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16 SPORT

Peaceful stirs aid democracy: Pranab

Ex-Prez deftly avoids naming CAA, but says protesters' belief in Constitution is heartening

PNS ■ NEW DELHI
Weighing in on the ongoing protests across the country, former President Pranab Mukherjee on Thursday said the present wave of largely peaceful protests that have "gripped" the country will once again help deepening India's democratic roots. Addressing the first Sukumar Sen Memorial lecture series at Pravasi Bharatiya Kendra on Thursday, former President said the last few months have witnessed people, particularly the youth, come out on the streets in large numbers to voice their views on issues "which in their view are important". "Indian democracy has been tested time and again. Consensus is the lifeblood of democracy. Democracy thrives on listening, deliberating, dis-

cussing, arguing and even dissent. Their assertion and belief in the Constitution of India is particularly heartening to see," he said. While Mukherjee did not name the Citizenship (Amendment) Act or CAA, in his address, his remarks, particularly his reference to belief of the youth in upholding the Constitution of India, have come against the backdrop of protests against the CAA. Incidentally, at several places protesters, mainly youths, grabbed headlines by simply reading the Preamble of the Constitution. The Modi Government has faced several protests during its second term across the country on issues such as CAA/NRC/NPR, abrogation of Article 370, and Triple Talaq. Mukherjee's daughter Sharmistha Mukherjee, a

Congress leader, has supported the ongoing protests against the CAA and she was detained. This is not the first time that he has spoken out on issues of national importance. Mukherjee had raked up a major controversy by visiting the RSS headquarters in Nagpur two years ago. At that time even people within his own party, the Congress, criticised him for showing proximity to the ruling BJP at the Centre. On December 19 last year, speaking at the second Atal Bihari Vajpayee Memorial Lecture at the India Foundation, Mukherjee had cautioned against a "majoritarian Government" against the backdrop of pan-India protests against the CAA. "A numerical majority in the elections only gives a political party the right to form a



"Indian democracy has been tested time and again. Consensus is the lifeblood of democracy. Democracy thrives on listening, deliberating, discussing, arguing and even dissent"
PRANAB MUKHERJEE

stable Government and not a majoritarian one. A numerical majority in elections gives you the right to make a stable government. The lack of popular majority forbids you from (becoming) a majoritarian government. That is the message and essence of our parliamen-

tary democracy," Mukherjee said. The former President also pointed out that while people have given "strong majorities" to various parties since 1952, not a single one has been elected with over 50 per cent vote. Similarly, delivering Rajendra Mathur Memorial

Lecture, organised annually by the Editors Guild of India in December last year, Mukherjee had emphasised that a democracy without a free press is like a "blank piece of paper". "Selective, orchestrated, one-sided, out of context, or motivated reporting and display, aimed at pushing the partisan agendas of one group or the other cannot or should not ever be the nature and character of journalism," he had said. In October last year, Mukherjee pressed on the importance of dialogue in a democracy while delivering the North East Institute of Advanced Studies Foundation Day lecture in memory of Justice (Retd) KN Saikia in Guwahati, Assam. Mukherjee stated that the soul of India resides in pluralism and celebration of its diversity.

