

OPINION 8  
A DAY OF  
MARTYRS

WORLD 11  
FEWER CASES IN CHINA, BUT  
DEATHS ABROAD RISE

SPORT 15  
INDIA BEAT AUSTRALIA IN  
WOMEN'S T20 WC OPENER

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14 VIVACITY

## Trump aims high in India

### Will make tremendous trade deal, says US President



Children from an art school make paintings of US President Donald Trump ahead of his India visit, in Mumbai on Friday

PTI ■ WASHINGTON

Days ahead of his India visit, US President Donald Trump on Thursday said the two countries could make a "tremendous" trade deal. "We're going to India, and we may make a tremendous deal there," Trump said in his commencement address at the Hope for Prisoners Graduation Ceremony in Las Vegas. Trump, accompanied by First Lady Melania Trump, is scheduled to travel to Ahmedabad, Agra and New Delhi on February 24 and 25.

Children from an art school make paintings of US President Donald Trump ahead of his India visit, in Mumbai on Friday. Trump indicated that the talks on this might slowdown if he did not get a good deal. "Maybe we'll slow down. We'll do it after the election. I think that could happen too. So, we'll see what happens... But we're only making deals if they're good deals because we're putting America first. Whether people like it or not, we're putting America first," Trump said. Bilateral India-US trade in goods and services is about three per cent of the US' world trade. In a recent report, the Congressional Research Service (CRS) said the trading relationship is more consequential for India — in 2018 the United States was its second largest

goods export market (16.0 per cent share) after the European Union (EU, 17.8 per cent), and third largest goods import supplier (6.3 per cent) after China (14.6 per cent) and the EU 28 (10.2 per cent). "The Trump Administration takes issue with the US trade deficit with India, and has criticised India for a range of 'unfair' trading practices," the CRS said. "Indian Prime Minister Modi's first term fell short of many observers' expectations, as India did not move forward with anticipated market opening reforms, and instead increased tariffs and trade restrictions," it said. "Modi's strong electoral mandate may embolden the Indian Government to press ahead with its reform agenda with greater vigour. Slowing economic growth in India raises concerns about its business environment," CRS said. As per a fact sheet issued by the Council on Foreign Relations (CFR), trade in goods and services between the two countries from 1999 to 2018 surged from \$16 billion to \$142 billion. India is now the United States' eighth-largest trading partner in goods and services and is among the world's largest economies. India's trade with the United States now resembles, in terms of volume, the US' trade with South Korea (\$167 billion in 2018) or France

(\$129 billion), said Alyssa Ayres from CFR. "The United States for two years now has set out in stone pretty clearly the things that they wanted to see to try to get an agreement, and it's basically then on India's doorstep on whether they want to take those steps," said Rick Rossow, Wadhvani Chair in US-India Policy Studies at the Center for Strategic and International Studies think-tank. "The list of US asks has been pretty static all throughout. Not to say that any of these things are easy for India to do, but the United States to my knowledge didn't change the goalposts just because we now consider India to be a middle-income country. The things that we wanted to see happen to get this trade agreement have been pretty static all throughout, no matter how difficult they are," he said.

## Shaheen Bagh blinks

### Protesters agree to open parallel road if security is guaranteed

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

The talks between the Supreme Court-appointed interlocutors and the Shaheen Bagh protesters yielded partial results on Friday, the third day of the negotiation, as the protesters agreed to open the parallel road if the SC can guarantee their security at the protest site. The interlocutors — senior advocates Sanjay Hegde and Sadhana Ramachandran — on resumed talks with the protesters on the third day on Friday evening. A woman protester said, "We want in writing that if there is a single incident of attack or firing, the police officials, from the SHO to the police commissioner, should be shunted out. Home Minister Amit Shah has said the NRC is not coming soon, so ask him to issue a circular, saying they are not bringing the NRC now. We want the Supreme Court to pass an order on our security if the road adjoining the protest site is opened." Hegde said, "Today is Shivraatri. If somebody uses a cuss word, it becomes a blessing today. It is your right to speak. Speak up. Say everything you want to say. Let us take a joint decision for all the affected parties here." The protesters told the



SC-appointed interlocutors Sanjay Hegde and Sadhana Ramachandran during their visit to Shaheen Bagh on Friday

interlocutors that the police had first barricaded the road parallel to the sit-in site, and then they occupied the parallel road erecting "India Gate". The Delhi Police admitted that initially they had blocked the road opposite to the sit-in road for safety and security of the protesters. "We barricaded the parallel road to ensure security to the protest site. If the road is opened to commuters, we will ensure double security to the protesters," the police official said. As the interlocutors called the police to the spot to discuss the matter with the protesters, a woman stood up and told the mediators, "The Government thinks women are uneducated. All of us are educated women who know what we are fighting for. The students from Jamia Millia Islamia, who were teaching us more on CAA and NRC, are being beaten up. If the police could not stop the men who fired at us, how are they claiming that they will protect us if the parallel road is opened?" Another woman protester said, "When several adjoining roads are open, why are they insisting us to move from this road? This is not the only road connecting Delhi to Noida." Ramachandran said, "When we checked on the roads, we noticed that you (protesters) were right. Many roads are open, which were blocked by the police. I am very upset to say that the Noida-Faridabad road, which was opened on Friday, was again closed by the police. Whoever has done this is now answerable to the Supreme Court." The restrictions are a "conscious" decision of the Noida Police and are continuing as it is, Deputy Commissioner of Police (Noida Traffic) Rajesh S told PTI. He added that the day, the Delhi Police decides to lift the restrictions, "We will also do it on our side."

## VHP model to be tweaked for a grander Ram Mandir

### Height of temple likely to be 160 feet, it will be 3-storey now

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The map prepared by the Vishwa Hindu Parishad (VHP) some 30 years ago for building a grand Ram temple at Ayodhya could be altered slightly to raise the height of the proposed structure from 125 feet to 160 feet and add an additional third floor. Nripendra Mishra, the head of the temple construction committee, will hold discussion with experts to finalise the temple's design, plan for all construction-related works, including its start date. For his part, Prime Minister Narendra Modi has asked members of the newly constituted Ram temple trust to ensure that construction work is conducted harmoniously and without any bitterness, Trust's general secretary Champat Rai said on Friday. On Thursday, members of



the Ram Janmabhoomi Teerath Kshetra Trust, including general secretary Champat Rai, Vimlendra Mohan Pratap Mishra and Anil Mishra, met Nripendra Mishra during which they discussed various issues related to the construction of the proposed temple. Earlier, the VHP insisted for the model based on the old design. In 1987, architect Chandrakant Sompura had prepared a model of the proposed temple on being asked by then VHP international president Ashok Singhal. "The temple will be built on the basis of the VHP's map. There can be changes to its proposed shape and scale," Swami Govind Dev Giri, a member of the Trust, told PTI. Another member of the Trust said, "We have received suggestions to make changes to the old map in order to give an ever grander form to the proposed temple. Now, we are brainstorming on building a three-storey structure instead of the two-storey proposed earlier, as well as adding a pavilion and detailing to the 35-feet-high 'shikhar'." Continued on Page 7

## ITBP boss starts 100-km march to promote 'fit India'

RAKESH K SINGH ■ NEW DELHI

Indo Tibetan Border Police (ITBP) chief SS Deswal, undoubtedly one of the most physically fit paramilitary bosses, began a 100-km march on Friday with senior officers from Bikaner district's Mehraas to Jodhpur in Rajasthan. The route includes more than 25 km desert and many other stretches, including undulating terrains and off-track routes. The march is aimed at promoting "Fit India" movement and fitness among masses in general. Deswal, 58, has undertaken dozens of long route and speed marches in the Himalayas and on seaside of the country in the last one year. The routes undertaken on the Himalayan range by him include Lipulekh Pass, Sangla Valley (103 KM), Auli Tapovan and Gangotri Tapovan, among others. "The march is aimed at spreading the 'Fit India' mission and to promote the youth to



engage in more physical exercises to remain fit," said ITBP spokesperson Vivek Pandey. The trek record of Deswal includes 30 km around Bhriagu Lake in Himachal Pradesh and touched the highest point at 14,100 ft, Amarnath Yatra route (42 km, highest point: 14,500 ft), Lipulekh Pass (30 km, highest point: 17,060 km), Sangla Valley, Kinnaur in Himachal Pradesh (103 km, highest point: 15,000 ft) and Mussoorie (Distance covered: 42 km, highest point: 6,800 ft). Continued on Page 7

## US planning to ink peace deal with Taliban on February 29

AFP ■ RIYADH

The United States is preparing to sign a deal with the Taliban on February 29, building on an agreement on reducing violence across Afghanistan, Secretary of State Mike Pompeo said Friday. "Upon a successful implementation of this understanding, signing of the US-Taliban agreement is expected to move forward," he said in a statement released after visiting Saudi Arabia. A week-long "reduction in violence" between the Taliban, the US and Afghan security forces will commence shortly, Afghanistan's National Security Council spokesman Javed Faisal told AFP on Friday. The partial truce will mark a historic step in more than 18 years of gruelling conflict in Afghanistan and would pave the way for a deal that could, ultimately, see the war end. Pompeo said that intra-Afghan negotiations would begin shortly after the February 29 signing, expected to take place in Doha. Continued on Page 7

## Uddhav allays CAA, NPR apprehensions after meeting Modi

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Against the backdrop of his simmering differences on a host of issues with the Congress and the NCP, Maharashtra Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray met Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Congress president Sonia Gandhi on Friday, his first visit to Delhi after taking up the reins of the State. Uddhav's son Aditya Thackeray, who is a Minister in his Cabinet, accompanied him, during his meeting with Modi. After the meeting, Uddhav said, "I had a good discussion with the Prime Minister over issues concerning Maharashtra. I also discussed the CAA, NPR and NRC with the PM. No one needs to fear about the CAA. The NPR is not going to throw anyone out of the country," Uddhav said. He also denied that there was any friction among the constituents of the Maha Aghadi, while asserting that the Maharashtra Government will complete its five-year term. Continued on Page 7



Prime Minister Narendra Modi with Maharashtra Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray and his son and State Minister Aaditya Thackeray in New Delhi

## Alternative land accepted, Waqf board to decide use on Monday

PTI ■ LUCKNOW

The UP Sunni Central Waqf Board on Friday said it does not have the option to reject the alternative piece of land given to it under the Supreme Court's Ayodhya verdict but will decide how to use it when it meets on Monday. In a historic verdict in November on the Ramjanmabhoomi-Babri Masjid dispute, the Supreme Court ruled in favour of construction of a temple. It also ruled that an alternative five-acre plot must be found for a mosque. Soon after the verdict, there were suggestions that the board should not accept the land. "Following the Supreme

Court verdict, the Sunni Waqf Board does not have the choice of rejecting the five-acre alternative land for the construction of a mosque in Ayodhya as it would amount to contempt of court," Farooqui said. "We had been saying since the very beginning that we will abide by the court verdict on the issue, and because of this we did not go in for a review of the verdict. There has been no shift in our stand," he said. "But on how to use the land given to us by the government, it will be decided at the all important-meeting of the board slated on Monday," he said. Farooqui said the apex court order clearly stated that the Uttar Pradesh government will allot a plot to the board and "we

had the liberty to build a mosque and associated amenities on it." "It did not say that the board had the liberty of rejecting it," he added. Besides Farooqui, there are seven other members on the Sunni Waqf Board. Earlier this month, the Uttar Pradesh government gave the allotment letter to the board for the plot in Dhannipur village in Ayodhya's Sohawal tehsil. It is on the Ayodhya-Lucknow highway, about 20 km from the district headquarters. Based on the SC verdict, the Centre had asked the Uttar Pradesh government to allot five acres of land to the Sunni Waqf Board. The state cabinet meeting the allotment after its meeting of February 5.

## 30 squats to earn you free platform ticket

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

The Indian Railways has come with a unique scheme to make commuters healthy by offering a free platform ticket at the Anand Vihar railway station in the national Capital if they successfully do thirty squats at the designated kiosk. In a first-of-its-kind Fit India initiative, the railways has also opened a "Dawa Dost" store at the station, a generic medicine store for passengers. "Dawa Dost" aims to make it easier for Indians to take care of their health and help them make substantial savings on their health bills by providing high-quality, affordable medicines. "Dawa Dost" supports the Indian Government's stance on the use of generic medicines. The firm currently has 10 stores in Rajasthan and Delhi

and plans to increase the number to 100 in a year and to 1,000 in the four years," a statement issued by the railways said. Other health-related amenities include a pulse health machine kiosk, which measures various health and wellness parameters (body composition analysis, blood pressure, etc.) and gives indications of potential lifestyle diseases with personalised recommendations. The railways has also installed a Robocura massage chair, the most advanced body massage chair that has 3D massage rollers, along with a longer massage track line giving maximum massage coverage, the statement said. The railways has also created a "Eat Right Station Certification", the main objective of which is to help pas-



sengers make healthy food choices. "It aims to engage, excite and enable people towards their health and well-being. A 'Eat Right Station'

audit was conducted at the Anand Vihar terminal in January and the station achieved the highest score of 92 per cent with a five-star rating.

The station is the first 'Eat Right Station' under the Northern Railway," the statement said. Continued on Page 7

GSDP growth likely to be 4.4 per cent

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

Advance estimates of Economics and Statistics Division of UP's State Planning Institute have projected that growth in Gross State Domestic Product (GSDP) at constant (2011-12) prices is likely to be 4.4 per cent. Uttar Pradesh is aiming to become a \$1-trillion economy by 2024.

As per Gross State Value Added (GSA) estimates at constant prices for 2020-21 fiscal, the primary, secondary and tertiary sectors of UP's economy show a growth of 2.2 per cent, 1.1 per cent and 7.5 per cent.

It reflects that highest growth would be recorded by tertiary sector. The growth of Net State Domestic Product (NSDP) at constant prices was estimated at 4.3 per cent.

The Economics and Statistics division of UP Planning Institute released the advance estimates of state income at constant and current prices for 2019-20 on base year 2011-12.

Besides, the GSA of state crop sub-sector was projected to grow by 1.6 per cent during 2019-20.

The estimates of livestock sub-sector have been prepared using milk, egg and wool production data of 2019-20 provided by UP Animal Husbandry department and rates provided by CSO. The GSA of Livestock sub-sector was likely to show a growth of 3.8 per cent during 2019-20.

The main indicators used to estimate industry sector estimates are state wholesale price index (WPI) and state Index of Industrial Production (IIP).

The GSA of manufacturing sub-sector was likely to be more than Rs 1.83 trillion, showing a growth of (-) 1.5 per cent during 2019-20.

In services sector, GSA was projected to witness a growth of 7.5 per cent during 2019-20. The main indicators

IT REFLECTS THAT HIGHEST GROWTH WOULD BE RECORDED BY TERTIARY SECTOR. THE GROWTH OF NET STATE DOMESTIC PRODUCT (NSDP) AT CONSTANT PRICES WAS ESTIMATED AT 4.3 PER CENT

used to estimate service sector estimates were preceding three years' average growth rate and consumer price index (CPI) of 2019-20.

Meanwhile, the GSDP of UP at current prices for 2019-20 was likely to hit Rs 17.95 trillion.

As per Institute Director, Arvind Kumar Pandey, these estimates were based on methodology provided by Central Statistical Organisation, New Delhi and by adhering to all India 1st advance estimates released last month, as well as by using provisional data of targets and achievements provided by various related departments of UP government.

Meanwhile, the per capita income of UP has shown a growth of 5.9 per cent, rising from Rs 66,512 in 2018-19 to Rs 70,419 in 2019-20.

Sectoral distribution of GSA at current price was primary sector 25.2 per cent, secondary sector 25.8 per cent and tertiary sector 49.0 per cent.

The GSDP at constant prices was likely to breach Rs 11.87 trillion in 2019-20 as against quick estimates of GSDP for previous 2018-19 fiscal of Rs 11.37 trillion.

War of words between Akhilesh and CM's media advisor

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

A Twitter war over 'Ram Rajya' versus Samajwad broke out between Samajwadi Party chief Akhilesh Yadav and the media advisor to Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath on Friday.

Yogi had recently observed that the country needed 'Ram Rajya' not Samajwad & socialism was no longer relevant, and the country did not need the ideology. Reacting to this, Akhilesh listed the reasons for the relevance of socialism.

Marshalling his arguments in favour of socialism, the SP chief said: "The Chief Minister's comment that 'Samajwad nahi chahiye' was against letter and spirit and also against the essence of the Constitution."

"The Chief Minister is against the poor and he is siding with the rich and capitalists. The CM is working for a particular class of the society and not

for the whole society. He is against egalitarianism and social equality as socialism also stands for caste less society," he alleged.

In a quick riposte, CM's media advisor Mrityunjay Kumar said: "Only one family headed by Akhilesh Yadav flourished in the garb of socialism. The family amassed huge wealth and also got the office of Chief Minister."

Without naming the coup against Mulayam Singh leading to his marginalisation in Samajwadi Party and Akhilesh capturing the party, Kumar said, "Akhilesh Yadav attacked the very person with whose blessings he managed to occupy the post of Chief Minister."

Mrityunjay further said, "Goondaism and corruption rose by leaps and bounds during the SP regime. I salute this kind of 'Samajwad' from a distance."

Attaching the video link of the

CM's speech on a debate on motion of thanks to Governor Anandiben Patel in Assembly on Wednesday, Kumar said: "It's beyond your capacity to comprehend the meaning of 'Ram Rajya'. Listen to the Chief Minister's speech once again."

During his speech in Assembly on Wednesday, Chief minister Yogi Adityanath launched a scathing attack on the SP chief and his father Mulayam Singh Yadav. Yogi said that the Supreme Court verdict in favor of Ram temple on November 9 last year, underlined the fact that those who ordered police firing against Kar Sewaks in Ayodhya in October/November 1990 were wrong and Ram Bhakts were on the right path.

Without naming Mulayam Singh, Yogi recalled his controversial 'boys will be boys' remark and mocked the opposition for speaking on women empowerment. While opposing capital punishment for rape, Mulayam

"ONLY ONE FAMILY HEADED BY AKHILESH YADAV FLOURISHED IN THE GARB OF SOCIALISM. THE FAMILY AMASSED HUGE WEALTH AND ALSO GOT THE OFFICE OF CHIEF MINISTER"

Singh had sparked an outrage by saying 'ladke, ladke hain... galti ho jati hai' (boys will be boys... they commit mistakes)."

The CM also criticised Akhilesh for sending his daughter to Hussainabad where protests are being staged by women against the CAA.

PUBLIC NOTICE

This is for notice of the general public that a political party is proposed by the name of APNA DAL (Kamerawadi). The office of the party is located at 126/17-B, 1st Floor, B.N. Road, Lal Bagh, Lucknow - 226001 Uttar Pradesh. This party has submitted application to the Election Commission of India, New Delhi for its Registration as Political party under section 29A of the Representation of People Act, 1951. Name / address of the office-bearers of the party are as follows: President : Smt. Krishna Patel, C-3/1 Aman Patel Complex, 3/15 Vishnupuri Post Nawabganj, Kanpur (U.P.) Secretary : Sri Chheda Lal Verma, Trivediganj, Barabanki-227131 U.P. Treasurer : Shri Saanjay Bhanauri, Karachhaha, Prayagraj. If any one has any objection to the registration of APNA DAL (Kamerawadi) they may send their objection with reasons thereof, to the secretary (Political Party) Election Commission of India, Nirvachan Sadan, Ashoka Road, New Delhi - 110001 within 30 days of the publication of this notice.

Modi, Trump paintings come up at Taj Mahal sidewalks

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

Paintings of Prime Minister Narendra Modi and US President Donald Trump have come up at the sidewalks of Taj Mahal with slogans like 'Radhe-Radhe Trump' and 'Jai Shree Krishna Trump' during their visit to the city on February 24.

Preparations were underway in full swing to welcome US president Donald Trump and his wife Melania Trump at Taj Mahal during their visit to the 338-year-old mausoleum in Agra.

Walls from the airport to Taj Mahal have been painted with depictions of different facets of Indian culture.

Official of Culture department said that US President Donald Trump and his wife Melania along with his family members would be welcomed with a peacock dance performance by 350 artistes at the airport. As many as 3,000 dancers have also been roped in to perform at 16 spots on the route leading to Taj, while another 500 artistes would dress up as Radha and Krishna.

Thousands of school children carrying flags of US and India would



An artists paints a portrait of US President Donald Trump on a wall in Agra on Friday

greet the couple on their way to Taj Mahal.

The Agra Municipal Corporation was getting walls around Taj Mahal painted and machines have been engaged to clean up the roads leading to the mausoleum.

The Agra administration has also engaged hundreds of workers to clean boards and hoardings, while repair work was being carried out on bumpy stretches.

Meanwhile, for the first time, mudpack (using multani mud or fullers earth) treatment was being given to tombs of Mughal Emperor Shahjahan and his wife Mumtaz Mahal.

Officials of Archaeological Survey of India were hoping to complete all mudpack and chemical treatment work by Sunday (February 22). The chandeliers above the graves of Shahjahan and Mumtaz were also being cleaned up.

'Number of road mishaps has come down'

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

Even as reports of accidents continue to pour from across the state, the BJP govern-

ment claimed that the number of mishaps has come down due to better coordination between Traffic department and UP Police.

Transport Commissioner Dheeraj Sahu claimed that there was a decline of 11.89 per cent in the number of accidents in UP this year as compared to last year and the number of mortality also went down by 12.02 per cent in 2020 as compared to 2019.

The same views were expressed by Transport Minister Ashok Kataria in Assembly during the Question Hour early this week, but he did not substantiate the claim with figures.

"This decline is evident from July 2019. There was some increase in accidents in August and September, but overall between July 2018 and January 2019 and January 2020, the number of accidents and mortality has shown a downward trend," Sahu said.

The Transport Commissioner said: "If we compare January then in 2019 at least 3481 accidents were recorded in which 1,822 people died and 2,287 people were injured. However, in January 2020, the total number of accidents was recorded at 3,067 while 1,603 died and 2,077 were injured."

Sahu said that the main reason behind fall in number of accidents was awareness and alertness of UP Police and Traffic department personnel.

"The Traffic department has gone tough against helmet and seat belt violators which helped immensely in bringing down the number of deaths and injuries in accidents," Sahu said.

Congress announces candidates for election to Legislative Council seats

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

Uttar Pradesh Congress announced candidates for election to vacant Legislative Council seats from Graduate and Teachers Graduate Constituencies on Friday.

As per in-charge of UPCC administration Siddharth Priya Srivastava, Rajesh Dwivedi will be the party candidate from Agra, Jitendra Kumar Gaur from Meerut, Ajay Kumar Singh from Allahabad and Brijesh Kumar Singh from Lucknow while for Graduate constituencies, the candidates will be Nagendra Nath Tripathi from Gorakhpur-Faizabad and Dr Mehdi Hassan from Bareilly-Moradabad. Meanwhile, Srivastava hit out at the BJP government for their leaders involvement in sensational crimes or their kin taking law into their hand.

"Uttar Pradesh has been pushed into 'jungle raj' by the Yogi's government. Now his party legislators or their close kin are indulging in sensational crimes and taking law in their hands," Srivastava asserted

while referring to cases registered with Bhabodi, Ballia and Bulandshahr police during the last 48 hours.

Srivastava said people have not forgotten how BJP MLA Kuldeen Sengar raped a minor girl and got the father of the victim killed, another former BJP minister Swami Chinmayanand was involved in sexual exploitation of a LLM student and there were several other instances where BJP members exploited their status and committed crime with impunity.

Only on Thursday, two cases were registered against BJP MLA's sons in Bulandshahr and Ballia. He claimed that in Bulandshahr, the BJP MLA's son was booked for opening fire during a wedding ceremony despite a ban on the practice.

An FIR was lodged against BJP's Khurja MLA Vijendra Singh Khatik's son Vikas Khatik after a video of Vikas firing multiple shots from a gun surfaced on social media on Thursday.

Similarly in Ballia, BJP MLA from Bairia, Surendra Singh's son was

accused for manhandling a Dalit Revenue department official.

The official, Radheyyam Ram, registered a case against Hazari Singh and 10 others for manhandling and abusing him on Wednesday.

All accused were booked under relevant sections of the IPC and Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes (Prevention of Atrocities) Act.

Srivastava said that despite the offences being non-bailable, the police did not arrest the MLA's son for his contacts.

The Congress leader claimed that likewise in Bhabodi, local BJP MLA Ravindra Nath Tripathi and six others, including his three sons, were accused of raping a woman repeatedly for a month in 2017.

"In this case too, the local police instead of registering a case gave a free hand to the accused to terrorise the victim and get the case withdrawn. It was only after the media highlighted the issue that the police provided security to the victim but no action was taken against the accused so far," Srivastava said.

Govt to set up centre to increase population of vultures

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

Aiming to conserve near-extinct vultures and help increase their numbers, the Uttar Pradesh government will set up state's first Jatayu Conservation and Breeding Centre at Bhari-Vaisi village in Pharenda tehsil of Maharajganj.

To be developed on five hectares under Gorakhpur Forest division, the centre will be developed on the line of India's first such centre at Pinjore in Haryana.

A senior government official told The Pioneer on Friday that the centre at Maharajganj would be set up jointly by Wildlife Research Organization and Bombay Natural History Society (BNHS).

"The BNHS has prepared a Detailed Project Report (DPR), which has been sent to seek funds under the CAMPA scheme. About 60 per cent of the survey work has already been completed," he added.

engers were thriving. "A survey carried out in 2014 across 13 districts of the state put the population of vultures at 900," he said.

"The government has decided to set up the centre at Bhari-Vaisi village of Maharajganj as over 100 vultures were seen in Madhwaliya range of Maharajganj Forest division in August last year. Another flock of these birds had also been seen near a bovine protection centre set up by state government. Abandoned bovines were kept in this bovine centre. Because of being very old and weak, these cattle die very soon, and their corpses naturally attract vultures," he said.

The Indian Vulture (Gyps Indicus) found in India, Pakistan and Nepal has been listed as a critically endangered on International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) Red List since 2002, as the population severely dwindled. To protect the scavenger, the UP government had earlier proposed setting up of a Vulture restaurant in 2016 which failed to get the nod from the then Akhilesh Yadav regime.



CLASSIFIEDS

OBITUARY

OBITUARY NAIK RAJA NK 06 MAY 1982-06 FEB 2020 ALL RANKS OF ARMY MEDICAL CORPS SOLEMNLY PRAY TO THE ALMIGHTY TO BESTOW PEACE TO THE DEPARTED SOUL AND GRANT STRENGTH TO THE BEREAVED FAMILY TO BEAR THE GREAT LOSS OF NAIK RAJA NK WHO DIED WHILE SERVING WITH CH (SC) PUNE. FROM : LT GEN NAVDEEP SINGH LAMBA AND ALL RANKS OF ARMY MEDICAL CORPS

OBITUARY

OBITUARY HAV KHUNDONGBAM ANIL SINGH 03 OCT 1982-26 DEC 2019 ALL RANKS OF ARMY MEDICAL CORPS SOLEMNLY PRAY TO THE ALMIGHTY TO BESTOW PEACE TO THE DEPARTED SOUL AND GRANT STRENGTH TO THE BEREAVED FAMILY TO BEAR THE GREAT LOSS OF HAV KHUNDONGBAM ANIL SINGH WHO DIED WHILE SERVING WITH 61 FMSD. FROM : LT GEN NAVDEEP SINGH LAMBA AND ALL RANKS OF ARMY MEDICAL CORPS

# No headway in murder & loot case

Traders stage demonstration

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ LUCKNOW

The traders of Yahaganj, Rakabganj, Nadan Mahal Road, Nehru cross staged demonstration on Friday against the murder and loot at a wholesale trader's establishment at Nehru cross market on Thursday by four unidentified armed men. Meanwhile, the police failed to make any headway in the case in which employee Subhash Gupta was shot dead.

Commissioner of Police Sujeet Pandey said that six teams have been constituted and sent to adjoining districts. He said the police officials of Sitapur, Hardoi and Barabanki districts have been advised to cooperate with the Lucknow police so that the case is worked out at the earliest.

Police officials of other districts have been asked to provide the names and other details of listed criminals of their areas. Police suspect that the miscreants belong to nearby districts and might have taken shelter there, the Commissioner of Police said.

"The culprits may be professional killers as they used a sophisticated weapon. An empty shell which was found in the trader's establishment was of 38 bore," Pandey said.

The police said the incident was well-planned and it was executed in such a smooth manner that it forced them to believe that it was committed by professionals.

Intelligence experts stated that the culprits covered their faces with a black cloth and wore helmets to ensure that they were not recognised by locals. It was speculated that the culprits were familiar with local traders and residents. The registration number of the motorcycles were found to be fake and it was confirmed by the RTO.

As the markets in Rakabganj and nearby areas remained, there was little business on Friday. President of local Vaypar Mandal Amar Nath Mishra said the traders would continue to hold demonstration till the case was worked out.



Shops in Yahaganj and Rakabganj closed on Friday in protest against the murder and loot

Pioneer

# Former BSP MLA's son arrested for stabbing budding engineer to death

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ LUCKNOW

Aman Bahadur, the son of former Bahujan Samajwadi Party (BSP) MLA Shamsher Bahadur, was arrested on Friday in connection with the murder of a student preparing for B.Tech entrance in Gomti Nagar.

Prashant Singh (23) was murdered on Thursday afternoon and the incident was reportedly caught on a CCTV camera installed in the premises of Alaknanda apartment in Gomti Nagar. Prashant Singh had reportedly gone to meet his sister at the apartment complex at Gomti Nagar Extension when a group of men, who had been waiting for him, stabbed him.

The prime accused in the case, Aman Bahadur, was arrested on Friday morning. Police said they were conducting raids to nab other accused.



GOMTI NAGAR. PRASHANT SINGH (23) WAS MURDERED ON THURSDAY AFTERNOON AND THE INCIDENT WAS REPORTEDLY CAUGHT ON A CCTV CAMERA INSTALLED IN THE PREMISES OF ALAKNANDA APARTMENT IN GOMTI NAGAR

During the investigation, police recovered CCTV footage from the premises of the apartment where the murder took place. The footage showed a group of men stopping a Toyota Innova car Prashant Singh was travelling in, and attacking Prashant several times. The footage showed Prashant Singh running out of the car and entering a building. He collapsed on the stairs of the apartment complex and was later found in a pool of blood by the police.

The police have constituted three teams and sent them to Varanasi to nab four other accused involved in the murder case. The complaint was

lodged at the Gomti Nagar police by the deceased's father. The police said they were working on two theories to work out the case. The first is that the group clash was in a bid to ascertain supremacy over each other in a coaching institute where Prashant was preparing for B.Tech entrance. The youths in huge number from eastern part of UP have joined the coaching institute to prepare for competitive exams.

The other theory on which the police are working was the proximity of a group of girl students with Prashant and his accomplices. The rival group was against their mixing-up with the girls' group. There used to frequently tiffs between them but the coaching management used to sort out the dispute.

The girl students who were close Prashant will also be interrogated, if need be, the police said.

# PSO held for clubbing daughter to death

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ LUCKNOW

A head constable identified as Ved Pratap Singh (39), who was deployed as personal security officer (PSO) of the Defence Minister, was arrested late Friday evening on the charge of killing his 16-year-old daughter by beating her with a cricket bat at his official residence in Vishnupuri Colony under Vikas Nagar police station. Earlier, it was suspected that the girl had shot herself with her father's licenced revolver after she was found dead under mysterious circumstances on February 17. The head constable was also accused of making the incident look like a case of suicide due to exam phobia to save his skin.

However, the post-mortem report nailed his lies as it was revealed that she died of multiple injuries, and not due to bullet wounds. Senior sub-inspector of Vikas Nagar Hirendra Pratap Singh was tasked with conducting a probe after the post-mortem report came out.

Ved Pratap was picked up for interrogation on Thursday. On being quizzed, he confessed to his crime. He told the investigating officer that his daughter was poor in studies and not serious about examinations. On the fateful day, he called her to know about her preparations for the exams. He was annoyed after he came to know that his daughter was not prepared for the exams, and he thrashed her with a cricket bat. The police said that the girl started bleeding profusely and ultimately succumbed to injuries. The accused then took the girl to a bedroom and kept the body on the bed. He placed his service revolver and live

cartridges beside her to make it look like a case of suicide. The cricket bat was recovered from the room. The victim was a Class X student of Career Convent College in Vikas Nagar while her younger brother was a Class IX student.rat

## ELDERLY MAN MOWED DOWN BY MINI-TRUCK

An elderly man, identified as Ratan Lal, a resident of Daravnagar village in Banthra, was killed after being hit by a speeding mini-truck (HR38 Q5435) near a countrymade liquor shop in Narayanpur Harauni on Thursday night. He was rushed to the community health centre where he succumbed to injuries in the wee hours of Friday. The errant driver sped off after the mishap.

Son Shyam Kishore stated in his complaint that his father was returning home after completing his work. He worked on contractual basis at a farm-house in Beni area. He stopped for a while to rest near the countrymade liquor shop. In the meantime, the speeding

mini-truck moving in wrong direction knocked him down.

Meanwhile, with the arrest of four persons, police claimed to have busted a gang of auto-lifters and others involved in incidents of loot in trans-Gomti areas and Barabanki. Mohammad Wasiq, who was said to be the mastermind, was also arrested. Others were identified as Raman Mishra, Gyani Singh and Uma Dutt alias Guddu. Two countrymade pistols, five live cartridges and stolen motorcycles were recovered from their possession.

Three bike-borne persons were stopped by the police near main Jankipuram market late on Thursday night during a checking drive. The police grew suspicious when they failed to give convincing replies to queries. They were taken to the police station where they confessed to their crime and disclosed the identity of their master-mind as Wasiq.

On the basis of the information furnished by them, a raid was conducted at his hide-out in Jankipuram area and he was nabbed.

