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Women in non-combat command

SC also orders permanent commission for women in Army within 3 months

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

In a landmark judgment, the Supreme Court on Monday opened the way for women in command positions in the Army and directed the Centre to grant permanent commission to all women officers within three months. The apex court orders, on grounds of the need to end gender bias in the Armed forces, will directly benefit more than 300 women officers, including making them eligible for pension.

The women officers, however, will not be induced into the combat arms such as the infantry, artillery and armoured corps as the Supreme Court clarified that their deployment is a matter of policy as held by the Delhi High Court.

On February 9, serving women officers in the Indian Army had countered the Centre's stand in the SC on denying command posts to women on the ground of their physiological limitations, terming it not only "regressive but also completely contrary to the demonstrated record and statistics." In their written submission to the court, the women officers had sought rejection of the submission of the Centre and said it is unfortunate that such grounds have been raised, which are completely contrary to the demonstrated records of the case.

"There is no reason and justification for the union of India not to act as per the Delhi High Court verdict. On September 2, 2011, the Supreme Court clarified this aspect and said there is no stay on the High Court verdict. Despite that scant regard has been paid to the verdict of the HC and the order of Supreme Court as well," the Bench said.

While directing the Centre to grant permanent commission, the court termed the Government's argument of physiological limitations and social norms for denying them command posts as "disturbing."

The court said women officers in the past have brought laurels to the country and change of mindset is required on the part of the Government to put an end to gender bias in Armed forces. A Bench headed by Justice DY Chandrachud said there will not be any absolute bar on giving women command postings.

Landmark judgment

- The SC orders, on grounds of the need to end gender bias in the Armed forces, will directly benefit more than 300 women officers, including making them eligible for pension
- The women officers, however, will not be induced into the combat arms such as the infantry, artillery or armoured corps as the top court clarified that their deployment is a matter of policy as held by the Delhi High Court

The top court said despite there being no stay on the 2010 Delhi High Court verdict allowing grant of permanent commission to women officers, the Centre showed scant regard in implementing the directive in the past one decade.

"There is no reason and justification for the union of India not to act as per the Delhi High Court verdict. On September 2, 2011, the Supreme Court clarified this aspect and said there is no stay on the High Court verdict. Despite that scant regard has been paid to the verdict of the HC and the order of Supreme Court as well," the Bench said.

The SC said it is of the opinion that physiological features of women have no effect in granting permanent commission and they have to be assigned to them.

given equal opportunity on a par with their male counterparts in the armed forces.

It said the Centre's submission of physiological limitation is based on flawed notion and there is no constitutional basis to deny them equal opportunity. The SC said permanent commission can be given to women officers in the Army irrespective of their tenure of service.

On February 9, serving women officers in the Indian Army had countered the Centre's stand in the SC on denying command posts to women on the ground of their physiological limitations, terming it not only "regressive but also completely contrary to the demonstrated record and statistics." In their written submission to the court, the women officers had sought rejection of the submission of the Centre and said it is unfortunate that such grounds have been raised, which are completely contrary to the demonstrated records of the case.

The women officers had said they have been serving in the 10 Combat Support Arms, for the last 27 to 28 years and have proven their mettle and courage under fire.

The written submission had also said the women officers have demonstrated that they do not lack in any manner in the roles that have been assigned to them.



(Left to right) Short Service Commission women officers Anjali Bisht, Seema Singh and Sandhya Yadav flash victory sign outside the Supreme Court in New Delhi on Monday

Now, Nirbhaya rapists to hang on March 3

Death warrant issued for third time even as convicts' bids on to exploit legal lemmas

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

A Delhi court on Monday issued fresh death warrants against the four death-row convicts in the Nirbhaya gangrape and murder case. The four convicts will be now hanged to death on March 3 at 6 am. This is the third time that death warrants have been issued against them.

Additional Sessions Judge (ASJ) Dharmender Rana issued fresh warrants against death row convicts Mukesh Kumar Singh (32), Pawan Gupta (25), Vinay Kumar Sharma (26) and Akshay Kumar (31).

The first date of execution, January 22, was postponed to February 1 by January 17 court order. Then the trial court on January 31 stayed "till further orders" the execution of the four convicts as they had not exhausted all their legal remedies.

Mukesh on Monday told the court that he didn't want to be represented by advocate Vrinda Grover, after which advocate Ravi Qazi was picked to represent him.



Nirbhaya gangrape case convicts PTI

The court was also informed that Vinay is on hunger strike. Vinay was assaulted in jail and has head injuries, his lawyer told the court, adding that he was suffering from acute mental illness and hence the death sentence cannot be carried out.

The court directed the Tihar Jail superintendent to take appropriate care of Vinay as per law.

Pawan's counsel informed the court that he wanted to move curative petition and the mercy plea against the death sentence before the President.

Pawan is the only one among the four convicts who has not yet filed the curative petition — the last legal remedy available to a person, which is decided in-chamber.

5 theatre commands for modern warfare by 2022

RAHUL DATTA ■ NEW DELHI

With the objective of fighting modern-day warfare, India will roll out two to five theatre commands by 2022 to take care of security challenges along the western (Pakistan) and northern (China) borders.

While Jammu & Kashmir will be a separate theatre, the western and eastern Navy commands will operate as one and known as peninsular command to guard the strategically important Indian Ocean.

Chief of Defence Staff (CDS) General Bipin Rawat said here on Monday.



Stressing that his charter as CDS is clearly enunciated, he said the mandate is to achieve jointness and synergy between

the three Services by undertaking these reforms.

Rawat said the theatre commands will be geographically defined and demarcated and a study will be conducted from March 31 onwards. The study will be submitted for scrutiny by the end of next year and hopefully the commands will roll out by 2020, said Rawat, adding the study groups will evaluate the options of number of commands which could vary from two to five. At present, the three Services have their own commands and operate in silos.

Protest a right, but can't block roads, SC tells Shaheen Bagh

Court asks senior advocate Hegde to persuade anti-CAA protesters to shift

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Blockade of the public road at Shaheen Bagh is "troubling us," the Supreme Court said on Monday and suggested that the anti-CAA protesters go to another site where no public place would be blocked.

The SC asked senior advocate Sanjay Hegde to "play a constructive role as an interlocutor" to persuade the protesters to move to an alternative site. People have a fundamental right to protest "peacefully and lawfully" but blocking public roads and public places is a matter of concern as it might lead to "chaotic situation," the apex court said, stressing that there has to be a "balancing factor."

Democracy works on expression of views but there are lines and boundaries for it," a bench of Justices SK Kaul and KM Joseph said, adding, "The question which is arising is



Women during a sit-in protest at Shaheen Bagh in New Delhi on Monday PTI

where to protest."

"Our concern is if everybody starts blocking public areas then where will it end," the bench asked.

The SC said Hegde can take assistance of advocate Sadhana Ramachandran and former Chief Information Commissioner Wajahat Habibullah for talking to the protesters.

Solicitor General Tushar Mehta, appearing for the Delhi Government and the Delhi Police, told the court that the solution is to remove these protesters from the site. "We will not go that far but the problem is that they (protesters) are keeping children and women as shield. We have held a series of

Marandi ends 14 year-vow, joins BJP

Shah asks Marandi, Munda & Raghubar to work for strengthening party in Jharkhand

ROSHAN KUMAR ■ RANCHI

First Chief Minister of Jharkhand Babulal Marandi, who headed Jharkhand Vikas Morcha (Prajatantrik) since 2006, on Monday ended his 14 years Vanvaas as he made ghar wapsi to BJP. Marandi, the 61-year-old leader having political experience for more than three decades, merged his party JVM (P) with BJP in presence of Union Home Minister Amit Shah, BJP national general secretary OP Mathur and senior BJP leaders at Jagannath Maidan.

Shah, welcoming Marandi said, "The party will become stronger with expertise of Marandi as he is one of the leaders in State who can understand the pulse of people." Shah, for the first time publicly admitted that BJP was working on the mission since 2014 to bring back Marandi in Saffron party fold.

Shah said, "In 2014 when I became the national president of BJP I tried to bring back Marandi having RSS background in BJP fold, but Marandi due to his stubborn attitude rejected BJP's offer.



Union Home Minister Amit Shah and JVM Chief Babulal Marandi wave to party supporters during the merger of Jharkhand Vikash Morcha (JVM) with the BJP at an Milan Somorah at Jagannath maidan in Ranchi on Monday. Former Chief Minister Raghubar Das and others are also seen in the picture. Ratan Lal | Pioneer

But, today we are happy that Marandi has decided to return home." The Union Home Minister also indicated that Marandi will be given top posts in State BJP equal to both Arjun Munda and Raghubar Das.

Shah said, "From today Raghubar Das, Arjun Munda and Babulal Marandi will work together for strengthening the party at grass root level. Not only Marandi but all JVM leaders will be given respectable posts in the organization."

Marandi too praised BJP saying that though he was out from party for 14 years but he never joined any other party. The former chief minister revealed how BJP leaders tried to bring

him back in saffron party since 2006. The former chief minister disclosed how Prime Minister Narendra Modi had sent his emissary to him with an offer to join BJP in 2014.

Marandi also said that he had joined the party without any offer and is ready to discharge any responsibility that the party bestows to him.

Marandi also said how BJP is different than other parties as the Saffron party is cadre based disciplined organization. He also supported Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA) saying that some political parties are spreading wrong information about CAA especially among minorities.

Union Home Minister Amit Shah addresses a gathering during the merger of JVM with the BJP at an Milan Somorah at Prabhat Tara ground in Ranchi on Monday Ratan Lal | Pioneer

Marandi, an affable, suave and soft in nature politician has been a loyalist of RSS and it was his closeness to RSS that he was made first CM of Jharkhand when it became a separate state on November 15, 2000. However, his stint as the CM could not last for a long time and he had to step down on March 17, 2003.

In 2006, Marandi formed his own party and since then he has been trying to find a base in the State. In 2009, his party won eleven Assembly seats, which were reduced to eight in 2014. In 2019, his party managed to win only three seats.

Former chief minister Raghubar Das and Union Tribal

Affairs minister Arjun Munda on the occasion welcomed Marandi terming him as popular leader. Das said, "Babulal jee fought against Left Wing Extremism (LWE) menace and he had to even sacrifice his son fighting against LWE." Reacting on JVM merger with BJP, Chief Minister Hemant Soren said, "My best wishes to Marandi for his new innings."

With Marandi's home coming to BJP, the party aims at once again getting back its tribal vote bank as in last Assembly election the party's biggest disappointment was in tribal reserved seats. Out of 28 tribal seats in Jharkhand, the BJP won only Khunti and Torpa seats.

VP calls for ethical corporate governance in Indian Industry

PARVINDER BHATIA ■ JAMSHEDPUR

Emphasising the need for ethical corporate governance in Indian Industry, Vice President Venkaiah Naidu on Monday said that the Tata group has set ethical standards in the corporate world and every industry must adopt it.

Speaking at the centenary year celebrations of naming of the city as Jamshedpur, the Vice President said that some people took undue advantage of the system and industry has a duty to abjure such elements. He appreciated the Tata Group for being synonymous with high ethical standards and the pioneering spirit of entrepreneurship.

Calling industry and agriculture as two eyes of nations, he opined that industry must



Vice President M Venkaiah Naidu along with Governor Droupadi Murmu, SC, ST Welfare and Transport Minister Champai Soren and others during Commemorative function at Tata Auditorium, XLRI in Jamshedpur on Monday Pioneer photo

Naidu offers prayers at Rama Mandiram

Jamshedpur: After releasing stamp on Jamshedpur at Tata Auditorium, the Vice President Venkaiah Naidu visited the hundred year old Andhra Bhakta Sri Rama Mandiram, at Bistupur and performed puja and interacted with devotees.

He also planted a sapling at the premises. Prior to this, the Vice President also visited the Center for Excellence (CFE) and Tata Steel Archives

support the efforts of Government to achieve desired economic progress.

Addressing the gathering at Tata Auditorium, XLRI, Naidu commended Tata Steel for its

trial city that had earned the distinction of becoming the country's role model for sustainable urban and industrial development.

He dwelt at length on the priorities of the Government and outlined the investment opportunities that can contribute to the economic growth of the country. He said, "Government spending alone cannot push the economic growth to the levels that we wish to achieve. We need to work together with industries for the overall development of the country."

"The development of a sustainable strategy is increasingly becoming an imperative for companies' survival and longevity and Jamshedpur is a glowing example of sustainable development," he added.

Continued on Page 4

कार्यालय जिला परिषद्, पलामू
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प्रेस विज्ञप्ति

जैव विविधता अधिनियम, 2002 की धारा-41 के अन्तर्गत सभी स्थानीय निकाय रत्तों (ग्राम पंचायत/प्रखण्ड/जिला परिषद्/नगर निगम/नगर परिषद्/नगर पंचायत) पर जैव विविधता प्रबंधन समितियों का गठन किया जाना है जिसमें 07 सदस्य होंगे। दिनांक 29.01.2020 को सम्पन्न आम सभा में 05 सदस्यों का चयन किया जा चुका है। जैव परिषद्, पलामू राज पर जैव विविधता प्रबंधन समिति के शेष 02 (1-महिला एवं 1-अन्य) सदस्यों के चुनाव हेतु अध्यक्ष जिला परिषद्, पलामू की अध्यक्षता में अध्यक्ष, जिला परिषद्, पलामू के प्रकोष्ठ में दिनांक 29.02.2020 को समय 2:00 बजे अपराह्न में आम सभा का आयोजन किया गया है।

जैव विविधता समिति के सदस्यता के लिए अहताँ निम्नवत है-

1. जैव-विविधता से संबंधित पहुँचों के जानकार व्यक्ति।
2. वन् कृषि, पशुधन, मछली पालन, शिक्षाविद् इत्यादि क्षेत्र से संबंधित व्यक्ति।
3. वैसे समाजिक कार्यकर्ता जो जैविक सम्पदा को बचाने के प्रति गम्भीर विन्ता रखते हों एवं इस विषय की समझ रखते हों।
4. जिला परिषद्, पलामू सीमा क्षेत्र के अन्दर के निवासी हों।

उपरांकत अहतों रखने वाले व्यावेत आम-सभा में सासमय भाग लेना सुनिश्चित करेंगे ताकी पलामू जिला परिषद् स्तर पर जैव विविधता प्रबंधन समिति के गठन हेतु सदस्यों का चयन किया जा सके।

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उप विकास आयुक्त -सह-

मुख्य कार्यालयक पदाधिकारी, जिला परिषद्, पलामू।

P.R.225531 District(19-20):D

कार्यालयक अभियान का कार्यालय पेयजल एवं स्वच्छता प्रमंडल, लातेहार।

आम सूचना

आगामी ग्रीष्म को देखते हुए लातेहार जिलान्तर्गत पेयजलार्पूति सम्बन्धित शिकायत यथा नलकृप की मरमति से लारे रोटर पप्प की मरमति सम्बन्धी शिकायत का त्वरित निराकरण हेतु पेयजल एवं स्वच्छता प्रमंडल लातेहार में जिला स्तरीय नियंत्रण का गठन किया जाता है। नियंत्रण कक्ष कार्यालयक अभियान, पेयजल एवं स्वच्छता प्रमंडल लातेहार के पूर्ण नियंत्रण में होगा।

जिला स्तरीय नियंत्रण कक्ष

श्री अवधेश कुमार पाण्डेय, प्रधान लिपिक मो1 सं0- 8235448360

श्री राजीव कुमार, निम्न वर्गीय लिपिक मो1 सं0- 8551028839

1. नियंत्रण कक्ष के प्रभारी को उनके मोबाइल संख्या पर पेयजल की शिकायतें कार्यालय दिवस के कार्यालय अवधि में अंकित कराई जा सकती है। जिस पर त्वरित कारंबंद की जाएगी, इसके अंतिरिक्त क्षेत्राधीन कार्यालय में भी नोडल पदाधिकारी घोषित है जिनके मोबाइल पर उनके आवंटित प्रखण्ड के पेयजल की समस्या सम्बन्धित शिकायतें दर्ज करायी जा सकती हैं।

क्रो सं स्तो	प्रखण्ड का नाम	नोडल पदाधिकारी का नाम एवं पदनाम	आवंटित प्रखण्ड	मोबाइल संख्या
1	लातेहार	श्री मार्गी लाल गिलआ	सहायक अभियंता	7091123335
2	मनिका	श्री महेन्द्र राम, कर्नीय अभियंता	कर्नीय अभियंता	9122448551
3	चटवा	श्री विजय मिंज, कर्नीय अभियंता	कर्नीय अभियंता	8076379837
4	बालुपुराय	श्री बुवाम भगत	कर्नीय अभियंता	7488575755
5	बरियातु	श्री बुवाम भगत	कर्नीय अभियंता	7488575755
6	हेहेज	श्री राजीव कुमार सिंह	कर्नीय अभियंता	7979710917
7	गारु	श्री अल्प खुरान सिंह,	कर्नीय अभियंता	8292225655
8	बरवाडीह	श्री महेन्द्र राम	कर्नीय अभियंता	9006392954

कार्यालयक अभियंता, पेयजल एवं स्वच्छता प्रमंडल, लातेहार।

पेयजल एवं स्वच्छता प्रमंडल, लातेहार।

PR 225502 Drinking Water and Sanitation(19-20)D

Jharkhand Bijli Vitran Nigam Ltd.

CIN No. U40108JH2013SGC901702

OFFICE OF THE General Manger Cum Chief Engineer
Electric Supply Area, Combined building, Dhanbad, Pin- 826001
GSTIN No.- 20AACDJ3148A5Z9, E-mail ID- gm_dhjnsc@yahoo.co.in

Short E-Tender Notice

e-Tenders are invited from reputed tenderers having good experience in following similar type of Civil works and having sound certified financial status.

Sl. No.	NIT No.	Name of work	Estimated cost (In Rs.)	Earnest money to be deposited (In Rs.)	Cost of BOQ (non refundable) (In Rs.)
1	242/PR/JBVN L/19-20	Construction of approach road at proposed 33/11 KV PSS Phudnidih, Chas (Bokaro)	318700.00	6400.00	840.00
2	243/PR/JBVN L/19-20	Area development of Yard at proposed 33/11 KV PSS Phudnidih, Chas, Bokaro	577055.00	11600.00	1400.00
3	244/PR/JBVN L/19-20	Area development of Yard at proposed 33/11 KV PSS Taranari, Bokaro	943100.00	18900.00	1400.00
4	245/PR/JBVN L/19-20	R/M of control room and boundary wall at proposed 33/11 KV PSS, Phudnidih, Chas, Bokaro	84400.00	1700.00	280.00

Availability of tender documents on website 20.02.2020 at 11:30 AM

Last date and time for uploading of e-Tender 06.03.2020 upto 06:00 PM

Last date and time for physical submission of original Demand Draft towards cost of BOQ and Earnest Money

Date and time for opening of Tender Part-I (Technical and Commercial) 11.03.2020 at 02:00 PM

Date and time for opening of tender Part-II (Price Part) Further communicated

Tendering officer and address for communication General Manager-Cum-CIE-Cum-CE Electric Supply Area, Dhanbad

1. e-Tender documents and BOQ including terms & conditions, specification etc. can be downloaded and submitted online on website <https://jharkhandtenders.gov.in>. Any details required in this regard can also be had from the office of the undersigned during office hours. NIC helpline No. 06034-222109, for any clarification regarding NIT contact no. 9798643489

2. Demand Draft from any nationalized bank of India towards cost of BOQ and Earnest Money will be in favour of Accounts Officer, ESA, Dhanbad.

The tenders will be received through electronic tendering mode only.

स्पष्टित एवं राज्यान्वयित में ऊंचा बचाव। क्रूरा अपनी

शिकायतों को टॉल फ़ोन नं. 1800 345 6570 पर दर्ज करायें।

PR 225539 (Jharkhand Bijlee Vitran Nigam Ltd) 19-20 (D)

Sd/-
GM-cum-CE
Electric Supply Area, Dhanbad

आरखण्ड औद्योगिक क्षेत्र विकास प्राधिकार

बोकारो प्रक्षेत्र, बियाडा अवन, बालीडीह, बोकारो स्टील सिटी-827014

Phone No.: 06542253731 E-mail: mdbiababokaro@gmail.com

आम सूचना

आरखण्ड औद्योगिक क्षेत्र विकास प्राधिकार विनियमन 2016 की कपिडका 6ii (a) के तहत बोकारो औद्योगिक क्षेत्र के क्षेत्राधीन बोकारो/कार्पानी/सिर्पी/सिर्पी और अंतर्गत औद्योगिक क्षेत्र में अवधिकृत खाली पूर्ख-खण्ड इक्षुक उपयोगियों को आदेन हेतु आवेदन करने वाले संस्करण की रूपी जारी है। इन खु-खण्डों का आवेदन उद्यमों के बायारों से किया जाएगा। ऑनलाइन 05.00 बजे तक Online आवेदन करने वाले संस्करण चार दिनों के बायारों में दर्ज करायी जाएगी। इक्षुक उद्यमों दिनांक 02 / 03 / 2020 के आवेदन 05.00 बजे तक Online आवेदन करने वाले संस्करण चार दिनों के बायारों में दर्ज करायी जाएगी।

भूमि का अप्रिवेद्य (Non Refundable) प्राप्तेशिंग/स्कूलनी शुल्क एवं एक एकड़ हेतु 10000 रु, एक एकड़ से तीन एकड़ हेतु 25000 रु एवं तीन एकड़ से ऊपर इन्हीं शुल्कों की भूमि हेतु 5000 रु नियंत्रित है। आरखण्ड औद्योगिक क्षेत्र विकास प्राधिकार विनियमन 2016 के आवेदन करने वाले संस्करण की रूपी जारी होगी।

बोकारो औद्योगिक क्षेत्र विकास प्राधिकार के अंतर्गत रिक्त खु-खण्डों की विवरणी औद्योगिक क्षेत्रवान नियन्त्रित है-

भूखण्ड की प्रमाणी/पर्स एकड़ (लैंड)

नियांकित दर दिनांक 01.04.2019 से दि 31.03.2020 तक प्रमाणी है।

भूमि का संवर्तन वाली दर आवेदन करने वाले संस्करण की रूपी जारी होगा।

बोकारो के विवरणी औद्योगिक क्षेत्र का स्थल अवलोकन औनलाइन आवेदन करने के पूर्व जारी होगा। आवेदन के पश्चात भूमि संवर्तन की रूपी आवार्ता पर विवरान की रूपी जारी होगा।

जियाडा विवरण की रूपी जारी होगा।

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Shah flays alleged closure of welfare plans

PNS ■ RANCHI

Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Monday caustionated Hemant Soren Government of withdrawing welfare schemes initiated by BJP Government in Centre and State. Shah on the occasion of merger of JVM (P) with BJP at Jagannath ground said, "The new Government should carry forward the welfare schemes initiated by Modi jee and erstwhile Raghubar Das government. If the present government tries to withdraw or roll back any schemes the BJP will stage an agitation from Sadak to Sadan (from road to Assembly) protesting against the decision."

The Union Home Minister also condemned the Soren government for poor law and order situation in State especially Chaibasa incident where seven tribals were killed by pro Pathalgadi supporters last month. Shah on the occasion once again reiterated BJP government commitment in implementing Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA) in State saying that after the change of Government in State attacks on CAA supporters in



Union Home Minister Amit Shah addresses a gathering during the merger of JVM with the BJP at an Milan Somaroh at Jagannath ground in Ranchi on Monday
Vinay Murmu | Pioneer



Union Home Minister Amit Shah along with former Chief Ministers Raghubar Das, Babulal Marandi, BJP national vice president Om Prakash Mathur, Party senior leader Karia Munda and Union Tribal Affairs Minister Arjun Munda during the merger of JVM with the BJP at an Milan Somaroh at Jagannath ground in Ranchi on Monday
Vinay Murmu | Pioneer

State has gone up.

Shah said, "Jharkhand has always remained close to BJP as former Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee created the State in 2000 and Prime Minister Narendra Modi is working hard for the making of the State as one of develop state in country. The Union Home Minister on the occasion urge the BJP cadres to work for the strengthening the party at grass root level.