Jail readies noose, Nirbhaya convicts' lawyer plans delay



STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

With nine days left for their execution, the four death-row convicts in the Nirbhaya gangrape case are yet to inform the Tihar jail authorities about when they want to meet their families for the last time or whom they want to will their assets and the money that they have earned during their incarceration. Delhi Prisons authorities have begun preparations for the execution of the four convicts on February 1 and have contracted Pawan, the hangman from Meerut who would be paid ₹15,000 for each hanging. Meanwhile, the counsel for the convicts, AP Singh told *The Pioneer* that options are there before him as Akshay Singh and Pawan Gupta's curative petitions are yet to be filed before the Supreme Court. Once the petitions are filed, the hanging will be stayed till the petitions are decided. The four convicts, Vinay Shrama (26), Akshay Singh (31), Mukesh Kumar (32) and Pawan Gupta (25), who are lodged in separate cells of Jail No 3 where the execution will take place, are scheduled to be hanged at 6 am on February 1, in case they fail to file the curative petition. According to AP Singh, Pawan and Akshay still have options to file curative petitions in the Supreme Court. Pawan and Akshay are yet to request for the "Presidential pardon". A petition of Pawan claiming to be juvenile at the time of crime was rejected by the Supreme Court recently but the advocate said Pawan is still left with option to move a curative petition in the Supreme Court. The lawyer also claimed that Akshay is also left with option to file curative petition. Meanwhile, a senior jail official while elaborating about the procedure before executing death-row convicts said after the death warrants were issued, the convicts were asked when they would like to meet their respective families for the last time and if so, who all do they wish to meet. But none of them have responded yet. The official said the convicts were also asked if they would want to prepare their will, but they have not responded yet. "The families of all the four convicts are allowed to meet them twice a week but the last date of meeting has not been fixed because they still have not responded," he said. "Dummy execution of the four death-row convicts was performed in the prison last week. The officials recorded the weights of the convicts and then prepared the dummies accordingly with sacks filled with debris and stones," a senior jail official said. The execution will take place in Jail No 3, the official said, adding that the Uttar Pradesh Prison authority has confirmed that Pawan Jallad from Meerut will be sent to hang the four convicts. All the four are likely to be hanged simultaneously.

Cononavirus locks down 5 Chinese cities

In rare move, Wuhan among five cities sealed to contain infection

PTI ■ BEIJING

China on Thursday locked down five cities, including Wuhan, suspending all public transport in an unprecedented move to contain the coronavirus that has infected over 630 people and left 17 others dead, dampening the celebrations of the Lunar New Year. On Thursday evening, Chinese officials announced suspension of public transport in five cities - Huanggang, Ezhou, Zhijiang, Qianjiang and Wuhan in Hubei province, official media reported. Wuhan, the city of 11 million people where the virus is believed to have first emerged, has no trains or planes in or out. Nationwide, a total of 17 people have died, all of them in and around Wuhan. The vic-

tims' average age was 73, with the oldest 89 and the youngest 48. So far 631 cases have been confirmed in 25 provincial-level regions in the country. The Government has sealed Wuhan and Huanggang, a prefecture level city with over 7.4 million people, in an unprecedented effort to curb the spread of the deadly novel coronavirus. The other three cities too have substantial population. From 10 am on Thursday, all public transportation, including city buses, subways, ferries and long-distance coaches in Wuhan were suspended, and outbound channels at airports and railway stations closed until further notice. The city officials have asked people in both the cities not to leave.



Travellers wearing masks enter the arrival area at Beijing Capital International Airport in Beijing on Thursday

Kerala nurse in Saudi infected

New Delhi: An Indian nurse working at a hospital in Saudi Arabia tested positive for the novel coronavirus when she and nearly 100 of her Indian colleagues, mostly from Kerala, were screened, the Government said on Thursday. The affected nurse is being treated at the Aseer National Hospital and is recovering well, Minister of State for External

Affairs V Muralidharan said. In a tweet, he said, "Update from @CGIjeddah: About 100 Indian nurses mostly from Kerala working at Al-Hayat hospital have been tested and none except one nurse was found infected by Corona virus. Affected nurse is being treated at Aseer National Hospital and is recovering well." **Detailed report on P5**

India berates Pak for spewing venom, false narrative on Kashmir

PNS/PTI ■ NEW DELHI/UNITED NATIONS

Brushing aside Prime Minister Imran Khan's plea for global intervention to prevent a showdown between "two nuclear armed" nations, New Delhi on Thursday rejected President Donald Trump's offer of "help" to resolve the matter insisting that Kashmir issue was a bilateral issue. India also asked Pakistan to take verifiable action against terror groups active there and blamed it for "spewing venom and false narratives" in the United Nations, saying it takes to hate speech like 'a fish takes to water' on the Kashmir issue. Addressing the media along with the Pakistan Prime Minister in Davos on Tuesday,

Trump said the US was watching the developments related to Kashmir "very closely" and repeated his offer to "help" resolve the matter. Reacting to Khan's call to the global community, the External Affairs Ministry Spokesman Raveesh Kumar said Pakistan efforts would be better spent in taking verifiable action against terror groups on its territory than trying to "distract" the global community. In an interview on the sidelines of the Davos meet, Imran Khan had urged international powers — including the UN and the US — to help de-escalate tensions between India and Pakistan before things get to a point of no return.