**UPSIDA** कार्यालय वरिष्ठ प्रबंधक, विद्युत खण्ड-प्रथम  
उत्तर राज्य औद्योगिक विकास प्राधिकरण,  
ए-1/4, लखनपुर, कानपुर

**ई-निविदा सूचना**

एलए द्वारा सूचित किया जाता है कि मुख्यालय भवन, कानपुर में स्थापित 33/04 केवी उपकेंद्र एवं 200 केवीए डीजी सेट के वारिक अनुखण अनुबंध एवं औद्योगिक क्षेत्र कुर्सी रोड, बाराबंकी में सब-डिवाइडेड प्लॉट नं 0-6 के न्यू कांसट्रक्टेड रोड पर प्रोवाइडिंग पावर लाइन्स के कार्य हेतु क्रमशः ₹ 24.81 लाख एवं ₹ 28.55 लाख बजट वाली सरकारी विभागों/सार्वजनिक उपक्रमों/निगमों/प्राधिकरणों/परिषदों/नगर निकायों में अर्ह की श्रेणी में पंजीकृत एवं विद्युत सुखा विभाग, उत्तर प्रदेश, शासन लखनऊ में श्रेणी 'क' अनुमोदित के लाइसेंस होल्डर टेकेंडरों/फर्मों से ई-निविदाये आमंत्रित की जाती है जो दिनांक 26.02.2020 को पूर्वाह्न 11:00 बजे से 16.03.2020 को सां 5:00 बजे तक एलएड की जा सकती है। जिन्हे दिनांक 17.03.2020 को पूर्वाह्न 11:00 बजे खोला जायेगा। निविदा दाताओं द्वारा शाय पत्रों की मूल प्रतियां दिनांक 20.03.2020 को सां 5:00 बजे तक कार्यालय में जमा की जा सकती है। निविदा सम्बन्धी विस्तृत जानकारी निगम की website: [www.upsida.com](http://www.upsida.com) पर स्थित ई-लिक एवं यूपीएलसी की website: <http://etender.up.nic.in> पर देखी जा सकती है। प्रबंधक, विद्युत खण्ड-प्रथम उत्तरराज्यऔद्योगिक, कानपुर

# Rain fails to dampen spirit of Shiv bhakts

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ LUCKNOW

Rains failed to deter the enthusiasm of devotees visiting Shiva temples on the occasion of Mahashivratri that was celebrated on Friday. Despite the thundering clouds and the dark skies some of the devotees could be seen visiting the temples in the wee hours but the rush increased as the day progressed.

Shiva temples across the city witnessed crowds with people offering prayers with bel patra and dhatura. The snake charmers also made rounds despite restrictions on display of snakes. There were many Shiv Barats taken out on the occasion.

Shrimati Shakuntala Sharma Foundation organised a 'Shiv Baraat' from Shiv Mandir at Top Khana Bazaar and thereafter, prasad was also distributed among the devotees after the 'Shiv-Parvati' marriage which witnessed the participation of many people from Cantonment area.

Brahma Kumari Samaj in Gomti Nagar also took out a huge march on the occasion. A member of the group said they were sending the message of Lord Shiva that one should remain stable in any situation and enjoy that situation without feeling ruffled.

There were a large number of youths at the temples to pay obeisance to the deity. Book-sellers across city said Krishna and Shiva were among the popular gods amongst the youths.

"Amish Tripathi, with his trilogy on Shiva, has made Lord Shiva extremely popular among the youths," said Manoj Chandel, the organiser of a book fair.

A grand 'Rudrabhishek hawan' and puja were held at Chandreshwar Mahadev Mandir at SKD Academy. The devotees took part in the celebrations with devotion and offered 'bel patra', 'dhatura', milk, curd, ghee, flowers and fruits to Lord Shiva.



Devotees lined up outside Mankameshwar temple and taking part in Shiv baraat taken out from Buddheshwar temple on Friday



Pioneer

# Mahashivratri gives fillip to bael conservation

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ LUCKNOW

The offering of the 'bael patra' to Lord Shiva at the time of Mahashivratri has immensely helped in the conservation of this fruit. CISH director Shailendra Rajan said 'bael patra' has helped thousands of trees in terms of survival. "Initially, small fruit-bearing bael seedling varieties were in good numbers but as people commercialised the fruit, the demand for fruits with good quality increased. The plants with bigger fruit, higher pulp content, less mucilage and seed are preferred. The development of the grafting technique in bael also helped in conserving varieties as the grafted plants give good quality fruit as the mother plant," he said.

He further pointed out that a few decades back, people had to wait till the seedling tree came in fruition. "It may be stated that till the fruiting stage of the tree, Lord Shiva protects the plant from being uprooted because 'bael patra' are regularly used by

Shiv bhakts for worship. Plants may take several years to come into fruiting but now the grafted bael plants start fruiting in five years. This has made it a commercial crop and the uncertainty of the seed's performance has gone away," he said. He added that Vastu Shastra also helped in conserving the diversity in bael.

"Bael is also considered to be auspicious for planting in the north-south direction of houses. People believing in Vastu consider it as insurance for the peace and happiness of the family. Large-scale use in Shivtrati is one of the reasons for diversity in bael and trees are still surviving in the areas where people use it for worshipping Lord Shiva. Bael leaves are sold in the market and at many places of famous Shiv temples one can see the importance of these leaves along with other flowers," he said.

He pointed out that many other plants are also benefited due to the traditional use of worshipping Lord Shiva.

"Datura, ber fruits, bhang (Cannabis) along with water are offered to Shiva Lingam. Plants are saved due to their utility for worship and people protect the plants forgetting leaf, flower, and fruit. Indian mythology has helped in conserving the diversity of many plant species from extinction. Most of these plants are not directly used in daily meals but for medicinal purposes still being used in traditional medicine," he said.

Rajan said that outside the Shiva temple, vendors selling flower, fruits, and leaves for the worship of Lord Shiva say that most of these plants are not available in big cities but still, people demand for these leaves and fruits for Shiv Puja and we get few thousand rupees by arranging from villages where still these plants can be seen.

"Although there is not much economic value of plants in the villages, these are associated with gods and goddesses but become important on the day of Shivtrati and many vendors get handsome amount

by making these things available at the cost of few rupees," he said.

He said CISH recognised the importance of this future fruit. "The requirement of grafted plants of bael is increasing. The nursery of the institute is producing a good number of grafted plants and most of them are of the varieties developed at CISH. CISH developed two bael varieties, CISH-B-1 and CISH-B-2, which are becoming popular in different parts of the country due to suitability for processing and higher yield. The institute provides information to the farmers on different aspects of bael cultivation, disease & pest control, and value addition," Rajan said.

He said that the institute has made significant contribution in popularising bael among farmers by providing the core planting material of high-yielding varieties to different nurseries, KVKs, universities and Horticulture departments for developing mother blocks.

**DHFL** DEWAN HOUSING FINANCE CORPORATION LIMITED  
National Office: HDIL Towers, B-Wing, 6th & 8th Floor, Anant Kanekar Marg, Bandra (East), Mumbai - 400 051.  
Branch office: DHFL, Dreams Mall, first Floor, L.B.S Marg, Bhandup (West), Mumbai - 400078.

**DEMAND NOTICE**

Under Section 13(2) of the Securitisation And Reconstruction Of Financial Assets And Enforcement Of Security Interest Act, 2002 read with Rule 3 (1) of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002. The undersigned is the Authorised Officer of Dewan Housing Finance Corporation Ltd.(DHFL) under Securitisation And Reconstruction Of Financial Assets And Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 (the said Act). In exercise of powers conferred under Section 13(2) of the said Act read with Rule 3 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002, the Authorised Officer has issued Demand Notices under section 13(2) of the said Act, calling upon the following Borrower(s) (the "said Borrower(s)"), to repay the amounts mentioned in the respective Demand Notice(s) issued to them that are also given below. In connection with above, Notice is hereby given, once again, to the said Borrower(s) to pay to DHFL, within 60 days from the publication of this Notice, the amounts indicated herein below, together with further interest as detailed in the said Demand Notice(s), from the date(s) mentioned below till the date of payment and/or realization, payable under the loan agreement read with other documents/writings, if any, executed by the said Borrower(s). As security for due repayment of the loan, the following assets have been mortgaged to DHFL by the said Borrower(s) respectively.

Name of the Borrower(s)/ Guarantor(s)	Demand Notice Date and Amount With NPA date	Description of secured asset (immovable property)
(LC No. 00000061 of Allahabad Branch) Sushma Singh (Borrower) Mahendra Singh (Co Borrower 1)	21-01-2020/ ₹ 1341046/- (Thirteen lakh Forty One Thousand Forty Six) NPA (01-12-2019)	Arazi No 05, Mauza Chak Ausantwari, Pargana- Arail, Tehsil- Karchhana, Allahabad, Allahabad- 211001
(LC No. 00000032 of Bareilly Branch) Deepak Bajpai (Borrower) Surendri Devi (Co Borrower 1)	21-01-2020/ ₹ 2505948/- (Twenty Five lakh Five Thousand Nine Hundred Forty Eight) NPA (01-12-2019)	House Situated On Part Of Kh. No. 328 329,330, Munshi Nagar Biharman Nagla, Bareilly, Bareilly-243001
(LC No. 00000117 of Moradabad Branch) Amit Kumar Kalra (Borrower) Gunjan Kalra (Co Borrower 1)	21-01-2020/ ₹ 1720799/- (Seventeen lakh Twenty Thousand Seven Hundred Ninety Nine) NPA (01-12-2019)	Part Of Khasra No 543, Bank Colony Shahpur Tigr, Moradabad, Moradabad-244001
(LC No. 00000674 of Yamunanagar Branch) Pramod Kumar (Borrower) Mithlesh Kumar (Co Borrower 1)	21-01-2020/ ₹ 1121843/- (Eleven lakh Twenty One Thousand Eight Hundred Forty Three) NPA (01-12-2019)	Part Of Plot No-3 Of Ploty No-98, Khasra No-23 Minjumla gaurav Vihar Colony Near Masjid, Saharanpur, Saharanpur-247001
(LC No. 00000866 of Yamunanagar Branch) Sachin Kumar (Borrower) Honey Wo Sachin Kumar (Co Borrower 1)	21-01-2020/ ₹ 1296296/- (Twelve lakh Ninety Six Thousand Two Hundred Ninety Six) NPA (01-12-2019)	Khasra No-595/1,595/32 Near Gomukhi Shiv Mandir R K Puram Colony Saharanpur, Saharanpur, Saharanpur-247001
(LC No. 00007871 of Lucknow Branch) Pavan Kumar Pandey (Borrower) Arvind Nath Pandey (Co Borrower 1) Indrawati (Co Borrower 2)	21-01-2020/ ₹ 1247810/- (Twelve lakh Forty Seven Thousand Eight Hundred Ten) NPA (01-12-2019)	Plot No. 968, Part Of Khasra No. 573, Situated At Village- Paikramau, Pargana- Mahona, Tehsil- B K T, Lucknow, Lucknow-226020
(LC No. 00005127 of Lucknow Branch) Ashish Shivharey (Borrower) Urmila Shivharey (Co Borrower 1)	21-01-2020/ ₹ 4598941/- (Forty Five lakh Ninety Eight Thousand Nine Hundred Forty One) NPA (01-11-2019)	Flat 11/201 1st Floor Type New Malhar Block No 11 Sahara Estate Jankipuram, Lucknow, Lucknow-226020
(LC No. 00000980 of Noida 1 Rajendra Place Branch) Bindal & Bindal Batteries Pvt Ltd (Borrower) Pankaj Agarwal (Co Borrower 1) Disha Agarwal (Co Borrower 2)	24-01-2020/ ₹ 45907968/- (Four Crore Fifty Nine lakh Seven Thousand Nine Hundred Sixty Eight) NPA (01-12-2019)	House No-142 Block- B Sector-50 Noida Gautambudh Nagar Uttar Pradesh 201301
(LC No. 00041090 of Lucknow- Lalbagh Branch) Koteswar Infrastructure Private Limited (Borrower) Gopal Das Agarwal (Co Borrower 1) Shashi Agarwal (Co Borrower 2) Gaurav Agarwal (Guarantor 1) Shalini Agarwal (Guarantor 2)	24-01-2020/ ₹ 64399073/- (Six Crore Forty Three lakh Ninety Nine Thousand Seventy Three) NPA (01-12-2019)	Land Khasra No 241P, 243P, 244P 168P, 170P, Ghazipur Said-UN-Nisha Lucknow Lucknow Uttar Pradesh 226001
(LC No. 00000070 of Agra Branch) Prena Constructions Private Limited (Borrower) Itendra Kumar Mangla (Co Borrower 1) Rekha Mangla (Co Borrower 2)	21-01-2020/ ₹ 7458965/- (Seventy Four lakh Fifty Eight Thousand Nine Hundred Sixty Five) NPA (01-05-2019)	Office No. F-1, First Floor, Block No. G-13- A/8, Narian Tower Sanjay Place Agra Agra Uttar Pradesh 282001
(LC No. 00003277 of Agra Branch) Baba Jihman Lal Shiksha Prasar Samiti (Borrower) Hari Shankar (Co Borrower 1) Shashi Devi (Co Borrower 2) Mohit Kumar (Guarantor 1) Renu (Guarantor 2)	21-01-2020/ ₹ 5021275/- (Fifty lakh Twenty One Thousand Two Hundred Twenty Five) NPA (01-12-2019)	Plot/Khasra No-1261 Ambedkar Nagar Gadi Jeevan Ram Mauza Naraich Agra Agra Uttar Pradesh 282006
(LC No. CPL33718 of Delhi- CP Branch) Neeraj Kasana (Borrower)	21-01-2020/ ₹ 6349962/- (Sixty Three lakh Forty Nine Thousand Nine Hundred Sixty Two) NPA (01-04-2019)	Plot No. A 19, Chuharpur Khadar, Village. Greater Noida, Greater Noida-201306
(LC No. 00041413 of Noida- Sector 2 Branch) Dheeraj (Borrower) Rampal (Co Borrower 1) Shashindra (Co Borrower 2)	29-10-2019/ ₹ 2267491/- (Twenty Two lakh Sixty Seven Thousand Four Hundred Ninety One) NPA (01-08-2019)	Flat No 503 5th Floor Tower B Gardenia Gateway(eco City) Plot No Gh 10 Sector 75, Noida,Gautambudh Nagar-201301
(LC No. 00003445 of Lucknow Branch) Shahnawaj (Borrower) Rumza Khan (Co Borrower 1)	29-10-2019/ ₹ 2127803/- (Twenty One lakh Twenty Seven Thousand Eight Hundred Three) NPA (01-08-2019)	House On Plot Part Of Plot No 12 Khasra No 3 Vill Bahadurpur Ward Shankar Purwa, Lucknow, Lucknow-226020
(LC No. 00001291 of Kanpur Branch) Anil Agarwal (Borrower) Kaveta Agarwal (Co Borrower 1)	29-10-2019/ ₹ 2418185/- (Twenty Four lakh Eighteen Thousand One Hundred Eighty Five) NPA (01-08-2019)	Flat No. 301, 3rd Floor, Block Q Sharda Apartment- 1, Premises No. 117/ Q/796, Sharda Nagar, Kanpur, Kanpur Rural-208005

If the said Borrowers shall fail to make payment to DHFL as aforesaid, DHFL shall proceed against the above secured assets under Section 13(4) of the Act and the applicable Rules, entirely at the risks of the said Borrowers as to the costs and consequences. The said Borrowers are prohibited under the Act from transferring the aforesaid assets, whether by way of sale, lease or otherwise without the prior written consent of DHFL. Any person who contravenes or abets contravention of the provisions of the said Act or Rules made there under, shall be liable for imprisonment and/or penalty as provided under the Act.

Date : 22-02-2020  
Place: UTTAR PRADESH

Sd/-  
(Authorised Officer)  
Dewan Housing Finance Corporation Limited

**NORTH EASTERN RAILWAY E-TENDER NOTICE**

On behalf of the President of India, acting through Chief Administrative Officer/Con, North Eastern Railway, Gorakhpur invites the following E-works Tenders:

**S.No.-1, E-Tender No.:** DyCE-CB-02-2020, Closing Date: 18-03-2020, Name of work: Fabrication, supply and Erection of steel structures for Cover shed (75 x 15 m.) Mechanical workshop at Izatnagar and Fabrication, supply & erection of steel structures of Foot over bridges and P.P. Shelters at any station of N.E. Railway. Approximate Value (Rs.): ₹ 3,73,07,448/-, Earnest Money (Rs.): ₹ 3,36,500/-, Cost of Tender Form (Rs.): ₹ 10,000/-, Completion Period (Rs.): 06(Six) Months.

• Bid starting date on 04-03-2020 • Last date of submission of above E-Tender up to 15:00 hrs on 18-03-2020 • Date of Opening of above E-Tender 15:30 hrs on 18-03-2020 • Detailed tender notice, eligibility, criteria, terms & conditions is available of web site <https://ireps.gov.in>. • In case any disparity arises between Hindi and English version of tender notice, English version will hold good and will be followed.

Shri Ram Awadh, XEN/Con/Br./GKP, CUG Mob. No.: 9794844274

Dy.CE/Con/Br. Gorakhpur

CPRO/W-375

About any passenger amenity complaint SMS on Mob. No. 0978454555

Do not smoke Bid/Cigarette in train.

**STORES E-PROCUREMENT**

Tender Notice No. S/36/2019, Dated: 21-02-2020 (1) All tenders have been uploaded on Indian Railways E-Procurement Portal (IREPS) : [www.ireps.gov.in](http://www.ireps.gov.in). For details & necessary guidelines for quoting against e-tender. Please visit IREPS E-Procurement portal. (2) The prospective tenderers are advised to get them registered on the website <http://www.ireps.gov.in> online. This registration is mandatory for participation in e-tendering and is free of charge. (3) Offers are to be submitted online only. Offers sent/submitted against such e-tenders through e-mail, post/fax or in person will be rejected summarily without any consideration. (4) This notice is for information during initial phase only. In future, no such notice shall be published. Vendors are requested to get registered with IREPS using e-mail [postal@www.ireps.gov.in](mailto:postal@www.ireps.gov.in) for future tenders. (5) Please submit offers online for the following materials : **SN.1: Tender No.:** 30/19/1146/OT/088/19. **Brief Description, PL No & Quantity:** Distributor valve (DV), DRG No. KB-1.2-765, Qty. - 30 Nos for Dibrugarh Town workshop Depot & 15 Nos. for Pandu GSD & 10 Nos New Bongaigaon workshop Depot. P.L. No. 33505927. **Closing/Opening date :** 16-03-2020. **SN.2: Tender No.:** 37/19/0665/OT/089/19. **Brief Description, PL No & Quantity:** Draft Gear Assembly RF-361, DRG No. RDSO Drawing No. G-100 Nos for New Bongaigaon workshop Depot. P.L. No. 38134676. **Closing/Opening date :** 16-03-2020.

PCMM, Maligaon

**NORTHEAST FRONTIER RAILWAY**  
Serving Customers With A Smile

**Constable shoots self at Reserve Police Line**

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ LUCKNOW

A police constable, Anoop Tiwari (30) of Gonda, committed suicide by shooting himself with his service revolver at his quarter in Reserve Police Line under Mahanagar police station around 10 pm on Friday.

He was attached with Justice Manish Mathur as personal security officer (PSO). He reached his quarter at 9 pm after his duty was over. After around an hour, he shot himself with his service revolver and died on the spot. The gunshot drew the attention of his neighbours who came out of their quarters, only to find Tiwari lying in a pool of blood.

He was living with wife Priti Tiwari, who is a constable and posted at Mahila Thana in Hazratganj. She was not in the house when the inci-

dent took place.

Meanwhile, police arrested two persons from Para crossing in the afternoon and recovered two mobile phones and a scooter from their possession. They were identified as Deepak Verma (23), a delivery man working with Amazon, and Kaushal Yadav (19).

The police said both were involved in an incident of violence which was reported on February 11 near Raj Estate area under Para police station. A complaint was lodged on the following day.

The police, with the help of the electronic surveillance, were managed to locate their location and was picked up for interrogation after raids were conducted at their houses. A scooter recovered from their possession was said to be a stolen one.

**Norway students intrigued by yoga, religiosity**

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ LUCKNOW

Vice-Chancellor of Lucknow University Alok Kumar Rai met an international delegation of students from Innland University, Norway, who shared their impressions about India. The foreign students said they were intrigued by yoga, religiosity and spirituality but appalled at chaos and dirt on the streets.

Rai explained how Indians have been able to survive and move ahead despite challenges. He said all that was possible because India has soul and many foreigners are able to find their soul-mates here.

HRDC director Nishi Pandey shared the significance of wearing *bindi* and *tilak* on the forehead and expressed her views on women empowerment. Earlier, the delegation had visited the department of Business Administration for an interaction with the research scholars and students of



Lucknow University. Welcoming them, senior faculty member from the department of Business Administration Ritu Narang stressed on the importance of exchange of ideas among students from different nationalities and cultural background to promote mutual understanding

and learning. 'Sanskritik' members put up dance performances, showcasing Kathak and Bharatnatyam while Rakesh Chandra explained the meaning and significance of these dances. The Norway students also regaled the audience with a dance performance which was

followed by a deliberation on 'Building Social Competence'. Various issues of national importance were raised by the students. LU's media spokesperson Durgesh Srivastava said that the issues ranged from poverty, discrimination to emerging challenge of 'technological

occupancy', mobile phones, in particular. "The Norwegian students shared experiences of their country. They explained how they have overcome discrimination in their society through encouraging people to openly raise and discuss the issue on various forums. However, some amount of discrimination still persists. A Norwegian student shared how she faced discrimination in her country for being homosexual. The delegation also provided insights into the works undertaken by their government which ensures that education and medical services are free and everyone gets equal opportunities to take admission to colleges of their choices on the basis of merit. They also said that Norway doesn't face the problem of poverty as their government works on making sure that enough employment opportunities are provided," Srivastava said.

**Middle-aged couple battered to death; 8-mth-old daughter hurt**

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ LUCKNOW

A middle-aged couple was battered to death and their eight-month-old daughter was critically injured after they were attacked in Mainpuri while in Aligarh, a man was fatally stabbed by a kin over a money-related dispute.

In Mainpuri, Vighnesh Verma (40) of Nijampur area of Kurawali used to live with his wife Geeta (38). The childless couple recently adopted an eight-month-old girl child of one of their kin.

On Friday morning, their neighbours heard cries of the girl and when they went into the house to enquire, they were shocked to find the bodies of Vighnesh and Geeta lying in a pool of blood. The girl child also had injuries. The couple had been hit with blunt objects on their heads. The villagers later informed the Korawali police

**8-year-old struck by lightning, dies; two other kids injured**

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ LUCKNOW

Plucking 'bael patra' to sell it on the occasion of Mahashivratri proved fatal for a kid in Kaushambhi as he was struck by lightning. Two others were also injured.

As per reports, some children from Seghraha hamlet of Pashchim Sharira were plucking 'bael' leaves to sell it along with flowers outside temples on the occasion of Mahashivratri on Friday. As they were busy plucking leaves during a drizzle early Friday morning, lightning struck the tree, leaving three kids with critical injuries.

They were rushed to district hospital by the villagers where Heeralal Pal's son Satyam (8) was pronounced

dead upon arrival while the condition of Brijesh Pal's son Ankush Pal (7) and Bhani Pal's son Abhal Pal (7) was stated to be critical. They were later referred to Moti Lala Medical College in Prayagraj for further treatment.

Meanwhile in Banda, a couple was killed when a speeding jeep crushed them while the man was going to drop his wife at her parent's home on Thursday night. As per reports, Radhey Shyam (44) of Girwan in Banda was going to drop his wife Raj Kumari (40) to her parent's home for celebrating Maha Shivratri. While they were crossing Mahua hamlet late on Thursday night, a speeding jeep suddenly their bike as a result the couple died on the

spot. The errant jeep driver fled the scene with the vehicle. The couple had four children and who were staying with Rajkumari's parents. A case was registered and efforts were underway to identify the vehicle and arrest the driver.

Meanwhile in another mishap in Banda, 10 devotees were injured, four of them seriously, when a truck carrying them overturned in neighbouring Fatehpur district on Friday. The devotees were returning after visiting a temple when the mishap took place. The truck driver tried to overtake another vehicle near Azmatpur village of Lalauli police station when it turned turtle. The injured were later admitted to a government hospital.

**Play on Lord Ram an example of Ganga-Jamuni tehzeeb**

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ LUCKNOW

A play on Lord Ram, to be staged on February 24, is a perfect example of Ganga-Jamuni tehzeeb as the director and actors belong to the Muslim community. Also, the play highlights the contribution made by several other communities apart from Hindus in worshipping Lord Ram during the times of Nawabs.

The play titled 'Avadh Ke Ram' will be staged at Sant Gadge auditorium. It is written by SN Lal and directed by Nawab Masood Abdullah and SN Lal. Abdullah said that the play has a flavour of Ganga-Jamuni tehzeeb of Avadh because the writer, directors and even the actors are Muslims.

"The character of Lord Ram is played by Shabbir Hasan 'Ali Sagar' while Muni Bahardwaj by Elyas Hashmi, Nawab Wajid Ali Shah by Nawab Masood Abdullah, Nawab Asaf-ud-Daulah by

Rahul Dubey, and Rani Ganeshkwanri of Orcha by Nida," he pointed out. Masood Abdullah said that the play has 35 artistes altogether and also the costumes, set and music of that era. "The Ramayana was officially translated into Persian under the orders of Mughal Emperor Akbar and included 165 coloured paintings of important events. Many other translations of the holy book were made during the Mughal period highlighting the commonalities between Quranic verse and shlokas from the Ramayana. In order to give full force to the phrase 'Ganga-Jamuni' tehzeeb, the Nawabs of Avadh whole-heartedly participated in religious functions organised by their subjects professing different faiths. Famous poet Nazeer Akbarabadi often recited devotional poems regarding Diwali. Just before the First War of Independence in 1856 when Nawab Wajid Ali Shah was deposed by the British and

taken to Matia Burj under custody, his Hindu subjects also used to offer prayers of Ram Chandra for their monarch's safety," Abdullah said.

He said that all the above-mentioned events have been meticulously dealt with in the play which was conceptualised by Nawab Jafar Mir Abdullah, and completed with relentless efforts of 35 artistes. The set, costumes and music are according to the period and the programme is being presented under the tutelage of Athar Nabi. Before the play, eight persons will be given the prestigious 'Nishan-e-Urdu Award' for their contribution in different fields.

The play covers a period of 7,000 years of Sri Ram Chandra and Avadh and highlights the events of Sri Ram presenting a town known as Laxmanpur to his younger brother Laxman, composition of Ramayana by Maharishi Valmiki and Ramcharitmanas by Tulsi Das.

**कार्यालय अधिशासी अमित्यन्ता, विद्युत जानपद खण्ड, केरको, आरपीओ एनओ, कानपुर ई-निविदा सूचना**

द्वितीय भाग में दूर एवं व्यवसायिक शर्तें होंगी। विना धरोहर धनराशि के तथा सशर्त निविदाये खोली/स्वीकार नहीं की जायेगी। निविदा खुलने की तिथि को अवकाश घोषित होने पर निविदाये प्रथम-प्रथक दो भागो निविदाये अगले कार्य दिवस में नियत समय पर खोली जायेगी। अखिलेखित कुशल ठेकेदारों से ई-निविदा के ई-निविदाओं की पूर्ण प्रक्रिया केरको समूह दर्शित कार्यों हेतु यू.पी.एन. आई.सी., केरको की ई-टेंडरिंग वेबसाइट [etender.up.nic.in](http://etender.up.nic.in) / [www.kesco.co.in](http://www.kesco.co.in) के माध्यम से की जायेगी। प्री-क्वालीफाइंग शर्तें पुरान करने वाले निविदादाताओं को निविदा पर विचार नहीं किया जायेगा। निविदा का द्वितीय भाग (Price-Bid) को प्री-क्वालीफाइंग शर्तों के प्रपत्रों की जांच के उपरान्त अपलोड की जा सकती है। आनलाइन ही खोला जायेगा। कार्य सम्बन्धित ई-निविदा के प्रथम भाग को उसी दिन 12:00 बजे के उपरान्त वेबसाइट पर आन लाइन सार्वजनिक कारण बताया किसी एक अथवा रूप से खोला जायेगा। ई-निविदा के समस्त निविदाओं को स्वीकार/समूह वर्गित निविदा प्रपत्र की अस्वीकार करने का पूर्ण अधिकार धनराशि का भुगतान आन लाइन सुरक्षित होगा। 1. (क) अल्पकालीन (आरटीओजीएएसओ नेट बैंकिंग के ई-निविदा संख्या-40/सी/2019-माध्यम से) और नकद/बैंक ड्राफ्ट (ख) केरका हाउस, केरको मुख्यालय के रूप में स्वीकार किया जायेगा। 2 (क) अल्पकालीन (नेट बैंकिंग के माध्यम से) केरको ई-निविदा संख्या-41/सी/2019-के बैंक खाते में खाता सं नं 628805018266 IFCSC को नकद/बैंक ड्राफ्ट का विस्तारोकरण एवं ICIC0006288 आरटीओजीएएसओ/अन्य रिनोवेशन कार्य। कार्यावधि एनईओएफओटी / बैंक गारंटी/ 1600+18% जीएएसओटी अतिरिक्त जायेगी तथा बैंक में जमा का साध्य धरोहर धनराशि ₹ 23000.00 निविदा यथा योज्य यूटीओआर संख्या, पे-इन रिस्फ मूल को प्रति बैंक गारंटी की तिथि-16.03.2020, खुलने की अंतिम मूल प्रति (इश्यूइंग बैंक के कन्फर्म-मेशन मेल की प्रति) ई-टेंडर के प्रपत्रों के साथ आनलाइन अपलोड दिनांक 20.02.2020, "राष्ट्रहित में प्रस्तुत की जायेगी। निविदा के

station after which senior officers rushed to the spot. While the two bodies were sent for autopsy, the injured girl was admitted to district hospital where her condition was stated to be serious.

During investigation, the cops recovered an axe with blood stains on it. The cops said that they were trying to figure out the motive behind the killing and denied loot as a possible motive as the killers did

not touch any valuables in the house. Elsewhere in Aligarh, Jani aka Zafuruddin and his nephew Babloo used to live on rent in the house of Ram Kumar Gupta in Baraula Jafarabad area of Bannadea, the two used to work for Max Ford Company.

On Friday morning, Jani and Babloo had a tiff over a money-related dispute which took an ugly turn. In the

process, Babloo picked up a knife and screw driver and repeatedly stabbed Jani several times killing him on the spot. Hearing cries of help, some neighbours rushed to their room and shifted Jani to a nearby hospital where doctors pronounced him dead upon arrival. A case was registered and Babloo was taken into custody. Investigations were on to confirm the murder motive.

**Curtains on EMSI conference**



PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ LUCKNOW

Curtains came down on the 44th annual conference of Environmental Mutagen Society of India (EMSI) with the valedictory function presided over by IITR director Alok Dhawan. The chief guest on the occasion was Gareth J Jenkins from Swansea University (UK) while the guest of honour was PK Seth. Awards were also given away for the best oral presentation in the Young Investigators session and to the three best posters on display during the Poster session.

Alternatives to the use of animal models for mutagenesis studies was the theme of the first session on day 3 of the conference at IITR. Delivering the keynote lecture titled 'Improving Cancer Diagnostics Using an Empirical Assay to Assess Genome Sensitivity', Diana Anderson from the University of Bradford (UK) said that in spite of several

detection tests being developed for different cancers, there is no single test to detect cancers in general. She said that the results so far are suggestive of the repeatability and relevance of the method as a diagnostic tool for cancer detection. Continuing the scientific deliberations, D Kar Chowdhuri stressed on the increasing role of environmental chemicals in causing DNA damage and repair deficiency. The final session of the conference focused on molecular mechanisms of mutagenesis and carcinogenesis. Neera Tewari Singh from Michigan State University (USA) described the molecular mechanisms involved in skin injuries due to alkylating chemicals while Bushra Ateeq from IIT- Kanpur reiterated the role of androgen receptor mediated pathways in prostate cancer progression, among others. The scientific sessions were followed by a panel dis-

cussion chaired by former CEO of Biotech Park PK Seth and Qamar Rahman from Amity University. The panelists discussed the impact of xenobiotic mediated mutagenesis on human health and the challenges that the scientific community is faced with, in early detection and amelioration of these changes. Jenkin's laboratory has developed a novel method to screen for mutations in PIG-A gene using patient blood samples. The method is simple, rapid and cheap, therefore offer many advantages. He said that diagnosis and detection of cancer is useful for the effective management of disease. Another session on 'Environmental mutagens and human health risk' was chaired by renowned cancer immunobiologist and president of Environmental Mutagen Society of India KB Sainis, and chief scientist (IITR) D Parmar.

**Cane commissioner wary of locust attack, wants farmers to be aware**

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ LUCKNOW

Due to the information of locust (grasshopper) outbreak in some states, Commissioner of Cane and Sugar (UP) Sanjay R Bhoosreddy issued instructions to all departmental officers and scientists of Sugarcane Research Centres to carry out awareness campaigns among farmers to protect cane crop from pests in the state.

Bhoosreddy said that locusts attack in a flock and devour green leaves of any kind of vegetative plants rapidly and in high quantity. "Since its activity increases in less water, drought and summer, special caution is required during summers," he said. "Locusts breed and grow in winter (from November to December), spring (from January to June) and summer (from July to October). Locust outbreaks have been reported in border areas of UP. To avoid locust raids, it is necessary to constantly survey and monitor so

**"To avoid locust raids, it is necessary to constantly survey and monitor so that in they could be prevented from spreading in the state and wreak havoc"**

that in they could be prevented from spreading in the state and wreak havoc," he said. Bhoosreddy instructed officials for close monitoring of the possibility of occurrence of the pest, and warn farmers on a priority and ensure awareness about locusts. "Once that is done, we could adopt the principle of 'prevention was better than cure and necessary protective measures could be taken in time to protect the cane crop," he said.

The Cane Commissioner also appealed to cane farmers

to closely monitor locust outbreaks while visiting their fields. "If locusts are spotted in cane fields, spray insecticides like Chlorpyrifos 20 percent EC, Chlorpyrifos 50 percent EC, Bendiomethrin, Fipronil and Lambda immediately," he advised. "To ensure immediate preventive measures, cane farmers should inform concerned institutions of Government of India and also inform Cane Development Department immediately," he said. Regional and district officers have also been allocated targets based on area to keep watch regularly and to visit villages continuously to make farmers aware and take adequate precautions to thwart any possible attack of locusts.

"Officials have been instructed to distribute pamphlets, handbills and publish pest prevention measures in newspapers, write pest prevention measures on walls of all offices and warehouses and convey information to all farmers," Bhoosreddy said.