Shah also raised the issue of abolition of Article 370 from Constitution which granted

special status to Jammu and Kashmir and construction of Ram Temple in Ayodhya.

Former Chief Minister Raghubar Das making at scathing attack on Hemant Soren government said that the present government only concern is to defame earlier government. Das said, "The government has little interest for people of State as they don't want to initiate any welfare schemes to hide their incompetency they are saying that the state exchequer is empty." The former Chief Minister also

dared Soren government of stopping any ongoing welfare schemes. He said, "We have come to know that Government is trying to stop the scheme under which there is provision of registry of property at Re 1. The scheme is for empowerment of women and if the government tries to do so the BJP will oppose it." Das also mentioned about government plans to withdraw Mukhyamantri Krishi Ashirwad Yojana.

On party's debacle in recent Assembly election, Das

said, "Victory and lose in election are part for every political parties. BJP is not dejected with Assembly election results as the party will bounce back." The former chief minister also gave the slogan, "we will come back soon" urging the party leaders and worker to strengthen party at grass root level.

The JVM merger with BJP was a grand affair as senior BJP leaders including OP Mathur, Arjun Munda, state president Laxman Gilua, former state presidents had come to witness the grand affair.

"Apart from the JMM bribery case, there is no other instance when Rs 3 crore of bribe has been kept in Punjab National Bank's Narora branch in New Delhi. JMM should tell about the amount of bribe on which they got a notice to pay income tax, in the light of this, whether they have paid income tax on bribe money or not," he added.

Pratul said that the JMM while referring to Babulal as the Wholesaler of MLAs, forgets that the term horse trading in Indian parliamentary history had its origin from the Jharkhand Mukti Morcha when its four MPs voted to save the government at the Centre by taking money from Congress. Jharkhand Mukti Morcha is a super seller of the politics of horse trading," he added.

JMM is super seller in political horse-trading: BJP

PNS ■ RANCHI



Retorting to JMM's announcement to reopen files of the infamous Meinhardt issue and conduct probe in it, State BJP Spokesperson Pratul Shahdeo today said that the Vigilance department has already probed the matter and did not find any irregularity.

"The BJP is not shying away from any kind of probe, but when old files are being reopened and probed the JMM bribery case should also be reinvestigated on the directions of Supreme Court in 2014.

The JMM general Secretary presents the matters with incomplete information. Meinhardt issue was not during the tenure of former Chief Minister Babulal Marandi but

he referred to it as Babulal's tenure. In fact, JMM has got upset due to the merger of Jharkhand Vikas Morcha with BJP and its leaders are saying anything," said Shahdeo.

Lawyers to boycott work today

PNS ■ RANCHI

The executive committee of the Jharkhand State Bar Council has condemning the alleged attack on a lawyer by District and Session Judge, Daltonganj Pankaj Kumar on the court premises last week has decided that the lawyers across the State will abstain from work on Tuesday, February 18. The council regretted that such an incident reflects the arrogant and 'above law' attitude of some judicial officers towards the advocates. The executive committee of Jharkhand State Bar Council has decided to send a committee of four members which will visit the District Bar Association, Daltonganj to confer and to express solidarity of the council with the advocates of the Bar Association.

The Committee comprises Abdul Kalama Rashidi, Hemant Kumar Shikarwar, Kundan Prakashan, Rinku Bhakat. The committee will submit the report within shortest possible time. On February 15, the lawyers in Daltonganj boycotted their work after a lawyer was allegedly assaulted by district and session judge.

Nehru alleged that the concerned judge has no respect for the Bar as the concerned judge delays most inordinately in passing orders even in those cases where arguments are complete and over. He said the Jharkhand High Court Ranchi must inquire into this episode and remove the judge from here.



JMM General Secretary Supriyo Bhattacharya addresses media at party office in Ranchi on Monday Pioneer photo

Congress, JMM mock at Marandi's homecoming

MRITUJAY KUMAR ■ RANCHI

Mocking at former Chief Minister Babulal Marandi returning to Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) on Monday ruling parties in the State, Jharkhand Mukti Morcha (JMM) and Indian National Congress (INC) said that Marandi was duping people for the last 14 years.

Addressing a Press conference at the party headquarters, Jharkhand Pradesh Congress Committee (JPCC) Spokesperson, Alok Kumar Dubey said it is not mega merger but it is merger of disappointment. Taking a dig at Union Home Minister, Amit Shah the party Spokesperson said that Shah is seeing the day when he had to come to the State Capital to include a single MLA.

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Meanwhile, reacting on Marandi's merger at a press meet, JMM General Secretary, Supriyo Bhattacharya said that returning home after 14 years of long time Marandi is thinking that he will celebrate Dipawali then it will be his blunder as the State BJP is divided in many groups and many leaders of the State unit of the party internally opposing his returning in BJP.

Taking a dig at Marandi, the party General Secretary said that on one hand BJP brought Local Policy based on year 1985 and Marandi had raise Local Policy based on year 1932 during his tenure. Now he should explain which side he will go, he added.

Bhattacharya further said that Marandi should also remember that during January, 2001 to February, 2002 in Marandi's tenure as Chief Minister, Jharkhand High Court had said that there is situation of complete anarchy in the State.

Bhattacharya said that the State Government is not working on revenge policy; it is only reviewing former Government's work. There is example that the workers of State Government were not getting their salary since three months, they got their due salary on December, 16

"During this time, many national level footballers working in the departments will also participate in this tournament and show their talent to the people. The tournament will be played at the Birsa Munda Stadium in Ranchi under the aegis of the Government of Jharkhand," said Roy.



Pioneer photo

AG to hold inter-zonal football tourney

PNS ■ RANCHI

Jharkhand will be proud of its organization," she added.

Deputy Accountant General, Chandra Behera informed that the Accountant General's office, spread across the Country, encourages players associated with every sport, and hires them. "For example, the Accountant General of Jharkhand gives jobs to five players every year, and gives them a chance to grow and play," he added.

He told that this department has been giving jobs and encouragement to many athletes of badminton, cricket and football, who are or have been national level players, from time to time.

The press meet was also addressed by Principal Accountant General Champak Roy and the office's welfare assistant Vinay Ganguly and other aspects related to the

tournament were given in detail.

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Deputy Accountant General Mousumi Dhar along with senior official during a Press conference at AG office in Ranchi on Monday
Vinay Murmu | Pioneer

XISS Panache 2020 concludes

PNS ■ RANCHI



competition which brought out the stylish version of XISS.

The 11th annual cultural fest of the Xavier Institute of Social Service (XISS) - Panache 2020 concluded on Monday. The three-day fest culminated with bitter sweet memories and mixed emotions from the students and participants alike.

The fest provided an ideal platform to nurture the skills and values instilled in the students and also test the abilities required in a professional. Panache marks the end of tenure for the seniors and the passing on of the baton to the juniors.

The last day of the extravaganza had a plethora of events like dress making, face painting, chess, words worth, open mic and LAN gaming and PUBG among others.

The highlight of the day included an awe inspiring performance by the HIND band and also the Walks the Ramp

A student walks the ramp during the Panache 2020 at Xavier Institute of Social Service (XISS) in Ranchi on Monday
Vinay Murmu | Pioneer

competition which brought out the stylish version of XISS.

Team Anjali was adjudged as the winner of dress making which brought out the inner Versace's and Gucci's of the institute. Priyanka Pratim and Ritika Vishwakarma managed to win the first prize by expressing their thoughts through colours in face painting.

Rishi Verma was the winner in chess while Alisha Mishra Beck and Samiksha Nagar were the winners of words worth- competition conducted to decide who the true heir of Shakespeare is.

4MS from Gossener College won the LAN game and PUBG while Vastika Dubey and Saanvi Singh from the host college won the Itsy Bitsy food carnival which involved cooking without the use of heat or fire.

The evening concluded with the entire college swaying to the tunes of DJ Joypreet Singh Bindra aka DP Bindra.

The programme on an average is generally between 30 to 45 minutes and the mode of transmission is a public address system. A radio broadcast involves a large amount of money and many legal formalities which we cannot afford. So we decided to record pre record the broadcast packed with incidents from across the globe and also with news and songs related to the community, transfer it on a pen drive and play it through sound boxes," said Sushma Asur who has been at the forefront of the mobile radio.

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average is generally between 30 to 45 minutes and the mode of transmission is a public address system. A radio broadcast involves a large amount of money and many legal formalities which we cannot afford. So we decided to record pre record the broadcast packed with incidents from across the globe and also with news and songs related to the community, transfer it on a pen drive and play it through sound boxes," said Sushma Asur who has been at the forefront of the mobile radio.

Asur radio programme leader and General Secretary, Jharkhand Bhasha Sahitya Sanskriti Akhara Vandana Tete feels that the initiative has received overwhelming response from the locals. "This is something the people of the region relate to. The primary objective it to protect the language and also

popularize it amongst the new generations as the new generation is getting detached from its language. People around the area are keen to participate in the programme and also request us to organise the event at their place," said Tete. Natives of the Latehar and Gumla districts, the tribe has a population of around 23,000 with only about 10,000 well versed in the Asur language.

"Since their language is at risk, there is also a threat to their survival. This is because their land has been acquired and they have no traditional means of

livelihood. There are plans of starting similar programmes for the Birhor and Birjia communities as well," added Tete.

The Asur tribe is among the nine PVTGs — Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups found in Jharkhand while the language features in the UNESCO list of definitely endangered languages. Retired Principal Chat Topro, Melan Asur, Roshni Asur, Manita Asur, Ajay Asur are the others actively involved in creating the programme.

Asur Mobile Radio makes tribal voices echo in J'khand hinterlands

DIVYA MODI ■ RANCHI

As the sound of 'Dhan-Dhan Turr..Dhand Tanatang Turr..Noa Haake Asur Ahada Radio Enegabu Degaabu Stringabu Urrari' (Come sir, dance and talk..) This is Asur Mobile Radio reverberates through the hustle-bustle of the weekly market 'haat' in Netarhat, a crowd gathers around to listen to the local news, songs and gather other information relevant to them - all in their local dialect.

Around 200 Kms from



Tribal artists perform at Asur Radio Pioneer photo

कार्यालय, दक्षिणी छोटानागपुर प्रादेशिक परिवहन प्राधिकार, राँची। ज्ञापांक.....आर.टी.ए. राँची/दिनांक—.....

नेशनल परमिट धारको के लिए आवश्यक सूचना

वरीय लेखा परीक्षा अधिकारी (आर० एस०), महालेखाकार (लेखा परीक्षा), आरखण्ड, राँची के कार्यालय के पत्रांक 163 / दिनांक 16.01.2020 के आलोक में संलग्न सूची में उल्लेखित नेशनल परमिट धारको को सूचित किया जाता है कि एक सप्ताह के अन्दर बकाया राशि का भूगतान करें अन्यथा बकाया राशि की वसूली हेतु Bihar and Orissa Public Demand Recovery Act के तहत सम्पूर्ण कारबाई ली जायेगी।

REGIONAL TRANSPORT AUTHORITY, South Chhotanagpur, Ranchi

Non-renewal of authorization of national permit

Annexure

SLN No.	NP.No	Vehicle No.	DOR	Period of NP		Authorisation upto	Period of authorisation due		No. of years due	delay in days	Authorisa- tion fee	Compos- ite fee	Late fine	Total
				From	To		From	To						
101	NP/JH/99/082017/22752	JH01AM1227	5/23/2011	8/6/2016	8/5/2021	8/5/2018	8/6/2018	8/5/2020	2	511	33000	2000	10000	45000
102	NP/JH/99/062017/1372	JH01AM1296	5/11/2011	5/31/2016	5/30/2021	5/30/2018	5/31/2018	5/30/2020	2	578	33000	2000	10000	45000
103	NP/JH/99/052015/51866	JH01AM3115	6/6/2011	5/2/2015	5/20/2020	5/20/2016	5/21/2016	5/20/2020	4	1318	66000	4000	10000	80000
104	NP/JH/99/112017/23455	JH01AM3917	6/11/2011	11/6/2015	11/5/2020	11/5/2018	11/6/2018	11/5/2020	2	419	33000	2000	8500	43500
105	NP/JH/99/122016/9736	JH01AM4571	6/16/2011	8/6/2016	8/5/2021	8/5/2018	8/6/2018	8/5/2020	2	511	33000	2000	10000	45000
106	NP/JH/99/102017/50211	JH01AM5584	6/24/2011	12/1/2016	11/30/2021	11/30/2017	12/1/2017	11/30/2020	3	759	49500	3000	10000	62500
107	NP/JH/99/082017/4472	JH01AM6655	7/2/2011	7/31/2016	7/30/2021	7/30/2018	7/31/2018	7/30/2020	2	517	33000	2000	10000	45000
108	NP/JH/99/082017/12393	JH01AM7147	7/6/2011	8/6/2016	8/5/2021	8/5/2018	8/6/2018	8/5/2020	2	511	33000	2000	10000	45000
109	NP/JH/99/082016/44922	JH01AM7171	7/6/2011	8/31/2016	8/30/2021	8/30/2017	8/31/2017	8/30/2020	3	851	49500	3000	10000	62500
110	NP/JH/99/122015/41387	JH01AM9818	7/23/2011	10/1/2016	9/30/2021	9/30/2017	10/1/2017	9/30/2020	3	820	49500	3000	10000	62500
111	NP/JH/99/082016/59378	JH01AN0712	7/26/2011	8/29/2016	8/28/2021	8/28/2017	8/29/2017	8/28/2020	3	853	49500	3000	10000	62500
112	NP/JH/99/082017/33661	JH01AN1120	7/29/2011	8/31/2016	8/30/2021	8/30/2018	8/31/2018	8/30/2020	2	486	33000	2000	10000	45000
113	NP/JH/99/112017/89189	JH01AN1151	7/29/2011	11/26/2016	11/25/2021	11/25/2018	11/26/2018	11/25/2020	2	399	33000	2000	8500	43500
114	NP/JH/99/082017/55516	JH01AN1164	7/29/2011	8/31/2016	8/30/2021	8/30/2018	8/31/2018	8/30/2020	2	486	33000	2000	10000	45000
115	NP/JH/99/092016/37377	JH01AN2272	8/6/2011	8/31/2016	8/30/2021	8/30/2017	8/31/2017	8/30/2020	3	851	49500	3000	10000	62500
116	NP/JH/99/122017/4225	JH01AN4784	8/24/2011	11/6/2016	11/5/2021	11/5/2018	11/6/2018	11/5/2020	2	419	33000	2000	8500	43500
117	NP/JH/99/102017/50207	JH01AN5757	8/30/2011	10/6/2016	10/5/2021	10/5/2018	10/6/2018	10/5/2020	2	450	33000	2000	9000	44000
118	NP/JH/99/102017/50208	JH01AN5858	9/3/2011	10/6/2016	10/5/2021	10/5/2018	10/6/2018	10/5/2020	2	450	33000	2000	9000	44000
119	NP/JH/99/122017/4266	JH01AN6571	9/7/2011	10/18/2016	10/17/2021	10/17/2018	10/18/2018	10/17/2020	2	438	33000	2000	9000	44000
120	NP/JH/99/102017/44615	JH01AN6922	9/12/2011	10/21/2016	10/20/2021	10/20/2018	10/21/2018	10/20/2020	2	435	33000	2000	9000	44000
121	NP/JH/99/102017/18630	JH01AN7775	9/16/2011	10/24/2016	10/23/2021	10/23/2018	10/24/2018	10/23/2020	2	432	33000	2000	9000	44000
122	NP/JH/99/122017/85897	JH01AP0554	9/29/2011	11/19/2016	11/18/2021	11/18/2018	11/19/2018	11/18/2020	2	406	33000	2000	8500	43500
123	NP/JH/99/122017/19595	JH01AP0601	9/30/2011	10/31/2016	10/30/2021	10/30/2018	10/31/2018	10/30/2020	2	425	33000	2000	9000	44000
124	NP/JH/99/112017/85536	JH01AP0712	9/30/2011	11/11/2016	11/10/2021	11/10/2018	11/11/2018	11/10/2020	2	414	33000	2000	8500	43500
125	NP/JH/99/112016/76594	JH01AP1302	10/10/2011	10/31/2016	10/30/2021	10/30/2017	10/31/2017	10/30/2020	3	790	49500	3000	10000	62500
126	NP/JH/99/112017/12554	JH01AP1381	10/10/2011	10/31/2016	10/30/2021	10/30/2018	10/31/2018	10/30/2020	2	425	33000	2000	9000	44000
127	NP/JH/99/122016/4723	JH01AP1481	10/12/2011	10/31/2016	10/30/2021	10/30/2017	10/31/2017	10/30/2020	3	790	49500	3000	10000	62500
128	NP/JH/99/122016/9468	JH01AP2971	10/21/2011	11/26/2016	11/25/2021	11/25/2017	11/26/2017	11/25/2020	3	764	49500	3000	10000	62500
129	NP/JH/99/122017/19479	JH01AP3015	10/21/2011	11/19/2016	11/18/2021	11/18/2017	11/19/2018	11/18/2020	2	406	33000	2000	8500	43500
130	NP/JH/99/122017/67661	JH01AP3044	10/22/2011	1/17/2016	1/16/2021	1/16/2019	1/17/2019	1/16/2020	3	147	16500	1000	7500	25000
131	NP/JH/99/092017/55862	JH01AP3228	10/24/2011	5/8/2015	5/7/2020	5/7/2018	5/8/2018	5/7/2020	2	601	33000	2000	10000	45000
132	NP/JH/99/122016/7587	JH01AP3511	10/25/2011	12/1/2016	11/30/2021	11/30/2017	12/1/2017	11/30/2020	3	759	49500	3000	10000	62500
133	NP/JH/99/122017/67662	JH01AP3812	10/27/2011	1/2/2016	1/2/2021	1/2/2019	1/3/2019	1/2/2020	1	361	16500	1000	8000	25500
134	NP/JH/99/112017/61085	JH01AP5541	10/20/201											

SEXUAL HARASSMENT CASE

HRD to pursue action against Prof Jena

Enquiry was stopped due to Delhi Assembly elections

DEEPAK KUMAR JHA ■
NEW DELHI

With the electioneering process over in the national Capital and Arvind Kejriwal back at the helm, the Union HRD Ministry is now planning to pursue the initiation of administrative action against a former Central Government employee, currently working as Professor and Dean at Ambedkar University Delhi (AUD), falling under the purview of the Delhi Government.

The don, Professor Sitanshu Shekar Jena, was held guilty of sexual harassment at workplace by HRD Ministry's Internal Complaints Committee during his tenure as Chairman of National Institute of Open Schooling (NIOS). Subsequently, IGNOU, parent cadre, had punished him by reducing his pay band and increments.

- The don, Professor Sitanshu Shekar Jena works as Professor and Dean at Ambedkar University Delhi (AUD), falling under purview of the Delhi Government
- The don was held guilty of sexual harassment at workplace by HRD Ministry's Internal Complaints Committee during his tenure as Chairman of National Institute of Open Schooling (NIOS). Subsequently, IGNOU, parent cadre, had punished him by reducing his pay band and increments
- There are allegations in the complaints to the

increments.

There are allegations in the complaints to the HRD Ministry and the Delhi Government that Jena concealed the punishment fact when applying for the post at AUD. Further, he also did not inform his parent department while applying to AUD. And to facilitate his appointment in AUD, he applied for VRS from IGNOU.

Delhi Deputy Chief Minister Manish Sisodia, as

Education Minister in his last tenure, had initiated a probe a year ago and a report was to be submitted within seven days but which hasn't been done so far. The inordinate delay in the proceedings has now led the HRD Ministry to pursue the matter as it has received complaints against the AUD Professor.

Jena was appointed by the Delhi Government as Professor and Dean in the AUD School of Vocational Studies almost two years ago. A senior official said now that the elections are over and the Delhi Government is in place, the matter will be expedited and taken up in the first meeting of Education Ministry.

For his part, Jena said he was not aware of the complaints and such matters against him. "I am not a Central Government employee anymore as I have already taken VRS from IGNOU three years ago. When the case, which is

being talked about now, has already been settled then no controversy stands," Jena told *The Pioneer* over phone.

Under the Government rules, sexual harassment invokes a major punishment which includes dismissal from service. IGNOU recently took strict action against an official found guilty of sexual harassment by immediately suspending him and then awarding a major punishment.

"As per the allegation of manipulation against Dr Jena, it was also stated that he was given undue favour by awarding a minor punishment and that too retrospectively which is against rules. Jena also has an inquiry of financial irregularity pending against him when he applied. The Delhi Government probe is expected to look into the role of AUD officials too," sources said at the HRD Ministry.

The ED claimed that the action under Foreign Exchange Management Act (FEMA) has led to detection of "huge evasion" of customs duty, GST as well as Income Tax.

"The ED received reliable input that Maharaja Jewellers (proprietor Tara Chand Soni), Bhagwati Jewellers (owner Ram Gopal Soni) and Ladiwala Associates (owner Honey Ladiwala) of Jaipur were purchasing smuggled gold bars from Harsh Bothra of Chennai and Banka Bullions Pvt. Ltd etc," the agency said in a statement.

While acting on the information, it was found that vari-

ED unearths unaccounted ₹3.75 cr cash, 39 kg gold

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

HAWALA RACKET

Agency too discovered over 39 kg of gold and silver after conducting raids in Jaipur, Kolkata and Chennai against jewellers associated with an alleged gold-smuggling hawala racket



bars were then dispatched to various domestic markets by different modes of transportation to evade action from the law enforcement agencies.

The accused jewellers did not account for jewellery manufactured from smuggled gold and illegal funds generated were then transferred through hawala agents based in these cities, the agency said.

Hawala denotes the illegal manner of transferring funds by skirting banking channels and dealing in cash through agents.

"Searches at various premises in Jaipur, Kolkata and Chennai resulted in seizure of unaccounted Indian and foreign currency worth ₹3.75 crore, gold bar and jewellery weighing 26.97 kg and silver weighing 12.22 kg along with incriminating documents. Electronic and digital devices seized are still to be examined and may lead to further details of illegal dealings," the agency added.

MHA-appointed panel suggests 1951 cut-off for ILP in Assam

To control movement of people from outside State

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

an appointment with him. The report is expected to be submitted this week itself.

Union Home Ministry appointed committee has suggested that 1951 should be the cut-off year for defining the indigenous people of Assam and introduction of the Inner Line Permit (ILP) to control the movement of people from outside the State.

The committee has also suggested two formulas for the reservation of seats for the indigenous people in the Assam Assembly and Lok Sabha constituencies of the State, including 67 per cent quota.

As per the rules, outsiders have to take permission from designated authorities before entering the areas where the ILP is applicable.

In case of State Government jobs, the committee recommended 80 per cent reservation for the locals. A number of other recommendations were also given for the protection and growth of Assamese and other indigenous languages.

Rajnath Singh welcomes SC ruling

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Defence Minister Rajnath Singh on Monday welcomed the Supreme Court's judgement on Permanent Commission for women in Army and said Prime Minister Narendra Modi has supported the idea of permanent commission for women and announced the change in policy in his Independence Day speech in 2018.

Tweeting this message he also said, "A historic decision to allow women in field operations came earlier when the then Defence Minister Nirmala Sitharaman announced that women will be inducted into

the Military Police. The recruitment process has started in 2019. The plan was to recruit women in roles ranging from probing crime cases to assisting the army in field operations wherever required," Raksha Mantri said.

"There have been instances where certain women officers have been in the job for nearly 20 years, while SSC term terminates in 14 years. In 2019, the Defence Ministry granted permanent commission to women in all 10 branches of the Indian Army, including Signal Corps, intelligence, aviation, engineering, service corps and ordnance corps," Singh added.

Before 2016, women made

up just 2.5 per cent of India's armed forces, working in mainly non-combat roles. As of January 2019, 3.89 per cent of the army personnel comprised women, while 6.7 per cent of the navy and 13.28 per cent of the air force personnel respectively were women as of June 2019. As of June 2019, women were inducted in all branches of the Indian Air Force, with terms and conditions for women officers being issued from time to time.