A two-seater aircraft used by the NCC made an emergency landing on the Eastern Peripheral Expressway on Thursday following engine failure, officials said. The incident took place around 1.45 pm on the highway near Sadarpur village, Ghaziabad Senior Superintendent of Police (SSP) Kalandi Naithani said. "The plane had two pilots onboard and both of them are safe," Naithani said. The aircraft made an emergency landing following engine failure, a Directorate General of Civil Aviation official said. (In picture) Security personnel stand beside the two-seater aircraft, which made an emergency landing on the Eastern Peripheral Expressway following engine failure

Nitish dares Pavan Varma to quit party for rebelling against JD(U)-BJP tie-up

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar on Thursday lashed out at party leader and former diplomat Pavan Varma for publicly questioning the JD(U)'s tie-up with the BJP for Delhi Assembly elections and raising his differences with the party over the citizenship issue, saying he was "free to go" wherever he likes as the latter reacted saying he would decide on the next course of action after receiving a reply from Kumar to his letter. The Chief Minister also expressed his strong displeasure and objection over Varma, a national general secretary of the party, sharing on

the social media a letter wherein he had made mention of the Chief Minister having expressed apprehensions "in private" about the BJP's "divisive" agenda. "He is a learned man for whom I have a lot of respect even if he may not have similar sentiments for me. But is it proper to share such things in public and not on a party forum? What if I start sharing what he said to me in public?" Nitish told reporters in Patna. On Varma's repeated demands for "ideological clarity", Nitish said, "The JD(U)'s stand is very clear...He is free to go wherever he likes".

Kejriwal seeks votes for feats, Shah calls him liar number 1

Both campaign in Maitiala Assembly seat

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

With Delhi Assembly elections just 16 days away, ruling Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) and the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) stepped on the gas to woo the voters. Delhi Chief Minister and AAP convener Arvind Kejriwal and Union Home Minister Amit Shah were in Maitiala Assembly constituency on Thursday to drum up support for their candidates. Kejriwal held roadshows in Uttam Nagar and Vikaspuri areas while Shah held roadshows in Uttam Nagar, Palam and Nagloi Jat.



(Above) Union Home Minister Amit Shah and (Below) Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal during their election campaigns in Uttam Nagar in New Delhi on Thursday

couldn't bring a law for Lokpal and when Modi ji brought it you didn't implement it here," he said. For four and a half years the Chief Minister kept saying Prime Minister Narendra Modi did not let him work so development could not be done in Delhi, Shah said.

CAPSULE

DEATH SENTENCE CAN'T REMAIN OPEN-ENDED: SC
New Delhi: The Supreme Court on Thursday said the finality of death sentence is extremely important and a convict should not be under the impression that it remains open-ended, which leads to its questioning.
DELAY IN PROJECTS UNACCEPTABLE: GADKARI
New Delhi: Terming delays in projects as "unacceptable", Highway Minister Nitin Gadkari asked officials and developers to strictly adhere to schedules.
SC: WILL CONSIDER GIVING RAM SETHU HERITAGE TAG
New Delhi: The SC on Thursday said it will consider after three months the plea of BJP leader Subramanian Swamy seeking a direction for declaring 'Ram Sethu' as a heritage monument.

'MP can create new image in data centre biz'

STAFF REPORTER ■ BHOPAL

Madhya Pradesh can create its new image in data centre business. Six hundred ninety acre land is available at nine different places of the State for this business. Up to 75 per cent rebate in the cost for setting up units on Government land can also be given to the interested companies. On the third day of the World Economic Forum Annual Meeting on Thursday, the Chief Minister Kamal Nath held discussions at length with Max Peterson, the Vice President of Amazon Web Service. Peterson informed the Chief Minister that at present, the company is operating at 6 places including New Delhi, Mumbai, Hyderabad, Bengaluru, Pune and Chennai.



Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister with President of World Economic Forum, Bourge Bend, during a meeting in Davos on Thursday

Out of these, the company has data centers in Delhi, Mumbai and Chennai and wishes to start business in Madhya Pradesh. The Chief Minister, Kamal Nath said that all facilities and resources needed for data cen-

The Chief Minister Kamal Nath said all facilities and resources needed for data centre like land, electricity and work force are available in Madhya Pradesh

tre like land, electricity and work force are available in Madhya Pradesh. The Chief Minister also met Bourge Brende, the President of Economic Forum and Malik Mohammad Yunus Ali of Lulu Group.

Youth booked for molesting 16-year-old girl

STAFF REPORTER ■ BHOPAL

The TT Nagar police have booked a youth for molesting and assaulting a 16-year-old girl student in TT Nagar area on Wednesday.

The accused has been identified as Keshav Banwari. At the time of the incident, the victim was on her way to her grandmother's home.

Police said that the accused used to molest the victim frequently and on Wednesday evening, she was stopped and proposed by the accused and when she opposed and started to run, the accused chased her and when locals came to her rescue, he escaped from the spot and threatened her of life.

The victim lodged a complaint with the TT Nagar police against the accused.

Based on the complaint, the police have registered a case under sections 506 and 354 of the IPC and sections of the POCSO Act and have started search for the accused who went absconding after the com-



plaint was lodged.

During the investigation, police found that the accused lives in the same area where the victim lives. After returning to home, the victim informed her parents. Then, they approached the police and an FIR was lodged against the accused.

Meanwhile, Shahjehanabad police have booked a 17-year-old youth for forcing an 8-year-old into begging at Bhopal Talkies area on Wednesday.

Police have registered a case after the victim was found begging at traffic signals. The victim is the younger brother of the accused. The police have registered a case under section 363 A of the IPC and started further investigation.

Nath Govt broadens scope of social security

STAFF REPORTER ■ BHOPAL

The new Government of the State has established the importance of social thinking in politics by prioritising the problems of the common man. Now an atmosphere of sensitivity has been created towards social concerns in the State. The new Government has broadened the scope of social security by understanding the needs of the poor, weak, destitutes, senior citizens and disabled people of the society.

Realising the economic needs of the elderly, welfare and differently-abled people of the State, the Government has doubled the amount of social security pension from ₹300 to ₹600 rupees per month. Similarly, the Government has increased the Government assistance in the Chief Minister's Kanya Vivah / Nikah scheme from ₹28 thousand to ₹51 thousand, while participating in the concern for the expenses incurred in the marriage of daughters. Abolition of income-limit for this subsidy has also been ended.

The new Government of the State has also made the Mukhya Mantri Kanya Vivah /

In the year 2019, ₹190 crore 15 lakh 84 thousand were provided to 37,286 beneficiaries under the Mukhya Mantri Kanya Vivah Yojana. Similarly, 1,605 beneficiaries were benefited under Mukhya Mantri Nikah Yojana

Nikah Yojana girl-friendly. Now out of the total assistance provided for the marriage of girls, ₹48,000 are deposited in her account to set up her house and an amount of ₹3,000 per girl is provided to the authorised body for organising mass marriages. Fund for marriage assistance is also being provided for marriages, whether it is mass or single, conducted under various practices prevalent among the tribes in tribal areas.

In the year 2019, ₹190 crore 15 lakh 84 thousand were provided to 37,286 beneficiaries under the Mukhya Mantri Kanya Vivah Yojana. Similarly, 1,605 beneficiaries were benefited under Mukhya Mantri Nikah Yojana.

The Government has implemented a system of providing funds to 44 lakh 26 thousand 720 beneficiaries of the State directly in their account under various pension schemes.

The scope of social security was expanded to more than four and a half lakh needy in a year. Under the Indira Gandhi National Old Age Pension Scheme, an increased amount was made available to 15 lakh 69 thousand 627 beneficiaries in the last one year. Pension was issued to 5 lakh 36 thousand 412 under Indira Gandhi National Widow Pension Scheme and under Indira Gandhi National Disabled Pension Scheme to 99 thousand 924 beneficiaries. Integrated Social Security Pension is being provided to 20 lakh 91 thousand 573 beneficiaries in the State.

