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RATIONALITY

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ASIAN WRESTLING C'SHIP

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## Nationalism likened to Nazism: Bhagwat

PNS ■ RANCHI

Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) chief Mohan Bhagwat on Thursday said the word "nationalism" is nowdays equated with Hitler's "nazism" or Mussolini's "fascism" and it is better to avoid this word, stressing on using some alternative terms.

Bhagwat's remark came amid continued protests in several cities of the country against the Citizenship (Amendment) Act, which is branded by those opposing the CAA as a reflection of "Hindutva nationalism" that is detrimental to Muslims.

Besides, analysing the results of this month's Delhi Assembly polls, the BJP's ideological mentor RSS said in an editorial in its mouthpiece on Thursday that Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Home Minister Amit Shah cannot always help the BJP win Assembly elections.

Recalling an RSS event in the United Kingdom (UK), Bhagwat said, "During my recent visit to the UK, I was advised by an RSS worker not to use the word 'nationalism' as English is not our language and it could have a different meaning in England. It's okay to say nation, national and nationalism but not nationalism. Because it means (alludes to) Hitler, Nazism and Fascism



RSS chief Mohan Bhagwat addresses 'Sangh Samagam' at Ranchi College Football Ground on Thursday

(in England)."

Calling upon RSS members to connect with people irrespective of their caste, language, religion or region, Bhagwat said India's characteristic is to bind everyone in one thread following the principle of "Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam" (the world is a family).

"We (Indians) live for each other, not for ourselves. We believe that the world has made us and we have to give back to it. We look at the world with gratitude," he said.

Sharing an anecdote, he said, a Muslim intellectual from the country once went for Haj and was sent to jail on blasphemy charges for wearing a "locket". The then Foreign Minister, Sushma Swaraj, intervened and got him released within eight days, he said, apparently suggesting that everyone from India is considered a Hindu outside the country.

"...Because Bharatiya sanskriti (Indian culture) is also known as Hindu sanskriti, reflecting its values, ethos and

culture," he said.

The RSS chief also gave a call to make India a superpower.

Bhagwat said, "The aim of the Sangh is to unite Hindu society. The Swayamsevaks are dedicated to their aim. By feeling proud of the culture of our country we have to work to take the country to new heights. We have to make India a world 'Guru'. It is time to make India a superpower, but not like other superpowers that misuse their influence."

Continued on Page 4

## RaGa likely to return as Cong prez in April

This comes after many leaders call for full-time party president

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Rahul Gandhi is all set to be back as the Congress chief in the party's plenary session in April. Rahul had quit the post following the Congress rout in the Lok Sabha polls last year.

Congress Working Committee (CWC) had appointed Sonia Gandhi as interim president of the party in August last year. But as the unwell Sonia had to skip the party's campaign in the recent Assembly polls, the calls for Rahul to head the party have become stronger.

The Congress on Thursday said Rahul was a clear choice for the party president's post. Party sources said Rahul was the only contender, hinting that elections in that case may not even be necessary.

"Rahul has acceptability across the country and also the capability to lead the party," said a senior Congress leader. Several party leaders have called for the appointment of a full-time party president. On Thursday, former Union Minister Shashi Tharoor, who has been advocating elections



to the CWC, said, "I renew my appeal to CWC to hold leadership elections to energise workers and inspire voters."

"I was referring to my earlier call — eight months ago — for elections among the 10,000 party workers who constitute the 'AICC plus PCC delegates' list. These should be for the elected seats in the CWC as well as for the party presidency," said Tharoor.

Former MP Sandeep Dikshit has accused senior leaders of failing to find a new president because they are "scared who will bell the cat".

Reacting to the remarks, Tharoor tweeted, "What Sandeep Dikshit said openly is what dozens of party leaders from across the country are saying privately, including many with responsible positions in the party. I renew my appeal to CWC to hold leadership elections to energise

workers and inspire voters." Asked about the remarks made by Tharoor and Dikshit, Congress chief spokesperson Randeep Surjewala said the CWC will decide on the Congress chief post.

"If anyone has any doubts about this, he should kindly read the resolution of the CWC before giving any statements in public," Surjewala said.

"Instead of giving statements on social media and interviews in the media, if Sandeep Dikshit works hard in his own constituency and politically encash the work initiated during Sheila Dikshit's rule, the Congress will emerge victorious. It is my appeal to every leader like Dikshit that instead of giving knowledge to the entire country, they should first show the benefits of their own work done in their constituencies," he said.

Continued on Page 4

## CAPSULE

### TRUMP'S CONCERN ABOUT BLANDE OF TRADE: MEA

New Delhi: With US President Donald Trump claiming that India has not treated his country "very well" on the trade front, the Ministry of External Affairs said the context in which the remarks were made was balance of trade and there have been efforts to address the concerns. P5

### 'CHINA CAN'T OBJECT TO SHAH'S ARUNACHAL VISIT'

New Delhi: India on Thursday countered criticism from Beijing over Home Minister Amit Shah's visit to Arunachal Pradesh, asserting that it did not stand to reason and understanding to object to the visit of an Indian leader to a State of India. China had registered its objection to Amit Shah's visit to Arunachal Pradesh earlier in the day, claiming that India had violated territorial sovereignty and "sabotaged" political mutual trust with India. P5

### WHY CENTRAL VISTA CAN'T BE FACELIFTED, ASKS PURI

New Delhi: Union Minister Hardeep Singh Puri on Thursday said Government infrastructure, including the North and South Blocks, was built more than a century ago and there is no reason why the Centre should not go for a new-look Central Vista aesthetically while preserving the heritage. P5

### GERMANY KILLING: MERKEL SLAMS 'POISON' OF RACISM

Hanau: Chancellor Angela Merkel condemned the "poison" of racism on Thursday after a shooter with suspected far-right beliefs killed nine people at a shisha bar and a cafe in the German city of Hanau. P12

## Nirbhaya convict tries mental trick to escape death

Vinay moves court, seeks treatment for 'schizophrenia'

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

In what could be termed as another attempt to buy more time and delay the hanging of the four death-row convicts of the Nirbhaya gangrape and murder case, Vinay Sharma, one of them, moved the court on Thursday and demanded better treatment for his "mental illness".

The court has sought response from the Tihar jail authorities on a plea by Vinay, who through his counsel sought remedy for his claimed mental illness, schizophrenia and the injuries suffered in his head and arms.

Additional Sessions Judge (ASJ) Dharmender Rana directed the prison authorities to file its reply on the plea of Vinay on Saturday.

"Vinay injured himself by banging his head on his cell wall in Tihar Jail. The incident happened in jail number 3 on Sunday afternoon and he got



some minor injuries and was treated inside the prison premises," said a prison official.

During the hearing, the prosecution opposed the plea saying it was not maintainable. Counsel for Vinay told the court that he was refusing to recognise people, including his mother.

The plea claimed that when Vinay's counsel visited him in the prison on the request of his family members, he found that he had sustained grievous head injury, fractures in his right arm with plaster and was suffering from insanity, mental illness and schizophrenia.

Continued on Page 4

## No light at end of Shaheen Bagh tunnel?

As protesters dig in heels, mediators say resolution needed otherwise SC will act

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

The mediation attempt by Supreme Court-appointed interlocutors — advocates Sanjay Hegde and Sadhana Ramachandran — to persuade the Shaheen Bagh protesters to lift blockade of the Delhi-Noida main road remained futile for the second day on Thursday. The protesters patiently expressed their anguish but refused to budge from their day 1 demand that they would end protest only after the CAA is repealed and proposed NRC is shelved.

After holding talks with the protesters, Hegde and Ramachandran left for the day. It is understood they are likely to visit the protest site again on Friday to find an amicable solution to end the impasse. The road blockade has been going on since December 15.

Like Wednesday, Hegde and Ramachandran expressed their unwillingness to talk with protesters in the presence of the media. As Ramachandran started addressing the protesters surrounding the dais tried to suggest her on how to hold talks. It angered her, and she asked the mediators to leave the tent where the talks were to be resumed.

Ramachandran began addressing the protesters say-



Supreme Court appointed interlocutors — advocates Sanjay Hegde and Sadhana Ramachandran — during their visit to Shaheen Bagh in New Delhi on Thursday

ing, "Aapne bulaya, hum chale aaye (You called us and we are here)". Hegde said the SC has recognised their right to protest, but added "the rights of others have to be respected".

"When Shaheen Bagh has become an example of protests in India, let us set an example of a protest that does not disturb anybody. You all must be rest assured that we are here to fight for you. Don't think if you

change your spot, your fight will die down," Hegde said.

"We have seen many PMs come and go. Whoever comes in power and runs the country, sometimes some could be right and some could be wrong. Whatever you are saying the whole country and the PM are listening," he added.

Ramachandran said she is waiting for that day when the country's atmosphere will

change. Then an elderly man expressed his fear, "I am very scared... I am very scared for my children. Madam save me," he said. When Ramachandran asked him more about his fear, the man replied, "I am a single father. I will die but my children should get to live here fearlessly. My girls go to school where they are being told that you will go out of the country."

Continued on Page 4

## CM to take Melania on happiness course tour

SAPNA SINGH ■ NEW DELHI

Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal is likely to take the US First Lady, Melania Trump, on a brief tour of a Government school to help her get a first-hand experience of the "happiness curriculum" introduced by the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) Government, during her visit, along with US President Donald Trump, to Delhi on February 25.

The US First Lady is also expected to interact with students of the school.

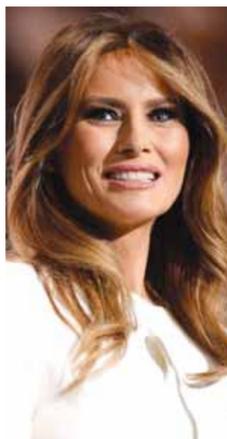
"Melania is likely to be welcomed by Kejriwal and Deputy Chief Minister Manish Sisodia," a government official said.

Trump, accompanied by wife Melania and a high-level delegation, will arrive in Ahmedabad early on February 24 for a little less than 36-hour-long trip to India. From Ahmedabad, he will travel to Agra before arriving in the national Capital for the main leg of the visit.

A visit to heritage site in Agra — Taj Mahal — is also in the schedule.

Melania is to visit the school when President Trump will hold talks with Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

The Delhi Government's "happiness curriculum" was introduced in Delhi Government schools two years



ago with an aim to reduce stress among schoolchildren. In 40 minutes of happiness class, meditation, relaxation techniques are imparted.

## To joggers' delight, Ashram to Naraina special corridor

GAYATHRI MANI ■ NEW DELHI

Jogging, cycling or long walk on the roads of the national Capital is fraught with danger due to the sheer volume of vehicular traffic. In its bid to ensure safe corridors for pedestrians, morning walkers and joggers, Public Works Department (PWD) has started creating a "separate and safe" lane for pedestrians and Non-Motorised Vehicles (NMVs) from Ashram to Naraina.

Part of the Delhi

Government's dream project "Street scaping, beautification and widening", the stretch will be completely redeveloped on the standards of American Road designs and architecture. The main agenda behind this project is to create a pedestrian-friendly road by making the people feel happy with green ambience and "zero" traffic hurdles while traveling on these roads. The total estimated cost of the redevelopment plan for this stretch is ₹75 crore, said a Government official.

The stretch from Ashram to Naraina barring Moolchand to Moti Bagh will be redeveloped, beautified and widened. The stretch will be developed on American standards with an aim to provide a pedestrian-friendly as well as disabled-friendly road. Encroachment and narrow roads are also

### Stretch to be redeveloped on lines of American Road designs, architecture

another issue on this stretch, which will be cleared," added the official.

As per the official, the proposal was passed by the Government last year but the project could not start due to the imposition of Model Code of Conduct (MCC) for the Delhi Assembly elections. However, the work on the stretch has started and is expected to be completed by December 2020.

AIIMS to Ashram is one of the identified and selected stretches from the 10 most congested roads of Delhi. Currently on this stretch, the



bus stops and pedestrian facilities such as FOBs and subways are in un-designated places, for instance far from the bus stop or very close to ramp of the flyover, which becomes one of the main reasons for accidents.

"Further, during the study of this stretch, the department found that there is no facility for NMV vehicles and pedestrians, termination of service lanes at junctions, parking are very close to intersections

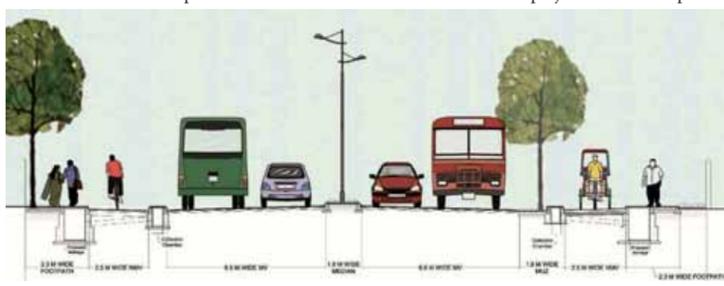
which hinder the movements. Moreover, due to the poor condition of the street, barrier-free movement becomes impossible," said the official.

"Thus, the PWD has decided to beautify and streetscape the roads by giving an aesthetic look and to provide maximum basic facilities to the road users as per the norms of United Traffic and Transportation Infrastructure (Planning and Engineering (UTTIPEP) and pedestrians can walk, jog and cycle without any fear," said the official.

Under the street-scaping and beautification of roads, the PWD will redesign and provide good infrastructure such as bus stops, separate lane for pedestrians, stands

for auto-rickshaws, cycles and e-rickshaws will be created. The official further said that public toilets, drinking water points, police booths, separate parking for police and emergency vehicles would also be provided. It has been deemed necessary to provide basic amenities to the people and also ensure cleanliness on the stretches.

Separate street vending zones, mohalla clinics, public canteens, maps, traffic signages, green carpeting and seating arrangements will also be developed. Once this project is completed, the outcome would be analysed and new such corridors would be developed in other parts of the city as well, the official said.



# Gangsters pump 40 bullets into rival

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

In a suspected gang war, a 30-year-old man was shot dead by four to five unidentified gangsters in Delhi's Rohini area on Wednesday night. Police said the gangsters fired around 35-40 rounds on the victim from a very close range. His bullet-riddled body was found lying on the spot. Preliminary probe has led the police to notorious Deepak Teetar gang and two of the assailants who were involved in the murder have been identified. Several police teams have been pressed into service to arrest the criminals.

The man identified as Pawan alias Anchil Thakur, a resident of Karala village died on the spot. Police said Thakur, who was lodged in prison for an attempt to murder case, had come out on bail earlier two months ago. According to a senior police official, the incident occurred around 9:30 pm on Wednesday night.

"Thakur was travelling in his black Scorpio in Rohini's Ladpur village on Wednesday night when a group of men in Hyundai i20 car targeted him. At least 35 to 40 rounds were fired. It seems to be the fallout of a gang war," said the senior police official.

"Thakur suffered many gunshot wounds and he died on the spot. The assailants fled



Pawan alias Anchil Thakur

in a getaway car from the spot after ensuring that Thakur had died. A passerby who happened to be around called up the police control room (PCR) about the incident following which police teams were dispatched to the spot," said the police official privy to investigation.

"Police has registered a case of murder and body of Thakur has been sent for autopsy. Police are also scanning CCTV cameras installed in the nearby areas to identify the assailants. The forensic team has lifted empty cartridges and same has been sent for the ballistic examination" said the police official adding that two assailants have been identified and raids are being conducted to nab the assailants. "During initial investiga-

tion it was revealed that Deepak Titar gang is behind the incident. This gang had a rivalry with Thakur. His younger brother is also found associated Dinesh Karala of Karala gang," said the sources. "Thakur in April 2019, had shot one Parvesh of Anandpur Dham in Karala village and police had arrested him in this case. Pawan's younger brother Sachin was arrested along with Deepak Majra and even his mother was jailed for assisting in an attempted case of case. He had come out on bail two months ago and it is suspected that Deepak Titar gang wanted to take revenge," said a police officer. Teams are raiding hideouts and killers involved in the shooting, have been identified, the official added.

## JESSICA LAL MURDER CASE

# HC seeks city Govt's reply on convict's plea for early release

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The Delhi High Court asked the AAP Government on Thursday to reply to a plea by Jessica Lal murder convict Manu Sharma, serving life imprisonment, seeking premature release.

Justice Brijesh Sethi asked the Delhi Government to file a status report in the matter along with the relevant records of Sentence Review Board (SRB). The court listed the matter for further hearing on March 30.

Sharma has sought direction to set aside the September 19, 2019 order of the competent authority which had accepted the July 19 last year recommendations of SRB rejecting his early release plea.

The petition, filed through advocate Amit Sahni, sought Sharma's release saying the authorities rejected his plea in an



unfair, arbitrary and whimsical manner.

It contended that Sharma was being victimised by the State and despite having undergone 23 years (with remission) in jail, his case was rejected four times. It claimed that he has been rewarded appreciations for his efforts through his NGO "Siddhartha Vashishtha Cheritable Trust".

"The petitioner (Sharma) has had an unblemished record throughout incarceration and there has been nothing adverse against him. His reformative

actions and efforts for helping children of jail inmates has been appreciated by the Lt. Governor of Delhi as well as the Division Bench of High Court of Delhi," the plea said.

Sharma, son of former Union minister Venod Sharma, was convicted and sentenced to life imprisonment by the high court in December, 2006 for killing Jessica Lal in 1999.

The trial court had acquitted him, but the Delhi High Court had reversed the order and the Supreme Court had upheld his life sentence in April, 2010.

Lal was shot dead by Sharma after she had refused to serve him liquor at Tamarind Court restaurant owned by socialite Bina Ramani at Qutub Colonnade in south Delhi's Mehrauli area on the night of April 30, 1999.

# 6-storey building tilts in Munirka, 145 evacuated



STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

A six-storey building in south Delhi's Munirka area tilted on Thursday creating panic among the residents. Police said a total of 45 tenants in the building and around 100 people living nearby were evacuated safely.

According to a senior police official, after the police were informed about the incident at 5.30 AM, police teams reached the spot.

"Teams of the Municipal Corporation of Delhi (MCD) and the National Disaster Response Force (NDRF) along with the Sub Divisional Magistrate were also at the spot and 45 tenants in the building were evacuated safely. As a precautionary measure, around 100 people living in nearby building were also evacuated," said the senior police official. "The building is situated in front of Jawaharlal Nehru University's north gate," he said.

# 500 students take part in SDMC nat'l municipal school games

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

In order to promote sports among students, South Delhi Municipal Corporation (SDMC) inaugurated first 'National Municipal School Games' at Dr Sahib Singh Verma Stadium situated at Kakrola.

Mayor Sunita Kangra inaugurated the event in which more than 500 students participated. Addressing the gathering, Kangra said that the event was organized to promote school games at a national level where students can showcase their sports skills and talent.

In the inaugural function, students from SDMC schools

presented different spectacular cultural and musical programmes. Chairman of education committee Nandini Sharma said that this municipal game will give an opportunity to the students to compete with students of other states and encourage them to participate according to their sport interest and abilities.

While giving the details about the event, she said students of other municipal corporations from across the country will also participate in various sports competitions like Throwball, Table Tennis, Volleyball, Chess, Football, Kabaddi, Kho-Kho, Rope Skipping.



# Hit by speeding SUV, biker clings to vehicle door for half km, dies

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

A 33-year-old man was mowed down to death by a Tata Sumo after being dragged for around half a kilometre. Police said the incident occurred on Sunday in Shahdara's Krishna Nagar area. Police said that they have arrested the 40-year-old accused and the vehicle involved in the crime has been seized.

Meanwhile, the video of the incident also went viral on social media sites. In the video Bansal can be seen hanging on the door frame of the moving Tata Sumo.

The deceased has been identified as Pradeep Bansal, a resident of Krishna Nagar, while the accused has been identified as Sudhir Kumar, a resident of Delhi.

According to a senior police official, on Sunday late afternoon when Bansal was on his way to his home in the area on his bike, he was allegedly hit by the SUV and in a bid to stop the car Bansal caught holds the left side window of the car.

"Bansal was dragged for around half a kilometre by the culprits until he fell and came under the rear wheels of the SUV," said the senior police official. "Bansal was rushed to nearby hospital where he succumbed to his injuries during the treatment. Police has recovered CCTV footage of the incident. A case under relevant sections of Indian Penal Code (IPC) at Krishan Nagar police station and police teams has nabbed the accused," the senior police official added.

# 27-yr-old held for killing man in Madanpur Dabas

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

The Delhi Police has arrested a 27-year-old man for allegedly killing a person over dispute of due payments in northwest Delhi's Madanpur Dabas.

The accused has been identified as Dilshad (27), a resident of Kasimpur village in Aligarh district of Uttar Pradesh. Police said the accused used to work in a factory in Rohini's Pooth Khurd village. He was arrested in connection with the killing of

Rajesh Kumar Gupta (40) on Sunday.

According to Jitendra Kumar Meena, the Additional Deputy Commissioner of Police (DCP), Rohini district, Gupta had gone missing from the Prem Nagar area on Friday.

"Two days later, his body with injuries to the head and strangulation marks around the neck was found in the bushes in Madanpur Dabas. Investigations revealed that Gupta was last seen with Dilshad," said the Additional DCP.

"Acting on a tip-off,

Dilshad was arrested from near a college in sector-22, Rohini. During interrogation, police found that Gupta was running a chit fund company and Dilshad was its member. Dilshad had taken money from Gupta but was not paying the installments due to financial constraints," said the Additional DCP.

"Gupta started pressuring Dilshad on due payments. Frustrated with his constant demand of paying the money, Dilshad hatched a conspiracy with his nephew Salim to eliminate Gupta. Dilshad bor-

rowed a mobile phone from his friend Feroz, a resident of Aligarh, and called Gupta for a meeting at Meer Vihar Sunday evening," said the Additional DCP.

"Dilshad also called his nephew Salim to reach the venue at the scheduled time. Both of them took Gupta to Madanpur Dabas where the three consumed alcohol. When Gupta was under the influence of alcohol, Dilshad and Salim hit him with bricks and subsequently strangled him," the Additional DCP said.

# Students demanding release of Kafeel, Tahir detained on march to UP Bhawan



Anti-CAA protesters are detained by the police at UP Bhawan in New Delhi

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

A group of students marching towards Uttar Pradesh (UP) Bhawan in National Capital demanding release of Gorakhpur doctor Kafeel Khan and Ulema Council national general secretary Tahir Madni were detained by Delhi Police.

While marching towards the UP Bhawan, the protesters raised slogans against the UP Government. "They were detained and taken to Mandir Marg police station," said a

senior police official.

However, another group of students arrived near the UP Bhawan with posters against the amended Citizenship Law and a countrywide National Register of Citizens. "They too were detained and taken to a nearby police station, said police.

"Around 65 men and 34 women protesters were detained for protesting outside UP Bhawan despite no permission. They were all also released after sometime," said a senior police official.

Kafeel Khan has been

slapped with the stringent National Security Act (NSA) and lodged in Mathura jail in connection with his anti-CAA speech at the Aligarh Muslim University.

Madni was arrested in Azamgarh on February 5 on the charge that the anti-CAA protesters he was leading used foul language against Hindus and Prime Minister Narendra Modi, while Kafeel Khan was held for allegedly promoting enmity between religions through his speech at a protest against the amended law at AMU on December 12.

# WOMAN'S BODY STUFFED IN SACK FOUND IN Gr NOIDA

STAFF REPORTER ■ NOIDA

An unidentified woman's body was found stuffed in a sack in Greater Noida on Thursday, with police suspecting that she was killed elsewhere and later dumped in Gautam Buddha Nagar.

According to police official, the body was found in the bushes along the Yamuna

Expressway near Murshadpur under the Dankaur police station limits.

"The body was found wrapped in a blanket and stuffed inside a plastic sack. The victim appears to be around 45-50 years of age. Prima facie, it

looks like she was killed elsewhere and her body was disposed here," the senior police official said.

"It appears that she was killed two or three days ago. Investigation has been taken up. Forensic teams have started examining the case and the body has been sent for post-mortem," said the senior police official.

# 4 turtles of rare species found in Kashmere Gate

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

The Delhi Police on Thursday recovered four turtles lying abandoned near Kashmere gate on Thursday. These three turtles are rarest of rare species and generally found in northeast India.

According to a senior police official, on Thursday specific inputs were received regarding the turtles near Municipal Corporation Delhi (MCD) parking in Mori Gate area.

"Acting on the specific inputs police team reached the spot and found four turtles, which were kept in a cardboard box in abandoned condition. The police team informed Wildlife Crime Control Bureau and inspection was done by them," said the



senior police official.

"Wildlife Crime Control Bureau identified three turtles (out of four) as 'Indian Tent Turtle' (Kachuga tecta tecta) which is listed in schedule I of Wildlife Protection Act, 1962," he said.

"These 3 turtles are of rarest of rare species. Possession of this species of turtles is strictly prohibited as

it a scheduled species as per Wildlife Protection Act, 1972," the senior police official said.

"So far there is no inputs regarding the person who brought them. Police teams are scanning CCTV cameras in the area to identify the culprits. Meanwhile, the turtles have been handed over to the officials of Delhi Zoo," the police officer said.

## NORTH WESTERN RAILWAY

**OPEN E-TENDER NOTICE**  
Divl.Rly. Manager, Engineering, N.W. Railway, Jaipur for and on behalf of President of India invites open E-Tender for the following works upto 15.30 hours on the date shown as below- Name of work with location: 1. ENGG-JP-2019-20-246. JP-Shifting of bore well & water pipe lines in 22 godam station in connection with Bais Godam/Sanganer- Provision of Stabling lines. Approx Cost of work: 13445790/-; Earnest money : Rs. 217200/-; 2. ENGG-JP-2019-20-247. Bandikui-Construction of 120 bedded staff barrack, 30 bedded ladies barrack & 20 bedded officers barrack for RPF training center. Approx Cost of work: 65264580/-; Earnest money : Rs. 476300/-; 3. ENGG-JP-2019-20-248. JP Div:Up Gradation of LC's No. 63, 72, 207 & 213 in Jurisdiction of ADEN/HQ/II/J.P. Approx Cost of work : 1751322/-; Earnest money : Rs. 35000/-; 4. ENGG-JP-2019-20-249. JP Division-Supply including AMC of Weld tester ultrasonic weld testing machine with supply of spares for a period of Seven year. (Modsonic or equivalents RDSO approved make). Approx Cost of work: 4028428/-; Earnest money : Rs. 80600/-; 5. ENGG-JP-2019-20-250. ADEN/RGS Sub Divn:- Remedil action required for miscellaneous deficiencies at existing LHS. No. 70, 73, 75, 81, 84, 86, 87, 90, 91, 94, 99, 104, 105, 106, 113, 114, 116, 117, 118, 122, 125, 126, 127, 128 And 129 in Jurisdiction of SSE (Work) RGS. Approx Cost of work: 37532333/-; Earnest money : Rs. 337700/-; 6. ENGG-JP-2019-20-251. JP Divn- Setting up of quick watering arrangement at Rewari station. Approx Cost of work: 2191039/-; Earnest money: Rs. 43800/-; 7. ENGG-JP-2019-20-252. Reconditioning of wheel burrs, scabbled rails, cup weld and low joints in the section of SPS/PW/RGS, NMIK, and AEL under jurisdiction of ADEN/RGS. Approx Cost of work: 8022774/-; Earnest money : Rs. 160500/-; 8. ENGG-JP-2019-20-253. Jaipur- Repairs of sewer line in Loco colony & Ganpati Nagar Jaipur. Approx Cost of work: 7592747/-; Earnest money: Rs. 151900/-; 9. ENGG-JP-2019-20-254. Jaipur Division - Conversion of SWR into LWR of loop lines - 35.20 Km in RPC section. Approx Cost of work: 25412642/-; Earnest money: Rs. 277100/-; 1. Other terms & condition will be shown on N.W.Rly website- [www.ireps.gov.in](http://www.ireps.gov.in) No any manual tender will be accepted. 2. Payment of earnest money deposit (EMD) & tender document cost (TDC) in respect of E-tendering should be accepted through net banking or payment gateway only.) The payment is to be made in favour of FA&CAO, NWR, Jaipur, other wise tender will not be considered. 3. Detail is available on N.W.Rly website- [www.ireps.gov.in](http://www.ireps.gov.in) and Notice Board in WA section, DRM Office, NWR/Jaipur. 4. Tender No ENGG-JP-2019-20-246 to ENGG-JP-2019-20-254 is to be closed on 12.03.20 at 15.30 hrs. and opened on 12.03.20 at 16.00 hrs. 5. Ms RADHA KISHAN YADAV, WARD NO-7, BHURA BADIGARO KI DHANI, TIGARIYA CHOMU, JAIPUR-303804 in Tender No. ENGG-JP-2019-20-250 shall not be participated. 198-AM/20

# Govt aims to reduce pollution by 1/3rd

Gopal chairs meet, asks officials to prepare action plan

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Setting a target to reduce one third of the pollution in the national Capital, in its third tenure of the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) Government, Delhi Environment Minister Gopal Rai on Thursday chaired a meeting with Delhi Pollution Control Committee (DPCC) officials.

Scientists, environmentalists and forest officials aired their views to prepare a comprehensive action plan to mitigate the impact of pollution. The Minister is expected to host another meeting with environment experts for assessing environmental solutions on February 27.

Curbing air pollution was one of the key agenda that AAP Convenor Arvind Kejriwal had promised to the people during Delhi Assembly elections. Kejriwal had listed its 10 guarantee schemes and had set a



Environment Minister Gopal Rai meets DPCC officials at Delhi Secretariat

Pioneer Photo

target to plant 2 crore trees across the city. Environment Minister will visit Washington University headquarter, near Major Dyanchand stadium to understand the process of obtaining 'real time air pollution data'.

Soon after his meeting with officials, Rai addressed the

media and said Delhi government has partnered with Washington University to obtain Real-Time data to monitor major air pollution source. "The environmental issues pertaining to Delhi have been a subject of constant deliberation and concern." "A lot of work has been done in

this sector, as a result of which the Delhi government has been able to reduce around 25 per cent of pollution levels in the city, along with the support of various agencies and the people of Delhi," said Rai.

According to Delhi government officials, a report prepared with Washington

### HIGHLIGHTS

- Rai will visit the Washington University HQ to understand the process of Real Time Air data.
- Sewage Treatment Plants (STPs) have been installed by the Delhi Jal Board to detect and monitor the causes of pollution of the Yamuna river.
- A Roundtable Conference will be held on 27th February in the Delhi Secretariat.
- Joint meeting of all agencies including MCDs, PWD, DDA and RWA will be held on February 28 where a plan will be discussed for the plantation of 40 Lakh trees in the city.

University on Delhi pollution source will be released in March this year

Elaborating further minutes of meeting with forest officials, Rai said, "I met with the environment department officials, DPCC scientists, forest department officials, to discuss the efforts taken by the Delhi government towards bettering the environment and the impact that it has created."

Rai mentioned about carbon rationing Odd-Even scheme and stubble burning in Delhi's neighborhoods during winters. "The implementation of the Odd-Even scheme has been a matter of friction since people believe that vehicular emissions do not constitute a major

part of the air pollution levels in Delhi." "Obtaining Real-Time Data is necessary to monitor the real sources of pollution at a particular point in time. Until we can gather information about the sources of pollution, we will not be able to devise any mechanism for reducing these sources," he asserted.

To tackle pollution issue, it is first need to learn that source of pollution because there is no generalised source and we cannot work on decreasing or eradicating this pollution in generalized manner, hence we need to obtain Real-time Data to devise an action plan to reduce pollution," the AAP minister added.