**DELHI JAL BOARD: GOVT. OF N.C.T. OF DELHI OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER (CENTRAL)-I NEAR UGR & BPS RAMLILA GROUND JLN MARG, NEW DELHI-110002.**

**PRESENIT NO. 72 (2019-20)**

S. No.	Name of Work	Estimate Cost in Rs	Date of Release of tender on e-procurement solution	Last Date/Time for receipt of tender through e-procurement Solution
02	Improvement of old and damaged 600mm dia Peripheral sewer line from MCD School, Turkman Gate to gali Sapru under EE(Central)-I, AC-21. (Re-invite)	₹ 33,15,803.00	21/02/2020 06.00 PM onwards Tender ID : 2020_DJB_188446_2	04/03/2020 upto 03:00 PM

Further detail in this regard can be seen at <https://govtprocurement.delhi.gov.in> ISSUED BY P.R.O (WATER) Advt. No. J.S.V. 852(2019-2020)

**SCHOOLSCAN SCHOLARSHIP**

Anushka Singh, a student of City Montessori School, Aliganj Campus I, has been offered admission with scholarship by three prestigious universities of USA and UK. She has been offered admission by the New York University with a scholarship of US\$ 86,800 for the entire study period of four years. University of Glasgow and Durham University (UK)

have also offered her admission with scholarship. C M S Founder Jagdish G andhi congratulated her on the achievement and praised the teachers for their hard work and encouragement.



Women continuing their protest against CAA, NRC and NPR at Hussainabad Clock Tower in Lucknow

# NEP in works again: Rollout delay likely

DEEPAK KUMAR JHA ■ NEW DELHI

The ambitious National Education Policy (NEP) has gone into the works yet again to specifically address some key contentious issues, and this could result in a further delay in its implementation despite the Government's plans to table a Bill in this regard in the current Budget Session of Parliament.

In a review meeting a couple of days ago, sources said, the Prime Minister's Office asked the HRD Ministry to rework on certain issues in the draft NEP before being finalised and brought in the Union Cabinet for its approval.

Sources said that the PMO went through every detail in the NEP and while seeking clarifications also directed to make the necessary changes both in the higher education and secondary education seg-

ments. "The HRD Ministry will now have to amend the NEP policy document on a war footing to seek Cabinet approval as the PMO has desired that the NEP be brought in during the current Budget Session of Parliament," sources said.

In the wake of controversy over language in State education system, the PMO suggested that NEP should not impose any language on the States but at the same time ensure that the existing three-language formula is continued.

While the NEP draft has talked about bringing the pre-primary education from age three onwards within the purview of the HRD Ministry, the PMO said that the existing system of early childhood education be continued with Women & Child Development (WCD) Ministry.

It said this should be reworked with age group 3-5

years being under the WCD Ministry and five years onwards under the HRD Ministry. The PMO is also learnt to have asked the HRD Ministry to omit the clause of State regulatory bodies for schools as objections have been reported to the PMO by the States.

The PMO also raised doubts as to why there are four channels in higher education regulations which seem to be complicated and there has to be one overarching body of the higher education regulator.

On the issue of restructuring of higher education regulatory system, NEP advocates for a National Higher Education Regulatory Authority (NHARA) as regulator and recommends three independent bodies working simultaneously - General Education Council (GEC) for academic standards, the National Assessment &

Prime Minister's Office asked the HRD Ministry to rework on certain issues

Accreditation Council (NAAC) for accreditation functions and the third one Higher Education Grants Council (HEGC) for funding.

A new NEP has been the ruling BJP's agenda in every manifesto and soon after coming to power in May 2014, the Modi government promised to transform educational system with a new NEP. The last NEP was revised in 1986.

Two former HRD Ministers - Smriti Irani and Prakash Javadekar - formed their own committees to draft the NEP. While Irani tasked T.S.R. Subramanian Committee to suggest recommendations for the policy, Javadekar rejected the Subramanian panel's report and disbanded the committee and formed another chaired by former Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) chief K. Kasturirangan. The committee began work on the policy in July 2017.

# Pak remains in FATF grey list

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Financial Action Task Force (FATF), the Paris-based international global terror financing watchdog, on Friday decided continuation of Pakistan in the 'Grey List' and warned it of stern action if it fails to check flow of money to terror groups like the Lashkar-e-Tayyiba (LeT) and Jaish-e-Mohammad (JeM).

The decision taken in the FATF plenary session also warned Islamabad that if it does not complete a full action plan by June this year, it could lead to consequences on its business, sources said here.

Already facing a grim economic and financial scenario, Pakistan will not be able to access loans from the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank, Asian Development Bank (ADB) and the European Union if the FATF takes any tough action after the June deadline is not complied with.

The plenary noted that Pakistan addressed only a few of the 27 tasks given to it in



controlling funding to terror groups like the LeT, JeM and the Hizbul Mujahideen, which are responsible for a series of attacks in India. The FATF said Pakistan has to swiftly complete its full action plan by June, the source said.

If Pakistan fails to abide by the FATF directive, there is every possibility that the global body may put the country in the 'Black List' along with North Korea and Iran.

India has all along stressed the point that Pakistan extends regular support to terror groups like the LeT, the JeM and the Hizbul Mujahideen, whose prime target is India, and has urged the FATF to take

action against Islamabad. Pakistan is believed to have received strong backing from Malaysia but failed to impress western nations due to India's consistent efforts by providing materials and evidence on Pakistan's inaction to check funding to terror groups operating from its soil.

Pakistan needed 12 votes out of 39 to exit the 'Grey List' and move to the 'White List'. To avoid the 'Black List', it needs the support of three countries.

The 'Grey Listing' came three days after a sub-group of the FATF recommended continuation of the country in it. The FATF meeting, from February 16 to 21, was held a

week after an anti-terrorism court in Pakistan sentenced Hafiz Saeed, the mastermind of the 2008 Mumbai attack and founder of the LeT, to 11 years in two terror financing cases.

The Pakistani court's judgment came ostensibly to please the FATF and western countries so that the country can exit the 'Grey List'.

Saeed, 70, a UN designated terrorist on whom the US has placed a USD 10 million bounty, was arrested on July 17, 2019, in the terror financing cases. He is lodged at the high-security Kot Lakhpat jail in Pakistan.

Pakistan has also recently informed the FATF that JeM founder Masood Azhar and his family are "missing." It has claimed that there were only 16 UN designated terrorists in Pakistan, of which "seven are dead."

Out of the nine who are alive, seven had applied to the UN for exemption from financial and travel restrictions. In the last month's FATF meeting in Beijing, Pakistan got support of Malaysia and Turkey besides FATF current chair China.

## INSHORT

### KHULBE, SINHA APPOINTED ADVISERS TO PM MODI

New Delhi: Retired IAS officers of 1983-batch Bhaskar Khulbe and Amarjeet Sinha have been appointed as Advisers to PM Modi. The Appointments Committee of the Cabinet has approved the appointments in the PMO in the rank and scale of Secretary, a government order said. Khulbe was from the West Bengal cadre and Sinha was from the Bihar cadre.

### GOM DISCUSSES CHANGES IN JUVENILE JUSTICE ACT

New Delhi: A Group of Ministers (GoM), headed by Union Home Minister Amit Shah, held a meeting on Friday and is believed to have discussed about the proposed amendments in the Juvenile Justice Act. Those who attended the GoM meet were - Law Minister Ravi Shankar Prasad, External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar, Women and Child Development Minister Smriti Irani, Health Minister Harsh Vardhan and Food Processing Industries Minister Harsimrat Kaur Badaul.

### CONG FINALISES OFFICE BEARERS OF AP UNIT

New Delhi: The Congress on Friday finalised office bearers for its Andhra Pradesh unit by appointing 11 vice presidents and 18 general secretaries, and made former CM Oommen Chandy the party's State coordination committee head.

### CONG SLAMS BJP OVER BHAGWAT'S REMARKS

New Delhi: The Congress on Friday attacked the BJP and the Sangh Parivar over RSS chief Mohan Bhagwat's remarks, saying if they would have understood Mahatma Gandhi's nationalism then the need for distancing themselves from nationalism would not have arisen.

# Bomb blast in Pak, earthquake in Nepal as grounds for lawyers' strikes irk SC

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Strikes by advocates for "flimsy reasons", like bomb blast in a Pakistan school and earthquake in Nepal, on all working Saturdays for more than the past 35 years in three districts of Uttarakhand has caught the attention of the Supreme Court which rapped them for resorting to such a "joke".

The issue came to the notice of the apex court while it was hearing an appeal against the verdict of the Uttarakhand High Court which had held as "illegal" the strikes or boycotts of court work on all Saturdays by lawyers in Dehradun and in several parts of Haridwar and Udham Singh Nagar. In its September 25, 2019 verdict, the high court had referred to the 266th report of

the Law Commission, which had analyzed data on loss of working days on account of strikes by lawyers and had opined that it affects functioning of courts and contributes to the ever mounting pendency of cases.

As per information sent by the high court to the Law Commission with respect to Uttarakhand for 2012-2016, advocates were on strike for 455 days during this period in Dehradun district, followed by 515 days in Haridwar district.

Referring to the Law Commission's report, the high court had noted that strikes by advocates or their abstinence from courts varied from local, national to international issues, having no relevance to the working of the courts, and

were seldom for justifiable reasons. "To mention a few, bomb blast in a Pakistan school, amendments to Sri Lanka's Constitution, inter-state river water disputes, attack on/murder of an advocate, earthquake in Nepal, condoling the death of near relatives of advocates, expressing solidarity to advocates of other state bar associations, moral support to movements by social activists, heavy rains.

And even for kavi-sammelans," the high court had noted in its verdict. The appeal against the high court's verdict came up for hearing before a bench of Justices Arun Mishra and M R Shah on Thursday. "This is happening everywhere in the country. This is a fit case to initiate suo motu contempt.

# SC larger Bench to revisit 2010 verdict in Lalu Prasad DA case

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court has decided to revisit its 2010 verdict in the disproportionate assets case of former Bihar Chief Minister Lalu Prasad Yadav in which it had held that the State Government has no authority to file an appeal against acquittal in cases probed by central agencies.

The issue cropped up as the Chhattisgarh Govt had to rush to the apex court in 2011 challenging the acquittal of Amit Jogi, the son of former Chief Minister Ajit Jogi, in a 2003 murder case as the CBI had not filed the appeal within the stipulated period.

However, during the inter-judgment, the apex court's three-judge bench in 2010 had delivered a verdict in the Yadav DA

Chhattisgarh Govt doubted correctness of the 2010 verdict in Lalu's case

case that the CBI, which was the prosecuting agency in the fodder scam, had the right to challenge the orders of the subordinate court and the State Government had no locus standi. When Jogi's matter came up last week in the apex court, the Chhattisgarh Government doubted the correctness of the 2010 verdict in Yadav's case and a bench of Justices SK Kaul and KM Joseph directed that the matter be referred to a larger bench.

"Counsel for the State of Chhattisgarh seeks to doubt the judgment of this Court in Lalu Prasad Yadav and others versus State of Bihar and others, which

is of a three-judge bench," the bench said. "We are thus of the view that it may be appropriate that the matters be placed before a three-judge bench itself so as to avoid further duplication of the hearing. The matters be thus, placed before Chief Justice of India for appropriate directions," it said.

Advocate Sumeer Sodhi, appearing for the Chhattisgarh Govt, said that the apex court's judgement in the Lalu Prasad Yadav case is per incuriam (bad in law).

He said the 2010 judgement needs to be reconsidered as it affects the substantial rights of all States to file an appeal against acquittal of an accused in a case investigated and prosecuted by the Central Bureau of Investigation or any other central agency.

## INDIA & MALDIVES

# Shah hold talks with Sheikh Imran Abdulla

PNS ■ NEW DELHI



Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Friday held deliberations with his Maldivian counterpart Sheikh Imran Abdulla during which they discussed ways to further strengthen the ties between the two countries. "Met Mr. Sheikh Imran Abdulla, Home Minister of the Republic of Maldives. Held extensive discussions on ways to further deepen and strengthen ties between India and Maldives," Shah tweeted after the meeting.

According to a Home Ministry statement, during the meeting, the two sides discussed issues of mutual interest in the area of security and law-enforcement cooperation. Welcoming the strengthening of the India-Maldives partnership, the ministers appreciated the expansion of bilateral cooperation in diverse

fields including policing and law enforcement, counterterrorism, counter-radicalisation, organised crime, drug trafficking and capacity building, the statement said. Abdulla is on a four-day visit to India since Thursday. The meeting was also attended by Union Home Secretary Ajay Bhalla and other senior officers from both sides.

# Kerala Guv: People sitting on roads, disrupting normal life

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

In an indirect criticism of Shaheen Bagh protesters, Kerala Governor Arif Mohammad Khan on Friday said people sitting on roads and disrupting normal life to force their opinion on others is a form of terrorism.

Speaking at the 'Bharatiya Chhatra Sansad', Khan said that aggression was reflected not just in violence but in other forms too. He said people blocking roads and disrupting normal life to voice their opinion is another form of terrorism. "Dissent is the essence of democracy. There is no problem with that but five people sit outside the Vigyan Bhawan and say we shall not move from here unless this parliament of students adopts a resolution which we would like them to adopt-- that is another form of terrorism," Khan said.

Since Parliament passed the Citizenship

(Amendment) Act (CAA) in December last year, a number of protests have taken place across the country, including the one at Shaheen Bagh in the national capital, against the contentious law and a proposed nationwide National Register of Citizens (NRC). On Monday, the Supreme Court observed that the blockade of road at Shaheen Bagh was "troubling" and suggested that the protesters go to another site, where no public place would be blocked. The top court, however, upheld their right to protest.

Referring to anti-CAA protesters reading the Preamble of the Constitution across the country, Khan said, "Honestly, I am very happy that people have started reading the Preamble of the Constitution. What does the Preamble say? It talks of liberty of thought, expression, belief, faith and worship. Do not confuse things. Do not try to impose your thoughts in the name of (freedom of speech and) expression on to others."

# Haath mein Samvidhaan, dil mein Waris Pathan: BJP

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The BJP on Friday alleged that AIMIM leader Waris Pathan's "inflammatory" remarks shows the conspiracy going on in the name of anti-CAA protest and questioned the "silence of liberals" opposing the law.

Addressing a Press conference at the BJP office here, party spokesperson Sambit Patra said, "I want to ask all the so-called liberals, who have been opposing CAA, why are they silent on his remarks. It also indicates that ladies who are sitting in Shaheen Bagh are just being used as a shield to further the cause of hatred."

"No one from these liberal brigades is making an issue of the divisive comments made by Waris Pathan. All of them are the same. Haath mein Samvidhaan, dil mein Waris Pathan (Constitution in hand, Waris Pathan in the

heart)," Patra said. Addressing an anti-Citizenship Amendment Act rally at Kalaburagi in North Karnataka on February 16, the All India Majlis-e-Ittehad-ul-Muslimeen (AIMIM) leader asserted that 15 crore Muslims can prove to be heavy on the other 100 crore.

Patra said Pathan's remarks actually shows the conspiracy which goes behind the walls of these people to defame the government and disturb peace of the country. He said had some BJP leader made similar remarks, then other political parties and their leaders would have come out on the streets in protest.

A video going viral during the day also showed a woman in the rally of AIMIM chief at Bengaluru purportedly shouting slogans in favour of Pakistan and being removed by the police.

# 3D fabricated model exhibition on famous monuments on till Feb 23

ARCHANA JYOTI ■ NEW DELHI

Five world-renowned Indian archeological wonders - Taj Mahal in Agra, Kashi Vishwanath temple, Konark Sun Temple in Odisha, Rani Ki Vav (stepwell) in Gujarat and the ruins of Hampi in Karnataka have virtually come alive here at an exhibition at the National Museum here.

Trained in state-of-the-art technologies, Vizara Technologies, a startup under the incubation of IIT Delhi in collaboration with the Department of Science and Technology has created accurate 3-dimensional models of these five most important archaeological sites in India, allowing for detailed study by archaeologists and future preservation.

A virtual treat particularly to the tech-savvy visitors at the museum, the exhibition which is on till February 23, 2020 showcases 3D fabricated models of the famous monuments with interactive virtual walk-throughs and projection mapping, and a room-scale 3D model of a Hampi Temple, with augmented reality (AR),

## Virtual walk-throughs and projection mapping

- ◆ Interactive virtual walk-throughs and projection mapping, and a room-scale 3D model of a Hampi Temple, with augmented reality (AR), virtual Reality (VR) and holographic interactions
- ◆ These installations combine multiple technologies, which can be used by a visitor to interact with the physical models and experience personalised, realistic virtual walk-throughs of each of these heritage sites, and get information about their various facets
- ◆ The exhibition on digital conservations termed it a rare public showcase of digital preservation work undertaken in India

virtual Reality (VR) and holographic interactions.

Dr Anupma Malik, CEO of Vizara Technologies explained that these installations combine multiple technologies, which can be used by a visitor to interact with the physical models and experience personalised, realistic virtual walk-throughs of each of these heritage sites, and get information about their various facets.

Under the project, damaged historical monument and

extinct art forms like dance are being conserved for the future generation.

The process includes laser scanning and mapping of the monument and preparation of digital format of the monuments on the basis of the available historical facts information. For instance, 3D model of Rani Ki Vav, an engineering marvel, showcases entire stepwell, intricately carved walls, detailing the terraces that lead to the well.

Union Minister of Science and Technology Dr Harsh Vardhan who had visited the exhibition on digital conservations termed it a rare public showcase of digital preservation work undertaken in India.

"The exhibition serves as a bridge between the past and future and will make aware the next generations about the rich cultural values and architectural techniques; this will help the new generation to learn the move forward in conserving monuments," he added.

The research conducted as part of the Indian Digital Heritage (IDH), initiative of DST, aims to develop indigenous technologies to digitally preserve Indian heritage, by focusing on the UNESCO world heritage site of Hampi, Karnataka as an illustrative example.

Teams from various cultural and scientific institutes such as IIT Delhi, IIT Bombay, CSIR-CBRI Roorkee, National Institute of Design, Bengaluru worked together to identify research problems such as how to restore fading murals that could reveal more about social life in the past.

# Rajnath lays foundation of 'Thal Sena Bhawan'

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Defence Minister Rajnath Singh on Friday performed the stone-laying ceremony, 'Bhoomi Pujan', for the proposed 'Thal Sena Bhawan' of the Army in Delhi Cantonment which will bring together various pockets of the Army headquarters spread across Delhi under one roof. At present, nearly eight offices of the Army are spread all over the national capital.

Observing that there is movement of about 3,000-4,000 vehicles every day from the various Army establishments in the city, Singh said this would be not required once the 'Thal Sena Bhawan' comes and would significantly reduce fuel consumption, expenses and pollution. "The new sena building will ensure they can work under one roof," he stated. The new Thal Sena Bhawan will be spread over 39 acres and the building will be completed in five years.

Singh also said the newly created Department of Military Affairs (DMA) headed by the Chief of Defence Staff (CDS) will also work from here. "This will help in jointness," he added.

The seven-storeyed complex is designed "like a rising



Defence Minister Rajnath Singh unveils a plaque during the foundation stone laying ceremony of the Thal Sena Bhawan in Delhi Cantt, New Delhi on Friday. Army chief General Manoj Mukund Naravane (to Singh's left) is also seen

sun." Singh said "we have laid the first stone of the new Sena Bhawan. This (stone) will not reach the top, but it is the first stone. And, it will represent the unsung heroes of the armed forces who have sacrificed their lives for the country."

The proposed Thal Sena Bhawan will bring all Army HQ offices under one roof thereby improving the working efficiency, while reducing the carbon footprint and logistics requirements, Army Chief Gen

Manoj Naravane said adding it will also allow more family time for all personnel tenating peace posting at Delhi.

The 'Thal sena bhawan' spread opposite Manekshaw centre in Delhi Cantonment will bring together Army headquarters split in eight pockets across Delhi. Presently, Army Headquarters is split into eight pockets across South Block, Sena Bhawan, Hutments Area, RK Puram, Shankar Vihar and other places, the Army said. The work was sanctioned to

make up the existing deficiency of 44% and also to accommodate the Army Headquarters in one place.

It is conceptualized as a multistorey green building adopting Green Rating for Integrated Habitat Assessment (GRIHA) norms and will house offices, residential area for security personnel and basic amenities.

Approximately 7.5 Lakh square meter of area will be constructed to house the office complex and parking. A total of 6,014 offices will be constructed which will house offices for 1,684 officers both military and civilian and 4,330 sub staff, the Army said. The proposed work will generate minimum 2 Lakh hours of skilled and unskilled work. There will be parking for 4,000 cars, sources said.

The Army Chief will continue to sit in South Block in close proximity to the Defence Minister and the present Army HQ 'Sena Bhawan' will continue to exist though some functions would be shifted to the new complex. The cost of the new project is about Rs 700 crores.

The present Army Headquarters is situated near South Block on the Raisina Hill.

CAA-NRC-NPR

PRO-PAK SLOGAN ROW

# Sedition charge slapped against woman

## Woman held for holding 'Kashmir Mukti, Dalit Mukti' placard in Bengaluru

**Woman had links with Naxals: BSY**

**Bengaluru:** A young woman who raised pro-Pakistan slogans at an anti-CAA rally here last evening has been booked for sedition and remanded to judicial custody, police said on Friday.

Karnataka Chief Minister BS Yediyurappa said the woman had links with Naxals. In a related development, security was provided at the home of the woman, Amulya Leona, in Chikkamagaluru district, after it was attacked, allegedly by right wing workers.

Officials said some people had targeted her home on Thursday evening and the window panes were damaged.

Amulya had raised 'Pakistan Zindabad' slogans thrice after the organisers, under the banner of "Save the Constitution", invited her to

address the gathering in the presence of All India Majlis-e-Ittehadul Muslimeen (AIMIM) chief Asaduddin Owaisi, on Thursday.

After being removed from the stage, she was arrested on charges of sedition and produced before a magistrate's court, which remanded her to 14 days judicial custody.

Her father Wazi also called for action against her as per the law, saying she has made an "unforgivable mistake."

On Friday, Yediyurappa said: "Importantly, the organisations that are behind people like Amulya and nurturing them, if we don't take action against such organisations, such things won't end."

Speaking to reporters in Mysuru, he said prima facie it was clear there was an conspiracy going on to disturb law and order with such incidents. "If organisations that are behind her are inquired into, things will come out. It is clear she had links with Naxals in the past. In this backdrop, she should be punished and action taken against organisations that are behind her," he said.

The Chief Minister noted that the girl's father himself has said she should be punished and not get bail and that he would not seek protection for her.

City Police Commissioner Bhaskar Rao said "making a statement somewhere is different, but calling someone for a stage event and for them to make divisive comments, is it right?"

Action would be taken against the organisers, he said, Adding that those calling people for such events should take

responsibility and them playing a 'drama' about their non-involvement in such incidents, is not acceptable.

"Because the matter is so sensitive, anything can happen any time," he said.

"We have been trying to maintain peace for three months in that it has become a competition to create a law and order situation," he added.

Home Minister Basavaraj Bommai said all angles, including the woman's posts on Facebook, would be looked into, including if any organisation was behind her.

"Let's look into what comes out of the investigation and accordingly action will be taken..." he said, as he hit out at the opposition for "supporting" such elements and asked them to function responsibly.

Amulya's father Wazi said action should be taken against her in accordance with law, so that she corrects herself.

"It is an unforgivable mistake, she has caused pain to Indians. I'm deeply disturbed....Action should be taken against her in accordance with law. She is around 19, we will have to find out why she said it and who is behind it," he said.

"She is a bright girl...I have tried to tell her not to involve herself in such activities after I got to know she was involving in anti-CAA, anti-NRC protests and complete her education first," he said.

Meanwhile, a video of a group of people, allegedly right wing activists, last evening, purportedly questioning Wazi about his daughter's conduct and making him raise "Bharat Mata ki Jai" slogans has gone viral. On the other hand a purported Facebook post of

Amulya on February 16 has surfaced in which she has said 'Zindabad' to several neighbouring countries and that doing so does not make her belong to them.

"Hindustan Zindabad, Pakistan Zindabad, Bangladesh Zindabad, Sri Lanka Zindabad, Nepal Zindabad, Afghanistan Zindabad, China Zindabad, Nepal Zindabad... Whichever country it may be, Zindabad to all countries," said the post in Kannada.

Some people who are said to be Amulya's friends have claimed she was about to raise Zindabad slogans naming various countries as mentioned in the Facebook post before she was stopped by people around her on the stage.

However, others rejected such claims, pointing out that she had said Pakistan Zindabad thrice.

Bengaluru: A day after pro-Pakistan slogans were raised by an agitator at an anti-CAA event here, a young woman was arrested on Friday for holding a 'Kashmir Mukti (liberation), Dalit Mukti, Muslim Mukti' placard at a counter protest in the city, police said.

A case had been registered against her for offences under the Indian Penal Code, including creating enmity between different groups of people against the woman, identified as Arudra, they said. "We have registered the case suo moto (on their own) for creating enmity between different groups of people," Deputy Commissioner of Police Chetan Singh Rathore said.

The woman was produced before a city court judge, who

remanded her to 14 days judicial custody till March 5.

Holding the placard with the slogans, Arudra was spotted sitting among the participants of the protest, organised by the Hindu Jagaran Vedike against Amulya Leona, who had shouted "Pakistan Zindabad" on Thursday. She was escorted out of the place as protesters asked her to leave and crowd started gathering, city police chief Bhaskar Rao had said.

"She was taken into custody for her own safety along with the placard... We will find out her background, where she has come from and who are behind her among other things," Rao had earlier told reporters, adding she did not raise any slogan.

## ROW OVER WARIS PATHAN SPEECH

### AIMIM to seek explanation from Pathan for his remarks

PTI ■ AURANGABAD

The All India Majlis-e-Ittehad-ul-Muslimeen (AIMIM) will seek explanation from its leader Waris Pathan over his alleged '15 crore Muslims can be heavy on 100 crore' remark he recently made in Karnataka, a party leader said here on Friday.

Pathan had made the purported remarks while addressing an anti-Citizenship (Amendment) Act (CAA) rally at Kalaburagi in North Karnataka on February 16.

"We have to move together. We have to take Azadi (freedom), things that we don't

get by asking, we have to take it by force, remember it... (We may be) 15 crore, but are heavy on 100 (crore), remember it," Pathan can be heard purportedly saying in a video of his speech that has gone viral.

Talking to reporters here, AIMIM's Maharashtra unit chief and Aurangabad MP Imtiaz Jaleel said, "Our party does not support the statement made by Waris Pathan. The party will seek an explanation from him over the remarks." "If needed, we will come out with a set of dos and don'ts for the party workers to be while giving speech," he said.

# AIMIM, BJP two faces of same coin: Congress

## Sena capable of giving a befitting reply to Pathan: Raut

TN RAGHUNATHA ■ MUMBAI

All India Majlis-e-Ittehadul Muslimeen (AIMIM) leader Waris Pathan's '15 crore (Muslims) will prove to be too much for 100 crore (Indians)' statement continued to dominate political discourse in Maharashtra on Friday, with the Congress condemning Pathan and charging that AIMIM and BJP 'are two faces of the same coin'.

Five days after Pathan made controversial remarks at an anti-CAA rally at Kalburgi in north Karnataka, the Shiv Sena and Raj Thackeray-led MNS also hit out Pathan for his hate speech.

Condemning Pathan for his "15 crore..." statement, Maharashtra Pradesh Congress Committee

(MPCC) general secretary Sachin Sawant said: AIMIM and BJP are two faces of the same coin. It has been repeatedly established that the two parties indulge in division of the society on religious lines. Extreme views held by the people of any religion are dangerous for the country. We have to oppose both the AIMIM and BJP."

Sawant compared Pathan's statement with the "divisive statements" made deliberately from time to time Union Home Minister Amit Shah, Minister of State for Finance Anurag Thakur, UP Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath, BJP leaders Giriraj Singh and Parvish Verma.

"Per se it appears like both the AIMIM and BJP have come together and chalked out the divisive agenda. Their agenda is aimed at eroding the foundation of social amity and secularism enshrined in the Constitution. Even in the past organisations like Muslim League, Hindu

Mahasaabha and RSS used to work in tandem to accomplish their common agenda," Sawant said.

"Despite speaking against each other in open forums, Hindu Mahasaabha and Muslim League shared power. They had also opposed Quit India movement and supported the British," he said.

Shiv Sena MP and spokesperson Sanjay Raut warned Pathan that despite being in power in Maharashtra, his party was party was capable of giving a befitting reply to Pathan and AIMIM.

Alluding to a pro-Pakistan slogan raised by a woman at an anti-CAA rally in Bengaluru, Raut said: "The matter does not end someone (Asaduddin Owaisi) disowning someone's slogans. On your (Asaduddin Owaisi) stage, if a woman comes and raises a slogan then it means that you have contributed to vitiating the environment in your way."

In a recorded statement, MNS leader Bal Nandgaonkar said: "Waris (Pathan) had become an MLA by mistake. You have not made your '15 crore crore.' statement after applying your mind. If you continue to indulge in this kinds, we will smack you in your back and you will not know what has happened to you"

"Hindustan ke Musalman is mitti se pyaar karne wala hai aur Woh hamare hain (the Muslims who love this country are ours). You are talking about Muslims who have illegally immigrated to India. How these Muslims are related to you?, If you talk like this, we will not allow to live Byaculla or anywhere in Maharashtra. In that case, you will have to go and livewith Owaisi," Nandgaonkar said.

It may be recalled that at an anti-CAA rally held at Kalburgi in north Karnataka on February 16, Pathan had said: "We have to move togeth-

er. We have to take Azadi (freedom), things that we don't get by asking, we have to take it by force, remember it".

"Now time has come, we are told that we have sent our mothers and sisters in the front and were sitting covered in blanket... Only our lionesses have come out and you are already sweating. Understand what will happen if we come together. (We may be) 15 crore, but we will prove to be too heavy on 100 (crore), remember it," Pathan had said. A video clip of this portion of Pathan's speech has gone viral media since then

On his part, Pathan defended himself by saying that his remarks made at Kalburgi rally five days ago have been quoted out of context. "I wish to reiterate that I can never say intentionally or unintentionally things that hurt the sentiments of any caste, community or gender. I am a proud Indian and respect the plurality of the country," he said in a statement.

## India paying price for not sending Muslims to Pak: Giriraj

**Patna:** The country is paying the price for failure to send Muslims to Pakistan and bring Hindus to India after the Islamic state came into being at the time of Independence, Union Minister Giriraj Singh has said, triggering a fresh controversy.

The BJP leader made the remark in Purnea district in the Seemanchal region of Bihar which has a sizeable Muslim population and where the Begusarai MP was canvassing in favor of the Citizenship (Amendment) Act.

Highlighting the need for such a legislation, he told reporters late Thursday "when our forefathers were fighting for Independence from British rule,

Jinnah was pushing for the creation of an Islamic state".

"Our forefathers, however, committed a mistake. Had they ensured that all our Muslim brothers were sent to Pakistan and Hindus brought here, the need for such a move (CAA) would not have arisen. This did not happen and we have paid a heavy price for it," the outspoken BJP leader said.

The CAA, which seeks to fast-track granting citizenship to non-Muslim refugees from Pakistan, Bangladesh and Afghanistan who might have fled their home countries because of religious persecution, has become a major bone of contention since it is feared that a country-wide National Register

for Citizens (NRC) may follow.

The Narendra Modi government, which had formerly hinted that a country-wide NRC was on the anvil, seems to have put it on the backburner though a section of citizens across the country, especially Muslims, have been organizing protests out of fear that, if implemented, the NRC may result in a large number of people becoming stateless. Singh has often been in the crosshairs of the opposition for placing his foot in the mouth. This time, however, his words were frowned upon even by NDA ally Lok Janshakti Party, founded by his cabinet colleague Ram Vilas Paswan and now headed by his son Chirag Paswan.

The young LJP chief, who kicked off a state-wide "Bihar First-Bihari First" yatra here Friday morning, to project the NDAs progressive face ahead of the assembly polls due later this year, expressed strong disapproval of Singh's utterance and noted the coalition had to suffer in the Delhi polls because of "divisive" remarks by BJP leaders.

"We are an NDA constituent but many times our coalition partners say things which the LJP does not at all agree with. This one (Giriraj Singh's statement) is such an example. Had a person of my party spoken in this fashion, I would have taken responsibility and acted," Paswan said.



Muslim women form a human chain to protest against CAA, NRC and NPR in Kolkata on Friday

## Mizoram's NRC-like Bill awaits Centre's nod

**Aizawl:** The Mizoram Maintenance of Household Registers Bill, 2019, which seeks to identify illegal immigrants and genuine residents of the State, is pending with the Centre for approval, Chief Minister Zoramthanga told the Assembly on Friday.

Zoramthanga said the State Government will continue to make efforts to ensure that the bill received the Centres consent.

"The bill is with the Centre and is yet to be approved," he told the House. The bill is pending clearance by the Union government for about a year after it was introduced by the chief minister and passed by the Assembly on March 18, 2019.

The NRC-like bill was then sent for assent of the state governor, who

referred it to the Centre as it involved detection of illegal immigrants, a subject under the Centre's jurisdiction, an official said.

While introducing the bill Zoramthanga had said its enactment will help the state government identify illegal immigrants and genuine residents.

He had said that influx of infiltrators into the state through its porous borders has been a matter of serious concern for several decades. In many cases, the benefits of the government's welfare programmes could not reach the targeted beneficiaries and were appropriated by illegal immigrants who clandestinely stayed back and mingled with the local population.

## Will be friend for Muslim community forever: ADMK

PTI ■ CHENNAI

Amid continuing protests by Muslims over CAA, NRC and NPR in Tamil Nadu, the ruling AIADMK on Friday sought reassure the community, saying it will not allow anything that would harm minorities and charged its arch-rival DMK with trying to create confusion through false propaganda.

The K Palaniswami Government has also written to the Centre that certain information and documents like Aadhaar should be avoided in the upcoming Census, the party said, in an apparent reference to apprehensions being raised over certain aspects of the National Population Register process.

"No injustice will be meted out to any minority brother and sister in Tamil Nadu. The government will not allow any activity against minorities.

AIADMK will be a true friend for the Muslim community forever," a party statement said appealing for maintaining communal harmony.

The statement by top AIADMK leaders Deputy Chief Minister O Panneerselvam and Chief Minister K Palaniswami comes in the backdrop of latest round of protests here and some other parts of the state against the amended citizenship law, NPR and the national register of citizens.