Singh said, "The Government is working to strengthen the 'Stree Shakti' in our Armed Forces and we stand committed to move forward in this direction."

The Government is working to strengthen the 'Stree Shakti' in our Armed Forces and we stand committed to move forward in this direction



BJP Govt disrespected women by arguing they don't deserve command posts in Army: Cong

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Congress on Monday said that the BJP Government disrespected Indian women by arguing in Supreme Court that women Army officers did not deserve command posts or permanent service because they were inferior to men.

Congress leader Rahul Gandhi attack on the Government came after the Supreme Court directed the Centre to grant permanent commission to all women officers in the Army within three months, terming the Centre's argument of physiological limitations and social norms for

denying them command posts "disturbing".

Congress general secretary Priyanka Gandhi Vadra on her part said the historic judgment of the Supreme Court has given new wings to the flight of women in the country.

"Women are capable -- in the Army, in valor, in water, land and sky. This is a befitting reply to the prejudiced Modi Government, which is opposed to women's power," the Congress general secretary said.

Rahul Gandhi, in a tweet, also lauded the women for standing up and proving the Government wrong. "The Government disrespected every Indian woman, by arguing in the SC that women Army officers didn't deserve command posts or permanent service because they were inferior to men



The Government disrespected every Indian woman, by arguing in the SC that women Army officers didn't deserve command posts or permanent service because they were inferior to men

RAHUL GANDHI

Bihar becomes 4th State to have bird tagging station

Sabarimala: Law can regulate offerings at religious places if used for terrorism, casinos, says SC

New Delhi: A 9-judge Bench of the Supreme Court observed on Monday that making offerings at places of worship may be a religious practice, but the law can regulate the money donated at such places if it is used for "terrorism" or "running casinos".

The top court said the old practices of "human sacrifices" and 'sat' amounted to murder under law and could not be saved on ground of "essential religious practice".

The Constitution bench, headed by Chief Justice SA Bobde, made these observations as it commenced hearing to deliberate upon the issues pertaining to the scope of freedom of religion as also of judicial scrutiny into "essential religious practices" of separate "religious

denominations".

The Bench is also examining the issue whether a person, who does not belong to a particular faith, can file a PIL questioning the religious practice of another religion or sect of a religion. The questions have arisen out of a judgement in the Sabarimala case.

"The IPC can be read as the guard against the practice of human sacrifices, because it is murder under the IPC. Likewise 'sat' also amounted to murder..

Even a religious aspect can be the subject matter of reform," said the Bench which also included justices R Banumathi, Ashok Bhushan, L Nageswara Rao, MM Shantanoudar, SA Nazeer, R Subhash Reddy, BR Gavai and Surya Kant. **PTI**

Other 3 are in Rajasthan, Tamil Nadu and Odisha

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Bihar has become the fourth State in the country to have a bird ringing (tagging) station wherein rings will be placed on legs of winged wonders to study their migration pattern, mortality, territoriality and other behaviour with the help of encrypted codes embedded in the attached tracking device.

The other three ringing stations are in Tamil Nadu, Rajasthan and Odisha.

A pact was inked between representatives of the Bihar Government and the Bombay Natural History Society (BNHS) at Gandhinagar in



A pact was inked between representatives of the Bihar Government and the Bombay Natural History Society at Gandhinagar in Gujarat on the first day of the opening of the CMS — COP13 (conservation of Migratory species — Conference of Parties)

Gujarat on the first day of the opening of the CMS — COP13 (conservation of Migratory species — Conference of Parties) attended by over 2,500 delegates from 111 countries.

This will be fourth ringing station in India and the first in North India. The pact is for five years in which our

Government will dole out almost ₹5 crore," Bihar Principal Secretary, Environment and Forests, Dipak Kumar Singh said, adding the station will monitor the areas where large no of migratory birds visit such as Nagi Nakti (in Jamui District), Kusheshwarthan (in Darbhanga District), Baraila jheel (Vaishali), Kanwar lake (Begusarai).

He added it is also the first ringing station to be set up with the support of a State Government. The pact was signed by Director BNHS, Pradeep Apte and Bihar's Chief Wildlife Warden, Prabhat Kumar Gupta.

The ringing station will be manned by trained scientists and other technical manpower from BNHS. For monitoring the migratory birds, rings are



Bihar Government and Bombay Natural History Society on Monday signed and exchanged an MoU in presence of Environment Secretary CK Mishra and Bihar Department of Environment, Forest and Climate change Principal Secretary Dipak Kumar Singh, Director BNHS Dr Deepak Apte and Chief Wildlife Warden of Bihar Prabhat Kumar Gupta.

used which have chips containing the details about their origin, route taken by them etc.

of migratory birds. Significantly, Bhagalpur is also one of the only three known breeding places of Greater Adjutant in the whole world, apart from Cambodia and Assam.

At these stations, rings are placed on legs of birds. The rings come with chips which help in tracking the origin of the birds and the route taken by them during migration.

An official from the BNHS explained that the ring's encrypted BNHS code numbers ensure that wherever a ringed bird dies, is shot or is spotted with binoculars or photographed, the data can be sent back to the organisation and the bird's migration is charted. BNHS has ringed over a million birds at different places in the Indian subcontinent, with the initiation of bird ringing study in India in 1950s.

Sabarimala: Law can regulate offerings at religious places if used for terrorism, casinos, says SC

New Delhi: A 9-judge Bench of the Supreme Court observed on Monday that making offerings at places of worship may be a religious practice, but the law can regulate the money donated at such places if it is used for "terrorism" or "running casinos".

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PALANISWAMI JOURNEY

EPS completes 3 yrs in CM office

KUMAR CHELLAPPAN ■

CHENNAI

When he was sworn in as Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu on February 17, 2017, even Edappadi Palaniswami would not have thought that he will survive in the chair at least for one year.

Why the post of Chief Minister was thrust on him was because of a Supreme Court verdict which upheld the judgment of the Special Court in Bangalore which had sentenced VK Sasikala, the then general secretary of the AIADMK and her two close relations to four years imprisonment in the Disproportionate Asset Case in which the former Chief Minister J Jayalalithaa was the prime accused.

Since Jayalalithaa went to meet her maker on December 5, 2016, she was saved from the ignominy of being seen as a convict marching to the Parappana Agrahara central Jail near Bangalore. Sasikala, who had been elected "unani-

mously" as the Chief Minister after the ouster of O Panneerselvam, instead of driving down to the Centenary Hall of Madras University for the oath taking ceremony had to travel all the way to Bangalore to surrender before the jail officials on her day of reckoning.

But before proceeding to Bangalore to serve her term, Sasikala had nominated Edappadi Palaniswami, her long term confidante, as the Chief Minister.

To keep Palaniswamy under a tight leash, Sasikala had also nominated TTV Dhinakaran as the deputy general secretary of the party, much to the shock of the AIADMK cadre. Dhinakaran was a non-entity in the party when Jayalalithaa was alive but had managed to sneak into Veda Nilayam (Jayalalithaa's private residence in Poes Garden) after Amma was admitted to Apollo Hospital in Chennai in an unconscious condition in September 2016.



With Dhinakaran breathing down his neck on a round-the-clock basis, Palaniswamy had to perform a tight rope walk in governance and the party.

No one had given him a chance of survival and things worsened further when Dhinakaran decided to contest the by-election from R K Nagar assembly constituency, a seat held by Jayalalithaa at the time of her demise. By the time Dhinakaran won from R K Nagar constituency, Palaniswamy had joined hands

with arch rival O Panneerselvam and the duo succeeded in easing out the Mannargudi Mafia (as Sasikala and her relations were known in Tamil Nadu) from the AIADMK.

Though there were tense moments about the majority of the AIADMK in the House as some of the MLAs decided to cast their lots with the Dhinakaran faction, Palaniswamy has proved that he is a wonderful survivor. The setback the AIADMK had suffered in the Lok Sabha elec-

tion of 2019 is long forgotten as the party has wrested two assembly seats in by-elections held recently.

"More than Palaniswamy, it is Stalin who is tense and nervous now. The DMK has been out of power in the State since 2011 and from the Centre since 2013. If he fails to win the 2021 assembly election, it is going to be the end of the road for Stalin," said T Ramakrishnan, author and commentator.

Tamil Nadu is seeing a resurgence in industrialisation and development over the last two years thanks to the silent manoeuvring by Palaniswamy from the Secretariat.

Other than the anti-CAA agitation, the Chief Minister has no major issues haunting his Government for the time being. The question being asked is whether EPS is the person who could resuscitate the AIADMK from its slumber following the demise of Jayalalithaa. Remember, the DMK is yet to get a saviour in the mould of M Karunanidhi.

those who want to participate in the polls even they are not being allowed to roam around freely and meet people. "They are being prevented to visit their constituencies and carry out political activity", he alleged.

Seeking immediate release of political leaders, detained since August 5, and freedom to campaign without any roadblocks and security restrictions, GA Mir appealed to the J&K administration to facilitate their participation in the polls by creating conducive atmosphere otherwise they won't be able to participate in these polls.

Addressing a press conference here at party headquarters in Jammu, Jammu & Kashmir Pradesh Congress Committee Chief, GA Mir told reporters, "The Congress party is ready to participate in the Panchayat by-polls, as they are being held on party lines, but it is not possible for them to contest the same by remaining indoors".

Mir said, "on what basis by-polls are going to be conducted on party lines. He asked, where are the parties. Except BJP, leaders of no other mainstream parties are in the field. He said,



roots".

Earlier, on Sunday National Conference too had appealed local administration to remove "roadblocks" so that it can campaign freely.

In a letter to Jammu and Kashmir Chief Electoral Officer (CEO) Shaileendra Kumar, NC central secretary Rattan Lal Gupta had stated it is practically impossible for the party to participate in the election when its top leaders, including its president Farooq Abdullah, vice-president Omar Abdullah, general secretary Ali Mohammed Sagar, are in detention under the stringent Public Safety Act.

Cong for conditional participation in J&K Panchayat bypolls

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■

JAMMU

After National Conference, the State Unit of the Congress party on Monday announced 'conditional' participation in the Panchayat-by-polls, being held to fill over 12,000 vacant seats in Jammu & Kashmir.

Since these by-polls are going to take place on party lines the mainstream political parties are keen on taking the plunge to test political waters at the grass roots.

Addressing a press conference here at party headquarters in Jammu, Jammu & Kashmir Pradesh Congress Committee Chief, GA Mir told reporters, "The Congress party is ready to participate in the Panchayat by-polls, as they are being held on party lines, but it is not possible for them to contest the same by remaining indoors".

Other than the anti-CAA agitation, the Chief Minister has no major issues haunting his Government for the time being. The question being asked is whether EPS is the person who could resuscitate the AIADMK from its slumber following the demise of Jayalalithaa. Remember, the DMK is yet to get a saviour in the mould of M Karunanidhi.

LOCUST ATTACK
Central team reaches Raj to assess damage to crops

PTI ■ JAIPUR

A 10-member central team will be visiting locust-affected areas of Rajasthan in next two days to take stock of the damage to crops due to the insects.

Rajasthan Agriculture Minister Lal Chand Kataria had informed the state assembly earlier in the month that crop on over 1.49 lakh hectares was damaged in various districts due to the locust attack since May last year.

The team, which arrived in Jaipur on Monday, will assess the damage in Bikaner and Jodhpur divisions in three parts.

The team held a meeting with Chief Secretary D B Gupta and other officials of the state Agriculture Department.

The state officials urged the Centre to provide an early assistance of ₹200 crore.

No rifles missing from SAPB, says Kerala police

PTI ■ THIRUVANANTHAPURM

Days after the CAG report found shortage of 25 INSAS rifles and 12,061 live cartridges at the Special Armed Police Battalion here, Kerala police on Monday said a physical verification has found that no rifles were missing.

"As the CAG is a very responsible auditing agency and their allegation has to be taken seriously, a crime has been registered as per their report," ADGP, Crime Branch, Tomin Thachankery, told reporters here.

He said it was SAPB's responsibility to come clean on the matter since the charge was against them.

The battalion was asked to produce all their rifles for inspection, he said.

The ADGP said a physical examination of the 647 guns brought from 13 locations found no guns had gone miss-

Goa to get largest super-specialty facility under PMSSY

PTI ■ PANAJI

The country's largest super-specialty medical block under the Pradhan Mantri Swasthya Suraksha Yojana (PMSSY) will



be inaugurated within next six months in Goa, State health Minister Vishwanit Rane said on Monday. The facility is coming up in Bambolim near the Goa Medical College and Hospital and the state will invite Prime Minister Narendra Modi to throw it open for the public, Rane added.

"My dream project for state of Goa Super Specialty Block. I am fortunate to be a health Minister of Goa under the BJP Government and for being able to take further, the vision of our Prime Minister Narendra Modi in providing quality health care to all citizens," Rane tweeted.

He also tweeted, "I am very pleased to have been able to implement his vision under the Pradhan Mantri Swasthya Suraksha Yojana that has made this dream project a reality for every Goan at the cost of Rs 450 crores." Within the next six months, we will be commissioning this hospital under a unique Public-Private Partnership approved by the NITI Aayog and the Centre," he added. He said he was looking for the inauguration of the facility at the hands of the prime minister in the presence of state chief minister Pramod Sawant.

Young, educated people give hope in troubling times: Ratna, Naseeruddin

PTI ■ MUMBAI

For actors Ratna Pathak Shah and Naseeruddin Shah, India is their Valentine.

The Shahs, always vocal about their opinions, say they are firm in their belief that the educated young give them hope in troubling times.

The couple was speaking at an event titled "India My Valentine" here on Sunday.

According to Ratna Pathak, the "khalbali" (churning) she saw in the 60s and 70s is back but the young and educated give her hope.

"During that time everyone was thinking about the progress of India. How to make the nation ours, what kind of nation it should be. Because my family has always been associated with performing arts, we used to have discussions on these topics," she said at the event featuring musical performances, stand-up comedy acts and speeches to celebrate love and unity in the country.

Over a dozen artistes, including Naseeruddin Shah, Vishal Bhardwaj, Rekha

Bhardwaj and Swanand Kirkire, came together on one stage at the event.

Ratna Pathak, the daughter of the late actor Dina Pathak, said questions related to nation building were on everyone's mind in the decades past. Now, there is "a possibility of the nation breaking, changing", she said.

"The 'khalbali', the brainstorming of that time, can be seen reflected today. Of course, things have changed, the situation is extremely serious. What I saw and heard today, what I see around me, it definitely increases hope."

Never before has India had so many young, educated people alive at one time. It's making a difference and we are seeing it all over the country," she said.

The churn is not limited to Shaheen Bagh or Mumbai Bagh but spread across, she said, referring to the anti-CAA protests in several places in the country.

"Again, art is showing the way. This kind of 'khalbali' is producing such wonderful

writing, music, performances," she said.

Naseeruddin Shah said he can't help but wonder about the current situation when he looks around at the state of the nation.

"At a time when a lot of us are grappling to understand what's going on around us, I think I'm not alone in agonising over a question: whether all this was always latent and has finally burst forth, not being able to contained any longer."

"Or has there been in the last decade a complete change in our country... I'm not a social scientist, so I don't know the answer."

The actor then read selections from Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru's "The Discovery of India" and said the book can shed some light.

"May be it'll show you the direction. I've also in these times felt the need to re-examine, rediscover what it is that is unique about this country, what it is that has always been our pride and has won the admiration of the entire world," he added.

The team held a meeting with Chief Secretary D B Gupta and other officials of the state Agriculture Department.

The state officials urged the Centre to provide an early assistance of ₹200 crore.

PTI ■ DEHRADUN

Three tourists from West Bengal were rescued from the Ganga in Uttarakhand's Rishikesh after they were stranded on a dry patch in the river, police said on Monday.

The tourists were stuck there due to a sudden rise in the water level, they said.

Police sprang into action immediately and rescued them with the help of ropes and rafts, Muni ki Reti police station in-charge R K Saklani said.

When the police team reached the spot near the Poornanand ghat, three men were seen stranded on a thin patch of dry land slightly above the surface of the river, he said.

The tourists have been identified as Gautam Majumdar and Sushil Halder from North 24 Parganas and Konrad Chakraborty from Jalpaiguri.

3 WB tourists rescued from Ganga in Rishikesh

Police personnel wearing life jackets reached the spot on rafts and brought them back with the help of ropes, Saklani said.

When the tourist waded into the river, the water level was low but when they walked downstream for a while, it rose all of a sudden, causing panic.

They somehow reached the dry patch of the land and raised an alarm, catching the attention of passersby who informed police, the official said.

The tourists have been identified as Gautam Majumdar and Sushil Halder from North 24 Parganas and Konrad Chakraborty from Jalpaiguri.

"In 2000, he killed one of his friends and in 2002 he murdered his cousin (in Uttar Pradesh). We nabbed him from New Delhi after receiving a tip-off about his presence in the national capital," the DCP said.

He has been booked in the murder case registered by the Powai police, Goyal said, adding further investigation was underway. The accused had been working as a security guard in Mumbai for the last 12 years, he said.

Pandey allegedly stabbed to death Singh, a fellow security guard, following a tiff over a game of ludo, the DCP said. He was produced before a local court, which remanded him in police custody till February 21, Goyal added.

The motive behind the two murders in Uttar Pradesh was not yet known, police said.

IGNOU holds 33rd convocation ceremony

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

HRD Minister Ramesh Pokhrayan 'Nishank' on Monday praised IGNOU for making education accessible to people in all parts of the country and developing analytical ability in students through their research activities.

Gold medals were awarded to over 50 meritorious students during the convocation by the minister.

In his convocation address, 'Nishank' lauded IGNOU for having "unprecedented expertise in developing and launching academic programmes that are needed in the present context and very useful for learning communities".

He was speaking at the 33rd convocation ceremony of the Indira Gandhi National Open University (IGNOU). Over 2.31 lakh students from throughout India received their degrees across 39 regional centres.

Crediting IGNOU for taking education to every house in the country, the minister said, "I congratulate IGNOU for the excellence achieved by it in developing critical and analyt-

tical ability of students through their research activities".

He appreciated IGNOU for increasing the Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER), which he said cannot be achieved by the conventional system of education alone. He urged the university to introduce programmes which are employment-centric and help in employment generation.

Prof Nageshwar Rao, the vice-chancellor of the university, said the varsity has introduced 26 new academic programmes including three graduate degree (general), 9 graduate honours programmes under CBCS and 3 online programmes in the last two admission cycles to meet diversified needs in the disciplines of health sciences, vocational areas, tourism, environment change, yoga, development studies, etc.

Naxals raid road work site, torch trucks, machinery in C'garh

PTI ■ BALRAMPUR

Trucks and construction machinery engaged in road work in Chhattisgarh's Balrampur were set ablaze by Naxals on Monday morning, police said.

Around a dozen armed Maoists raided the construction site near Bandarchua village under Samri police station limits, some 450 kilometres from here, between 10am and 11am and set fire to three trucks, two excavators and one concrete mixer machine, an official said.

"The vehicles and machines were deployed for a work under the Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana. The site is on the border of Chhattisgarh and Jharkhand. The ultras escaped into the jungles of the neighbouring state. A team under Balrampur Superintendent of Police TR Koshima has rushed to the spot," he added.

The arson took place in north Chhattisgarh which incidentally the State Government has earlier claimed to be an area freed from Left Wing Extremism (LWE).

Wanted for 3 murders, man arrested by Mumbai cops from Delhi

PTI ■ MUMBAI

A 38-year-old security guard, accused of murdering three persons since 2000 — two in Uttar Pradesh and one in Mumbai — and carrying a ₹10,000 reward on his head, was arrested by the city police from New Delhi, an official said on Monday. According to the official, the accused, Avinash Kumar Laxmikant Pandey, was nabbed from New Delhi's Kamala Market locality on Sunday in connection with the murder of a fellow security guard in suburban Powai last year.

Pandey has allegedly killed two persons, including his cousin, in Prayagraj (earlier Allahabad) in his native state of Uttar Pradesh, where the police has announced a reward of ₹10,000 for information leading to this arrest, he said.





Lead from the front

SC allows women officers to get command positions in the Army and quashes use of gender stereotypes as an argument



Thanks to the Supreme Court, women officers in the Army can now get command positions at par with male officers and break the glass ceiling in the forces. In non-combat roles for the time being. However, the sad part is that they had to fight for it legally rather than being naturalised in the just order of things, considering that they were inducted in the Army in 1992, a long 28 years ago. An entire generation has grown up in between. In this sense, the ruling is more than significant, it is a landmark. For it reminded the armed forces that as part of an institution that codified discipline, values, honesty, decency and honour, their despotic version of patriarchy, preventing women from leading men beyond event parades, was "discriminatory" and "disturbing." In fact, it went against the very principles of equality and fairness that the Army professes from time to time. In the process, the court also underlined the need for a mindset change in the evolutionary flow of changing times, not just in the Army but everywhere. It said that deep-rooted stereotypes, that men are dominant and women are primary caretakers, need to go away. It even dismissed the argument of women being unfit physically and compromised by family duties as creating an "artificial" distinction, considering that they have still not been cleared for active combat. The court demolished all chauvinist arguments that can be used as a precedent in deciding similar cases of gender parity, tersely: "To cast aspersions on gender is an affront to their (the women's) dignity and to the country. Time has come that women officers are not adjunct to their male counterparts. Physiological features of women have no link to their rights. The mindset must change. Women work shoulder to shoulder with men." With these words, Justices DY Chandrachud and Ajay Rastogi upheld the equality of opportunity for all citizens, elevating functionality above gender and treating human resource in any discipline as deserving of respect than either an entitlement or a consolation prize. It also implied that cultural arguments have no place when it comes to the larger duty of protecting the nation. The court, knowing the tendency of institutions to not follow its orders, said permanent commission would be available to all women, regardless of their years of service and that the judgment had to be implemented within three months. What all this means is that service conditions of men and women officers will be exactly the same and that the latter shall also be provided with choices of specialisation like their male counterparts. A woman can rise to the rank of Colonel and even lead battalions. Women officers, who have been retired, will also get pension benefits.

If the court had to admonish one of the highest institutions of the land — one that is expected to rise above societal ills and be progressive and liberal — on gender injustice, then clearly it is confirmation of inherent biases among the privileged, too. Where women officers can be test cases but not decisive enough, where they may be relegated to staff duties but not challenge the male bastion. The Government's regressive stand on limiting women's role in the Army is hypocritical considering its own departments have had all-women marching contingents in Republic Day parades, the Indian Air Force (IAF) allows them to become fighter pilots and the Army has even sent them to tough UN peacekeeping missions globally. Unless they were just tokenism to boost propaganda than really honour winners of the Seva medals and Vishist Seva medals. The next question, therefore, is should the buck stop with just entrusting greater responsibility to them? Are women just worthy of being included in non-combat roles only? In actuality, like their male counterparts, they, too, give up on all familial commitments to be part of the Army. They, too, undergo the same rigorous selection and training procedures as their male peers. None is arguing that the Army lower its standards. But if women have made it through all kinds of selection criteria, then they should at least be given a chance to prove their mettle. For they are often made a scapegoat for the failure in upgrading standards and changing the status quo. The issue is not only about whether women can be inducted in combat roles but how to make it happen with a radical overhaul of personnel policy. Other nations, including the US, Australia, Canada, Denmark, France, Germany and Israel, allow women to be part of certain combat units. By resisting change, the Army wouldn't want to be out of sync with an India that is resetting itself. Certainly, it doesn't suit its image when the court has to prod it all the time. It needs to be the initiator, not a follower.

Smashing heads

Young people will always find innovative ways of getting hurt for thrills. But the latest game craze is plain stupid



When you are young, you feel invincible. And because death feels so far away, you tend to take physical risks that you never will once you cross the 30s. Nobody is saying that older humans are boring and refuse to take challenges. But the physical ability to take risks is far reduced by simple physiology. There is a reason why an average infantryman is 22 years old; you would not want to go to war with a physically old army. But thanks to young people pulling off crazy stunts, we have seen the proliferation

of adventure sports and some death-defying feats of human achievement. This has been the story ever since human beings gained cognisance of the idea of "self", which after all, separates us from animals. Until the dare tempts death.