# Expedite setting up of more mohalla clinics: Health Min

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Delhi Health Minister Satyendar Jain held a high-level review meeting on Thursday and directed officials to expedite setting up more mohalla clinics, besides installing CCTV cameras inside diagnostic laboratories to keep an eye on alleged malpractices.

There are more than 450 Mohalla Clinics operational in Delhi currently. The Health Ministry is keeping a close check on operations of Mohalla Clinic. Delhi Health Minister Satyendar Jain also emphasized on the need to strictly monitor the availability of medicines.

According to a statement, Jain reviewed the working of mohalla clinics across the national capital and stressed on the need for digitising prescriptions for diagnostic tests through test referral reports. Since the number of

patients visiting Mohalla Clinics for diagnostics is rapidly growing, the Health Minister also emphasized on the need to digitize prescriptions for diagnostic tests through test referral reports instead of manual prescriptions.

"Digitization of prescriptions and reports will smoothen the functioning of the Centres. As the state-run healthcare facilities that offer free medicines and tests expand in number, the monitoring systems too will need regular upgrading, which the ministry is ensuring," the statement quoted the health minister as saying in the meeting.

A mohalla clinic is a neighbourhood facility for providing free primary healthcare to the city's resident's closer home. A typical mohalla clinic has a doctor, a midwife-cum-nurse, and an array of diagnostic services and essential medicines are provided free of cost to patients there.

## MURDER OF UNNAO RAPE SURVIVOR'S FATHER

# Court to pronounce verdict on Feb 29

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Delhi court will pronounce judgment on February 29 in a case of alleged murder of the father of a woman who was raped by expelled BJP MLA Kuldeep Singh Sengar in Unnao in 2017. The rape survivor's father had died on April 9, 2018 in judicial custody.

During in-chamber proceedings, District Judge Dharmesh Sharma has reserved the judgement after conclusion of final arguments by the prosecution and the defence, said a lawyer privy to the matter.

The counsel for the CBI examined 55 witnesses in support of the case and the defence examined nine witnesses, said advocate Dharmendra Mishra, counsel for the rape survivor



and her family.

The court recorded the statements of the rape survivor's uncle, mother, sister and one of her father's colleague who claimed to be the eye witnesses to the incident.

It had on December 20 last year sent Sengar to jail for "remainder of his natural bio-

logical life" in for raping the woman in 2017 when she was a minor. According to the CBI, on April 3, 2018 there was an altercation between the survivor's father and Shashi Pratap Singh.

The charge sheet filed on July 13, 2018 said the survivor's father and his co-worker were

returning to their village, Makhi, when they asked Singh for lift. Singh denied them the lift, triggering an altercation among them.

Singh called his associates, following which MLA's brother Atul Singh Sengar reached the spot along with others and beat up the survivor's father and his co-worker.

The survivor's father was subsequently taken to the police station by them and an FIR was lodged against him. He was arrested.

The charge sheet said that all this while Kuldeep Sengar was in touch with the district police superintendent, police station's in-charge Bhadauria. Later he also talked to the doctor who examined the survivor's father.

The court had earlier

framed charges against Sengar, his brother Atul, Makhi police station's in-charge Ashok Singh Bhadauria, Sub Inspector Kamta Prasad, Constable Amir Khan and six others in the case. The case was transferred to Delhi from a trial court in Uttar Pradesh on the directions of the Supreme Court on August 1 last year.

In July last year, a truck rammed into the car the rape survivor was travelling in with some family members and her lawyer. Two of her aunts died in the road accident.

She was airlifted from a hospital in Lucknow and brought to the AIIMS for better care as she continued to be critical. She has been given accommodation in the national capital and is under CRPF protection.

# Build grand Hanuman statue in Ayodhya: AAP MLA to urge Ram Temple trust

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) MLA from Greater Kailash Saurabh Bhardwaj on Thursday said he will make a formal request to the Ram Janmabhoomi Trust to build a grand statue of Lord Hanuman at Ayodhya.

Bhardwaj statement came days after he announced that recitation of 'Sunder Kaand' (a chapter in Tulsiidas' Ramcharitmanas, which talks about Lord Hanuman's visit to Lanka) will be held on the first Tuesday of every month in different areas of his constituency to seek the blessings of Lord Hanuman and Lord Ram. Bhardwaj said that he was receiving messages of people who wanted a Lord Hanuman Idol to be constructed at Ayodhya Temple Complex.

"Thousands of people have been sending me messages since we did Sunder Kaand



announcement. Crores of Hindus want a Lord Hanuman Idol at Ayodhya Temple Complex. It's a small & humble demand," he tweeted.

Bhardwaj said he will request the trust to build a "beautiful and grand" Hanuman statue in Ayodhya. "Hanuman ji is very dear to Lord Ram. It is seen that wherever you have a Ram temple, there is Hanuman because every Ram temple always consists of a Ram Darbar which includes Ram, Lakshman, Sita and Hanuman," he said.

Bhardwaj said a recitation of 'Sunder Kand', the fifth of the seven chapters of Ramayana originally written by Valmiki that talks about Hanuman's visit to Lanka, will be held on the first Tuesday of every month in many areas of his constituency.

Following suit, former Ghonda MLA Shri Dutt Sharma said an Aam Aadmi Bajrang Dal committee will be established and through the committee 'Sunder Kand' recitations would be held.

"I have been holding the 'Sunder Kand' prayers for the past few years but through formation of this committee we aim to do it at a larger scale," Sharma said.

The ruling AAP was trolled by the BJP over Delhi Chief Minister and AAP national convenor Arvind Kejriwal's frequent visits to the Hanuman Temple during his election campaign.

# Man killed over monetary dispute



STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

A 29-year-old man involved in multiple cases of robbery and theft was allegedly killed by unidentified people following a quarrel over a monetary dispute in south-east Delhi's Sunlight Colony on Thursday.

The deceased identified as Rakesh, a resident of Sidhharth Basti, is registered as a 'Bad Character' at the Sunlight Police Station.

According to R P Meena, the Deputy Commissioner of Police (DCP), Southeast district, police were informed about the incident at around 4 pm. Upon reaching the spot, they found blood stains on the street and learnt that the injured man was taken to a nearby hospital.

# NMC in dire straits, release due funds: Mayor to Kejriwal

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

North Delhi Municipal Corporation's (NMC) Mayor Avtar Singh has written a letter to Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal, asking him to release funds due to the corporation. Congratulating Kejriwal on being re-elected as Chief Minister of Delhi, he said that many departments of North DMC are facing financial problems due to non release of grant funds from Delhi Government.

"NMC is currently going through the phase of financial crisis due to which some departments are facing extreme shortage of funds due to which they are unable to perform their duties," he said.

Mayor said that the North Corporation is also an autonomous body of Delhi which works in larger public interest and for carrying out works, timely release of grant by the Delhi Government is required.

"The Delhi Government should stand above party politics and build



cooperation among union, state and local bodies for public interest," he added.

Meanwhile, welcoming Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal's comment about cooperating with the Centre for the city's development, senior BJP leader Vijay Goel urged him on Thursday to immediately release funds due to the municipal corporations and implement the Ayushman Bharat scheme.

The BJP will cooperate with the AAP government for the holistic development of Delhi, he said at a press conference. "I hope he will implement good things he talked

about in his swearing in ceremony at Ramlila Maidan," the BJP Rajya Sabha MP said.

By believing that Kejriwal would be impartial, Goel said, he would like to urge the chief minister to pay the dues to the municipal corporations "running into thousands of crores of rupees". He also expected the chief minister to meet the Lok Sabha MPs from Delhi at regular intervals to discuss development of the city.

All the seven Lok Sabha MPs in Delhi are from the BJP. Also the three municipal corporations in the national capital are ruled by the saffron party.

"If he (Kejriwal) wants to cooperate with the Centre, he should immediately implement Ayushman Bharat scheme and PM Awas Yojna. Also, he should try to solve the problem of dirty water supply by taking help of the Centre and the municipal corporations," Goel said.

The former Union minister also requested Kejriwal to hold 'Janta Darbar' to meet people and solve their problems.

# BSES using drones to detect power theft

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

With an aim to provide reliable power supply to its customers, the BSES discoms has started using drones to map distribution assets, detection of power theft, inspection of rooftop solar installations and overhead lines and equipment, grid-substations, damaged switches, capacitors and for other purposes.

A senior BSES official said that this will provide BSES' field teams, literally with a bird-eye view of the potential problem areas (physical condition of the assets and hot-spots) and helping it to take preventive actions by timely flagging irregularities.

The official said that BSES Yamuna Power Limited (BYPL) and BSES Rajdhani Power Limited (BRPL) have undertaken projects for visual and thermal mapping of the distribution infrastructure. "The



drones were fitted with high definition camera for visual inspection and an infra-red camera for thermal imaging for identification of the hot-spots for the same purpose," he said. Announcing the move,

BSES spokesperson said, "We continuously look for state-of-the-art technologies and innovations that help us serve our over 43 lakh customers better. Successful adoption of drone technology is a huge step in

preventive maintenance exercise, critical for ensuring reliable power supply".

The technology is also used for accurate assessment of rooftop solar potential and dealing with vegetation encroach-

ment around power infrastructure. A programme has been drawn for using drones to monitor the health of the electricity network, including high voltage lines and grid sub-stations.

The BSES has collaborated with Garuda UAV, a leading drone service provider for visual and thermal mapping of the electrical infrastructure, along with end-to-end solutions for maintenance and planning, he said.

In BSES Yamuna Power Limited (BYPL) areas, inspections were undertaken over a 45-day period at BYPL's Vivek Vihar grid and the EHV Circuit between the Vivek Vihar and Patparganj grid in East Delhi, he said.

"Through thermal scanning, drone assessment was able to determine health of the network and identify several hot-spots, which if unchecked could have caused problems in subsequent months. It was also able to determine the physical

condition of the towers and identify deterioration," he said.

A pilot project at the 66 kV Paschim Vihar Grid station, along with two-towers of 66kV Bodella 1 - Paschim Vihar Circuit 1 and 2 and 33 kV Mukherjee Park Circuit 3 near Chaukahndi, were undertaken in BSES Rajdhani Power Limited (BRPL) was undertaken using drones, he said.

Timely detection of potential trouble spots and issues plays a crucial role in the ensuring reliable power supply. Though BSES has a very robust system of undertaking preventing and predictive maintenance of its distribution network, the use of drone technology will be a force multiplier in its arsenal.

BRPL and BYPL are premier power distribution companies and Joint Ventures between Reliance Infrastructure Limited and GoNCT Delhi.

# Bookie Sanjeev to be grilled in Tihar jail till Feb 28: HC

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

The Delhi High Court on Thursday permitted the Delhi Police to interrogate Sanjeev Chawla, alleged bookie and key accused in one of cricket's biggest match-fixing scandals that involved former South African captain Hansie Cronje, in Tihar Jail only till February 28.

Justice Anu Malhotra said Chawla, who was extradited from the UK on February 13, will remain lodged in Tihar Jail during the trial and conviction, if any, of the case, as per the assurance given by the Indian Government to the foreign authorities.

The court also said that the interrogation will be allowed



only till February 28, after which the period of 15 days of his arrest would come to an end. It said after this period no further interrogation of Chawla in relation to this case can be granted.

"Investigating agency in the matter is permitted to conduct the interrogation of the petitioner (Chawla) at the Tihar Jail complex only in terms of the timeline stipulated in terms of Section 167 (2) of the CrPC," the court said in its 76-page judgment pronounced in the evening.

# India needs to invest \$109 bn to halve road fatalities: WB

**Washington:** India needs to invest an estimated extra USD 109 billion in road safety over the next decade to halve its crash fatalities, the World Bank said in a report released on a day when at least 35 people were killed in four separate accidents in the country.

The bank said such an investment will bring economic benefits equivalent annually to 3.7 per cent of the GDP.

The report titled "Delivering Road Safety in India" was released at the Third Global Ministerial Conference on Road Safety in Stockholm. It points to the high death rate on India's roads caused by chronic lack of investment in systemic, targeted, and sustained

road safety programmes and identifies relevant investment priorities to reverse the trend.

India has one of the highest rates of road crashes in the world. Every year, about 150,000 people lose their lives on India's roads, and more than five times that number are injured or maimed for life, the report said.

The national highways alone claim one life a year for every two kilometers. This is ten times higher than the developed country threshold. Road crashes also impact economic growth, costing the economy between 3 to 5 per cent of GDP a year, it said.

At least 20 people were killed and several injured seri-

ously when a bus collided with a container lorry near Tamil Nadu's Avinashi town in Tirupur district in the early hours on Thursday.

Six people were killed and seven injured when their car rammed into a stationary truck in Maharashtra's Chandrapur district on Thursday.

In another accident in Jammu and Kashmir, five members of a family were killed when their car rammed into a stationary truck on the Jammu - P a t h a n k o t Highway in Samba district on Thursday.

Four persons were killed when a tractor turned turtle in Chhattisgarh's Bastar district on Thursday.



Given the rising trajectory of crashes in India, the report calls the country's recent enactment of the Motor Vehicles (Amendment) Act, 2019 as an important step towards reducing road crash fatalities.

Part of a regional report, "Road Safety in South Asia: Opportunities for Shared Regional Initiatives," the World Bank in its report calls for regional initiatives to make roads and vehicles safer, even while making national-level actions a top priority.

"Years of rapid economic growth in South Asia, followed

by a steep rise in vehicle ownership have led to mounting traffic deaths and contributed to lost economic opportunities," said Hartwig Schafer, World Bank Vice President for South Asia.

"South Asia's road safety crisis is unacceptable but preventable. The good news is that South Asian countries recognise the urgent need to protect their people, save lives, and sustain their journey toward greater prosperity. We at the World Bank stand ready to support their efforts," said the World Bank official.

Towards this, the report suggests countries should collaborate on making regional trade corridors safer.

All categories of road users and vehicle types - animals, pedestrians, bicycles, rickshaws, motorcycles, motorized three-wheelers, cars, minibuses, buses, mini trucks, trucks, and agricultural vehicles - are represented in these corridors with narrow lanes, limited or no shoulders, and inadequate pedestrian facilities, it said.

According to the World Bank, the road safety conditions on these corridors mirror the nature and scale of conditions prevalent on national highways.

Crash data collected in a sample of highway sections across Nepal, India, and Bangladesh reveal alarming annual fatality rates ranging

from 0.3 to 3 deaths per kilometer, at a yearly average of 0.87 fatalities per kilometer.

"In India, 34.5 per cent of fatalities in 2016 resulted from crashes on the National Highways, which comprise only 1.79 per cent of the country's total road network," the report said.

"Historically, when countries reached motorisation levels of between 50-100 vehicles per 1,000 people, road crashes became one of the leading causes of death and injuries. Improving road safety was then recognised as a national development priority," said Arnab Bandyopadhyay, Lead Transport Specialist, World Bank.

## 7 held in Dalit thrashing incident, protests in Rajasthan Assembly

**Jaipur:** Seven people were arrested for beating and torturing two Dalit men in Rajasthan's Nagaur district, an incident that triggered protests in the state assembly and condemnation by political leaders on Thursday.

Apart from the seven arrested, seven others have been detained in this connection, police said.

DGP Bhupendra Singh said the Heinous Crime Monitoring Unit (HCMU) will monitor the case and it will be taken up under the case officer scheme for speedy investigation.

The police said IG Human Rights, Bipin Kumar Panday has been sent to Nagaur for a detailed investigation into the incident. Congress leader Rahul Gandhi earlier in the day termed the torture of the Dalits as "horrific and sickening" and

asked his party government in the state to take immediate action to bring the perpetrators to book.

"The recent video of two young Dalit men being brutally tortured in Nagaur, Rajasthan is horrific and sickening. I urge the state Government to take immediate action to bring the perpetrators of this shocking crime to justice," he tweeted.

According to the police, the incident took place on February 16 at a motorcycle service agency in Karanu village falling under Panchodi police station area. The staffers of the agency attacked the Dalits after accusing them of committing theft.

The brutal incident came to light after a video of the assault went viral. In the video, a group of men is seen thrashing two persons with rubber

belts. They later torture one of the victims by pouring petrol on his private parts with a piece of cloth wrapped on a screw-driver.

"Seven people have been arrested after registering a case against them under various sections of IPC and the SC/ST Act. A cross FIR has also been registered for stealing money. We are ascertaining how much money was stolen from the service agency counter. Further investigation in the matter is on," DSP Nagaur, Mukul Sharma said.

The police said section 308 of IPC (attempt to commit culpable homicide) has also been added in the FIR.

The arrested accused have been identified as Bhim Singh, Imaan Singh, Hanuman Singh, Raghuveer Singh, Chhail Singh, Chhatar Singh and Rehmatalah.

## NPR is big threat to Muslims, says Jamiat Ulema-I-Hind

**Mumbai:** The Jamiat Ulema-I-Hind (JUIH) on Thursday opposed the upcoming National Population Register (NPR) exercise, saying it is a "big threat" to Muslims, who have been living in the country for centuries.

The NPR exercise will be carried out across the country along with the house listing phase of the Census 2021 from April 1 to September 30, 2020. It is mandatory for every usual resident of India to register in the NPR. The objective of the NPR is to create a comprehensive identity database of every usual resident in the country.

JUIH president Maulana Syed Arshad Madani said they do not have any problem with the NPR if it is conducted in a way that is similar to Census since 1951, but it has now acquired a different form and meaning.

Addressing a press confer-

ence at the Mumbai Marathi Patrakar Sangh here, Madani alleged the Central Government is engaging in "politics of hate" for the past few years.

"The world knows the Government is sowing the seeds of hatred for the past eight years. We have a threat from the survey officer of that Government as we will never get our rights," he said. Madani said the NPR-NRC project is part of the Central Government's communal agenda to transform India into a Hindu nation.

"The NPR-NRC is part of a larger communal agenda to isolate and alienate Muslims and make India a Hindu nation. They want to polarise the society," he said. "When the Constitution guarantees equal rights to all citizens, irrespective of their religion, caste, language, region, the agenda behind the CAA-NRC-NPR is very clear," the JUIH chief said.



Workers fix tiles near the fountains at Taj Mahal, ahead of US President Donald Trump's visit in Agra on Thursday

## Tell people about surgical strike: Nath to Modi

**Chhindwara (MP):** Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister Kamal Nath on Thursday asked Prime Minister Narendra Modi to tell people something about the surgical strike, and sought to know why he does not speak about issues related to unemployed youths and farmers.

Nath also dared Modi to name at least one freedom fighter from his party- BJP.

He was addressing people after inaugurating a shelter for stray cattle at Umarhar village here.

"He (Modi) says that he carried out a surgical strike.

Which surgical strike?...Ninety thousand Pakistani jawans had surrendered during (former prime minister) Indira Gandhi's regime. Do you remember these things? They don't talk about it," he said.

"Tell the countrymen something about the surgical strike...Today you are talking about nationalism. Which lesson is being taught to us?" he asked.

"Modiji tell us the name of one freedom fighter in your party. There is no freedom fighter with them. And we are being taught nationalism!" he

said.

"(You) want to divert attention. This jugglery, which has been played out too much, is now over," he said.

The elections in Haryana, Maharashtra, Jharkhand and Delhi have showed that people have understood Modi's jugglery, the chief minister added.

"People can be misled once, but not often. What all is Modiji talking? Our biggest challenge is the future of youths, who are the country's future," he said.

"But Modiji is not talking about young people...He does

not talk about justice to farmers. Did you hear Modiji talk about youths and farmers in last six to eight months.

"Modiji used to talk about providing employment to two crore youths annually, but even two lakh youths haven't got employment. Modiji used to talk about turning farming into a profitable business," he added. "I want to ask a question about it...But now you would start talking about Pakistan. Has he come to teach a lesson on Pakistan to us? Will he talk about Pakistan with us...With the Congress?" Nath asked.

## Firing on Mangaluru anti-CAA protesters: 176 cops summoned

**Mangaluru:** Notices would be served on 176 police officers and staff to appear for hearing on the December 19 firing on anti-CAA protesters in the city, Udupi deputy commissioner G Jagadeesha, conducting the magisterial probe into the incident, said on Thursday.

Addressing reporters here, he said officials, including the city police commissioner PS Harsha, would be summoned to depose on the violence which led to police firing that killed two persons. Mangaluru

(north) assistant commissioner K U Belliappa, who is the nodal officer for the police department, has given a list of 176 policemen who are ready to adduce evidence in the hearing.

The police officers would be summoned in phases. The next hearing is on February 25.

He said so far, 203 members of the public have deposed before him on the incident.

Former city mayor K Ashraf, who is under treatment in hospital, has also provided a

written statement.

The remaining members of the public can provide evidence during next hearings, he said. On December 19, two persons were killed in police firing as protests against the Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA) turned violent here.

The protesters had attempted to besiege the Mangaluru north police station and tried to attack police personnel, following which force was used to disperse them, police had said.

## Vanvasi Raksha Parivar Foundation to hold 'Kumbh' on February 23

**New Delhi:** The Vanvasi Raksha Parivar Foundation will organise "Vanvasi Raksha Parivar Kumbh" at the Indira Gandhi Indoor Stadium, New Delhi on 23 February 2020, Sunday.

In this, 11 states of the country and Delhi-NCR and surrounding metropolitan cities would be participating.

Virendra Kumar, the organization's in-charge of the foundation, told reporters at Press Club of India, New Delhi, that under the Vanvasi Raksha Parivar Foundation single campaign, the religious identity of the forest dwellers settled in 4 lakh villages of the Vanvasi tribe and backward areas of the country, self-respect, is dedicated to reinforcing the spirit of self-reliance and nationalism.

Today, the organisation has rite centers in 70 thousand villages in the country.

The work of awakening and empowerment of Vanvasi society is going on continuously. 101 Rashtriya-Raksha-Yagna, Seminar, Harmony Sambandh were organized in Delhi-NCR to ensure the participation of a large number of people in Kumbh and to make them aware of the Foundation's work. Its purpose is to connect the urban society with the problems of forest areas. Vanvasi Raksha Parivar Kumbh is being organized to attract the attention of enlightened society towards poverty, illiteracy and conversion of forest dwellers.

Convener of Kumbh 2020 Hemant Batra informed that information about the work being done by the Foundation in the forest dweller area in Kumbh will be given.

## Allahabad court slaps fine on forest officer for delay in framing rules for tigers' protection



**Lucknow:** The Allahabad High Court has asked the principal secretary (forest) to pay a fine of Rs 25,000 for the delay in preparing UP Special Tiger Protection Service rules and wasting time of the court.

A Lucknow bench of justices MN Bhandari and Manish Kumar passed the order on a pending PIL moved in 2016 for protection of tigers.

The Tiger Protection Force was constituted way back in 2013 but the rules have not been framed till date.

On January 7, 2020, the court had issued directions for completing process of preparing the rules, else the principal secretary forest and Chief Conservator of Forest/Field Director of Dudhwa Tiger Reserve Kheri, Sanaji Kumar would appear before it.

Kumar appeared before the court and informed it that the rules were not framed as yet.

When the court inquired about the principal secretary, the government lawyer intimidated the court that he was busy in the assembly.

Angered on this, the court intended to issue him contempt

notice. But the bench was apprised that the principal secretary was on the way to appear before the court and it was requested that the petition may be taken up after half an hour.

The bench said, "The court cannot run on the dictum of the officer rather the principal secretary was required to remain present when the case was called".

The court granted the principal secretary time on the condition of paying fine of Rs 25,000 for his default and wasting the court's time. The cost would have to be deposited with the State Legal Services Authority, Lucknow within 15 days.

Later, the principal secretary appeared before the court and informed it that the process of framing rules was taking time due to involvement of other departments like finance, personnel, home and legal.

He sought three months to complete the process. Accepting his request, the bench granted him three months to prepare and place the rules for approval before the cabinet.

## Religion teaches us harmony, not divide & rule policy: Mamata

**Kolkata:** West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee on Thursday said religions have taught India to live in harmony and not take recourse to divide and rule.

The spirit of harmony was preached by Ramakrishna Paramahansa, Swami Vivekananda, Guru Nanak, Lord Buddha, Gandhiji and Netaji and others, she said.

"They have said we love a united India and we don't divide each other. We have travelled with so many gods and goddesses. From the period of Renaissance to the freedom movement, our Hindu religion is universal," Banerjee said at a programme of the Bharat Sevashram Sangha.

"Hindu religion has taught us that we can't close our doors to others. It has taught us to greet everyone with open arms

and also to show restraint and tolerance," she said.

The Trinamool Congress chief who had been severely critical of the Centre's move on citizenship said, "Our nation's welfare is our welfare. Our strength lies in unity in diversity."

Taking a jibe at the BJP, she said religion does not mean only loud sermons. It teaches men to honour women and sisters, the chief minister said.

In 2018, Banerjee said, she wanted to go to the US on the occasion of 125 years of Swami Vivekananda's historic speech at Chicago. "I was informed that the programme had been cancelled due to unavoidable circumstances. I know that pressure was created on the organisers as I had expressed my desire to visit that place," she claimed.

## RaGa likely to return as Cong prez in April

**From Page 1**

After the Congress was decimated in the just concluded Delhi Assembly elections, the question of leadership is being raised from within the party.

A senior Congress leader said that if Rahul Gandhi had been president, the result could have been better in Haryana and Maharashtra. "Since Soniaji was not mostly unwell, there has been a leadership vacuum and that affected the party's performance," he said.

Earlier in 2017, Rahul Gandhi was elected president unopposed following demand from different quarters of the party, but after the drubbing faced by the party in the 2019 general elections that saw the Congress barely getting over 50 seats, losing out to even being called the Opposition, the Gandhi scion resigned.

## No light at end of Shaheen...

**From Page 1**

Another man, while talking to the interlocutors, said, "I have a national flag on my bicycle. We love this country and stop calling us traitors."

On Monday, the Supreme Court observed that the blockade of the road at Shaheen Bagh was "troubling" and suggested the protesters go to

another site where no public place would be blocked. It, however, upheld their right to protest.

The apex court also asked Hegde to "play a constructive role as an interlocutor" to persuade the protesters to move to an alternative site. It said the interlocutors could seek former bureaucrat Wajahat Habibullah's assistance.

## Nirbhaya convict tries...

**From Page 1**

"Vinay could not identify his counsel and his mother in jail," it said.

The petition further claimed that he was having decreased sleep for a long time and was referred to senior psychiatrist in view of drug dependence.

The court had on February 17 issued fresh death warrants for March 3 at 6 am against the four death row convicts in the Nirbhaya gang rape and murder case.

It had issued fresh warrants against death row convicts -- Mukesh Kumar Singh (32),

Pawan Gupta (25), Vinay (26) and Akshay Kumar (31). This is the third time that death warrants have been issued against them.

A senior prison official said that Vinay is irritable in nature and acts different from the other three convicts. His nature is different from the other three.

A Delhi court on Monday ordered that Mukesh Kumar Singh (32), Pawan Gupta (25), Vinay Kumar Sharma (26) and Akshay Kumar (31) -- the four convicts in the Nirbhaya gang-rape and murder case be hanged on at 6 am on March 3.

## Nationalism likened...

**From Page 1**

He added, "What do countries do when they become the strongest? With superpower status they try to exert their influence on other countries, exploiting their resources for themselves.

This is the reason researchers think that a country becoming too powerful is bad for the world."

Bhagwat, who is on a five day visit to Jharkhand, was addressing "Sangh Samagam" of RSS volunteers on college

ground of Dr Syama Prasad Mookerjee University, Morhabadi, Ranchi.

The meeting was attended by former Jharkhand Chief Minister Raghubar Das, Ranchi MLA and former Minister CP Singh, Ranchi MP Sanjay Seth and BJP leaders, besides RSS volunteers.

The RSS chief, on the occasion, also expressed concern over environmental imbalance urging the people to work for protecting the environment. He said entire world has seen

the affects of playing with environment and in present context China is an example.

Bhagwat, who enjoys Z+ security cover by a special group of the Central Industrial Security Force (CISF) due to the threat perception against him, reached Birsamunda Airport on Wednesday.

On Thursday apart from attending the Sangh Samagam, he also addressed a meeting on IIM campus, followed by meeting at Maheshwari Bhavan. The RSS chief will be in State capital on Friday and Saturday too and will leave for Giridih

the same day.

The RSS chief visit to State assumes importance as there are around 60,000 full time RSS worker in State and the organisation is working to increase its members.

In Jharkhand the Vanvasi Kalyan Ashram a wing of RSS has its activities for Scheduled Tribes in remote areas of Jharkhand.

The BJP tasted defeat in the Delhi Assembly elections for the second consecutive time, increasing its tally from three to just eight seats, while Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal's Aam Aadmi Party

(AAP) scooped 62 of 70 seats.

The article in The Organiser said, "...the apparent failure of BJP to revitalise the organisational structure at the grassroots level after 2015 and building up of the campaign on in the last leg of the elections were the two major reasons for defeat in the well-fought out battle.

But Narendra Modi and Amit Shah cannot always help out in the Assembly level elections and there is no option but to rebuild the organisation in Delhi to address the local aspirations of the masses is the clear message," it added.

**THE PIONEER CLASSIFIEDS**

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**CHANGE OF NAME**

I, Mitul Rai W/o Sh. Sanjay Kumar Rai R/o E-90, East Ansari Nagar, AIIMS Campus Delhi-110029, declare that I have changed my minor Daughter's name from Yashshwi Rai to Yashshvi Rai for all future purposes.

PD(8813)C

TRUMP'S REMARKS

# Efforts made to address concerns: MEA

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

A day after US President Donald Trump said in Washington that India has not treated his country "very well," on issues of bilateral trade, the Ministry of External Affairs on Thursday said the context in which the remarks were made was balance of trade and there have been efforts to address the concerns. The US President's remarks came days ahead of his maiden two-day visit to India commencing February 24.

Looking forward to his visit to India, Trump had said India has not treated his country "very well" on the trade front and indicated that a "very big" bilateral deal with New Delhi may not be signed before the American presidential election in November.

Trump, forcefully pursuing his "America first" policy, has previously described India as a "tariff king" for imposing "tremendously high" tariffs on American products, also

DEAL DRAMA

- ◆ The US President's remarks came days ahead of his maiden two-day visit to India commencing February 24
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'America first' policy, has previously described India as a "tariff king" for imposing "tremendously high" tariffs on American products, also expressed dissatisfaction over the US-India trade ties.

expressed dissatisfaction over the US-India trade ties. "Well, we can have a trade deal with India, but I'm really saving the big deal for later on," Trump told reporters at the Joint Base Andrews outside Washington on Tuesday when asked whether he expects a trade deal with India before the visit.

Asked about his comments, the External Affairs Ministry spokesperson Raveesh Kumar said here it is important to understand the context in which the remarks were made. The context was balance of trade and efforts have been made to address concerns, he said.

India is eagerly awaiting President Trump's visit and it will strengthen the bilateral global strategic ties, Kumar said. He also said "we don't want to create any artificial deadline" replying to question on when India-US trade deal will be signed.

On how many agreements will be signed during Trump's India visit, Kumar said around five MoUs were under discussion. Asked whether the issues relating to H1B visa will figure in Modi-Trump talks, Kumar said they could come up.

Trump will reach Ahmedabad on February 24 where a grand event - called "Namaste Trump" - to welcome him will "showcase India's rich and diverse culture that will have few parallels in India or elsewhere".

"US President Trump will land in Ahmedabad around noon, from there he will go to the Motera Stadium to address the 'Namaste Trump' event. The route from the airport to the stadium -- we expect a large

number of people will line-up," Ravish Kumar said.

Talking of the route from the Ahmedabad airport to the stadium, he said, "We expect a large number of people lined up along the route". So far, 28 stages have been set up which will represent various parts of the country, on which artistes will be performing.