Among others, a massive protest was held here on Wednesday in which thousands of Muslims, including women, took part and urged the state assembly to adopt an anti-CAA resolution in the session that ended on Thursday.

Besides, Old Washermenpet in north Chennai has been witnessing protest by Muslims and others over the CAA, NPR and NRC since February 14 and been dubbed as

"Chennai's Shaheen Bagh" in the social media.

AIADMK Coordinator Panneerselvam and Joint Coordinator Palaniswami in their joint statement said the NPR was formulated during the Congress-led UPA government in 2010, in which the DMK was a key constituent.

The government was keen on protecting the country's sovereignty, supporting schemes taken up "as per" court directives and maintaining cordial ties with the Centre and neighbouring states as much as possible for Tamil Nadu's welfare, they said.

It has written to the Centre that information like mother tongue, parentage, spouse's birthday and place and documents like Aadhaar and voter ID, besides mobile number "should be avoided" during the 2020 Census, the leaders said.

## AMU teachers angry with Adityanath's statement against varsity students

**Aligarh (UP):** The AMU Teachers Association has taken a serious umbrage at Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath's allegation that over 15,000 varsity students protesting against CAA on December 15 last year had wanted to burn the Aligarh city.

While speaking on the Motion of Thanks to the governor's address in the Uttar Pradesh Assembly on Wednesday, the chief minister had said, "I had alerted the Aligarh administration after the violence at Jamia Millia Islamia university. There were 15,000 stu-

dents of AMU, who took to streets, wanted to burn Aligarh city but their game plan was averted by an alert police, Adityanath had stated.

The AMU teachers described the Chief Minister's statement as 'highly irresponsible' and 'travesty of truth'. In a letter to the President of India, the AMUTA secretary, Prof Najmul Islam, on Thursday demanded that the chief ministers statement should be expunged as he has tarnished the image of a leading institution of higher education without verifying facts.

## After Didi ke bolo, BJP to launch bolo programme

SAUGAR SENGUPTA ■ KOLKATA

The Bengal BJP is likely to match Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee's 'Didi ke bolo' (tell the elder sister) programme with a similar 'BJP ke bolo' (tell the BJP) initiative apparently to reach out to the masses ahead of the civic elections likely to be held sometime in April-May this year.

The elections to 107 municipalities and corporations are being considered as the semi-finals before the next year's Assembly elections.

When contacted the State BJP leaders said the proposed 'BJP ke bolo' was not similar to 'Didi ke bolo' curriculum as the first one was being organized to read

the people's mind and their issues while the second one was launched basically to handle the corruption charges against the State's numerous Trinamool Congress cadres.

The BJP leader said the people will be provided with a helpline number so as to enable them to call and register their grievances. A senior BJP leader said the party will work towards resolving those issues.

The programme will start as a pilot project where only BJP workers in the 107 municipalities will be asked to register feedback of the masses. Subsequently a statewide toll free number will be launched for the people, sources said.

Being the second such mass outreach programme after the "cha chakra Diliper songe (tea party with Dilip Ghosh)" "BJP ke bolo" initiative is likely to expand the party's public outreach. Through this programme the party will be able to understand the people's problem and promise them solutions in its manifesto sources said.

"Ours is a public relations exercise whereby we will try to understand the people's problems and their demands whereas Didi ke bolo was launched to deflate the grievances from the people's minds that had piled up against the corrupt hierarchy of the TMC.

"It was also used as a device

to segregate Mamata Banerjee as a cult from the TMC workers apparently with a message that the workers were thieves and the TMC chief was honest," said a State BJP leader.

Apparently conceived by TMC's poll consultant Prashant Kishore, Didi ke bolo was a handle to assuage people's ruffled feelings against the TMC Government by providing them instant relief from their problems.

For this telephone numbers were given to the people to contact the Chief Minister with their grievances which were then to be addressed within days if not hours. Incidentally Didi ke bolo had become a huge hit in the State the result of which was witnessed

in the three Assembly by-elections in the where the TMC bounced back with huge margin defeating the BJP.

The saffron outfit had won 18 out of 42 seats from Bengal in the last year's parliamentary elections. With anti-incumbency factor playing a major role in the TMC debacle Didi ke bolo clearly played a big role for the ruling party to stage a comeback, experts said. When contacted TMC general secretary and Minister Partha Chatterjee alleged that BJP was trying to copy the Chief Minister adding "howsoever they copy they will because Mamata Banerjee is a mass leader with credibility and the BJP has no public face."

## IIT-KGP ranked second among Indian higher education institutes

**Kolkata:** IIT Kharagpur in West Bengal has been ranked second among higher educational institutes of India in the "Times Higher Education Emerging Economies Ranking 2020".

The Indian Institute of Technology has been ranked 32nd in the overall global ranking, a jump from the 55th rank last year, the IIT-KGP said in a statement on Friday.

The Indian Institute of Science (IISc), ranked 16th globally, is India's top-ranked institution.

On the rise in ranking, IIT KGP Director Prof V K Tewari said, "In the recent past, we have taken measures to maintain a globally competitive faculty-student ratio while ensuring best-in-class quality." The Jadavpur University in Kolkata is

ranked third among all the state-run universities in the country and first among all such universities in the Eastern region, the JU said here.

No other State-run university from the Eastern zone has been able to make the cut, it said.

A JU professor said the institute has always got higher berths in different rankings due to its high academic standards in the domain of scientific research and excellence in different fields.

A total of 56 Indian universities appear in the full ranking of a total of 533 universities across emerging economies of the world.

Eleven institutes of India featured in the top-100 list.

# 26 tigers missing from Ranthambhore park: MP

PTI ■ JAIPUR

Claiming that 26 tigers were missing from Ranthambhore National Park in Rajasthan, BJP MP and member of the National Tiger Conservation Authority (NTCA) Diya Kumari has written to the Union Environment Minister, demanding a high level inquiry in the matter.



adaisial".

Kumari, in a letter to Environment, Forest and Climate Change Minister Prakash Javadekar, said a report has been submitted to the state government, stating that 26 tigers are missing from the park, which is located in Sawai Madhopur district.

She demanded a high level inquiry in the matter. The MP also stated in her letter that the attitude of officials concerned and authorities of the park was "half-hearted and lack-

"A national park is supposed to conserve the endangered animals and not lead to the decrease in their numbers," she said in her letter, written on Wednesday.

She also said the poachers must be identified, caught and strict action must be taken against them to prevent recur-

rence of incidents.

Earlier, on Monday, BJP MLA Chandrabhan Singh Aakya had also raised the issue of missing tigers in Ranthambhore during Zero Hour in the assembly. Manoj Parashar, chief conservator of forest, Sawai Madhopur, could not be contacted for comments.

# Gehlot: Make imp info related to preventive healthcare part of school curriculum

Jaipur: Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot on Friday directed officials to make important information related to preventive healthcare part of school curriculums under the Government's 'Nirogi Rajasthan' campaign.

The State Government's vision behind the campaign is to make everyone aware about living a healthy lifestyle, he said while chairing a meeting to review the campaign.

It is for the first time that a State Government has introduced a programme on preventive healthcare which will motivate people to stay fit and healthy, the Chief Minister said. Gehlot directed the officials to make information related to preventive healthcare a part of school curriculums and to introduce a 'Nirogi Rajasthan' helpline so that people can consult experts on health issues.

The Chief Minister said that under the campaign, the government will conduct a digital health survey of people and also reviewed the progress of new medical colleges coming up in the state. State Health Minister Raghu Sharma, Chief Secretary DB Gupta and other officials were present in the meeting. **PTI**

# Rijiju: Tech has changed learning, teaching methods

Chennai: Technology has changed education in a great way in recent years with learning and teaching methodology also undergoing changes, Union Minister of State for Youth Affairs and Sports Kiren Rijiju said on Friday.

Delivering the second convocation address of the Rajiv Gandhi National Institute of Youth Development at nearby Sriperumbudur, he also underlined the role of youths and parents in the nation's development.

About the changes the field of education had seen, he said, "In recent years, we have witnessed huge difference in education. Technology has greatly changed education, not only the learning methodology but teaching methodology too."

Rijiju highlighted the several schemes introduced by the Union government under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

He said there were several initiatives taken by the Centre for creating a New India, which is not possible without the involvement of youngsters and educational institutions like RGNIYD. **PTI**

# Koregaon-Bhima judicial panel urged to summon Pawar

Pune: The Koregaon-Bhima judicial inquiry Commission has received an application seeking summoning of NCP president Sharad Pawar in view of certain statements made by him in the media about the 2018 caste violence near here.

Sagar Shinde, a member of the Vivek Vichar Manch, a social group, on Thursday filed the application before the panel through his advocate Pradip Gawade, seeking that Pawar be asked to depose before the two-member commission.

In his plea, Shinde cited a press conference of Pawar held on February 18. As per the application, at the press meet Pawar alleged that right-wing

activists Milind Ekbote and Sambhaji Bhide had created a "different" atmosphere in Koregaon-Bhima, located on outskirts of Pune city, and its vicinity.

"In the same press conference, Mr Pawar also alleges that the role of Pune city police commissioner is doubtful and must be investigated. These statements are within the purview of the terms of reference of this commission and therefore they are relevant," Shinde said the plea.

The applicant said he has reasons to believe Pawar has relevant and additional information, apart from what he has already shared in his earlier

affidavit filed before the panel regarding the violence and other related matters.

"Therefore, in the interest of justice, this applicant makes a prayer to the commission to issue a summons to Mr Pawar and require him to depose in person and furnish additional information he has so that the commission can arrive at its findings in a just and fair manner," he said.

Pawar had, on October 8, 2018, filed an affidavit before the commission, headed by former Bombay High Court Chief Justice J N Patel. Former Maharashtra chief secretary Sumit Mullick is the other member of the judicial panel.

The former Union minister, in his affidavit, had stated, "I would not be in a position to factually point out the chronology of the said events as that would be the domain of the existing Law and Order machinery." He had also stated, "I would not be in a position to specifically make allegations against any particular organisation.

"However, it is unfortunate that the state government and law and enforcement authorities failed to protect the interest of the common man residing at Koregaon Bhima and its vicinity." Pawar's party is now a key constituent in the Shiv Sena-led government in the

state. The commission was set up when the BJP was in power in Maharashtra.

The former chief minister had further stated the active role of "right-wing" forces behind the violence at Koregaon Bhima can not be ruled out. However, concrete evidence in this regard can be gathered only by law enforcement agencies of the state, he had said in the affidavit.

Gathering of anti-social elements in large numbers at Koregaon Bhima indicated the failure of law enforcement agencies, the NCP leader had told the panel.

"Hence, the state of Maharashtra has to own the

responsibility of a failed law and order situation on January 1, 2018," he had stated.

On January 1, 2018, violence had erupted in Koregaon Bhima and nearby areas during the 200th anniversary celebrations of the Koregaon-Bhima battle.

The commission was constituted by the then BJP government to find out what led to the violence.

The Pune police have alleged "provocative" speeches given at the 'Elgar Parishad conclave', held on December 31, 2017, triggered the violence. According to the police, Elgar Parishad conclave organisers had links with Maoists. **PTI**

# Gehlot Govt has no control over crime: Min on Nagaur

Jaipur: Union Minister Arjun Ram Meghwal on Friday said the Ashok Gehlot-led Congress Government is unable to rein in crime in Rajasthan and held it responsible for the Nagaur incident where two Dalit men were beaten up and tortured for allegedly stealing money.

Meghwal, along with party legislators Madan Diwalar and Mohan Ram, reached Nagaur on Friday and met with the victims. He also visited the spot where the incident took place on Sunday.

"The Chief Minister is holding the portfolio of home minister but there is no control over crime and the Government is responsible

for the incident," Meghwal, the minister of state for heavy industries and public enterprises, said.

"There was also a failure on part of the police because they could not get to know about the incident when it happened," he added.

The Dalit men were beaten up, stripped and tortured by staffers of a motorcycle service agency in Karanu village 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 dipped a piece of cloth wrapped on a

screwdriver in petrol and inserted it in the private parts of one of the victims.

Meghwal, the MP from Bikaner, accused police of manipulating the case. He also alleged that the victims were under pressure.

"We met the victims and also visited the place where the incident occurred," he said.

The delegation of the BJP leaders also visited the Panchodi police station where an FIR regarding the incident has been registered.

Meghwal said an inquiry report of the party delegation, which he was heading, will be submitted to the BJP's state president in Jaipur on

Saturday. Police have so far arrested seven persons in connection with the case. "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 had said on Thursday.

Section 308 of IPC (attempt to commit culpable homicide) was also been added in the FIR. The arrested accused have been identified as Bhim Singh, Idaan

Singh, Hanuman Singh, Raghuvver Singh, Chhail Singh, Chhatar Singh and Rehmatullah.

Director General of Police Bhopendra Singh said in Jaipur that the matter was being investigated thoroughly and none will be spared. He said the IG Human Rights has been sent to Nagaur to monitor the investigation. Rashtriya Loktantrik MLA Narayan Beniwal also visited the victims at their village.

A delegation of the Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP) met the DGP and handed over him a representation demanding justice for the victims and also government jobs for them.

# Dewan Housing chief Wadhawan gets bail

Mumbai: A special court here on Friday granted bail to Kapil Wadhawan, chairman and MD of Dewan Housing Finance (DHFL) who is accused of having dealings with dead gangster Iqbal Mirchi in the past.

The ED moved Bombay High Court seeking a stay on the special court's order but withdrew the petition when told that Wadhawan had already been released from jail. Kapil Wadhawan (46) was arrested on January 27 by the Enforcement Directorate under the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA).

## US PLANNING TO INK PEACE DEAL WITH TALIBAN ON FEB 29

They will "build on this fundamental step to deliver a comprehensive and permanent ceasefire and the future political roadmap for Afghanistan," he said.

The US top diplomat said that challenges remain, but that progress made so far "provides hope and represents a real opportunity. The United States calls on all Afghans to seize this moment".

Meanwhile Pakistan on Friday welcomed the proposed US-Taliban agreement, hoping that all parties would now seize this historic opportunity to bring a comprehensive and inclusive political settlement for durable peace and stability in the war-torn Afghanistan and the region.

Pakistan's Foreign Office said the country has consistently supported direct negotiations between the US and Taliban. "From the outset, Pakistan has facilitated this process and contributed to its progress thus far. We look forward to the signing of the agreement on February 29, 2020," it said.

## ITBP BOSS STARTS 100-KM MARCH TO PROMOTE 'FIT INDIA'

Other trekking areas covered by Deswal are Auli Tapovan (Highest point: 13,000 ft, Distance: 35 km), Puri-Konark Sea Beach (52 km), Gangotri-Gaumukh-Tapovan- (15,000 ft, 46 km), Dhanushkodi, Tamil Nadu (32 km) and Alwar (42 km).

The rural trek route in Bikaner and Jodhpur districts being covered by Deswal on Monday and Tuesday will entail a journey of 100 km in 24 hours. Deswal's accomplishments in the

last one year range from over a dozen long route trek routes from the Himalayas to the sea shores. He walks with short time staging points. He walks at a speed of 4 to 5 KM per hour. "The DG never uses lift in multi-story buildings at Force Headquarters and motivates others for the same. He walks with the in-service courses of Inspectors General and Deputy Inspectors General throughout the stretch of 42 km around the training academy," a senior official said.

The DG is undeterred by the forces of nature. He started his trekking in Mussoorie at 5 am in the morning when the temperature was minus one degree. He is known to begin the trekking sessions in the Himalayas early in the morning around 4 am, Pandey said, adding such a case of leading by example by the Force's chief is an important motivational factor for the rank and file of the paramilitary.

## VHP MODEL TO BE TWEAKED FOR A GRANDER MANDIR

The height of the proposed temple could also be increased to 160 feet from 125 feet decided earlier by the VHP, he said.

The proposed Ram Temple is expected to be built in Lord Vishnu's favourite octagonal shape and its structure will be made completely with stone without the use of iron in the elevation. Approximately 1.75 lakh cubic feet stone will be required to build the temple. The temple construction work can take over three years, the sources said.

The VHP's map proposes the temple to have a length of 270 feet, breadth of 135 feet and height of 125 feet. Every floor will have 106 pillars and will be supported by 185 beams. The temple doors will be made of

## FROM PAGE 1

wood and will be attached to marble frames. While the ground floor will have a Ram idol, the first floor will house a Ram Darbar. There will also be a garbha graha (sanctum sanctorum) with a sitting area for the priests. The temple will have five entrances -- the Sinh Dwar and at the Nriya Mandap, Rang Mandap, pooja kaksh (prayer area) and garbh graha (sanctum sanctorum).

President of the Shri Ram Janmabhoomi Teertha Kshetra Mahant Nriya Gopal Das and three other members called on the Prime Minister at his residence here on Thursday and invited him to visit Ayodhya for the 'bhumi puja'.

Though a date for the ceremony is not finalised it is widely believed that construction ceremony (bhumi puja) is expected to be conducted on Ram Navami day - April 2.

Describing it as a courtesy meeting, Rai said the Prime Minister also said nothing should be done to disturb the atmosphere of the country.

The Vishwa Hindu Parishad is also working on celebrations for a 'RamoUtsav', in the run-up to Ram Navami, from March 25 till April 8. VHP workers will reach out to all 2.75 lakh villages which had contributed for the Ram Janmabhoomi movement, the organisation's members said.

## 30 SQUATS TO EARN YOU FREE PLATFORM TICKET

It added that the Indian Railway Stations Development Corporation Ltd (IRSDC) has provided these facilities at the Anand Vihar railway station.

Besides, passengers can now also avail the facility of air-conditioned waiting Hall by paying a nominal charge of Rs.20 for first two hours and thereafter Rs10 for every subsequent

hour. The waiting hall has been provided with cushioned chairs, LED TV and snack bar. Non-AC waiting halls are also been upgraded by providing LED TV and snack bar.

## UDDHAV ALLAYS CAA, NPR APPREHENSIONS AFTER MEETING MODI

The Congress and the NCP are reportedly miffed over the Chief Minister's stand on NPR and CAA. He also said the Prime Minister had assured him of extending all cooperation to the Maharashtra Government.

After Modi, Uddhav met Congress interim president Sonia Gandhi at her residence at 10, Janpath. In his meeting with Sonia, Uddhav is believed to have told the Congress president not to pay any heed to rumour about stability of the Government and assured her that the Shiv Sena-NCP and Congress alliance regime will last full five years.

Sources said Sonia also sought to know the Shiv Sena views on CAA, NRC and wanted that there should be clarity on them.

Uddhav also conveyed to the Congress leadership about the berths going to fall vacant in the Rajya Sabha and that there should be a separate meeting of top leaders to discuss the representation of the alliance in the upper house.

Before the meet, senior Shiv Sena leader Sanjay Raut played down Thackeray's interaction with Modi. "Yes, Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray will meet PM Modi. This is only a meeting, nothing else should be read into it. Jai Maharashtra," he tweeted in Marathi.

Barely months after the Shiv Sena, Congress and NCP formed a Government in Maharashtra, rifts among the three alliance partners have come to the surface. Contrary to the

NCP and Congress's stand on the Citizenship Amendment Act and the National Population Register, Uddhav Thackeray earlier this week extended his support to the two exercises.

"The CAA and the NRC (National Register of Citizens) are different and NPR is different. No one has to worry if the CAA gets implemented," he had said.

"The NRC is not there and will not be implemented in the State... The Centre has not discussed NRC as of now," he added.

Nationalist Congress chief Sharad Pawar, who had a crucial role in bringing together the Sena and the Congress, said on Tuesday they will discuss the matter with Uddhav Thackeray's party and bring it on the same page. "We will convince the Sena," he said. Another point of disagreement in the Maharashtra alliance is the Elgar Parishad case, which has been handed over to the National Investigation Agency. Pawar has claimed the case was transferred the day State Ministers met police officers.

Shortly after Pawar's remarks, Thackeray tweeted that he will ensure a related probe into the Koregaon-Bhima violence is not taken over by the Centre.

Over the last few weeks, there have been some awkward moments in the Maharashtra coalition after Chief Minister Uddhav asserted that he did not see anything wrong with implementing the national population register. It is a stand that contradicts the Congress position, which counts the population register as the big step towards the National Register of Citizens.

Several States ruled by non-NDA parties have already declared that they will not implement the population register. Congress leaders have indicated that it would be embarrassing if the Maharashtra Government goes ahead to implement NPR.

**CENTRAL ORGANISATION FOR RAILWAY ELECTRIFICATION**  
Office of the Chief Administrative Officer (RE)  
1, Nawab Yusuf Road, Civil Lines, Allahabad-211001

**E-Tender Notice No. ELCORE-T-PMC-EPC-5-Group** Date: 17.02.2020

**E-TENDER NOTICE**

On behalf of the President of India, Chief Administrative Officer (RE), Central Organization Railway Electrification, Nawab Yusuf Road, Civil Lines, Allahabad-211001 invites following E-TENDER.

**Name of Work:** Project Management Consultancy Services for Railway Electrification work (in EPC Mod) of Design, supply, erection, testing and commissioning of 25kV, 50 Hz, single phase electrification works (OHE, TSS, SCADA & Electric General, S&T and Civil Engineering works) in Dharmaram-Pakala section (Gr.-263), Nandyal-Yerraguntla section (Gr.-264), Lingampet Jagatyal-Nizamabad section (Gr.-265), Gadwal-Raichur section (Gr.-266), Pimpalkutti-Mukhed & Prabhani-Parli Vajinath section (Gr.-267), Purna-Akola section (Gr.-268) and Parli Vajinath-Vikarabad section (Gr.-269) (EPC-5 groups) of South Central Railway Under Railway Electrification Project, Secunderabad 1416 TKM/1217 RKM).

Tender Type	Open	Bidding System	Two Packet System
Tender Closing Date & Time	31.03.2020 15:00 hrs.	Pre-Bid Query/Conference Date & Time	02.03.2020 11:30 hrs.
Advertised Value (₹)	38,60,54,185.80	Tender Doc. Cost (₹)	10,000.00
Earnest Money (₹)	22,04,000.00	Validity of Offer (Days)	60
Pre-Bid Required	Yes	Period of Completion	30 Months

**Note:** 1. The complete information of above E-Tender and Tender document are available on IREPS website i.e. [www.ireps.gov.in](http://www.ireps.gov.in). 2. Only E-Bids shall be accepted against above Tender. The e-bids may be submitted before 15.00 hrs. on tender closing date.

**Chief Administrative Officer (RE)**  
No. PR/237/2020 Central Organization For Railway Electrification, Allahabad  
R.D. Adv For & on behalf of President of India

**"Serving Customers with a Smile"**

**NORTH CENTRAL RAILWAY, ALLAHABAD**

E-Tender No. ALD-Sig-138-2019-20 Dated: 17.02.2020

**E-TENDER NOTICE**

Senior Divisional Signal & Telecommunication Engineer /Coordination/North Central Railway/ Allahabad, for and on behalf of the president of India, Invite E-TENDER on prescribed form for the following works up to 12.00 hrs. on 11.03.2020. The details of the Tender is as under :-

S/N	Tender No.	Name of Work	Approx cost of work (₹)
1	ALD-Sig-138-2019-20	"Provision of Cable Shifting, From KAA-MNR to facilitate construction of RCC boundary wall by Engg. Dept. to prevent CRO & tress passing".	6101416.40

Earnest Money (₹): 122000/-, Cost of Tender Form (₹) : 5,000/-, Completion Period : 06 months, Date of Opening of tender : 11.03.2020

2. Availability of tender form: Tender forms are available on [www.ireps.gov.in](http://www.ireps.gov.in) 21 days prior to date of opening of the tender 3. Earnest Money to be deposited: The prescribed amount of Earnest Money as mentioned above must be deposited along with the tender form Online through Internet Banking or Online Payment gateway only. The tenderer (s) should note that, in any case, the Earnest Money in any other form than specified above shall not be acceptable. Tenderers without earnest money shall be summarily rejected. 4. Time Date & place of opening of tender : Tender will be opened through E-tender at office of Divisional Railway Manager, Allahabad at or after 12.30 hours on 11.03.2020. 5. Validity of offer: 45 days from the date of opening. 6. Right of Railway to deal with tender: Railway administration reserves the rights to postpone/modify or to cancel the tender without assigning any reasons. **244/20 (S)**

E-Tender No. ALD-Sig-140-2019-20 Dated: 17.02.2020

**E-TENDER NOTICE**

Senior Divisional Signal & Telecommunication Engineer /Coordination/North Central Railway/ Allahabad, for and on behalf of the president of India, Invite E-TENDER on prescribed form for the following works up to 12.00 hrs. on 11.03.2020. The details of the Tender is as under :-

S/N	Tender No.	Name of Work
1	ALD-Sig-140-2019-20	Annual Maintenance Contract for Preventive Maintenance and Fault Rectification in Kanpur-Ghaziabad section of OFC Links over Allahabad division for Two years.

Approx cost of work (₹) : 10593486.37, Earnest Money (₹) : 203000/-, Cost of Tender Form (₹) : 5,000/-, Completion Period : 24 months, Date of Opening of tender : 11.03.2020

2. Availability of tender form: Tender forms are available on [www.ireps.gov.in](http://www.ireps.gov.in) 21 days prior to date of opening of the tender 3. Earnest Money to be deposited: The prescribed amount of Earnest Money as mentioned above must be deposited along with the tender form Online through Internet Banking or Online Payment gateway only. The tenderer (s) should note that, in any case, the Earnest Money in any other form than specified above shall not be acceptable. Tenderers without earnest money shall be summarily rejected. 4. Time Date & place of opening of tender : Tender will be opened through E-tender at office of Divisional Railway Manager, Allahabad at or after 12.30 hours on 11.03.2020. 5. Validity of offer: 45 days from the date of opening. 6. Right of Railway to deal with tender: Railway administration reserves the rights to postpone/modify or to cancel the tender without assigning any reasons. **246/20 (S)**

**E-Tender Notice No. ALD/BR-HQ-II-2020-01** Date : 18.02.2020

**E-TENDERING TENDER NOTICE**

Dy. Chief Engineer/Bridge/HQ-I/INCR, Allahabad for and on behalf of President of India invites E-Tender on the prescribed tender forms for the under noted work.

Sr. No.	E-Tender No.	Name of Work	Cost of work in (₹)
1	Br-HQ-II-2020-01	Hiring of 03 (Three) nos. inspection vehicle (Tata Sumo-Vista, Tavera, Scorpio, Innova,	27,67,324/-

Eriga, Marrazo or similar with registration on or vehicle less than three years old models from the date of opening of tender for a period of 24 months for Dy.CE/BR/HQ-II, XEN/BD-I/HQ and XEN/BD-II/HQ.

Earnest Money in ₹ : 55,300/-, Completion period : 24 Months, Cost of tender form with (GST) Tax in ₹ : 3150/- (3000 + 5% GST), Date of opening : 03.04.2020

Note : (1) The complete information along with tender document of above E-Tenders are available on Website [www.ireps.gov.in](http://www.ireps.gov.in) up to 15.00 hrs. on the due date of tender opening i.e. 03.04.2020. (2) Bids other than in the form of E-Bids shall not be accepted against above tenders. For this purpose, vendors are required to get themselves registered with IREPS website along with Digital Signature Certificate issued by CCA under IT Act-2000. (3) Rates entered into Financial Rate page and duly signed digitally shall be considered. Rate and any other financial entity in any other form / letter head if attached by vendors shall be straightway ignored and shall not be considered. (4) Documents being attached should be signed by the tenderer on its body. (5) This tender notice has also been uploaded on [www.ncr.indianrailways.gov.in](http://www.ncr.indianrailways.gov.in). (6) Payment of Earnest Money Deposit (EMD) & Tender Document Cost in respect of e-tendering shall be accepted through net banking or payment gateway only. (7) In case of any difficulty helpdesk available on the website of IREPS may be approached. (8) Tender on line can be submitted up to 15.00 hrs. on 03.04.2020. **249/20 (S)**

E-Tender Notice No. 146-Med/Conservancy/Kanpur/2020 Dated : 15.02.2020

**NOTICE INVITING TENDER (E-TENDERING)**

Chief Medical Superintendent, Sub Divisional Hospital, North Central Railway, Kanpur, for and on behalf of the President of India, invites E-TENDERS on prescribed form for the following work up to 13.30 hrs on 16.03.2020. The details of the Tender are as under:-

ITEMS	DESCRIPTION	E-Tender Notice No. & Tender No.
Name of the work	All kind of conservancy work removal of dead animal, rubbish etc from the dustbins to outside to Railway premises in the Railway colony at Kanpur with 02 Truck/Tractor Trolley with Driver and unskilled 04 labours covered with canvas.	E-Tender Notice No. 146-Med/Conservancy/Kanpur/2020 Dated : 15.02.2020 Tender No.-146-Med-Consy.-CNB-02-2020

Approximate Cost : ₹ 5172526/-, Cost of Tender documents : ₹ 5000/-, Earnest Money : ₹ 103450/-, Type of Tender : Open tender, Similar work for 35% Minimum eligibility criteria : Removal and disposal of all kind of Rubbish, Silt, Garbage, refuse, garden refuse etc from railway colony/area, station by truck/mechanical transport. Period of Contract : 1005 days from the actual date of commencement of the work, Date & Time of tender opening : 16.03.2020 after 13.30 hours.

Note : (1) The complete information along with tender booklet of above E-Tenders will be available/uploaded since 00.01 AM of 02.03.2020 and shall be remained on Website [www.ireps.gov.in](http://www.ireps.gov.in) up to 13.30 hrs. on the due date of 16.03.2020 of tender opening. (2) Bids other than in the form of E-Bids shall not be accepted against above tenders. For this purpose, vendors/Bidders are required to get themselves registered with IREPS website along with Digital Signature Certificate issued by CCA under IT Act-2000. (3) Rates entered into financial rate page and duly signed digitally shall be considered. Rates and any other financial entity in any other form / letter head if attached by vendors/Bidders shall be straightway ignored and shall not be considered. (4) Document being attached should be sign by the tenderer on Its body. (5) This tender notice has also been uploaded on [www.ncr.indianrailways.gov.in](http://www.ncr.indianrailways.gov.in) (6) Payment of Earnest Money Deposit (EMD) and Tender Document Cost (TDC) in respect of e-Tendering shall be accepted through net banking or payment gateway only. (7) In case of any difficulty helpdesk available on the website of IREPS may be approached. (8) Tenderer online can be submitted up to 13.00 hrs on 16.03.2020. **239/20 (S)**

**f North central railways [www.ncr.indianrailways.gov.in](http://www.ncr.indianrailways.gov.in)**

## A Chinese conundrum

As that nation catches a cold, the world sneezes. But the virus spread has led to a revival of crucial sectors back home



The effects of Coronavirus, now called COVID-19 by the World Health Organisation (WHO), have mostly been contained along China's borders. Beijing declared a war-like situation to deal with its spread. It shut down all its cities effectively and Wuhan, the centre of the outbreak, became a ghost town. Streets, that once bustled, wore a deserted look. According to data from *FlightRadar24*, a flight tracking site, air traffic in China dropped by over 80 per cent since the outbreak. Nevertheless, the spread of coronavirus forced the entire world to realise just how integral China is to the global supply chain, even when it does not produce finished products. Take the example of the Indian pharmaceutical sector, which is afraid that a shortage of Active Pharmaceutical Ingredients (API) that form the basis of many important medications, including anti-retroviral drugs used to manage HIV/AIDS, will start running out by mid-March. We are so dependent on China-sourced raw materials that they form almost 70 per cent of India's imports of key ingredients for medicines. The potential damage this has caused to the sector cannot be wished away. Most importantly, domestic manufacturing is struggling to take off. But the long-term implications of the spread of the virus must not be missed and it has at least compelled the Government to reset its focus on local sourcing to offset the current supply disruption. In the pharma industry itself, a revival of old drug manufacturing units that once produced key ingredients for crucial medicines is on the cards. In other sectors such as automobiles, a complete shut-down in China is expected to lead to a shortage of fuel-injectors and electronic control units among other devices that are essential to meet the new BS-VI emission norms that come into force nationwide on April 1. In sectors like paints and plastics, China supplies essential dyes used for colouring. Industry insiders have warned that production lines in various sectors as also across the country will come to a screeching halt if supplies do not restart by the middle of next month. And even if they come back into the market, it might take six to eight weeks for fresh products to be shipped from China to India. The situation is so dire that even the Central Government has said that the Coronavirus outbreak can be considered a *force majeure* on contracts and that it can even be classified as an act of God for vendors so as to negate penalties if delivery schedules are not met. Logistical experts are working overtime to ensure once supplies start, delays at ports and at Customs points are minimised.

While there is no firm outline as to when production will restart at factories, the Chinese Government has announced that production units in Wuhan will remain shuttered till early March at the very least. However, manufacturing can happen around Beijing and the Pearl River Delta, possibly with limited production by next week. The Coronavirus outbreak must serve as a warning for Indian industries to diversify their supply chains. The Indian Government, too, must start encouraging production of critical components within the country. While this is an extreme situation, it has exposed Indian vulnerabilities to Chinese supplies. The latter is the former's top non-oil trading partner. But statements from the Chinese Government concerning Arunachal Pradesh prove that it is still inimical to India's interests, even if, at least once, it did support our stance against Pakistan at the Financial Action Task Force (FATF) pertaining to the farce surrounding Jaish-e-Mohammad chief Masood Azhar. While we live in a globalised world and it is impossible for a single nation to do everything for itself, India must use the COVID-19 outbreak as an opportunity to protect its industrial interests. This will be in the world's greater interests as well.

## Pak in grey zone

No matter what the FATF says, India has to develop its own dynamic on the war on terror at a time of shifting alliances



Just when all the lobbying by Pakistan seemed to have softened up deciding powers at the Financial Action Task Force (FATF) — the global watchdog that tracks terror-funding States and can disqualify them from global aid — they have held themselves back, and rightly so, keeping our neighbour in the grey list. Though we have been lobbying hard, and had even at one stage argued convincingly enough for Pakistan to be blacklisted, its all-weather friends, China, Turkey and Malaysia, brought it back from the brink.

