment must follow their routine consultation. On the career front, you need to watch out for any cheating. Make sure you are doing things the right way, often you will have nothing to worry about, even if someone is out to get you. In the matters of heart, you are not very vocal about your feelings. If you love someone, express it. Your introvert and individual personality is definitely not helping you get closer to someone you love. Trust your instincts.

Lucky number 19
Lucky colour White
Lucky day Tuesday



VIRGO Aug 23-Sep 22
You need time and quiet to connect with your soul and energies around. Health, vitality and inner vibrancy will fill you with energy and inspiration. Creative ideas will occupy your mind. Career-wise, there could be a moment which begs you to bring about some desirable changes. Those of you who are not satisfied with the current job, switching to a new job is likely. Good news: the job you find will be better than the previous one. Transfer to a desired place or changing locations are a possibility. On the personal front, you may meet an analytical mind. Make sure not to get pulled into silly debates. Do not ignore your loved ones. Take time out for them and show your concern. Let the heart speak louder than the mind.

Lucky number 11
Lucky colour Beige
Lucky day Sunday



CAPRICORN Dec 22-Jan 19
Let go of the past and any wrongs that you perceive were done to you, mainly if you are dealing with chronic medical issues. Letting go of your need to be right will go a long way towards helping you to feel better. Think positively. You may find yourself exploring ideas and spiritual directions that you never thought would appeal to you. Career-wise, you may be inspired to start a new creative project, take up an art class, or even dance. You see new potentials and allowing your creativity to flow. To those looking for a job, a suitable job offer matching with your profile may surprise you. For those in a committed relationship, it is best to handle situations in a traditional way. Those feeling suspicious about their partner, make a point to talk about it even if it is difficult.

Lucky number 12
Lucky colour Peach
Lucky day Tuesday



GEMINI May 21-June 20
You will enjoy happiness, good health and worldly pleasures. You tend to be enthusiastic. Carefully weigh and consider what others ask of you. You might consider taking a long holiday. Some of you may travel abroad. Some may even choose to stay at home in order to rejuvenate yourself. Practising yoga, meditation, cosmic healing or learning new interests is on the cards. Professionally, things are good. Don't take your initial success for granted. Enjoy what you have for the moment. Business is lucrative. On the relationship front, you need to analyse whether you are being realistic in love. Don't spend too much time in self-pity or wishing your life away. Put your anger in check.

Lucky number 15
Lucky colour Sky Blue
Lucky day Thursday



LIBRA Sep 23-Oct 22
Work towards good health and vitality. Plan your routine. Those of you like to dwell in solitude, it would be a good idea to reach out to others. At work, good news is indicated. You will get the benefits from the choices that you make. An 'out-of-the-blue' opportunity may arise. Your company may send you on a foreign assignment. This is a good time for those in the export and import business. You have the potential to crack the most difficult competitive exam and face the interview with confidence, if you have applied for a job. On the love front, those who are committed, you may find your workload or that of your partner interfering with the relationship. Make time and space for the relationship, regardless of your jobs, otherwise, things will suffer.

Lucky number 20
Lucky colour Mauve
Lucky day Monday



AQUARIUS Jan 20-Feb 18
You are a quiet and keen observer this week. Your perception about life will change sensing the positivity around. You will feel healthier than ever. Things will move along well, and hope will emanate – with good cause. Avoid obsession/passion this week. On the career front, you want your time and space. Take rest to emerge from those difficult times, perhaps the trauma of losing your job or financial and health worries. Stress and conflict with your colleagues will overpower you. This is not the time to make decisions, particularly when you are at your vulnerable most. In love, happiness and compassion is on the cards. The start of a new relationship, be it a friendship or a romance will bring a smile to your face.

Lucky number 2
Lucky colour Pink
Lucky day Sunday



CANCER June 21-July 22
This is the time for self-improvement. Be creative in your work and avoid stress. Follow a good diet and take adequate rest. Tensions of the past would ease off. Listen to your body and work accordingly. The spiritual journey proves to heal this week. Career-wise, this is a very good time to start planning long term, even if you are very young. Plan to work methodically. An intriguing business opportunity will come along this week. The investments you made in the past will fetch you good returns, and with interest. In love, confusion will prevail. Think calmly and carefully about what your deal-breakers are in a relationship. Be honest with yourself first, and then be honest with your beloved.

Lucky number 8
Lucky colour Magenta
Lucky day Friday



SCORPIO Oct 23-Nov 21
With your experience and maturity, you will be able to take charge of your life. Instead of being innovative, you need to adapt to the existing set of beliefs and systems that are already in place. Any new theory or fashionable trends will not work for you this week. On the career front, a foreign assignment may come up. There's a good chance that you are working far too hard for recognition and money. This is the time to remind yourself of your real value. In relationship, messages of love and affection will come your way. You will feel pampered and wish to rejuvenate yourself this week. Those who are single, a new suitor with whom you have a lot in common, and who is also very adventurous, may enter your life. Exciting times ahead.