The roadshow will feature Mahatma Gandhi's life and the programme at the Motera Stadium would be like the "Howdy Modi" event, he said referring to the mega programme at Houston in US, where Trump had shared stage with Prime Minister Narendra Modi and addressed the assembled Indians.

The other stop on Trump's schedule is Agra and the last stop is New Delhi where Modi and Trump will hold talks on the entire range of bilateral issues including defence and trade. Incidentally, it will be the fifth meeting between Modi and Trump in the last eight months.

## COMMISSION FOR WOMEN IN ARMY

# SC verdict gives clarity in moving forward: Naravane

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

Days after the landmark Supreme Court judgment directing the Government to grant permanent commission and command postings to women officers, Army Chief MM Naravane on Thursday said his force has been championing gender equality and the apex court verdict has given the Army clarity to move forward.

In a momentous ruling on Monday, the apex court on Monday had called for a "change in mindsets" and directed that women officers of the Army, serving under Short Service Commission (SSC), be considered for grant of Permanent Commission, irrespective of tenure of service, and also for command posts in non-combat areas since "an absolute bar on women seeking criteria or command appointments would not comport with the guarantee of equality under Article 14".

Making the Army's stand clear, the Army Chief said here the Indian Army does not discriminate any soldier based on religion, caste, creed, or even gender. The outlook of the Indian Army has been through-out like this and "that is why we started inducting women officers as early as in 1993".

Outlining steps taken to induct women in the force, he said the Army has taken the initiative to induct women in rank and file, and the first batch of 100 women soldiers is undergoing training at Corps of Military Police Centre and School, he said.

Supreme Court's decision is a welcome one as it brings out a sense of clarity and purpose to gainfully employ officers for better efficiency of the organisation. I must assure that everybody in the Indian Army including women officers will

## Army maintaining pressure on terror groups in J&K, says chief

Speaking on the situation in Jammu & Kashmir, Naravane said terror incidents have seen a downturn and the Army is maintaining pressure on terror groups.

There is an external dimension to the decrease in cross-border terrorism, he said, in oblique reference to the ongoing Financial Action Task Force (FATF) plenary.

Pakistan may have to rethink strategy as even China realised they cannot back

their all-weather friend all the time, the Army chief said on the FATF plenary.

On the health condition of hardline Hurriyat leader Syed Ali Shah Geelani, the army chief only said security forces are geared up to take care of any situation. On the proposed creation of a theatre command exclusively for Jammu and Kashmir, he said there will be detailed discussions before anything is finalised.

## New Army's headquarters to be ready in next 5 years

Regarding the new Thal Sena Bhawan to be built in the Delhi Cantonment, for which Defence Minister Rajnath Singh will lay the first stone on Friday morning, the Army Chief said the proposed

"Thal Sena Bhawan will bring all Army Headquarters offices under one roof thereby improving the working

efficiency, while reducing the carbon footprint and logistics requirements."

However, he clarified that the office of the Army Chief will not shift to the new building, and will continue to be close to wherever the Defence Minister's office is. The new Army Headquarters will be spread over 35 acres and will be built in five years.

be given equal opportunity to contribute to the nation as also progress in their careers," he said hailing the verdict as enabling. Naravane also said letters are being sent to women officers asking whether they will prefer permanent commission.

The court has given three months' time to the Government to implement its verdict and Naravane said a roadmap has been prepared for its implementation. He also said there is equal opportunity for everyone and there is no gender discrimination. "We

have drafted a plan" he stated.

Same procedure for male Short Service Commission (SSC) officers will be followed for women to give permanent commission, the Army chief clarified adding "it will be same rule for everyone."

Observing that the judgement is for those who have crossed a certain point in their career in the Army, he said those rules for young officers will not be applied on them. In the next batch of women officers trained all these factors will be discussed, he stated.

## JP Nadda's maiden visit to Bihar as party chief on February 22

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

With Bihar Assembly poll closing by, BJP president JP Nadda will visit Patna on February 22 to discuss his party's strategy with State leaders and that of National Democratic Alliance (NDA) there besides to inaugurate BJP's new offices in 11 districts.

This would be Nadda's first visit to Bihar after taking over party's baton this year from Amit Shah, the Union Home Minister.

"Nadda would be inaugurating the newly-built office of the BJP in 11 districts in Bihar, including Samastipur, Siwan, Bhagalpur, Arwal, Naugachhia, Lakhisarai, Gopalganj, Sasaram, Saharsa, Aurangabad, and Sheohar by a remote control at Patna office. These new offices are equipped with latest equipment, including an e-library that would help party workers in advancing BJP ideology in their districts," said Party's General Secretary and Bihar-in-charge, Bhupendra Yadav.

Nadda will hold meetings with members of the core committee to ensure the victory of NDA with Nitish Kumar being



the Chief Ministerial face of the NDA alliance.

Picking its lessons from the Delhi poll debacle, BJP is keen to rein-in its motor mouths and spoil its campaign in Bihar. Recently Nadda had summoned union minister and MP from Begusarai Giriraj Singh's controversial comments against a prominent minority institution.

BJP intends to focus on state and development issues rather taking up national agenda in the forefront of its campaigning in the Bihar poll. BJP wants to win to end it series of reverses in Maharashtra, Delhi and Jharkand by faithfully aligning with the JDU and not queering its pitch on a Nationalist agenda.

## MEA: Arunachal part of India, China's objection to Shah visit not reasonable

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

As China on Thursday objected to Home Minister Amit Shah's visit to Arunachal Pradesh, saying the visit had violated its territorial sovereignty and "sabotaged" mutual trust with India, New Delhi asserted the eastern State is an integral part of the country. Moreover, objection to an Indian Minister's visit there does not stand to reason, it reiterated.

The Home Minister is in Arunachal Pradesh to attend functions related to the 34th Statehood Day of the north-eastern state and launched projects including industry and road infrastructure. China has always claimed the border State as part of south Tibet and routinely criticises the visit of any Indian official to the region.

Objecting to Shah's visit, Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesperson Geng Shuang said "China's position on the eastern sector of the China-India boundary, or the southern part of China's Tibet region, is consistent and clear."

Responding to a question about Shah's visit, the



Home Minister Amit Shah presides over the 34th Statehood Day celebrations of Arunachal Pradesh in Itanagar on Thursday

spokesperson said "the Chinese Government has never recognised the so-called 'Arunachal Pradesh' and is firmly opposed to the Indian politician's visit to the southern part of China's Tibet region as it violated China's territorial sovereignty, undermined stability of the border area, sabotaged political mutual trust, and violated relevant bilateral agreement," Geng. The official also said India should stop taking any action that may "further complicate the border issue."

Asked about China's objection to Shah's visit, Ministry of External Affairs spokesperson Raveesh Kumar said here on Thursday India's consistent posi-

tion has been that the State is its integral and inalienable part. Objecting to visit to Arunachal by an Indian leader does not stand to reason, he said.

China last year too raised similar issue when Defence Minister Rajnath Singh visited Arunachal Pradesh to take stock of the security situation in the frontier border region.

Earlier in 2019, customs authorities in a northeastern Chinese city had destroyed nearly 30,000 world maps showing Arunachal Pradesh as a part of India and Taiwan as a separate country.

## CBI plea against HC order to let Punjab take back blasphemy cases

New Delhi: The Supreme Court on Thursday dismissed the CBI's plea challenging the Punjab and Haryana High Court order by which it had last year refused to interfere with the Punjab Government decision to take back all sacrilege cases from the Central probe agency. A Bench of Justices R F Nariman and S Ravindra Bhat dismissed the CBI's plea on the ground of delay.

"...Special Leave Petitions are dismissed on the ground of delay. However, the question of law is left open. Pending application stands disposed of," the Bench said. PTI

## SC allows K'taka plea for implementation of Mahadaya Water Dispute tribunal's final award

New Delhi: The Supreme Court in its interim order on Thursday allowed the plea of the Karnataka Government for implementation of the final award by a tribunal for sharing of water between Goa, Karnataka and Maharashtra from the Mahadaya river.

The interim order was passed by a Bench comprising Justice DY Chandrachud and

Justice Hemant Gupta after hearing the counsel from the three States. The Bench said the final hearing in the matter will take place in July.

It also said the interim order is subject to the final outcome of the petitions filed by the three States against the tribunal's award. PTI

## SC questions issuance of death warrants by trial courts

New Delhi: The Supreme Court Thursday questioned the issuance of black warrants by trial courts for execution of death penalty even before the expiry of 60-day time period for filing of appeals in the apex court by the convicts. The top court's observation came during the hearing of an appeal, filed by death row convict Anil Surendra Singh Yadav, alleging that the black warrant was issued by a Gujarat sessions court just 33 days after his conviction was upheld by the high court. PTI

## Ravidas Temple: Ex-MP seeks action against DDA, Delhi Govt

New Delhi: Former Congress MP Ashok Tanwar moved the Supreme Court on Thursday seeking contempt proceedings against the DDA and the Delhi Government for allegedly "willfully and deliberately disobeying" its orders allowing construction of a permanent structure for the Guru Ravidas temple at Tughlaqabad. The temple was demolished by the DDA following the SC's August 9 last year direction which had observed that "serious breach" was committed by Guru Ravidas Jayanti Samaroh Samiti. PTI

## No reason why Central Vista can't be rebuilt: Puri

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Amid concerns and criticisms, Union Housing and Urban Affairs Minister Hardeep Singh Puri on Thursday said that Government infrastructure, including the North and South Blocks, was built more than a century ago and there is no reason why the Centre should not go for a new-look Central Vista aesthetically while preserving the heritage.

Speaking at a function, Puri said that some people are talking about the Central Vista makeover without knowing what is happening. "Look every 100 years somebody has to take charge and decide what the city is going to look like. Delhi in its present form...The current Delhi Governmental infrastructure (including)



Rashtrapati Bhavan, North Block, South Block, were built in 1910s or 1920s," Puri added.

The questions are being raised by experts from various quarters that what is the need to do so and what's the objective and why it is being implemented. "We are paying thousands of crores of rent to house Government buildings. We have the land, so there is no reason why we can't do it in an architecturally, aesthetic way, preserve the heritage etc and create a New Delhi," he said.

LokPATH (people for Appropriate Transformation of Habitat), a collective of urban development experts, which was formed recently, has flagged the lack of transparency in the process of land use change. The Indian Society of Landscape Architects (ISOLA) has called the project an "inappropriate planning decision". Many have questioned the need for the project and said it contradicts the provisions of the Master Plan of Delhi 2021.

The redevelopment of the Central Vista — the nation's power corridor in Delhi — envisages a triangular Parliament building next to the existing one, a common Central Secretariat for ministries and the revamping of the three-km-long Rajpath - from Rashtrapati Bhavan to India Gate.

# India's first coronavirus patient discharged from Kerala hospital

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

With the discharge of a woman medic, who was country's first novel coronavirus patient being treated at the Government Medical College hospital in Kerala on Thursday, India may have become a pathogen-free country for now, but the pathogen continues to take its toll in neighbouring nations.

One more Indian aboard a quarantined cruise ship off Japan was tested positive for the novel coronavirus and shifted to hospital, taking the number of Indian nationals infected with the virus on the vessel to eight, the Indian embassy said on Thursday. China has reported 2,118 deaths while the overall confirmed cases has climbed to 74,576.

The Indian embassy said that a total of 138 Indians, including 132 crew and 6 passengers, were among

the 3,711 people on board the Diamond Princess cruise ship. In a tweet, the Indian embassy here said, "1 Indian crew who tested positive for #COVID19 among 79 new cases on #DiamondPrincess yesterday too has been shifted to hospital for treatment. All 8 Indians receiving treatment are responding well. Rest all Indians on-board are braving out the trying circumstances."

Earlier, seven Indians were tested positive for the COVID-19. The mission said that infected Indians were responding well to the treatment.

Many countries have banned arrivals from China while major airlines have suspended flights to the country. In India, national carrier Air India has announced that it is extending the suspension of its flights to the neighbouring country till June 30.

The discharge of the women



medico student marked the recovery of all three cases of infection in India reported from Kerala. Two other students — one from Alappuzha and another Kasaragod — had been discharged recently

after they too tested negative for the virus in fresh tests days after being infected by it.

A total of 650 people were brought back from Wuhan in China on February 1 and 2 in two 747

Boeing Air India aircraft after the outbreak of coronavirus in that country.

Last month, the Air India had suspended its six weekly Delhi-Shanghai flights from January 31 to

## ITBP honours staffers who served at its Delhi coronavirus quarantine facility

The Indo Tibetan Border Police on Thursday honoured its doctors, paramedics, cooks and sanitation officials who served in a special quarantine centre set up here housing 406 people suspected to have been exposed to coronavirus, a spokesperson of the force said. "Thank you for what you did. The country and the force is proud of you," ITBP Director

General (DG) S S Deswal told the personnel after he held a special 'sainik sammelan' at the Chhawa camp of the force. Deswal gave away the top award of the force called the 'DG commendation disc' to 28 personnel, appreciation letters to three while 32 staffers were presented with cash rewards, ITBP spokesperson Vivek Kumar Pandey said.

February 14. However, it did not restart the flight operations from February 15 onwards.

The national carrier had also suspended its Delhi-Hong Kong flights due to the coronavirus epidemic that has killed more than 2,000 people in China till date.

"Flight operations on both routes — Delhi-Shanghai and Delhi-Hong Kong — have been suspended till June 30," an Air India spokesperson said on Thursday.

Earlier, IndiGo and SpiceJet had suspended their flight operations between India and China.

# 20 die in in TN bus tragedy, survivors shell-shocked

**Chennai:** A road crash in Tamil Nadu early Thursday left 20 dead and 28 injured as a lorry collided with their bus reducing it to a mangled heap.

Police said the accident occurred on the Salem-Kochi highway at Avinashi in Tirupur around 4 am as the Kerala State Road Transport Corporation (KSRTC) bus was proceeding to Ernakulam from Bengaluru. Tirupur is located about 450 km from here.

Most of the passengers were asleep when the lorry crashed into the bus.

The lorry driver, Ernakulam native Hemaraj, was arrested later. The tiles-laden container lorry's tyre burst and it entered the wrong lane colliding with the bus, reducing the vehicle to a mangled heap, police said.

The 20, including six women, died at the scene while the injured were admitted to hospitals in Tirupur and some referred to Coimbatore, police said.

Palakkad Superintendent of Police Siva Vikram said "It was a high speed collision. The container lorry went out of

control."

The accident came as a shock to many in the state since one of such a magnitude has not happened in Tamil Nadu in the recent past.

There were 48 passengers on board the bus.

The lorry suffered a tyre burst before colliding with the KSRTC bus, Tamil Nadu Chief Minister K Palaniswami said in the State Assembly, adding, all the victims were Keralites.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Tamil Nadu Governor Banwarilal Purohit, Palaniswami, and Kerala Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan condoled the deaths.

"Extremely anguished by the bus accident...In this hour of grief, my thoughts and prayers are with the bereaved families. I hope those who are injured recover at the earliest," the PM's Office said in a tweet quoting Modi.

Though reports initially suggested the bus was proceeding towards Thiruvananthapuram in Kerala, officials later clarified its destination was Ernakulam. Palaniswami said he has



Onlookers gather near the mangled remains of a Kerala State Road Transport Corporation bus which collided with a container lorry, in Tirupur district on Thursday. PTI

asked the Tirupur administration to coordinate with their Palakkad counterparts, to expedite activities including sending the bodies of the deceased to Kerala.

Further, 23 people were seriously injured and were undergoing treatment while

five others sustained simple injuries and were proceeding to Kerala, he said.

"I have directed the Tirupur collector and police officials there to set up a help centre to assist the relatives of the victims and also expedite the process of sending the

bodies of the deceased by contacting Kerala officials," he said.

In Thiruvananthapuram, Vijayan deputed his cabinet colleagues—Transport Minister AK Saseendran and Agriculture Minister VS Sunilkumar, to Tirupur to

coordinate relief operations, his office said.

The Kerala delegation later arrived in Tirupur.

Saseendran, Sunilkumar, Palakkad MP VK Sreekandan, and Alathur MP Ramya Haridas besides MLAs from Kerala are camping at Tirupur.

"The State Government will provide a compensation of ₹10 lakh to the bereaved families, ₹two lakh will be given within a week. The rest of the amount will be given following the procedures," Saseendran said.

"The families of the KSRTC employees will be given ₹30 lakh each under the insurance scheme," he added.

The State Government has also declared that it will take care of the medical expenses of the injured passengers.

The Health department has sent ambulances to Tirupur to bring back the bodies. The accident left the survivors shell-shocked.

Karishma, on her way to Ernakulam, said she was seated on the left side of the bus and was sleeping when the accident occurred.

"When I woke up suddenly, I saw many people running around and the injured being taken in ambulances," the woman told the media.

Alan, also from Kerala, said he was still finding it difficult to overcome the shock.

"I have sustained a minor injury on my leg. But my friend is injured on the nose and I am taking him to hospital," he said.

Jemin George, an injured

passenger, said he suffered a cut on his lips and an injury to his forehead that required 10 stitches.

"I do not know what exactly happened. I was sleeping in a seat behind the driver's seat," he said, adding, he was referred to a hospital in Coimbatore.

A weeping woman passenger alleged the container lorry was overloaded and there were not many vehicles on the road.

## 6 pilgrims from Nepal killed

**Salem/Chennai:** Six pilgrims from Nepal, including two women, were killed and 24 others injured in a road accident near Salem on Thursday, police said.

The accident happened on the Salem-Bengaluru highway after a bus rammed the minibus the pilgrims were travelling in when its driver tried to swerve to the right near Omalur in the district, police said.

Chief Minister K Palaniswami condoled the death of the six pilgrims and

said the accident happened in the early hours of Thursday when they were proceeding to Rajasthan from Kaniyakumari.

Speaking in the Tamil Nadu Assembly, he said that the accident happened around 1 AM. Six Nepalis including two women travelling in the bus were killed," he said and expressed his condolences.

The injured have been admitted to hospital, he said, adding he has directed the Salem Collector to ensure they received the best medical treatment. PTI

## Mamata Govt to provide Z security to Prashant Kishore

SAUGAR SENGUPTA ■ KOLKATA

Bengal is mulling enhanced security for election strategist Prashant Kishore, sources in the State Government said adding already the security directorate has reviewed his security status and submitted its recommendations before the Government.

Accordingly, Kishore who has reportedly been hired by the ruling Trinamool Congress to chalk out its strategy road map ahead of the 2021 Assembly elections is likely to get 'Z' category security cover which is provided among others former Chief Minister Buddhadeb Bhattacharjee, senior Ministers like Partho Chatterjee, Firhad Hakim, Suvendu Adhikari, BCCI president Sourav Ganguly and another 5-6 persons.

Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee and his nephew and MP Abhishek Banerjee gets 'Z

Plus' security cover.

The security personnel will be drawn from the trained officers of Kolkata Police and Bengal Police, sources said adding the decision to provide security cover to Kishore was taken following a meeting of the security directorate officials.

Significantly the meeting took place following two developments. First, Kishore's expulsion from the Jantada United Party of Nitish Kumar and second his decision to launch 'Baat Bihar Ki'.

"A meeting was called where his security was reviewed and its upgradation was recommended to the State Government," sources said.

However officials in Kishore's election management company said they did not have any information about the new security proposals.

Bengal has seen a lot of political murders over the past one decade or so. One such vic-

tim of recent escalated political hostilities was a Trinamool Congress MLA from Nadia.

Satyajit Biswas Krishanganj MLA was murdered near house in Nadia. Local BJP MP who was named among 43 others was recently grilled for four hours by the State CID regarding his alleged role in the murder.

With TMC's position improving since the losses it suffered in last year's Parliamentary elections—when the party conceded 18 out of 42 seats to the BJP —thanks Kishore's reported strategic manipulations the Bengal ruling party wants him secured at any cost, experts said.

One of the major reflections of Kishore's successes with the TMC was a remarkable comeback staged by the Trinamool in the recently held Assembly elections to three seats in which the BJP suffered humiliating defeat.

## Bengal CM writes to Modi about 'steady reduction' of funds

**Kolkata:** West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee on Thursday wrote a letter to Prime Minister Narendra Modi, expressing concern over 'steady reduction' of central funds to the State and 'inordinate delay' in their release.

The BJP called the letter a "political ploy to befool people" ahead of civic polls in the state.

In her letter, Banerjee asserted that despite the decline in central funds the state's GSDP grew by 10.4 per cent against the national GDP growth of 5 per cent in 2019-20. "I write to you with deep concern regarding steady reduction of central funds to the state and also inordinate delay in release of funds to us from the Government of India," Banerjee wrote.

She said the state is yet to receive its share of central

funds totalling ₹50,000 crore till January, 2020.

This "extraordinary situation" is creating major difficulties in meeting obligations for the welfare of the state, she said.

The letter said, "You will, no doubt, appreciate that both the central and the State Governments are expected to fulfil the constitutional obligations and the commitments to the people, so that respective governments run smoothly... However West Bengal is being deprived of the huge outstanding dues."

Banerjee said West Bengal's index of industrial production (IIP) in April-November 2019-20 stood at 3.1 per cent against the national figure of 0.6 per cent, while growth of the services sector at 16.4 per cent was much higher than the national number of 6.9 per cent. PTI

## Class 9 boy threatens 'Pulwama-like attack' in school, detained in UP

**Bareilly (UP):** A class nine student has been detained by the police here for allegedly threatening to blow up his school building in a 'Pulwama-like attack' if he was not paid ₹2 lakh as extortion amount, an official said on Thursday.

Senior SP Shailendra Pandey said the boy, who also works as a newspaper hawk, has been sent to a reform home.

The principal of the school had complained to police that someone dropped a letter at his house on Friday threatening to blow it up and also the school building. On Tuesday, the accused student handed him a letter carrying the "Pulwama-like attack" threat, the police officer said.

On receiving the complaint, a case under relevant sections of the IPC was registered and the boy was questioned.

After changing his statement frequently, he confessed to have written the letter to make easy money, the police said. PTI

## PHE workers extend strike by 72 hours across Jammu

PTI ■ JAMMU

The Public Health Engineering (PHE) workers on Thursday extended their ongoing strike by 72 hours in support of various demands including release of pending wages and regularisation of services.

The PHE workers had begun their strike on February 7. The stir has led to a drinking water crisis in most parts of the Jammu region.

"We have decided to extend the ongoing strike by 72 hours and if the Government failed to address our issues, we have no option but to hit the roads," a leader of the protesters said. Police on Wednesday foiled an attempt by thousands of PHE workers to stage a rally from the office of the chief engineer to the Raj Bhavan here.

"After the end of the 72-hour deadline, over 22,000 workers from across the Jammu region will gather here and come on the roads to press for their genuine demands," the leader said. He said the wages of the workers are pending for the last 65 months, while they have served the department for over two decades with a hope that their services will get regularised one day.

"We have only got assurances from time and again and therefore, we will not budge till our demands are met...With or without Article 370, our fate remains the same and our families are suffering due to the failure of the Government to address our issues," he said.

## Manipur Class 11 papers leaked, exams cancelled

**Imphal:** The Manipur State education board cancelled the class 11 final exams after question papers of at least five subjects were leaked, a senior official said on Thursday.

Question papers of Physics, Chemistry, Maths, Biology and Manipuri were leaked. Council of Higher Secondary Education Manipur (COHSEM) secretary Ch Biren Singh told PTI.

The final examinations, which began on February 17, of all streams of class 11 have been cancelled as "concrete evidence regarding the leakage" was found. COHSEM chairman L Mahendra said.

The council has instructed principals of all the affiliated schools to return the question papers "in their original forms as collected" by February 24, he added.

Mahendra assured stern action against those found responsible and said the principals who do not comply with the council's direction will be considered as individuals responsible for the leakage.

"Authorities of private institutions found guilty will have their affiliation cancelled," he said, adding that the council will announce new dates for the exams soon. PTI

## Mizo accord beacon of hope for lasting peace, says Guv

Aizawl: Mizoram

**MIZORAM STATEHOOD DAY** since attaining statehood has Sreedharan Pillai hailed the Mizo Peace Accord, signed in 1986, as a beacon of hope for enduring peace as the north-eastern state celebrated its 34th statehood day on Thursday.

Pillai, while addressing a programme here on the occasion, said, "The signing of the historic Mizo Peace Accord on June 30, 1986 remains a beacon of hope for the world that peace can be attained and sustained if the people and leaders choose it over violence."

Mizoram became the 23rd state of India in 1987 after the Mizo National Front (MNF) signed the peace accord with the Centre, ending a two-decade-long insurgency.

Before attaining statehood, Mizoram was union territory. Observing that Mizoram's endeavour

been to attain self-reliance, Pillai urged the state government and denizens not to solely rely on central funding.

"Mizoram is abundantly blessed with resources in horticulture, handloom, handicrafts, human resource and tourism sectors, which we need to tap. It is our duty to provide a congenial socio-economic setting where our youth can flourish with pride," he said.

He called upon the state government to work towards achieving a welfare state. Pillai said the Centre has allocated 10 per cent of the Union budget for the development of the Northeast.

He also urged the churches and the NGOs to help the State Government in combating AIDS and cancer. Several programmes were held across the State on the occasion. PTI



A boatman waits near his 'shikara' for tourists at Dal Lake in Srinagar on Thursday. PTI

## CITIZENSHIP AMENDMENT ACT

### Woman raises pro-Pak slogans in Bengaluru

**Bengaluru:** Leaving the organisers of an event to protest against the CAA, NRC and NRP here red-faced, a young woman on Thursday raised 'Pakistan Zindabad' slogan in the presence of AIMIM chief Asaduddin Owaisi, who denounced her action and asserted "we are for India".

The woman, identified as Amulya, asked people to shout with her 'Pakistan Zindabad' after the organisers of the event under the banner of "Save Constitution" invited her to address the gathering soon after Owaisi came on the stage.

Soon Owaisi rushed to snatch the mike from her hands and was joined by others who tried to remove her from the stage.

But the woman was adamant and raised the slogan again repeatedly. Later, the police stepped in and removed her from the dais.

**JD(S) corporator Imran Pasha claimed she was planted by some rival group to disrupt the event**

Owaisi then addressed the gathering, saying he did not agree with the woman.

"Neither me nor my party has any link with her. We denounce her. The organisers should not have invited her here. If I knew this, I would not have come here. We are for India and we no way support our enemy nation Pakistan. Our entire drive is to save India," the AIMIM MP said.

JD(S) corporator Imran Pasha claimed she was planted by some rival group to disrupt the event. The woman, he said, was not in the list of speakers and demanded that the police investigate the matter seriously. PTI

### TN: Protest site turns marriage venue for Muslim couple

**Coimbatore:** A Muslim couple entered into wedlock amid protests against the Citizenship Amendment Act here by over 1,000 people, including women, on Thursday.

The ceremony took place under a canopy erected at the protest venue at Aathupalam and was witnessed by the protesters, who have been on a sit-in since Wednesday seeking withdrawal of the CAA, proposed National Register of Citizens and National Population Register.

The marriage was solemnised by an Imam, with the bride Reshma and groom Abdul Kalam exchanging vows amid slogans against the new law.

Family members and those present at the venue blessed the couple. A Muslim couple, holding an anti-CAA placard, got married at the venue of the ongoing protest against CAA in Chennai on Monday. PTI

### Darapuri, Sadaf Jafar to challenge UP Govt's recovery notices in court

**Lucknow:** Social activists S R Darapuri and Sadaf Jafar said Thursday they intend to move court against the Uttar Pradesh Government's recovery notices on them for damage to public property during anti-CAA protests here last year.

They stated they have not yet received any official communication seeking recovery, but a senior Government official said the notices have been issued to 28 people including them.

Darapuri told PTI on Thursday, "I am hearing news that I've been issued recovery notices by the district administration, though I have not received any such notice till now. I will challenge it in the High Court if I get any."

Social activist Jafar, who is also a Congress leader, said if she receives any recovery notice she too will move court. "The State Government is sending recovery notices unconstitutionally to

people. There is no proof against me of inciting violence but instead of arresting antisocial elements, they arrested and tortured me," she said.

She was arrested on December 19 in connection with the violence.

Lucknow Additional District Magistrate (East) KP Singh had on Monday issued recovery notices to 28 people stating that they have to deposit Rs 63 lakh by March 20, otherwise action will be taken against them.

Besides Darapuri and Sadaf, the notice also names Mohammad Shoaib of Rihai Manch, and social activists Robin Verma, Deepak Kabir, Pawan Rao Ambekar, among others. Darapuri, a retired IPS officer, was accused of instigating violence during the anti-CAA protest in the state capital on December 19 last year. He was arrested on December 20, but later granted bail. PTI

### AMU students take out protest march against UP CM's remarks

PTI ■ ALIGARH (UP)

Students of the Aligarh Muslim University (AMU) took out a protest march under the banner of Students' Coordination Committee here on Thursday against Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath, accusing him of shielding the State police from allegations of brutalities.

"The Chief Minister is deliberately twisting facts to falsely implicate students and thus, shielding the police from allegations of brutalities," committee spokesperson Faizul Hasan said.

Hasan, a former president of the AMU Students' Union, said, "Either the Chief Minister has been grossly misinformed or he is deliberately trying to frame those who were protesting against the

Citizenship (Amendment) Act (CAA)."

Adityanath defended the Uttar Pradesh police on Wednesday over the deaths of anti-CAA protesters, saying they were shot by other rioters and nothing could be done to save someone with a death wish.

Wrapping up the discussion on the governor's address in the State Assembly, he said the role of the police in dealing with rioters during the anti-CAA protests should be appreciated.

Meanwhile, in a statement, AMU Employees' Union president Professor Ramesh Rawat described Adityanath's remarks that 15,000 students of the university had attempted to indulge in arson on December 15 last year as "false and fabricated".

# Nirogi Rajasthan, wealthy farmer top priorities for Raj Govt: Gehlot

**Jaipur:** The Rajasthan Budget is based on seven resolutions, including Nirogi Rajasthan and efforts are being made so that development is not interrupted in the State despite various challenges, Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot said on Thursday.

Presenting the Budget for FY2020-21 in the Rajasthan Assembly, Gehlot referred to the public welfare measures in the last Budget, and said that his Government has tried to present a concrete action plan in this Budget also.

He levied no new tax proposals and announced to fill 53,151 new vacancies. He also announced rebate of ₹130 crore in different kinds of taxes.

This is the second Budget of the Congress Government,

which came to power in the state in December 2018.

"For us the entire Rajasthan is like a family. For this family, I want to make seven resolutions as priorities of this Budget," Gehlot said.

These resolutions are healthy Rajasthan, prosperous farmers, welfare of women, children and elderly, capable labourers, youth-students, education, water power and roads, skills and technology, he added.

Chief Minister Gehlot who also holds finance portfolio said the Central government's revenue has reduced due to its wrong economic policies and Rajasthan is also suffering due to this.

He said that state's share in the central taxes has been



reduced by ₹10,362 crore.

Gehlot said the financial condition of the states in the federal system depends on the policies and decisions of the central government to a large extent and noted that today most economic indicators indicate that the country's economic condition has deteriorated.

"We have made efforts to make it an inclusive budget by

keeping in mind the views and suggestions of farmers, cattle rearers, women, students, youth, industrial and business organisations and civil society," Gehlot said.

He said, it is important to present the true picture of the economic situation of the country before giving details of far-reaching steps that are likely to be taken in the coming year by the state government to achieve the overall development of the state.

"The reason for mentioning the financial position of the states in our federal system depends on the policies and decisions of the Centre to a large extent. Today, most of the indices of the country's econ-

omy indicate that the country's economy is currently going through a bad phase," he said.