It needed the support of 13 countries to get out of the grey list, and though it has taken a few compliant correctives, they weren't proof enough. It may have finally imprisoned the 26/11 mastermind of the Mumbai attacks Hafiz Saeed and even booked his charities through which he funded money but is yet to cap the money trail to other terrorists or prosecute the financiers. Besides, it could deliver only on 13 of the 29-point action plan it had promised to implement during the last session. It now must show improvements in the next four months. For India, this comes as a reprieve considering at the last regional meeting of the FATF, it was the lone voice of protest with the US, EU and even Japan appearing convinced about Pakistan's efforts to curb terrorism. But the US, while endorsing India's position on Kashmir at the UN and proscribing Jaish chief Masood Azhar as a global terrorist, is too invested in stitching up a deal with the Taliban before it exits Afghanistan. That explains the clean chit in Beijing and even the acknowledgement of Pakistan's "great efforts" at course correction. The US also thinks that freezing aid to Pakistan might just aggravate the economic instability in the region and have a cascading impact on politics. The US also needs a trade deal with India, which is why it will not overtly hurt our position *vis-a-vis* the FATF. China, which is increasingly looking at a strategic partnership with India while being Pakistan's ally, has devised its own workaround. It now wants a renegotiation of the FATF brief itself, saying the grouping had no business to blacklist nations but should help them counter terrorist funding and networks. India must realise that the shades of the FATF list mean nothing in terms of threat levels ever since the blacklist was diluted as a "call for action" and the grey list was downgraded to "other monitored jurisdictions." Besides, the FATF has just put Pakistan on an extended timeline to fulfil the technical criteria and not been exactly censorious about it. For our neighbour, this means a radical overhaul of its terror economy as it has to show visible proof of penalties against terror-financing, including sanctions and controls on international transactions.

In the end, India must remember that global penalties won't impact Pakistan's proxy war with India. Even while staying on the FATF watch, there has been no cessation of terrorist infiltration into Kashmir. Pakistan will continue raising Kashmir. India has to evolve its own dynamic regarding terror instead of focussing solely on isolating it diplomatically. For the fluidity of geopolitics means that each nation would work out its tactical advantage in an evolving context and might not prioritise India's concerns. And global politics is but transactional and revolving stakes mean shifting alliances.

# A day of martyrs

February 21 has a special significance for Bangladesh, which transcends its observance as the International Mother Language Day. On this day, Dhaka fought for Bangla's recognition



HIRANMAY KARLEKAR

February 21 has a significance for Bangladesh that transcends its observance as the International Mother Language Day. Every year from 1953, it has been observed in that country as the Bengali Language Martyrs' Day or Language Martyrs' Day in memory of four students — Rafiq, Barkat, Jabbar and Salam — killed in police firing on a peaceful demonstration in Dhaka on the same day in 1952. The demonstration, in turn, was a part of the historic language movement that, more than anything else, contributed to the rise of the liberation struggle, which culminated in Bangladesh's emergence into freedom in 1971.

The language movement owes its origin to the Pakistan Government's decision to have Urdu alone as the country's State language. Its incipient stirrings followed the announcement by Pakistan Government's Central Education Minister in late 1947 that Urdu would be the country's only State language. A resolution seeking to make Bengali a language of the Constituent Assembly along with Urdu and English, was defeated on the first day of Session on February 23, 1948, thanks to bitter opposition by former Pakistan Prime Minister Liaquat Ali Khan. A massive burst of anger exploded in what was then East Bengal, which was renamed East Pakistan in 1955 under former Prime Minister Mohammad Ali Bogra's one-unit scheme, which also merged the four western provinces into a single unit, West Pakistan.

The anger spread and intensified following Muhammad Ali Jinnah's visit to East Bengal from March 15 to 28, 1948, during which he reiterated his stand of Urdu being Pakistan's sole State language and warned Bengalis about the activities of "subversive elements" bent on destroying Pakistan. A lull followed, only to be shattered by the interim report of the Constitutional Basic Principles Committee on September 28, 1950, which stated that Urdu would be Pakistan's State language. The movement peaked after Nazimuddin, who became the Prime Minister following the assassination of the preceding incumbent, Liaquat Ali Khan, on October 16, 1951, read out from Jinnah's speech in Dhaka saying that Urdu would be Pakistan's sole State language. More, he denounced those who wanted Bengali to be a State language as "provincialists" and, as such, enemies of the Pakistani State.

A series of strikes and demonstrations that followed culminated in a general strike throughout East Bengal on February 21, 1952, the day when the four students were killed. Dhaka and many parts of East Bengal remained paralysed on the 22nd when two persons were killed in police firing and 45 injured in lathicharges and tear gassing by the police. The movement intensified throughout Bangladesh in the next few days, with shops and offices closed and train and steamer services paralysed and Dhaka seething in anger. Savage repression by the Government foiled the general strike called



for in Dhaka on March 5, 1952. By then, however, the movement had spread to even the most remote reaches of Bangladesh and it had become clear that it was a matter of time before the Central Government accepted Bengali as a State language. This it did on April 19, 1954, when Pakistan's Constituent Assembly decided that both Bengali and Urdu would become the country's two State languages.

The installation of Bengali in its rightful place in Pakistan's governance and public life was a historic victory for the people of East Bengal. It was, however, the immediate and most visible outcome of the language movement. Far more important was the latter's identity-defining and transformative role in the history of East Bengal, leading to the eventual rise of the sovereign nation of Bangladesh. A mass movement involving almost every part of Bangladesh and every section of its population, it shaped the self-perception of the overwhelming majority of the people as Bengalis as well as Muslims and not — as immediately after India's Partition — as Muslims above everything else. It also prompted the province's rising middle class to identify itself passionately with Bengal's rich, eclectic and liberal-humanist culture, which acted as a powerful countervailing force against the spread of fundamentalist Islamist doctrines in its ranks.

In terms of historical causation, however, the most important consequence was the feeling of self-confidence that victory in the language movement imparted to large sections of people in East Bengal. The increasing feeling that they could confront and defeat the rulers entrenched in Karachi and Islamabad did much to sustain their long resistance to the western wing's efforts to economically exploit and politically subjugate them, of which the language policy was a part and which owed much to the composition of the country's armed forces and bureaucracy.

**“ A MASS MOVEMENT INVOLVING ALMOST EVERY PART OF BANGLADESH AND EVERY SECTION OF ITS POPULATION, IT SHAPED THE SELF-PERCEPTION OF THE OVERWHELMING MAJORITY OF THE PEOPLE AS BENGALIS AS WELL AS MUSLIMS AND NOT — AS IMMEDIATELY AFTER INDIA'S PARTITION — AS MUSLIMS ABOVE EVERYTHING ELSE ”**

The role of the Army was particularly important. It ruled the country from 1957 to 1968, 1977 to 1988 and then again from 1999, when General Pervez Musharraf captured power through a coup, to 2007, when he resigned as President to avoid impeachment. It has always called the shots even when a civilian Government has been in power. Almost wholly from the western wing, Army officers favoured the interests of the region and, as a hangover from the British period, looked down upon Bengalis as "non-martial."

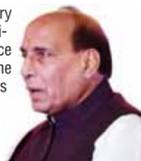
The bureaucracy, particularly the Civil Service of Pakistan, which wore the mantle of the erstwhile Indian Civil Service, was dominated by Urdu-speaking people from the western wing. Given the low competence level of Pakistani politicians, they exercised a disproportionate influence on making and implementing policies. People from East Bengal had little say. An early indication of the intended shape of things to come was clear from the report of the Constitutional Basic Principles Committee, which besides saying that Urdu would be Pakistan's State language, provided for a Constitution, which would neutralise the impact of East Bengal's numerical superiority in the country's politics, and put it under the western wing's domination. It also sought to create a presidency vested with arbitrary powers, which made it easy for an incumbent to become a dictator. Widespread agitation postponed a decision on the report. Nevertheless, its contents as well as the Government's language policy convinced an overwhelming majority of people in East Bengal that their Central Government was bent on dominating and exploiting them — a belief that was increasingly strengthened over time by the policies emanating from Karachi and Islamabad.

The rest, including the evolution of the resistance movement into a tidal wave for national liberation under Sheikh Mujibur Rahman's leadership, India's trouncing of Pakistan in the 1971 war and Bangladesh's emergence as a sovereign nation in the teeth of genocidal repression, is history.

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

## SOUNDBITE

The politics in the country is facing a crisis of credibility due to the difference in words and deeds of the politicians and this needs to be checked.



Defence Minister —Rajnath Singh

It's very interesting to see how people consume everything on mobile across cities and towns. Why should we not step up and make content for the mobile?



Academy Award winner —Guneet Monga

Pakistan has made enormous efforts in improving its counter-terror financing system, which has been recognised by the vast majority of the FATF members.



Chinese official —Geng Shuang

There should be gravitas, seriousness and depth in Trump's visit as well as tangible outcomes on substantive issues that should be announced during the joint declaration.



Congress spokesperson —Anand Sharma

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

### In denial mode

Sir — On the anniversary of the Pulwama terror attack, Congress leader Rahul Gandhi raised three important questions: Who benefited from the attack? What was the result of the inquiry into the matter? And who did the Government hold accountable for the security lapses that allowed the attack? Rattled by these questions, BJP spokesperson Sambit Patra snubbed the Congress scion, saying he is making a "dastardly comment" and that the Gandhi family can never think beyond "benefits."

Patra's response, however, was far from satisfactory. BJP leaders can abuse Rahul Gandhi but at least for the sake of the slain jawans, the Centre must answer his questions. It is true that the BJP benefitted tremendously from the Pulwama attack by making it a poll issue.

Why did Patra not snub Karnataka Chief Minister BS Yediyurappa, who had said that the Balakot air strike would help the BJP win over 22 Lok Sabha seats from his State? Even the Prime Minister sought to take credit for the strike. Should he not

### Real India is hidden behind the walls

This refers to the editorial, "Bending backwards" (February 20). It is a tell-tale testimony of our times that in a span of five decades, Indian politics has graduated from *garibi hatao* (remove poverty) to *garibi chupao* (hide poverty). The construction of a wall between the Ahmedabad airport and Indira Bridge in Gujarat to hide India's poverty from the view of US President Donald Trump and his wife Melania is symbolic of class disparity. We know well that Trump rose to power on an exclusive hate campaign, at the heart of which was his commitment and rhetoric to build a wall at the Mexican border. His arrogant pledge, asking Mexico to even pay for such a wall, added to his deceitful masculinity and persona, traits which do matter in the elections to the highest office in America. In our penchant to welcome guests beyond their expectations, we have perhaps gone too far in pleasing Trump by offering him a spectacle of a wall on his forthcoming visit.

Ironically, the wall in question is not to limit illegal migration but to hide the legal citizens of this country. The building of walls to hide poverty is not new in this world. To build a wall to separate the view of poverty has its own unique flavour. It becomes even more important in the context of a democracy where the people, both poor and the rich, vote to form the very Government



which wants to hide them from visiting leaders of affluent countries. The indices of human development in Gujarat reveal a story where the necessity of such a wall to hide the poor and poverty can be explained, though not justified. Despite the so-called "Gujarat model of development," poverty and poor human existence is the unending companion of the Gujarati masses, irrespective of what the Government wants us to believe. No wonder, Gujarat's ill-fate has continued unabated till date so as to warrant a wall of shame.

Javvadi Lakshmana Rao  
Andhra Pradesh

have taken responsibility for the Indian helicopter that was shot down in friendly fire? The "nationalist" Government should also find out who is accountable for allowing the enormous

amounts of explosives smuggled to terrorists. Clearly, the BJP has failed to come up with any answer even a year after the tragedy.  
Bidyut Kumar Chatterjee  
Faridabad

### Learn the balancing act

Sir — This refers to the editorial, "Bending backwards" (February 20). US President Donald Trump

won the 2016 presidential election betting on his policy of "America First." With the 2020 elections round the corner, it is but expected that his aim would be to accrue maximum gains for his country.

Considering his interests, Trump's utterances that Washington is in no hurry to seal a trade deal with New Delhi did not come as a surprise. But it is sad that in welcoming him, simplicity has taken a back seat. Extravagance should have been avoided. Even if India and the US differ on trade issues, balance must be maintained in relations in all fields.

Sanjeev  
Via email

### Splurging money

Sir — The state of our nation and its poor is not hidden from the world. Why should we be spending over ₹100 crore on Trump's visit? Such a huge sum of money can solve many problems facing the country.

Shilpi  
Via email

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

FIRST COLUMN

## Medical R&D a lost cause

Medical research should be one area where we have the potential to lead India towards the beginning of an era of bio-economy by 2030



KM CHERIAN

Research and Development (R&D) contribute to strengthening the economy of a country in terms of growth and revenue. While R&D is primal, it is also essential that the Government pays attention to sustain the same in every industry and particularly healthcare, which is one of the fastest growing sectors. At present, the healthcare industry has a long way to go when it comes to research and technological progress. There is a dire need for R&D in basic medical sciences so that indigenous technology gets a chance to grow. This is only possible, when there is support from the Central Government in the form of policies and capital. The availability of good infrastructure, too, is imperative to create a conducive environment for R&D. Thankfully, several areas have been identified by the Centre to keep up the tempo on infrastructure development. It is well-known that several large organs are received from human donors only and the wide disparity in the supply and demand ratio has resulted in many fatalities. Today, the stage is evolving into a time where solid organs could be manufactured using a person's own cells and a biological scaffold, like a shark fin, on which it could be grown. This will soon be available off the shelf. Shark skin is another potential tissue substrate to create biological tissue heart valves in view of its inherent tensile strength and durability. Unfortunately, due to ignorance on the part of regulatory bodies and other law enforcing agencies, even the licence for producing them has been poorly formulated and prioritised.

Another important area is in the realm of stem cell research with its tremendous regenerative potential, but we face many hurdles in their commercial production despite having the knowledge, technology and facilities. According to a recent study published in the *British Medical Journal*, the Indian medical industry fares poorly on multiple critical parameters, including the quality of care, ill-equipped facilities, lack of healthcare professionals, paucity of funds and professional qualifications of doctors, making the entire sector a debatable part of the Indian economy. Therefore it is important that provisions be made in the Union Budget to address this issue by providing funds for skill acquisition and establishment of educational institutions. It is quite overwhelming to see that in our country, where growth is a priority, change is a very slow and ignored process and our healthcare sector has been ailing for several decades now. But, as the country recompenses a claim at the geopolitical high table under a nationalist Government, its human development motives are increasingly pushed toward severe scrutiny. Also in this day and age, affordable healthcare for all should be one of the top priorities of the Government.

Growth in India's younger working population is also posing challenges we have not seen before. High stress levels, unhealthy and sedentary lifestyle, increased intake of processed foods, increased tobacco and alcohol use and so on, are giving rise to co-morbidities like diabetes, hypertension, dyslipidemia/obesity and other lifestyle diseases, which in turn have accelerated the growth of Coronary Artery Disease with a high incidence of premature deaths. The major challenges being faced in cardiac care are low availability of quality treatment, specialists, preventive and curative cardiac care facilities and due to this, the future of cardiac care should be given a holistic outlook. In addition, majority of the hospitals with cardiac facilities are located in urban areas while the rest of the country is faced with little to no access to quality care.

Today, technological disruptions are transforming healthcare delivery worldwide. The role of medical technology, emergence of Information and Communications Technology, expanding network of the internet and social media play a major role in transforming healthcare delivery. Digital medicine is the future as devices get interconnected. In a large country like ours teamwork is crucial when it comes to delivering quality healthcare. The current taxation policies and regulations do not address issues regarding diagnostic tests and home healthcare, which should definitely be considered under the Ayushman Bharat Yojana, as well. In our nation, healthcare has always been expanding and the need to increase expenditure proportionally has to be addressed.

India imports more than 75 per cent of its medical devices and patented drugs, thus making healthcare unaffordable to the masses. While we are big on generic drugs, new molecule development and patenting is lacklustre. Moreover, medical equipment should be exempted from taxes so that healthcare is more affordable. The necessity to forge new advances in cardiac healthcare and bio-medical engineering are being slowly extinguished not by time but by a Government that is apathetic to the possibility that millions could have access to better healthcare and this, in turn, could stimulate and pioneer cutting-edge research. India should make optimum use of the new Budget which will create an opportunity for opening and supporting the first Medical SEZ. Time and again, India has taken the lead in pioneering developments. Medical research should be one area where we have the potential to lead the country towards the beginning of an era of bio-economy by 2030.

(The writer is a Padma Sri awardee and cardiothoracic surgeon credited with India's first bypass. He is Chairman and CEO of Frontier Lifeline Hospital)

I RENEW MY APPEAL TO THE CWC TO HOLD LEADERSHIP ELECTIONS TO ENERGISE WORKERS AND INSPIRE VOTERS.  
 —CONGRESS LEADER  
 SHASHI THAROOR

POINT COUNTERPOINT



IF ANYONE HAS ANY DOUBTS ABOUT THIS, HE SHOULD KINDLY READ THE RESOLUTION OF THE CWC BEFORE GIVING ANY STATEMENTS IN PUBLIC.  
 —CONGRESS CHIEF SPOKESPERSON  
 RANDEEP SURJEWALA

# Digital slums in internet society

A divide is explicitly emerging in India, which might result in massive gaps in access to the internet in the age of a network society



MOHAMMAD IRSHAD



ARNISHA ASHRAF

The internet has entered all possible dimensions of human existence. It has overwhelmingly transformed the contours of social communication, behaviour and imagination. The web is gainfully managed by knowledge workers, who could be from diverse social groups and identities, to steer it in a determined direction to attribute shape through three indispensible variables: Power, language and culture.

Internet has acquired the status of something that is inherently for the good of the public, hence it must be considered a fundamental human utility. Our growing reliance on communication networks has facilitated the advance of a technology-driven internet society.

In India, the rapid growth of online and partially private behavioural and policy changes in doing business furthered the rise of an (ICT) Information and Communication Technology-monitored "internet economy." Diffusion of mobile phones could make access possible to various things, which were earlier only physically accessible. In India, not enough theoretical engineering has taken place concerning online communities to enable them to exploit the scope of the same comprehensively. It however, remains explicit that the internet can bring significant threat to conventional corridors of power, making them fearful of its power. And rightly so, as it carries the potential to transform prevailing social structures.

The internet has become a crucial constituent to underline the arrival of digital citizenry throughout the world. This will further contribute in the formulation of different online social groups and identities. However, it is notable that new and efficient legislations have not emerged so far pertaining to digital citizens. Therefore, new citizens act without any constraints, rules and procedures in this new land. This perhaps helps them escape accountability for certain actions, in contrast to the physical citizenry. In doing so, this might develop the case for an appropriate study of anonymity, verification, authenticity and lack of moral currency. Social network theories are helpful to understand online communities in the country. Moreover, information exchange can happen among people of same communities, whether they are members of civil society, students or professionals. We are, however, not sure about the quality of the same.

Internet Society, in a 2017 report, maintains that the Net allows people to develop and join new communities and eliminates geographical barriers to make connections. It further demonstrates that around 53 per cent of the world's population was offline in 2017. As mainly rural regions of the world did not have access to the internet, this has reasonably contributed to a sharp rise in the digital divide/digital discrimination. The personal freedom to express and right to the internet was largely suspended and put on hold.

The web deliberately seems to be failing in projecting its true meaning to produce extensive, eloquent departures to the new age to humanity, different from the agricultural and industrial society. Though new means of communication have carved out a social, political and eco-



THE HUGE COST OF ACCESS TO AND THE USE OF NEW TECHNOLOGY WILL SET THE STAGE FOR A DIGITAL DIVIDE I.E. DIGITAL DISCRIMINATION. DIGITAL ILLITERACY IS ALSO ON THE CONSTANT RISE IN INDIA. PARADOXICALLY, THE GOVERNMENT IS CLAIMING TO BE MANUFACTURING THE BASE AT A BREAKNECK PACE FOR DIGITAL INDIA, WITHOUT ADDRESSING THESE UNRELENTING PROBLEMS

nomics space for some unnoticeable and unsuspecting communities, the internet has also been considered as a new instrument to withstand new business organisations, power structures and technology-determined groups of diverse nature.

Certainly the goal of digital citizens and digital participation is gaining momentum. India has close to 1,162 million mobile phone subscribers and 1,183 million telephones. Though, in contrast to 2018, there is a sharp decline in mobile subscribers and telephone subscribers in 2019. A major cause of the same could be the deteriorating health of the Indian economy. The Government must employ strong measures to arrange for free and affordable internet to maximise digital participation in digital India. Instead of doing that, the Government is promoting the culture of internet shutdowns across the country. In 2019, the number of internet shutdowns rose over 100 times than in the past.

Ordinary citizens could be the generators and contributors of information i.e. knowledge. This, however, is brought along with the ample use of technology, which is costly and requires trained and efficient individuals to make use of it. In an agricultural society, those who could not acquire land of their own to cultivate then just worked as labourers, in other words service providers. Likewise, in this technology-driven age, with some exceptions, they cannot acquire key positions to make it functional for them, particularly the underprivileged.

Telecom Statistics India (2019), reports that telephone subscribers in rural and urban India stand at 514 million and 669 million respectively. It authenticates that a considerable widening disparity exists between rural and urban telephone subscribers, which

stops a sizeable rural population from existing in the online/digital world. A study by the Internet and Mobile Association of India (IAMAI), *India Internet (2019)*, noted that nearly one-third of users access the internet for more than one hour in urban areas, whereas in rural regions, a similar proportion of users access the net for 15-30 minutes. It raises pertinent questions about the elementary construction for rural India to be an effective contributor to the vision of the Digital India Programme.

In this age of alternative facts, anyone can claim information/knowledge by generating and contributing to content making. It raises grave concerns regarding the validation of this information. In the meantime, this has provided people with ample opportunities to become knowledge producers instead of remaining consumers of manufactured information/knowledge.

Women's Rights Online by the World Wide Web Foundation says that in the poor areas of New Delhi, the few women who are online use the internet to look for important information on their rights (17 per cent), search for jobs (29 per cent) or voice their opinions online (eight per cent). The survey, initiated to minimise the gender gap in India, argues for prioritising free public net access.

In another report by IAMAI (2017), in urban India, the ratio of women mobile internet users stands at 40 per cent as opposed to an impressive 60 per cent of men. In rural India, women mobile internet users are only 33 per cent compared to 67 per cent men.

This widening inequality might be a notable obstruction to the purpose of digital equality and participation. It, therefore, shall be a matter of grave concern to all of us. According to the same report, 57 per cent of the mobile inter-

net users are under the age of 25 and a large portion of that, with the help of fake news, trolling and disinformation, cater to online constituencies of political parties.

Still there are people who can't access the internet as they don't have smart phones, laptops, gadgets and other mandatory devices. Therefore, a digital divide is explicitly emerging in India, which might result in massive gaps in access to the internet in the age of a network society. The huge cost of access to and the use of new technology will set the stage for a digital divide i.e. digital discrimination. Digital illiteracy is also on the constant rise in India. Paradoxically, the Government is claiming to be manufacturing the base at a breakneck pace for Digital India, without addressing these unrelenting problems.

Leading theorist of the information society, Frank Webster argues that the new society is more of a theoretical one. The construction of these theories will determine the democratic and egalitarian patterns of this new age. If these ingrained flaws formed during the construction of theoretical knowledge are rectified, it would foster a sustainable information environment.

Undeniably, at this epoch, we have information in abundance and fewer instruments to certify authenticity, relevancy and beneficial information, which set the score for the post-truth age. Meanwhile, still, some of them could not enjoy the enormity of information. Hence a parallel, mammoth building in the internet society is constructed, wherein digital slums will find a permanent place, without any trace of their digital history.

(Irshad is Assistant Professor, Department of Philosophy, DU and Ashraf is Assistant Professor, IMS Unison University, Dehradun)

# The quality of water still awaits a verdict

Clean supply is a basic right like clean air and is needed for survival. The citizens of Delhi must fight for their fair share of this important natural resource



KOTA SRIRAJ

Last November saw at least four reports coming out in quick succession pertaining to the quality of the piped water supply in the Delhi-National Capital Region (Delhi-NCR). In two of its reports, the Union Ministry of Consumer Affairs stated that the tap water samples collected from different parts of Delhi failed to meet safety norms. However, these reports were quickly followed by two more studies, this time from the Jal Shakti Ministry and the Delhi Government, which rebutted the Union Ministry's reports and gave a nod of approval to the Capital's water supply. They even labelled the water

quality to be better than that of some European cities. Even though the comparison with European cities seems a bit far-fetched, what is really worrying is the fact that the citizens of Delhi still have no conclusive answer regarding the quality of their water supply. And all the reports did was to spark off a slanging match between various political parties in an election year.

Traditionally, we rely on the authentic testing standards and procedures of the Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS). In September 2019, the BIS collected tap water samples from 11 locations across Delhi and tested the same for odour, colour and pH values and Total Dissolved Solids. These were part of the 24 parameters on which the samples were assessed. The water samples eventually failed on all the 24 parameters, leading to a major hue and cry in the political as well as public sphere.

However, even as the confusion over the authenticity of various reports remains, children and the elderly continue to consume water with dubious quality. The only one to



gain out of this mess is the water purifier industry, which is witnessing an unprecedented boom on the back of the fears of the populace. The just-concluded elections also did not see any of the contesting parties give clarity on how they would approach the problem of unsafe drinking water and air pollution in the national Capital.

So, for the citizens of Delhi, the problems continue unabated as they battle with dirty air and water, with

no respite in sight. In January, a leading media group commissioned a study to test the water quality in seven Lok Sabha constituencies across Delhi in an effort to highlight the water quality woes of the Capital before the February 8 Assembly elections. Termed as Operation Paani, the initiative involved collecting water samples from across the city on three different days and getting them tested by independent water quality experts.

The tests eventually found that half of Delhi was getting unsafe drinking water. However, this time the report has not found any detractors. But then, the elections are over, so who is bothered to highlight the issue anymore. The spectre of beleaguered, frustrated and short on temper residents fighting for water near rusty water tankers is an all too common sight in India. Unfortunately, it is the same even in the national Capital and has remained so even after decades of governance by some of the so-called best governments in power. It seems like it is in the best interests of political parties not to solve such problems so that they can be milked for votes in the next elections.

This, sadly, is the fix that India finds herself in, where political issues are kept alive at the cost of the common man. So, how does Delhi get its water right? Clean water is a basic right like clean air and is needed for survival. The citizens must fight for their fair share of this important natural resource. The present Government in Delhi prides itself on the fact that it is people-friendly and

approachable, which means it must listen to the problems of the people and more importantly do something about solving the issues that matter to the populace. And not just the Government, water woes are an amazing opportunity for the corporate world, too, if India Inc wants to approach the issue through its corporate social responsibility (CSR) programme. Under the CSR programme, corporates can tie up with the Government and install an on-the-spot water checking mechanism that is connected to the water supply pipes. This will give a real time feedback on the quality of the water being supplied. If suitable technology is paired with this initiative, then water quality readings can be forwarded to the citizens' phone through an app and also be sent to the Government department concerned. This initiative will definitely improve water quality and Government accountability in one go, provided the politicisation of the issue stops and a genuine quest for a solution begins.

(The writer is an environmental journalist)



## CHINA'S GAG ON MEDIA IS BAD

In the midst of the coronavirus outbreak, Beijing has expelled three journalists. Since the Wall Street Journal headline on Coronavirus caused real anger in China, the expulsions may help to divert growing rage at the official handling of the outbreak towards foreigners. But reliable coverage, of the kind that Chao Deng, one of those expelled, has been producing from Wuhan, is in the interests of all.

(The Guardian editorial)