From every generation, some activity or the other emerges that the adventure sports X-Games might take up. But the latest challenge by the young, called the "Skull breaker" is downright stupid and has parents across the world in a state of panic. As the name implies, the challenge is not a smart one. It involves a trio of teens, who stand in a line and jump, and when the central participant's feet leave the ground, his/her companions on either side attempt to knock his/her feet out from under them. The prospect of the central participant making a headfall backwards, with chances of smacking his/her head besides injuring other parts of the body, looms larger. Some children have already been fatally injured and many are suffering the impacts of a concussion. It is beyond one's rational understanding as to why would anyone want to get a concussion deliberately. However, there are a few things that we must understand: Banning this practice will not end it. The best way to deal with this is to talk to adults at social media firms and actively prevent the widespread sharing of videos. The second way is for parents, teachers and doctors to talk to children and explain what a concussion is and how it can have long-term ramifications. One can get a concussion or an injury while playing sports, particularly contact sports. That is accidental; this stupid activity causes self-harm and it must be classified as such. We must ensure that it is one that is ended and not emulated by future generations while ensuring that the creative physicality of the next generation continues. Just like an army of youth needs a grizzled veteran to maintain discipline and order, this army of children needs some common sense from adults.

Pseudo-Caliphate and India

By throwing his weight behind Islamabad on the Kashmir issue, Erdogan unambiguously signalled his intention to emerge as the imam of the new Caliphate he hopes to lead



SANDHYA JAIN

Even if we overlook the facts about which nation is "occupying" Kashmir, by stating that there is "no difference between Gallipoli and occupied Kashmir", Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan unambiguously signalled his intention to emerge as the "imam" of the new (pseudo) Caliphate he hopes to lead by 2023, the centenary of the Turkish Republic. Addressing a joint session of Pakistan's Parliament (February 14), he lauded sacrifices made by it in the war on terror and the "positive contributions" it made to the Afghanistan peace process and promised support during the Financial Action Task Force (FATF) meet in Paris (February 16-21, 2020). His denunciation of US President Donald Trump's Mideast plan hints at an eventual challenge to Riyadh in the region.

Erdogan's determination to restore the Caliphate has created a visible schism between the Arab States formally led by Saudi Arabia and the non-Arab States led by Turkey. A nascent axis is discernible between Turkey, Malaysia and Pakistan; Iran and Qatar complete the anti-Riyadh alignment. Erdogan declared in February 2018, "The Republic of Turkey is a continuation of the Ottoman Empire... the essence is the same, soul is the same..."

Unsurprisingly, Ankara has emerged as the new hub for anti-India activities by Pakistan's Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI). Unknown to most people, Turkey has universal jurisdiction laws as part of its domestic laws. Article 13 of the Turkish Penal Code states, "Turkish law shall apply to" the crime of torture "committed in a foreign country whether or not committed by a citizen or non-citizen."

Khalistanis tried to invoke these laws. Sikhs for Justice, a group working for a referendum ("Referendum 2020") to create Khalistan, is believed to be funded by the ISI. In October 2018, its legal advisor, Gurpatwant Singh Pannu, filed a case against Punjab Chief Minister Captain Amarinder Singh when he visited Turkey to pay homage at Gallipoli to soldiers from the First Patiala Infantry Regiment (now 15 Punjab), who lost their lives in World War I, on the centenary of the Great War.

Pannu went to Gallipoli to secure an arrest warrant and restrain the Punjab Chief Minister from leaving Turkey. As the Captain was on a non-official trip, he lacked diplomatic immunity as under the Vienna Protocol, only the Prime Minister and External Affairs Minister are "protected persons" when abroad in personal capacity. In Pakistan, Erdogan lauded a 1915 rally in Lahore, led by Allama Iqbal, where people from present-day Pakistan supported the Turkish people and blatantly ignored the sacrifices made by Indian soldiers at Gallipoli (Battle of Çanakkale), possibly because the bells tolled for the Ottoman Empire.

Turkey's domestic laws explain why ex-

IAS officer Shah Faesal was going to Turkey on August 14, 2019, soon after the Centre abrogated Article 370 and divided the State of Jammu & Kashmir into the Union Territories of Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh. It is possible that some foreign mentors asked Faesal to invoke these laws in Turkey. He was to file a case of human rights violations against Union Home Minister Amit Shah, Defence Minister Rajnath Singh, the then Chief of Army Staff Gen Bipin Rawat and others, on behalf of his political party, Jammu & Kashmir People's Movement (JKPM).

Media reports stated that from Ankara, Faesal was likely to try to take the Kashmir issue to the International Court of Justice (ICJ) at The Hague, the Netherlands. But this would not take off for want of jurisdiction; no individual can file a case in the ICJ, only States can. Of course, his arrival in the Netherlands would be embarrassing for India.

But if Faesal really wanted to go to The Hague, he could have taken a direct flight to Amsterdam. His plan was to exploit Turkey's Article 13 universal jurisdiction law. Some human rights NGO would receive him at Ankara, where he would be lionised as a civil service topper (2010) and Harvard alumni who quit a Government job to protest against the activities of the Indian State in Kashmir. Actually Faesal

resigned from the service in January 2019 in order to enter politics. However, the sudden split of Jammu & Kashmir and freeze on political activity nixed his unborn political career, leaving NGOs activism his only alternative.

Had he reached Ankara, the international media would have splashed Kashmir on the front pages of all important newspapers and magazines and the Indian media would follow suit, thus making Faesal the global face of the anti-India Islamic movement. Once he managed to file a case in Turkey, Islamabad would almost certainly have followed up by filing a case against India at the ICJ, where it has suffered reverses in the Kulbhushan Jadhav case.

However, Faesal's mentors could not anticipate the lookout notices for Kashmiris trying to leave the country; he was caught at the airport, sent back to Srinagar and placed in preventive custody. He has now been booked under the Public Safety Act (February 15).

This argument can be corroborated from Pakistan Prime Minister Imran Khan's tweet on August 15, 2019, where he invoked Srebrenica, site of the 1995 genocide of over 8,000 Bosnians by the Bosnian Serb Army led by Ratko Mladic. Khan tweeted: "Will the world silently witness another Srebrenica-type massacre and ethnic cleansing of Muslims in

IOK? I want to warn the international community if it allows this to happen, it will have severe repercussions and reactions in the Muslim world setting off radicalisation and cycles of violence?" The talk of "masacres and ethnic cleansing" of Kashmiri Muslims is, of course, pure bunkum but the tweet suggests an ISI hand in the aborted Turkish escapade.

Meanwhile, Erdogan has been cultivating separatist, religious and business leaders and Islamic groups in Kashmir after the tweaking of Article 370; this goes deeper than his traditional support to Pakistan at the Organisation of Islamic Conference. Previously also, he supported Pakistan in the FATF. While addressing the UN General Assembly on September 25, 2019, he chided the international community for not paying proper attention to Kashmir over the past seven decades.

Interestingly, soon after the FATF and UNGA meetings, the Indian Overseas Congress headed by Rahul Gandhi loyalist Sam Pitroda opened an office in Istanbul in November 2019. Possibly the Congress hopes to recover its once-committed Muslim vote bank by cultivating the emerging Caliphate; the repercussions on India's internal affairs will need careful observation.

(The author is a senior journalist. Views expressed are personal)

SOUND BITE

Erdogan's remarks are completely unacceptable. They reflect neither an understanding of history nor of the conduct of diplomacy.

MEA Spokesperson
—Raveesh Kumar

I'm happy that I can now do the work that I've wanted to. I want to continue working all my life because it's difficult as people say that actresses have a shelf-life.

Actor
—Kareena Kapoor

The global community must step up efforts to help bring peace in war-torn Afghanistan. The Afghan people need and deserve peace, prosperity and full respect of their human rights.

UN chief
—Antonio Guterres

Lakhs and lakhs of people are up in arms against the CAA. His assertion that there would be no going back on CAA shows the dictatorial attitude of the PM.

Congress leader
—Sanjay Dutt

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Corrupt rule the roost

Sir — Interestingly, though the electoral bonds (corporate-sponsored cash money to political parties excluding goods and services tax and without the donor's name) scheme was originally formulated for the Lok Sabha polls, the window for the sale of bonds was opened before the Assembly elections as well. The last instance for this was seen in the just-concluded elections in Delhi.

As per the election watchdog, the Association of Democratic Reforms (ADR), in the run-up to the Delhi Assembly elections, 139 electoral bonds (78 bonds were worth ₹1 crore each, 34 bonds worth ₹10 lakh each while the remaining 27 bonds were worth ₹1 lakh each) worth ₹81.67 crore were sold by various branches of State Bank of India (SBI).

So far, ₹6,210 crore have been donated through this method ever since the scheme began. In the name of election reform, this electoral bond scheme is the invention of the BJP. This is yet another way of concealing facts and encouraging corruption without a trail.

Law-abiding citizens believe that the electoral bond is one such corrupt practice that has been made official to benefit the BJP as more than 93 per cent of the bond's amount goes to the party. It's a pity that neither the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) or the Election Commission (EC) or the Supreme Court is really bothered with this white-collared corruption.

Bidyut Kumar Chatterjee
Faridabad

The dark side of Indian politics



make an informed choice. Despite landmark judgments, parties and contestants are reluctant to do the needful for the obvious reason that such disclosure can harm their poll prospects. This time, too, the onus of cleaning the system has been put on the Election Commission (EC). It has been made responsible for enforcing the court's order so as to ensure "transparency." But at a time when the institution itself is toothless, how can it change the situation on the ground? The EC should be granted the power to disqualify candidates and de-register parties in case of concealment of vital information and other grave electoral offences.

Abhijit Roy
Jamshedpur

Digest the irony

Sir — The appointment of Rishi Sunak as the UK's new Finance Minister is proof of the acceptance of Indian talent. His work is cut

out. It is likely that he will overcome all challenges on account of his vast financial acumen and practical understanding of the issues at hand. Sunak's rise to prominence has not come without undertones. While we feel proud that Indian-origin men and women are gaining prominence, we brand them as "termites" when they come home in search of livelihood. They are viewed as a "danger" to the nation.

Ruchi

Via email

When will we learn?

Sir — Union Home Minister Amit Shah's admission that his party failed to feel the pulse of the people in Delhi makes one feel the country is a "picture hall," where the politicians are the "entertainers" and the citizens cast their vote to rate the level of entertainment. Why can't our leaders realise that people assess their worthiness with reference to the job done?

PP Sen

New Delhi

Send your feedback to:
letterstopioneer@gmail.com

FIRST COLUMN

A win-win for Modi and Trump

While India will benefit from stronger defence ties and technology, the US President will gain from his pro-India image in an election year



SIMI MEHTA

On February 24, US President Donald Trump will inaugurate the world's largest cricket stadium in Ahmedabad. He will also be welcomed with resounding calls of "Kem Cho, Trump" while participating in a seven-kilometre long roadshow from the airport to the Sabarmati Ashram accompanied by Prime Minister (PM) Narendra Modi. Celebrating the close ties between America and India, this will be the first visit of a US President since 2015 and Trump's first foreign tour after his impeachment trial. The palpable excitement over the visit is evident, with Modi underscoring that this would "go a long way in further cementing India-US ties."

The tour is expected to overtake the obvious optics and engage in serious discussions on broad, strategic ingredients that bring India and the US together. On February 25, the Trumps will be accorded a ceremonial welcome in the second leg of their trip to New Delhi. Defence cooperation is expected to occupy the centrestage and India is set to give a final approval for the \$2.6 billion 24 MH-60R Seahawk helicopters equipped with torpedoes and submarine-detection capacities for the Indian Navy. Additionally, there is a US approval already in place for the sale of an Integrated Air Defence Weapon System (IADWS) or the National Advanced Surface-to-Air Missile System-II to India estimated at \$1.8 billion. This will strengthen Indian defence capabilities and aid the modernisation process of its armed forces.

This will build upon the Trump Administration's previous decisions to ease the controls for high and sensitive technology product sales to India. This will grant to India the same access as NATO allies through the Strategic Trade Authorisation-1 status, as well as sale of armed drones and integrated air and missile defence technology. India would demonstrate its will to modernise its armed forces and strengthen military capabilities and bilateral defence cooperation through the agreements with the US that guide the sharing of sensitive military and communications technology and reciprocal use of facilities.

Trump's maiden visit to India as the US President will strengthen the respective countries' Indo-Pacific policies and witness a synergy in their pushback strategies against the China-Russia alignment in Asia. It would be of relevance to see if the Blue Dot network finds mention at the leadership level. This network, launched by the US Government in November 2019 is a global certification for projects as market-driven, financially-sustainable and transparent and is a reaction to the Chinese Belt and Road Initiative. It needs to be highlighted that Australia and Japan — the other two members of Quad (apart from the US and India), have already signed up for the network.

In an endeavour to push for deeper trade and business ties, the two countries have been trying to reach a modest trade deal with lower tariffs. But the long-awaited "mini" trade deal may not see the anticipated fruition as talks have run into problems due to concerns over data privacy and e-commerce controls. Add to this the recent withdrawal of India from the list of "developing countries" — a status given in line with the WTO's system of Generalised System of Preferences, on February 10. This would emboss the issues of increased tariff barriers, which could act as an impediment for India getting favourable trade terms. So far, Indian exporters benefitted from the tariff-free access to US markets and receiving the "developed country" tag would subject exports to scrutiny regarding the harm they do the US industry. Despite this, Indian Inc is optimistic about higher investments from US companies, demanding exemption from high duties imposed by the US on certain steel and aluminium products from India and greater market access for its agricultural, automobile, auto components and engineering products.

Reflecting the strong personal rapport between Trump and Modi, this visit will be the fifth meeting between the two leaders in the last three years to elevate bilateral strategic relations. It would demonstrate the two countries' affirmation of the shared values of commitment to democracy and rule of law and to a more peaceful and open Indo-Pacific, plus the US' acknowledgement of India as its major partner in maintaining the international global order.

Trump's visit to India is possibly the final major foreign tour before the presidential elections in November 2020. Given the fact that Indian-Americans constitute a huge population and voter base in the US, if Trump reaffirms America's commitment to diversity, inclusion and immigrants, this visit would steer a significant number of their votes his way as it will showcase his close ties with their home country. In fact, Modi already blew the US election bugle at the Howdy Modi event in September 2019 in Texas. Swarmed by Indian-American crowd, he endorsed Trump for a second term saying, "Abki baar Trump sarkar."

(The writer is CEO and Editorial Director, IMPRI)

RAJEEV
AHUJA KEERTI
PRADHAN

The Indian Government aspires to take the economy to the \$5 trillion level over the next five years. It is a difficult goal by its own admission but not an impossible one. Given the current economic slowdown, many experts had hoped for a much stronger fiscal stimulus than what is contained in the recent Union Budget. That being what it is, some experts believe that the Government has missed an opportunity. However, the Centre seems to think differently. While acknowledging the need for growth-enhancing measures, the Niti Aayog's Vice-Chairman, Rajiv Kumar, had hinted prior to the Budget on using "alternative" measures in the face of limit-

ed fiscal headroom. Subsequently, the Reserve Bank of India (RBI), in its monetary policy, used unconventional tools to give the economy a shot in the arm. Without getting into the debate on what's an optimal dose of economic stimulus and what combination of fiscal and monetary policy could deliver it, Government spending does have an important role in the revival of the economy. The Centre believes that a decent dose of fiscal stimulus is already contained in the Budget.

Be that as it may, growth revival is closely tied to Government spending, which in turn is closely tied to revenues and taxes are an important source of it.

It is startling to note some income tax statistics that have recently been cited: That only 8,600 individuals have reported incomes above ₹5 crore and only 2,200 professionals (doctors, chartered accountants, lawyers and so on) have declared professional income above ₹1 crore in the entire country in the fiscal year 2018-19. These figures don't match well with some other statistics, such

I BROUGHT THE EAST-WEST METRO TO KOLKATA AFTER MUCH SACRIFICE BUT NOW WHEN ITS INAUGURATION DATE CAME, I WAS KEPT OUT OF IT.
—WEST BENGAL CHIEF MINISTER MAMATA BANERJEE

POINT COUNTER POINT



MAMATA SHOULD STOP MAKING ISSUES OUT OF NON-ISSUES LIKE THIS IN PUBLIC AND CONCENTRATE ON GIVING GOOD GOVERNANCE TO THE STATE.
—STATE BJP PRESIDENT DILIP GHOSH

analysis 09
Make your choice

If demand doesn't improve, firms might retain the tax cut bonanza instead of investing. It would've been better to put more cash in the pockets of individuals by giving more IT relief



UTTAM GUPTA

Amid an atmosphere of gloom and doom (triggered by growth plunging to a low of less than five per cent during the current year and muted projections for next year), it is necessary to closely scrutinise tax proposals in the Union Budget for 2020-21 to assess whether or not these will generate the much-needed growth impulses.

The four major factors impinging on a surge are private consumption, investment, export and spending by the State. The Modi Government has kept up the tempo of expenditure by way of building infrastructure and spending on welfare schemes. On the export front, given the all-round depressed growth and international trading environment, there is little that it can do in terms of using this lever for providing the much-needed fillip.

Therefore, much of the focus has to be on the first two levers, i.e. private consumption and investment. The big question is whether the tax proposals will help in boosting demand. First, let us look at the changes in personal income tax (PIT).

At present, a person having an income of ₹2,50,001-₹5,00,000 per annum pays a tax of five per cent, those earning more than ₹5,00,000 but less than ₹10,00,000 pay 20 per cent tax whereas, someone having an income higher than ₹10,00,000 pays 30 per cent. Accompanying this are a plethora of exemptions and deductions viz. Section 80C (annual investment, expenses, life insurance premium and so on, up to ₹15,000), Section 80D (health insurance premiums), Section 24 (interest on home loans), Section 80CCD (including extra NPS contribution up to ₹50,000), Section 80E (education loan interest) and Section 16 (standard deduction on salary income) and so on.

This Budget, even while retaining five per cent tax for annual income in the ₹2,50,001-₹5,00,000 range, on income higher than ₹5,00,000, proposes a differentiated structure with five slabs against two under the existing scheme of things. The proposed slabs and corresponding tax rates are 10 per cent for ₹5,00,001-₹7,50,000; 15 per cent for ₹7,50,001-₹10,00,000; 20 per cent for ₹10,00,001-₹12,50,000; 25 per cent for ₹12,50,001-₹15,00,000 and for those earning above ₹15,00,000 a tax of 30 per cent. A person who decides to avail lower tax rates under the new scheme will have to forego most exemptions and deductions. In other words, he can either continue with the existing scheme or go for the new regime. No cherry picking is permitted.

For a person availing of most tax breaks, switching to the new regime won't yield any savings. He could even be worse off depending on the income profile and deductions/exemptions availed. For instance, a person having an annual income of ₹15,00,000 and availing tax breaks aggregating ₹37,500 (Section 80C; 15,00,000; Section 80D: 25,000; Section 24: 2,00,000) or net income ₹11,25,000 will have to pay ₹1,56,000 as tax. In case however, he opts for the new scheme i.e. taxable income remaining at ₹15,00,000 but lower rates, his tax liability will be ₹1,95,000. This being ₹39,000 higher, he would prefer to continue with the old scheme. However, the reality on ground zero is that an overwhelming number of assesses are unable to avail of the tax breaks. This is because people in the early stages of their family life have high expenditure commitment and hence need more cash in hand, leaving little surplus to invest which is necessary for availing deductions. Then, there are people at the fag end, say age 55 years plus, who are

THE BUDGET PROPOSALS (SEPTEMBER 2019 AND NOW) ENTAIL A MAMMOTH GIVEAWAY OF ABOUT ₹1,50,000 CRORE PER ANNUM. THIS SHOULD HELP IN SPURRING INVESTMENT DEMAND. HOWEVER, CONSIDERING THAT AT PRESENT, CONSUMPTION IS SUBDUED AND ALREADY, SURPLUS CAPACITY EXISTS IN SEVERAL SECTORS, ITS IMPACT ON GROWTH IN THE SHORT-TERM MAY NOT BE MUCH



under no compulsion to save (he has already built a house or nearly completed education of the children). Such people who are unable or unwilling to invest — due to economic circumstances facing them — and hence, unable to avail exemptions and deductions would stand to gain by switching over to the new dispensation. In the above example (annual income ₹15,00,000), the tax liability of such a person under the old regime would be ₹2,73,000, which is ₹78,000 higher than under the new regime (₹1,95,000). Without doubt, he/she will be inclined to go for the latter. That apart, the FM's proposals empower assesses to take their own decisions instead of being constrained by available tax breaks. Someone wanting to have more cash in hand can opt for the new scheme whereas another person keen to save more can continue with the old regime.

According to an internal exercise by the Union Finance Ministry, the proposal will entail a loss of ₹40,000 crore to the exchequer, which means that much extra cash in the hand of tax payers which they can spend, thereby giving a boost to demand. No cherry picking is permitted.

Another proposal expected to put more cash in the hands of individuals, especially those earning less than ₹10,00,000 per annum, relates to the manner of levying dividend distribution tax (DDT). At present, a company is required to deduct tax (known as DDT) at the rate of 20 per cent (including surcharge and education cess, this comes to 20.35 per cent) from the surplus/profit set aside for distribution of dividend to shareholders. The Budget proposes to substitute this by taxing dividends in the hands of recipients/shareholders.

This substitution means that retail investors, whose earnings are in the ₹500,001-₹750,000 and ₹750,001-

₹10,00,000 range, will stand to gain as they will pay tax on dividend at 10 per cent and 15 per cent respectively, as against 20 per cent they pay currently. This will also be a booster to foreign portfolio investors (FPIs) who will be able to claim offset for the tax paid on dividend received from companies here in their respective jurisdictions (this is not possible under the existing dispensation of levying tax before distributing profit).

Implementation of this proposal will entail an annual loss of ₹25,000 crore to the exchequer. This much extra money in the hands of investors will also help augment purchasing power. Coming to corporate tax, on September 20, 2019, Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman had announced steep reduction in the rate of corporate tax for "new entities" incorporated from October 1, 2019 in the manufacturing sector and start production by March 31, 2023 from the existing 25 per cent to 15 per cent. Such companies won't have to pay minimum alternate tax (MAT) (levied on book profit of firms which have no taxable profit courtesy, exemptions and incentives).

Furthermore, the tax rate on existing companies was reduced from 30 per cent to 22 per cent (for small and medium enterprises (SMEs) annually with a turnover of less than ₹400 crore. This was reduced from the already preferential 25 per cent to 22 per cent) sans exemptions and deductions. These firms are also exempt from MAT. For companies who decide to continue with the old regime viz. tax at 30 per cent with tax breaks, MAT was reduced from existing 18.5 per cent to 15 per cent. In the Budget for 2020-21, the FM has extended the benefit of 15 per cent rate to "new" power companies. Besides, "cooperatives" are eligible for the 22 per cent rate sans exemptions and deductions. The steep reduction in tax rate

(for new enterprises, it is at 15 per cent. This is lower than other major countries viz. the US 21 per cent, China 25 per cent; even for existing firms at 22 per cent, this is comparable) is a major structural reform aimed at making Indian firms more competitive and leaving more resources with them for increasing investment. The FM has given a choice, enabling them to choose either the old regime (higher tax rate with exemptions) or new regime (lower tax rate sans exemptions).

The Budget proposals (September 2019 and now) entail a mammoth giveaway of about ₹1,50,000 crore per annum. This should help in spurring investment demand. However, considering that at present, consumption is subdued and already, surplus capacity exists in several sectors (major investment by way of setting up new projects can come only after existing capacities are fully utilised), its impact on growth in the short-term may not be much.

Unless private demand improves significantly, companies might be inclined to retain the tax cut bonanza instead of investing. It would have been better if the Government had put more money in the pockets of individuals by giving extra relief in PIT (say, by applying 10 per cent tax to the entire income range ₹5,00,001-₹10,00,000 instead of limiting this up to ₹7,50,000) as the need for resurrecting growth now is far more pressing.