The World Bank, IMF and ADB have slashed growth rate projections. According to the Economic Survey 2019-20 India's GDP growth rate is estimated to be 5 per cent, he added.

The Chief Minister said the Central Government raises funds in many ways such as by taking money from the Reserve Bank, disinvesting in Air India and Bharat Petroleum Corporation Limited (BPCL), reducing the stake in LIC whereas the states have no such option. He said that despite these challenges, we have tried that the road to development in this budget is not obstructed. **PTI**

## Opposition dubs it routine, directionless

**Jaipur:** The Opposition BJP on Thursday criticised the Budget presented by the Congress-led Rajasthan Government, saying it was a routine budget and an "example of poor financial management".

The BJP also said the budget failed to fulfil the expectations of the people of the state.

Leader of Opposition in Rajasthan Assembly, Gulab Chand Kataria said the Ashok Gehlot-led government has burdened electricity consumers with ₹12,000 crore annually by increasing the power tariff. He added that the state had come into surplus in terms of revenue receipts in the previous dispensation led by the BJP.

"Power companies are reeling under losses. They have put an annual burden of ₹12,000 crore on people by increasing power tariff. There is no relief to people in the budget. We are not able to see any development in the budget," Kataria said at a press conference.

The Congress government had recently announced the power tariff hike of 11.21 per cent.

Replying to a question on decreasing state share in tax collection from the Centre, Kataria said the State share in GST has increased concurrently with the income of the Centre.

He claimed the State Government was earning ₹21,000 crore through value-added tax (VAT), the highest in any state of the country, and despite that there was no word about development in the budget.

Rajasthan BJP president Satish Poonia said it was a routine Budget of the routine government and did not fulfil the expectations of the people of the State. They will blame the Centre and will also expect from the Centre. It is an example of their poor financial management. The Budget does not seem to be fulfilling the expectation of the people of the state. **PTI**

# Nagpur court grants bail to Devendra Fadnavis

TN RAGHUNATHA ■ MUMBAI

Nagpur court on Thursday granted bail to Maharashtra's former Chief Minister and leader of the Opposition in the State Assembly Devendra Fadnavis in a case seeking criminal proceedings against him non-disclosure of criminal cases registered against him in his 2014 election affidavit.

Fadnavis, who had been granted exemption from personal appearance on four previous occasions, finally appeared before Chief Metropolitan Magistrate PS Ingle amid tight security, and sought bail in the case.

After recording Fadnavis' appearance before the court, the CJM granted him bail on a personal bond of ₹15,000.

Fadnavis had been given

last chance to appear before the court on Thursday. While granting bail to Fadnavis, the CJM observed: "The presence of the accused (Fadnavis) is secured. The offences are bailable. There is no apprehension of him absconding. Hence, bail is granted."

The court was hearing an application filed by advocate Satish Uke, seeking criminal proceedings to be initiated against Fadnavis for alleged non-disclosure of criminal cases registered against him in his election affidavit in the 2014 Assembly elections.

The court, while granting bail, directed Fadnavis to remain present at the next hearing and also as when directed by the court in the matter. The court has scheduled the next hearing for March 30.

Earlier, advocate Satish Uke

## POLL AFFIDAVIT CASE

opposed Fadnavis' bail application on grounds that he had skipped earlier hearings on various grounds and citing the precedence of a similar case concerning Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal.

Uke had initially had moved a magisterial court which dismissed his complaint against Fadnavis on September 7, 2015. Subsequently, he moved a sessions court in Nagpur which transferred the matter to the magisterial court for a "de novo" (afresh) consideration.

Not happy with the Sessions court's order, Fadnavis moved the Bombay High Court, which on May 3, 2018 set it aside.

Later, in its judgment on

October 1, 2019, the apex court had set aside the Bombay High Court order which gave a clean chit to Fadnavis and held that he did not deserve to be tried for the alleged offence under the Representation of the People (RP) Act.

The SC order had come on an appeal filed by Uke, who had challenged the high court's order.

In its October 1 2019 order, the Supreme Court had directed that a magistrate's court in Nagpur district consider afresh the complaint filed by Uke, seeking criminal proceedings to be initiated against Mr Fadnavis under section 125-A of the RP Act.

The section 125-A of the RP Act, which deals with the penalty for "filing false affi-

dativ", says if a candidate or his proposer fails to furnish or gives false or conceals any information in his nomination paper on issues like pending criminal cases, then the person may be awarded six months jail term or fine or both.

Early this week, the Supreme Court reserved its verdict on Fadnavis' plea seeking review of its 2019 judgment asking the BJP leader to face trial for allegedly failing to furnish details of two pending criminal cases against him in his 2014 poll affidavit.

While representing Fadnavis, senior advocate Mukul Rohatgi had told a SC bench headed by Justice Arun Mishra that the issue would have very far reaching consequences for other candidates fighting elections and the apex court needed to re-examine its October 1, 2019 order.

# Uddhav to meet Modi in Delhi today

## Sena describes it as 'courtesy call'

TN RAGHUNATHA ■ MUMBAI

Maharashtra Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray will meet Prime Minister Narendra Modi in New Delhi on Friday, in what is being described by the Shiv Sena as a 'courtesy call'.

Though Uddhav had met Modi briefly on December 6 during the latter's visit to Pune to attend a national conference of directors general and inspectors general of police, Friday's will be — for all practical purposes — the first formal meeting between the two leaders, after the Shiv Sena snapped ties with the BJP and formed a government in Maharashtra in alliance with the NCP and Congress November 28.

Confirming Uddhav's scheduled meeting with Modi

on Friday, Shiv Sena's MP and spokesperson Sanjay Raut — in a tweet posted on Thursday evening — described the meeting as "courtesy call". He, however, declined to go into further details relating to the meeting.

Informed sources in the Shiv Sena, meanwhile, said that at Friday's meeting, Uddhav would press for release of pending tax dues and also seek financial assistance from the Centre for the unseasonal rains hit farmers in the State.

It may be recalled that in a letter written to Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman on December 11 last year, Thackeray had sought the State's "legitimate dues" of ₹15,558 crore from the Union government by way of GST compensation and tax devolution.

"The State is awaiting legit-

imate dues of ₹15,558.05 crore from the Government of India.... Timely release of GST compensation and tax devolution amount will help my state to manage the finances efficiently," the Chief Minister had written in his letter.

At that time, the pending dues comprised ₹6,946.29 crore by way of tax devolution and ₹8611.76 crore towards GST compensation up to November 2019.

"As per the Union budget 2019-20, the tax devolution to Maharashtra was ₹46,630.66 crore which is 11.15 per cent more than ₹41,952.65 crore received by the state during 2018-19.

But, the state has received only ₹20,254.92 crore till October 2019 which is 25.53 per cent less compared to the budget estimate of 2019-20," the Chief Minister had said in his letter to Sitaraman.

# No scheme of BJP Govt worth mentioning: Cong

**Bengaluru:** Calling BJP Government in Karnataka as "a child born illicitly from Operation Kamala", the Opposition Congress on Thursday warned the ruling party that people would punish it, if it does not keep the promise of making the state a 'Ram Rajya'.

Alleging that the BS Yediyurappa-led Government in the state has not come to power with the mandate of the people, but only by engineering the defection of 17 Congress-JD(S) legislators, the Leader of Opposition in the assembly Siddaramaiah said there was no programme from the current dispensation worth mentioning in the last seven to eight months.

"There is no programme of the BJP Government in the last 7-8 months that is worth mentioning; all the mentions made in the address are of previous Congress and coalition Government, he said.

He accused the Government of failing to get the right share of central funds to the state on time, despite having the same party in power at the Centre.

Siddaramaiah said there would be over a ₹11,000-crore

shortfall in tax devolution to Karnataka during 15th finance commission, while warning that "We are going to suffer if this continues and the administration doesn't act."

You (BJP) people had said that you will make Karnataka a Rama Rajya if party comes to power both at the state and the Centre...Where is it? Do it," he said.

You (BJP) will construct Ram Mandir and bring in Uniform Civil Code, because it is your agenda but also make efforts towards building Rama Rajya as you had promised or else you may have to eat your own words, and people will punish you, he said.

Participating in the debate on the motion of thanks to Governors address in the assembly, Siddaramaiah said the state government has failed to give any preview through the address.

The Governors address doesn't have anything from this Government, except the state providing ₹4,000 crore in addition to the Central governments ₹6,000 crore under the Pradhan Mantri Kisan Samman Nidhi scheme," he said. **PTI**

# Congress to dare 10 MLAs who joined BJP to quit, seek re-election

**Panaji:** The Goa Congress has said it will Challenge its 10 former MLAs, who joined the BJP last year, to resign and seek fresh mandate on the saffron party's ticket.

State Congress spokesman Urfan Mulla told PTI on Thursday that his party leaders will visit homes of the 10 MLAs and challenge them to re-contest the election.

After the 2017 Goa polls, a hung Assembly had emerged. But, the BJP outsmarted the Congress by cobbling together a coalition quickly.

In July last year, 10 Congress MLAs switched over to the BJP. "The Congress will challenge them to resign as MLAs and then re-contest on BJP's ticket from their respective Assembly constituencies. If they think they can get re-elected on BJP's ticket, they should try their luck," Mulla said.

These MLAs got elected in the 2017 polls on Congress' ticket, as the voters had rejected the BJP, he claimed.

"But these ten MLAs ditched the voters and join the BJP," he alleged. The state Congress leaders will start visiting these 10 MLAs later this week, Mulla said. **PTI**

# Man sentenced to 12 years for raping minor

PTI ■ MUMBAI

A special court here on Thursday Sentenced a man to 12 years of rigorous imprisonment for raping a 12-year-old mentally-challenged girl.

Special judge S P Ponskhe found the accused guilty of offence committed under relevant sections of the Indian Penal Code and Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act.

As per the minor victim's testimony, the incident took place in November 2016 when the accused worked as a sweeper at a housing society in Mulund where she lived.

The accused forcefully took the victim to the watchman's bathroom in the building's compound and raped her.

He then threatened her with dire consequences if she complained about the assault.

When the incident subsequently came to light, the minor's family lodged a complaint with the police and an FIR was registered.

# Security of woman increased after her rape charge against UP BJP MLA

**Bhadohi (UP):** A day after registration of an FIR against local BJP MLA Ravindra Nath Tripathi and six others, including his three sons, for allegedly raping a woman repeatedly for a month in 2017, police have beefed up the victim's security on her claims that she was getting threats to her life.

"The woman alleged that she was getting threats after which her security has been enhanced. She has been provided three constables, including two women constables, who will provide her round-

the-clock security," Superintendent of Police Ram Badan Singh said.

The 40-year-old woman, who is a widow, had lodged a complaint with the police on February 10, following which an FIR was registered on Wednesday, they said.

The woman alleged that she was first raped by Tripathi's nephew Sandeep Tiwari, who has also been named in the FIR, in 2016. She said she did not lodge a complaint back then as Tiwari had promised to marry her.

She also alleged that during

2017 Uttar Pradesh Assembly polls, she was kept at a hotel for a month by Tiwari. All the seven accused would visit the hotel and repeatedly rape her, the officer said.

She also claimed that she got pregnant and was forced to undergo abortion, he added.

A probe in this regard was handed over to Assistant Superintendent of Police Ravindra Verma. On the basis of his report, an FIR was registered against the seven men at the city police station, the SP said. **PTI**

# Man convicted for raping daughter in Muzaffarnagar

PTI ■ MUZAFFARNAGAR

A special court here on Thursday convicted a man for raping his 14-year-old daughter while the grandfather, grandmother and uncle of the victim were acquitted due to lack of evidence.

Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) court judge Sanjiv Kumar Tiwari has fixed February 24 for quantum of punishment in the case.

According to special lawyer for POCSO Dinesh Kumar Sharma, the mother of the girl had filed a complaint with the police alleging that her husband raped the daughter when she had gone to her parents' home on July 7, 2016.

The woman had also alleged that her father-in-law, mother-in-law and brother-in-law supported the accused and did not take any step to prevent him to commit rape on his daughter, Sharma said.

GOVT. OF NCT OF DELHI: DELHI JAL BOARD OFFICE OF EXECUTIVE ENGINEER (PR) SR-I SECTOR VI: POCKET D7: ROHINI: DELHI 110085 NIT No-06 (2019-20) EE (PR) SR-I (Re-invite)					
PRESS NOTE					
S. No	Name of Work	Amount put to tender (Rs)	Earnest Money/ (Rs.)	Date of release of tender in e-procurement solution	Last date/time for tender download Time of receipt of tender through e-procurement solution Time of opening of technical Bid. Time of opening of financial Bid. Date
1.	P/F barbed wire fencing and watch & ward arrangement at proposed site for construction of Sewerage Pumping Station at Prem Nagar & Pratap Vihar, under Kirari GOC.	Rs. 29,81,663/-	Rs. 59700/-	19/02/2020	13.03.20 up to 3:00 pm 13.03.20 up to 3:00pm 13.03.20 up to 3:15 PM After Evaluation of Part A (Technical Bid)

DELHI JAL BOARD GOVT. OF N.C.T. OF DELHI OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER (CENTRAL)-II ANDHA MUGHAL, PARTAP NAGAR (NEAR METRO STATION) DELHI-110007 PRESS NIT No. 66 (2019-20)					
S. No.	Name of Work	Estimated Cost (Rs.)	Earnest Money (Rs.)	Tender Fee (Rs.)	Date of release of Tender/Tender Id. Last date/time of receipt of tender
1.	Shifting of 200mm and 450mm dia. water line due to construction of Electric Sub Station by DTL near Than Singh Nagar UGR AC-23, Karol Bagh under EE(CENTRAL)- II.	37,54,793/-	75,100/-	500/-	Dt. 20/02/2020 Upto 3:00 PM 2020_DJB_188386_1

TN RAGHUNATHA ■ MUMBAI

A court has sentenced Shaliwahan Solegaonkar, then Branch Manager, Bank of Maharashtra, Pune to 10 years' rigorous imprisonment (RI) and levied a fine of ₹24 lakh on him, while it has awarded three years' rigorous imprisonment to one Rakesh Yadhav, a private person, along with a fine of ₹10,000 on him.

The CBI had registered a case on June 28, 2018 on the allegations that during the period 2009 to 2017, Solegaonkar, a Branch Manager in 5 different Branches of Bank of Maharashtra, respectively and thereby allegedly misappropriated a total amount of ₹2,56,15,998, which was entrusted to him as banker. After investigation, the CBI filed five charge sheets were filed before the Special Judge, BI Cases, Pune on December 20, 2018 and December 26, 2018 under sections 13(2) r/w 409 and Section 120-B of IPC r/w 13(1)(d) of P.C. Act, 1988 against the two accused.

Sahakar Nagar Branch, Dy. Manager at Lavale & Lasurne branches, Manager at Hadapsar Industrial Estate and Talegaon Dhamdhare branches — had transferred various amounts from Bank General Ledger (BGL) account to a Savings Account opened in the name of Jadhav which was maintained at Sahakar Nagar Branch of Bank of Maharashtra at Pune.

Subsequently, Shaliwahan Solegaonkar transferred the said amounts from the account of Jadhav to his own Savings Bank Accounts maintained at Vadgaon Budruk Branch and Sahakarnagar Branch of Bank of Maharashtra, respectively and thereby allegedly misappropriated a total amount of ₹2,56,15,998, which was entrusted to him as banker. After investigation, the CBI filed five charge sheets were filed before the Special Judge, BI Cases, Pune on December 20, 2018 and December 26, 2018 under sections 13(2) r/w 409 and Section 120-B of IPC r/w 13(1)(d) of P.C. Act, 1988 against the two accused.

BSES BSES Rajdhani Power Limited, New Delhi TENDER NOTICE Date: 21.02.2020					
Sealed tenders under two Bid System (Unpriced & Priced) is invited for following job from all bidders.					
NIT No.	Brief Item Description	Estimated Cost (₹)	Cost of EMD (₹)	Due Date & Time of Submission	Date & Time of Opening
C/MC/BR/19-20/SV/AR/840	AWARD OF WORK FOR CARRYING OUT METER-READING FOR SINGLE PHASE METERS (SLCC) AND BILL DISTRIBUTION FOR SINGLE PHASE AND THREE PHASE METERS (SLCC AND MLCC) IN BRPL	96.87 Crores	12.10 Lacs	12.03.2020 1530 HRS	12.03.2020 1545 HRS

OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER (SW) II DELHI JAL BOARD: GOVT. OF NCT OF DELHI NEAR DWARKA, WTP, DWARKA, NEW DELHI-110043 NIT No.54(19-20) (Item No. 01.02 & 03)					
S. No	Name of Work	Amount put to Tender	EMD & Tender Fee	Completion period	Date of release of tender in e-procurement solution Last date/time of receipt of tender through e-procurement solution
1.	Replacement of Old Damaged Water Line by P/L 150/100mm dia D.I. Water Pipe Line at Ghumanera Village in Maliaia Constituency under EE(SW)-II (Re-invite) Tender I.D.: 2020_DJB_188310_1)	Rs.49,33,975/-	Rs.98,700/- & Rs.500/-	90 Days	19.02.2020, 4:00 PM onward 05.03.2020 Upto 3:00 PM
2.	Making Functional the Internal Sewer System by P/L Sewer Lines in Leftout area and Tracing, Raising, repairing and Desilting of manholes in Mhalpur Village in AC-36 under EE(SW)-II (Re-invite) (Tender I.D.: 2020_DJB_188310_2)	Rs.41,14,986/-	Rs.62,500/- & Rs.500/-	120 Days	19.02.2020, 4:00 PM onward 05.03.2020 Upto 3:00 PM
3.	P/L 100mm dia D.I. Water Line at 20 Point Programme Colony, Dhuliras in Bijwasan Constituency under EE(SW)-II (Tender I.D.: 2020_DJB_188310_3)	Rs.30,15,846/-	Rs.60,500/- & Rs.500/-	30 Days	19.02.2020, 4:00 PM onward 05.03.2020 Upto 3:00 PM

## Priyanka for RS?

The Cong is hoping that the gambit of putting her in a Central role will hold out some hope of reviving the party



There may be a host of recommendations for the Congress to revive itself and capitalise on its pan-India matrix as a cohesive Opposition force. But there's nobody to accept them. There may be unmet calls to restore inner-party democracy by holding organisational elections and choosing capable leaders and its president based on cadre choices. But there's nobody to "bell the cat" as one of its own self-deprecating leaders said. There may be articulate and activist young leaders, who have sought to shine their light for a 2.0 recast but have been fobbed off by old hawks who fear their irrelevance, even if that applies to holding on to the crumbs of a fast disintegrating party. There may be seasoned leaders with wise words of wisdom that run in different directions, justifying them as inner party democratic dialogues although the world sees them as terrible infighting. There's the old matriarch, who is still keeping it together, the Gandhi tag the party's brand adhesive that's as scapegoating for party leaders in failure as grandstanding in success. But Sonia Gandhi doesn't know how to pass it on to her offspring. Reconciling some issues and the generational divide, infusing fresh breath energy with his band of followers was son Rahul, reluctant yet stubborn, a cocktail that's more implosive than explosive. Then there is Priyanka Gandhi, the more willing and capable scion with some strike capabilities, who could have been the galvaniser had not her *brahmastra* potential been wasted by benching her. So the Congress is tempted to play its last family card to mend the party by assigning her a Central role now rather than waiting for the next round of parliamentary elections. As 51 Rajya Sabha seats will be falling vacant in April, of which eight are from the three party-ruled States, there's a growing clamour to elect her to the Rajya Sabha.

Can this reset the Congress' narrative indeed? On the face of it, she has not been able to sway the Lok Sabha verdict even though she was made party general-secretary in charge of eastern Uttar Pradesh (UP). In fact, the Gandhis lost the home bastion of Amethi, too. Beyond some crowd-pleasing speeches, dramatic optics with the boatmen of Varanasi and campaign colour, Priyanka was compromised by an organisational matrix that had been floundering in the face of the BJP's phalanx. She herself admitted as much. And although she is probably the only politician other than Modi who can produce a mass resonance, she has two handicaps — the people's rejection of the politics of entitlement and a disconnect with the grassroots. Which is why one must credit her with not abandoning UP even after the Lok Sabha debacle while her brother chose exile. She worked the ground unlike her brother, who chose to be a disembodied conscience. She has been taking up the cudgels on behalf of the dispossessed tribals in Sonbhadra, praying with Dalits and has been visiting the anti-citizenship law protesters at the receiving end of police brutality. She has also been articulating her positions on national issues rather vociferously on social media. There is a rooted realism to her brother's exalted escapism, one that is now translating into huge crowd turnouts at her roadshow to the utter discomfort of caste-based parties, Samajwadi Party (SP) and Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP). Not only has she lived down her tag, her political sensibilities are primed and she has based herself in Lucknow with diligence of purpose. But the real problem is how she negotiates the tricky territory between her and Rahul camp followers and obviates criticism that by getting elected to the Rajya Sabha, the Gandhis would ensure family representation in each House and were just living out their timeliness as legislators. But Priyanka could make herself heard that much more nationally as a parliamentarian and counter the BJP's oratory and propaganda. Comparisons are being drawn about how her grandmother Indira Gandhi became Prime Minister in 1966 as a Rajya Sabha member. However, the context was different as Indira had the Congress as the dominant political party ruling in most States and at the Centre. That position has been wrested by the BJP today, leaving Priyanka with virtually no enablers. She has a classic glass cliff situation; she could emerge in her own right if she manages to bring the Congress out of the ventilator or she could be condemned for inefficiencies if she fails. Besides, she has a better connect with and a sensibility to deal with both senior and junior leaders, who are claiming fiefdoms of importance and fighting each other, be it Milind Deora, Ajay Maken, Pawan Khera, Abhishek Manu Singhvi, Kamal Nath or Jyotiraditya Scindia. She could still be the balancer and end the confusion at least. But how would she avoid her Achilles' heel, businessman-husband Robert Vadra, who is entangled in vigilance probes? If she manages the political disassociation from personal, perhaps she could still get the party back on keel.

## Tesla's second coming

The company announces it is working on improved EV batteries to reduce 'range anxiety' among drivers



South Africa-born entrepreneur Elon Musk is a polarising figure. His late night tweets are analysed by venture capitalists and tech journalists as much as that of US President Donald Trump's morning tweets, which are examined by diplomats and political journalists alike. It would not thus be incorrect to argue that Musk has become one of the most important human beings in the world alongside Trump. That's because his automotive venture, Tesla Motors, which makes Electric Vehicles (EVs), is now valued at \$100 billion, more than the entirety of India's automotive sector combined and even more than that of Volkswagen AG, the German automotive colossus. Only Japanese carmaker Toyota is worth more by quite a bit. But Tesla Motors, named after the famed Serbian inventor Nikola Tesla, who promoted the alternating current system, is now miles ahead of the rest of the global automotive industry as it pivots towards an electric future. It is not only taking a lead with its readily available products but dominates the software world, too, with its autonomous driving system.

Musk and Tesla are also leading the charge when it comes to battery technology. The company is now developing batteries that can ensure an electric car can travel almost 600 km on a single charge. It will make for the longest journeys possible on a single charge, diluting "range anxiety" that is still the single-most quoted reason for people not to buy electric vehicles at this time. Yet, while Tesla solves problems for the first world, India is still miles away from adopting an electric future, with infrastructure and manufacturing far behind the curve. That said, the few electric cars that have been launched in our country right now are promising and have decent enough range for daily commuting, if not long-distance travel. With Musk bemoaning high Customs duties for imported cars, Tesla Motors is yet to come to India. It would be wise for the Government to keep a lower degree at least initially on electric cars to promote their usage going forward.

# The war on rationality

Shutting down N-power plants only to replace them with coal burning is the height of illogic. Nobody is as crazy as the Germans and the Japanese



GWYNNE DYER

Germany and Japan are finally winning a war together. Unfortunately, it is the "war on rationality." Coal, as everybody knows, is by far the most damaging source of energy we use, in terms of both the harm to human beings and the impact on the climate. It's twice as bad as natural gas and dozens of times worse than solar or nuclear or wind power. Yet both Germany and Japan have been building a lot of new coal-fired power stations. But why are they still betting on coal?

Would it upset you if I said it's because they are, despite their apparent sophistication, superstitious peasants at heart? Well, go ahead and get upset. Germany still gets more than a third of its energy from burning coal and most of it is ultra-polluting lignite or "brown" coal. Solar, wind, geo-thermal and hydropower generation provide just 17 per cent of the country's electricity needs. If most of Germany's 17 nuclear powers had not been shut down after 2012 (the last are scheduled to close within two years), then at least half the coal would not have been needed.

There had been an active anti-nuclear power movement in Germany for some time but what triggered the 2012 decision to shut the entire sector down was the Fukushima disaster of the previous year. I am deliberately avoiding the words "calamity", "disaster" and "catastrophe" because while the Fukushima tsunami killed 19,000 people, the subsequent problem with the four nuclear reactors on the coast killed nobody. Yet, the German people, or at least a large number of German anti-nuclear activists, insisted that any nuclear reactor anywhere was a mortal danger and the Government agreed to shut all nuclear plants down. The country pulled a 180 and decided to embark on ending its use of nuclear power entirely.

The same thing happened in Japan. The Japanese planners were foolish to put four reactors on the coast in a region where earthquakes and consequent tsunamis were to be expected from time to time. What needs to be condemned is the decision of the planners and not nuclear power. Nevertheless, all 50 Japanese nuclear reactors, which accounted for 30 per cent of the country's electrical power, were immediately shut down.

The Japanese are not as blindly dogmatic as the Germans: Two of those nuclear plants reopened in 2015 and seven more resurfaced recently. A further 17 are in the lengthy process of restart approval. So by 2030, the Japanese Government hopes to be getting 20 per cent of its electricity from nuclear power again. But that's only half the amount of



nuclear power that Japan originally planned to make available by 2030. The gap between 20 per cent and the planned 40 per cent of the country's energy needs will be made up by burning coal.

Japan recently announced that it plans to build 22 new coal-burning power plants in the next five years. Its Government has argued that these coal plants use ultra-supercritical boilers that are vastly more energy-efficient and pollute less per unit of energy. But these plants still emit greenhouse gases and are a non-starter for activists who want the world to zero out carbon emissions.

This is deeply irresponsible behaviour and the worst thing is that the decision-makers know it. They are just deferring to public opinion, which in this instance is entirely wrong. The "superstitious peasants" should really be frightened of global warming, for which coal-burning is a major driver, not of relatively harmless nuclear power.

That's not to say that nuclear power is the solution to all our problems, or even most of them. It is generally

“OTHER COUNTRIES CAN BE IDIOTIC, TOO. DUE TO AN ADMINISTRATIVE GLITCH, CHINESE PROVINCES ARE CURRENTLY BUILDING HUNDREDS OF UNNECESSARY COAL-FIRED POWER STATIONS THAT MAY NEVER BE USED SINCE THE CENTRAL GOVERNMENT EXPECTS THE COUNTRY'S COAL USE TO PEAK THIS YEAR”

the most expensive option because it costs so much to build the reactors and the associated controls and safety devices. Indeed, nuclear is no longer cost-competitive with other "clean" sources of power like wind and solar.

So there is a case for not building any more nuclear power stations, at least in regions and countries that have ample resources in terms of sun and wind. But there is no case for shutting down existing nuclear stations and burning more coal to make up the difference. That is so stupid, it verges on the criminal.

Other countries can be idiotic, too. Due to an administrative glitch, Chinese provinces are currently building hundreds of unnecessary coal-fired power stations that may never be used, since the Central Government expects the country's coal use to peak this year — and most existing Chinese coal plants already sit idle more than half of the time.

China is using coal power financing as a key element of its Belt and Road Initiative to expand its economic and political influence throughout Asia and Africa. Both Japan

and China are now racing to secure lucrative construction contracts in developing countries to expand their strategic reach.

At least China is also building nuclear plants as fast as it can. Last year, it accounted for more than half the world's output of solar panels. (On the other hand, it is providing work for the Chinese construction industry by building a planned 300 coal-fired power stations in other countries, presumably on the unspoken assumption that carbon dioxide emissions elsewhere won't affect China's climate.)

But nobody is as crazy as the Germans and the Japanese, who have been shutting down nuclear plants and replacing them with coal-fired plants. France will close its last coal-fired station in 2022 and Britain will do the same in 2025. But Germany says 2038 and Japan just says "eventually." That's far too late: By then the die will be cast and the world will be committed to more than 2°C of warming.

(Gwynne Dyer's new book is 'Growing Pains: The Future of Democracy and Work').

## SOUNDBITE

Problems of radicalism, environment and the belief that one is right while the rest are wrong are the basic issues disturbing the peace in the world.

RSS chief — Mohan Bhagwat

It is hypocritical that only female actors are accused of going under the knife or getting botox when male actors do the same. Why point fingers at women?

Actor — Raveena Tandon

In all fairness, the Chinese have slowed down. It is India that is an even bigger problem but it is an enormous problem. Nobody is doing anything about it.

US presidential aspirant — Michael Bloomberg

China has realised that it cannot back its all-weather friend all the time. If FATF comes down heavily on them (Pakistan), it may have to do a rethink on rhetoric and activities.

Army Chief — General MM Naravane

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

### Threat of extinction

Sir — The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) operates with four levels of language endangerment between "safe" (not endangered) and "extinct" (no living speakers), based on inter-generational transfer. At a time when nations are talking about the decline of languages, India still ranks one among those countries that have the largest number of living languages. But it is depressing that our country has also earned the dubious distinction of being one with the most number of endangered languages in the world. India has reportedly lost one-fifth of its languages in the past five decades.

It's not surprising that those languages that are at risk are the ones spoken by marginal tribes. Mother tongue languages, too, rank at the bottom. When there's no education in the mother tongue, children drop out when they go to high school. The best way to conserve a language is to create livelihood opportunities for those who speak it.

Dimpay Bhatia  
New Delhi

### Speak up to save languages

The mother tongue forms the very basis of "identity" of an individual or a community. Every effort must be made to build strong foundations at the formative stage to preserve languages. To stress the importance of mother tongue in one's life, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) declared February 21 as the International Mother Language Day to celebrate linguistic and cultural diversity and multilingualism. However, it's disturbing that India is not doing enough to preserve its rich native languages. In the 1961 census report, a total of 1,652 mother tongues were mentioned. The 1971 census mentioned only 108 languages. Further, a 2017 study, carried out by the Bhasha Research and Publication centre, titled *People's Linguistic Survey of India*, arrived at the conclusion that the country had lost at least 300 languages since Independence. It predicted that at least 400 Indian languages were at the risk of dying over the next 50 years. The extinction of hundreds of languages indicates the loss of culture, too.

The importance of languages must be realised. They permeate every facet of our lives and form the very basis of our civilisation. They play a significant role in creating and strengthening bonds among people. Preserving



and protecting our cultural heritage is the constitutional duty of the citizens. Social scientists and concerned authorities, too, must rise to the occasion and rescue dying languages and cultures to keep heterogeneity and spirit of "equality of all languages" alive. The protection and promotion of languages is the responsibility of both the citizens and the Government. The best way is to constantly use them. A start can be made at schools by making mother tongue the medium of instruction for children.

Kajal Chatterjee  
Kolkata

### Welcome move

Sir — It wasn't surprising that a special court pulled up the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) for not conducting a lie

detector or psychological test on its former Special Director, Rakesh Asthana, in an alleged bribery case. But it was happy that Special CBI Judge Sanjeev Aggarwal has asked the probe agency to submit the case diary

for examination. It also enquired about the previous investigating officer, Ajay Kumar Bassi, who was taken off the case and had been transferred to Port Blair after the then agency Chief, Alok Kumar Verma, was shunt-

ed out. People are fully aware that Asthana is the blue-eyed boy of Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Union Home Minister Amit Shah. How can one forget that in 2002, the then Home Minister and Deputy Prime Minister LK Advani had introduced Asthana to the then Gujarat Chief Minister Narendra Modi?