TOPPERS

Scheme	NAV	1Yr %	PGIM India Diversified Equity Fund-Reg(G)	14.56	21.03	IDBI Equity Advantage Fund-Reg(G)	28.52	16.89	UTI Healthcare Fund-Reg(G)	91.68	13.08	ICICI Pru Value Fund-13(D)	10.60	9.39
SBI Tax Advantage Fund-III-Reg(G)	30.41	40.99	Fund-Reg(G)			SBI Equity Opp Fund-Sr IV-Reg(G)	16.52	16.84	Sundaram LT Tax Adv Fund-Sr I-Reg(G)	14.31	13.05	ICICI Pru Bharat Consumption Fund-3-(G)	10.79	9.32
SBI Tax Advantage Fund-II(G)	43.91	37.90	Axis Capital Builder Fund-4-Reg(G)	12.04	21.01	Edelweiss Large Cap Fund(G)	38.62	16.82	SBI Nifty Index Fund-Reg(G)	103.80	12.89	Franklin India Opportunities Fund(G)	73.92	9.15
SBI LT Advantage Fund-IV-Reg(G)	15.39	34.38	Tata Large & Mid Cap Fund(G)	222.75	20.98	SBI BlueChip Fund-Reg(G)	41.59	16.69	Principal Dividend Yield Fund(G)	55.84	12.88	Aditya Birla SL Mfg. Equity Fund-Reg(G)	13.28	9.12
Sundaram Services Fund-Reg(G)	13.67	33.81	IDFC Focused Equity Fund-Reg(G)	40.79	20.93	L&T Midcap Fund-Reg(G)	142.57	16.66	Aditya Birla SL Nifty Next 50 ETF	289.23	12.84	HDFC Equity Fund(G)	661.37	9.02
BNP Paribas India Consumption Fund-Reg(G)	13.95	33.67	ICICI Pru US Bluechip Equity Fund(G)	33.25	20.91	Nippon India Small Cap Fund(G)	41.97	16.62	IDBI Focused 30 Equity Fund-Reg(G)	10.39	12.81	Canara Rob Small Cap Fund-Reg(G)	10.91	8.99
Invesco India PSU Equity Fund(G)	20.39	33.18	Aditya Birla SL Banking & Financial Services Fund-Reg(G)	31.05	20.82	Sundaram Emerging Small Cap-Sr-II-Reg(G)	8.96	16.61	HDFC Growth Opp Fund-Reg(G)	116.57	12.73	Sundaram LT Tax Adv Fund-Sr IV-Reg(G)	9.78	8.99
Sundaram Multi Cap Fund-Sr II-Reg(G)	11.99	31.50	Kotak India Growth Fund-Sr 5(G)	10.64	20.64	SBI LT Advantage Fund-I-Reg(G)	14.18	16.60	Aditya Birla SL Index Fund-Reg(G)	118.46	12.70	Nippon India Index Fund - Nifty Plan(G)	20.20	12.69
Sundaram Multi Cap Fund-Sr I-Reg(G)	12.02	31.27	Sundaram Large and Mid Cap Fund(G)	38.15	20.63	Aditya Birla SL Intl. Equity Fund-A(G)	24.50	16.58	IDBI Nifty Index Fund(G)	22.27	12.70	HDFC Focused 30 Fund(G)	75.97	8.72
DSP Equity Fund-Reg(G)	46.00	30.85	Sundaram Select Focus(G)	198.23	20.51	ICICI Pru Value Fund-18(G)	12.33	16.54	Nippon India Power & Infra Fund(G)	97.25	12.59	Franklin India Bluechip Fund(G)	473.12	8.70
Invesco India Smallcap Fund-Reg(G)	12.29	30.47	Tata India Pharma & Healthcare Fund-Reg(G)	11.89	20.28	DSP US Flexible Equity Fund-Reg(G)	28.67	16.51	Nippon India Consumer Fund-Reg(G)	18.58	12.58	Nippon India Tax Saver (ELSS) Fund(G)	54.29	8.64
Sundaram Fin Serv Opp Fund(G)	48.12	30.30	Mirae Asset Healthcare Fund-Reg(G)	12.11	20.35	Canara Rob Infrastructure Fund-Reg(G)	46.89	16.35	Nippon India Pharma Fund(G)	165.19	12.50	Sundaram Select Micro Cap-Series IX-Reg(G)	13.09	8.51
Kotak World Gold Fund(G)	10.92	30.02	Invesco India Tax Plan(G)	56.78	20.30	HDFC Sensex ETF	4334.06	16.34	Aditya Birla SL MNC Fund-Reg(G)	812.57	12.49	Kotak India Growth Fund-Sr 4(G)	9.58	8.44
Sundaram Select Small Cap Series-VI-Reg(G)	11.17	29.93	SBI Infrastructure Fund-Reg(G)	16.15	20.28	Aditya Birla SL Sensex ETF	384.91	16.31	ICICI Pru Global Stable Equity Fund(FOF)(G)	17.13	12.48	Sundaram Select Micro Cap-Series VIII-Reg(G)	13.16	8.40
Sundaram Select Small Cap Series-V-Reg(G)	11.45	29.78	L&T Focused Equity Fund-Reg(G)	11.89	20.28	Kotak US Equity Fund(G)	19.12	16.11	Franklin India Index Fund-NSE Nifty(G)	95.48	12.47	IDBI Long Term Value Fund-Reg(G)	10.73	8.38
Tata Banking & Financial Services Fund-Reg(G)	21.49	28.94	Invesco India Multicap Fund(G)	52.54	20.26	Franklin Asian Equity Fund(G)	24.96	16.22	Aditya Birla SL Resurgent India Fund-3-Reg(G)	12.23	12.41	Principal Nifty 100 Equal Weight Fund(G)	71.81	8.36
Invesco India Infrastructure Fund(G)	19.33	28.52	DSP Equity Opportunities Fund-Reg(G)	241.00	20.02	Tata Value Fund-Sr-1-Reg(G)	10.59	16.19	Baroda ELSS 96(G)	46.22	12.32	Edelweiss ETF - Nifty 100 Quality 30	289.77	8.33
Motilal Oswal Midcap 30 Fund-Reg(G)	29.03	28.52	IDFC Equity Opportunity-6-Reg(G)	11.28	19.62	Baroda Multi Cap Fund(G)	104.72	16.12	UTI Nifty Next 50 Index Fund-Reg(G)	10.23	12.30	Tata Digital India Fund-Reg(G)	16.13	8.20
ICICI Pru Smallcap Fund(G)	27.73	28.44	Edelweiss Large & Mid Cap Fund-Reg(G)	34.59	19.59	Kotak US Equity Fund(G)	19.12	16.11	SBI Technology Opp Fund-Reg(G)	71.74	12.27	DSP World Agriculture Fund-Reg(G)	17.52	8.16
SBI Banking & Financial Services Fund-Reg(G)	20.71	28.32	Axis Capital Builder Fund-1-Reg(G)	11.32	19.54	IDBI Diversified Equity Fund(G)	22.68	16.07	ICICI Pru Nifty Next 50 ETF	28.97	12.24	UTI Dividend Yield Fund-Reg(G)	66.83	7.98
Franklin India Feeder - Franklin U.S. Opportunities Fund(G)	38.59	28.18	PGIM India Largecap Fund(G)	31.07	16.02	IDFC Sensex ETF	424.86	16.03	L&T Equity Fund-Reg(G)	84.95	12.23	UTI LT Adv Fund-IV(G)	10.39	7.91
Axis Focused 25 Fund-Reg(G)	32.29	27.93	Nippon India Banking Fund(G)	286.75	15.97	DSP India T.I.G.E.R Fund-Reg(G)	91.58	15.81	Aditya Birla SL Tax Relief '96(G)	33.09	12.21	Franklin India Equity Fund(G)	597.79	7.79
Sundaram Select Small Cap Series-III-Reg(G)	16.30	27.93	Baroda Mid-cap Fund(G)	9.61	15.92	Sundaram Emerging Small Cap-Sr-I-Reg(G)	8.67	15.76	U/S 80C of IT ACT(G)	33.09	12.21	UTI LT Adv Fund-V(G)	9.54	7.67
Sundaram Select Small Cap Series-IV-Reg(G)	16.31	27.74	PGIM India Large Cap Fund(G)	179.32	15.91	Baroda Large Cap Fund(G)	15.59	15.74	Aditya Birla SL Frontline Equity Fund(G)	232.96	12.19	IDFC Sterling Value Fund-Reg(G)	49.64	7.66
Axis Long Term Equity Fund-Reg(G)	51.84	27.28	Kotak Infra & Eco Reform Fund(G)	20.52	15.91	IDFC Core Equity Fund-Reg(G)	47.82	15.73	Aditya Birla SL Intl. Equity Fund-B(G)	19.45	12.15	UTI Core Equity Fund-Reg(G)	61.79	7.66
SBI Focused Equity Fund-Reg(G)	162.49	27.27	IDFC Large Cap Fund-Reg(G)	35.13	15.90	HDFC Mid-Cap Opportunities Fund(G)	57.43	15.72	PGIM India Large Cap Fund-2-Reg(G)	13.08	12.02	HDFC Top 100 Fund(G)	486.04	7.63
Baroda Banking & Fin Serv Fund(G)	226.16	26.56	HDFC Index Fund-Sensex(G)	365.86	15.81	UTI Mastershare-Reg(G)	131.81	15.65	DSP Global Allocation Fund-Reg(G)	13.75	11.99	Sundaram Smart NIFTY 100 Eq Weight Fund-Reg(G)	11.81	7.54
Invesco India Financial Services Fund(G)	64.22	26.44	DSP India T.I.G.E.R Fund-Reg(G)	91.58	15.81	ICICI Pru Growth Fund-1(DP)	11.83	15.64	IDBI Small Cap Fund(G)	9.55	11.96	Nippon India Capital Builder Fund-IV-B(G)	7.80	7.51
DSP Healthcare Fund-Reg(G)	12.41	26.08	Sundaram Emerging Small Cap-Sr-I-Reg(G)	8.67	15.76	Mirae Asset Large Cap Fund-Reg(G)	54.35	15.63	Aditya Birla SL Resurgent India Fund-5-Reg(G)	9.79	11.89	ICICI Pru Nifty Low Vol 30 ETF	91.72	7.49
Axis Emerging Opp Fund-1-Reg(G)	14.17	25.96	Baroda Large Cap Fund(G)	15.59	15.74	Tata Large Cap Fund(G)	232.83	15.63	U/S 80C of IT ACT(G)	33.09	12.21	ICICI Pru NV20 ETF	57.83	7.39
Axis Midcap Fund-Reg(G)	42.76	25.62	HDFC Core Equity Fund-Reg(G)	47.82	15.73	Tata Index Fund-Sensex Plan(G)	101.49	15.58	Aditya Birla SL Tax Relief '96(ELSS)	33.09	12.21	SBI-ETF Sensex Next 50	325.80	7.12
PGIM India Global Equity Opp Fund(G)	22.66	25.54	HDFC Mid-Cap Opportunities Fund(G)	57.43	15.72	Motilal Oswal Multicap 35 Fund-Reg(G)	27.71	15.57	UTI LT Adv Fund-VII(G)	8.90	6.81	Sundaram Select Micro Cap-Series XIV-Reg(G)	8.58	6.59
Canara Rob Consumer Trends Fund-Reg(G)	45.71	25.51	UTI Mastershare-Reg(G)	131.81	15.65	ICICI Pru Sensex Index Fund(G)	12.79	15.55	ICICI Pru Nifty Next 50 Index Fund(G)	25.40	11.69	IDFC Infrastructure Fund-Reg(G)	14.04	6.44
L&T Emerging Opp Fund-II-Reg(D)	11.00	25.19	ICICI Pru Growth Fund-1(DP)	11.83	15.64	Nippon India ETF Nifty Midcap	15067.39	15.50	Nippon India Capital Builder Fund-IV-D(G)	7.93	11.61	Templeton India Equity Income Fund(G)	46.68	6.42
UTI Focused Equity Fund-I(G)	15.27	25.13	DSP A.C.E. Fund-Sr 2-Reg(G)	10.90	19.48	DSP A.C.E. Fund-Sr 1-Reg(G)	10.96	19.31	Edelweiss Emerging Markets Opp Eq. Offshore Fund-Reg(G)	14.02	11.60	Sundaram Select Micro Cap-Series X-Reg(G)	12.72	6.36
Kotak Emerging Equity Fund(G)	43.60	25.09	IDBI India Top 100 Equity Fund(G)	26.30	19.33	DSP 3Y Close Ended Equity Fund-Reg(G)	16.45	19.27	Nippon India Multi Cap Fund(G)	100.08	11.59	IDFC Equity Opportunity-4-Reg(G)	7.47	6.26
UTI Focused Equity Fund-IV(G)	11.01	24.99	DSP A.C.E. Fund-Sr 1-Reg(G)	10.96	19.31	Mirae Asset Tax Saver Fund-Reg(G)	19.28	19.20	IDBI Nifty Junior Index Fund(G)	21.61	11.54	Aditya Birla SL Resurgent India Fund-4-Reg(G)	9.92	6.21
Motilal Oswal Focused 25 Fund-Reg(G)	24.78	24.98	DSP 3Y Close Ended Equity Fund-Reg(G)	16.45	19.27	JM Value Fund(G)	34.92	19.18	PGIM India Euro Equity Fund(G)	14.89	11.45	ICICI Pru India Opp Fund(G)	10.27	6.20
Kotak Small Cap Fund(G)	80.24	24.97	JM Value Fund(G)	34.92	19.18	Invesco India Growth Opp Fund(G)	37.61	19.17	Sundaram TOP 100-Sr VII-Reg(G)	12.71	11.43	HDFC TaxSaver(G)	508.13	6.16
Axis Bluechip Fund-Reg(G)	33.43	24.97	SBI Magnum Comma Fund-Reg(G)	38.24	18.97	SBI Magnum Comma Fund-Reg(G)	38.24	18.97	Aditya Birla SL Midcap Fund(G)	288.93	11.39	ICICI Pru Manufacture in India Fund(G)	10.23	6.12
DSP Midcap Fund-Reg(G)	61.74	24.58	UTI Infrastructure Fund-Reg(G)	55.47	18.91	UTI Infrastructure Fund-Reg(G)	55.47	18.91	SBI Consumption Opp Fund-Reg(G)	122.68	11.36	JM Large Cap Fund(G)	68.13	5.80
SBI LT Advantage Fund-VI-Reg(G)	11.76	24.56	ICICI Pru Bharat Consumption Fund-4-(G)	11.07	18.90	ICICI Pru Bharat Consumption Opp Fund(G)	14.72	18.52	Invesco India Feeder - Invesco Global Equity Income Fund(G)	14.14	11.35	Sundaram Value Fund-VIII-Reg(G)	10.92	5.61
Aditya Birla SL India GenNext Fund(G)	94.77	24.52	Sundaram Emerging Small Cap-Sr-VII-Reg(G)	11.79	18.88	DSP Small Cap Fund-Reg(G)	58.16	18.47	Aditya Birla SL Global Emerging Opp Fund(G)	14.72	18.52	Sundaram Select Micro Cap-Series XII-Reg(G)	9.32	5.37
Axis Emerging Opp Fund-2-Reg(G)	13.56	24.40	Kotak Standard Multicap Fund(G)	38.26	18.87	Axis Multicap Fund-Reg(G)	13.29	23.86	Sundaram Emerging Small Cap-Sr-V-Reg(G)	10.39	22.00	Sundaram Select Micro Cap-Series XI-Reg(G)	9.68	5.34
Edelweiss Small Cap Fund-Reg(G)	12.37	24.36	UTI India Consumer Fund-Reg(G)	28.32	18.76	BNP Paribas Large Cap Fund(G)	100.35	23.77	Kotak Standard Multicap Fund(G)	38.26	18.87	DSP Natural Res & New Energy Fund-Reg(G)	30.17	5.33
Canara Rob Bluechip Equity Fund-Reg(G)	28.46	24.28	Aditya Birla SL Equity Fund(G)	791.92	18.75	DSP Focus Fund-Reg(G)	25.83	23.71	UTI India Consumer Fund-Reg(G)	28.32	18.76	SBI Contra Fund-Reg(G)	105.05	5.22
Motilal Oswal Long Term Equity Fund-Reg(G)	19.52	24.27	L&T India Large Cap Fund-Reg(G)	29.51	18.72	Invesco India Midcap Fund(G)	55.27	23.51	L&T India Large Cap Fund-Reg(G)	29.51	18.72	HDFC Equity Opp Fund-Sr 2-1126D-May 2017(1)-Reg(G)	10.26	5.00
BNP Paribas Mid Cap Fund(G)	35.74	24.25	SBI Magnum Equity ESG Fund-Reg(G)	114.94	18.62	BNP Paribas Long Term Equity Fund(G)	43.18	23.37	SBI Magnum Equity ESG Fund-Reg(G)	114.94	18.62	Aditya Birla SL Small Cap Fund(G)	32.06	4.95
PGIM India Midcap Opp Fund-Reg(G)	20.40	24.24	SBI Equity Opp Fund-Sr I-Reg(G)	17.36	18.55	UTI Focused Equity Fund-V(G)	10.66	23.21	SBI Equity Opp Fund-Sr I-Reg(G)	17.36	18.55	UTI LT Adv Fund-VI(G)	8.50	4.93
JM Multicap Fund(G)	35.91	24.06	Aditya Birla SL Global Emerging Opp Fund(G)	14.72	18.52	JM Tax Gain Fund(G)	19.18	23.20	Aditya Birla SL Global Emerging Opp Fund(G)	14.72	18.52	Sundaram Select Micro Cap-Series XV-Reg(G)	8.29	4.89
Axis Multicap Fund-Reg(G)	13.29	23.86	DSP Small Cap Fund-Reg(G)	58.16	18.47	UTI Focussed Equity Fund-VI(G)	11.17	23.11	DSP Small Cap Fund-Reg(G)	58.16	18.47	Sundaram Value Fund-VII-Reg(G)	8.51	4.88
BNP Paribas Large Cap Fund(G)	100.35	23.77	IDFC Multi Cap Fund-Reg(G)	101.11	18.47	Nippon India US Equity Opp Fund(G)	18.68	23.03	SBI Healthcare Opp Fund-Reg(G)	133.13	18.30	ICICI Pru Value Discovery Fund(G)	140.86	4.81
DSP Focus Fund-Reg(G)	25.83	23.71	SBI LT Advantage Fund-III-Reg(G)	14.42	18.45	Nippon India Growth Fund(G)	1242.92	23.03	L&T Large and Midcap Fund-Reg(G)	50.75	18.16	HDFC Capital Builder Value Fund(G)	286.12	4.80
Invesco India Midcap Fund(G)	55.27	23.51	Kotak Bluechip Fund(G)	254.96	18.40	Axis Growth Opp Fund-Reg(G)	12.58	23.33	UTI Focused Equity Fund-V(G)	10.66	23.21	Sundaram Select Micro	7.79	4.52
BNP Paribas Long Term Equity Fund(G)	43.18	23.37	IDBI Banking & Financial Services Fund-Reg(G)	11.33	18.39	Canara Rob Equity Tax Saver Fund-Reg(G)	73.89	23.29	UTI Focussed Equity Fund-VI(G)	11.17	23.11	ICICI Pru Focused Equity Fund(G)	28.94	4.51
Mirae Asset Emerging Bluechip-Reg(G)	59.58	23.37	Services Fund-Reg(G)	133.13	18.30	UTI Value Opp Fund-Reg(G)	66.83	18.11	Tata Equity P/E Fund(G)	137.88	11.01	DSP Equal Nifty 50 Fund-Reg(G)	9.75	4.35
Axis Growth Opp Fund-Reg(G)	12.58	23.33	SBI Healthcare Opp Fund-Reg(G)	133.13	18.30	Nippon India Vision Fund(G)	555.70	18.02	ICICI Pru FMCG Fund(G)	252.97	10.93	Franklin India Smaller Cos Fund(G)	51.11	4.30
Canara Rob Equity Tax Saver Fund-Reg(G)	73.89	23.29	L&T Large and Midcap Fund-Reg(G)	50.75	18.16	UTI LT Equity Fund (Tax Saving)-Reg(G)	95.53	18.01	PGIM India LT Equity Fund-Reg(G)	14.67	10.88	Sundaram LT Micro Cap Tax Adv Fund-Sr V-Reg(G)	8.17	4.29
Fund-Reg(G)	10.66	23.21	Sundaram Mid Cap Fund(G)	499.45	18.14	Aditya Birla SL Focused Equity Fund(G)	64.24	18.00	ICICI Pru Value Fund-16(G)	11.23	10.86	Aditya Birla SL Resurgent India Fund-7-Reg(G)	7.96	4.05
JM Tax Gain Fund(G)	19.18	23.20	UTI Value Opp Fund-Reg(G)	66.83	18.11	UTI LT Equity Fund (Tax Saving)-Reg(G)	95.53	18.01	Nippon India Quant Fund(G)	26.89	10.64	India Fund-7-Reg(G)	10.64	3.98
UTI Focussed Equity Fund-VI(G)	11.17	23.11	Nippon India Vision Fund(G)	555.70	18.02	Aditya Birla SL Focused Equity Fund(G)	64.24	18.00	Principal Tax Savings Fund	210.89	10.47	Sundaram LT Micro Cap Tax Adv Fund-Sr IV-Reg(G)	8.31	3.98
Nippon India US Equity Opp Fund(G)	18.68	23.03	UTI LT Equity Fund (Tax Saving)-Reg(G)	95.53	18.01	UTI LT Equity Fund (Tax Saving)-Reg(G)	95.53	18.01	Sundaram Global Brand Fund(G)	18.58	10.46	Adv Fund-Sr IV-Reg(G)	11.13	3.95
Nippon India Growth Fund(G)	1242.92	23.03	Invesco India Contra Fund(G)	51.82	17.99	Tata Resources & Energy Fund-Reg(G)	15.18	17.94	L&T Infrastructure Fund-Reg(G)	15.76	10.44	Invesco India Feeder - Invesco Pan European Equity Fund-Reg(G)	11.13	3.95
Principal Focused Multicap Fund(G)	72.04	22.70	Mirae Asset Great Consumer Fund-Reg(G)	38.10	17.97	SBI Magnum Multicap Fund-Reg(G)	52.38	17.93	Aditya Birla SL Global Real Estate Fund(G)	21.77	10.39</			

# Fewer cases in China, but deaths abroad rise

AFP ■ BEIJING

China on Thursday touted a high drop in new virus infections as proof its epidemic control efforts are working, but the toll grew abroad with deaths in Japan and South Korea.

Fatalities in China hit 2,118 as 114 more people died, but health officials reported the lowest number of new cases in nearly a month, including in hardest-hit Hubei province.

More than 74,000 people have been infected by the new coronavirus in China, and hundreds more in over 25 countries.

The number of deaths outside mainland China climbed to 11.

Japan's toll rose to three as a man and a woman in their 80s who had been aboard a quarantined cruise ship died, while fears there mounted over other passengers who disembarked the Diamond Princess after testing negative.

South Korea reported its first death, and the number of infections in the country nearly doubled Thursday to 104.

Iran reported two deaths on Wednesday and three new cases Thursday. Deaths have previously been confirmed in France, the Philippines, Taiwan and Hong Kong.

Chinese officials say their drastic containment efforts, including quarantining tens of millions of people in Hubei and restricting movements in cities nationwide, have started to pay off.

Chinese President Xi Jinping spoke by phone about the virus with leaders in South Korea and Pakistan, state news agency Xinhua said.

South Korean President Moon Jae-in "chose to call to express sympathies and support" regarding the outbreak, Xinhua said. Xi told him the epidemic's impact on bilateral ties will be temporary.

Xi told Pakistani Prime Minister Imran Khan that their

two countries "are true friends and good brothers," and that combating the virus is his government's top priority.

At a special meeting on the virus with Southeast Asian countries in Laos, China's Foreign Minister Wang Yi said results "show that our control efforts are working."

Although more than 600 new infections were reported Thursday in Hubei's capital Wuhan, it was the lowest daily tally since late January and well down from the 1,749 new cases the day before.

The national figure has fallen for three straight days.

Chinese authorities placed the city of 11 million under quarantine on January 23 and quickly locked down the rest of the province in the days that followed.

Wuhan authorities this week carried out door-to-door checks on residents, with the local Communist Party chief warning that officials would be "held accountable" if

any infections were missed.

Cities far from the epicentre have limited the number of people who can leave their homes for groceries, while rural villages have sealed off access to outsiders.

In Japan, critics slammed the government's quarantine measures imposed on the Diamond Princess.

The huge vessel moored in Yokohama is the biggest coronavirus cluster outside the Chinese epicentre, with 634 cases confirmed among passengers and crew.

Another 13 people on board the ship were diagnosed with the virus Thursday, Japan's health ministry said.

Still, passengers were disembarking after negative tests and having completed a 14-day quarantine period — packing into yellow buses and leaving for stations and airports.

An infectious diseases specialist at Kobe University slammed the quarantine procedures on board as "com-

pletely chaotic" in rare criticism from a Japanese academic.

"The cruise ship was completely inadequate in terms of infection control," said Kentaro Iwata in videos he has since deleted. South Korea, meanwhile, announced 51 new cases, with more than 40 in a cluster centred on the Shincheonji Church of Jesus, an entity often seen as a cult.

The infections apparently came from a 61-year-old woman who first developed a fever on February 10 and attended at least four services before being diagnosed.

Authorities were investigating whether she visited a hospital where a long-term patient contracted the virus and later died.

Beyond Asia, citizen backlash was growing over fears of contagion.

Iraq on Thursday clamped down on travel to and from neighbouring Iran, with Iraq's health ministry announcing people in Iran were barred

from entering the country "until further notice."

The move came after Iran confirmed three new coronavirus cases following the deaths of two elderly men.

And in Ukraine, a crowd clashed with police outside a hospital over government plans to quarantine evacuees from coronavirus-hit China at the site. Six buses with the evacuees arrived at the medical centre in Novi Sanzhar, in the central Poltava region, escorted by police.

Angry demonstrators lit fires and pelted the buses with rocks, breaking at least three windows.

Because of the virus outbreak, airlines operating in the Asia-Pacific region stand to lose a combined USD 27.8 billion of revenue, the International Air Transport Association said.

This is the first time since 2003 that demand for air travel has declined, IATA CEO Alexandre de Juniac said.

# Toll 2,236 in China, 75,400 cases confirmed

PTI ■ BEIJING

The death toll in China's novel coronavirus has gone up to 2,236 with 118 more deaths reported, mostly from the hard-hit Hubei province, while the overall confirmed infection cases have climbed to 75,465, Chinese health officials said on Friday.

The number of deaths is higher than the previous day when 114 people died of the disease, but the country reported the lowest number of new infection cases in nearly a month, fuelling hopes that Beijing's epidemic control efforts were working.

By the end of Thursday, a total of 2,236 people had died of the disease and 75,465 confirmed cases of novel coronavirus infection had been reported from 31 provincial-level regions and in China, the National Health Commission (NHC) said in its daily report on Friday.

In all 118 deaths and 889 new confirmed cases of the novel coronavirus infection were reported from all over the country, state-run Xinhua news agency reported.

Another 1,614 new suspected cases were reported on Thursday and 5,206 people were still suspected of being infected with the virus, the NHC said.

Among the deaths, 115 were from the epicentre of the virus Hubei province and one in Zhejiang, Chongqing and Yunnan, respectively, it said.

Also 18,264 patients infected with the novel coronavirus have been discharged from hospitals after recovery by the end of Thursday.

Hubei Province, centre of the novel coronavirus outbreak, reported 411 new confirmed cases and 115 new deaths on Thursday, according to the provincial health commission Friday.

The latest report brought the total confirmed cases in the hard-hit province to 62,442.

Wuhan, the provincial capital, recorded a total of 45,346 confirmed cases.

Among the 42,056 hospitalised patients, 8,979 were still in severe condition and another 2,018 in critical condition, the local health commission said.

The province also saw 1,451 patients discharged from hospital after recovery on Thursday, bringing the total number of discharged patients in the province to 11,788, it said.

By the end of Thursday, 68 confirmed cases including two deaths had been reported in Hong Kong, 10 confirmed cases in Macao, and 24 in Taiwan including one death.

Meanwhile, Beijing saw a sudden spike in the cases after the central city hospital reported 36 novel coronavirus infections as of Thursday, a sharp increase from nine cases from two weeks earlier, leading many to fear a potential explosion of infection numbers in the capital, the state-run Global Times daily reported.

Among the infected at Fuxing Hospital in Xicheng district were eight medical workers, nine cleaning staff and 19 patients along with their families, the report said.

"Considering 36 confirmed cases were found in Fuxing Hospital, it is more about one case of multiple infections rather than an epidemic of the whole area," Wang Guangfa, director of the department of respiratory and critical care medicine at Peking University First Hospital said.

Another major hospital, Peking University People's Hospital, on Thursday, for the first time, reported confirmed cases of infection.

Three patients at the hospital were confirmed to have the novel coronavirus on February 17.

As of Wednesday, Beijing had confirmed 395 cases of novel coronavirus infection, with four deaths.

# Virus hotspots emerge in Chinese prisons

AFP ■ BEIJING

More than 400 cases of the new coronavirus have been detected in prisons across China, officials said Friday, fuelling concerns about new clusters of the epidemic.

Seven guards and 200 inmates tested positive for the virus at Rencheng prison in eastern Shandong province, the provincial health commission said at a press conference. Xie Weijun, head of Shandong's justice department, was sacked over the outbreak along with two other provincial prison administration officials and five officials from the penitentiary, officials said.

Wu Lei, director of Shandong's prison administration, said the new cases showed that "the implementation of our prevention and control measures has not been effective."

Another 34 cases were found at Shilifeng prison in

eastern Zhejiang province, leading to the ouster of its director and another official.

Hubei, the hard-hit central province where the virus emerged late last year, said Friday that 271 cases were reported by its prisons on Thursday, including 220 that had previously not been known to provincial authorities.

Hubei announced earlier on Friday that a total of 411 new cases of the virus were confirmed in the province on Thursday, but later revised its figure up to 631 to include the prison numbers.

The clusters came as Chinese authorities have pointed to a drop in officially reported new cases this week as evidence that quarantines and other drastic measures to contain the virus are working.

Most of China remains paralysed over fears of contagion, with people slowly trick-

ling back to work, schools remaining closed, and Beijing ordering returnees to self-quarantine for 14 days.

New cases at two hospitals in the country's capital have also emerged. Health officials said 36 patients, medical workers and family members have been infected with the virus at Beijing's Fuxing hospital, which has been partially sealed off since January 31. An elderly woman receiving kidney treatment at Peking University People's Hospital also tested positive after two infected relatives visited her earlier this month, the hospital said.

People who came into close contact with those infected at both hospitals are being monitored, while 12 women and 10 infants from the obstetrics ward have been ordered to leave Peking University People's Hospital for their own safety, authorities said.



Workers in face masks dispense lunch outside of an office building in Beijing on Friday AP

# Three new virus cases in Iran

AFP ■ TEHRAN

Iran has confirmed three new coronavirus cases following the deaths of two elderly men, the health ministry told AFP on Thursday, as Iraq banned travel to and from its neighbour. The pair who died were elderly Iranian citizens and residents of the city of Qom.

They were the first confirmed deaths from the COVID-19 virus in the Middle East.

Health ministry spokesman Kianush Jahanpour said two of the new cases were also in Qom and the other was in Arak, south of the holy city.

"In total there were five cases... of which two have been fatal," he said.

Qom is a centre for Islamic studies and tourists, attracting scholars from Iran and beyond.

However, a government official said the deceased men had not left Iran.

Following the announcement of the deaths, Iraq on Thursday clamped down on travel to and from the Islamic republic, with Iraq's health ministry announcing people in Iran were barred from entering

the country "until further notice".

"Iranians are prohibited from entering (Iraq)," a senior official told AFP, adding that border crossings with Iran had been closed, with only returning Iraqis allowed to pass through.

Those Iraqis would be examined and, if necessary, placed in quarantine for 14 days, the health ministry said.

Iraqi nationals are also not allowed to travel to Iran, according to the ministry.

The border closure followed a backlash against a Wednesday announcement of visa waivers for Iranian nationals wishing to travel to Iraq.

Iraqis took to social media using the hashtag "close the border" and local officials called for a ban on the entry of goods and people through various border crossings with the Islamic republic.

Iraqi airports are already screening travellers for the virus and national carrier Iraqi Airways has suspended flights to Iran.

Each year, millions of Iranian pilgrims visit holy

Shiite sites in Iraq, providing the Iraqi state with significant revenue.

Earlier Thursday, Iran's government spokesman Ali Rabiei said Tehran would set up a top-level body of government and defence officials to fight the virus' spread, according to state news agency IRNA.

"We, however, need global action (by authorities) and the cooperation of all citizens," Rabiei said on Twitter.

In Kuwait, national carrier Kuwait Airways announced Thursday it would suspend all flights to Iran, while its ports will also be closed to passengers travelling to and from the country. Kuwaitis were advised not to travel to Qom, and were warned anyone arriving from the city they would be quarantined.

The deaths in Iran were reported by local media on Wednesday, just hours after Tehran said there were two cases in the country.

On social media, several people accused the government of keeping silent to prevent panic ahead of Friday's parliamentary elections.

"Just four hours separated the announcement that two compatriots were infected... and their deaths," journalist Javad Heydari tweeted.

"This signifies that the virus had been around for some days but they hid the truth." Public confidence in government pronouncements has plummeted since the downing of a Ukrainian passenger plane on January 8 that killed 176 people.

The government initially denied responsibility, but later admitted the plane had been fired on due to "human error" and blamed a jittery missile operator. The culture ministry has asked local media to only publish official information from government officials and denounced what it claimed was a proliferation of fake news on social media regarding the virus.

Since December, the novel coronavirus has killed more than 2,200 people in China, the epicentre of the epidemic.

Elsewhere in the world, the virus has killed 11 people and spread across some 25 countries.

# SKorea confirms 52 more cases

AFP ■ SEOUL

South Korea confirmed 52 more cases of novel coronavirus on Friday, taking its overall figure to 156 and making it the worst-infected country outside China.

Altogether 39 of the new cases were linked to the Shincheonji Church of Jesus in the southern city of Daegu, the Korean Centres for Disease Control and Prevention said.

More than 80 members of Shincheonji have now been infected, starting with a 61-year-old woman who developed a fever on February 10 but attended at least four church services before being diagnosed.

The mayor of Daegu — South Korea's fourth-biggest city, with a population of over 2.5 million — has advised residents to stay indoors, and commanders at a major US base in the area restricted access.

Residents wore masks to go about their daily activities Friday.

# Condition of 8 infected Indians on board ship improving

PTI ■ TOKYO

The condition of eight Indians, who were on board the cruise ship off the Japanese coast and undergoing treatment for the deadly coronavirus, is improving as the last batch of healthy passengers was set to disembark the vessel on Friday after the quarantine period ended.

The ship, Diamond Princess, docked at the Yokohama port, near Tokyo, on February 3 with 3,711 passengers and crew on board. It was quarantined after a passenger who disembarked last month in Hong Kong was found to be the carrier of the disease.

A total of 138 Indians, including 132 crew and 6 passengers, were among the 3,711 people on board the ship.

The Indian embassy said in a tweet that no additional Indian national on board the ship has tested positive for

the virus since Thursday. "Conditions of 8 Indians receiving treatment are improving," it tweeted on Friday.

The Indian mission said it was coordinating with the Japanese authorities and ship management company for safe return of the Indians.

According to an AP report on Friday, the ship has the largest cluster of COVID-19 cases outside China. A total of 634 people tested positive of the disease.

Two former passengers of the ship have also died.

Health Minister Katsunobu Kato told reporters that mass disembarkation of passengers from the ship was set to end on Friday.

According to a report in Japan Today newspaper, over 400 passengers from the ship were scheduled to depart on Friday.

Chief Cabinet Secretary Yoshihide Suga said that over

1,000 passengers and crew will remain on board the ship after Friday's disembarkations.

Some of the passengers with no infection began leaving the ship on Wednesday after the end of a two-week quarantine period that failed to stop the spread of the virus among passengers and crew.

Meanwhile, the death toll in the novel coronavirus in China has gone up to 2,236 with 118 more casualties reported, mostly from the hard-hit Hubei province, while the overall confirmed infection cases have climbed to 75,465, Chinese health officials said on Friday.

The virus outbreak originated in China's Hubei province in December and has spread to more than 25 countries, including India.

Many countries have banned arrivals from China while major airlines have suspended flights to the country.

# Young doctor in China's Wuhan city dies of coronavirus

PTI ■ BEIJING

A 29-year-old Chinese doctor, who postponed his wedding to treat patients infected with the deadly coronavirus, has died treating them after being infected by the virus, the ninth fatality among the health-care providers working to contain the outbreak.

Dr Peng Yinhua, doctor of a Wuhan hospital who treated patients infected with the coronavirus, died on Thursday night, according to the health bureau.

Peng, a respiratory acute care medical professional, became infected while working to combat the novel coronavirus at the First People's Hospital of Jiangxia District of

Wuhan. He was hospitalised on January 25 and transferred to the Wuhan Jinyintan Hospital for treatment on January 30.

"Peng Yinhua, a frontline doctor at Jiangxia First Hospital in virus epicenter #Wuhan, died of #COVID19 on Thursday night. He had earlier delayed his wedding as he wanted to treat patients with the disease at hospital," state-run Global Times tweeted on Friday.

He died from the virus despite doctors' all-out efforts to save his life.

Chinese health authorities have asked health agencies to apply for the honour of martyr for deceased medical staff to the veteran's affairs authorities, comfort the families of the

**"Peng Yinhua, a frontline doctor at Jiangxia First Hospital in virus epicenter #Wuhan, died of #COVID19 on Thursday night. He had earlier delayed his wedding as he wanted to treat patients with the disease at hospital"**

deceased and help solve their difficulties, as well as publicise stories of those who sacrificed their lives during the epidemic, state-run Xinhua news agency reported.

Li Wenliang, the 34-year-old Chinese doctor, who was one of the first people to sound the alarm about the new out-

break died on February 7.

Li sent a message to his medical-school alumni group on December 30, warning that seven patients had been quarantined at Wuhan Central Hospital after coming down with a respiratory illness that seemed like the SARS coronavirus. But Wuhan police reprimanded and silenced Li.

Earlier, Dr Liu Zhiming, head of the Wuchang Hospital died due to the virus. On the same day Liu Fan, senior nurse of the hospital, died along with her parents and brother due to the virus.

China's National Health Commission earlier said that a total of 1,716 medical workers had contracted the infection as of February 11.

# Amid virus crackdown, Uighurs hope Chinese 'waking up' to their plight

AFP ■ GENEVA

Chinese suffering under harsh measures used to fight the deadly new coronavirus should recognise that similar methods have been deployed against China's minorities for years, an exiled Uighur rights activist said this week.

Jewher Ilham, the daughter of jailed Uighur intellectual Ilham Tohti, criticised some of the measures imposed by Beijing, including placing tens of millions of people under lockdown with little freedom of movement.

But she said she hoped the crackdown might raise awareness and more sympathy among the general Chinese public for the Uighur minori-

ty in the northwestern Xinjiang region, who she said had long faced similar oppressive methods.

"This is a time when the Chinese citizens will have to realise that the Uighurs are not the only ones who are targeted," Ilham told AFP this week in Geneva, where she was attending a conference for human rights activists.

Ilham, whose award-winning father was sentenced to life imprisonment in 2014 for "separatism" in an internationally criticised trial, said it was time regular Chinese citizens realised that "terrorists" are not the only ones seeing their rights trampled on.

"It is not about religion. It is not about our identity," she said. "This is about human

rights." China has faced international condemnation for rounding up an estimated one million Uighurs and other mostly Muslim ethnic Turkic minorities in internment camps in Xinjiang, where rights groups say inmates endure political indoctrination and forced assimilation into the majority Han society.

Beijing says the facilities are "vocational training centres" necessary to combat terrorism through job training and teaching Mandarin.

Chinese authorities have taken drastic means to try to halt the spread of COVID-19, which has killed more than 2,200 people since emerging in December, with more than 75,000 people infected in China and hundreds more in over 25

other countries.

Some 56 million people in central Hubei province and its capital Wuhan, the epicentre of the outbreak, have been placed under unprecedented lockdown. Authorities, who have begun going door-to-door to compel anyone with symptoms into quarantine, have been met with praise from the World Health Organization, which credits Beijing for so far having averted an explosive international spread of the virus.

But rights advocates have raised alarm over the crackdown both on freedom of movement and of expression, and have also raised questions about access to food and medicine for those under lockdown.

# India hitting US 'very hard' on trade: Trump

PTI ■ WASHINGTON

India has been hitting the US "very hard" on trade with high tariffs for many years, Donald Trump complained ahead of his first visit to the country during which the President said he will "talk business" with Prime Minister Narendra Modi to promote American products.

President Trump and First Lady Melania are scheduled to travel to Ahmedabad, Agra and New Delhi on February 24 and 25.

"I'm going to India next week and we're talking trade. They've been hitting us very hard for many, many years," Trump said at a 'Keep America Great' rally in Colorado on Thursday.

Trump told thousands of his supporters that he "really likes" Prime Minister Modi and they would be talking business.

"We've got to talk a little... We've got to talk a little business. It's been hitting us hard. They give us tariffs, one the highest in the world is India,"

he said.

Ahead of Trump's visit, there have been reports on India and the US agreeing on a trade package as a precursor to a major trade deal.