Lucky number 18
Lucky colour Silver
Lucky day Wednesday



PISCES Feb 19-March 20
Do not run away from reality. It does not suit your personality. If dealing with a health issue, you need to look for another healthcare practitioner. Look for treatment outside your purview. Plan a vacation to natural surroundings to rejuvenate yourself. Avoid stress. On the career front, share your responsibilities as you may feel overstressed. Share your thoughts with your friends. Reflecting upon the past will help you prepare for the next phase. Review your past experiences and mark your learnings. All the pieces of the puzzle of your life are finally coming together. On the personal front, true love, balanced partnership, commitment, and all good things that most of us hope for in love and relationship, are yours to savour!

Lucky number 14
Lucky colour Green
Lucky day Thursday

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ASTROTURF
BHARAT BHUSHAN PADMADEO

Lord Shiva: Existence personified

This Friday, Hindus celebrated Shivaratri dedicated to Lord Shiva, popularly seen as one amongst the God-trinity of Brahma, Vishnu, and Mahesh (another contextual naming of Shiva). Hindus apart, who revere Him in highest esteem, Shiva now seems to be extending His charm even in the scientific world. He, now in his dance form (Nataraja), is prominently displayed at Perth laboratory, known for its particle accelerators engaged in exploring what they term as "God Particle". For, in their perception, Shiva's dance symbolises the play and interplay of cosmic energy streams, which progressively evolved into the manifest plural world. The concepts underlying Lord Shiva can be seen in different perspectives. For meditators, He remains the Adi Guru. In Nataraja form, he remains the guiding spirit of the classical dancers. Kashmir Shaivism carries on its metaphysical perception around Shiva. To me, He comes out as 'Existence personified'.

first picture Lord Shiva is seated in meditative posture on Mount Kailash. He is shown having lunar crescent over his head, almost bare bodied with just the private part covered with tiger skin. His poison fed blue neck is encircled by venous snakes. River Ganges flows down his matted hair locks. He is seen holding a trident in one arm, *Damru* (double headed hand drum) in another, rosary in the third, and the 4th palm in blessing mode. Being in meditative posture symbolises reflecting on the churning within, on the prospects of creation. As the rosary keeps circling, the life cycle keeps moving in succession. The blessing mode implies that all existences draw succour out of his inexhaustible potential.

In the second imagery, Lord Shiva, mounted on a bull, has in his entourage multitude forms of existences, some of them even weird and invisible. To name a few, divine beings, humans, devilish existences, animals, birds, goblins, and even invisible existences such as ghost etc. Symbolically, his entourage is indicative of the multipolar manifest world with all its enormity and diversity. This particular symbol stands for the dynamic world ever on the move at its own pace,



as would a bull moving at a constant pace mean. While pulling a cart, the bull moves unprovoked at a constant pace and would not stop in the way till it reaches a place designated for being fed and taking rest. After a while, the bull again takes the journey forward, and then finally reverts back to its normal place of abode after completing the voyage. The manifest world too, after being on the run for a specified time, reverts back to the primal source to acquire a restful state, when it gets recharged once again. Following which, out of the seeds of life withdrawn into primal-source, fresh creation cycle takes off.

Mount Kailasa, is one of the high peaks in the Himalayan range to which lot of perennial rivers are sourced, including the Ganges. It, thus, is closest to the cosmic world, simultaneously having all round view of life down below. Lord Shiva, with lunar crescent over the head, read together with his place of abode, the Himalayan range having in store perennial rivers, is symbolic of eternity, infinity.

The presence of lunar crescent symbolises the convergence of all nature driven forces. For, Moon's luminosity is drawn out of the light extended by the Sun, as well as all the planets and stars up above in the cosmos. But before all light

drawn out, flows down the line. Moon does its own stamping by turning them into an amiable form. Moon, thus, symbolises convergence of all nature driven energy streams.

With the play of *Damru*, the equilibrated state of the primal source gets shaken, when the primal sound note *Om* comes into play. Now going by the scientific perception, once there is entropy (disorder), it multiplies in geometric progression. So, it happened following excitation of *Om* sound. In the process, first came into play Energy-trinity – Sata, Rajasa, and Tamasa. Trident, it may kindly be noted is symbolic of Lord Shiva's creative power – the three challenges of the trident branching out of the base rod imply three dimensions of energies emanating from a singularity. The random mutation of the three that followed, led to multitude of differentiated energy streams. The harmony and symphony of these differentiated energy streams that followed, led to all creations, first up above in the cosmos.

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