Back then, he was heading the probe on the Godhra train burning case and had sent the State into an unprecedented carnage and helped Modi to get clean chit from the Supreme Court appointed-SIT, headed by R Raghavan.

To clear the matter, Special Judge Aggarwal has directed the initial investigating officer in the case, Ajay Kumar Bassi, to appear before it on February 28. Hope the case diary clears the role of Asthana and Prime Minister Modi's much hyped *na khaunga, na khane dunga* mantra and simultaneously, the skeleton of the country's highest probe agency's alleged wrongdoing.

Bidyut Kumar Chatterjee  
Faridabad

Send your feedback to: [letterstopioneer@gmail.com](mailto:letterstopioneer@gmail.com)

## FIRST COLUMN

## We must come up Trumps

Leaders of both nations have to look at meaningful and time-bound solutions to address each other's concerns on emerging trade issues



KUMARDEEP BANERJEE

In the run up to President Donald Trump's maiden visit to India, a bunch of eye-catching, US Secret Service men have started fanning out in locations which the leader is expected to visit. Make no mistake, that's not the only spectacle India will witness for the next week or so. "Namaste Trump" formerly "Kemcho Trump", promises to be a grander display of abundance and strategic friendship than "Howdy Modi" in Houston. Trump has already made statements on being "Number one" on Facebook, ahead of Modi, and expressed elation over the millions and millions of people who are expected to greet him in India.

Meanwhile, thousands of eyes would be scanning for inches or miles moved in the crucial Indo-US strategic partnership corridor. Trump is keen for India to open up its markets further for US goods and services and act as a key balancing partner in the region that is facing threats of dominance from China. Pushing his "America first" policy, Trump has been chipping away at any preferential treatment to India, specially in the field of trade. A few days ago, he declared India with a national average income of \$2,000 and, therefore, an approximate \$3 trillion economy as "developed" at par with China. He thereby justified taking India off any list of a preferential trade policy. Perhaps in the same breath a US-based think tank *World Population Review* has ranked India as the fifth-largest economy, overtaking the UK and France. While it may have led to celebrations in some quarters, many look at this development under the bleak prospect of a meaningful trade deal.

India's key ask from the US at this stage is a reinstatement of the Generalised System of Preferences (GSPs) programme which will allow it to export nearly \$6 billion worth of goods to the US under nearly zero tariffs. While it may be less than 10 per cent of India's overall exports to the US, it is a sticking point. Several trade watchers and policy analysts have indicated that the US is pushing for an increase of nearly \$5-\$6 billion in additional trade value of goods. Hopeful of a deal, nearly \$3.5 billion defence agreements between India and the US are ready to be signed when Trump visits India. These include nearly 30 armed helicopters mostly meant for naval operations, a key tool in the strategic Indian Ocean where China has been seen flexing its maritime muscles. Whether a sale of weapons and military copters will be seen within the broad contours of Indo-US trade, will be a complex question to answer.

That leaves — fraught with screaming lobbies on both sides — high attention agricultural produce and medical equipment sectors. In the run-up to the visit, reports have surfaced of India's willingness to allow low tariff import of some frozen meat products, along with berries and nuts. Conditional import of dairy products with strict compliance to the vegetarian nature of the produce, could also be made. Limited concessions on medical devices' price caps imposed in the post-GSP era, can also be brought to the table.

However, right now chances of a restricted or "mini" trade deal are also looking like a distant possibility. US Trade Representative Robert Lighthizer, who was supposed to be in India at least a week before Trump to give final contours to the deal, has given it a pass, substituting it with hectic video conference calls with his Indian counterpart Commerce Minister Piyush Goyal. It is unclear if the duo would be able to strike a lightning deal in under a week to come up with crackling billion figure hopes.

Many point at previous last-minute dashes for making major announcements, sometimes literally minutes ahead of crucial leadership meetings. Take the example of US support to India's permanent seat at the UN Security Council, a decision which was taken "15 minutes" ahead of then President Barack Obama's address to the Indian Parliament. This gives rise to hopes of a fig leaf trade deal pending since the "Howdy Modi" event in Houston last year being accomplished during the "Namaste Trump" extravaganza.

This deal or no deal, from what we gather, still leaves an impactful chunk of digital trade between India and the US. Trade in services between the two nations — large portions of it digitally-aided — remains a key area of negotiation. US companies have raised concerns with Indian counterparts and the Government on the restrictive nature of tariffs and non-tariff barriers which limit the access of US tech firms to India. For instance, the upcoming Data Protection Bill has text additions which suggest compulsory data localisation and sharing of non-personal data with the Government. These are seen as growth and innovation barriers in a connected, seamless, shared digital economy of two great democracies. Technology collaboration by removing tariff and non-tariff barriers, specifically in the technology segment, could be great lever of strategic and public policy partnership for both countries. One clear area to work together is looking at developing protocols beyond fifth generation or 5G followed by communications. India and the US can be natural partners in the new digital trade world. Rhetoric and spectacle aside, leaders of both nations have to look at meaningful and time-bound solutions to address each other's concerns on emerging trade issues while ensuring prosperity for local markets.

(The writer is Country Manager, India, ITC Council)

## POINTCOUNTERPOINT

ALL WHO WORK AS BRAND AMBASSADORS ARE AT A RISK OF BEING FRAMED BY THIS (MODI) GOVT. TAPAS WAS THE THIRD VICTIM OF THIS VENDETTA POLITICS.

—BENGAL CHIEF MINISTER  
MAMATA BANERJEE



MAMATA, TOO, FOLLOWED A SIMILAR VENDETTA POLITICS IN BENGAL AND PUT HUNDREDS OF OPPOSITION WORKERS IN JAIL.

—CONGRESS LEADER  
ADHIR CHOWDHURY

# No country for women

Govt apathy and hopelessness have led many farm widows to take their lives. Just how many more suicides will it take for the State to take action?



SWAPNA MAJUMDAR

Mudapu Yadamma, 38, is from Mallareddipalli village in Nalgonda district, Telangana. Two years ago, her husband, a farmer, committed suicide by consuming pesticide and left her with a debt of ₹3.5 lakh. Kamatham Lakshmidevi, 31, is from Danduvuripalli village in Ananthapur district of Andhra Pradesh. She, too, was left with a debt of ₹8 lakh after her husband, also a farmer, killed himself two years ago.

Vidya More, 38, is from Maharashtra. When her husband ended his life in 2012, his suicide was declared not eligible (as a farm suicide) thereby denying her the right to ex-gratia compensation.

They may live in different States but the fate of farm widows across the country is worryingly similar. Not only do farm widows suddenly become invisible to the State, they are ostracised by their families and are left to fend for themselves, especially when they are hounded to repay the debts taken by their farmer husbands. Latest statistics released by the Government show that 11,379 farmers killed themselves in India in 2016. In other words, there were 948 suicides every month or 31 growers committed suicide daily. One big reason for this was mounting debts. While the inability to pay back loans can be attributed to several reasons, including failed crops, the agrarian crisis and the unavailability of alternative opportunities for earning a livelihood, the burden of repaying the debts has fallen on their widows.

At present, there is no programme or policy that frees these farm widows from debts incurred by their husbands. The harrying by banks or moneylenders begins almost immediately after the husband's death, leaving hardly any time for the widow to mourn her spouse.

The need to survive and look after her children pushes her to earn a living. But studies have shown that the woman farmer often adopts the same kind of farming as the deceased husband. She also resorts to the same practice of chemical-intensive and external-input-driven farming requiring investments and borrowing. But with women farmers not seen as credit-worthy and access to Government schemes and credit being limited, the situation can be so hopeless and dire that women farmers are often forced to take the same path as their husbands and end their lives. Women accounted for 8.6 per cent of farmer suicides in the country.

A prime cause has been the inadequate efforts by the Government to prevent farmer suicides coupled with insufficient and lopsided support to families affected by them, according to the Mahila Kisan Adhikaar Manch (MAKAAM), an informal forum comprising 120 organisations of women farmers and civil society groups in 24 States working to secure rights of women growers.

Recent consultations on the "Status of Women Farmers in Farm Suicide Families" held by MAKAAM and UN Women also revealed that the lack of recognition by the Government of the deaths as farm suicides in many cases further exacerbated the conditions of the marginalised widows as the State refused to extend any support to them.

Korra Shanthi is one such victim of State apathy. A resident of Nalgonda district, Telangana, Shanthi and her husband were engaged in culti-

“LACK OF RECOGNITION IS A MAJOR HURDLE IN THE RELIEF AND REHABILITATION OF WIDOWS AND THEIR FAMILIES. THIS IS ACCORDING TO A MAKAAM STUDY ON THE STATUS OF WOMEN IN FARM SUICIDE-AFFECTED FAMILIES IN THE SIX STATES OF MAHARASHTRA, KARNATAKA, TELANGANA, ANDHRA PRADESH, TAMIL NADU AND PUNJAB”



vation on leased land. When her husband ended his life in 2018, Shanthi was left with a debt of ₹6 lakh. Although she applied for ex-gratia payment with the help of local activists, she has not received any money yet. Shanthi has been told that she is unlikely to receive it because her husband did not own any land in his name, making her ineligible for ex-gratia payment.

Since several State Government rules specify that only land owners and land title holders are considered as farmers while extending support to the suicide-affected family, those toiling on leased land fall through the cracks. With land ownership being the main criteria, tenant farmers and women farmers, especially farm widows who do not have land in their names, are not recognised as real farmers. Further, farmers who have borrowed from moneylenders also don't get counted as eligible or genuine cases and their widows and families are denied compensation. "This is one of the biggest problems in Punjab," contends 40-year-old Veerpal Kaur. A resident of Mansa district, Punjab, Kaur has witnessed the despair that led to her husband, father and father-in-law ending their lives. But their families were not considered eligible although the suicides were due to farm distress.

Lack of recognition is a major hurdle in the relief and rehabilitation of widows and their families. This is according to a MAKAAM study on the status of women in farm suicide-affected families in six States of Maharashtra, Karnataka, Telangana, Andhra Pradesh, Tamil Nadu and Punjab. One of the important findings was that in Maharashtra, Punjab and Karnataka,

only those farmers who had institutional debt were considered as genuine and eligible for support, not those who ended their lives due to pressure from moneylenders.

Moreover, there was a wide variation in the relief and rehabilitation package given by these six States. The study showed that the criteria used to determine "farm suicides" were different across States and even within the relevant agencies like the police, agriculture and revenue departments.

According to MAKAAM's Seema Kulkarni, even in the States where compensation was being paid, it was not uniform. "While Andhra Pradesh provides a compensation of ₹7 lakh for each family, in Maharashtra, which has the largest number of farm suicides in the country, this is only ₹2 lakh. In the case of Telangana, although its policy states a compensation of ₹6 lakh, hardly any payment had been made since subsuming farm suicide cases into the Farmer Insurance scheme called Rythu Beema Padhakam," says Kulkarni.

Of all the States, only Andhra Pradesh had a one-time settlement mechanism, (used in certain cases), to settle all outstanding institutional as well as private loans within ₹1 lakh to liberate woman from never-ending debt. However, its use was limited.

The study also found that only Karnataka had a policy to support education of children from farm suicide families, including reimbursement of fee of those studying in private institutions. "However, even here, the implementation was poor and lacked coordination between different agencies, states," Ashalatha Satyam of Rythu Swarajya

Vedika, a MAKAAM partner.

She points out that such a policy does not exist in other States. This is why many widows in Telangana and Andhra Pradesh had to pull out their children from schools. Although the Maharashtra Government had announced a support package related to education fee, nothing has been finalised so far.

In cases where land is in the name of the husband, wives have the opportunity to eke out a living once they are able to get it transferred in their name. But even here it is usually a long and uphill battle as relatives don't want to give her the rightful share in the property. Lack of land ownership has forced most of the women to either become labourers or seek other means of employment, often at the cost of their safety. So, Mudapu Yadamma is dependent on wage labour to keep her three children in school since her in-laws are not prepared to give her a share in the family land. Kamatham Lakshmidevi, too, was denied her share in the family land cultivated by her husband and does any work that helps her earn a living. Vidya More has taken up sewing and wage labour to make ends meet. But all this isn't enough to repay the huge debts incurred by their husbands.

They are not the only ones struggling for survival and their rights. Hundreds of farm widows have fallen off the Government's radar. Government apathy and hopelessness have led many to take their lives. This is not unknown to the political masters. Then what is the Government waiting for? Just how many more suicides will it take for it to take action?

(The writer is a senior journalist)

## Strive to preserve your identity

Maintaining and retaining the languages of ethnic and cultural groups is critical for the preservation of cultural heritage and identity. Using one's mother tongue at home is part of this exercise



MJ WARSI

To promote awareness of linguistic and cultural diversity and bolster social and multilingual identity, the International Mother Tongue Day is celebrated every year on this day (February 21).

Mother tongue refers to a person's native language, that is, a language learned from birth. The first International Mother Tongue Day was observed in 1990 after the declaration by the United Nations (UN) to recognise the sacrifices of people who lost their lives for the sake of their mother tongue in Bangladesh.

Language is one of the most precious gifts that we have and each tongue represents a unique and distinct cultural heritage. Language is a

means of communicating values, beliefs and customs and has an important social function as it fosters feelings of group identity and solidarity. It is the means by which culture, traditions and shared values may be conveyed and preserved.

About 50 per cent of the world's out-of-school children live in communities where the medium of instruction is different from the language used at home. This is perhaps one of the most astounding facts about second language education. Schools have tried to tackle the problem by going to the families of these children for assistance in helping students gain confidence in the use of the second language. They ask the parents to use the second language at home so that the students become more comfortable with it and are able to cope with it in school. This does more harm than good for reasons other than that of a second language being much harder to learn regardless of copious levels of effort put in to achieve fluency.

In developing areas, usually there aren't resources enough to prepare

students at this level, so the efforts made by the parents and the students are futile in that sense.

This second language education also causes a rift between families and their native languages in a wholly unnecessary way. Families feel alienated from their mother tongue simply because the school gives the impression that they should feel this way. By propagating this attitude, these education systems are essentially destroying diverse cultures and backgrounds that make our species so great.

The different languages and dialects spoken throughout the globe reflect how history and culture have shaped the way in which people speak, think and reflect. Our mother tongue helps to link new generations to the past, which is part of our cultural and plurilingual heritage. It is a well-known fact that everyone had a language that they grew up speaking and a good proportion of the world spoke more than one tongue. However, the idea that someone would regularly have to be taught in a language that wasn't

native to them had never occurred previously. "This was, undoubtedly, exacerbated by the fact that I never made significant strides towards becoming fluent in another language. The closest I had ever come was a working proficiency in Spanish during my junior year of high school. When I think back on my perspective on this subject in the context of my parents, their accents never bothered me because I had just always been so used to them," says a 21-year-old former student Tej, who is pursuing higher studies at Washington University in St Louis, USA.

Leanne Hinton, a Professor of linguistics at the University of California in Berkeley, says in *Mother Tongue-Based Multilingual Education*, "More broadly, the loss of language is part of the loss of whole cultures and knowledge systems, including philosophical systems, oral literary and musical traditions, environmental knowledge systems, medical knowledge and important cultural practices and artistic skills. The world stands to lose an impor-

tant part of the sum of human knowledge whenever a language stops being used. Just as the human species is putting itself in danger through the destruction of species diversity, so might we be in danger from the destruction of the diversity of knowledge systems."

These problems are hard to fix. If one were to approach educators and tell them to fix the issue, they would undoubtedly point to a lack of resources. Nevertheless, an effort must be made by educators to have respect for the mother tongue of their students, even if it is different from their own.

The beauty of academic education is that the majority of it comes from books that can be more easily produced in areas with greater resources. It is for the educators in these parts of the world — who are multilingual — to produce orthographical and instructional materials for use in developing areas. Given the resource crisis in the developing world, this is likely to be one of the most practical solutions. Children in developing areas have the

thirst for knowledge, we must do what we can to satiate it.

Language is the essence and identity of culture and is a major tool of communication and for exchange of ideas and emotions. To know your language is the simplest and most important way to keep and preserve your culture. In recent times, the idea of linguistic and cultural awareness has increased; thus allowing the mother tongue to be more culturally accepted.

It is clear, that we must strive to reform the systems that educate the youth, in order to further the quality of learning in the first language or mother tongue and to inspire solidarity based on understanding, tolerance and dialogue.

Maintaining and retaining the languages of ethnic and cultural groups is critical for the preservation of cultural heritage and identity. Using one's mother tongue at home will make it easier for speakers to be more comfortable with their own linguistic and cultural identity.

(The writer is Chairperson, Department of Linguistics, AMU)



FOREIGN EYE



GENERATING JOBS NEED OF THE HOUR

Is there any sign that Boris Johnson understands that monetary policy has failed and there needs to be fiscal intervention to bolster demand for jobs? Not much. Just increasing the fiscal deficit won't help. However, most of the cash flows via tax cuts to the richest, who do not spend it. Johnson promises infrastructure spending in Labour areas that voted Tory. The economic returns from this won't materialise for a decade — not in time to impress anyone who voted for the Tories.

(The Guardian editorial)

AGRCASE

# Govt may seek balance between SC order, telcos' health

IAN S ■ NEW DELHI

With the telecom sector reeling under severe financial stress and Vodafone Idea staring at bankruptcy in case it is made to pay its adjusted gross revenue (AGR) dues, the Government is considering options to stick to the Supreme Court's directive but with least possible impact on the financials of the stressed operators. According to people in the know, the Government will try to ensure that its action regarding AGR dues takes care of all the perspectives, firstly, compliance with the Supreme Court's order, then, ensuring minimum impact on the health of the telcos along with making sure that the consumers are not impacted adversely. The Government, among other options, is considering to set up a fund to facilitate opera-

tions of telcos post the payment of their AGR dues, sources said.

According to sources in the know, the dues which have to be paid to the Department of Telecommunications (DoT) would have to be put in the telecom fund, and can then be lent to the companies at lower interest.

This will allow companies to maintain their going concern status and continue operations without running to banks to raise funds.

With the sector in trouble, none of the banks would be ready to lend to telcos, so the fund would act as critical funding support. The telecom fund is likely to help telcos manage their cash flows and would be fiscally neutral for the Government.

The sources also said that two other options are being looked at — waiver of penalties

or staggered payments with interest. The Prime Minister's Office (PMO) and the Law and Finance Ministries would take the final call.

The DoT has maintained that it will execute the top court's directive and stick to the spirit of the order.

In the last couple of days, chiefs of telecom majors, Bharti Airtel and Vodafone Idea have met Government officials and Ministers in a bid to get some relief.

On Wednesday, Mittal and Vodafone Idea Chairman Kumar Mangalam Birla met Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman to apprise her the current stressed state of affairs in the telecom sector due to huge AGR payment and are learnt to have sought relief for sustenance. Both the telco bosses have also met Telecom Secretary Anshu Prakash.

## AGR unprecedented crisis, sought cut in taxes for industry: Mittal

IAN S ■ NEW DELHI

Bharti Airtel chairman Sunil Mittal on Thursday met Telecom Minister Ravi Shankar Prasad in the wake of the current AGR payment to be made by the telcos, saying he suggested that for the overall health of the industry, taxes needed to be brought down.

Mittal, however, said the issue of AGR payment per se did not figure in the talks. The discussion was on the overall industry, he said.

"Adjusted Gross Revenue has been an unprecedented crisis for the telecom industry. I made certain suggestions on the overall health of the industry. Industry has been heavily taxed and taxes need to be

looked at. The issue of very low revenues left in the kitty of the industry needs to be addressed and the AGR also need to be dealt with", he said after the meeting with Prasad.

He said Airtel will make the balance payment expeditiously. "The demand for reduction in taxation for the telecom sector has been for a long time. The regulator has been supporting it", he said in response to a query if he has sought any cut in levies.

Mittal met the minister amid reports that said government was looking at some form of relief for the sector in view of huge AGR dues to be paid by telcos.

The telcos, particularly Vodafone Idea, which is severe-

ly hit by the AGR payment, has sought a bailout. The options here before the government are limited. There could be a cut in licence fee and spectrum usage charges, staggered payment of AGR over long years with interests, a waiver of interest and penalties on AGR dues.

So far the Government has neither stated nor indicated any relief for the telcos. On Wednesday, Mittal met Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman and sought sustainability for telcos in the stressful times. He had said Indian telecom industry has been under stress for the last three-and-a-half years and the Government should ensure sustainability of the sector.

"The only thing

Government needs to do is to focus on how to ensure sustainability of the sector," he said after meeting the FM.

Airtel faces ₹35,500 crore AGR dues. The company has already announced its plans to pay the dues that arose from the Supreme Court ruling.

Earlier this week, Bharti Airtel had paid ₹10,000 crore to the telecom department as part of its AGR dues. The company plans to pay the balance amount before the next date of Supreme Court's hearing which is on March 17.

Former Finance Secretary Subhash Chandra Garg has said in a blog that telecom crisis is not limited to AGR and that the problems are much deeper.



## Govt to verify telcos' AGR math via test checks before March 17: Sources

New Delhi: The telecom department will verify telcos' claims of lesser AGR dues by initiating random 'test checks' before March 17, sources said. The 'test check' will happen for all telcom firms but will start with those claiming they have already made full and final settlement towards their statutory liabilities. The exercise will help the department assess the gap between telcos' claim of what their adjusted gross revenue (AGR) dues are and its own estimates. PTI

## Govt to bar vendors of countries that disallow purchase from Indian firms

New Delhi: The Department of Telecom will bar telecom vendors of those countries that would disallow or exclude Indian suppliers from providing network gears used for wifi, fixed line and cellular networks, including 5G services, in their respective local markets, according to an official order.

The order is part of Government's Public Procurement (Preference to Make in India) order 2017 which

envisages to source domestic-ly manufactured products to encourage 'Make in India'.

"Any foreign Government which is not allowing Indian suppliers to participate and/or compete in procurement of telecom equipment, provision of clause 10 (d) of Public Procurement (Preference to Make in India) order 2017 be invoked in relation to the aforesaid telecom items," the order sent by the DoT to all Central Government depart-

ments and public sector units on February 19 said.

This includes wifi access points, routers, optical fibre cable, enterprise routers and related technology, integrated broadband systems, broadband transmission equipments, modems etc. Section 10 (d) of the order states that if nodal ministry finds that Indian suppliers of an item are not allowed to participate or compete in procurement by any foreign government

then it may restrict or exclude bidders from that country from eligibility for procurement of that item and other items relating that nodal ministry.

The Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade identifies DoT as the nodal department for implementing the provisions related to procurement of goods, services or works related to the telecommunication sector. PTI

## Vodafone Idea pays ₹1,000 cr to DoT towards AGR: Sources

New Delhi: Vodafone Idea on Thursday paid ₹1,000 crore to Department of Telecom towards its AGR dues, official sources said.

Earlier this week, the telecom company had paid ₹2,500 crore and had said it would pay ₹1,000 crore more on weekends. But Friday is a holiday, so the company has made the payment on Thursday, however, Vodafone Idea did not comment on it.

The DoT seeks ₹53,000 crore AGR

payments from Vodafone Idea as it has been hit maximum by the AGR dues demand. On Wednesday, VIL chairman KM Birla and his Airtel counterpart Sunil Mittal individually met Finance minister Nirmala Sitharaman and learnt to have sought relief from the government.

While the Government has so far not taken any decision on a bail out, Birla and Mittal have also met Telecom secretary Anshu Prakash to press for supporting the industry for sustainability. IANS

## ₹ slides 10 paise to over 1-month low of 71.64 against \$

PTI ■ MUMBAI

The rupee on Thursday declined by 10 paise to settle at a more than one-month low of 71.64 against the US dollar amid heavy selling in domestic equities and strengthening of the American currency in the overseas market.

Forex traders said investor sentiments remained fragile amid coronavirus fears and sustained foreign fund outflows. The death toll from the coronavirus epidemic in China has climbed to 2,118, while the overall confirmed cases increased to 74,576, Chinese officials said on Thursday.

At the interbank foreign exchange market, the local currency opened at 71.75. During the day, it lost ground and touched a low of 71.80 and finally settled 10 paise lower at 71.64 against the US currency, a level not seen since January 8. The

rupee had settled at 71.54 against the US dollar on Tuesday. Forex market was shut on February 19, on account of Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj Jayanti.

"Indian rupee recovered early morning losses following Asian peers. Foreign fund inflows, dollar selling by state owned banks and stable crude oil prices also supported the rupee," said V K Sharma, Head PCG and Capital Markets Strategy, HDFC Securities.

Sharma added the near-term bias for rupee is bearish amid stronger dollar vis-a-vis major trading currencies. On a weekly basis, the rupee lost 33 paise. "Despite a lackluster week, we saw an appreciation in USD/INR spot tracking some uncertainty over coronavirus along with sharp surge in dollar index and crude oil prices," said Rahul Gupta, Head of Research- Currency, Emkay Global Financial Services.

## Round-the-clock power supply by bundling renewable with thermal power: Draft policy

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The Ministry of New and Renewable Energy has proposed a draft policy for the supply of round-the-clock (RTC) power to distributors through a mix of renewable energy and electricity generated in coal-based plants.

Addressing the issues of intermittency, limited hours of supply and low capacity utilisation of transmission infrastructure, the draft policy provides for reverse bundling, wherein high-cost thermal power is being allowed to be bundled with cheaper renewable energy.

Accordingly, a power generating firm will have to supply electricity such that at least 51 per cent of the annual energy supplied corresponds to renewable energy and the balance is drawn from thermal sources.

The generator will supply RE power complemented with thermal power, in RTC man-

ner, keeping at least 80 per cent availability on an annual basis, the draft said.

"The main objective of the scheme is to provide RTC power to the discoms through bundling of RE power with thermal power and to scale up renewable capacity additions. It will also facilitate fulfilment of renewable purchase obligation (RPO) requirement of the obligated entities," the ministry said inviting comments from stakeholders on the new policy.

While India is committed to installing 175 GW of renewable energy (RE) sources by 2022 and 450 GW by 2030, intermittent power generated through such sources and its implication on the grid safety has been a concern. Parallely, there is around 26 GW of stranded thermal power assets lying unutilised which can provide firm power to the grid.

To bridge the gap, the MNRE has come out with the draft RE-based round the clock (RTC) power.

## Centre to come up with new rental policy very soon: Puri

New Delhi: Union Minister Hardeep Singh Puri on Thursday said the ministry of housing and urban affairs (MoHUA) will soon come out with a rental policy.

The policy would help alleviate housing shortage in urban areas by encouraging renting of homes as millions of houses lie vacant across the country.

"Very soon you will see a rental policy out," he said here at a function. The Minister said that a lot of people do not want to give their properties on rent because they think that "if you have a weak legal system, you might not get your property back". He expressed hope that the new policy will overcome this concern. "You have got the template etc (of the policy). States can tweak it to the extent they like. You will have a situation where large amounts of residential accommodation which is not being utilised will then be released into the market," the Minister said. PTI

## Economic activity remains weak: RBI rate setting panel minutes

Mumbai: Economic activity remains weak and high frequency indicators do not point to "bottoming out" of the downturn, the RBI Monetary Policy Committee noted while keeping the key interest rate unchanged earlier this month.

According to the minutes of the MPC released by the central bank on Thursday, member and RBI Deputy Governor Michael Debabrata Patra observed that economic

activity remains weak. "... There are indications of the momentum of growth stabilising, with sector-specific upticks underlying this guarded optimism, but they are far from gaining economy-wide traction. In some sectors, the slowdown is deep, and activity is stalled by sizable slack in demand.

"High frequency indicators are not offering definitive evidence yet that the downturn is bottoming out," he said dur-

ing the meeting of the MPC that concluded on February 6.

RBI Governor Shaktikanta Das, who heads the six-member panel, said "some green shoots are, however, visible". India's economic growth is estimated to have slowed down to 11-year low of 5 per cent during the current financial year ending March 2020. High frequency indicators like automobile sales and capital goods output are moderating since last several months. PTI

## Central Govt releases ₹19,950 cr GST compensation to States

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The Central Government has released ₹19,950 crore as GST compensation to states, taking the total amount released to them to over ₹1.2 lakh crore.

In a statement, the finance ministry said ₹19,950 crore was released to states and union territories on last Monday. When the Goods and Services Tax (GST)

came into force in July 2017, states, which lost powers to levy taxes such as VAT, were guaranteed to be compensated for any loss of revenue in the first five years of GST implementation. This compensation was to come out of a pool that is to be created by levy of cess on certain sin and luxury goods over and above the GST tax rate. The shortfall is calculated assuming a 14 per cent annual growth in GST collections by states over the base year of 2015-16.

### UNIDENTIFIED DEAD BODY

General public is hereby informed that one unknown male person was found unconscious Gali No.5, Ambedkar Nagar, Haiderpur, Delhi on Dated 05.02.2020. was admitted at BJRM Hospital refer to L.N.J.P Hospital vide MLC No.185181/19. during the treatment declared dead by Doctor on dated 13.02.2020. The dead body has been preserved at L.N.J.P Hospital Mortuary identification for 72 hrs. In this regard Case DD No. 20A, Dated 14.02.2020. has been lodged at P.S. Shalimar Bagh, Delhi. The description of the dead body is given as under Name Unknown S/o Unknown R/o Unknown Age: 33 Years, Complexion: Wheatish, Height: 5'6", Face: Long, Build: Thin, Sincere efforts have been made by local police to trace out the dead person but no clue has come to light so far. If any one having any information about this dead person please inform undersigned.



SHO P.S. Shalimar Bagh, Delhi Ph.: 011-27495198 8750870226

DP/02/NW/20

### SEARCH FOR MISSING/KIDNAPPED MALE

General Public is hereby informed that one male (depicted in the photo) namely Arjun Singh S/o Ram Singh R/o K-1861, Jahangir Puri, Delhi Aged-38 Years has been reported missing/kidnapped since 04.02.2020 vide DD No.28A Dated 05.02.2020 registered at Police Station Jahangir Puri, Delhi. His physical description is as under-



Complexion: Wheatish, Height: 5'7", Face: Oval, Build: Thin, Clothing: Blue coloured jacket and Yellow coloured shirt, Black coloured pant and white coloured slipper in feet.

Any person having any information/Clue about this missing/kidnapped male, may inform SHO, Jahangir Puri, Delhi at E-mail : [cic@cbi.gov.in](mailto:cic@cbi.gov.in) or website : <http://cbi.nic.in>

Tele No. : 011-24368638 or 24368641 Sd/- P.S. Jahangir Puri, Delhi Ph.: 011-27636000, 27631600

DP/9728/NW/2020

## Fixed broadband speed dips in India in Jan, mobile download speeds slightly up: Ookla

New Delhi: Mean download speeds on fixed broadband network in India slipped to 38.84 megabit per second (Mbps), but the same on mobile network improved slightly to 11.58 Mbps in January, a report released by Ookla said on Thursday.

"India's performance in mean download speeds on fixed broadband has gone down from 40.11 Mbps in December 2019 to 38.84 in January 2020. Mean download speeds on mobile broadband have gone up from 11.46 Mbps to 11.58 Mbps in January 2020,"

the broadband speed analysis firm said in its report.