Downplaying the expectation of a trade deal with India during his visit, Trump said the two countries could make a "tremendous" trade deal, but indicated that the talks on this might slow down if he did not get a good deal.

"We're going to India, and we may make a tremendous deal there," Trump said in his commencement address at the Hope for Prisoners Graduation Ceremony in Las Vegas on Thursday.

"Maybe we'll slow down. We'll do it after the election. I think that could happen too. So, we'll see what happens," he said.

"But we're only making deals if they're good deals because we're putting America first. Whether people like it or not, we're putting America first," Trump said.

The bilateral India-US trade in goods and services is

about three per cent of the US' world trade.

Trump spoke about his India visit at the Colorado rally and the grand welcome he is expected to get in the country.

"I hear, they are going to have 10 million people. They say anywhere from six to 10 million people are going to be showing up along the route to one of the largest stadiums in the world, the largest cricket stadium in the world, which is brand new and beautiful," Trump said.

He said the "Namaste Trump" rally in Ahmedabad would spoil him.

"Prime Minister Modi said, we will have 10 million people greet you. Here's my problem. We have a packed house. We have a lot of people, thousands of people that couldn't get in. It's going to look like peanuts from now on," he said.

"I'll never be satisfied with the crowd. If we have 10 million people in India, how can I be satisfied when we fill up like a 60,000 seat stadium? I am getting spoiled? He said build

a bigger stadium visit," Trump said.

One of his supporters from the audience suggested that he build a bigger stadium.

Trump, who is seeking reelection in the November presidential polls, indicated that his visit will result in more products "proudly stamped with the beautiful phrase Made in the USA".

Multiple rounds of talks have taken place between Commerce Minister Piyush Goyal and US Trade Representative Robert Lighthizer in the past few weeks over telephone to sign a possible trade deal during Trump's visit.

India is demanding exemption from high duties imposed by the US on certain steel and aluminium products, resumption of export benefits to certain domestic products under their Generalised System of Preferences (GSP), greater market access for its products from sectors including agriculture, automobile, auto components and engineering.

On the other hand, the US

wants greater market access for its farm and manufacturing products, dairy items and medical devices, and cut on import duties on some ICT products. The US has also raised concerns over high trade deficit with India which was USD 16.9 billion in 2018-19.

In a recent report, the Congressional Research Service (CRS) said the trading relationship is more consequential for India - in 2018 the US was its second largest goods export market (16.0 per cent share) after the European Union (EU, 17.8 per cent), and third largest goods import supplier (6.3 per cent) after China (14.6 per cent) and the EU 28 (10.2 per cent).

India is now the United States' eighth-largest trading partner in goods and services and is among the world's largest economies.

India's trade with the US now resembles, in terms of volume, America's trade with South Korea (USD 167 billion in 2018) or France (USD 129 billion), according to Council on Foreign Relations.

# Modi has advantage on Facebook: Trump

PTI ■ WASHINGTON

US President Donald Trump on Thursday said Prime Minister Narendra Modi, who represents "1.5 billion" Indians, has an advantage on Facebook, while referring to the number of followers the two leaders have on the social networking website.

Trump, who will visit India next week, said Modi is "number two" on Facebook in terms of followers and that he is number one as told to him directly by Facebook CEO Mark Zuckerberg.

"I'm going to India next week, and we're talking about — you know, they have 1.5 billion people. And Prime Minister Modi is number two on Facebook, number two. Think of that. You know who number one is? Trump. You believe that? Number one. I just found out," Trump said during his commencement address at the Hope for

Prisoners Graduation Ceremony in Las Vegas.

As per official estimates, India's population currently is 1.3 billion people.

Facebook pages on Thursday reflected that Modi is followed by 44 million people, while the account of Trump by 27 million. The US population is estimated to be 325 million.

During his address, Trump said he was recently congratulated by Zuckerberg for being the number one on Facebook.

"The head of Facebook Mr Zuckerberg came in three weeks ago. He said, 'Congratulations.' I said, 'On what?' He said, 'You're number one on Facebook.' I said, 'That's cool.' Number one on Twitter too," the president said, amidst laughter from the audience.

"That's because — it's true. And if I wasn't, I could never say it because it would be breaking news that

Trump told a fib. No, number one," he said, adding that he has congratulated Modi on this.

"And I congratulated Prime Minister Modi. I said, 'But, you know, you have 1.5 billion people. I have 350 million. You have an advantage,' Trump said, during his commencement address referring to one of his conversations with Modi.

This is not the first time that the US President has claimed to be the number one and Prime Minister Modi number two on their popularity on Facebook. Last week, Trump took to Twitter and claimed to be the number one on Facebook citing Zuckerberg.

Even last month, in an interview to CNBC TV on the sidelines of the World Economic Forum in Davos, Trump said, "I'm No.1 on Facebook, you know who's no.2? Modi from India."

# Voting underway in Iran parliamentary poll

AFP ■ TEHRAN

Iranians began voting Friday in a parliamentary election which conservatives are expected to dominate, capitalising on public anger against moderate conservative President Hassan Rouhani over a ravaged economy, corruption and multiple crises.

State television showed the Islamic republic's supreme leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei casting the first ballot in Tehran.

As he voted, Khamenei called on all Iranians to take part in the election "as soon as possible," saying that doing so would "guarantee the country's national interests".

The 11th parliamentary election since the 1979 Islamic Revolution comes after steeply escalating tensions between Iran and the United States and the accidental downing of a Ukrainian airliner that sparked anti-government protests.

Experts predict a low turnout with rising voter apathy that they say will serve the conservatives at the expense of Rouhani, who was re-elected in

2017 promising more freedoms and the benefits of engagement with the West.

Iran has been hit by an economic slump and high inflation following harsh US sanctions after President Donald Trump pulled out of a landmark nuclear deal with Tehran in 2018.

"Iran's biggest problem is not having stability, peace and calm," said Amir Mohtasham, who is 38 and jobless.

"Our elections are useless. Even the current parliament has 90 sitting MPs who are under investigation for financial corruption," he said.

Nearly 58 million people are eligible to vote.

Around half of the 16,033 hopefuls will contest the 290 seats up for grabs across 31 provinces after the Guardian Council barred thousands of would-be candidates, mostly moderates and reformists.

On Thursday, Washington slapped sanctions on five Iranian officials in charge of vetting candidates, including Ahmad Jannati, a powerful cleric.

"The Trump administra-

tion will not tolerate the manipulation of elections to favour the regime's malign agenda," said Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin.

The Guardian Council slammed the sanctions, saying they showed the United States' disdain for democracy.

"America's regime has shown through illegal sanctions... on members of the Guardian Council that it has nothing to do with democracy," said its spokesman Abbas Ali Kadkhodae, who was among those hit with sanctions.

"We are now even more determined to safeguard the people's vote," he tweeted.

On the eve of the elections, state media aired a short clip showing votes transforming into torpedoes hitting enemy navy ships closing in on Iran.

Hessameddin Ashena, Rouhani's main adviser, warned on Twitter that abstention "increases (among other things) the possibility of a military aggression".

Turnout in Iran's past 10 elections averaged 60.5 percent, according to the interior ministry.

The Guardian Council said it expected at least 50 percent of registered voters to cast ballots.

Many voters, however, have voiced disinterest.

"We voted for Mr Rouhani with a dream, and then we didn't achieve anything. So, in my opinion, people are not hopeful any more," said Mohammed, who spoke from his carpet shop and only gave one name.

"I honestly don't want to vote, because it won't fix our problems and is of no use, and this election is only a formality just so they can show to the world that they are chosen by the nation, while it is not so," said Pari Aghazadeh, a fashion designer.

In November, demonstrations over petrol price hikes spread across Iran and turned violent before being crushed in a deadly crackdown.

Tehran and Washington have nearly gone to war twice in the past seven months, most recently after the US assassinated prominent Iranian general Qasem Soleimani on January 3.

The "martyrdom" of the hugely popular general provoked an outpouring of grief in Iran.

Millions of people turned out to mourn his death, but that unity suffered a blow after Iran finally admitted that it had shot down a Ukrainian airliner on January 8, killing 176 people.

The government sparked further anger by denying for several days that Iran was to blame, before owning up to a jittery reaction by a missile operator.

The disaster unfolded as Iran's defences were on high alert in case the US retaliated to Iranian strikes hours earlier on American troops stationed in Iraq in response to the killing of Soleimani.

Voting for the parliament, or Majles, lasts 10 hours but can be extended. Final results are not expected before Sunday.

Apart from the parliament, voters will also choose replacements for deceased members of the Assembly of Experts, a 88-strong clerical body that appoints and monitors the supreme leader.



In this photo released by an official website of the office of the Iranian supreme leader, Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei casts his ballot in the parliamentary elections, in Tehran on Friday. AP

# Lanka Parl panel proposes immediate burqa ban

PTI ■ COLOMBO

Sri Lankan parliamentary committee on national security has proposed an immediate ban on the burqa and suspending the registration of political parties on ethnic and religious basis, following the Easter Sunday terror attack that killed over 250 people.

The proposals featured in a special report presented in Parliament on Thursday to resolve 14 controversial issues following the April 21 Easter attack last year. The report was tabled by MP Malith Jayatilaka, Chairman Sectoral Oversight Committee on National Security, the Daily Mirror reported.



a number of countries have already banned the burqa.

The report suggested that the police should have the power to ask anyone wearing a face covering in a public place to take off such clothing in order to establish the identity of the person. If such a request is not complied with, police should have the power to arrest the individual without a warrant, the report said.

It also recommended the country's Election Commission to enact a legislation to suspend the registration of political parties on ethnic and religious basis.

The report also said that the registration of political parties which have some racial or religious conflict

or in its name should also be prohibited.

Such a party should be converted into a political or non-religious political party within a specified period of time, the report said.

The report states that all students studying in madrassas should be absorbed into the normal school system under the Ministry of Education within three years.

The report also proposes to establish a special committee to regulate the madrassas under the Department of Muslim Religious and Cultural Affairs.

Nine suicide bombers belonging to local Islamist extremist group National Thawheed Jamaat (NTJ) carried out a series of devastating blasts that tore through three churches and three luxury hotels on the Easter Sunday, killing 258 people, including 11 Indians.

# Trump scoffs at 'Parasite's' Oscar win

AFP ■ COLORADO SPRINGS

President Donald Trump on Thursday scorned the best picture Oscar for South Korean film "Parasite," asking how a foreign movie could get the honour.

"How bad was the Academy Awards this year?" Trump asked the crowd at a packed reelection campaign rally in Colorado Springs, Colorado.

"We got enough problems with South Korea, with trade. On top of it, they give them the best movie of the year?" Trump asked in disbelief.

"Parasite," a dark comedy exploring class divides, made history by becoming the first non-English-language film to win Hollywood's biggest annual prize.

Saying, "was it good? I don't know," Trump seemed to indicate he had not watched the film.

# Intelligence officials say Russia boosting Trump candidacy

AP ■ WASHINGTON

Intelligence officials have warned lawmakers that Russia is interfering in the 2020 election campaign to help President Donald Trump get reelected, three officials familiar with the closed-door briefing said Thursday.

The warning raises questions about the integrity of the presidential campaign and whether Trump's administration is taking the proper steps to combat the kind of interference that the U.S. saw in 2016.

The officials asked for anonymity to discuss sensitive intelligence. They said the briefing last week focused on Russia's efforts to influence the 2020 election and sow discord in the American electorate.

The warning was first reported by The New York Times and The Washington Post.

A senior administration official said the news infuriated Trump, who complained that Democrats would use the information against him. Over the course of his presidency, Trump has dismissed the intelligence community's assessment of Russia's 2016 election interference as a conspiracy to undermine his victory. The official spoke on the condition of anonymity to describe the private meeting.

One day after the Feb. 13 briefing to the House Intelligence Committee, Trump berated the then-director of national intelligence, Joseph Maguire, and he announced this week that Maguire would be replaced by Richard Grenell, a Trump loyalist.

US intelligence agencies say Russia interfered in the 2016 election through social media campaigns and stealing and distributing emails from Democratic accounts.

They say Russia was trying to boost Trump's campaign and add chaos to the American political process. Special counsel Robert Mueller concluded that Russian interference was "sweeping and systematic," but he did not find a criminal conspiracy between Russia and the Trump campaign.

Republican lawmakers who were in last week's briefing by the DNI's chief election official, Shelby Pierson, pushed back by noting that Trump has been tough on Russia, one of the officials said.

While Trump has imposed severe economic sanctions on Russia, he also has spoken warmly of Russian leader Vladimir Putin and withdrawn troops from areas, like Syria, where Moscow could fill the vacuum. He delayed military aid last year to Ukraine, a Russian adversary — a deci-

sion that was at the core of his impeachment proceedings.

The Times said Trump was angry that the House briefing was made before the panel's chairman, Rep. Adam Schiff, who led the impeachment proceedings. Trump on Thursday formally appointed Grenell, the US ambassador to Germany, to replace Maguire as the new acting director of national intelligence.

Maguire was required to step down soon under federal law governing acting appointments. The Times cited two administration officials as saying the timing, after the intelligence briefing, was coincidental.

Grenell's background is primarily in politics and media affairs. He lacks the extensive national security and military experience of Maguire, as well as previous holders of the position overseeing the nation's 17 intelligence agencies.

# Irish PM quits as govt formation founders

AFP ■ DUBLIN

Irish Prime Minister Leo Varadkar resigned on Thursday, but stayed on as interim leader while the country's three main parties battle out coalition talks after an inconclusive election.

Varadkar tendered his resignation as taoiseach, or premier, to President Michael Higgins after the first sitting of Ireland's lower house of parliament since an 8 February election which radically recast the political landscape.

"In accordance with the constitution, the taoiseach and the government will continue to carry on their duties until successors have been appointed," a government

statement said.

Parties in the 160 seat chamber — the Dail — convened and nominated candidates to lead a new government as taoiseach but with none commanding a majority it was adjourned until 5 March.

Sinn Fein leader Mary Lou McDonald received the most votes backing her.

At 45 it was far short of the 80 needed to take office but it was a symbolic victory reflecting the surge the nationalist party enjoyed in the election.

Sinn Fein, which once served as the political wing of paramilitary the Irish Republican Army (IRA), became the second biggest party with 37 seats — break-

ing the historic duopoly of centre-right parties Fine Gael and Fianna Fail.

"The people who vote for us aren't going anywhere," said McDonald.

"We have made a commitment to them to represent them well and to make our very best effort to deliver that government of change — and that is precisely what we intend to do."

McDonald outstripped the 36 votes backing Varadkar to continue as prime minister after his Fine Gael party slipped into third position in the election with 35 seats.

"The onus is on those who have made enormous promises of change to people during this election, who are entrusted with that

mandate to bring a programme for government to the Dail for approval," Varadkar said in parliament before departing to resign.

"If they cannot, they should say so and be upfront and honest about their failure, and the empty promises they made," Micheal Martin's Fianna Fail party won the most seats in the election at 38, but suffered significant losses on their 2016 wins.

He received the backing of 41 lawmakers in Thursday's contest.

Sinn Fein has been historically associated with the IRA which fought British rule in Northern Ireland for decades until the late 1990s, when a peace agreement largely ended violence that

left more than 3,000 dead on all sides. It won the popular vote with 24.5 per cent of first preference ballots and picked up 14 seats by attracting voters with a campaign focusing on Ireland's housing shortage and health crisis.

But its flagship policy on Irish unity is likely to be a top issue if it gains power.

It wants a referendum on uniting the two parts of the island within five years.

At least three parties will be needed to form a majority government in the Dail.

But with the three largest refusing to cooperate newly elected speaker Sean O Fearghail said the challenge of government formation remained "substantial".

Fianna Fail and Fine Gael

# Saudi intercepts Yemen missiles

AFP ■ RIYADH

Yemeni rebel missiles targeted cities in Saudi Arabia have been intercepted, the region's Riyadh-led military coalition said, in the latest cross-border attack by insurgents. The missiles were fired by the Iran-aligned Huthi militant group, the coalition said in a statement released Thursday by the official Saudi Press Agency (SPA).

"They were launched in a systematic, deliberate manner to target cities and civilians, which is a flagrant defiance of international humanitarian law," coalition spokesman Turki al-Maliki said, according to

SPA.

"The capital (Sanaa) has become a Huthi militia assembly, installation and launching hub for ballistic missiles that target the kingdom," he added.

Saudi Arabia has repeatedly accused Iran of supplying sophisticated weapons to the Huthis, a charge Tehran denies.

The coalition intervened in support of the Yemeni government in 2015 when President Abdrabbo Mansour Hadi fled into Saudi exile as the rebels closed in on his last remaining territory in and around Aden.

Since then, the conflict has killed tens of thousands of people, many of them civilians, relief agencies say.

FOOD MANIA 60 MINUTES

# MEMORIES ON THE TABLE

Even though it has become a fad to be a vegan these days, you're still likely to be the odd one out on the dinner table. However, chefs are actually creating a space for them by generating the best alternatives even if it's not a vegan-friendly cuisine — here, seafood. Chef Peter Kuruvita, too, made sure that there were enough alternatives for the vegetarians on the table as he presented a flavourful island feast of Sri Lankan seafood at Table Stories, a dining concept by FoodInk Expeditions and Roseate Hotels and Resorts.

Food is an effective trigger of profound memories and it's all about chasing them, believes the chef. Leaving his home in Colombo was one of the toughest decisions that chef Peter took in his life. He often finds himself reminiscing the sights, sound and smell of his home there. And *Pol sambhal* was one such recipe that has always helped revive that nostalgia. We began the meal with the dish and village bread. The dish, which is a mixture of grated coconut, dried chillies, Maldive fish, lime juice and salt, has forever managed to teleport him back to the village bakery next to his house in Colombo. As a ritual, he would find himself at the bakery every morning picking up a loaf of baked bread, slicing it and placing some *Pol sambhal* into it. He says that it's a memory he'll cherish forever. The bread was sleek and crunchy to the core — almost like the crispy, thin-crust of a pizza.

Chef Peter believes that he inherited his passion for cooking from his grandmother. She has undoubtedly been a perennial source of inspiration for him. Her special egg curry was the only reason he would wait for Sundays to come as a child. The sauce that she prepared, brimmed with spices, was the next recipe that he served on the candle-lit dinner table — butter poached crab, sugar snap peas, egg curry and dill. He mixed his grandma's secret egg curry sauce with sweet-tasting crabs, garnished it with peas, sugar snaps and *Wasabi* peas to create a dish that was a tribute to her. For vegetarians, it was soybeans, snap peas, *kiri hoddy* and dill on offer.

An Australian chef of Sri Lankan descent, an advocate of sustainable seafood, author and television presenter PETER KURUVITA tells AYUSHI SHARMA that because Sri Lanka has been a colony of Portugal, Holland, England and close to Southern India, its cuisine has taken on the best of what was brought to it

Except for the Wasabi peas, which were roasted and coated in a mixture of starch, sugar, salt and oil and lemon, it failed to make a mark on my tastebuds.

Moving on, he presented the beetroot curry with pickled red onion, baby target beet, which is an iconic Sri Lankan dish. This curry represented the indomitable spirit of Sri Lankan countrymen. For us to understand how this dish came to be, he told us that he wandered through the markets of Hambantota, a town in Sri Lanka, which was destroyed during the tsunami of 2004. He chose to return there to pay his respect to the people, who never went home and showed how things can be regenerated and recouped after such a tragedy. That's where he decided to recreate this curry, which is very popular in the country. If you thought beetroot was one of those bland vegetables that was difficult to coax flavour out of, this one by chef Peter was the perfect answer to it.

The next dish needs a background story first. What started in 2003 as an attempt to knock off one of his opponent's dishes from favourites list, really had chef Peter to create something special. And yet again, his grandmother had a role to play in it. The dish, Sri Lankan snapper curry, *aloo chop*, tamarind *chutney*, steamed rice and condiments, was made using her favourite fish curry recipe. To layer this combination, he added beetroot to lend its vivid red colour and the tamarind *chutney* to up the punch

the dish packed. But this *chutney* wasn't the one you would traditionally find in the subcontinent. He learnt this particular version from an Indo-Fijian in one of his restaurants in Fiji. He feels that migrants are instrumental in shaping the culinary and cultural fabric of any place. This dish was an amalgamation of chef's experiences and an ode to all the people he has met in his life. For vegetarians, he replaced the snapper curry with vegetable cutlets and the rest stayed the same. Due to the name, one might recall the usual cutlets one has in Indian homes for breakfast, but these were way beyond conventionality.

Ending the meal on a sweet note, chef Peter presented *curds* and *treacle*, for which he had collaborated with the farmers of Sri Lanka. "We made the curd with farmers and palm treacle from the palmyra palm. The combination is undoubtedly heavenly," he says. This dessert was an attempt to bring a smile on the faces of orphans of Hambantota. And it certainly brought a smile on my face, too.

After having a stomach-full of delectable delicacies with many stories and laughter around the table, chef Peter and I sat for a quick conversation over a few glasses of wine.

◆How did you conceptualise the meal?

The idea was to use the food from my heritage, travel experiences and my restaurant — Noosa Beach House, Australia. I was completely aware that

people of Delhi are not that into seafood. So I purposely chose to present that. It should be fresh, odourless and delicious. So the mission was to seek the highest quality ingredients from the best suppliers available. We achieved that goal with the help of the Table Stories team. I really like to challenge myself in the kitchen. The fusion of Sri Lankan flavours and food at my restaurant is what I did. But I also wanted to bring one Sri Lankan dish as it is and that's why added the beetroot curry on the menu.

◆How unique do you find the Sri Lankan cuisine?

Too Indian? I would put it that we are distant cousins, who have grown up in two different countries. Spices, a seed, coconut-driven, occasionally searingly hot and



others are slightly mild. It is heavily influenced by regions and availability, but being a small island, seafood is everywhere. Being a multicultural country, meat is enjoyed in all forms — be it Muslim, Sinhalese, Dutch, Portuguese, Burgher or Tamil. We have combined it as one national cuisine. There are so many influences but if you took any of the dishes back to its origin, it would be unrecognisable. As a colony of Portugal, Holland, England and close to Southern India, the cuisine has taken on the best of what was brought to the country, but rather than just adding it onto the menu, the ideas and flavours have been absorbed and become Sri Lankan food. The concept of modern Sri Lanka is very new and for me, it was my French base that helped me to plate the cuisine in a modern style. The idea was to deconstruct the food, ensure all the ingredients are being treated with respect, and then present it in a modern style, while being true to the flavours.

◆How have you explored various food cultures across the globe?

I get to travel a lot with my job and I love to try everything. In my restaurant, we look at the ingredients rather than the nationality. We are blessed with the most amazing produce in Australia and I like to let the ingredients do the talking. But I focus on how do I use the Australian produce using modern techniques and a twist of Sri Lankan cuisine.

◆How do you think the Indian audience is accepting the global food trends?

India is being embraced. It has many celebrity chefs and this is a clear indication that the discerning Indian population is now looking for new flavours and textures. India is already ahead of the world — in probably the biggest shift in dining — veganism.

◆What is your signature dish and how did you come up with such an experiment?

The Sri Lankan

snapper curry, tamarind *chutney*, *aloo chop*, rice and condiments. In India, when you traditionally eat curry and rice, you have upto six different curries on a plate with condiments, *papadam*, chilli and pickle. So that was the real challenge — how to serve a single dish and still call it Sri Lankan rice and curry? So here, the first part was to respect the fish because the idea of cooking a curry is to put everything into a pot with spices and cook it. But for me, that process ruined the fish. So I made the curry sauce with the fish scraps and kept the fish fillets aside. Then made a tamarind *chutney* and used it as the base. I took an idea from a Sri Lankan snack and adapted it to suit the fish curry by adding prawn, sweet potato and a roasted vine-ripened cherry tomato. Later, I added the vegetable component and then served the rice, condiments and coconut *sambal* separately. For me, being a seafood-orientated chef is that the fish is cooked perfectly and separated from any other flavours.

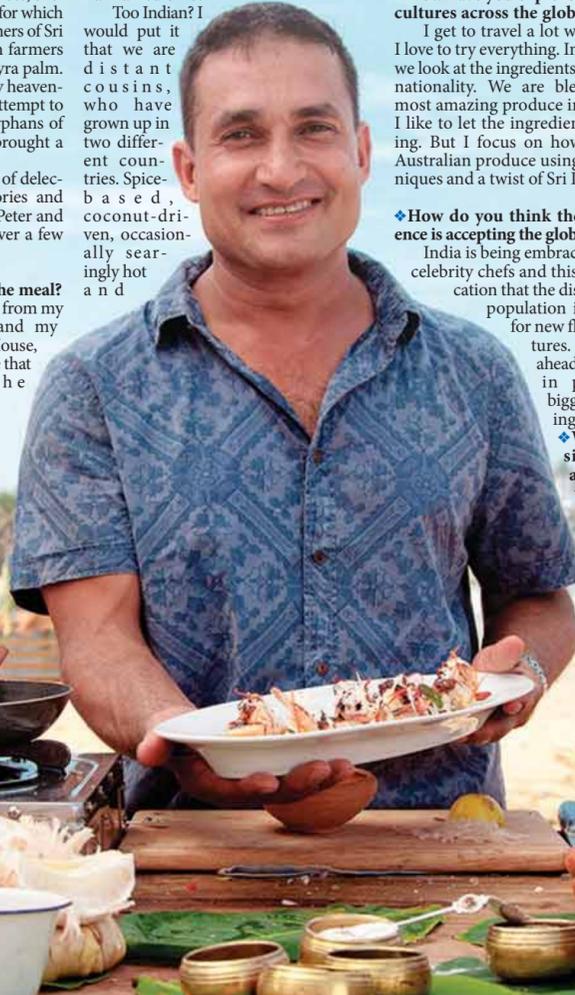
◆How do you adapt your dishes to local ingredients while travelling? Any Indian spices or dish that may have caught your fancy?

In India, there are a few ingredients that are not readily available. It is a matter of being organised and ensuring you either order ahead or bring it with you. The Indian spices that are very unique and not used in Sri Lanka at all are — asafoetida, *chaat masala*, *garam masala*. Rest is shared but the uses differ.

◆Food is subjective for different people. Some may like a dish and some won't. How do you deal with negative criticism to your food?

Take it on the chin and move on. If a guest has chosen a dish from your menu, you know it has to be executed well and if you don't like it, that is completely fine, they have just chosen the wrong one because as you said, food is subjective for different people, some may like it and some won't.

I do not let any food below mark leave the kitchen. But if a dish doesn't make the cut, you go out, talk to the guests and take the comments. Constructive criticism is always good to learn from. Aggressive guests have their own issues. I feel sorry for them and don't have time for them. If I make a mistake, I own up to it and will probably take it off the bill.



STUDIO CHAT 30 MINUTES

# The heart will go on

Actor CLAIRE DANES says that her series *Homeland* not only entertains people but stimulates conversations too. By TEAM VIVA



◆What would you say about taking a bit of Brody's role this season?

Yes, that was very elegant storytelling and a perfect symmetry. It psychically fuses Carrie with Brody in a way that felt right. And she is very clear about her patriotism, she can be challenged in every way but if her patriotism is questioned, I think that is probably the most profound insult she could imagine. So that was also interesting to play and explore. It was a good entry point.

◆After doing *Homeland*, do you discuss about world news and what's happening in the Middle East with your friends as your roles delve deep into this?

Yes, a little bit. All the knowledge that I had gained is through storytelling. Having direct inter-

change with actual policymakers, intelligence officers and people who are really building the world around us gave me a deep insight about the happenings in the Middle East. That is one of the things I will also miss the most.

◆Over these eight seasons, what were your favourite episodes?

Well, the first one that comes to mind is Q&A. This was the first time I met Mandy and it was like a play. It was very unusual in its structure and beautifully written. The fact that I'd never done that before, an hour long conversation opposite another actor, makes it more memorable. In fact, any scene with Mandy is memorable, I even remember my first scene but I don't know what episode it was. It was in the first season when I was



knew it would be hard for her emotionally. Is it similar with you?

Yes, I know it's taxing but I am so intimate with this imagined person now. And I've been carrying her with me for almost a decade and have been in this incredible company that is so exquisitely talented.

It's a rare combination to work with people whom I trust, respect and admire so much and to work with something which is challenging and make me question something urgent and worthwhile. So I feel very conflicted. I also feel that the show is such that we could go on. I think of it like origami. It just gets reconfigured every season. And I also think it is providing a service that isn't being provided very readily. It entertains people only to a certain extent as it stimulates conversation too. This is unique. There will be an absence. I will miss it, personally.

We had one extra season beyond what we were contracted to do and we all had to dig deep in order to produce it. But I can't say much now because I've never made anything for this long. I had my family over the course of filming this. It's been so profoundly defining for me. I'm still doing ADR. I have to go back and record what we've mucked up in 11 and 12. And we are doing press too. So I still feel very immersed and tethered at the same time. It's going to hit me that it's over around April when we would shoot the next season.

(The show airs on Star World every Friday at 10 pm.)

talking to Mandy about my frustrations with the job and loneliness. This is what first comes to my mind. There are many more.

◆The two people who have been there in most of the seasons are Saul and Carrie but it's Max who is seen for the longest time. What would you say about that character?

I think he's an incredible example of an actor who turned a part that could have been easily dismissed into something really specific and substantial. And he was playing somebody on the autistic spectrum, which was never overtly articulated but he was consistent with his choices. It is really interesting to see somebody who is an analyst and is working on the detailing of this technology. It is also interesting to see that Carrie had a bipolar condition and also a brain that worked a little differently.

You also understand that it does not take an exceptional person to devote themselves to this kind of work. This was something that just happened naturally, nobody designed it. But it was really valuable and revealing of how that world works.

◆Carrie was asked to go the field and she agreed even though she

SHORT CIRCUITS

**BHUMI PEDNEKAR**

When you want to become an actor, you dream that your responsibility increases, that your fan-following and their love for you increases. You want to keep them happy and satisfied with your films, so it's a happy problem to have. I am thankful for the award in critic's category which was decided by jury.



**A R RAHMAN**

We did a screening of *99 Songs* at Busan Film Festival and got standing ovation there. This is a feel-good film and not an art film. To be clear, it is not only for Indians but for all the people worldwide. I am not pitching it as an art film because it has got all the elements that you require for a regular Hindi film.



**SUNNY LEONE**

It was my friend's idea to organise a day out for the special kids. There will be art, craft, dancing, drawing and a lot of other fun activities that we are planning to do with them. I am trying to give those kids a memory of a lifetime and something that they will learn and cherish for long. We will get our 10-15 children.



**MILIND SOMAN**

Our awareness and understanding of lifestyle disease and mental illness is fairly recent. And also the fact that fitness and non competitive sports can help with long term physical and mental health. India has never had a tradition of sports for all or a healthy lifestyle driven by conscious choice. But yes, change in attitude is coming.

**AL PACINO**

Nothing takes me back to the 70s. I just can't go back there. I'm in the 70s right now as I speak to you and there's no costumes going on. It's a dark period of my life. It was very fruitful period as I was in very good films and different things happened to me.



ENCOUNTER 30 MINUTES

LOVE IN THE TIME OF UNCERTAINTY

Actor GUL PANAG says that it's an individual's personality which determines the change in human relationships over time. By TEAM VIVA



It's not working between us anymore. Things are not the same. We are not compatible now. It's different. There are times when two people in a relationship might start feeling the pinch. They begin questioning each other's love for themselves. They might also feel that things aren't going the way they had imagined them to be. For actor Gul Panag, who is currently featuring in MX Player's web series, *Pawan & Pooja*, apart from misunderstandings and a lack of time for each other, it is also a person's individuality which gradually becomes a major reason of change in a relationship.

Giving a reference of her own marriage, Gul says, "A relationship keeps getting hard to maintain at every level. The definition of love keeps changing because people change. It's an individual's personality that changes the meaning of love for her/him as well. For instance, I have been with Rishi (Attari) for two decades now. I was a different person when I met him and so was he when he met me. But today, we are completely different because of our experiences and how we have grown. We have come a long way and have changed. How can then we expect our relationship to be the same?"

Her character, Pooja, and her relationship with Pawan Mehra (played by Sharman Joshi) showcase a similar thing. The series revolves around three couples with the same names but different

age groups — old (60s-70s), mid (40s-50s) and millennial (20s-30s). For each couple, meaning of love, and the way of looking at their relationship, differs. The mid Pawan and Pooja are caught in a midlife crisis, where they have the plateau not just in their love life but as well their careers. Gul says, "Change in a relationship is inevitable. Why will it not change? That's exactly my Pooja's problem. She is carrying the burden of an unrealistic relationship. That is what most couples face. Our relationships change. And it is very obvious because you have changed with time. That is exactly the meat of mid Pooja's character."

She finds a connect with her character. Was this the reason she said yes to the role? She tells us, "I am stealing Mahesh sir's answer here. When somebody reaches out to you for the character of Pooja in a show called *Pawan & Pooja*, it gives you a strong motivation because it is a crucial character. There are three stories and six protagonists. It's a great character to play and yet, equally challenging because it is not some larger than life character. She's not a classic army officer with a great body language. It's about the smaller details and circumstances. It is about people in ordinary circumstances who are actually extraordinary. She's not a gangster. If you were to ask me to define the mid Pooja, beyond the fact that she's in her late 30s and early 40s, she has a child and she has been with her



husband for 15 years. She is bored. Her relationship makes her feel stagnant. She is just a wife."

The actor, recalling her own previous roles, says that Pooja is different and cannot be restricted to any particular label. "In *Student Of The Year 2*, it was a smart, fit coach. There were several adjectives to describe her personality. In *Family Man*, there are again multiple adjectives to define Saloni, my character. In *Bypass Road*, I play the antagonist, who has an attitude of her own. But Pooja can't be labeled. It's the reason why as an actor it is far more challenging to play her part. How do I make you

want to watch Pooja? The only way I can make you see Pooja is by being as real as possible because it's very much derived from real life."

Talking about the millennial couple in the show, she points out that the essence of love hasn't changed as it is perceived to be. It's only the ways of looking at it that have changed. She says, "I think love has always remained the same. It's only now that we are vocalising it through various media. If we talk in context of India, out of 135 crore people, not many people are actually in a live-in. The total viewership of English

media is 20 crore. Out of that, 20 per cent is the conservative lot. Yes, it has always been complicated. And today, we are in an environment where there is a lot of pressure. People are compelled to put their best feet forward. They are constantly questioning, 'Am I good enough?' Social media is promoting that pressure and you are constantly measuring your worth with other people's yardstick at each level. Relationships are the same. They should look good enough on social media to be labelled as 'goals', no matter how they are in reality. People hunting the spark which was

there when they first met is not going to be there because the people have changed. And for millennials, a lot is defined through Instagram today."