Similarly, under the Mukhya Mantri Kanya Abhibhavak Pension was provided to 55,260 beneficiaries and 73,977 needy were provided pension under the retarded / multiple disability financial assistance scheme.

'Barnam Vana' staged at Bharat Bhavan



A scene from the play 'Barnam Van' staged at Bharat Bhavan in Bhopal on Thursday

Pioneer photo

STAFF REPORTER ■ BHOPAL

Another Shakespeare's tragedy, Barnam Vana, was loved by the theatre lovers of the city. The play was staged at Antarang Hall, Bharat Bhavan, here on Thursday marking the conclusion of Dinman Samaroh.

Barnam Vana is the adaptation of William Shakespeare's Macbeth. The play was translated in Hindi by Raghuvir Sahay and was first directed by BV Karanth. On Thursday, the play was presented by the artists of Roopvani Sanstha and was

directed by Vyomesh Shukla.

Macbeth is a tragedy by William Shakespeare. It is thought to have been first performed in 1606.

It dramatises the damaging physical and psychological effects of political ambition on those who seek power for its own sake.

A brave Scottish general named Macbeth receives a prophecy from a trio of witches that one day he will become King of Scotland. Consumed by ambition and spurred to action by his wife, Macbeth murders King Duncan and takes the

Scottish throne for himself. He is then wracked with guilt and paranoia. Forced to commit more and more murders to protect himself from enmity and suspicion, he soon becomes a tyrannical ruler. The bloodbath and consequent civil war swiftly take Macbeth and Lady Macbeth into the realms of madness and death.

The play was beautifully performed leaving the audience enthralled. The light design and the costumes, stage backdrop added zest in the play. The play was much enjoyed by the theatre lovers of the city.

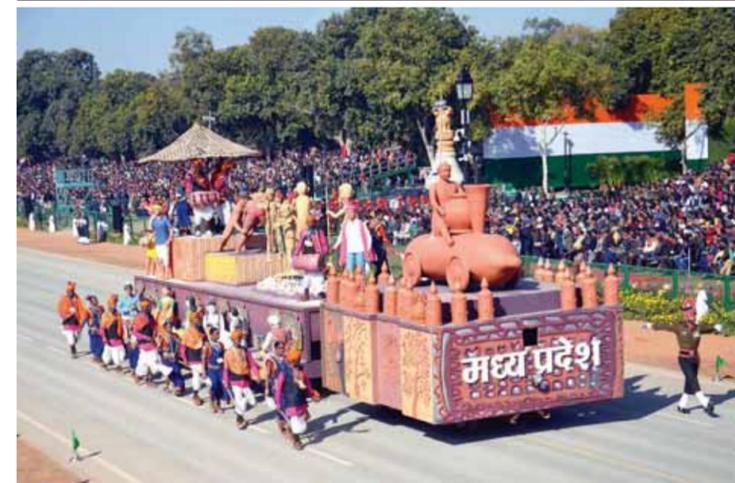


Tableau of Madhya Pradesh on display during full dress rehearsal ahead of Republic Day in New Delhi on Thursday

Pioneer photo

Sanghralaya se Samvaad held at MP State Tribal Museum

STAFF REPORTER ■ BHOPAL

A campaign "Sanghralaya se Samvaad" is being held at Madhya Pradesh State Tribal Museum. The campaign began on November 14 to connect children and young visitors with museums.

Under this series, about 2,000 children of various schools of the State visited Madhya Pradesh Tribal Museum. They witnessed Madhya Pradesh's tribal life, Kalabodh, Devalok, sports galleries and various types of art crafts displayed in the museum.

They also observed with bariki. Along with this, the children praised the paintings made by Bhili painter Sharama Baria under "Shalaka-4" in the museum's exhibition gallery "Likhandra".

Under the same series, about 200 children of Government Subhash Higher Secondary School, Bhopal visited museum on Thursday. The students shared their experience in the Tribal Museum. Khushi Pal, Shruti, Anu, Ankaksha, Prachi, Bhoomi, Udit, students of class 9, told that after visiting the museum, they understood the tribal life and everyone loved the arts composed by them.