The index placed UAE on first position for mobile broadband speed with a mean download speed of 87.01 Mbps. Singapore still holds the top spot for fixed broadband speed with a significant increase in mean download speeds at 202.21 Mbps. Ookla's Speedtest Global Index compares internet speed data from round the world each month, and the data for same comes from tests taken by people using Speedtest application. PTI

### BUSINESS CORNER

OBC CELEBRATES 78TH FOUNDATION DAY



New Delhi: On the occasion of 78th Foundation Day of the Oriental Bank of Commerce, event was organised at Siri Fort Auditorium New Delhi on 19.02.2020. Various cultural activities were organized and staff members from Delhi/NCR attended the event with great zeal and enthusiasm. The guest of honour Shri. Yuzvendra Chahal, Brand ambassador of the bank along with Shri.S.K.Soni, Ex.CMD OBC, Shri.T.M Bhasin, Chairman ABBF and the other retired staff members attended the event. The celebration of Foundation Day were extended all over Circle offices and the branches on Pan India basis.

### APPEAL FOR IDENTIFICATION



General public is hereby informed that an unidentified male Age : 65 years, Face : Round, Height : 5'7" Complexion : Sallow, Build : Normal, wearing black colour jacket and black colour pant, was found unconscious on 15.02.2020 in Safdarjung Emergency, he was admitted in Safdarjung Hospital, New Delhi by unknown person, during the treatment doctor declare him dead. In this regard a DD No. 09-B dated 15.02.2020 has been lodged at P.S. Safdarjung Enclave, New Delhi.

Any person having any information or clue about the deceased may kindly inform to the undersigned on following address or telephone nos.

SHO : P.S. Safdarjung Enclave, New Delhi Tel. No. : 011-24106345, 24106346

DP/01/SW/20

### SEARCH FOR MISSING/KIDNAPPED



General Public is hereby informed that one girl Namely: Sneha, D/o Amit Kumar, R/o: H.No. 3025, Ranjit Nagar, Delhi has been missing/ kidnapped from her house since 10.02.2020 at morning 10:00 am from the area of P.S. Ranjit Nagar, Delhi In this regard a case vide FIR No. 35/2020 u/s 363 IPC, dated 10.02.2020 has been registered at P.S.

Ranjit Nagar, New Delhi. The description of the missing/ kidnapped girl is as under: Age: 15 years, Height: 5'2", Face: Oval, Complexion: Fair, Build: Thin, Wearing: Green colour salwar-suit, white colour shoes. Sincere efforts have been made by local police to trace out the girl but no clue has come to light so far. Any person having any information or clue about this girl kindly inform to the following.

Website: <http://cbi.nic.in> E-mail Id - [cic@cbi.gov.in](mailto:cic@cbi.gov.in) Ph.: 011-24368638, 24368641 Sd/- P.S. Ranjit Nagar, Delhi Ph.: 011- 25704008, 8750870436

DP/6930/CD/2020

### SEARCH FOR MISSING



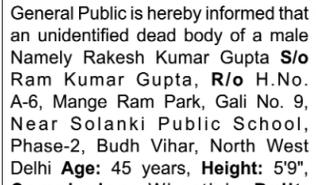
General Public is hereby informed that one girl Namely: Roshni, D/o: Sh. Late Arun Kumar Singh, R/o: RZ-28F, Gali No. 11, Durga Park, Sagarpur, New Delhi has been missing since 04.11.2019 from the area of P.S. Sagarpur Delhi. In this regard a case FIR No. 526/19 u/s 363 IPC dated 05.11.2019 has been lodged at PS Sagarpur, Delhi. The description of the

missing girl are as under: Age: 12 yrs 11 months, Sex: Female, Height: 4' 10", Complexion: Shallow, Face: Round, Wearing: Blue colour T shirt and jeans. Sincere efforts have been made by local police to trace out the girl but no clue has come to light so far. Any person having any information or clue about this girl kindly inform to the following.

Website: <http://cbi.nic.in> E-Mail ID - [cic@cbi.gov.in](mailto:cic@cbi.gov.in) Ph. Nos.: 011-24368638, 24368641 Sd/- P.S. Sagarpur, Delhi Ph.: 011-28522655, 7065036228

DP/7162/SW/19

### APPEAL FOR IDENTIFICATION



General Public is hereby informed that an unidentified dead body of a male Namely Rakesh Kumar Gupta S/o Ram Kumar Gupta, R/o H.No. A-6, Mange Ram Park, Gali No. 9, Near Solanki Public School, Phase-2, Budh Vihar, North West Delhi Age: 45 years, Height: 5'9", Complexion: Wheatish, Build: Strong, Face: Round, Eyes: Black, Wearing: Sky blue shirt and navy blue pant was found dead in B-1, Jal Board, Vasant Kunj, New Delhi on 06.02.2020. In this regard a DD No.52A, dated 06.02.2020 has been lodged at P.S. Vasant Kunj North, New Delhi.

If any one having any clue about deceased male may kindly inform the undersigned and contact on following numbers.

SHO P.S. Vasant Kunj North, New Delhi Ph.: 011-26892530

DP/06/SW/2020

# Adani Gas gets PNGRB nod for demerger, stake sale to Total

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The Adani family-owned Adani Gas has secured a nod from oil regulator for its demerger from its parent and the subsequent sale of a stake in the company to French energy giant Total SA after it made a formal application for the same, sources said.

The Petroleum and Natural Gas Regulatory Board (PNGRB) had threatened to cancel the 13 city gas distribution licences Adani Gas had won in the 9th bid round in 2018 for allegedly perpetrating a "fraud" by not disclosing material facts of the demerger.

After PNGRB slapped Adani Gas a showcase notice on Adani Gas Ltd (AGL) on November 29, 2019, the company maintained that "all concerned authorities were intimated about the proceedings pertaining reorganisation of AGL through media/ newspapers/ disclosures/ public listing/ bid submissions."

But, with PNGRB threatening to seek an investigation by the Ministry of Corporate Affairs into the "fraud", impose a Rs 396.81 crore penalty and cancel licences for all 13 areas that it had won, the company made a formal application for the stake sale. The sources said subsequent to that, PNGRB processed the application and

gave its approval. PNGRB, however, has told the company that it should have sought approval of the stake sale in time. A company spokesperson was not immediately available for comments.

Originally, Adani Gas was part of Adani Enterprises Ltd (AEL) and was demerged into a separate unit before half of Adani family's 74.8 per cent stake being sold to Total.

PNGRB had in its November notice stated that the AGL at the time of submission of bids in the 9th city gas distribution bid round in July 2018 was "already in the process of undertaking the implementation of a 'Composite Scheme of Amalgamation and Demerger'" and was fully aware that this would "result in the change in promoter of AGL from AEL to two discretionary family trusts". AGL submitted bids using the net worth of AEL to meet the bidding criteria and non-disclosure of the change of ownership was a "fraud", it had contended.

In October 2018, the Adani group agreed to form a 50:50 joint venture with Total for retailing CNG to automobiles and piped cooking gas to households. A year later, Total signed up to buy 37.4 per cent stake in Adani Gas for around

Rs 5,700 crore. When the news of the PNGRB notice first broke last month, Adani Gas had stated that it has "duly responded to PNGRB with all required informations to close the matter".

"Our project work at all GAs (geographical areas) are going on in full swing and with the facilitation and support of PNGRB and all authorities, we are committed to deliver CNG and piped gas to millions of our consumers on a fast track basis. "We are guided by the principles of corporate governance. It should be noted that we are fully compliant and have transparently represented facts in totality adhering to norms of compliance and disclosure," the Adani Gas spokesperson had added.

The spokesperson also said that there is no question of penalties as the same are not applicable and moreover Adani Gas is in full compliance of applicable rules/laws. Adani Gas has already set up city gas distribution operations in Ahmedabad and Vadodra in Gujarat, Faridabad in Haryana and Khurja in Uttar Pradesh. It in joint venture with Indian Oil Corp (IOC) is also developing distribution networks in Allahabad, Chandigarh, Ernakulam, Panipat, Daman, Dharwad, and Udhamsingh Nagar.

# Mkts resume downward spiral on muted global cues; post weekly losses

PTI ■ MUMBAI

Benchmark indices resumed their slide on Thursday as trading sentiment remained at a low ebb on lacklustre overseas cues and lack of buying triggers. A depreciating rupee and persistent capital outflows also weighed on the bourses, traders said. After a choppy session, the 30-share BSE Sensex settled 152.88 points, or 0.37 per cent, lower at 41,170.12. Similarly, the broader NSE Nifty slipped 45.05 points, or 0.37 per cent, to 12,080.85.

Financial markets will remain closed on Friday on account of 'Mahashivratri'. During the week, the Sensex fell 86.62 points or 0.21 per cent, while the Nifty shed 32.65 points or 0.26 per cent. Asian Paints, HUL, TCS, Nestle, Tech Mahindra and Reliance Industries were among the top laggards in the Sensex pack on Thursday, dropping up to 2.30 per cent. On the other hand, IndusInd Bank was the top gainer, spurting 3.57 per cent, followed by Tata Steel, SBI, ONGC and PowerGrid.

Global markets stayed on the backfoot as investors assessed the economic impact of the coronavirus epidemic. The coronavirus death toll climbed to 2,118 in China with

the death of 114 more people. However, new confirmed cases declined to 394, registering the biggest drop since December when the first case was reported in Wuhan. "The Sensex remained volatile and ended in negative during the truncated week. Global markets were mixed with the US and Chinese markets trading in the negative for the week... With the coronavirus situation in China stabilising, commodity prices have started to recover. Thus, crude price has started to inch up and is now close to USD 60 per barrel.

"With the earnings season coming to an end, the focus will shift to global and domestic macro developments. There are no major political events in the near term. While the interest level is high for small and midcap stocks, investors are still trying to assess the impact of coronavirus on procurement from China," said Sanjeev Zarbade, VP PCG Research, Kotak Securities. Sector-wise, BSE energy, oil and gas, IT, consumer durables, FMCG, teck and realty fell up to 0.95 per cent, while metal, telecom, bank and power rose up to 0.90 per cent. The broader BSE midcap and smallcap indices outperformed the benchmarks, rising up to 0.51 per cent.

# India-focused offshore funds, ETFs see \$2 bn outflow in Dec qtr

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

New Delhi (PTI): India-focused offshore funds and exchange traded funds (ETFs) witnessed a net outflow of over USD 2 billion (about Rs 14,200 crore) in three months ended December 2019, making it the seventh consecutive quarter of withdrawal amid stuttering economic growth, says a Morningstar report.

In comparison, net outflow of USD 1.3 billion was witnessed during the quarter ended September. India-focused offshore funds and ETFs are some of the eminent investment vehicles through which foreign investors invest in Indian equity markets. Of the total quarterly net outflow of USD 2.1 billion, India-focused offshore ETFs registered a net withdrawal of USD 321 million, while the remaining amount was withdrawn by India-focused offshore funds, the report noted. Flows into offshore funds are generally considered to be long-term in nature, whereas flows into offshore ETFs indicate predominantly short-term money.

During the quarter, their asset base rose to USD 49.4 billion from USD 49.1 billion in the previous quarter. Of the overall asset base of USD 49.4 billion, India-focused offshore ETFs made up about USD 8.5 billion, whereas India-focused offshore funds accounted for USD 40.8 billion.

# Fitch Ratings takes Bharti Airtel off 'watch negative'

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Fitch Ratings on Thursday said it has taken Bharti Airtel off 'watch negative' and affirmed the telecom operator's long-term foreign currency issuer default rating at 'BBB-' with a stable outlook. "The Stable Outlook reflects our view that an equity injection of USD 2 billion in January 2020 and EBITDA growth for the financial year ending March 2020 (FY20) and FY21 will be more than sufficient to offset the increase in debt to pay regulatory dues of up to USD 4.9 billion, which stem from a dispute over adjusted gross revenue (AGR)," the rating agency said in a statement.

Bharti paid Rs 10,000 crore on February 17 to the Department of Telecommunications (DoT) after the Supreme Court rejected telcos' petition to ascertain with the DoT the amount and timing of payment of regulatory dues related to the AGR dispute. "Bharti's management estimates the regulatory dues will not exceed the provision amount of USD 4.9 billion," it said. The Supreme Court's original ruling in October led the DoT to seek hefty unpaid dues on licence fees and spectrum-usage charges from telcos. The DoT demand relates to a 14-year-old dispute regarding the definition of AGR, which the Supreme Court agreed should include all kinds of

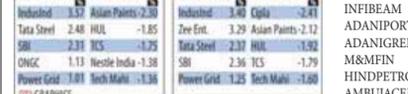
income generated by the telcos. "The Rating Watch Negative is removed from all the ratings," Fitch said. It estimated that funds from operations (FFO) adjusted net leverage will improve to 2.3-2.4 times in FY20 and to around 2.0x in FY21 - excluding USD 6.3 billion in deferred spectrum costs - below 2.5 times, the threshold above which it may consider negative rating action.

The USD 2 billion (over Rs 14,000 crore) equity injection alleviated pressure on the balance sheet resulting from high regulatory dues obligations and the company says it is committed to an investment-grade rating. It raised about USD 7.6 billion in equity through a rights issue and the sale of equity in its African subsidiary, Airtel Africa Plc, in last 18 months. "We estimate Bharti's consolidated EBITDA will increase by 20-25 per cent a year in FY20 and FY21 due to easing competition in the Indian wireless market and continued strong growth in its African markets and Indian enterprise segment," Fitch said. The rating agency said Bharti is poised to gain at least 30 million subscribers from Vodafone Idea in FY21. "We believe that Bharti and Jio will gain market share, given Vodafone Idea has limited financial flexibility to raise at least USD 6 billion in debt to pay regulatory dues in the short term," it said.

SCRIP	OPEN	High	LOW	LTP	CHANGE
NIFTY 50	12119.00	12152.00	12071.45	12080.85	-45.05
INDUSINDBK	1145.05	1203.85	1145.05	1180.95	-38.80
ZEE	252.50	260.85	251.00	260.55	8.30
TATASTEEL	429.00	447.70	428.00	443.45	10.25
SBN	319.35	329.20	318.75	327.90	7.55
POWERGRID	187.50	190.70	185.90	189.85	2.35
ONGC	102.00	104.10	101.80	102.75	1.05
HINDALCO	187.80	191.00	185.40	190.00	1.90
COALINDIA	177.75	180.25	175.20	179.10	1.35
YESBANK	35.30	36.50	34.65	35.55	0.25
HCLTECH	611.00	612.95	605.15	610.00	4.25
AXISBANK	742.75	754.00	737.60	745.40	4.45
ITC	207.00	208.55	205.45	207.90	1.20
TATAMOTORS	157.95	162.30	156.00	158.75	0.70
JSWSTEEL	280.70	285.85	277.00	281.80	0.95
SUNPHARMA	403.85	411.50	403.55	404.80	1.25
ICICIBANK	545.50	549.35	541.00	546.50	1.70
BHARTIARTL	543.70	552.00	538.60	544.60	1.20
BAJFINANCE	4867.90	4923.40	4853.75	4880.00	9.95
INFRAEL	225.50	231.00	224.60	225.30	0.20
UPREL	586.00	596.25	580.70	585.50	0.30
LIT	1279.90	1288.90	1275.30	1282.00	0.60
VEDL	141.80	144.75	140.80	142.60	-0.05
EICHANMOT	1869.90	1930.00	1854.50	1885.00	-25.20
ADANIAPORTS	371.00	374.50	370.00	370.50	-0.80
MARUTI	676.00	680.75	672.00	674.10	-16.50
HDFC	2364.00	2377.50	2349.05	2368.50	-8.75
GAIL	118.90	121.00	118.50	119.40	-0.40
M&M	525.00	533.00	528.00	524.30	-2.15
BAJAJFINSV	9758.00	9827.55	9693.75	9715.00	-43.65
NTPC	111.70	112.40	111.85	111.55	-0.50
INFE	803.25	806.10	793.85	796.80	-3.65
HEROMOTOCO	2267.00	2316.00	2235.45	2240.00	-11.60
TITAN	1330.00	1341.05	1320.00	1322.70	-6.90
DREDDY	2489.30	2484.95	2440.05	2457.00	-21.15
WIPRO	328.00	345.95	325.10	325.85	-1.75
BRITANNIA	3079.80	3123.45	3052.25	3060.00	-22.25
HDFCBANK	1230.00	1230.00	1214.10	1217.00	-10.20
GRASIM	750.00	767.80	745.90	750.75	-6.40
KOTAKBANK	1697.30	1699.25	1676.20	1685.00	-16.10
ULTRACEMCO	4450.00	4508.00	4420.00	4430.00	-43.10
BPCL	474.85	480.00	475.50	471.00	-4.55
BAJAJ-AUTO	3091.00	3100.05	3057.65	3059.00	-31.90
RELIANCE	1497.00	1508.00	1483.80	1487.00	-16.80
NESTLEIND	16740.00	16740.00	16525.40	16560.00	-225.05
IOC	113.55	114.45	112.00	112.40	-1.80
TECHM	840.15	845.90	826.95	827.45	-13.45
TCS	2204.50	2214.40	2151.25	2157.00	-39.35
HINDUNILVR	2282.20	2289.95	2242.50	2251.00	-41.15
ASIANPAINT	1883.00	1886.00	1839.05	1845.25	-39.65
CIPLA	448.00	448.80	434.50	436.70	-10.80

## BSE 500

Script	Open	High	Low	LTP
RELIANCE	1498.70	1507.95	1483.45	1485.50
IBULHSGFIN	304.30	359.60	301.65	338.30
TATACHEM	761.40	778.35	760.80	763.35
HDFCLIFE	582.90	583.50	572.10	573.75
SKTRANSFIN	1295.00	1358.45	1277.55	1342.05
IDEA	4.44	4.98	4.23	4.40
HDFC	2365.00	2378.05	2349.75	2370.90
INDUSINDBK	1149.20	1203.65	1146.20	1181.75
SBN	320.00	329.00	318.95	325.30
TCS	2215.00	2215.00	2152.05	2164.10
MFSL	541.10	597.60	541.10	565.05
INFE	800.45	805.90	794.05	796.70
TATAMOTORS	158.60	162.15	156.00	158.45
ESCORTS	910.60	910.70	888.45	877.35
TATASTEEL	429.47	447.50	428.25	443.70
MUTHOOTFIN	876.90	935.20	867.30	913.30
AYOUPHARMA	610.00	610.00	590.85	599.55
JIOHYDLAB	130.05	138.00	129.05	135.55
YESBANK	35.25	36.50	34.70	35.45
LIT	1282.00	1288.80	1275.60	1280.85
INDHOTEL	137.40	141.40	134.00	140.00
M&M	526.00	532.90	523.25	524.75
DMART	2439.00	2484.10	2430.55	2461.80
NCC	43.10	44.30	41.30	41.75
AMBER	1679.00	1690.00	1624.00	1643.25
BAJFINANCE	4880.00	4923.20	4860.00	4880.70
NAM-INDIA	433.15	429.25	430.00	441.30
PEL	1571.00	1633.00	1555.50	1599.45
BHARTIARTL	542.00	552.00	538.50	545.50
HDFCAMC	3375.00	3448.45	3346.30	3383.35
RBLBANK	306.00	319.45	303.50	308.85
AXISBANK	743.50	753.90	737.80	743.95
MARUTI	6760.00	6807.60	6721.00	6754.65
HDFCBANK	1228.00	1228.95	1214.35	1217.30
ADANIENIT	2563.00	2611.20	2528.85	2570.50
MIDHANI	218.15	248.60	216.60	228.40
GODREJPROP	1080.00	1120.50	1076.65	1112.45
ICICIBANK	547.00	549.10	542.20	546.65
HINDUNILVR	2288.30	2289.65	2243.00	2247.85
JINDALSTEL	188.20	195.85	186.10	193.35



SCRIP	OPEN	High	LOW	LTP	CHANGE
NIFTY NEXT 50	28632.20	28958.75	28627.55	28669.80	-39.05
IBULHSGFIN	304.00	359.75	301.30	336.00	30.55
IDEA	4.45	5.00	4.20	4.40	0.20
SKTRANSFIN	1281.00	1359.40	1277.00	1350.05	59.00
ASHOKLEY	81.30	84.65	81.20	84.30	3.05
BIOCON	305.95	319.00	305.80	314.60	8.50
MARICO	300.00	307.00	297.00	306.95	7.10
PFC	129.25	133.40	128.35	132.25	2.65
PEL	1573.10	1633.90	1553.75	1600.20	27.10
BANKBARODA	80.35	83.25	80.30	82.30	1.20
DMART	2433.00	2485.00	2430.00	2458.00	33.50
GODREJCP	622.60	637.90	622.60	631.00	8.40
ICICIRPLI	490.90	504.00	490.85	495.65	6.10
MOTHERSUMI	121.00	125.10	120.30	123.40	1.40
CADILAH	276.00	281.70	275.00	279.00	3.10
PAGEIND	2277.50	2376.20	2275.00	2310.00	188.85
NAVEL	621.20	631.35	620.05	623.10	4.55
HINDALCO	135.00	139.05	133.50	133.70	0.95
HDFCAMC	3372.00	3446.60	3345.00	3382.00	23.70
NHPC	21.35	21.75	20.85	21.60	0.15
BANDHANBANK	417.95	434.00	410.10	416.00	1.10
PETRONET	266.00	271.00	265.10	266.25	0.60
AMBUJACEM	204.95	210.25	200.10	206.20	0.40
PNB	52.50	53.70	52.05	52.80	0.10
NMDC	104.80	106.50	103.80	104.80	-0.20
PGHIL	11208.95	11209.00	11100.00	11150.00	-25.75
L&T	123.00	127.65	122.50	122.85	-0.50
SHRECEM	24400.00	24791.65	24270.65	24417.00	-116.25
AUROPHARMA	612.05	617.55	590.35	598.60	-3.25
COLPAL	1361.95	1366.95	1339.55	1346.00	-7.40
DIVISLAB	2199.50	2236.40	2156.85	2172.00	-13.85
BOSCHLTD	14512.05	1			

# 9 killed in 'far-right' attack in Germany

**AP ■ HANAU**  
A 43-year-old German man shot and killed nine people at several locations in a Frankfurt suburb overnight in attacks that appear to have been motivated by far-right beliefs, officials said Thursday.



German Interior Minister Horst Seehofer, center, and Governor Volker Bouffier, left, set flowers at the hookah bar where several people were killed late Wednesday in Hanau, Germany on Thursday

days earlier in which he details a conspiracy theory about child abuse in the United States. The authenticity of the video couldn't immediately be verified.

On a website registered by someone with the same name as the man in the video, Tobias R., the owner says he was born in Hanau in 1977 and grew up in the city, later training with a bank and completing a business degree in 2007.

The attack comes amid growing concerns about far-

right violence in Germany.

Chancellor Angela Merkel called off a planned visit Thursday to a university in Halle.

Her spokesman, Steffen Seibert, said she was "being constantly kept abreast of the state of the investigations in Hanau." Halle was the site of a deadly anti-Semitic attack last year. A man expressing anti-Jewish views tried to shoot his way into a synagogue, failed and killed two passers-by before being arrested.

## Merkel slams 'poison' of racism

**Hanau (Germany):** Chancellor Angela Merkel condemned the "poison" of racism on Thursday after a shooter with suspected far-right beliefs killed nine people at a shisha bar and a cafe in the German city of Hanau.

The suspect, identified as 43-year-old German Tobias R., was found dead at his home following an hours-long manhunt.

The body of his 72-year-old mother was also found at the flat in what appeared to be a murder-suicide.

Federal counter-terror

prosecutors investigating the case said they saw "a xenophobic motive" behind the shootings, the latest deadly attack blamed on the far right in Germany.

"Racism is a poison, hatred is a poison and this poison exists in our society and it is already to blame for far too many crimes," Merkel said in Berlin.

The suspect left behind online a "manifesto" and video material that suggested a terror attack motivated by "a hostile attitude to foreigners," said

Peter Beuth, the interior minister of the state of Hesse.

Among the dead were "several victims of Kurdish origin", the Kon-Med association of Kurds in Germany said in a statement, adding that it was "furious" that authorities weren't doing more to combat rising extremism.

The rampage started at around 10:00 pm (2100 GMT) on Wednesday at a shisha bar in the Heumarkt area of central Hanau, a city some 20 kilometres (12 miles) east of Frankfurt. **AFP**

## CORONAVIRUS

# China's toll climbs to 2,118, confirmed cases on decline

**Beijing:** The death toll from the coronavirus epidemic in China has climbed to 2,118 with the death of 114 more people, while the overall confirmed cases increased to 74,576, Chinese officials said on Thursday.

China's National Health Commission (NHC) said the new confirmed cases declined to 394, registering the biggest drop since December when the first case was reported in Wuhan city in the central Hubei Province.

The NHC said on Thursday that it received reports of 114 deaths on Wednesday from 31 provincial-level regions. The overall confirmed cases on the Chinese mainland reached 74,576 and 2,118 people died of the deadly disease.

The commission added that 4,922 people were still suspected of being infected with the virus.

Among the deaths, 108 were in Hubei Province, the epicentre of the virus and one each from Hebei, Shanghai, Fujian, Shandong, Yunnan and Shaanxi, it said.

The worst-hit Hubei Province and its provincial capital Wuhan which were the ground zero of the virus reported 349 new confirmed cases and 108 new deaths on Wednesday. **PTI**

## Thailand unhappy with Israel's entry ban

**Bangkok:** Thailand's Government is scrambling to cope with new travel restrictions after Israel banned the citizens of Thailand and three other Asian countries and territories from entering over concerns about a new virus.

Israel on Monday announced it was refusing entry to all foreign nationals who travelled to Thailand, Singapore, Hong Kong and Macau during the past 14 days.

Israeli citizens and residents will be isolated at home for 14 days after their return from areas at risk. **AP**

## S Korea reports 1st virus death

**Seoul:** South Korea reported its first death from a new virus on Thursday while the mayor of a southeastern city urged his 2.5 million people to refrain from going outside as viral infections, linked to a church congregation, spiked.

The death of a previously confirmed patient in South Korea marked the world's ninth virus fatality outside mainland China.

Other deaths have occurred in Hong Kong, Japan, Taiwan, the Philippines and France. **AFP**

## EU 'concerned' by China's expulsion of WSJ reporters

**Brussels:** The EU on Thursday voiced concern about China's decision to expel three Wall Street Journal reporters, saying the move was a fresh attack on freedom of expression.

Beijing ordered the journal's deputy bureau chief and two reporters to leave the country, saying the headline of a comment piece — titled "China is the Real Sick Man of Asia" — was "racially discriminatory" and "sensational". EU Spokesperson

for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy Virginie Batten-Henriksson said it was the latest example of Beijing using visas to hamper the work of foreign journalists in China. "The denial of visas and the revocation of credential in retaliation for the publication of an opinion piece are of concern and amount to further restrictions on freedom of expression and opinion," Batten-Henriksson said in a statement. **AFP**

## Media that smears, insults China must pay the price: China on expulsion

**Beijing:** China on Thursday defended expelling three foreign journalists of the Wall Street Journal, saying that media which insults, smears the country and support racial discrimination "must pay the price".

China on Wednesday expelled three journalists of the Wall Street Journal (WSJ) following an article in the newspaper titled "China Is the Real Sick Man of Asia" by Walter Russell Mead published on February 3 as the country was fighting an all-out war against the coronavirus outbreak that has killed over 2,000 people.

China's Foreign Ministry revoked the press cards of three WSJ journalists (two Americans and one Australian) and asked them to leave the country within five days. **PTI**

## Iran announces 3 new cases after 2 deaths

**Tehran:** Iran said on Thursday that three more people have been infected with the new coronavirus that originated in central China, following an announcement the day before that two people had died of the illness caused by the virus in the Iranian city of Qom.

All schools and universities, including religious Shiite seminaries, were shut down in the holy city of Qom, according to the official IRNA news agency. Other news reports said Iran had recently evacuated 60 Iranian students from Wuhan, the Chinese city at the epicentre of the epidemic.

Qom, located around 140 kilometres south of the capital, Tehran, is a popular religious destination and a centre of learning and religious studies for Shiite Muslims from inside Iran, as well as Iraq, Pakistan and Afghanistan and Azerbaijan. **AP**

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China's Foreign Ministry revoked the press cards of three WSJ journalists (two Americans and one Australian) and asked them to leave the country within five days. **PTI**

## Trump ousts top defence official who certified Ukraine aid

**Washington:** President Donald Trump has ousted the Pentagon's top policy official who had certified last year that Ukraine had made enough anti-corruption progress to justify the Trump administration's release of congressional authorised aid to Kyiv in its conflict against Russian-backed separatists.

John Rood resigned Wednesday, saying he was leaving at Trump's request.

The Trump administration's delay in releasing the aid to Ukraine was central to the president's impeachment by

the House on charges of abuse of power and obstruction of Congress.

The Senate voted to acquit the president. But in the wake of the Senate trial, an emboldened Trump has gone after officials he has perceived as being disloyal.

Rood is the latest official to be purged. His forced resignation comes as Democrats on the Hill express concerns that Trump is on a vendetta in the wake of his acquittal.

Just days after the Senate vote, the White House reassigned an Army officer, Lt. Col.

Alex Vindman, a key witness in the impeachment inquiry, from the National Security Council, and pushed his twin brother, an NSC lawyer, out with him.

Gordon Sondland, Trump's ambassador to the European Union who also was a key witness before House investigators, was recalled from his post.

Trump tweeted Wednesday that he wanted to "thank John Rood for his service to our Country, and wish him well in his future endeavors!" Rood, in his letter to Trump, did not mention Ukraine.

It's my understanding from Secretary (Mark) Esper that you requested my resignation," Rood said. Rood said he will step down as of February 28.

Rood wrote in a May 23 letter to Congress that the Pentagon had made a thorough assessment of Ukraine's anti-corruption actions and other reforms.

And he said that, "I have certified that the government of Ukraine has taken substantial actions to make defense institutional reforms for the purpose of decreasing corruption" and making other improvements." **AP**

## Bloomberg, Sanders under attack at Dems' Nevada debate

**Las Vegas:** From the opening bell, Democrats unleashed an aggressive verbal assault on New York billionaire Mike Bloomberg and raised new questions about Bernie Sanders' take-no-prisoners politics in a contentious debate Wednesday night that threatened to scramble even further the party's urgent quest to defeat President Donald Trump.

The former New York City mayor was forced to defend his divisive record on race, gender and Wall Street in his debate-stage debut, while Sanders, appearing in his ninth of the 2020 primary season, tried to beat back pointed questions about his health and his embrace of democratic socialism.

Fierce exchanges throughout the two-hour affair marked the most aggressive sustained period of infighting in the Democrats' yearlong search for a presidential nominee, reflecting rising urgency in a 2020 primary season that is already deep into its voting phase.

Nevada votes Saturday. South Carolina the week after. And more than a dozen states host a series of Super Tuesday

contests in less than two weeks. In a fight for her political life, Massachusetts Sen. Elizabeth Warren was a leading aggressor against Bloomberg. She was on the attack throughout the night following a sharp slide in the polls, calling Bloomberg "a billionaire who calls people fat broads and horse-faced lesbians." She wasn't alone.

Sanders lashed out at Bloomberg's policing policies as New York City mayor that he said targeted "African-American and Latinos in an outrageous way." And former Vice President Joe Biden charged that Bloomberg's "stop-and-frisk" policy ended up "throwing 5 million black men up against the wall." Bloomberg defended himself on all counts and took a shot at Sanders' electability: "I don't think there's any chance of the senator beating Donald Trump." Bloomberg later seized on Sanders' rising wealth: "The best known socialist in the country happens to be a millionaire with three houses!" Sanders defended owning multiple houses, noting he has one in Washington, where he works, and two in Vermont. **AP**

Sanaa: Nineteen children were among at least 31 civilians killed in air strikes on rebel-held northern Yemen last week, the United Nations said on Thursday.

## 19 children among dead in recent Yemen strikes: UN

**Sanaa:** Nineteen children were among at least 31 civilians killed in air strikes on rebel-held northern Yemen last week, the United Nations said on Thursday.