Gul says that apart from everything else, she was happy to see that the show doesn't dramatise the love between the three couples. "They are very organic and straight out of reality. The stories do not uphold the cliché of any happily-ever-afters. Their problems are believable. They compel you to realise the fault lines in your own relationship."

Photo: Pankaj Kumar

CELEB TALK 15 MINUTES

Peel the layers off

Actor JOSH RADNOR says that his series *Hunters* is dark, scary, funny and thrilling. It has every element he was looking for in a project. By TEAM VIVA



mately. And you realise that when you get your hands bloody, when it comes to vengeance, you become a lot like the people you're trying to kill. So there's a lot of layers to it.

**What does Lonny offer these hunt guys?**

As the show goes on, as the series evolves, some of Lonny's talents really come in handy, especially in a later episode where he is asked to draw his acting talents to save the day. So he's dismissed initially as the most frivolous member of the gang. You've got bomb defusers, tech geniuses, puzzle-solvers and all sorts of stuff, lock-pickers. And then by the end it's revealed that he's quite an indispensable member of the group.

**How do you relate to your character?**

Well, we're both actors, which I think is something very specific about being an actor. And I think he's very human in the sense that he's



battled a lot of demons, which we all have. And I also relate with his yearning to be a better person and to reinvent himself.

**Who does Lonny pair up the most with?**

He has a soft spot for Jonah. He's one of the first one to see how awkward is Jonah feeling and goes up to him, gives him a pep talk, and tells

him that even he's scared of these people. They're crazy, but cool. And then they have a little tension that bubbles up which really hurts Lonny. So I think Jonah is kind of bud in the gang. On screen, there's a lot of friction between Lonny and other characters. Off screen, we're getting along terrifically.

**Who do you think is most wary**

**of Lonny?**

I think sister Harriet is really tough on him. Joe rolls his eyes quite a bit. Roxy rolls her eyes, but you can see her smirking. She kind of gets a kick out of him.

**What's like working with Al Pacino?**

It is like a peak career experience. It's just being on set with someone who has specific hours logged in front of a camera and it's interesting. I find this with great older actors. They have a beautiful combination of attentive kind of readiness, like athletic readiness but in total relaxation. So he's relaxed and takes his time to rehearse. He loves doing that so he likes to figure out what he's doing. He also tries lots of different stuff and is always on the hunt for the truthful moment. We sometimes get story time with Al where we ask him a hundred questions and he tells us some of these stories that you don't get to hear unless you're working with him very intimately. He is a really dear person and I've learned a lot from him and adore him a lot.

**What do you think people will be really excited about?**

The show has many things. There are bursts of deep, super funny things. It's a period piece, so you will get all great 70s stuff. There are harrowing concentration camp scenes. There are bursts of exciting but scary violence. There is snappy, hilarious, amazing dialogue and great acting. There are even terrific faces to look at.

**Do you have any advice for any aspiring actors or creatives?**

I feel it's important to get used to failure and rejection and not think about the ends of the road. I've never had an experience artistically that was like a total, unqualified triumph. It's always one step forward, two steps back, three steps forward, two steps back. It's just about staying in the process and enjoying the journey because it will certainly lead to all kinds of bells and whistles that you think will make you feel good at the end, whether it's awards or red carpet. That's weird about artist life. It's more about asking yourself I you can wake up and enjoy it? Which I certainly do.

(The show is currently streaming on Amazon Prime Video.)

'It's okay not to win everytime'

Actor Riteish Deshmukh surprised the audience with his evil act in the 2004 film *Ek Villain*. He followed it up last year with *Marjaavaan* that presented him in a meaner role.

Talking about taking up negative roles in films, Riteish said: "Life is about positivity and being nice. I feel that at some point, we feel negative towards certain things. We might hate something, we might dislike someone, we might feel like punching someone and say 'I don't want to see his face ever again.' Killing is extreme though."

"I am just saying that these are the feelings that we are all filled with. We feel love, humour, empathy, compassion, hatred...but in overall behaviour of ours because of education and our upbringing, we know how to differentiate between good and bad," added the father of two kids.

The actor shared that he is currently at a stage where he is teaching this to his children. "Saying thank you is good, sharing toys is good, it's okay to be second and not to win every time. These are the things you teach your children and prepare them for life. But there are certain people... probably because of their own insecurities. We see that in the society, they take up different things... evil things. We have read about those people but on screen, to get an opportunity to play them and getting into their

mind and getting that swag, I got to do that in *Ek Villain* where I was trying to get into the insecurities of a man, who was a serial killer," he said.

The beauty of the character, he felt, was that he was just a common man who could be anyone — a lightman or electrician or anybody. "And he could kill anyone and disappear in the crowd. If he didn't kill, his insecurities would have been of a man in every building...those insecurities and depression. Not everyone resorts to taking lives though," said the actor.

On the other hand, Vishnu in *Marjaavaan* is larger than life for Riteish. "He is three feet tall but is larger than life, evil and mean. He has a great sense of humour, an evil one and he puts other people down," he explained.

The Milap Zaveri-directed film also featured Tara Sutaria, Sidharth Malhotra and Rakul Preet Singh. It will be aired on Sony MAX on February 29. Meanwhile, Riteish is looking forward to the release of his film *Baaghi 3*, which also stars Tiger Shroff.

—IANS



# SHAKY START FOR INDIA

PTI ■ WELLINGTON

India's top-order batsmen performed woefully on a challenging track as the side crawled to 122 for 5 with New Zealand's towering pacer Kyle Jamieson rattling the visiting big guns on his debut on a rain-hit opening day of the first Test here.

Friday's play was called off after tea due to a heavy downpour, the gloomy conditions typifying India's batting blues with only Ajinkya Rahane (38 batting off 122 balls) matching wares when it came to winning the mental battle.

The 6'8" Jamieson could not have asked for a better start, picking up 3 for 38 in 14 overs and his prized scalps included two of India's best long-form batsmen — skipper Virat Kohli (2) and the dogged Cheteshwar Pujara (14 off 42 balls).

He also took a lovely catch in the deep to cap off a day he will remember forever. What Jamieson did wonderfully well was mix up the back of the length stuff with fuller deliveries in between.

He bowled the natural back of the length deliveries that climbed on the batsmen, pegging them on backfoot.

He also mixed it up with fuller deliveries when the batsmen were just a tad unsure of their footwork.

Bowling at barely 130 kmph, he troubled the visitors making it easier for senior pros Tim Southee (1/27 in 14 overs) and Trent Boult (1/44 in 14 overs) to bowl a more probing line.

"The last couple of weeks has been pretty surreal. Pretty pleased and from a team perspective we're in a pretty good position as well," said Jamieson at the end of the day's play.

Such was the disciplined effort from the Black Caps bowlers that India managed only 43 runs in the second session.



New Zealand's Trent Boult, second from right, celebrates the dismissal of India's Mayank Agarwal for 34 during the first cricket test between India and New Zealand AP

New Zealand vs India  
Live from 4:00am IST  
STAR SPORTS 1 NETWORK

Rahane played 122 balls, hitting four boundaries on a heavy outfield. Rishabh Pant was at the other end on 10.

Mayank Agarwal (34 off 84 balls), who did the hard work of surviving the first session, was out after lunch as he tried a pull shot off Boult just after surviving a tough caught and bowled chance.

"As a batsman, it's not easy, especially first day, on this track. I thought they bowled good areas and they kept testing us. They didn't give us anything loose," Agarwal, who was the only other batsman who looked a bit comfortable said.

"As a batsman, you never felt that you were completely in

**"AS A BATSMAN, IT'S NOT EASY, ESPECIALLY FIRST DAY, ON THIS TRACK. I THOUGHT THEY BOWLED GOOD AREAS AND THEY KEPT TESTING US. THEY DIDN'T GIVE US ANYTHING LOOSE"**

because even after lunch, it was doing a little bit," he added.

Hanuma Vihari (7) was Jamieson's third victim when he edged a pitched up delivery.

Once Kane Williamson called it right under the over-cast conditions, it was a challenge for the Indian batsmen.

Young Prithvi Shaw's loose technique and tendency to close the bat face was always going to cost him.

Southee bowled one that looked like angling in and Shaw closed the bat face as the ball moved a shade away after pitching, brushing his pad and then the off-stump.

Pujara was ready to show a lot of patience as he started leaving deliveries outside the

off-stump.

However, Jamieson, coming in as the second change, bowled his back of length delivery on the off-middle channel and he had no option but to jab at the rising delivery which kissed the outside edge of his bat and was taken by BJ Watling.

Kohli was playing Jamieson for the disconcerting bounce that he generated from back of the length but in between, the bowler decided to slip one fuller delivery on the fourth stump channel.

Kohli lunged into the drive and the thick edge was taken by the '100 Test man' Ross Taylor, standing at the first slip compounding India's troubles.

Kiwi pacers hit right areas, says Mayank

IANS ■ WELLINGTON

India opener Mayank Agarwal feels New Zealand fast bowler Kyle Jamieson, who had a dream debut on Friday in the first Test, bowled exceedingly well and used the new ball to good effect as India were left reeling at 122/5 at stumps after a rain-affected first day's play.

The towering Jamieson picked up three wickets including that of Indian captain Virat Kohli.

"I thought he (Jamieson) bowled exceedingly well. He hit good areas and he got good bounce. The way he used the new ball was fantastic and he kept testing us bowling in the right areas," Agarwal said.

"Since the wicket was soft, he was getting extra kick as well. As a batsman, you have to make that little extra adjustment to the bounce, which can be a little tricky," said Agarwal.

"I think it is quite tricky since the wind blows at more than a decent speed here. And you just have to make adjustments right there on the field. As a batsman, it's not easy, especially first day, on this track," said Agarwal of the conditions at Basin Reserve.

"As a batsman, you never felt that you were completely in because even after lunch, it was doing a little bit."

Asked if his dismissal had anything to do with lapse of concentration, the Karnataka batsman said: "I don't really think about all of those things while I am batting. If you are playing well and if you are addressing the ball well, it's fine. It really doesn't matter, especially in these conditions. It's alright to be at the non-striker's end," he said.



Last couple of weeks have been surreal: Jamieson

PTI ■ WELLINGTON

Getting Virat Kohli and Cheteshwar Pujara out on his first day in Test cricket is the stuff dreams are made of and no wonder Kyle Jamieson thinks events of the past couple of weeks have been "surreal".

Jamieson, who made an impact on his white ball debut during New Zealand's 3-0 ODI series win, picked three for 38 on his Test debut and also took a fine catch in the deep to leave India struggling at 122 for 5 on the first day of the opening Test.

Is he able to believe what's happening?

"Not really. It's still sinking in. The last couple of weeks have been pretty surreal as well. Pretty pleased and from a team perspective we're in a pretty good position as well," said the Auckland-born pacer, who is currently tallest, among international cricketers.

"He's a pretty good batter and such a key to their line-up. To get him early was massive for us. To get a couple (including Pujara) early was where

the emotion came from, certainly pretty special," said Jamieson.

While Kohli's problems outside the off-stump has been talked about, Jamieson feels that "nitpicking" wasn't the smartest thing to do.

"He's scored runs all around the world so to try and nitpick that would be not the smartest. With the assistance of the pitch it was how we would try to make him play and he's so strong on the stump line. I probably missed a little bit but managed to get the edge which was good."

The extra bounce that he generates has been his go to strategy since he came into the ODI side.

"I tried to keep it simple the last few weeks. My role is to make them play and with that extra bounce bring them forward. There was a lot of assistance with pace and bounce and swing and seam. That simplifies my gameplan to try to hit a good area. I stayed pretty relaxed which helped," he said expecting that second day will also be helpful for the seamers.

## Fighting India lose 3-4 to Aus



Indian Hockey team celebrates after scoring goal against Australia Hockey India/Twitter

PTI ■ BHUBANESWAR

India fought hard before losing 3-4 to defending champions Australia in their first match of the two-leg FIH Pro League encounter here on Friday.

Making their debut in the second season of

the FIH Pro League, the Indians displayed their potential by claiming 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.

But the hosts were made to toil hard by the world no.2 Australia before eventually losing the match in a close encounter.

Dylan Wotherspoon (6th minute), Tom Wickham (18th),

Lachlan Sharp (41st) and Jacob Anderson (42nd) scored four field goals for the winners.

India's goals came from the sticks of Raj Kumar Pal (36th, 47th) and Rupinder Pal Singh (52nd).

By virtue of this win, Australia moved up to the third position in the standings with nine points from five games, while India are a rung behind with eight points from as many matches.

Australia showed why they are considered as one of most ruthless hockey teams in the world, taking the lead with the first chance of the match in the sixth minute with Wotherspoon deflecting home Sharp's perfect pass from close range after an excellent break from skipper Aran Zalewski.

The Indians tried to bounce back from the early shock but were denied by Australia's confident defensive unit.

## Poonam spins Oz out

Yadav's 4/19 & Shikha 3/14 take India to resounding win over defending champions in T20 WC opener



Poonam Yadav second right, is lifted by a teammate after taking the wicket of Ellyse Perry

PTI ■ SYDNEY

Leg-spinner Poonam Yadav bowled a magical spell in her comeback game to steer India to a comfortable 17-run win over defending champions Australia in the opening match of the Women's T20 World Cup here on

Friday.

Put in to bat, India struggled to a below par 132 before Poonam (4/19 in 4 overs) foxed the Aussies with her googlies, turning the match decisively into her team's favour.

Australia, who have won the competition four times in six edi-

tions, were all out for 115 in 19.5 overs.

"A bowler like Poonam is someone who leads from the front. We were expecting a great comeback from her. Our team is looking nice, earlier we depended on two-three players," India skipper Harmanpreet Kaur said after the match.

Poonam, who missed the preceding tri-series due to a hand injury, also got good support from other bowlers including pacer Shikha Pandey.

The 28-year-old from Agra was on a hat-trick but narrowly missed out as wicketkeeper Taniya Bhatia dropped a difficult chance.

The tournament-opener saw a record 13,000 plus attendance with a sizeable chunk supporting India.

India next play against Bangladesh in Perth on February 24.

"It was great for me to come back from injury and perform like this. It was the third time that I was on a hat-trick but satisfied that I was able to do the job for the team," said Poonam at the post-match presentation.

PTI ■ VALSAD (GUJARAT)

Roosh Kalaria scored his third first-class century to propel Gujarat to a mammoth 602 for eight declared against Goa.

Gujarat pacers then removed both the Goa openers on nought before the visiting team recovered to end the day at 46 for two.

Kalaria (118 not out off 185 balls; 14x4s, 1x6) and Axar Patel (80 off 113 balls; 11x4) built on the foundation laid by skipper Parthiv Patel, who scored his 27th first class hundred on the opening day of the match on Thursday to put the hosts in the driver's seat.

NO PLAY ON SECOND DAY

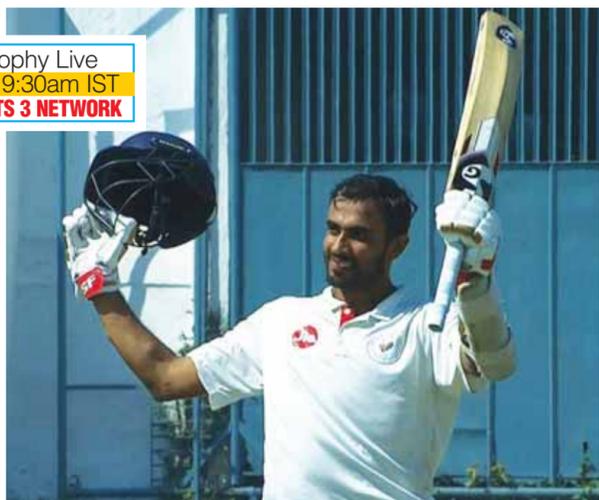
JAMMU: The second day's play match between Karnataka and Jammu & Kashmir was called off without a ball being bowled because of wet ground conditions here on Friday.

Despite the sun shining brightly on Friday, water seepage under the covers after last night's downpour left wet patches near the run-up area at one end.

The on-field umpires conducted as many as five inspections before eventually calling off the day's proceedings.

Karnataka were wobbling at 14 for 2

## Gujarat in command against Goa



Roosh Kalaria raises his bat after scoring hundred against Goa

at stumps after only six overs were possible due to bad light on the opening day on Thursday

BENGAL MAKE LATE INROADS

TANGI: Odisha let the opportunity slip in the final hour, losing three wickets in quick time as Bengal took an upperhand.

Fighting half-centuries from opener Shantanu Mishra (62) and Debasish Samantray (68) frustrated Bengal bowlers after their first innings folded for 332.

But a lapse in concentration from Samantray, who chased a wishful delivery, triggered the collapse as Bengal seamer Nilkantha Das finally ended their dogged 125-run partnership, which came off 317 balls.

Shabbaz Ahmed and Ishan Porel then fired in quick succession as Odisha lost three wickets for 16 runs to end day two on a disappointing 151 for four, still 181 runs behind Bengal

SAURASHTRA POST 419

ONGOLE: A dogged century by Chirag Jani (121 off 297 balls, 12x4s) and his 157-run seventh-wicket partnership with Perak

Mankad (80) helped Saurashtra pile up 419 in the first innings against Andhra.

Skipper Jaydev Unadkat removed Andhra opener D B Prasanth (1) and Jyothisaikrishna (17) to leave the host at 40 for two from 22 overs at stumps, still trailing by 379 runs.

Resuming at the overnight score of 226 for six, Jani (on 53) and Mankad (80, 177 balls, 8 fours) frustrated the Andhra bowlers and were still at the crease at lunch.

They defied the attack led by Y Prithvi Raj (3/51) and scored whenever presented with the opportunity.

Jani reached his ton from 249 balls. Though it was a slow knock, it helped Saurashtra recover from 140 for five to post a big score.

Mankad too complemented Jani well and helped the visitors' cause. For the home team, left-arm medium-pacer Prithvi Raj and right-arm medium-pacer K V Sashikanth picked up three wickets each.

## SINGLES

KALINGA STADIUM TO HOST QATAR GAME

BUDAPEST: India's return leg FIFA World Cup group E qualifier against Qatar next month will be held at the Kalinga Stadium in Bhubaneswar, the All India Football Federation (AIFF) said. "Yes, Kalinga Stadium in Bhubaneswar will host the match on March 26," AIFF general secretary Kunal Das Das confirmed. "We want to spread the game to new venues and the state has shown tremendous support for football," he added.

L'POOL HENDERSON OUT FOR THREE WEEKS

LIVERPOOL: Liverpool captain Jordan Henderson will be sidelined for up to three weeks after suffering a hamstring injury against Atletico Madrid, the Premier League leaders announced. Liverpool manager Jurgen Klopp revealed the time-frame for Henderson's injury at Friday's press conference. "We heard of different hamstring injuries now around in the Premier League, Harry Kane, for example," said Klopp. "It's not that bad. But he will be out, I think, for three weeks or so, which is not cool. But how we see it, we were still lucky."

WOMEN'S IPL MATCHES LIKELY IN JAIPUR

JAIPUR: Jaipur is likely to host the Women's IPL matches once again this year. "There would be seven matches between four teams in the women's IPL and Jaipur is likely to host them," a senior official associated with the cash-rich T20 league said. Last year, too, Jaipur had hosted the matches of the Women's IPL, when three teams had featured in the tournament. Matches in Jaipur are played at the SMS, though a final decision on it is yet to be taken. Meanwhile, the official also confirmed that the All Star match, which was scheduled to be held before the IPL, will now take place after it.

KOHLI TO PLAY FOR ASIA XI

NEW DELHI: The Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) President Sourav Ganguly has sent the names of skipper Virat Kohli, Mohammed Shami, Shikhar Dhawan and Kuldeep Yadav to the Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) as the latter gets ready to host two T20s between Asia XI and World XI to celebrate the 100th anniversary of their founding father Sheikh Mujibur Rahman. The matches will be played at the Sher-e-Bangla Stadium in Dhaka on March 18 and 21. Sources in the know of developments said that Ganguly had sent the names to BCB after the availability of players were checked.

HAZARD RETURN POSES REAL DIFFICULTY

MADRID: Eden Hazard's return should prove timely ahead of a crucial week for Real Madrid, but fitting him into the team may not be a simple task for Zinedine Zidane. Real play at Levante on Saturday at the start of an eight-day period that continues at home to Manchester City in the Champions League and finishes against Barcelona at the Santiago Bernabeu. "We're happy to have him back for what did during his 70 minutes — we know what he can give us" said Zidane

KANTE RULED OUT FOR THREE WEEKS

LONDON: N'Golo Kante will be sidelined for three weeks after suffering a muscle injury against Manchester United, Chelsea coach Frank Lampard said on Friday. Kante limped off after 12 minutes of Monday's 2-0 defeat to United at Stamford Bridge and Blues boss Lampard does not expect to have the France midfielder back until March. "N'Golo is not fit, he has a muscle injury, similar to the one he picked up against Arsenal; hopefully three weeks, something around that," Lampard told reporters. Kante's absence is a blow for Chelsea as they head into a crucial period featuring this weekend's showdown with top four rivals Tottenham and Tuesday's Champions League last 16 first leg against Bayern Munich. AGENCIES

# Sakshi settles for silver; Vinesh takes bronze

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Exploiting a weaker field, Sakshi Malik claimed a Silver while Vinesh Phogat dominated her Bronze medal play-off after losing to nemesis Mayu Mukaida as Indian women team registered its best-ever performance at the senior Asian Wrestling Championship, returning with eight medals here on Friday.

The Indian team had won only one Gold medal before this edition but Divya, Pinki and Sarita Mor won three on the opening day. Nirmala Devi came out second best.

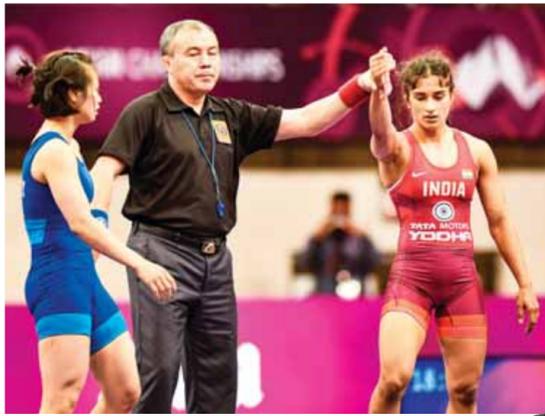
On Friday, Sakshi (65kg, Silver), Vinesh (53kg, Bronze) young Anshu Malik (57kg Bronze) and Gursharan Preet kaur (72kg, Bronze) added to India's tally.

Sakshi twice lost to Japan's Naomi Ruike — in the opening round and the final — to win her second Silver at this event. She had grabbed a Silver in 2017 also.

The Rio Olympic Bronze medalist Sakshi, who has been struggling of late, lost her opening round 1-2 to Naomi and could not score a point in final, which she lost 0-2.

"She was not that strong but I just could not score many points against her. Initially I lost two points and that pegged me back," she said.

Sakshi overcame two weak opponents to eventually reach the final. She outplayed Korea's Ohyoung Ha in her second round, winning by technical superiority. In her semifinal against Uzbekistan's Nabira Esenbaeva, she led 5-0 but her rival pulled off consecutive two-point moves to make it 5-4.



Umpire declares Vinesh Phogat as winner during Bronze medal match against Thi Ly Kieu

Sakshi has been losing in closing stages of late but this time she managed to hold on to her narrow lead, surviving anxious last two seconds. All eyes were on Vinesh, who yet again fell to Mukaida to go out of the Gold medal race but made a strong comeback to win then Bronze medal play-off against Vietnam's Thi Ly Kieu, winning by technical superiority in the first period itself.

"Obviously I am not happy but I am making progress. It's not easy to beat experienced Japanese in this category. I have lost but I tried a few things and it worked a bit. Earlier I had not even scored a point against her but this time I got two. The gap is not much now, it's 70-100 between Mukaida and myself," Vinesh said.

Vinesh had lost twice to Mukaida in 2019 — at World Championship and Asian Championships — and the trend continued as the gritty Indian yet again struggled to break the strong defence of the Japanese.

In a tough opening round, Vinesh tried single leg attacks a number of times but every time Mukaida blocked her move and eventually got the upper body lock to subdue the home favourite.

## Sakshi handed chance to book slot for Asian Olympic Qualifiers

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Sakshi Malik's dream to compete at the Tokyo Games is still alive with Wrestling Federation of India (WFI) deciding to hold fresh trials in two categories to pick women wrestlers for the Asian Olympic Qualifiers.

Two-time Cadet World champion Sonam Malik had defeated Sakshi during the 62kg trials but since she could not win a medal at the Asian Championship, the WFI has given Sakshi one more chance to book her place in the Indian team.

The Asian Qualifying event will be held in Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan from

March 27 to 29. The event was originally scheduled to be held in Xian but was moved out due to outbreak of Coronavirus in China.

"We have made a decision. The trials will be held in 62kg and 76kg on February 26 in Lucknow for women. These are the only categories which could not win any medal. We have also decided to hold fresh trials for 60kg category in Greco Roman style," said WFI Assistant Secretary Vinod Tomar.

The WFI had made it clear before the start of the championship that if required, it may hold fresh trials in categories where the performance will not be up to the mark.

Out of India's two brightest youngsters, it was Anshu who bagged a Bronze while Sonam Malik (62kg), who was pitted against some heavyweights lost her Bronze medal play-off.

Anshu opened up her campaign against Kyrgyzstan's Nuraida Anarkulova, winning by technical superiority but was outplayed by reigning world champion from Japan Riskao Kawai.

She then beat Sevara Eshmuratova from Uzbekistan to win her first medal at senior level.

"I had nothing to lose

and every thing to gain. I now know where I stand when I am competing against seasoned wrestlers in this category. I have got richer in experience," said the 18-year-old.

Sonam, who had defeated Sakshi in the trials, showed good tactical mind in her resounding win against Korea's Hanbit Lee and also in the 2-5 defeat against world bronze medalist Yukako Kawai.

Up against world champion Aisuluu Tynbekova, it was a tough ask for her to get bronze but she fought well before losing.

In the non-Olympic 72kg, Gursharanpreet Kaur Mongloia's Tsevegmed Enkhbayar in the third place play-off to win her second medal at this championship.



Sharath Kamal and Manika Batra in action during ITTF Hungary Open Sharath/Twitter

## Sharath-Sathiyam enter Hungary Open final

BUDAPEST: The Indian pairing of Sharath Kamal and G Sathiyam upset top-seeds Kwan Kit Ho and Chun Ting Wong of Hong Kong to enter the men's doubles final of the ITTF World Tour Hungary Open here on Friday.

In a hard-fought five-setter, the Indian qualifiers won 11-7, 12-10, 4-11, 4-11, 11-9 and earned a meeting with the second-seeded pair of Duda Benedikt and Franziska Patrick from Germany in the final to be held today.

The Germans defeated Poland's Dujaks Jakub and Belgium's Nuytinck Cedric 11-4, 11-5, 8-11, 11-3.

Also in the mixed doubles semifinals, Sharath and Manika Batra take on German duo of Patrick Franziska & Petrisa Solja.

On Thursday, Sharath and Sathiyam had beaten home favourites Nandor Ecsesi and Adam Szudi in the quarterfinals, after having sent the Japanese pair of Shunsuke Togami and Yulia Uda packing in previous round.

As for Sharath and Manika, they got a walkover in the quarterfinals from the second-seeded Japanese pair of Jun Mizutani and Mima Ito after Mizutani pulled out because of a neck injury he suffered during his singles event.

Manika failed to go past Japanese Miu Hirano in the pre-quarterfinals, losing in straight games of 9-11, 1-11, 7-11, 7-11. Manika, who beat Szu-Yu Chen of Taipei 4-3 in a tough round of 32 match, was down 0-3 before scoring a strong comeback win, including the crucial fourth game on extended points.

Sathiyam is still in the fray and is also slated to meet top-seed Harimoto Tomokazu and Manika will meet Japanese Miu Hirano in the round of 16. PTI



Frankfurt's Daichi Kamada celebrates scoring his side's second goal against Salzburg AP

## Jota, Kamada hit Europa hat-tricks

AFP ■ WOLVERHAMPTON

Diogo Jota of Wolves and Daichi Kamada of Eintracht Frankfurt hit hat-tricks, but the man at the heart of the most remarkable Europa League display had a familiar name: Ianis Hagi, who inspired an unlikely Rangers fightback.

In the first leg of the round-of-32 on Thursday, Wolves beat Espanyol 4-0, Eintracht beat Salzburg 4-1 and Rangers beat Braga 3-2 at Ibrox.

Arsenal won 1-0 at Olympiakos and, in early games, Manchester United drew 1-1 away to Club Brugge and Celtic's visit to Copenhagen finished with the same score.

In a battle between two European heavyweights Bayer Leverkusen held off Porto 2-1.

Jota, who hit three in the last pool game in November and had not scored since, struck the first from close range, the second from a narrow angle and the third from outside the area.

Ruben Neves hit a typically spectacular volley and Wolves crushed the club struggling at the bottom of La Liga.

"We competed well and we were clinical," said Nuno Espirito Santo, the Wolves coach.

"For me, the organisation and another clean sheet is important. You know my view that everything starts from there."

In Frankfurt, Kamada, a 23-year-old Japanese midfielder, hit the first after 12 minutes. Two minutes before the break he broke from the halfway line to score a second. He added a third with a header in the 53rd minute.

He then turned provider, starting the move which ended with Filip Kostic netting Frankfurt's fourth.

Kamada has not scored in 17 Bundesliga games this season, but Thursday's hat-trick gave him six in the Europa League, all in his last three games and scored over a span of 178 minutes.

Liverpool's Takumi Minamino who has so far also scored 11, all for Salzburg.

In Glasgow, Braga dominated the first hour and led with goals by captain Fransergio and Abel Ruiz.

Hagi started the fightback in the 67th minute, cutting in from the right and shooting in off the post. His father Gheorghe, who won the UEFA Cup, from which the Europa League evolved, with Galatasaray in 2000, celebrated in the stands.

Joe Aribo then scored a remarkable second, weaving and barging through the massed Braga defence and when he finally burst clear, the Nigerian international finished with composure.

With eight minutes left, Rangers won a free-kick. Hagi stepped up. His shot hit the wall and then arced slowly into the corner of the Braga net just out of reach of goalkeeper Matheus.

Rangers had saved themselves with three goals in 15 minutes. "I think we've rediscovered ourselves, certainly from the second-half performance," Rangers manager Steven Gerrard told BT Sport.

"We showed unbelievable character, we ran hard for each other, we were more compact, more organised, we had a better shape and we were on the front foot more in the second half."

Arsenal also struck late in Greece. In the 81st minute, Pierre-Emerick Aubameyang chased a long ball and kept it in play before passing inside to Bukayo Saka. The youngster hit a hard, low cross which Alexandre Lacazette turned in from close range.

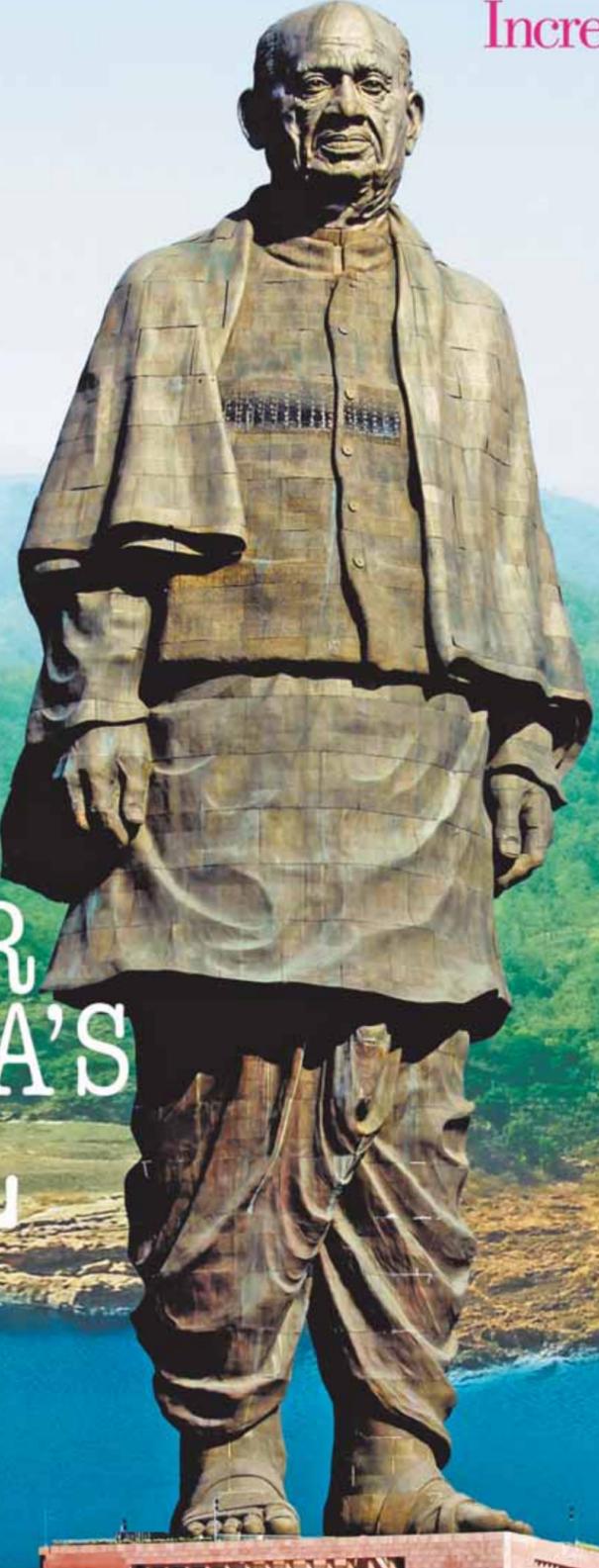
Olympiakos had seven strikes on target to six by the Gunners but Arsenal goalkeeper Bernd Leno stopped everything.

"It's my job to make saves," said the German.

"At the end when you have a clean sheet, I'm happy. We won this game and we have the away goal so we're happy."





THE COLOUR OF INDIA'S SOUL



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