To conclude, tax proposals in the 2020-21 Budget are in the right direction. However, a lot more needs to be done in terms of further reducing and simplifying the PIT. With regard to corporate tax, the Government should aim at 15 per cent rate applicable uniformly to enterprises in all sectors, new and existing (sans exemptions).

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

Pay taxes for a developed nation

The Government needs to proactively create the culture of paying taxes in order to be able to fulfil the dream of us becoming a \$5 trillion economy in five years

RAJEEV
AHUJA KEERTI
PRADHAN

The Indian Government aspires to take the economy to the \$5 trillion level over the next five years. It is a difficult goal by its own admission but not an impossible one. Given the current economic slowdown, many experts had hoped for a much stronger fiscal stimulus than what is contained in the recent Union Budget. That being what it is, some experts believe that the Government has missed an opportunity. However, the Centre seems to think differently. While acknowledging the need for growth-enhancing measures, the Niti Aayog's Vice-Chairman, Rajiv Kumar, had hinted prior to the Budget on using "alternative" measures in the face of limit-

ed fiscal headroom. Subsequently, the Reserve Bank of India (RBI), in its monetary policy, used unconventional tools to give the economy a shot in the arm. Without getting into the debate on what's an optimal dose of economic stimulus and what combination of fiscal and monetary policy could deliver it, Government spending does have an important role in the revival of the economy. The Centre believes that a decent dose of fiscal stimulus is already contained in the Budget.

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as the number of premium cars sold or the total people travelling abroad. There seems to be significant scope for improving tax compliance, which is essential to India achieving its \$5 trillion goal.

No rationale for tax avoidance: Tax evasion or underreporting may have been justified when corruption in public administration ran high. But now that the Narendra Modi Government has been able to provide a cleaner administration, this justification is no longer valid.

Further, the taxpayers can be reasonably certain that their money is being used responsibly. Indeed, the Modi Government has a vision of creating a "New India" and is focussed on the economic development of the entire country. The Government's focus on the development of the North-east region, on "aspirational" districts and on Tier-1 and Tier-2 cities is all aimed at unleashing economic development across the entire country. Furthermore, several policies and programmes such as Skill India, Mudra Yojana, Start-up India, dou-

bling of farmers' income with the promotion of agriculture and allied activities such as animal husbandry and so on are aimed at benefiting all sections of society.

Additionally, the Government is working towards ease of paying taxes. It is simplifying the taxation system and making it citizen-centric. It has taken or is taking several steps such as simplifying laws, reducing the tax burden, making tax assessment faceless, bringing taxpayers' charter and so forth that should instill trust and confidence among tax-payers.

But trust and confidence alone are not sufficient to persuade people to pay taxes honestly. The culture of tax avoidance developed over the last few decades will need to be changed consciously.

Promote tax-paying culture: The Government needs to promote the culture of paying taxes in the country. This can be done through a combination of measures. First, the example of clean administration at the national level needs to percolate down to the sub-national level too. Second, it's not enough for the Prime

Minister or Chief Ministers to be clean. Every Minister as an individual tax-payer ought to set an example. Third, the Government needs to run media campaigns to inform the public of their civic duty and also to connect the dots transparently on how their taxes are contributing towards nation-building.

Fourth, the Government needs to rope in popular personalities with a large fan following to drive home the message of paying taxes — pretty much the same way as it has been doing for some other social campaigns. The culture of paying taxes honestly is being instilled consciously and proactively.

India has a rich tradition of people donating to social organisations involved in helping the needy. However, in a well-functioning system, the Government, through its various programmes and initiatives, ought to be taking care of the needy. Although people are free to continue giving private donations, they don't necessarily have to, as long as they are paying their taxes and holding their Government accountable

for its performance, including its welfare role.

Tax culture essential: India is considered to be a lower-middle income country as per the World Bank's country classification which is based on income per person. Even if India becomes a \$5 trillion economy by 2025, it would still be considered as a lower-middle income country as per the World Bank classification.

The changes in the taxation system that the Government has or is introducing can help it generate revenues to fuel economic growth. Achieving a \$5 trillion economy in the next few years is not difficult. India may take a year or two longer but the goal is within reach.

However, to become a truly developed economy, India will need to change the mindset of its people. It will have to consciously and proactively create the culture of paying taxes.

(Ahuja is a development economist formerly with the World Bank and Pradhan is advisor and adjunct professor, Chitkara University, Punjab)



LEND A HAND TO IDLIB REFUGEES

As abrupt as the surge in those fleeing Idlib has been, this is a long-awaited disaster; the end result of decisions made over the years. Only an immediate ceasefire and unhindered flow of aid can offer these desperate civilians any hope of respite: Western powers should be doing everything they can to press for them. This is far less than those now huddled in Idlib are owed — and even this, it seems, may be too much to expect.

(The Guardian editorial)

SC refuses to accept Voda's proposal to pay ₹2,500 cr

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court Monday rejected telecom firm Vodafone's proposal to pay ₹2,500 crore by the end of the day and ₹1,000 crore by Friday against Adjusted Gross Revenue (AGR) dues, while also refusing its plea that no coercive action be taken against it.

A bench headed by Justice Arun Mishra declined to accept the proposal given by senior advocate Mukul Rohatgi, appearing for Vodafone, after he mentioned the matter.

Rohatgi said they are willing to pay ₹2,500 crore today (Monday) and another ₹1,000 crore by Friday but no coercive action be taken against the company.

He urged the bank guarantee deposited with the government by Vodafone should also not be encashed.

The top court had on Friday warned of contempt proceedings against top executives of Bharti Airtel, Vodafone-Idea and other telecom firms for failing to comply with its directive to pay an estimated ₹1.47 lakh crore in past dues, and asked them whether there was no law left in the country.

With the apex court's rap, the Government came down heavily on telcos following which Bharti Airtel on Monday said it has paid ₹10,000 crore to the telecom department towards statutory dues.

The company said it will



make payment of balance amount after self-assessment exercise.

"The...Amount of ₹10,000 crore has been paid on behalf of Bharti Airtel, Bharti Hexacom, and Telenor," the Sunil Mittal-led company said in a statement.

In the Friday order which will have a far-reaching implications for the telecom sector, the apex court expressed displeasure at the "temerity" of a desk officer in the Department of Telecom for "scuttling" its order by issuing a written directive to not take any coercive steps till further orders.

cive action against firms for not depositing dues by the January 23, 2020, deadline.

The Bench, also comprising Justices S Abdul Nazeer and M R Shah, said the companies have violated its order "in pith and substance" and asked them to clear dues before the next date of hearing on March 17.

Following the apex court rap, the Department of Telecom withdrew its January 23, 2020 order that had called for no coercive action against defaulting firms and started issuing notices to telcos asking them to deposit dues before midnight of Friday.

Expressing displeasure over an order passed by the DoT's desk officer, which virtually stayed the effect of its verdict, the apex court said this is nothing "but a device to scuttle" its judgment and this case projects a "very disturbing scenario". It issued a notice to the officer.

The bench noted that the desk officer "has the temerity to pass the order "to the effect of issuing a direction to another constitutional authority, the accountant general, "not to insist for any payment pursuant to the order passed by this court and not to take any coercive steps till further orders."

The top court made it clear that in case its order is not complied with, the desk officer of the DoT and top executives of these companies "shall remain personally present" before it on March 17.

Airtel pays ₹10K cr to Govt towards AGR dues

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

After Supreme Court rap and the government's stringent deadline, Bharti Airtel on Monday said it has paid ₹10,000 crore to the telecom department towards statutory dues.

The company said it will make payment of the balance amount after self assessment exercise.

"The...Total amount of ₹10,000 crore has been paid on behalf of Bharti Airtel, Bharti Hexacom, and Telenor," it said in a statement.

Tata Teleservices pay ₹2,197 crore to settle AGR dues

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Tata group firm TTSL on Monday said it has paid Rs 2,197 crore to the government to settle outstanding arising from the Supreme Court ruling on adjusted gross revenue (AGR) dues for telecom firms.

Tata Teleservices Ltd and Tata Teleservices Ltd have made a payment of ₹2,197 crore to the Department of Telecommunications (DoT) towards license fee and spectrum usage charges," it said in a statement.

Pradhan says does not believe top court's AGR ruling applies to non-telecom PSUs

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Oil Minister Dharmendra Pradhan on Monday said he believes non-telecom PSUs are not covered by the Supreme Court order that asked telecom licence holders to pay statutory dues after including non-telecom revenues.

Following the October 24 Supreme Court ruling that non-telecom revenues of the GAIL India Ltd, about ₹1.83 lakh crore from gas utility GAIL India Ltd, about ₹48,500 crore from OIL, ₹21,953.65 crore from Power Grid Corp and ₹15,020 crore from Gujarat Narmada Valley Fertilizers & Chemicals Ltd.

The Government's demand from such companies was many times more than their net worth.

"The Department of Telecommunications (DoT) has served notice to Government oil companies due to some communication gap. We have placed our side after doing all legal consultations," Pradhan told reporters here.

He went on to state that neither of the public sector undertakings (PSUs) slapped with huge demand has any core work in the telecom business.

Telecom AGR crisis: RBI closely monitoring developments

New Delhi: With massive ₹1.47 lakh crore of AGR dues pushing telecom firms to the brink, Reserve Bank of India Governor Shaktikanta Das on Monday said the central bank is "very closely monitoring" the fallout of the crisis on lenders by way of a default, if any, by telecom players.

In an interview with PTI, Das said so far no red flags have been raised but the central bank continues to monitor the situation closely.

The Supreme Court last week rejected a plea by mobile carriers such as Bharti Airtel and Vodafone Idea Ltd for extension in the payment schedule and asked them to deposit an estimated ₹1.47 lakh crore in past dues for spectrum and licences by March 17.

Some telecom firms are already struggling with mounting losses and debt and the additional liability has raised concerns of them defaulting on existing loans.

Telecom stocks end in red amid uncertainty over statutory dues

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Shares of Vodafone Idea and Bharti Airtel closed marginally lower on Monday even as investors kept their fingers crossed amid uncertainty over statutory dues.

State-owned MTNL was 8.14 per cent down over the previous close of ₹9.35 on the BSE. Vodafone Idea's shares closed 0.58 per cent down to ₹3.42 per unit. Intra-day, the stock gained as much as 18.89 per cent to hit upper circuit at ₹3.78.

The stock lost all its early gains after the Supreme Court rejected Vodafone Idea's proposal to pay ₹2,500 crore by the end of Monday, and ₹1,000 crore by Friday against adjusted gross revenue (AGR) dues.

However, after market hours, Vodafone Idea and Tata group have made part payments of about ₹2,500 crore and over ₹2,190 crore, respectively, to the telecom department towards statutory dues, a government official said.

Market ends lower for 3rd day as macroeconomic worries persist

PTI ■ MUMBAI

Domestic equities clocked losses for a third session in a row on Monday as worries over economic slowdown and financial impact of coronavirus outbreak continued to play in the minds of investors.

At the closing bell, the BSE gauge Sensex was down 202.05 points, or 0.49 per cent, at 41,055.69. The index swung about 390 points during the session.

The NSE barometer Nifty fell 67.75 points or 0.56 per cent to close at 12,045.80.

The Sensex chart, ONGC led the fall with a 3.20 per cent drop after the company posted halving of its December quarter net profit.

On the Sensex chart, other top laggards on the index were Sun Pharma, NTPC, Bajaj Auto and HDFC — slipping as much as 2.37 per cent.

On the other hand, Titan, Nestle, TCS, Kotak Bank and Tata Steel emerged as major gainers, rising as much as 1.86 per cent.

Of the Sensex constituents,



Moody's Investors Service has slashed India's growth forecast to 5.4 per cent for 2020 from 6.6 per cent projected earlier on slower-than-expected economic recovery.

Meanwhile, worries over rising death toll and the economic fallout from the novel coronavirus continued to haunt investors globally.

The coronavirus epidemic that emerged in central China has now killed nearly 1,800 people and spread around the world.

Payment of AGR dues to bring down fiscal deficit to 3.5% in FY20

PTI ■ MUMBAI

ance with its AGR order, the telecom department is pressing for the payment of dues by the telcos.

"The fiscal arithmetic will change significantly post March 16, 2020, (the date till which telecom companies have to pay their AGR dues). If we assume that the government is able to collect Rs 1.20 lakh crore through AGR dues, the fiscal deficit for FY20 will reduce to 3.5 per cent of GDP," the economists at SBI said.

However, one will have to wait till March 16 — the payment deadline — before the picture gets clear, they said.

After facing the Supreme Court's ire over non-compliance with its AGR order, the telecom department sought ₹1.83 lakh crore from gas utility GAIL India Ltd, about ₹48,500 crore from OIL, ₹21,953.65 crore from Power Grid Corp and ₹15,020 crore from Gujarat Narmada Valley Fertilizers & Chemicals Ltd.

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Of the Sensex constituents,

Moody's cuts India growth projection to 5.4% for 2020

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

'shallow'.

"While the economy may well begin to recover in the current quarter, we expect any recovery to be slower than we had previously expected. Accordingly, we have revised our growth forecasts to 5.4 per cent for 2020 and 5.8 per cent for 2021, down from our previous projections of 6.6 per cent and 6.7 per cent respectively," Moody's said.

Moody's growth projec-

tions are based on calendar year and as per its estimates, India's GDP grew 5 per cent in 2019.

The rating agency had in November 2019 projected economic growth in 2020 and 2021 at 6.6 per cent and 6.7 per cent respectively. In its latest update, Moody's said the reduction in India's growth rate reflects domestic challenges rather than external factors.

RBI Guv: Govt must continue reforms; green shoots of recovery need to sustain

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

and twin balance sheet crisis of rising non-performing assets (NPAs) or bad loans on the one hand, and heavily indebted corporates on the other, for the slowdown in the economy.

"There are certain positive evidences visible ... Things slightly picking up but we have to wait and see whether these positive trends are sustaining themselves and we have to see how durable they are," he said.

He refused to say if the growth slowing down to 4.5 per cent in July-September was the bottom of the pit that the economy can see. "As I have said there are evidences of positive developments. But we have to see how durable are these positive developments before we pass a judgment that from here on it is an upward trajectory."

While Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman's Budget for 2020-21 and recent steps have created a facilitating ecosystem for reviving demand and consumption, it is necessary to undertake land and labour reforms, bring efficiencies in agri marketing and focus on skill development, he said.

Das said the RBI saw an imminent slowdown in growth early in 2019 and used the space that was opened up by the moderation in inflation to cut interest rates on five consecutive occasions.

He cited global trade and business uncertainties together with sluggish domestic demand leading to lower capacity utilisation at factories

Fiscal deficit figures absolutely realistic: Nirmala Sitharaman on Monday defended the fiscal deficit figures in the union budget and termed it as "absolutely realistic".

"I think this budget we have been absolutely realistic both on the score of revenue generation and on the score of what we can spend or borrow, so figures therefore are absolutely realistic keeping in mind the economy and also that is why we were able to give path," he said.

She said: "...We have given a realistic picture, we have been able to give a figure of 3.5 (fiscal deficit target) for the coming fiscal."

On inflation management, the Minister said except for the seasonal perishable commodities which make up for significant size in the basket, except for seasonal fluctuation, prices of most goods and also particularly food products have been kept well within the acceptable norms, "so we are hopeful".

To a question on Yes Bank allegedly facing stress, she said, "Reserve Bank is the regulator of Banks. I'm not naming any particular bank, I'm sure Reserve Bank is playing its role as regulator monitoring and taking care of banks."

His physical description is as under:-
Sex: Male, **Age:** 24 years, **Height:** 5'5" ft., **Complexion:** Shallow, **Wearing:** Green Sweater White & Red Lining Yellow Colour Jackets and Blue Lower.

Any person having any information or clue about the deceased may kindly inform to the undersigned on the following address or Telephone Numbers.

SHO
P.S. South Rohini, Delhi
Ph. No.: 011-27512189
Mob. No: 8750870331

DP/3723/RD/2020

APPEAL FOR IDENTIFICATION

General public is hereby informed that an unidentified person (depicted in the photo) name: **Unknown**, residence and family: **Unknown** about 24 years of age was found dead at BSA Hospital Rohini, Delhi on **25.01.2020 at 16.53 PM**. In this regard a FIR/DD No. **21-A** dated **25.01.2020** has been registered at Police Station South Rohini, Delhi.

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DP/3723/RD/2020

The Indian rupee on Monday settled 5 paise higher at 71.32 against the US dollar, helped by some moderation in crude prices. However, stronger US dollar against key rival currencies and subdued domestic equities kept the rupee's rise in check.

At the interbank foreign exchange market, the domestic unit started on a weak note at 71.45 against the US dollar, but kept on reclaiming the lost ground as the day progressed. It swung between a low of 71.24 and a high of 71.24.

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PROCLAMATION REQUIRING THE APPEARANCE OF ACCUSED PERSON

(See Section



HEALTH

DOCYARD

DR ARUN KUMAR VERMA

Senior Oncologist

MAX HOSPITAL,
NEW DELHI



Oral cancer can be prevented

Oral cancer is a major problem in the Indian subcontinent where it ranks among the top three types of cancer in the country. Age-adjusted rates of oral cancer in India is high, that is, 20 per 100,000 population and accounts for over 30 per cent of all cancers in the country. The variation in incidence and pattern of the disease can be attributed to the combined effect of ageing of the population, as well as regional differences in the prevalence of disease-specific risk factors.

Oral cancer is of significant public health importance to India. First, it is diagnosed at later stages which result in low treatment outcomes and considerable costs to the patients who typically cannot afford this type of treatment. Second, rural areas in middle and low-income countries also have inadequate access to trained providers and limited health services. As a result, delay has also been largely associated with advanced stages of oral cancer. Earlier detection of oral cancer offers the best chance for long term survival and has the potential to improve treatment outcomes and make healthcare affordable. Third, oral cancer affects those from the lower socio-economic strata of society due to a higher exposure to risk factors such as the use of tobacco. Last, even though clinical diagnosis occurs via examination of the oral cavity and tongue which is accessible by current diagnostic tools, many cases present to a healthcare facility at later stages of cancer subtypes, thereby reducing chances of survival due to delays in diagnosis.

Causes: Mouth cancers form when cells on the lips or in the mouth develop changes (mutations) in their DNA. A cell's DNA contains the instructions that tell a cell what to do. The mutations changes tell the cells to continue growing and dividing when healthy cells would die. The accumulating abnormal mouth cancer cells can form a tumour. With time they may spread inside the mouth and on to other areas of the head and neck or other parts of the body. Mouth cancers most commonly begin in the flat, thin cells (squamous cells) that line your lips and the inside of your mouth. Most oral cancers are squamous cell carcinomas.

Prevention: There's no proven way to prevent mouth cancer. However, you can reduce your risk of mouth cancer if you:

- Stop using tobacco or don't start.
- Drink alcohol only in moderation, if at all.
- Avoid excessive sun exposure to your lips.

■ See your dentist regularly. As part of a routine dental exam, ask your dentist to inspect your entire mouth for abnormal areas that may indicate mouth cancer or precancerous changes.

Treatment:

- Surgery: Tumour present in lips, mouth, tongue can be removed with surgery. Surgical excision leads to disfigurement of face, drooling of saliva from angle of mouth, partial or complete loss of tongue and voice, reduced mouth opening in case of lip cancer. Disfigurement can be corrected cosmetically by plastic surgery. Functional losses may persist.
- Radiation therapy: Treatment of cancer by rays (gamma, electron, photons and protons) is called radiation therapy. IMRT, IGRT are advanced form of radiation therapy that have the ability to spare surrounding organs as well as precisely deliver accurate dose to tumour. Post-surgery radiation therapy is called adjuvant therapy and reduces possibility of locoregional recurrence.

Chemotherapy: Chemotherapy is a medicine which is given in form of injections or tablets under supervision of oncologist. Mostly, it is given on a weekly basis during radiation therapy to enhance effects. Common side effects are hair loss, loss of appetite, nausea, vomiting, constipation and reduced blood count.

WARM FOODS

BLUEBERRY: Blueberries contain a plant compound called anthocyanin. This gives them the blue colour and is known for many health benefits. Blueberries contain iron, phosphorous, calcium, magnesium, manganese, zinc, and Vitamin K. Adequate intake of these minerals and vitamins help in maintaining bone structure and strength.

They are also rich in Vitamin C which makes them a good option for healthy skin and reduces the damage caused by the external agents.

Blueberries can also improve the heart health and help in managing Diabetes.

They also help in boosting body's immunity and thereby keeping cough and cold at bay. They also aids in digestion, helps in weight loss by making you feel



BELLY OH BELLY

Food poisoning and stomach flu are common ailments. However, most people get confused between the two. DR SK MUNDHRA tells you how to tackle both

Better safe than sorry

Some foods are more likely to cause food poisoning because of the way they're produced and prepared. Meat, poultry, eggs, and shellfish may harbor infectious agents that are killed during cooking. If these foods are eaten in their raw form, not cooked properly, or if hands and surfaces are not cleaned after contact, food poisoning can occur.

A stomach flu has a few common symptoms that can last for up to 10 days. They include:

- Diarrhea that may be watery or bloody
- Loss of appetite
- Nausea or vomiting
- Stomach cramps, muscle aches, or weakness
- Low-grade fever
- Headaches
- Light-headedness or dizziness

There are a few things that people can do at home while recovering from a stomach virus:

- People with a stomach virus should avoid food for a while to let their stomach settle.
- Let the stomach settle: Try not to eat any solid foods for several hours.
- Take small sips of water: People should drink plenty of liquids to not get dehydrated. Avoid juice or other beverages which can make diarrhea worse.
- Ease back into eating: Start with bland easy-to-digest food such as soda crackers, toast, and rice. Stop eating if nausea returns.
- Avoid certain substances: These include dairy, caffeine, alcohol, sugar, and fatty or highly seasoned foods.
- People should be cautious of over-the-counter medications as some can make the infection worse. Even anti-diarrhea medications can make the situation worse if the cause of the infection is certain bacteria. The stomach flu typically goes away within 24 to 28 hours, but home care is vital for a speedy recovery. See a doctor if you have any of the following symptoms:
- Bloody stool or vomit
- Unable to keep liquid down for at least 24 hours
- Dehydration
- Fever above 104°F.

way to ensure that your delicious leftovers will still be good for the next few days. Reheating meat more than once; If you've got something meaty in your leftovers, ensure that you don't heat it up more than once. Continuously heating and then cooling meat allows bacteria to grow and multiply, potentially causing food poisoning.

If you've got a lot of leftovers, the best thing to do is to only heat up the portion you're planning to eat, rather than the entire dish.

The symptoms of food poisoning occur more quickly than those of a stomach virus.

Cross-contamination is often the cause of food poisoning. This is when harmful organisms transfer from one surface to another. Raw foods and ready-to-eat foods like salads are particularly at risk of contamination.

Bacteria can also grow rapidly when foods such as meats, dairy products, and sauces are not kept at the right temperature.

The bacteria and other harmful organisms can produce poisonous substances that cause inflammation of the intestines when eaten.

Symptoms can vary depending on the source of the infection. Common cases of food poisoning will typically include at least three of the following symptoms — abdominal cramps, diarrhoea, vomiting, loss of appetite, mild fever, weakness, nausea and headaches.

The best way to prevent food poisoning is to handle your food safely and to avoid any food that may be unsafe.

The writer is HOD, Internal Medicine, Saroj Super Speciality Hospital, New Delhi

Always wash your hands before cooking or eating. Make sure that your food is properly sealed and stored. Thoroughly cook meat and eggs

DadiKaKehna

The season is changing and with it comes the usual problems — sore throat, cough and cold.

ROSHNI DEVI tells you how home remedies can help ease the pain, itchiness and irritation of the throat



Is there irritation in the throat? Is their pain when you swallow? In all probability you have a sore throat — a common ailment during change of season. While the itchiness and the irritation in the throat can be painful, there are several ingredients that we have in our kitchen that can bring relief.

The most important thing to remember is that one must drink warm liquids. Soup, herbal tea and even just warm water with honey can help soothe a sore throat. For flavour one can add mint and even ginger.