"UNICEF is sad to confirm that the recent attack in Al-Jawf, north of Yemen, on February 15, took the lives of 19 children (eight boys and 11 girls) and injured another 18 (nine boys and another nine girls)," the UN children's agency said in a statement. "It was an attack on a civilian populated area where children were in the vicinity," UNICEF regional communications chief Juliette Touma told AFP. Saturday's air strikes came after the Iran-aligned rebels claimed to have shot down an aircraft of the Saudi-led coalition supporting the Government. **AFP**

## Trump ally gets 40 months prison amid meddling firestorm

**Washington:** Donald Trump's longtime ally Roger Stone was imprisoned for 40 months on Thursday for impeding a congressional investigation, in a case that ignited a firestorm over the president's political interference in the justice system.

Stone, a veteran Republican operative and one of Trump's oldest confidants, was convicted in November of lying to Congress, tampering with a witness and obstructing the House investigation into whether the Trump campaign conspired with Russia to cheat in the 2016 election.

"The truth still exists," said US District Court Judge Amy Berman Jackson as she hand-

ed down the sentence. "The truth, still matters. Roger Stone's insistence that it doesn't, his belligerence, his pride in his own lies are a threat to our most fundamental institutions, to the very foundation of our democracy."

Stone was not immediately sent to prison as Jackson said implementation of the sentence would be delayed while she considered his request for a new trial. Trump sparked a scandal by decrying a "miscarriage of justice" after prosecutors he smeared as corrupt recommended a prison sentence of seven to nine years, in accordance with federal sentencing guidelines. **AFP**

## Rare Ethiopian crown, hidden for 21 yrs in the Netherlands, returns home

**Addis Ababa:** Ethiopia's government on Thursday assumed custody of a priceless 18th-century crown that a former refugee had kept hidden in his apartment in the Netherlands for two decades.

The handover took place at a ceremony in the capital, Addis Ababa, attended by Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed and Sigrid Kaag, the Dutch minister for foreign trade and development cooperation.

Sirak Asfaw, the one-time refugee who is now a Dutch

citizen, fled Ethiopia during the late 1970s during the so-called "Red Terror" purges.

He found the gilded crown — which features images of Christ and the Twelve Apostles — in 1998 in a suitcase left behind by a visitor.

It had "disappeared" from the Holy Trinity Church in Cheleqot, a village in northern Ethiopia, the Dutch government said in a statement Thursday.

Sirak assumed the crown had been stolen but worried it would "just disappear again" if he returned it to

Ethiopia's leaders, so he kept it in his apartment in the Dutch port city of Rotterdam, he told AFP last year.

Only after Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed took office in 2018 did Sirak feel comfortable handing it over.

He then contacted Arthur Brand, a renowned Dutch art detective, who brought the story to the Dutch government's attention. "We're honoured and delighted to have been able to facilitate the rightful return," Kaag, the Dutch minister, said in a statement Thursday. **AFP**

**MODIFI SERVICES PRIVATE LIMITED**  
Corporate Identity Number: U51909UP2019FTC120031  
Registered Office: C2, Block-C Sector 1, Noida Gautam Buddha Nagar, Uttar Pradesh- 201301 E-mail: nelson.holzner@modifi.com; Phone: +91-8152006808  
Form No. INC -26  
In the matter of the Companies Act, 2013, Section 13(4) of Companies Act, 2013 and Rule 30(5)(a) of the Companies (Incorporation) Rules, 2014 Before the Central Government, Regional Director Northern Region, New Delhi And In the matter of Modifi Services Private Limited having its registered office at C2, Block-C Sector 1, Noida Gautam Buddha Nagar, Uttar Pradesh- 201301, .....The Petitioner

**PUBLIC NOTICE**  
Notice is hereby given to the General Public that the company proposes to make application to the Central Government under section 13 of the Companies Act, 2013 seeking confirmation of alteration of the Memorandum of Association of the Company in terms of the Special Resolution passed at the Extra Ordinary General Meeting held on Wednesday, February 19, 2020 to enable the Company to change its Registered office from "State of Uttar Pradesh" to "State of Delhi" within the jurisdiction of Registrar of Companies Delhi & Haryana. Any person whose interest is likely to be affected by the proposed change of the registered office of the Company may deliver either on the MCA-21 portal (www.mca.gov.in) by filing investor complaint form or cause to be delivered or send by registered post of his/her objections supported by an affidavit stating the nature of his/her interest and grounds of opposition to the Regional Director-Northern Region, Ministry of Corporate Affairs, B-2 Wing, 2nd Floor Paryavaran Bhawan, CGO Complex, New Delhi-110003, within Fourteen days from the date of publication of this notice with a copy to the applicant company at its registered office at the address mentioned above.  
For and on behalf of the Board  
Modifi Services Private Limited  
Sd/-  
Nitin Iyaz  
Director  
Dated : 20-02-2020  
Place : Noida  
DIN- 08533805

**WESTERN RAILWAY SUPPLY OF TRACK ITEMS**  
Tender Notice No. WTR/17/2020/02 dated 18.02.2020 for tender on e-procurement mode only, invited by Chief Engineer (Track Supply), Head Quarter Office, Old Building, 2nd floor, Churchgate, Mumbai - 400 020 for supply of the following items:-  
Sr. No. Tender No. Short Description Tender Quantity Date of closing tender  
1 206002 CMS Crossing to RDSO drg. No. (A) 294 Sets 19.03.2020 (B)T-4967 (B) 141Sets  
2 196032 CMS crossing to RDSO drg. No. 80 Sets 24.03.2020 T.8662/1  
Time of closing of E-tender Box: 11.30 hrs on the date of closing of tender. For detailed tender conditions/Corrigendum please visit www.ireps.gov.in  
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**DEBTS RECOVERY TRIBUNAL -II, DELHI**  
4th FLOOR, JEEVAN TARA BUILDING, PARLIAMENT STREET, NEW DELHI-110001  
OA NO 535/19 Date: 15.01.2020  
CANARA BANK APPLICANT VERSUS MR. MANDEEP SINGH & ORS. RESPONDENT  
To, Defendant,  
1. Mr. Mandeep Singh S/o. Mr. Dalip Singh, R/o 2286, 2nd Floor, Raja Park, Shakur Basti, Delhi-34 Also At: Convergys India Services Pvt. Ltd. Bectech Business Tower Sect-48, Sohna Road, Gurugram, Hry-122002.  
2. M/s La Residentia Developers Pvt. Ltd. 220, 2nd Floor Vardham Sunrise Plaza Plot No. 1LSC Vasundhara Enclave Delhi, Also at: Amarpal Corporate Tower, C-56/40, Sect-62, Noida, UP, Also at: GH-06/A, Tech Zone IV Noida Extn. UP.  
Whereas the above named applicant (s) has / have instituted a case for recovery of Rs 39,64,570/- (Rs. Thirty Nine Lakh Sixty Four Thousand Five Hundred And Seventy Only) against you and where as it has been shown to the satisfaction of the Tribunal that it is not possible to serve you in the ordinary way therefore, this notice is given by advertisement directing you to make appearance in the Tribunal on 31.03.2020 At 10.30 A.M.  
Take notice that in default of your appearance on the day before mentioned, the case will be heard and determined in your absence.  
By Order Of The Tribunal  
Section Officer, DRT-II, DELHI.

**UJVN LIMITED**  
H.O.: "UJJWAL", Maharani Bagh, GMS Road, Dehradun-248006  
Telephones: 0135-2763808 & Fax: 0135- 2763508  
CIN No. U40101UR200515G025866  
**TENDER NOTICE**  
The Office of The Executive Engineer (Gen.), Ramganga Power Station, Kalagarh (Pauri-Garhwal) invites sealed tenders from interested & experienced firms/ contractors/ authorized dealers. Brief summary of work/ supply and details of tender is given below.  
T. No. 11/EE (Gen)/2019-20: General Cleaning of Ramganga Power Station, Kalagarh.  
T. No. 12/EE (Gen)/2019-20: Refilling of fire extinguishers including supply of fire accessories.  
Approx. Value of Tenders: Rs. 6, 59,549/-, Rs. 1, 95,010/ respectively.  
Earnest money: Rs. 19,800/-, Rs. 7800/- respectively.  
Tender cost: Rs. 590/-, Rs. 295/- respectively.  
Last date for receipt of Tenders: 12.03.2020 upto 16.00 Hrs.  
Date of opening: 16.03.2020 at 11.00 Hrs.  
For eligibility criteria and fuller and further details kindly visit our website "www.uttarakhandjalvidyut.com" (Bidders are advised to regularly visit our website for tender notice) Tenders can only be downloaded from our website & their cost has been to be paid at the time of submission.  
प.सं. 93 दिनांक 20.02.2020 Executive Engineer (Generation)  
"Avoid wasteful use of Electricity"

**PSPCL Punjab State Power Corporation Limited**  
Office of Superintending Engineer/ Thermal Operation Circle  
Guru Hargobind Thermal Plant Lehra Mohabbat, Distt. Bathinda (Punjab) Pin-151111  
Tel. No.0164-2756265, Mob. 96461-17603, Fax No. 0164-2756265  
E-mail: se-th-op-lehra@pspcl.in  
**Notice Inviting Tender (For Press)**  
Enquiry No. 88/S.E./Th.Op./CD-38/Vol-IV/O&M/GHTP/2020 Dated: 12-02-2020  
Short Description: To provide assistance of eighteen (18) No. B.Sc. Chemistry Qualified Graduates / B.Tech for the Operation of Water Treatment Plant and Chemical Dosing Systems: Round the Clock in Three Shifts & / or during General Duty hours: under the Chemical Department of GHTP (O&M) Lehra Mohabbat. The tenders shall be required to submit fixed earnest money of Rupees One Lakh only (i.e. Rs. 10 lakhs) online on the website https://eproc.punjab.gov.in  
Quantity: Supply of Manpower to carry out above job as per scope of work.  
Date & Time upto which tender shall be received : 11-03-2020 up to 11:30 Hrs.  
Date & Time of opening of tender : 13-03-2020 at 12:00 Hrs.  
Tender specification can only be downloaded from PSPCL website https://eproc.punjab.gov.in  
Note:  
1 The prospective bidders can obtain clarification regarding tender specifications from this office for registration of digital signatures and uploading of tender information may be sought from M/s E-procure Technologies Ltd., Contact No. 0172-2970263  
2 It is informed that in case the tender process is not completed due to any reason no corrigendum will be published in newspapers. Detail regarding corrigendum may be seen on PSPCL official website i.e. https://pspcl.in.  
Sd/-  
GHTP- 10/2020 Superintending Engineer Th. Op.  
DPR/17/FEB20/C9064 Dt. 17-02-2020 GHTP, PSPCL, Lehra Mohabbat

**PUBLIC NOTICE**  
To be known to all that my client, Surinder Singh Rekhli, S/o Late Sh. Jaidev Singh Rekhli owner/allottee of SFS Flat No. 72, Third Floor, CAT-II, Pocket-3, Madipur, New Delhi- has applied for conversion of the aforesaid flat from leasehold to free hold vide file No. F-136(327)/1988/SFS/Fall in DCA. The original documents i.e. Allocation, Allotment/ Demand Letter, Possession Letter, NOC to Water & Electricity & Site Possession Slip of the above said flat has been lost. An NCRILR No.174891/2020 dated 18.02.2020 to this effect has been lodged in P.S Crime Branch, Delhi. Any person(s) claiming any right, interest, having any objection or found in possession of original documents, may write/contact with above named person at above Address/ Phone No. 9560096706 within 15 days from the date of publication of this notice. The person claiming any right, interest, objection with respect to this property, can personally inform or write to Deputy Director (GH) or Director (GH), C Block, 2nd Floor, Vikas Sadaan, New Delhi. Naveen Aggarwal, Advocate Ch. No. 7, Tis Hazari Court, Delhi-54

**WESTERN RAILWAY**  
ADVERTISING RIGHTS FOR DISPLAY ADVERTISEMENT THROUGH FULL VINYL WRAPPING OF MEDIA RAKES  
Executive: Sr. DCM, Tender Notice No. CAT11 External 10 Rakes-2020. Dated: 18/02/2020. Work and location: Tender for advertising rights for display of advertisement through full vinyl wrapping on entire exterior of 10 Media rakes for a Period of 5 years. Approx. cost of work for 5 years: ₹14,21,76,175/- EMD: ₹28,43,600/- Site where Tender form available: www.ireps.gov.in, Date & Time of submission & opening: 20.03.2020 at 15.00 hrs. For more details please visit our website www.ireps.gov.in.  
Like us on: facebook.com/WesternRly

**PUBLIC NOTICE**  
This is to inform public in general that Kotak Mahindra bank ltd has organized an auction in below mention respect of vehicles.  
**VEHICLE FOR SALE**  
1) CB\_HYUNDAI VERNA REG. NO. DL8CAA1731 YOM 2011  
2) CB\_MARUTI OMNI REG. NO. DL12CN3204 YOM 2018  
3) BB2523CBGD REG. NO. HR55W7721-YOM -2015  
4) SM\_SAMRAT REG. NO. DL1M9161-YOM 2017  
5) T2518CBGD REG. NO. HR38S6058-YOM -2013  
6) CB TATA LP 1109 FULLY BUILT-REG. NO. UP33AT5354-YOM -2016  
7) BLAZO49TTS REG. NO. HR47D2072-YOM -2017  
8) AL2516C3 REG. NO. HR55X6521-YOM -2018  
9) CB\_VE 10.95 FULLY BUILT REG. NO. NL01AC2518- YOM -2018  
10) CB\_VE 10.95 FULLY BUILT REG. NO. NL01AC2591-YOM -2018  
11) AL2516C3 REG. NO. HR55X5921-YOM -2015  
12) AL2516C3 REG. NO. HR55X5121-YOM-2018  
UNDER HYPOTHECAE WITH M/S KOTAK MAHINDRA BANK IS UNDER SALE IN ITS "AS IS WHERE IS CONDITION" INTERESTED PARTIES CAN GIVE THEIR QUOTATIONS WITH IN 7 DAYS AT  
BRANCH ADDRESS: KOTAK MAHINDRA BANK 3RD FLOOR, PLOT NO 7, SECTOR 125, NOIDA-201313 OR CONTACT : RAJESH ANTIL, KOTAK MAHINDRA BANK LTD. CONTACT NO. 9711173320

Trend Blazer

'Glad critics felt I am worthy of an award'

Actor **TAAPSEE PANNU**, who recently won the Filmfare Critics' Choice Award for Best Actor (Female), has reacted on the controversy that the awards ceremony has generated this year, over Zoya Akhtar's *Gully Boy* sweeping most of the awards.

She said she is happy that her name wasn't dragged in the controversy as I am so used to it. And that she is glad that critics felt she was worthy of an award. "It took time but finally I got it and what should I say other than that? I was preparing my speech for it since 2016 and it was of no use. But this year I didn't prepare a speech and that day I had to deliver it, Taapsee said.



'Happy birthday Patralkhaa. I still remember seeing you in an advertisement and

wondering I wish I could meet this girl one day. And as destiny would have it, much to my desire, I met you a month later. It has been so many years of togetherness yet it feels like we've just met. You are the prettiest and the strongest girl I've met.'

—Rajkumar Rao

*Badlapur*, an action-thriller, has completed five years since it was released, and its actress **RADHIKA APTE** is super nostalgic.

Reminiscing about working with Sriram Raghavan, who helmed the film, Radhika said, "I think Sriram has a very peculiar eye about thrillers like no one else does, he is one of the most passionate people I have met, I mean he watches cinema, everything that is made available to him."

The film featured Varun Dhawan and Nawazuddin Siddiqui in the lead roles.



Jennifer returns to acting after marriage

Actor **JENNIFER LAWRENCE** is all set to return to the screen for the first time after marriage last year. She has taken up a role in director Adam McKay's forthcoming Netflix comedy titled *Don't Look Up*.

The Oscar-winning actress wed Cooke Maroney last year. Her new film follows two scientists who discover a meteor that is set to strike Earth in six months' time and attempts to warn the rest of the world.

"She's what folks in the 17th century used to call 'a dynamite act'. And the fact that Netflix sees this film as a worldwide comedy sets the bar high for me and my team in an exciting and motivating way," McKay said.



Even though the results may be slower, organic skin care products are gentle on skin and won't harm in the long run, says **AYUSHI SHARMA**

THE NATURAL LOOK

When organic skincare products came into India, it was assumed that they would be another elitist fad, which would eventually fade away with each passing day. However, as the benefit of natural, plant-based cosmetics spread, the bigger brands spurred an interest in our native traditions and birthed home brands as well.

One of the major reasons why the demand kept on growing in India is due to the country's constantly increasing digital literacy rate, shares Vedika Sharma, Director at Mantra Herbal. She feels that people are now becoming more conscious of and familiar about the benefits of organic products and trying to avoid the harmful effects of chemicals and fertilisers used during farming. "The personal care space has mostly been defined by three terms — ayurveda, wellness and organic. From a marketing standpoint, ayurveda is more of a mass play. On the other hand, organic has emerged as an alternative to ayurveda with a more premium positioning," says she.

While the Director at The Imperial Spa and Salon, Jacqueline Tara Herron, who recently announced association with French luxury skincare brand, Olivier Claire, tells us that from the growers to the market place and on to the consumer, the economy is greatly influenced by these intelligent choices. Director at O3plus, Vidur Kapur, believes that even though the future of organic products is bright, the degree of result may vary if you compare it to a dermatological product.



IMPACT OF ORGANIC PRODUCTS

Certified organic products are derived from plants and other naturally occurring ingredients. More importantly, those ingredients are grown without the use of pesticides, herbicides, synthetic fertilisers, genetically modified organisms (GMOs), and other additives or chemicals. Tara says, "More and more of us are seeking ways to redress the balance of pollution that can damage the skin and destroy the skin's ability to regenerate. The synthetic ingredients found in non-organic products may be fast acting, but they are also invasive, causing harm that cannot be seen. Olivier Claire products and treatments have an integral protective and preservative nature that combats the effects of negative stress on the skin caused by environmental hazards."

Vedika tells us that the use of toxic chemicals worsens the skin's natural barrier and accelerates the damage by disrupting pH balance and can even cause skin cancer in the long run. "Given Delhi's air pollution level and atmosphere, it causes many skin problems brown spots, wrinkles, redness, enlarged pores and dry patches. Even though the results may be slower, organic skin care products are gentle on your skin and



won't harm you in the long run," says she.

NEWER NATURAL INGREDIENTS

On the surface of the skin, there is something known as microbiome, which is made up of bacteria, fungi and viruses. This makes certain chemicals that keep the skin healthy and help your skin's barrier stay intact. Skincare experts note that this is set to go mainstream this year.

The trends also points towards 'less-but-better' attitude. Experts say that brands need to evolve with this concept understanding that consumers are looking to purchase fewer items that still deliver all of the results they want.

Vedika feels the concept of "blue beauty," is on the rise, which will push peo-

ple to use marine-friendly products. The fear is if it is bad for marine life, why do you think it is good for your skin? "Waterless beauty is the next thing in the industry, which means that brands will reduce water consumption in making the products," says she. Keeping in mind the current air pollution situation, anti-pollution skincare will become synonymous with sun protection, she adds.

Also, the biggest shift in Vidur's opinion is going to be towards mens skincare range of products. "While the mainstream media has historically targeted women when it comes to grooming products, more options for men's personal care are emerging," she says and adds that the star ingredient of the products is going to be caffeine.

PERCEPTION OF BEAUTY MAY VARY

A good state of health isn't a process that you can master overnight, it takes a lot of baby steps and determination. The definition of beauty keeps on changing but something that stays constant is the fact that internal beauty really does matter over the external charm. And skincare brands must prioritise internal intangibles — like being comfortable in one's own skin and feeling confident — over external features.

The good news is that focussing on a

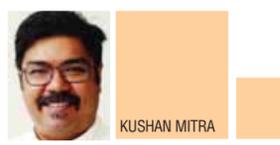
few, simple things can make a massive difference to how you look and feel. In Vedika's opinion, healthy skin comes from a combination of a good diet and use of natural skincare products. She says, "Good nutrition implies what to avoid. Veggies and water can only hydrate your organs. Skin is also an organ of the body and water also evaporates from it easily. Hence, moisturisers seal moisture in skin. Skincare have ingredients that penetrate and work on the problem area directly. For instance, dark circles won't just fade away with an eye cream. A healthy diet and sound sleep will work together along with a good skincare product."

Tara believes that inner beauty is long lasting. You don't need costly cosmetics or expensive surgeries to keep it intact. There are many brands that cater to this concept. One such example is Dove. Olivier Claire focus on it too. The products have been harmlessly harvested from natural sources. Key ingredients such as native stem cells from sunflower pollen, wakame seaweed and sea fennel are scientifically tested to achieve the best results.

Inner beauty enhances your external charm. It gives you the confidence to face the world and its problems, which is something far greater than the standards that had been set by the society, feels Vidur.

Your next car will not be electric

Electric cars have come a long way in India but they still cost far too much for a majority of Indians. For now



First things first. We have to keep in mind that we live in a country where the people who are in power believe that cars are a luxury item. That was made clear by Prime Minister Narendra Modi the other day when he said that 1.5 crore luxury cars have been sold in India over the past five years. Now, while I believe WagonR and Santro are fairly nice cars, BMW is not, because as much as the i3 tries to be basic, it really isn't.

Luxury or premium cars in my book are cars that cost upwards of ₹30 lakh, which would include the higher-end of mass-market brands. That means cars like the Hyundai Santa Fe and, of course, all the German premium brands as well as Lexus, Volvo and the like. The figure for sales of such cars would at best be around 250,000 over the past five years. Because the total sale of cars in India is 1.5 crore. So now we know, according to the government cars are a symbol of bourgeoisie, the moment you move to four wheels, whether it is a Maruti Alto or an Audi, you are a member of the entitled classes. Not for politicians and bureaucrats, of course, because they need cars to tell us how bad we are for not paying taxes.

Anyway, back to the topic, which again involves excise duties, Customs and taxes again. The fact is that electric cars are far too expensive for mass adoption in a country like India. The two electric SUVs that have been launched so far, the Hyundai Kona and the MG ZS EV, are both cars that can definitely be lived with on a daily basis without any worry about range. If you live in a city like Delhi where you have parking, and if you can afford a ₹25 lakh car you possibly do have parking, charging is not a problem. With ranges of 300 kilometres, and the average daily commute being 25-30 kilometres, you will easily survive a week on a single charge. As for long-distance driving, well, Delhi-Lucknow may be a bit of a stretch but Agra, Chandigarh, Dehradun and Jaipur should be easily



achievable as long as you have planned for a charging point at your destination. There are few, if any, public chargers outside Delhi and even those in Delhi are often not compatible with all cars as I have discovered in the past. But one assumes that will change going forward.

But until it changes and until cars like the Kona and ZS EV will make no sense whatsoever. Cars with more limited ranges such as the Tata Nexon EV and the Mahindra e-Verito are entering governmental and taxi fleets in Delhi, the latter being a bit bizarre given the usage of taxis over long distances and without any fast-charging infrastructure. That is because decent range costs money and battery costs make up the bulk of the cost of an electric car. Without any battery manufacturing in India, all batteries are imported from China and as the last couple of weeks have shown, our neighbour is integral to the global supply chain. As China gets the flu, even India's automotive industry will sneeze. That is just for some small components. Can you imagine what will happen if unrestricted imports of batteries are allowed from China? Indian manufacturing and jobs will be hollowed out. India needs to secure lithium resources and establish battery factories and work towards reducing costs of electric cars.

There is little doubt that electric



vehicles are the future of mobility across the world but we should not make the assumption that the world is equal. In the United States, a \$50,000 car is a standard family car and the Tesla Model 3 serves that purpose but the optics of a ₹35 lakh car in India, possibly ₹70 lakh after Customs duties particularly with politicians railing against the rich, won't work, right? India has to take smaller, more sustainable steps towards electrification. Even for public transport, forcing electrification down the throats of transport bodies when they do not have enough buses to transport the people they need to now, is counter-productive. There is far too much misinformation

about the benefits of electrification of vehicles out there. The plain and simple fact is that electric vehicles are expensive, and it does not make sense for India at the current time and the current economic environment to move to electric cars and buses. Hybrids, where smaller engines are coupled with small batteries, make much more sense in the next decade in India. And in that time we should work towards improving affordability and growing our economy so as to afford electric cars and make them in India.

In the rush towards electric vehicles, we should really not lose sight of the bigger picture.

Ayushmann and I are connected: Vicky

Actor Vicky Kaushal returns to the screens for the first time since his National Award-winning blockbuster *Uri: The Surgical Strike* with his new release, *Bhoot Part One: The Haunted Ship*. At the box-office the film clashes with *Shubh Mangal Zyada Saavdhan*, starring Ayushmann Khurrana, with whom he shared the National Award. Ayushmann received the honour for his role in *Andhadhun*.

"I think Ayushmann and I are connected somewhere. We were together on *Koffee With Karan* and we have hosted an awards show together as well. After that, we shared the National Award (Best Actor) and now, our films are releasing on the same day!" said Vicky.

About the clash, he added, "It is impractical that you will get a solo release because we make a lot more film than the Fridays that we have, so clashes (of films) are bound to happen." Vicky's next after this is the *Karan Johar* directorial *Takht*. He will start shooting for the historical drama in March.

*Takht* is a big-budget period drama that casts Ranveer Singh as Dara Shukoh and Vicky as Mughal emperor Aurangzeb. The film is scheduled for a Christmas weekend release in 2021 and it also stars Kareena Kapoor Khan, Alia Bhatt, Anil Kapoor, Janhvi Kapoor and Bhumi Pednekar.

Asked if he feels the pressure being a part of such a big-budget film, Vicky said, "I don't feel much pressure but I am excited because it was on my bucket list to do a period film. I will start preparing for it immediately after release of *Bhoot Part One: The Haunted Ship*."

The recent Filmfare Awards in Guwahati ignited widespread fan ire over Zoya Akhtar's *Gully Boy* bagging the maximum number of awards. Talking about the controversy, Vicky said, "It's not the first year where this kind of a controversy has taken place. They (award ceremonies) have their jury to decide winners. I don't know what goes behind it. We (actors) are also like the audience who go there to enjoy the award ceremonies. If we are announced winners then we receive it (the award) otherwise we just enjoy the night. So, I don't know anything about it, but I believe there is jury who takes that decision. So, we should leave it to them."



# SHARING FOOD, CONVERSATION AND LAUGHTER

STEPHANIE ALEXANDER, an Australian food educator, feels that it is very important to concentrate on the enjoyable aspect of cooking and not just skills. By TEAM VIVA

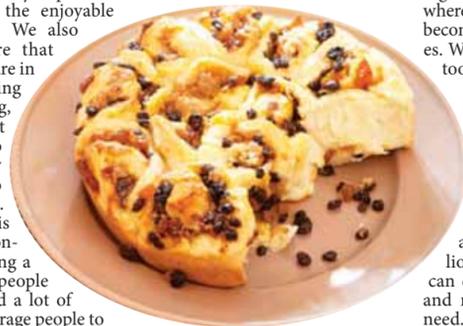


Sharing food and wine with family and friends is very important for her. Brushing past scented leaves in a garden, picking parsley outside the back door, pulling a cork from a bottle of wine, setting out a picnic on a bush table — all these things push her to live another day and eat another meal. Stephanie Alexander, an Australian food educator, believes that there is no greater joy than sharing food, conversation and laughter around a table.

**You emphasise more on joyful and healthy cooking. Do you think people nowadays are more aware of fresh and organic ways of cooking?**

Yes, I think it is very important to concentrate on the enjoyable aspect of cooking. We also need to make sure that young people, who are in the process of learning the skills of cooking, not only get efficient in that but also understand how important it is to enjoy the process. For me, cooking is one of the most wonderful things to bring a family or group of people together. So I spend a lot of time trying to encourage people to enjoy their food choices.

I choose organic food only. The



organic movement is growing everywhere, as more and more people are becoming aware of their food choices. We have great emphasis on fish too.

**Melbourne is known as Australia's food capital. What reasons would you attribute that to?**

I am very proud of Melbourne as it is a great food destination. Though we are a country of just three million, there are a lot of things we can do. We have a range of cafes and restaurants catering to every need. Some of the reasons for its popularity are: The Queen Victoria Market, fish food, Wagyu beef tar-

tars and chilli baked mussels.

**What do you have to say about the current food culture of Melbourne? What does it have in store for Indians specifically?**

There are no special food trends there. You can have good food everywhere in Melbourne, not only in the city but even in the vineyard or sea side. Wherever you go, you will find one commonality fish.

One in every third person in Melbourne is born elsewhere or their parents were. So we have all kinds of ethnic foods you can imagine. The population there has a huge choice. So any visitor, Indian or otherwise, can choose what they would like to eat. There is nothing specific.

**What is your signature dish and how did you come up with it?**

I don't think I have a signature dish. I only have certain things which I cook all the time. One of them is roast chicken, my children are very fond of it. My speciality is garlic chicken and potatoes and lemon garlic chicken. It tastes delicious. I always like to serve a dish with green salads. Even choosing a favourite dish is very hard for me. I really like lamb cutlet and fresh fish.

**What are the new global food movements?**

Now more and more restaurants are interested in using indigenous ingredients. If you go into a good restaurant in Melbourne, you will find ingredients that you have never heard of such as fingerlings. As the name suggests, it is the size of your finger and are grown on very small trees in the rain forest.

**You are the author of 17 cookbooks. Are there any more on their way? If so, what will you focus on?**

Yes, I am writing a book on home cooking. It will cater to the family cooking basically. However, it will take a year for it to come out.

## R E C I P E S

### PAN-SEARED SEABASS

#### WHAT YOU NEED

- Seabass fillets: 180 gm each
- Black olives: 150 gm
- Green asparagus: 200 gm
- Cherry tomato: 300 gm
- Olive oil: 30 ml
- Salt: 10 gm
- Pepper (crushed): 5 gm
- Garlic (chopped): 5 gm
- Whole garlic: 2 cloves
- Fresh rosemary: 20 gm

#### METHOD

- Cut each seabass fillet into two, season it with salt and pepper on both sides and keep aside.
- Blanch the asparagus in boiling salted water for three minutes and immediately immerse it in iced water to preserve the colour.
- Cut diagonally, saving the tips intact. Then cut the cherry tomato into halves and keep aside. Add the mascarpone and mix well.
- Cut the garlic clove into thin slices and keep aside. Remove the kernel from olive and blend adding a bit of olive oil, till it becomes smooth.
- Heat the oil in a non-stick pan and start to cook the seabass skin side for about three to four minutes. Turn the seabass and cook for one extra



minute. Remove from the pan, arrange the seabass in baked proof dish, skin up.

- Arrange the slices of garlic and fresh rosemary on top, drizzle with few drops of olive oil and bake at 180 degrees for five minutes.
- In the meantime, heat the oil in a heavy bottom pan, add the chopped garlic, when sizzling, then add asparagus and cherry tomato, season it with salt and pepper and cook at moderate flame for about three minutes.
- In a deep plate, pour the olive tapenade, arrange asparagus and cherry tomato, place two seabass file on top and finish with few drops of olive oil.

Courtesy: Chef Ivan Chieriegatti, Executive chef, Hyatt Regency.

### GREEN TEA NOODLES WITH SESAME CHICKEN

#### WHAT YOU NEED

- Noodles: 100 gm
- Ginger: 5 gm
- Garlic: 10 gm
- Green tea: 30 gm
- Lemongrass: 4 gm
- Kaffirlime: 10 gm
- Lemon juice: 10 gm
- Soy sauce: 20 ml
- Salt: 5 gm
- Sesame oil: 10 gm
- Vinegar: 10 gm
- Sweet chilli sauce: 30 gm
- Red Chilli (dry): 10 gm
- Chicken thigh boneless: 120 gm
- Yaki Nori sheet: 10 pcs
- Cucumber: 25 gm
- Spring onion: 10 gm
- Sesame Seeds: 5 gm

#### METHOD

- Cut the chicken thigh in strips and marinate with salt, pepper and dry chillies.
- Dust very little corn flour and flour and keep it aside. Blanch noodles and spread on clean working table to get dry.



● Put some oil so that it does not get sticky. Make a green tea stock. Cut juliennes of cucumber, spring onion and nori sheet and keep it aside to use later.

- In a separate bowl, mix soy sauce, vinegar.
- Chop garlic, lemon juice, green tea, sesame oil, salt and black pepper. Mix everything and your dressing will be ready for use.
- Heat oil and deep fry the chicken strips, in a separate pan toss the

ginger, garlic chop and add sweet chilli sauce. Add fried chicken and toss it. Season it and finish with sesame seed and oil.

- Toss the noodles in dressing and add julienne vegetables. You can add blanched mushroom if you like.
- Plate the noodles on your serving dish and place the chicken strips on top. Garnish and serve.

Courtesy: Chef Manoj, Partner Chef, The Piano Man.



## GIFTS FOR YOUNG CHEFS

From kitchen tools to books, here are some amazing gifts to encourage fledgling cooks

**Do you have a kid in your life who loves a good baking session? Who really wants to use your chef's knife? Who is addicted to the TV show MasterChef Junior, and who uses words like "umami" in regular conversation?**

There are many terrific gifts to encourage the fledgling cooks in our lives.

### COOKING KITS

An all-inclusive cooking kit (besides the ingredients) is often a great catalyst for getting kids into the kitchen.

Handstand Kitchen makes a slew of them, including a Rainbows and Unicorns Ultimate Baking set, with cookies cutters, unicorn-shaped cupcake tray, spatula, frosting bag with three tips, and a recipe leaflet and sticker sheet. Other offerings here include the Out of This World space-themed baking kit; a 17-piece Intro to Baking kit; and several matching adult and child apron sets.

Curious chef's kits include a 17-piece prep set with bowls, measuring cups and spoons, and a timer. Made for Me has kits for particular foods, such as a beginner's pasta and pizza making set for kids, as well as a macaron, sushi and pancake party set.

### SUBSCRIPTIONS

Here's a gift that leaves something to look forward to after the holidays are over. Options include:

**Young chef's club:** From the folks at America's Test Kitchen, these monthly kits are also thematic. Kids ages 5 and up receive a box filled with family-friendly recipes, hands-on activities, and extras ranging from board games to tortilla warmers to special sprinkles.

### Culinary adventure society:

For kids who already know their way around a kitchen and are craving new ingredients and flavours to play with. Up to four times a year, Zingerman's specialty food store in Ann Arbor, Michigan, will send a big box of eight to 10 interesting and on-trend food surprises. A box might contain maffe, a peanut simmer sauce from West Africa; Lisbon lemon marmalade; or a tamarind date sauce inspired by Somali cuisine, for example. A collection of writing on the foods' history and culture is included.

### EQUIPMENT

A new smart kitchen tool is exciting, even empowering. Examples:

**Immersion blender:** For a slightly older kid, it can be used to blend things like soups and sauces right in the pot. That save you from having to transfer hot liquids into

a regular blender or food processor, so it can be a safer way to puree things. Breville makes an All in One Immersion Blender that also transforms into a food processor, so kids can take on different levels of chopping as they get more skilled.

**Cutting boards:** Giving kids their own cutting board makes them feel as though they've arrived. You can support Unicef.com by ordering one of many hand-carved boards, such as the teakwood Daily Grain from Guatemala, or the Beautiful Meal board from Thailand. Or memorialise a family recipe for a child on a cutting board: Carver's Ridge lets you send in a recipe, choose a font and board size, and have your recipe engraved into a fully functional work board.

### INGREDIENT 'FLIGHTS'

It's fun to play around with a single ingredient in many forms.

**Olive Oil and Vinegar:** The worlds of olive oil and vinegar are both vast. For starters, you can make new and different salad dressings all week long. O-Med, a small company from Grenada, makes lots of varieties, including smoked olive oil, yuzu olive oil and olive oil from Arbequina olives. Encourage the kids to mix and match those with cabernet vinegar, rose vinegar and cava vinegar. Your family's vinaigrettes with never be the same.

**Honey:** Bee Raw Honey has a beautiful nine-vial assortment of honeys ranging from floral and sweet to buttery to "barnyard." The honey comes from different flower sources across the country, and sales help support artisanal beekeepers.

### BOOKS

Lots of kid-friendly cookbooks and food books out there, for all ages. A few to check out this holiday season:

From America's Test Kitchen, *The Complete Cookbook for Young Chefs* and *The Complete Baking Book for Young Chefs*. All recipes are kid-tested. The little chef hat symbols let you know how much experience is needed for each recipe.

*Notes from a Young Black Chef* (Knopf, 2019): Award-winning, 29-year old executive chef Kwame Onwuachi was raised in New York City, Nigeria and Louisiana. He started cooking at a young age under his mother's direction, and tells an intense story of moving up through kitchens both gritty and elite. This memoir centers on the experience of being a minority in the culinary world, and finding a place in the sphere of fine dining. —AP

## gorge us



Daryaganj's mutton offerings are all about succulent meat cooked to perfection, authentic flavours and perfect combinations. Try out dishes like *mutton bheja fry*, *saag* meat with fresh *palak*, Daryaganj style *mutton* curry and *kebabs* like *Amritsari chaap*, *sharaabi raan* and much more. **Time:** 11.30 am to 4 pm **Venue:** Daryaganj.



Enjoy a playful twist at Farzi Cafe, as it offers Pearl barley and *Dahi Bada*, *Rawa* fried Chicken Strips, Braised Lamb Shanks, *Hass Avocado Chaat* with Beetroot gel, *Apple Mithai*, *Kheer Brulee* with *Murmura Chikki* and much more. **Date:** Till February **Price:** ₹2200 for two **Venue:** Cyber Hub, DLF Cyber City, Gurugram.



The Westin Gurgaon, New Delhi is all set to host you in a royal affair at its Rajasthani Food Festival. It offers *Laal Maas*, *Gatta Curry*, *Dal Bati Churma*, *Papad ki Sabzi*, *Ker Sangri*, *Jodhpuri Chicken*, *Jungle Maas* served with delectable *Mirchi Parantha*, *Bajre ki Roti* and much more. **Time:** 7 pm to 11:30 pm **Date:** Till 29 February **Price:** Starting from ₹3186 per person **Venue:** Seasonal Tastes, The Westin Gurgaon, New Delhi.



Get to pick the tastiest, thinnest and most amazing pizzas at Plum by Bentchair. It offers Sichuan Chicken with smokey flavour, Chilli bean and Tempura, fresh Tuna cold Pizza with Black Truffle, straw Mushroom with Truffle and much more. **Date:** Till February **Time:** 12 noon to 1 am **Price:** ₹2,000 plus taxes (for two) **Venue:** Plum by bent chair, Aerocity and Lutyens, Janpath.



Made in Punjab rediscovering the flavours of Punjabi cuisine with dishes like slow-cooked *Rara Meat*, *Luxury Butter Chicken*, *Paneer Makhni*, *Bhindi Masala*, *MIP special Dal* and much more relishing delicacies. **Date:** Till February **Time:** 12 noon to 11:30 pm **Price:** ₹1,500 for two **Venue:** Made in Punjab, DLF Mall of Noida and Cyber Hub.

# INDIA READY TO TASTE KIWI PACE

PTI ■ WELLINGTON

India's battle-hardened cricketers are ready for their toughest challenge of the World Test Championship till date as they face formidable hosts New Zealand on a spicy Basin Reserve track in the series-opener beginning here today.

Virat Kohli's top-ranked team, with 360 points in its kitty, is certainly the favourite on paper but the Black Caps under Kane Williamson are experts at wearing down opposition with their patience on pitches which turn flat as the game progresses.

The last time New Zealand lost a series at home was back in March 2017 and since then have won five (10 Tests) in familiar conditions.

For New Zealand, it is time to pick up pieces after their 0-3 drubbing in Australia while the current Indian team would love to reassert that they are the best when it comes to winning in adverse conditions like they did in Australia last year.

The open Basin Reserve ground has always been challenging for both batsmen and bowlers due to cross winds.

And the new opening pair of Prithvi Shaw and Mayank Agarwal will have its task cut out against a top class seam attack comprising Trent Boult, Tim Southee, and Kyle Jamieson, who in all likelihood will make his debut.

However, the absence of left arm speedster Neil Wagner, who could have created awkward angles with his short balls, will provide some respite for the Indian middle-order. Wagner is on a break to welcome his first child.

New Zealand named their 12 on the day and it will be a choice between seamer all-rounder Daryl Mitchell or slow left-arm orthodox Ajaz Patel.

In an open ground with overcast conditions expected, captain Kohli will not mind winning the toss and unleash Jasprit Bumrah, Ishant Sharma and Mohammed Shami on the home team.

Even Kohli admitted that his men would need to have tons of patience once the track eases out as Williamson's team is known to the play waiting game.

"It doesn't matter how much



Indian captain Virat Kohli, right, New Zealand captain Kane Williamson, left, pose with the trophy

BCCI/Twitter

New Zealand vs India  
Live from 4:00am IST  
STAR SPORTS 1 NETWORK

## WTC points system unfair: Williamson

WELLINGTON: New Zealand captain Kane Williamson is not a fan of the points system used for the World Test Championship where a team gets a maximum of 120 points irrespective of the length of the series.

As per points system, the value for each Test match win in the upcoming two-match series is 60 points per game.

However if it's an Ashes series, the value of a Test match win is reduced to 24 as there are five matches.

"It's an interesting one. I guess there's an element to it that isn't fair. But I guess there is an effort in bringing context to Test cricket which wasn't there. So

I mean the World Test Championship is a step in the right direction.

"It's not perfect but I guess after the first year or two of it, there'll always be efforts to continue to make it a better product," Williamson was guarded in his criticism.

But he did mention that points distribution system needs to have a relook.

"It is a step in the right direction but there are so many parts to it that some teams playing five, some teams playing two, the difference in countries, there is just heaps of different parts to it that don't quite make the points of equal measure," said the Kiwi skipper.

"But we have all signed up for it and we are all keen to see how it unfolds and I'm sure it'll develop over time," he said.

Williamson's sentiment was also echoed by one of his senior teammates Ross Taylor, who was also critical of the points system.

"There are probably still a few teething issues to go with the points system but it has brought context to cricket which is probably what ICC were after. Is it the ideal situation at the moment? Probably not. But it's a lot better now than it was before when we had nothing," Taylor had said during his interaction earlier this week.

PTI

patience opposition has, we have to show more patience. We can't really prepare in a manner where New Zealand show more patience and put pressure on us," skipper Kohli made his intentions clear during a media interaction.

While New Zealand are expected to go with four frontline pacers and may be a fifth seamer in all-rounder Colin de Grandhomme, the Indian team management might be tempted to try out Ravichandran Ashwin, who purely as a spinner, has more variety compared to left-arm orthodox of Ravindra Jadeja.

The wind factor in Wellington is an issue that captains need to deal with and Kohli is no different as he will have to judiciously choose ends for his bowlers.

"If breeze is blowing across the ground, who is more effective with inswinger or outswingers, these things you think as a captain," said Kohli.

The return of Trent Boult for New Zealand and Ishant for India, from their respective injuries will certainly bolster both the sides.

For India, Cheteshwar Pujara, Kohli and Ajinkya Rahane will have to be the foil around Shaw, Agarwal and Vihari with their techniques being tested.

"As a batsman, you need to think that ball might not travel in the air a lot more when you are hitting against the wind. So you need to be prepared to run a lot more which we experienced last time and if you have a light bat, you are in trouble.

"You need to be firm with your stance and where your bat is as it can really swing around," added Kohli, who is India's best batsman by a mile.

### TEAMS

**India (First 12):** Virat Kohli (captain), Mayank Agarwal, Prithvi Shaw, Cheteshwar Pujara, Ajinkya Rahane, Hanuma Vihari, Wriddhiman Saha (wk), Ishant Sharma, Mohammed Shami, Jasprit Bumrah, Ravichandran Ashwin, Ravindra Jadeja.

**New Zealand (12):** Kane Williamson (c), Tom Blundell, Trent Boult, Colin de Grandhomme, Kyle Jamieson, Tom Latham, Daryl Mitchell, Henry Nicholls, Ajaz Patel, Tim Southee, Ross Taylor, BJ Watling.



## 'NZ start favourites but 320 is good first innings score'

PTI ■ WELLINGTON

A first innings total in the range of 320 on a bouncy Basin Reserve track is what India vice-captain Ajinkya Rahane is aiming for despite calling New Zealand the favourites going into the first Test starting here on Friday.

"I think New Zealand are favourites in their home conditions. But I still feel the host country remains favourite because they know what to bowl and batsman are aware of what shots to play.

"As a unit we need to learn and adapt quickly as New Zealand grounds have different angles," Rahane said on a cautious note on the eve of the Test match.

But the 2014 win at Lord's or the 2018 victory in Adelaide had come with modest first innings scores of under 300 (295 at Lord's and 250 at Adelaide), a template that can be executed in Wellington also, feels the stylish Mumbaikar.

"When you bat first, your mindset is always positive, not saying that it's not when you bowl first. If you get 320 to 330 outside India in first innings, it's a very good total. "All the matches if you see we won (in England and Australia), we got around 320 to 350 runs on the board in the first innings," said Rahane.

While 320 may not be a big score but Rahane's confidence stems from the fact that India's world class pace attack, which has shown ability to pick 20 wickets in overseas conditions.

"We know that our bowlers can take wickets in any condition but suppose you lose the toss and have to bat first, you should know that you are in right kind of mindset to actually go out there and tackle those situations.

"Keeping mindset right in seaming conditions even if you lose the toss is really important. Same goes to bowlers who should keep their mindset right on flat wickets. They should actually have the belief to take 20 wickets on flat tracks," said the veteran of 63 Tests.

While he called the home team the favourites but Rahane and his teammates are enjoying the phase where the current batch under Virat Kohli is expected to win Test series outside sub-continent following their historic triumph in Australia last year.

"There is no awe about conditions anymore. Every condition is home condition for us. Irrespective of victory or defeat, expectation is bound to be there. As a team, we want to enjoy this phase where people feel that we are favourites wherever we go," the confident deputy of Kohli said.

## Ton-up Majumdar scripts dramatic turnaround for Bengal



Anustup Majumdar raises his bat after scoring hundred against Odisha PTI

### K'TAKA IN TROUBLE

JAMMU: Karnataka were wobbling at 14 for 2 at stumps after only six overs were possible due to bad light on the opening day against Jammu and Kashmir.

Overcast skies meant the light alternated between poor to border-line for most part of the day.

Play started after tea and only six overs were possible during which Karnataka struggled against Jammu and Kashmir new ball pair of Aquib Nabi (1/6) and Mujtaba Yousuf (1/5).

Karnataka lost both their openers -- Ravikumar Samarth (5) and Devdutt Padikkal (2).

At the close of play, skipper Karun Nair was batting on four in the company of Krishnamurthy Siddharth, who is yet to open his account.

### PATEL SCORES HUNDRED

VALSAD: Skipper Parthiv Patel led from the front with his 27th first-class century and helped Gujarat reach 330 for four against Goa.

The left-handed batsman scored an unbeaten 118 off 156 balls at the Sardar Patel Stadium, hitting 15 boundaries off the Goa bowlers.

In the process, Patel also completed 11,000 first-class runs.

For Goa, Verma was the pick of the bowlers, while Darshan Misal and Vijesh Prabhudesai (1-60) took a wicket each.

This is Patel's second hundred in Ranji knock-outs, the first being against Mumbai in the 2016-17 final.

### SAURASHTRA POST 226/6

ONGOLE: Fighting half-centuries by Vishvaraj Singh Jadeja (73, 179 balls, 10 fours), Chirag Jani (53, 128 balls, 5 fours) and Sheldon Jackson (50) helped Saurashtra make 226 for 6 in 79 overs against Andhra.

For the home team, left-arm medium-pace Yarra Prithvi Raj was impressive, picking up three wickets in 20 overs conceding 51 runs. K V Sashikanth picked two wickets.

A lot will now depend on Jani and the lower-order including captain Jaydev Unadkat if Saurashtra has to post a fighting total in the last-eight match.

## Indian Eves begin chase for 1st ICC title

PTI ■ SYDNEY

The Indian women's cricket team will be aiming for much needed consistency when it opens its bid for an elusive ICC trophy with the T20 World Cup opener against defending champions Australia here on today.

Inconsistency has plagued India for a long time and a classic example was their performance in the recently held tri-series in Australia where they reached the final.

They won and lost a game against the more accomplished England and Australia before losing to the mighty hosts, who have won the T20 World Cup a record four times out of the six editions held so far.

India's middle and lower-order needs to do a lot better than what it has been doing to beat the likes of Australia and England in the knock-out stages, something that has been acknowledged star

opener Smriti Mandhana.

The team needs to ensure that the frequent middle-order collapses are not repeated in the showpiece event.

The southpaw and 16-year-old Shafali Verma will have to get India off to a flying start more often than not in the competition.

Expectations are high from skipper Harmanpreet Kaur, who too has suffered from inconsistency and would like to correct that, beginning with the opener against Australia.

It remains to be seen if the other 16-year-old in the squad, Richa Ghosh, gets to play regularly as she made her international debut only in the final of the tri-series.

In the bowling department, they have heavily relied on spinners with not many quality pacers to choose from.

Shikha Pandey, who is often the lone pacer in the playing eleven full of spinners, has the crucial task of providing early breakthroughs.



The squad is expected to reach the last four as it had two years ago but the growing women's game in India will get a further fillip only if they go all the way.

Long gone are the days when women cricketers were a neglected lot and have all the facilities at their disposal.

They take on Australia, who could not have asked for a better build-up to the tournament than winning the preceding tri-series.

If you want to do well as a team, you need to come up together and do well for the side. Through past tournaments, we have learnt that you cannot depend on just one or two players to win the game for you

— HARMANPREET KAUR

There's no one quite the same as Tayla so we will have to slightly tweak how we are going to go about it. But generally our plans are pretty flexible anyway, so we don't feel like it's going to be too much of a disadvantage

— MEG LANNING

However, they suffered a big blow on the eve of the tournament opener as their lead pacer Tayla Vlaeminck, who had troubled the Indian batters in the tri-series with extra pace, was ruled out of the competition due to a foot injury. Off-spinner Molly Strano was named her replacement.

## Saina, Sameer in Barcelona quarters, Srikanth loses



Saina Nehwal plays a return shot BAI/Twitter

PTI ■ BARCELONA

London Olympics Bronze medallist Saina Nehwal secured a straight game win over Ukraine's Maria Ulitina to storm into the women's singles quarterfinals of the USD 170,000 Barcelona Spain Masters here on Thursday.

Saina, who is facing a race against time to qualify for her fourth Olympics, brushed aside Maria 21-10

, 21-19 in the second round to set up a last-eight clash with Thailand's third seed Busanan Ongbamrungphan, who has beaten the Indian twice in the last two encounters.

Sameer Verma also made it to the last eight with a hard-fought 21-14, 16-21, 21-15 win over Germany's Kai Schaefer. He will face either Thailand's Kunlavut Vitidsarn or Ireland's Nhat Nguyen in the men's singles quarterfinals.

However, former world No 1 Kidambi Srikanth's wretched run continued as he went down 6-21, 17-21 to fellow Indian Ajay Jayaram, dashing his hopes of qualifying for the Tokyo Games.

Srikanth, who had lost in the first round in Malaysia, Indonesia and Thailand, desperately needs to win a tournament or make it to the quarters and semifinals consistently to qualify for the Olympics.

N Sikki Reddy also endured a difficult day as she lost both the mixed doubles and women's doubles to bow out of the competition.

Sikki and her women's doubles pair of Ashwini Ponnappa, who is coming back from an injury, lost 18-21, 14-21 to Bulgaria's Gabriela Stoeva and Stefani Stoeva, seeded third.

In the mixed doubles, Sikki and Pranaav Jerry Chopra went down fighting 16-21, 21-17, 11-21 to top seeded Malaysian pair of Goh Soon Huat and Lai Shevon Jemie.

## India hope to continue fine run

PTI ■ BHUBANESWAR

Hosts India would look to continue their fine form when they take on title holders Australia in their next FIH Pro League tie here on Friday.

India have made an excellent start to their maiden FIH Hockey Pro League season and are currently sitting third in the table with eight points from four games.

The Manpreet Singh-led side claimed five points from a possible six against the Netherlands before claiming another three in a stunning 2-1 victory over Belgium, the reigning World and European champions. The Red Lions bounced back with a 3-2 win in the second match.

Few would dispute that India, coached by former Australian international Graham Reid and captained by newly crowned FIH Men's Player of the Year Manpreet, are playing their best hockey in recent years.

It would also be India's penultimate home tie at the Kalinga Stadium here before they embark on a series of away games. But past records and statistics don't look promising for the hosts as Australia have an outstanding recent record against India.

The world no.2 Kookaburras have won 22 of their last 30 meetings against world no.4 India and have not faced a defeat since a 2016 Test match in Bendigo, Australia, when VR Raghunath scored twice in



Indian Hockey team celebrates after winning the match

Manpreet Singh/Twitter

a 3-2 win.

Australia, managed by Colin Batch, who was recently named 2019 Men's FIH Coach of the Year, also have an imperious record at the Kalinga Stadium, a venue where they have not suffered a defeat in regular time since a semi-final loss at the hands of Germany at the Hero Champions Trophy in 2014.

The Australians were unbeaten in all six matches on the way to claiming the title at the 2017 Hockey

World League Final, and won five of their six matches at the Odisha Hockey Men's World Cup 2018, with only the Netherlands getting the better of them in a semi-final shoot-out.

after the regular time finished 2-2. The Kookaburras will be in a confident mood coming into the tie after their recent performances against Great Britain in the FIH Pro League, where they claimed five points out of six.

India vs Australia  
Live from 7:00pm IST  
STAR SPORTS 1 NETWORK

# Indian women dominate with 3 Gold

## Divya, Pinki and Sarita bag yellow metal in freestyle event of Asian C'ship

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

On a fruitful day for India in women's competition of Asian Wrestling Championship at Indira Gandhi stadium here on Thursday, three female wrestlers — Pinki Rani (55 kg), Sarita Mor (59 kg) and Divya Kakran (68 kg) won Gold medals in the freestyle event. While Nirmala Devi (50kg) settles for Silver in the 50kg category after losing final against Japan's Migo Igarashi.

2018 Commonwealth and Asian Games Bronze medallist Divya was the star performer for the hosts on the opening day of freestyle event as she produced a strong performance by winning all her bouts, including against reigning junior world champion Naruha Matsuyuki in the fourth round.

She started the day by routing Kazakhstan's Albina Kairgelinova and then knocked out Mongolia's Delgermaa Enkhsaikhan.

In the third round, against Uzbekistan's Azoda Esbergenova, she led 4-0 with consecutive rolls and then

pinned her opponent to finish it off in just 27 seconds.

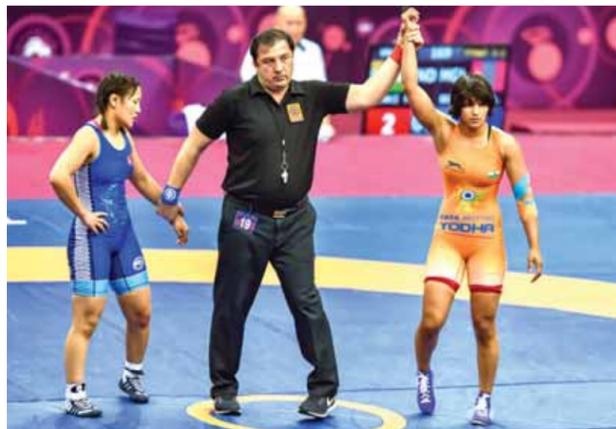
Against the Japanese junior world champion, with her strong left-leg attacks, Divya led 4-0 with a takedown and an expose move.

The Japanese made a solid start in the second period as she attacked the Indian's left leg initially but scored points with a right leg move to make it 4-4.

The Japanese almost pinned her but Divya wriggled out of the difficult position. She soon effected a move which led to her victory by fall.

"I had to win by fall to get five points from all my bouts because the Japanese was winning all her bouts by big margins, so I took a risk for big wins. My coach had said that I don't have to go for big throws all the time, but I went for it," said Divya.

"It did become tricky after I led 4-0 (in final). I was not in a great position (Naruha's lock) and it could have been very dangerous. But I took a risk



Referee raises the hand of wrestler Pinki after winning her bout against Mongolian Dulguun Bolormaa PTI

and it paid off by God's grace."

Asked if the absence of Chinese wrestler helped, she replied in the affirmative.

"Yes, it did benefit. But if you have a five-wrestler group it becomes even

tougher, you have to fight everyone and win big. I won 4 bouts within 2 hours. It was tough on the body but the good thing is I have improved on my range, I made all kinds of attacks, *Irani*, *Kheme*, single-lead, double leg attacks."

Sarita, competing in her first Asian event since winning a Silver in 2017 in 58kg, won her first two bouts by technical superiority against Madina Bakbergenova (Kazakhstan) and Nazira MarsbekKyzy (Kyrgyzstan) before winning 10-3 against Japan's Yuumi Kon.

She edged out Mongolia's Battseteg Atlantsereg 3-2 in the final. Sarita managed a push-out point to win her first Gold at this event after the scores were tied.

Pinki, competing at senior Asian for the first time, began by beating Uzbekistan's Shokida Akhmedova by fall but lost the next bout to Japan's Kana Higashikawa.

She won her semifinal against Marina Zuyeva 6-0 and beat Mongolia's Dulguun Bolormaa 2-1 to grab the Gold. All the points scored in the final were on passivity.

"I was a bit careful because I had injured my elbow. I did not want to aggravate since important events are lined up," said Pinki.

Nirmala beat Mongolia's Munkhnar Byambasuren 6-4 and Uzbekistan's Dauletbike Yakshimuratova by technical superiority but lost the final 2-3 to Japan's Miho Igarashi.

### SINGLES

#### LFC WORLD HEADS TO DELHI

**NEW DELHI:** Liverpool FC has confirmed Delhi as the next stop for its interactive roadshow, LFC World. The unique fan experience will arrive at the Select Citywalk Mall on March 7. Liverpool legends Emile Heskey and Jason McAteer will be in town. Reds in Delhi can also have their photograph with UEFA Champions League trophy and various iconic recreations of Anfield such as the Shankly Gates, *This Is Anfield* sign and the players' dressing room. Following a day of free LFC-themed activities, fans can be part of a *BOSS* nights gig featuring Jamie Webster — creator of the Reds famous "*Allez allez allez*" song — and share the match-day atmosphere at a viewing party as the team takes on Bournemouth in the Premier League back at Anfield.

#### FEDERER WILL MISS FRENCH OPEN

**BASEL:** Roger Federer has had surgery on his right knee and will miss the French Open and several other tournaments. Writing on his Facebook page on Thursday, the 20-time Grand Slam champion said his knee "has been bothering me for a little while" so he "decided to have arthroscopic surgery in Switzerland yesterday (Wednesday)." Doctors "are very confident of a full recovery," Federer said, before ending his post by telling his fans "see you on the grass!" as he targets a return for Wimbledon. Federer will skip tournaments in Dubai, Indian Wells, Bogota and Miami prior to the French Open, which starts on May 24.

#### SHARATH ENTER MEN'S & MIXED DOUBLES Q/F

**BUDAPEST:** Indian table tennis legend Aachanta Sharath Kamal on Thursday entered the quarterfinals of both men's doubles and mixed doubles at the ITTF World Tour Hungarian Open. The former Commonwealth Games Gold medallist showed tremendous grit and resolve as he partnered Manika Batra to a marathon 11-8, 9-11, 6-11, 11-9, 11-7 victory over home hope Adam Szudi and Szandra Pergel. Later, Sharath Kamal paired up with Gnanasekaran Sathyan to register yet another hard-fought 11-6, 11-8, 8-11, 9-11, 11-9 win against Japan's rising stars, Shunsuke Togami and Yukiya Uda in men's doubles.

#### MUGURUZA SHOCKED BY QUALIFIER IN DUBAI

**CHENNAI:** Qualifier Jennifer Brady claimed a second seeded victim on Thursday, defeating Garbine Muguruza 6-7 (5/7), 6-3, 6-4 to reach the Dubai C'ships semi-finals. The American who ranks just outside the Top 50 followed up on her first-round defeat of third seed and two-time champion Elena Svitolina at the Aviation Club. "I was able to find a way, I wasn't feeling my best," Brady said after seeing off the ninth-seeded Spaniard. "Maybe I didn't play my best tennis, but I stayed in there, competed and came out on top."

#### BARCA SIGNS DANISH FORWARD BRAITHWAITE

**BARCELONA:** Barcelona signed Denmark forward Martin Braithwaite to help fill its injury-depleted attack on Thursday. Barcelona agreed to pay the 18 million euros (\$19.4 million) buyout clause in Braithwaite's contract with Spanish league rival Leganes. Barcelona was granted permission to sign a Spanish league player after it was left without Luis Suarez and Ousmane Dembele for long periods due to injuries to both attacking players. Braithwaite will sign for the rest of this season plus four more, the club said.

# Atalanta's night to 'remember forever' No bright side for Spurs

AFP ■ MILAN

Atalanta coach Gian Piero Gasperini hailed a performance his club will "remember forever" after the Italian side crushed Valencia 4-1 on Wednesday to take a giant step closer to reaching the Champions League quarter-finals for the first time.

Dutch wing-back Hans Hateboer scored twice on 16 and 62 minutes, sandwiching goals from Josip Ilicic and Remo Freuler.

"This is an evening that we'll remember forever," said Gasperini. "It's an amazing result, full of emotion."

It was an extraordinary night for the side from Bergamo who travelled to the San Siro



Atalanta players celebrate after UEFA Champions League R16 first leg victory AP

had finished top of their group after away wins over Ajax and Chelsea but were missing several key players through injury and suspension.

"It certainly complicates things a bit, it's a pretty overwhelming result, this 4-1," said Valencia coach Albert Celades.

"In the end it doesn't reflect much what we saw on the pitch."

Atalanta's run comes despite losing their opening three Champions League group games, before finishing second behind Manchester City.

"Three goals ahead is a nice reward," added Gasperini. "But there were a lot of dangerous situations, these are things we'll need to improve in Valencia."

"We are satisfied with this victory and above all with this advantage."

AFP ■ LONDON

Jose Mourinho fears his side's season is running out of gas after an injury-hit Spurs slumped to a 1-0 defeat at home to RB Leipzig in the first leg of their Champions League last 16 tie.

Spurs could be without the talismanic duo of Harry Kane and Son Heung-min for the rest of the season through injury and looked toothless against the Bundesliga contenders.

"We are in a very difficult situation," said Mourinho. "What worries me is this is going to be the situation until the end of the season."

Tottenham captain Hugo Lloris kept his side in the tie with a string of important saves, but he could not prevent Timo Werner from the penalty spot as the German international's 26th goal of the season gave Leipzig a lead to defend on home soil on March 10.

"Over the 90 minutes we deserved



Timo Werner celebrates after he scores RB Leipzig opening goal against Tottenham AP



## Incredible India





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