There is a reason why everyone suggests a saltwater

gargle. Make a saltwater solution by putting half a teaspoon of salt in a glass of warm water.

Just like salt, lemons, which are packed with Vitamin C help to boost the immune system and give it more power to fight infection. Mix one teaspoon of lemon juice into a glass of warm water and drink for quick relief.

They say prevention is better than cure. If you sense a sore throat coming, dilute one-two tablespoons of apple cider vinegar in one cup of water and gargle with it. Do this on an hourly basis. Do drink plenty of water in between the gargling sessions.



Department — Emergency — Indraprastha Apollo Hospitals said: "The emergency department of Indraprastha Apollo Hospitals as he was stabbed over right area of the chest leading to fatal injuries and loss of blood."

TIPTOP

Gynecological cancers or women's cancers are largely preventable if screened early. This was stated by Dr Amita Naithani and Dr Leena Dadhwal, two gynecology experts from Rajiv Gandhi Cancer Institute and Research Centre, Nitibagh South Delhi. The two doctors were speaking at a conclave attended by Moradabad based gynecologists in large numbers.

The conclave was organised by Moradabad Obstetrics Gynecological Society (MOGS), Moradabad. Dr Leena Chauhan, Dr Saba Asad and Dr Shazia Monis, President, Honorary Secretary and Treasurer of MOGS presided over the function.

Speaking on cervical cancer, Dr Amita Naithani, Consultant — Gynaec Oncology, RGCIRC argued in favour of early screening of cervical cancer which can be easily

tested by a simple PAP Smear test. It can even be detected in the pre-cancerous stage thus preventing the development of cancer. Cervical cancer, though most prevalent amongst women in rural India is one of the most preventable cancers," she said.

Regarding the treatment, Dr Amita Naithani said: "In 80 per cent of the cases, cervical cancer is caused by HPV virus infection for which vaccine is available. Between nine-14 years of age, vaccine can be given in the form of two injections and between 14 to 26 years of age, three injection need to be given."

Cervical vaccine programme has been introduced in several states in the country including Sikkim and Punjab. School girls are going to get vaccinated under this programme.

SLIMLINE

In a rare turn of events, 19-year-old Mukul, was rushed to the emergency department of Indraprastha Apollo Hospitals as he was stabbed over right area of the chest leading to fatal injuries and loss of blood.

On November 15, 2019, Mukul was stabbed with the iron rod which was about 15 cm of which six-seven cm entered in the lower part of the back of left side of chest after he got into a fight which resulted in puncture of the posterior chest wall.

Dr Priyadarshini Singh, Head of Department — Emergency — Indraprastha Apollo Hospitals said: "The emergency team rushed to attend the patient with immediate attention within five minutes of the patient being admitted. Our mission is to give patients the appropriate care in the fastest, most efficient manner possible."

Mukul underwent thoracotomy through which the blood clot on the aorta was removed. All the wounds were sealed. He improved gradually and was discharged on November 18, 2019.

STUDYCENTRE

On Valentine's Day, international dating service OkCupid made an annual check in with millennials in India about love, romance and relationships in the 21st century. The app reviewed findings from user responses to hopefully find the answer to what men and women really want!

While the Indian millennial today are evolved, well-traveled and like to live life king-size, they still love those old-school coffee dates. A large majority of both men and women report a preference to chat over a steaming cup while out on a first date, even now. And despite what every other generation is saying about millennial, most of them truly believe in the beautiful serendipity of falling in love and want to live 'happily ever after' rather than exploring multiple relationships. Funny, the most interesting finding is that unlike popular perception, men are actually hopeless romantics at heart and like to go all guns blazing on planning Valentine's Day celebrations. No judgement, but love deserves to be celebrated and most people did agree that love is not overrated or over-celebrated.

According to the survey, while most millennials have an unquenchable thirst for knowledge (46 per cent), love is not far behind with over 30 per cent men and women saying that they are still driven by the idea of true love. The survey also revealed that 61 per cent of women and 53 per cent of men consider love as a true stroke of serendipity and want it to just happen to them by chance.

BeSmart

Researchers have developed a smart jumpsuit that accurately measures the spontaneous and voluntary movement of infants from the age of five months — data that can help in assessing abnormal neurological development, among other things



SECRET TO GOOD SLEEP

A safe, non-toxic mattress determines whether your child sleeps well.

PANKAJ GUPTA tells you things to look out for

One of the most important decisions a parent can make is choosing an organic kids mattress. Sleep is critical to your child's health and well-being, and since kids spend more than one third of their lives in direct exposure to their mattress materials it's crucial to their health that those mattress materials be safe, organic and non-toxic.

A safe, non-toxic mattress can determine whether your child sleeps well or not. Kids are more vulnerable to the toxins in mattresses since their fragile organ and elimination systems are developing and they can't easily detoxify. During sleep, children's bodies work to recover from the accumulation of toxins and stress from their day. The cells attempt to regenerate and the body tries to eliminate toxins. The last thing you want to do is introduce more toxins from your child's mattress.

The way to ensure a non-toxic sleep environment is to avoid polyurethane foam, memory foam and other synthetic materials. Also avoid mattresses with fire retardants. Your kids need a mattress with good quality organic, non-toxic materials.

While firm support for your child is the most important feature in a safer mattress for kids, comfort counts too! Many mattresses contain conventional cotton fiber (treated with pesticides), synthetic filling materials made with harmful chemicals, or polyurethane foam for comfort.

Pay attention to how your child sleeps to help you select the ideal comfort and support levels needed in the best organic mattress for their needs.

Side Sleepers: If your child sleeps on their side, they need a little more cushion to reduce tension and pressure on their developing skeletal system. Check out the Naturepedic Verse with encased coil support if your child is older or a side sleeper. You can also get a quilted mattress pad to provide extra comfort.

Tummy Sleepers: For kids who sleep on their stomachs, a firm mattress is important to help reduce pressure on the back and shoulders.

Back Sleepers: If your big kid sleeps on their back, this is the best position for spinal health! Medium or cushion firm support is great for back sleepers, but remember that kids need a little more firmness than adults.

Be careful of what you pay for. A cheap bed may not necessarily be the safest option for your child. When buying a bed for your toddler, it is important to consider their weight and age. The changeover from cot to a regular bed should occur between 18 and 36 months.

One of the most important things that matter for a sleeping child is their spine support. Both the neck and spine must be in a neutral position. This reduces stress and encourages spinal growth.

The spine of a toddler can grow up to 1.5 cm at night, and this comes from filling of the intervertebral discs between the vertebrae with water. This means the mattress should be soft enough to make them comfortable, yet stable enough to prevent sinking in.

It can be tempting to save money by going with the smallest mattress for a small child, but consider the big picture. Children grow quickly, and the ideal mattress will be one with a long lifespan that can adjust to a child's needs as he or she gets bigger. To avoid having to go through the process again in just a year or two, it's best to buy the highest quality you can afford with the long-term in mind.

The writer is Director, RP Foam Home India Pvt Ltd



CORONAVIRUS

99 more cases on Japan cruise ship: Media

Tokyo: An additional 99 people have tested positive for coronavirus on a cruise ship off the Japan coast, Japanese media said on Monday, citing new figures from the health ministry.

That would take the total number of positive cases on the Diamond Princess to 454. The health ministry declined to confirm the reports immediately.

It was also not clear whether the figures included 14 US citizens who tested positive for the virus but were allowed to board evacuation flights home.

The Diamond Princess vessel moored in Yokohama near Tokyo has become the second-largest cluster of coronavirus cases outside the epicentre in China.

Passengers have been largely confined to quarters since

February 5 with only brief and occasional breaks to take air on deck — with face masks.

The quarantine period is over on Wednesday but many countries have decided to repatriate their citizens after an

alarming climb in cases on board.

The US was the first country to evacuate its citizens from the ship but Australia, Canada, Italy and Hong Kong have indicated they will follow suit.

WHO experts join field inspections in China

Beijing: Top WHO experts, including from the US, have joined the fight against the novel coronavirus in China that has claimed 1,770 lives, as Beijing stepped up its efforts by deploying 30,000 more medical staff in the worst-affected Wuhan city to contain the spread of the epidemic.

China's National Health Commission (NHC) said on Monday that 105 people died of the virus on Sunday while 2,048 new cases of infection have been confirmed, taking the total number of COVID-19 infected cases to 70,548, the state run

Xinhua news agency reported.

Of the new deaths, 100 were reported from the central Hubei province, three in the central Henan province, and two in the southern Guangdong province. The efforts to combat coronavirus picked up pace with the global experts mobilised by the World Health Organisation (WHO) joining hands with their Chinese counterparts.

China has confirmed that the WHO team reportedly comprising 12 members includes experts from the US, which has been a major demand from Washington. **PTI**

German far right arrests reveal 'shocking' mosque attack plot

Berlin: Members of a German extreme right group arrested last week were believed to have been plotting "shocking" large-scale attacks on mosques similar to the ones carried out in New Zealand last year, a government spokesman said Monday.

Officials said that investigations into 12 men detained in police raids across Germany Friday had indicated they planned major attacks, following media reports over the weekend the group aimed to launch several simultaneous mass-casualty assaults on Muslims during Mayday.

"It is the task of the state, and of course of this government, to protect free practice of religion in this country, with no reference to what religion it might be," Chancellor Angela Merkel's spokesman Steffen Seibert said.

"Anyone practising their religion in Germany within our legal order should be able to do so without being endangered or threatened." According to media reports, the group planned to use semi-automatic weapons to ape last March's attacks in Christchurch in New Zealand in which 51 people were killed at two mosques. **AFP**

of time," interior ministry spokesman Bjoern Gruenewaelter told reporters at a Berlin press conference.

"It is the task of the state, and of course of this government, to protect free practice of religion in this country, with no reference to what religion it might be," Chancellor Angela Merkel's spokesman Steffen Seibert said.

"Anyone practising their religion in Germany within our legal order should be able to do so without being endangered or threatened." According to media reports, the group planned to use semi-automatic weapons to ape last March's attacks in Christchurch in New Zealand in which 51 people were killed at two mosques. **AFP**

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, Demans 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(12) 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. 0.0001839 of New Delhi Branch) Tilak Raj Khurana (Borrower) Mr. Tek Ram Bhosar (Guarantor 1) 21-01-2020/₹ 8,68,121/- (Eight lakh Sixty Eight Thousand One Hundred Twenty Two) NPA (01-06-2016)

1/23, Vijay Nagar, Delhi- 1100, Delhi.

(LC No. 0.0002406 of New Delhi Branch) Gautam Sharma (Borrower) Shashi Sharma (Co Borrower 1) 21-01-2020/ ₹ 11,79,324/- (Eleven lakh Seventy Nine Thousand Three Hundred Twenty Four) NPA (01-10-2017)

Unit No T-2 401, 4th Floor Parsvnath Castle Rajput Patiala, Rajputa- 140401, Punjab.

(LC No. 0.0002920 of New Delhi Branch) Yoganand S Gosain (Borrower) Poonam Gosain (Co Borrower 1) 21-01-2020/ ₹ 36,62,458/- (Thirty Six lakh Sixty Two Thousand Four Hundred Fifty Eight) NPA (01-07-2017)

Flat No-J-1101, 11th Floor, Block-J Grand Savana(KDP Project) Nh-58, Noor Nagar, Ghaziabad- 201001

(LC No. 0.0000329 of Rohini Branch) Ranjan Bhasin (Borrower) Chitra Bhasin (Co Borrower 1) 21-01-2020/ ₹ 21,86,185/- (Twenty One lakh Eighty Six Thousand One Hundred Eighty Five) NPA (01-09-2019)

Flat No- H-1001, 10th Floor Tower- H, Kdp, Grand Savana Raj Nagar Ext, Nh-58, Ghaziabad, Ghaziabad- 201011

(LC No. 0.0000265 of Faridabad Branch) Sunil Kumar Sharma (Borrower) Anil Kumar Vaishnav (Co Borrower 1) 21-01-2020/ ₹ 26,98,607/- (Twenty Six lakh Ninety Eight Thousand Six Hundred Seven) NPA (01-11-2015)

Unit A-2-1502, 15th Floor Era Divine Court (High Rise) Sec-76, Faridabad, Ghaziabad- 121002

(LC No. 0.0000933 of Ghaziabad Branch) Poonam Shokeen (Borrower) Sunil K Malik (Co Borrower 1) 21-01-2020/ ₹ 31,30,484/- (Thirty One lakh Thirty Thousand Four Hundred Forty Eight) NPA (01-05-2019)

Flat No. A-2/C-12, Type C, Block A-2 12th Floor, Shubhkarma Advent Techomes Plot No. G H 05/B, Sector 137, Noida, Gautambudh Nagar-201301

(LC No. 0.0000682 of Noida Branch) Anil Rohila (Borrower) Archana (Co Borrower 1) 21-01-2020/ ₹ 34,27955/- (Thirty Four lakh Twenty Seven Thousand Nine Hundred Fifty Five) NPA (01-11-2019)

Flat No-123, 12th Floor Block- B1, Aravali Heights Dwarkadish Project, Sec-24, Dharuhera, Gurgaon-122001

(LC No. 0.0000758 of Noida Branch) Anuj Goel (Borrower) Poonam Goel (Co Borrower 1) 21-01-2020/ ₹ 16,01,191/- (Sixteen lakh One Thousand One Hundred Ninety Nine) NPA (01-04-2019)

Unit No-1612, 16th Floor, Socrates 1 Supertech Czar, Plot No- Gh-02 Sector-Omicron- 1, Greater Noida- 201308

(LC No. 0.0001244 of Noida Branch) Amit Kumar (Borrower) Juhu Tiwari (Co Borrower 1) 21-01-2020/ ₹ 35,61,557/- (Thirty Five lakh Sixty One Thousand Five Hundred Fifty Seven) NPA (01-12-2019)

Plot No: 1208- A 12th Floor Tower- CS-6 Sec-74, Noida, Gautambudh Nagar-201301

(LC No. 0.0001116 of Noida Branch) Place Branch) Mahabir Singh (Borrower) Raj Bala (Co Borrower 1) Acl Infrastructure Pvt Ltd (Co Borrower 2) 21-01-2020/ ₹ 74,55,875/- (Seventy Four lakh Fifty Five Thousand Eight Hundred Seventy Five) NPA (01-07-2017)

Flat No. 405, 4th Floor, Ganga Tower G-2 Pocket D-6, Vasant Kunj Delhi-110070, Delhi-110070, New Delhi-110070, Delhi.

(LC No. 0.0001274 of Noida Branch) Mukesh Kumar (Borrower) Seema (Co Borrower 1) 21-01-2020/ ₹ 28,30,311/- (Twenty Eight lakh Thirty Thousand Three Hundred Eleven) NPA (01-12-2019)

Flat No - 71 - A, Ground Floor Pocket-2, Madipur Paschim Puri, New Delhi, New Delhi-110063, Delhi.

(LC No. 0.0001227 of New Delhi- West Branch) Sukhvinder Singh (Borrower) Harpreet Kaur (Co Borrower 1) 21-01-2020/ ₹ 15,70,875/- (Fifteen lakh Seventy Thousand Eight Hundred Seventy Five) NPA (01-12-2019)

Plot No. C-1/21-C, Third Floor, Front Portion, With Roof Rights, Khasra No. 104/11, Rajapuri, Vill Palam, Utam Nagar, Delhi, New Delhi-110046, Delhi.

(LC No. 0.00043693 of Delhi- Safdarjung Branch) Neeraj Kumar (Borrower) Sunil (Co Borrower 1) 21-01-2020/ ₹ 18,09,321/- (Eighteen lakh Nine Thousand Three Hundred Twenty Two) NPA (01-12-2019)

Upper Ground Floor Front RHS Portion Port No. D- 406 Indraprastha Colony, Ghaziabad-201010

(LC No. 0.0000965 of Karkarduma Noida Branch) Shalu Jain (Borrower) Vijay Rana (Co Borrower 1) 21-01-2020/ ₹ 158,2238/- (Fifteen lakh Eighty Two Thousand Two Hundred Thirty Eight) NPA (01-12-2019)

Flat No. 7- UGF, Front LHS Plot No. 33, Middlekhasra No. 80min, krishna Vatika Sudamparam Colony Dundhera Khatia No- 01178 Ghaziabad- 201009

(LC No. 0.00042190 of Delhi- Pitampura Branch) Abhishek Kundra (Borrower) Brij Mohan Kundra (Co Borrower 1) Prem Late Kumar (Co Borrower 2) 21-01-2020/ ₹ 68,42,912/- (Sixty Eight lakh Forty Two Thousand Nine Hundred Twelve) NPA (01-12-2019)

Plot No. 112 Pocket-12 Sector-20 Rohini New Delhi New Delhi Delhi 110085

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.

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

On land, cases in Japan have risen to 65, with authorities warning that the outbreak is entering a "new phase" and advising people to avoid large gatherings. A public celebration of the new emperor's birthday on Sunday has been scrapped and organisers of the Tokyo Marathon scheduled on March 1 are reportedly considering cancelling the amateur part of the race. **AFP**

China asks recovered patients to donate plasma for virus treatment

load in critically ill patients, an official from China's National Health Commission told a press briefing Monday.

"I would like to make a call to all cured patients to donate their plasma so that they can bring hope to critically ill patients," said Guo Yanhong, who heads the NHC's medical administration department.

Eleven patients at a hospital in Wuhan received plasma infusions last week, said Sun Yanrong, of the Biological Center at the Ministry of Science and Technology. **AFP**

Trading quarantines, Americans from cruise land in US

Travis Air Force Base: One of two charter flights carrying cruise ship passengers from Japan landed at a California air force base early Monday, starting the clock on a quarantine period to ensure passengers don't have the new virus that's been spreading in Asia.

A plane carrying American passengers touched down at Travis Air Force Base in northern California just before 2:30 a.m., local time. Another flight was headed to Lackland Air Force Base in Texas.

Japan's Defence Minister Taro Kono had tweeted earlier that Japanese troops helped transport 340 US passengers on 14 buses from Yokohama port to Tokyo's Haneda airport. About 380 Americans were on the cruise ship. **AFP**

Donald Trump calls for Russia to stop backing Syrian 'atrocities'

Washington: President Donald Trump has called for Russia to end its support for the Syrian regime's "atrocities" as he expressed US concern over violence in the Idlib region, the White House said.

In a call with Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan, Trump "expressed concern over the violence in Idlib, Syria and... Conveyed the United States' desire to see an end to Russia's support for the Assad regime's atrocities."

President Bashar al-Assad's forces made new gains Sunday in their offensive against the last major rebel bastion in the northwest region of Idlib.

Backed by Russian air strikes, Syrian government forces have kept up the assault in Idlib and areas of neighbouring Aleppo and Latakia provinces since December.

On Sunday, after clashes and air strikes, regime forces "were in control of all the villages and small towns around

Aleppo for the first time since 2012," the Syrian Observatory for Human Rights said.

The Russian-backed offensive has triggered the largest wave of displacement in Syria's civil war, with 800,000 people fleeing since December, the United Nations says.

In the Saturday phone call with Erdogan, Trump also "reiterated that continued foreign interference in Libya would only serve to worsen the situation."

Libya has been mired in chaos since a 2011 NATO-backed uprising killed long-time dictator Moamer Kadafi, with two rival administrations vying for power.

States including Russia, France, the United Arab Emirates, and Egypt support strongman Khalifa Haftar, while the UN-recognised Government of National Accord is backed by Turkey and Qatar. **AFP**

Church pastor among 24 killed in Burkina Faso attack

Protestant church. At least 10 other people were injured.

"It hurt me when I saw the people," Brigadier said after visiting some of the victims in the hospital in Dori town, 180 kilometers (110 miles) from the attack. The gunmen looted oil and rice from shops and forced the three youth they kidnapped to help transport it on their motorbikes, he said.

Both Christians and Muslims were killed before the church was set on fire, said a

government security official in Dori who spoke on condition of anonymity because they weren't authorized to speak to the media.

Attacks have targeted religious leaders in the area in the past. Last week, also in Yagha province, a retired pastor was killed and another pastor was abducted by gunmen, according to an internal security report for aid workers seen by The Associated Press.

Extremist violence has dra-

matically escalated in once-peaceful Burkina Faso.

Analysts are concerned that attacks against civilians, including against Christians, are increasing "at an alarming rate," said Corinne Dufka, West Africa director for Human Rights Watch.

"Perpetrators use victims' links to government or their faith to justify the killings, while others appear to be reprisal killings for killings by the government security

forces," she said.

More than 1,300 civilians were killed in targeted attacks last year in Burkina Faso, more than seven times the previous year, according to Armed Conflict Location and Event Data Project, which collects and analyzes conflict information.

Trend Slayer

Kangana's first look as pilot released

Actor **KANGANA RANAUT**'s first look as an Air Force pilot in her forthcoming flick *Tejas* has taken the internet by storm.

Ronnie Screwvala's production house RSVP movies shared the look. The tweet reads, "Soaring high into the sky! Presenting the first look of #KanganaRanaut as an Air force Pilot in #Tejas."

Kangana's sister Rangoli Chandel tweeted, "Tejas is not only a fighter jet but also Kangana's name in the film. She always wanted to play a soldier and her dream came true. After *Manikarnika*, another war film but this time action will be in the sky, *Jai Hind*."

'It's my dream to become India's pop icon. That dream is going to be fulfilled through non-film songs. It also gives me a chance to feature in my own videos and the song is associated to my face and name instead of being a voice for someone else's face. I have never let success get into my head. I think that's how a person can grow.'

—Dhvani Bhanushali

A special screening of filmmaker Anubhav Sinha's *Thappad* starring **TAAPSEE PANNU** will be held today in the capital by director Vishal Bhardwaj.

The makers say that they are very confident about the film and hence, hosting a special screening 10 days before the official release.

Given the industry's competitive environment, for Sinha, it is a breath of fresh air to see other directors come forward to support their contemporaries and back up films with strong social messages.

I smell like a crayon: Robert

Actor **ROBERT PATTINSON** says he smells like a crayon. Pattinson was then asked, "Like you're made of wax?" To which, he said, "Yes! Like I'm embalmed."

Pattinson was recently described as the "most handsome man" in the world according to science.

Asked what's it like to be superlatively hot, he said, "It's weird. My character in *Harry Potter* was of a good-looking guy. It was quite a shock that it was easy to get. Then *Twilight* happened too."

Pattinson will next be seen playing Bruce Wayne in Matt Reeves' *The Batman*. Last week, the director stared the first image for the film, showing the actor in his Batman mask and suit. The look went viral on the net.



ONE LOVE IS ALL WE NEED

Designer duo ABU JANI SANDEEP KHOSLA's collection at *Blenders Pride Fashion Tour* was a passionate call to action for inclusivity and the celebration of difference. By TEAM VIVA

□ What was this year's theme for *Blenders Pride Fashion Tour*?

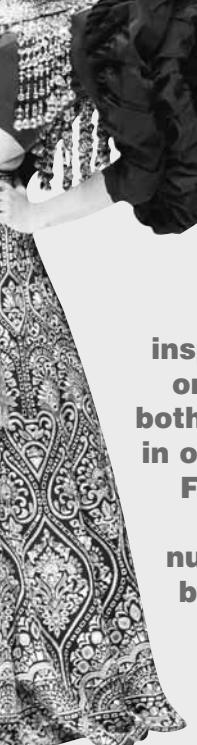
The milestone 15th edition of Blenders Pride Fashion Tour unveiled a new face of fashion by bringing the universe of pride to life, with 'My Blend, My Pride' being the theme for the Delhi chapter of the tour. The concept represents our creative and spiritual vision. Blend is an amalgamation of multiple textiles, techniques, embroidery, colours and silhouettes, each one distinct and a reflection of the rich and living cultural, historical, art and craft legacy of India. With India as muse, we have imagined this new collection as an original style standard for now and for the future. Blend is also an ode to the concept of 'One Love'. And it's many, many forms. It is a passionate call to action for inclusivity and the celebration of difference.

□ How did you blend modern silhouettes and Indian traditions and aesthetics through your designs?

The proof of the pudding is in the tasting. The collection revealed its ability to carry traditions and classical sensibilities in a thoroughly modern avatar. We believe in breaking boundaries, in crossing borders when it comes to creativity.

□ What inspired the collection?

Our collection is always inspired by multiple influences and is essentially a celebration of the sheer diversity, that is India. We have always worked intensively with Indian textiles, be it block printing, khaki or cotton. Our intention is to elevate these crafts to works of art. Natural fabrics, weaves, dyes were used as a canvas for the finest embroideries and accents. Multiple motifs, too, inspired by flora, fauna and architecture. Every range is distinct and blends multiple elements together in decidedly original silhouettes to create a tribute to crafts-



'Every range features signature colours, inspired by the ones found in both nature and in our tradition. From whites, beige and nudes to rust, brown, green and red'

manship and design at their highest level.

□ Some of your collection seems to be inspired by Indian architecture. How did you weave architecture in your designs?

Architecture has always played an important role as a personal passion and creative inspiration. Be it Mughal monuments or South Indian temples, we have used these extensively as motifs in our collections. We also designed collections of architectural furniture. We incorporated gothic and art deco architecture in our fashion and interior designs.

□ This has been your signature style. How has it evolved over the years?

One's core sensibilities and aesthetics remain the same. As artists and designers, we have always committed ourselves to creating original, impossibly refined, exceptional and timeless pieces. We believe in constant experimentation and in challenging ourselves to break our own bar. We are always learning, striving to dream and achieve bigger. The circle of creativity must always expand. Each time we fashion a

new dream, with new eyes.

□ Fabrics, initially seen as hierarchical symbols, have evolved to be accepted and recognised as an art form. What is your take on this? Which fabric did you use?

Our textile legacy is an art form. It is labour and skill-intensive. From weaving to block printing, we are beyond blessed in India to have artisanal quality within our reach. These 33 years have seen us work with myriad fabrics and textiles. Our mission has always been to make these textiles high fashion — the standard of couture. *Bandhani, khadi, ajrak, silk, georgette, satin and cotton* feature extensively in this collection.

□ Can you tell us in detail about your colour palette this time?

The colour palette as always is extensive. Every range features signature colours, inspired by the ones found in both nature and in our tradition. From whites, beige and nudes to rust, brown, green, Indigo. The palette included even the jewel hues like fuchsia, orange, emerald and red.

Photo: Pankaj Kumar



The show must go on

Climate change activists brought flares, wore gas masks, stopped traffic with a street protest as they demanded the cancellation of the five-day style extravaganza, London Fashion Week

Climate change activists stole the show on the opening day of London Fashion Week, stopping traffic with a street protest as they demanded the cancellation of the British capital's five-day style extravaganza. Dozens of protesters from the Extinction Rebellion group drew attention — and anger from some drivers — as they fired colorful smoke flares into the air and blocked busy intersections in central London near the fashion events. Some protesters wore gas masks and dresses made from chains, while others carried placards reading 'no fashion on a dead planet'.

They called on the British Fashion Council to take more action to lobby for environmental policies. It was an eventful day at London Fashion Week, which brings crowds of style editors, photographers, models and celebrities to the city twice a year. Burberry, Victoria Beckham, Tommy Hilfiger, Erdem and Christopher Kane are among the leading fashion houses and designers showcasing their latest fall and winter creations over the next few days.

Organisers of London Fashion Week have said they want to help promote sustainability and create positive change within the industry. This season, the trade show is featuring a "Positive Fashion" exhibition and a "swap shop" where visitors will be able to exchange used clothes for donated items.

Most fashion week attendees, however, will have their eyes firmly trained on new season offerings. On Saturday, Temperley London staged four catwalk shows that were open to the public as part of a wider drive to make the displays — traditionally only accessible to fashion insiders and VIPs — more public-facing and instantly available to the masses.

The brand, adored by fans for its romantic evening and bridal wear, showcased summer dresses



with bold prints and an array of opulent and ultra-feminine evening gowns featuring plenty of ruffles, jeweled embellishments, sheer fabrics and show-stopping sequins.

Gale force winds and a deluge of rain may be causing havoc to much of Britain, but for the fashion crowd the show must go on. Storm Dennis didn't stop models, celebrities and fashion insiders from donning their finest to attend the fashion week. American streetwear designer Tommy Hilfiger also made a guest appearance, showing neon yellow tracksuits and luxury sportswear in a collaboration collection with Formula One racing driver Lewis Hamilton.

Cameras flashed as the Beckham family turned out in style to support Spice Girl-turned-designer Victoria Beckham, who staged her catwalk show at central London's grand Banqueting Hall. Her sons Romeo and Cruz shared the front row with father and former soccer star David Beckham, while 8-year-old Harper got a comfy seat in her father's lap.

On the catwalk, models wore checked shirts, smart tailored coats, culottes and velvet blazers, all paired with skin-tight, thigh-high leather boots in shades from blue to bright red. Beckham said "we're using the boot to throw things off in a little bit of a strange way."

Elsewhere, French designer Roland Mouret turned to 1980s London under Margaret Thatcher for inspiration. There were double-breasted blazers, exaggerated shoulders and androgynous suits; a sugary pink boxy blazer, worn with matching culottes, stood out in a mostly austere palette of greys, khakis and monochrome.

The fashion industry has come under increasing scrutiny from green groups, and Mouret — who counts Meghan, the Duchess of Sussex, among his celebrity fans — was keen to respond to calls for more transparent and environmentally-friendly practices. Sustainable fashion "is at the heart of my collection in a time where the process of creating clothes carries with it a personal responsibility," he said, and emphasised that he aimed for the brand to be carbon neutral within the year.



SOCIAL MEDIA WAR ON FILMFARE

The latest Filmfare Awards have disappointed some netizens. People have taken to social media to express their dissatisfaction with the winners and #BoycottFilmfareAwards has been trending on Twitter since Monday.

Some argue that the earthy song of the pro-Right *Kesari* should have been chosen over *Gully Boy*, which celebrates protest poetry against social inequity, others cried nepotism. Luckily, the war played out in social media that allows a democracy of opinions. Unluckily, it also gave vent to political biases.

While fans tweeted their ire, lyricist Manoj Muntashir declared that he is heartbroken over not winning an award for penning the heart-wrenching track *Teri Mitti* from *Kesari*. He took to Twitter to announce that he would not be attending any award ceremonies for the rest of his life. Manoj penned an emotional note, "Dear Awards, even if I try all my life, I won't be able to write a better line than *Tu Kehti Thee Tera Chaand Hoon Main Aur Chaand Humesa Rahta Hai*. You failed to honour the words which made millions of Indians cry and care for their motherland. It would be a great disrespect to my art if I still continue caring for you. So here I bid you a final good bye. I officially announce that I

won't attend any award show till I breathe my last. *Alvida*."

Netizens came up in support of him because *Teri Mitti* is a song that touched hearts of almost all Bollywood buffs, especially due to its lyrics. Commenting on his post, a user wrote, "@filmfare @jiteshpillai, you literally killed the spirit of many Indians and lyricist by not giving award to #TeriMitti. This song is best of the decade."

The mood has been similar for many fans. Accusing the awards of propagating nepotism and awarding actors and filmmakers who are star kids, a user wrote, "They have to promote betis some renowned people Akhtar, Bhattacharya and Pandey. Nepotism rules in Bollywood. It's so sad that quality cinema does not matter. #BoycottFilmfareAwards."

Another user wrote, "Worst filmfare awards. Some splendid films were ignored. It was never expected from such a jury. Was it only to please the boss Karan Johar or Ranveer Singh. *Teri Mitti* song, Super 30 film ignored. #BoycottFilmfareAwards. Another tweet reads, "#BoycottFilmfareAwards they simply ignored Sushant Singh Rajput who gave two powerful performances in *Sonchiriya* and *Chhichhore*. The songs of these films are far better than *Gully Boy*. I officially announce that I

—AP

—IANS

Man needs colour to live; it's just as necessary an element as fire and water," said the great Fernand Léger in *The Aesthetics of the Machine, Geometric Order and True (1923)*.

The quaint and curious little space at the Akar Prakar Contemporary, showcasing minimal colour field landscapes by the great master from Bengal, Ganesh Haloi, reminds one of this. Haloi has been brought into the limelight by director Reena Lath. His solo will be unveiled at the Asia Art Week, New York in March.

In these landscapes, the modernist you see suffuses fertile pastures tinted by tiny strokes of colour, the splendour of which, all of a sudden, transforms into a bouquet of earth songs. It's one of the reasons why Haloi was handpicked by Documenta 14 curator Adam Szymbczyk in 2014.

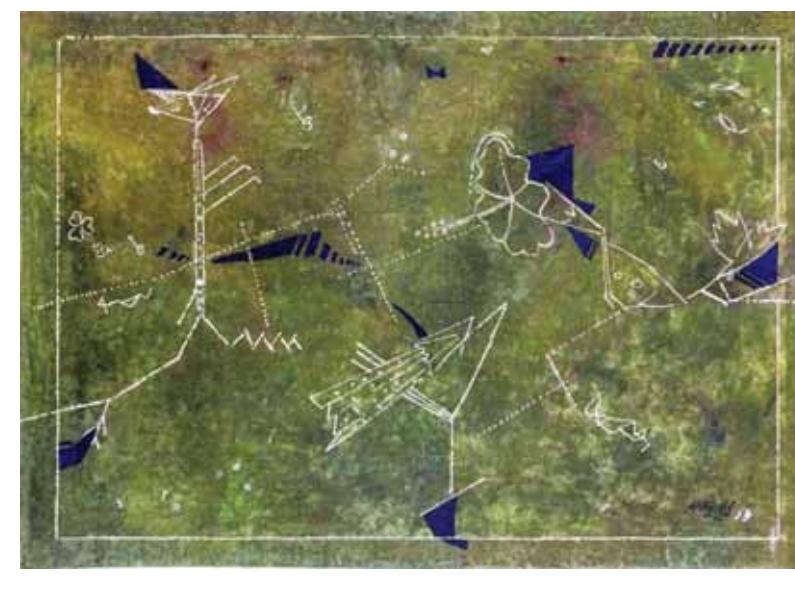
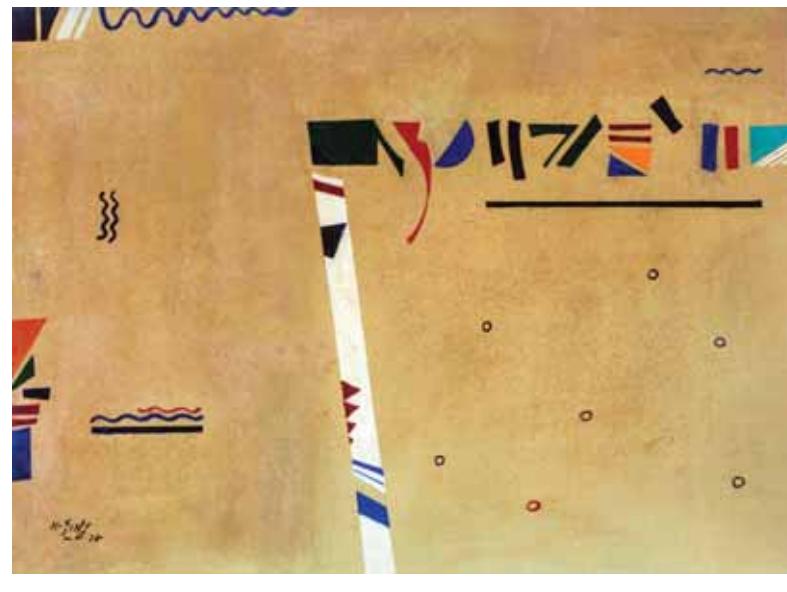
TRANQUILITY OF COLOUR FIELDS

Halo plays with the tranquility of colour fields as he creates a study of his homeland, which is intense, in-depth and unexpected. In one of them, one could spot a golden yellow rapture, while in another, a vigorous tenor of mud brown. One can also find a voluminous ochre that could belong to a paddy field or an autumnal evening in Shantiniketan. Whatever the case maybe, Haloi creates a counterpose, aptly balancing space and volume.

In a life that has found the graceful gravitas of pure abstraction, Haloi's works at Akar Prakar are both joyful and dynamic. In 2006, at his home in Kolkata, he said in an interview, "Colour is not just a vital necessity in the hands of an artist. It is like a raw material, which is primary as well as essential in life. It is like air, water and fire. If I am thinking of my experiences and memories, I cannot imagine it without the mood of the atmosphere. When you look at a pond, at the plants, fishes and birds around you, you are also thinking of all that is natural in colour tones. When we look at nature in its purest form, we are recording what is linked to light. The memory becomes an intensity which we can either strengthen or soften. This process for me is the abstraction that I engage in."

FRAGMENTED HOMOGENEITY

His tiny strokes look as though light is vibrating and moving along the rhythms of the wind. Musical broadths and deeper understandings of abstract expressionism — all come into play in



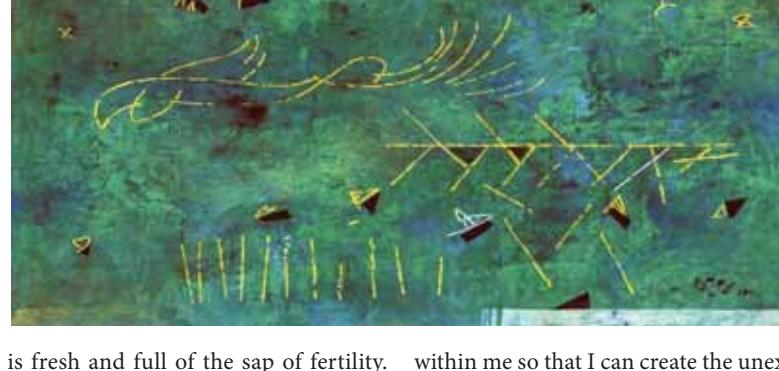
MEMORIES ON CANVAS

For artist GANESH HALOI, working on a piece is like cultivating crops on a part of land. It's the reason why nature's true essence can be found in his works, says UMA NAIR

Halo's works. He is a scholar, who is content to create something within the orbit of his own oasis. He is the reflective traveller content within the conventions of time and space and happy to venture into terra incognita. His canvases speak a language, where each portion takes on a novel, fresh and moving meaning.

One morning in 2006, in the silence of his flat and company of artist Sudip Roy, Haloi said, "A work of art is like a land I cultivate. It grows progressively but quietly. Abstraction is neither a technique nor geometry. It is born of one's own residue of memory and experience.

The stories, events and spectacles I saw in my childhood come back to me. The sadness of the Bengal famine and the helplessness of people, engulfs me. The sunset at the pond in the village... everything accumulates as associations with the past. When I put paint to paper or canvas, I want to create something that



is fresh and full of the sap of fertility. Like the poet who sits down to write, I gaze at my canvas or paper for some time. Yes, I want the trigger of a vital energy and a zest. The beginning is quiet but once the first swish of the pliant brush or the pen touches the canvas, it flows. Some stimulus must accumulate

within me so that I can create the unexpected symphony. It's like one of the compositions from the Gitabitan — moody, rhythmic and full of resonance. That resonance must happen."

When asked if he likes to be alone when he paints, Haloi said his wait in front of his canvas or sheet of Nepali

paper is a combination of silent patience and the gesture of poise. These landscapes are tinged with grace and dreaminess, populated by strokes that resemble the rustling of leaves or just riverine tributaries, bathed in harmonies of green or tan or an indigo. They are rooted in the ethos of his own world.

In the density of depth and the melody of motion, Halo's exhibition is a paean to poetic patterns, prismatic haikus that lull the senses long after we have gone through an immersive experience of dulcet tunes of the yesteryear. It would be intriguing to know how New York responds to India's resonant master even as he brings alive the words by Aldous Huxley: "There are things known and there are things unknown, and in between are the doors of perception."

(Form & Play will be shown in New York at the Fuller Building from March 12th to 19th.)

Sotheby to unveil private collections

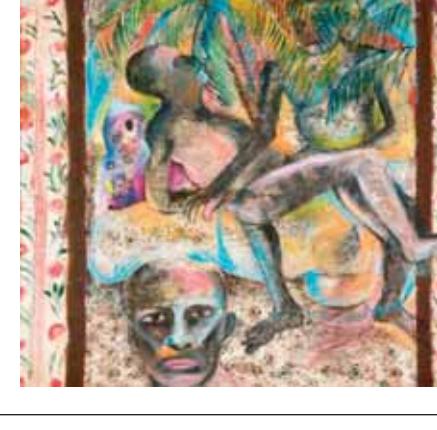
Commemorating the 25th anniversary of Modern and Contemporary South Asian

Art sales at Sotheby's, this season features a selection of rare and never-seen-before works emerging from private collections. Led by two 1960s paintings by pioneer Indian abstractionists Nasreen Mohamedi and Vasudeo S Gaitonde, the auction also features an important work by Indian National Treasure artist Raja Ravi Varma; a selection of sculptures led by modernist works by Amarnath Sehgal and Adi Davierwalla; a curated selection on Neo-Tantra, including works by Biren De, GR Santosh and a diverse selection from the Bengal School of Art as well as Modern and Contemporary art from Pakistan.

Anu Ghosh-Mazumdar, head of Sotheby's Indian and Southeast Asian Art Department in New York, commented, "We are thrilled to continue our strength in presenting fresh material to collectors worldwide. Our entire March sale features material that is either newly discovered or has remained in esteemed private collections for decades."

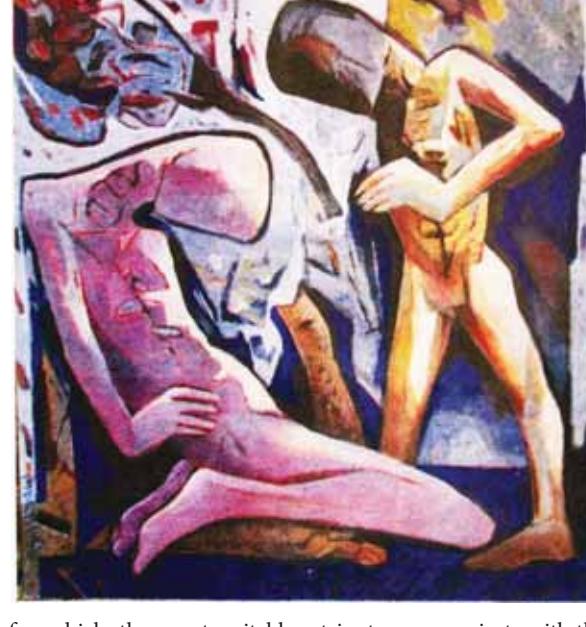
Manjari Sihare-Sutin, head of Sotheby's Modern and Contemporary South Asian Sales in New York, noted, "Twenty-five years ago, Sotheby's held its first dedicated auction of Modern and Contemporary Indian Art, featuring the legendary collection of Chester and Davida Herwitz. I am immensely proud to continue to bring fresh and exciting property to the market. From Gaitonde's works with a connection to Dr Homi Jehangir Bhabha to an alluring Mohamedi work, previously owned by Peggy and Robert Matthews, and a fantastic collection of art acquired by Marcia Gilmarin including rare works by Zarina, this sale offers a variety of riches for the discerning collector."

(The art auction will be held in New York on March 16.)



The illusion of reality

Through different media of printmaking like lithography, wood engraving, etching and enamel paintings, artist AJIT SEAL showcases his journey of 40 years of art practises and how he has experienced many transformations over time. By TEAM VIVA



works echo at the very heart of contemporary art practices and the issues of self-identity.

There are three major objectives that Ajit explores. First, the visual language that he uses. Second, the thought-process he uses to guide the making of his artworks. Third, the wider chronological framework through which he both produces his works as well as thinks the work will occupy a significant place.

At the very first sight of

Ajit's printmaking works, one becomes aware of his images and they speak volumes about his thoughts and beliefs. With the help of strong narratives, his

works reflect his own musings which keep transforming, sometimes static, veiling, unveiling and changing as he progresses.

The images and prints are the silhouettes of his inner self. His works communicate expressions of everyday experiences, along with the belief that its identity is made up of a body, of thoughts, feelings, ambitions, plans, ideas, values, impulses, desires, actions, qualities, and so on.

Ajit's works are an approach where he presents a traditional and spiritual morality into visual perspective. His works emerge from a personal quest,

for which the most suitable media and materials that express his 'self' are lithographies, wood engraving as well as etching. His work process goes with the flow of his thoughts. He says, "Sometimes ideas emerge gradually through the everyday things I am engaged in and other times, it takes a long thinking process for days before I start exploring the visual concepts on different printing media."

The illusion of reality is one of Ajit's prime objectives and he seems to be moving around the circumference of a time circle for which his art is governed by much aesthetic austerity. He

The art of fostering relationships

Musicians from Goa have always been at the forefront and now artists from the state are more confidently stepping into new festival spaces

With a view to build upon the community of creative people residing in Goa, the maiden edition of the *Goa Open Arts Festival* aimed to foster collaborations and relationships among participants, who may not have previously known each other but are all living and making work in the state.

Talking about the public festival, Sitara Chowfla, independent curator and spokesperson of the festival recalled that it was prompted by the idea that there are a significant number of creative people — artists, writers, designers, poets, musicians, who had come from around the country and the world to make Goa their home.

"The intention was also to encourage and provide a platform for creating new work and for artists to retain control over what and how they show. This is a point of difference from many other festivals that it is organised by artists and the content is driven by the selected artists and not by curators," she said.

Stressing that the underlying thought behind the three-day festival was premised on the idea of "openness", Chowfla elaborated that they have included a diverse range of practices in the arts — music, performance, visual arts, poetry — and also opened up different interpretations of art. "For example, we had chefs who used food to awaken sensory experiences and a mental health initiative that used creative design to reach out to adolescents. There was artists conducting workshops for chil-



Chowfla, Dheer Kaku, Mustafa Khanbai and Rajaram Naik. There were also many interactive projects including the Travelling Library by Bookworm trust, a special exhibit on mental health by Goa-based NGO Sangath in collaboration with Quicksand Design Studio, and a polaroid photo studio set up by photographer Bharat Sikka.

The main stage witnessed acoustic music and poetry acts by the likes of Rochelle D'Silva, Shyamant Behal, Govez, and late-night music ranged from Sufi music by HAWA, jazz and funk by the Coffee Cats, and a Fado concert by Sonia Shirsat. "We also created a lot of opportunities for local schools to interact with our programme — clay-making, theatre and printmaking workshops for students in the area," said Sitara and added, "Our focus was on deepening the engagement with the community with more sustained programmes through the year and through fostering cross-collaboration between our current participating artists."

Talk to her about Goa's growing popularity among artists from across the country, and she said, "The state's inherent natural beauty, culture and people — there is a particular energy here that attracts creativity. It seems to be a natural fit perhaps that's why more and more cultural events are being planned in Goa. Goan musicians have always been at the forefront and now Goan artists are more confidently stepping into these new festival spaces."

—IANS

Raza Foundation and Vadehra Art Gallery presents *Known Unknown*, an exhibition of contemporary artists curated by Amitava Das. The show opens with a book launch by Raza.



Ambassador of France HE Emmanuel Lenain titled, *I Will Bring My Time*, containing English versions of love letters by Raza.

WHEN: Till February 29 **TIME:** 11 am to 8 pm **WHERE:** Shridharani Gallery, Triveni Kala Sangam.



Bruno Art Group presents *Shining Brightly*, a group exhibition by Israeli and international artists, which celebrates 28 years of diplomatic relations between India and Israel. **WHEN:** February 23 to 29 **TIME:** 10 am to 8 pm **WHERE:** Visual Arts Gallery, India Habitat Centre.

India International Centre presents *Derakht-e-Doosti, The Shahnameh of Fredowi & Iranian Identity*, that unveils a new

edition of the *Shahnameh*, features miniature paintings, Iranian handicrafts and hosts programmes like live Persian calligraphy. **WHEN:** February 20 to 27 **TIME:** 11 am to 6.30 pm **WHERE:** Art Gallery, IIC Annex.



WATCH OUT



Nature Morte presents *Everyday Extraordinary*, a solo exhibition of works by artist Suhasini Kejriwal, which features her errands of Chitpur of north Kolkata and Chor Bazaar in central Mumbai. **WHEN:** Till March 14 **TIME:** 10 am to 6 pm **WHERE:** A1, Neeti Bagh, Khel Gaon Marg.

Altasha Art by Asif and Zoya Kamal, presents *Aarambh*, which will exhibit works by a group of emerging as well as established modern and contemporary artists from India. **WHEN:** Till February 29 **TIME:** 11 am to 7 pm **WHERE:** Altasha Art Gallery, DLF South Court, Saket.



ITALY RECEIVE NEW SMS

Lazio topple Inter 2-1 to go 2nd behind Juventus

AFP ■ ROME

Lazio coach Simone Inzaghi gave warning his side are ready to fight for their first Serie A title since 2000 after moving into second in Serie A on Sunday, just one point off leaders Juventus after a come-from-behind 2-1 win over Inter Milan at Stadio Olimpico.

Juventus reclaimed pole position thanks to Paulo Dybala and Juan Cuadrado's goals as the Turin giants rediscovered their winning form 2-0 at home against Brescia.

Inter Milan dropped from top spot to third — three points behind the eight-time reigning champions — after falling to just their second defeat of the season.

"We need to stay humble and focused but I'm sure we will succeed. We have nothing to lose," said Inzaghi.

"We know that Juventus and Inter are two great teams and we will do everything to fight to the end, knowing that it will be very difficult."

In a fiery clash in the Stadio Olimpico defender Ashley Young broke through just before the break with his first Serie A goal for Inter Milan after his move from Manchester United.

The 34-year-old got his foot to tap-in off a rebound after Thomas Straskosha had cleared from former Lazio player Antonio Candreva.



Sergej Milinkovic-Savic celebrates with Lazio teammate Lucas Leiva after scoring his side's second goal AP



Ciro Immobile scores Lazio's opener against Inter Milan from penalty spot at Stadio Olimpico AP

A Stefan de Vrij foul on Ciro Immobile allowed the Serie A top scorer to slot in his 26th goal in 24 games this season, five minutes after the break.

Sergej Milinkovic-Savic snatched the winner after 69 minutes amid confusion in front of goal.

"We gifted Lazio two goals," said Inter coach Antonio Conte as the northerners fell to their second defeat after Juventus in October.

Lazio extended their unbeaten run to 19 games as they target their second Scudetto, with a return to Champions League football on the cards for next season.

MERTENS LIFTS NAPOLI

In Sardinia, Napoli got back to winning ways with a Dries Mertens' 65th-minute goal sealing a 1-0 success over Cagliari.

The Belgian completed a give-and-go with Elseid Hysaj with the ball curling in with a deflection off the post.

It was the 32-year-old's 12th goal for Napoli, one short of Marek Hamsik's all-time record, and five ahead of club legend Diego Maradona.

"Dries is a phenomenon, a champion who makes difficult things seem simple," said coach Gennaro Gattuso.

Gattuso's side overtake Cagliari, moving up to eighth.

SINGLES

KOHLI SLIPS TO 10TH IN T20 RANKINGS

DUBAI: India skipper Virat Kohli slipped to the 10th position but KL Rahul and Rohit Sharma remained static at the second and 11th place respectively in the latest ICC T20I rankings. Batting mainstay Kohli (673 points) dropped down as England captain Eoin Morgan (687), who scored 136 runs including two fifties against South Africa moved to the ninth place.

CASILLAS TO RUN FOR RFEF PRESIDENCY

MADRID: Spain's World Cup-winning captain Iker Casillas confirmed he will run for the presidency of Spanish Football Federation (RFEF). The date of the election has not yet been decided but Casillas said he has informed his current club Porto of his decision, with the 38-year-old now expected to retire from playing the game. "Yes, I will run for the presidency of the RFEF when the elections are called," Casillas wrote. "Together we will put our federation at the top of the best football in the world, the football of Spain".

HARSIMRAN INVITED TO NBA GLOBAL ACADEMY

NEW DELHI: India's Harsimran Kaur has been invited to participate in a multi-week training camp at the NBA Global Academy at Basketball Australia's Centre of Excellence in Canberra. The training camp started on Monday and will end on March 3. This will be her second stint at the NBA Global Academy after attending a camp from November 7 to 24 last year.

INDIA WILL HOST FIH JR MEN'S WC IN 2021

LAUSANNE: International Hockey Federation (FIH) on Monday announced India as the hosts for next year's junior men's World Cup. This is the second time that India will be hosting the prestigious tournament, having staged it in Lucknow in 2016, where the hosts lifted the coveted trophy. FIH said that the competition will be played towards the end of 2021 but exact venue and dates for the tournament will be announced at a later stage. The junior men's World Cup will see 16 teams compete for the title, out of which six will be from Europe, four from Asia, including hosts India, two from Africa, two from Oceania and two from Pan America.

JR WEIGHTLIFTERS WIN 5 SILVER, 6 BRONZE

NEW DELHI: India claimed five Silver and six Bronze medals at the ongoing 2020 Asian Youth & Junior Weightlifting Championships in Tashkent. KV Pavani Kumari (45kg) won Silver medals in both youth girls and junior women section, while Sidhanta Gogoi (61kg) claimed Silver in youth boys and junior men events after lifting a total of 145 and 269kgs respectively. Mukund Aher (49kg) then clinched a Silver in youth boys category with a lift of 189kgs. Harshada Goud (45kg) clinched two Bronze medals with a lift of 139kgs in youth girls and junior women events. Other lifters to win Bronze medals are Boni Manghika (55kg), Ch Nirmala Devi (59kg), S Gururaj (49kg) and Golom Tinku (55kg).

TOKYO MARATHON CANCELLED FOR 38K RUNNERS

TOKYO: Organisers said on Monday they are cancelling the amateur portion of the Tokyo marathon, affecting around 38,000 runners, on fears about the spread of the new coronavirus in Japan. "We reached the conclusion that unfortunately it is difficult to organise the event... After several cases (of the virus) were confirmed in Tokyo," the Tokyo Marathon Foundation said. The decision will not affect elite runners, including elite wheelchair participants, the organisers said. But they only account for around 200 of the tens of thousands of people who had registered for the March 1 race.

MAREGA WALKS OFF AFTER MONKEY CHANTS

LISBON: Porto's Malian striker Moussa Marega walked off the pitch in disgust after being subjected to a torrent of monkey chants in a stormy Portuguese league game at Vitoria Guimaraes on Sunday. The 28-year-old had scored a 60th-minute winner for Porto against his former club which sparked the home fans to aim even more vitriol at the France-born player which had started as early as the pre-match warm-up. In the 71st minute, Marega signalled to the bench that he was walking off in protest even though teammates, Porto coach Sergio Conceicao and Vitoria players tried to get him to stay on the pitch. As he walked off, an angry and upset Marega gave a thumbs-down signal with both gloved hands to the home fans.

AGENCIES

Dortmund defence key against PSG



Dortmund vs PSG
Live from 1:30am IST
SONY TEN 1 NETWORK

AFP ■ DORTMUND

Borussia Dortmund coach Lucien Favre says how his team defend against Paris Saint-Germain stars such as Neymar and Kylian Mbappe will be the deciding factor in today's Champions League clash.

Dortmund host PSG in the last 16, first leg at Signal Iduna Park.

"They're a dangerous team," Favre said in Monday.

"When you lose the ball, they move very fast up front. The key will be how we defend."

New signing Erling Braut Haaland, 19, has scored nine goals in six

Neymar returns from injury

AFP ■ DORTMUND

Neymar has been named in the Paris Saint-Germain squad for today's Champions League last-16 first leg at Borussia Dortmund, despite missing the French club's last four games through injury.

The world's most expensive player has been struggling with a

Tuchel, PSG are looking to break their last-16 jinx having failed to progress past the first knock-out stage for the last three seasons.

Dortmund are looking to emulate their run to the 2013 Champions League final and have some serious attacking prowess of their own.

Dortmund's Belgian midfielder Axel Witsel has positive memories from his last game against Neymar — in the quarter-finals of the

2018 World Cup.

"It's a good memory because we (Belgium) won (2-1), but tomorrow (Tuesday) will be different," he said.

"If he plays, we'll have to pay attention to him, but not only to him, because Paris has a lot of qualities in attack."

"We'll have to be very compact, we'll have to defend together as a team and be very strong."

games and forged a successful partnership with England winger Jadon Sancho, also 19.

The teenagers are set to lead Dortmund's attack with Germany pair Marco Reus and Julian Brandt both out injured.

Dortmund's Belgian

rib problem, but was expected to be fit in time for the game at Signal Iduna Park.

The Brazilian missed last season's surprise last-16 loss to Manchester United with a foot injury, while he also sat out the second leg of the defeat at the same stage of the competition by Real Madrid in 2018.

On Sunday they conceded a late goal to draw 2-2 at home to Celta Vigo and finish the weekend with their lead over Barcelona down to one point.

Real manager Zinedine Zidane was philosophical.

"There's nothing to explain, it's just the way things are, it's football," he said.

"I'm not worried about it, but I'm disappointed, as always when you drop two points at home."

On Sunday they welcomed back Eden Hazard, who had been out since November. Coach Zinedine Zidane also recalled his other 100 million euro player Gareth Bale to complete an all-star attack with Karim Benzema.

Yet Celta leapt into the lead after seven minutes. A pass from Iago Aspas sent Fedor Smolov galloping clear up the middle and he shot low past Thibaut Courtois.

"There were mistakes, especially for the first goal," said Zidane.

"We were not well positioned, it happens, and it'll happen to us again."

Real levelled in the 52nd minute, Marcelo, not for the first time, found space on the left. His low cross deflected to Toni Kroos following the attack. The German drilled in the equaliser. It was the sixth straight season Kroos had scored against Celta.

In the 65th minute, goalkeeper Ruben

Celta put brake on Real

AFP ■ MADRID

Real Madrid's winning streak ended when they conceded a late goal to draw 2-2 at home to Celta Vigo and finish the weekend with their lead over Barcelona down to one point.

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Sergio Ramos celebrates after scoring from spot AP

Blanco pulled down the impressive Hazard. Ramos slammed the penalty into the bottom corner of the net.

However Celta responded by rediscovering their attacking nerve.

With four minutes left, a sharp pass from Denis Suarez, who had come on in the 71st minute, caught the Real back four rigid on the edge of their own area. Santi Mina, who had been on for just two minutes, raced onto the ball and drilled a shot past Courtois.

"In the last two years...I've gone from being the youngest one to one of the oldest in the team," she said.

"They (her teammates) never show us that they're young, we can always do what we expect of them. The team is looking in really good shape and showing what they can do with extra responsibility," she added.

She is still not over the disappointment of missing the ODI world title in 2017 and Harmanpreet said the T20 World Cup trophy would go a long way in making up for that debacle.

"Our team is growing day by day, everyone is looking so positive," Harmanpreet said.

"It's going to be very big if we win, I was very surprised at all the reaction from 2017. My parents didn't tell me, they didn't want us to feel the pressure. If we win, it's going to be very big for us. We will try to give our best."

Harmanpreet is well aware of what a long run in an ICC tournament can do for her country.

"Over the last two years, we have already had a few games as part of the Women's T20 Challenge and this year we are looking forward to more," said the aggressive batter, who became the first Indian cricketer to join an overseas league by signing up with Women's Big Bash League side Sydney Thunder in 2016.

"If we win the World Cup, there's no doubt things will change. That tournament would bring a lot of confidence to the girls."

"If we get a women's IPL that will be really good for us. If we win the World Cup, it's going to be very big for us as a team, so we will try to give our best," she said.

Boult back for India Tests

PTI ■ WELLINGTON

Fit-again senior pacer Trent Boult has been named in the 13-member New Zealand squad for the first Test against India starting at Basin Reserve on February 21.

According to a media release issued by New Zealand Cricket, the 6 feet 8 inch giant pacer Kyle Jamieson, who made his ODI debut against India in the recent series, has also earned his call up in the Test squad, which will have slow left-arm orthodox Ajaz Patel as the only spinner.

Boult's comeback is a big boost for the New Zealand side as he missed the entire limited overs leg due to a fractured right hand.

"It's terrific to have Trent back with us and we're looking forward to the energy and experience he adds to the group alongside his obvious class with the ball in hand," head coach and chief selector Gary Stead said.

Jamieson, on the other hand, has been included in a pre-series Test squad for the first time.

"Kyle will offer us a point of difference with the bounce he can extract on what is traditionally a good surface in Wellington," Stead said.

Mumbai-born Patel was chosen over leg-spinner Ish Sodhi because of his consistency.

"We're excited to welcome back Ajaz (Patel) who has done a great job for us overseas and has a

New selectors by end of NZ tour

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

BCCI's Cricket Advisory Committee (CAC) member Madan Lal says two new selectors will be in office by the time the national team's tour of New Zealand winds up early next month.

"We have received a list of 44 applicants and we should have the two selectors appointed by the end of New Zealand tour," Lal said, referring to the ongoing tour, which will end on March 5 after a two-Test series starting Friday.

The national selection panel also includes Devang Gandhi, Jatin Paranjape and Sarandeep Singh, all of whom have one more year left in their tenure.

"Out of the applications, how many applicants we will call for

PUNIA, VINESH LEAD INDIAN CHALLENGE

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Defending champion Bajrang Punia will look to retain his 65kg freestyle title while six-time medalist (3 Silver and Bronze each) Vinesh Phogat will aim to upgrade the 53kg Bronze she won in the 2019 edition at Xi'an, China to Gold when the Asian Wrestling Championship begins here at Indira Gandhi Arena today.

The six-day event at the K D Jadhav Wrestling Stadium will act as a platform for the Indian wrestlers to test their skills against the best in Asia ahead of the Tokyo Olympics.

The championship has been classified as a ranking tournament for the Tokyo game by the United World Wrestling.

Besides Punia and Vinesh, the 30-member India squad will also feature Deepak Punia, Ravi Kumar Dahiya and 2016 Rio Olympic Bronze medallist Shakhzod Malik.

Anshu Malik, Ashu and Sonam Malik are the three youngsters who would look to make a mark in the tournament.

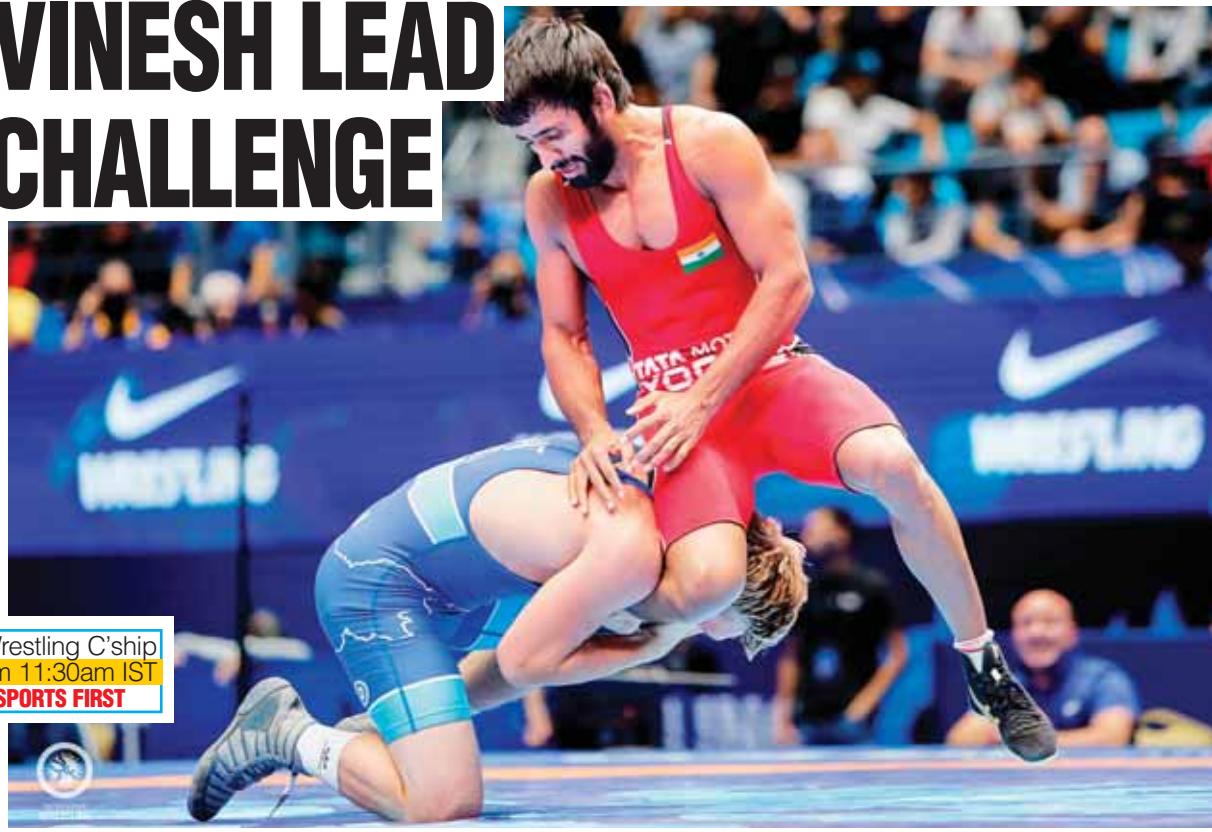
The tournament will be played in three categories — men's freestyle, Greco-Roman and women's wrestling. The first two days will see Greco-Roman competition, followed by women's wrestling (next two days) and men's freestyle (last two days).

There was initially uncertainty over the participation of four Pakistani wrestlers and two officials due to political tension but they have been cleared by the government to take part in the championship.

However, a 40-strong Chinese contingent will not be taking part in the championships as they have not been granted visas by the government due to the novel coronavirus outbreak there.

The Senior Asian Championship is returning to India after a gap of two years. India last hosted the championship in 2017. In the 2019 edition, India had won 16 medals, including the lone Gold from Punia in 65kg category.

World No 2 and India's leading medal hope, Punia said, "It is a great opportunity for all



Indian wrestler Bajrang Punia (red) in action during 2019 World Wrestling Championship match in Nur-Sultan, Kazakhstan

PTI/File Picture

of us. We will be playing in front of our home fans. Though to many it might seem as pressure, but I believe it will work as an advantage and I am hopeful that large numbers will be coming in to fill the stands and support us."

Dahiya, who has already qualified for the Olympics courtesy his Bronze medal-winning performance at the 2019 World Championships, echoed Bajrang's feelings.

"We are excited about the tournament. I am personally looking at ensuring that in my weight category I end up winning Gold. 57 kg is a tough weight category and has probably the stiffest competition but

losing is not an option when you are playing in your home ground," he said.

Fresh from her Gold medal at the Ranking Series in Italy, Vinesh is India's brightest medal prospect in the women's category.

"We have a strong contingent in both men and women's category. Asia has a very good set of wrestlers and being the Olympic year everyone will be looking to get as many wins as possible heading to the Tokyo Games. Personally, I am looking at this competition as a launchpad for my upcoming competitions," said Vinesh.

One of the dark horses of the tournament will be Sakshi (65 kg) who has not done anything of note last year. While she is not competing in her regular weight category, she could utilise the tournament to redeem herself.

Sakshi had won a Bronze in 62kg in the last edition.

Apart from the Indians, there will be a number of top international wrestlers as well, like Kenichiro Fumita, Gold medallist at 2019 World Wrestling Championships, and Nurislam Sanayev from Kazakhstan in freestyle.

In Greco-Roman, wrestlers like South Korea's Ryu Han Su

Coronavirus impact: No entry for Chinese wrestlers in Delhi

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Chinese wrestlers will not compete in the Asian Championships beginning here today as they have not been granted visas by the government due to the novel coronavirus outbreak there, a top official of the national federation said on Monday.

Wrestling Federation of India (WFI) assistant secretary Vinod Tomar said that the government has denied visas to the 40-strong Chinese contingent.

"We have got to know that the government has not granted visas to the Chinese contingent and so they are not taking part in the Championships," Tomar said.

"The world is grappling with the issue of coronavirus and so health of the athletes is the primary concern now. It is understandable why the government has not given visas to them," he added.

(a two-time world champion) and Uzbekistan's Elmurat Tasmuradov (a five-time Asian Championship Gold medallist) will be in action.

Aisuluu Tynybekova of

Asked what could be United World Wrestling's reaction on the denial of visas to the Chinese wrestlers, Tomar said, "We do not see any issues here, it is not something which happens in normal times. We are dealing with a grave health issue facing the world."

"It is not happening just in this championship, other countries have also done the same to Chinese athletes in other sporting events. Moreover, the UWW has not told us anything or given any direction about the Chinese wrestlers in the past week or so."

Talking about the granting of visas to the Pakistani wrestlers, Tomar said, "There could be issues had we not granted visas to the Pakistani wrestlers. So, we tried hard to get it done. But in case of Chinese wrestlers, it is for the health and safety of the participating athletes."

Kyrgyzstan, Gold medallist at 2019 world championships and a three-time Asian Championship winner, will be headlining the women's wrestling category.

Saina, Srikanth chase Olympic berth

PTI ■ BARCELONA

Seasoned Indian shuttlers Saina Nehwal and Kidambi Srikanth will look to keep their Olympic hopes alive when they compete at the \$170,000 Barcelona Spain Masters starting here today.

The Indian duo has been inconsistent in 2019 and didn't enjoy a good start to the new year.

While Saina has crossed the first round in only one of the three events in 2020, Srikanth has lost in the opening round in all three tournaments that he has played so far this year.

Saina and Srikanth are currently ranked 18th and 15th respectively, while being placed 22nd and 26th in the Race to Tokyo rankings, which takes into consideration only the points accumulated from the tournaments played in the last one year.

According to the BWF Olympic qualification rules, only two players from each singles category can qualify if their ranking is within the



top-16 by April end.

Among the Indians, world champion P V Sindhu and B Sai Praneeth and men's doubles pair of Satwiksairaj Rankireddy and Chirag Shetty have almost secured their berths for the Tokyo Games.

With the Olympic qualification cut-off date ending in April, there are only seven tournaments, including the Barcelona Spain Masters, left in the calendar and the Indian duo will have to produce consistent performances to earn a ticket to Tokyo.

London Bronze-medalist Saina, who is looking to make her fourth Olympics, will begin her campaign here against Germany's Yvonne Li.

Third seed Srikanth, on the other hand, will face fellow Indian Subhankar Dey, who notched up a morale-boosting win over world No 20 Indonesian Shesar Hiren Rhustavito in the Asia Team C'ships on Saturday.

Srikanth, who was also a part of the team in Manila, won two of his singles matches and lost one last week and he would hope to go deep in the draw in the tournament.

'United by Emotion': Tokyo 2020 unveils Games motto

PTI ■ DUBAI

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Mirza will return to action at the ongoing Dubai Open on Wednesday after recovering from a calf injury which had cut short her campaign at the Australia Open in January.

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he 33-year-old Indian will pair up with her French partner Caroline Garcia and they face Russia's Alla Kudryavtseva and Slovenia's Katarina Srebotnik in the opening round of the women's doubles event.

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uitting off a grand slam tournament due to an injury is a sad experience. Especially, when you are back into the game after a long break. But thanks to my physio for making me fit for the tournament. I have started practicing and look forward to a great tournament," she said.

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rowds of spectators who do not know each other prior to the Games will come together and learn that there is more that unites them than divides them," Tokyo 2020 said as it unveiled the motto.

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The official Olympic motto

is *Citius, Altius, Fortius* or *Faster, Higher, Stronger*, but each host city chooses its own motto to accompany that edition of the Games.
London's motto in 2012 was *Inspire a Generation*, whereas Athens in 2004 went for *Welcome Home* — a nod to the birthplace of the Games in Olympia.
Less well-received was Sochi, which plumped for *Hot. Cool. Yours*, sparking derision in some quarters.

Tokyo said the motto would be beamed onto the Skytree tower in the Japanese capital to raise awareness as it will be seen for miles around.

The opening ceremony will be on July 24 and organisers have stressed there is no discussion about changing this date despite the coronavirus crisis hitting global transport.