Among the students, Vishal Meena, Yash, Sachin

UNDER THE SAME SERIES, ABOUT 200 CHILDREN OF GOVERNMENT SUBHASH HIGHER SECONDARY SCHOOL, BHOPAL VISITED MUSEUM ON THURSDAY. THE STUDENTS SHARED THEIR EXPERIENCE IN THE TRIBAL MUSEUM

Tedela said that they have come to know the rural surroundings and the culture there which is amazing, the houses of the tribes and the arts preserved here are very attractive.

School teacher Gulab Singh said that after the tour the children are also given a competition in the school in which the children share their ideas in writing and oral.

Rashi Raghuvanshi told that she closely teaches children about museum arts so that they can get tribal cultural knowledge.

Man robbed of mobile phone

STAFF REPORTER ■ BHOPAL

A 34-year-old man was robbed of his mobile phone by two bike-borne miscreants at Aishbagh Parisar under Aishbagh police station area in the night of Wednesday.

Police said that the victim, Prashant Singh Tomar, was robbed when he was having a walk after dinner near his house.

The victim, in his complaint, stated that the two miscreants came from behind and escaped with mobile phone over which he was talking.

Based on the complaint and after the preliminary investigation, the police have registered a case under section 392 of the IPC and started search for the accused. The victim is a businessman and operates his



business from New Bhopal area.

Initially, he tried to chase but miscreants managed to escape from the spot. The miscreants targeted the victim at around 10.30 pm.

Victim approached Aishbagh police and lodged a complaint against the bike-

borne miscreants. The habitual criminals of the nearby area would be questioned in the further investigation. Police would search for CCTV cameras installed in the area and nearby areas to search for the bike borne miscreants in captured footages.

'Kahani Subhash Ki' staged at Shaheed Bhavan with elan

STAFF REPORTER ■ BHOPAL

A dance drama 'Kahani Subhash Ki' based on the life of Subhash Chandra Bose was staged at Shaheed Bhavan Auditorium here on Thursday. The dance drama was held to observe the birth anniversary of Subhash Chandra Bose.

Organised by Directorate of Swaraj Sansthan, the dance drama was directed by Vaishali Gupta. The dance drama was brilliantly performed by the artists of Arghya Kal Samiti, Bhopal. The play was performed under Deshraag series.

"Give me blood and I shall give you freedom", the slogan was chanted in the entire hall,

as the artists lyrically performed the biographical drama of Subhash Chandra Bose on stage.

The dance drama was very intelligently directed as Vaishali tried to bring the factual details on stage with the beautiful blend of music, dance and strong dialogues. The play, though showcased the lifespan of Subhash Chandra Bose, it was one of the dance drama so far by Vaishali which was much appreciated by the audience.

Other than the strong performance by the artists, the light design and music played an important role in shaping up the play. The story of the play travels from the time of

college days of Subhash Chandra Bose, where he first began his fight against the British Rule. Beginning, the struggle against the British at college level, he got involved with the freedom struggle lead by Mahatma Gandhi.

The play included all the major incidents where Subhash Chandra Bose began his fight and formed Azaad Hind Fauj. His death is merely doubtful so, the play did not highlight about his death, but the dance drama was ended on a note where audience were forced to think about the sacrifices Bose made.

The dance drama was much enjoyed by the audience.

Two fraudsters nabbed

STAFF REPORTER ■ BHOPAL

Hanumanganj police has nabbed two fraudsters from Qazi Camp area who have financed vehicles using documents of police personnel and recovered three scooters worth ₹2.17 lakh from their possession on Wednesday.

According to the police, acting on a tip-off, four accused were nabbed.

The nabbed accused were identified as Mohammad Khalid (28) of Qazi Camp while the two other booked accused were identified as Riyazuddin (23) of Putlighar, Rahil and Khalid Farqui of

Nariyalkheda who are yet to be arrested.

Based on the complaint police registered a case under sections 403, 419, 420 and 120 B of the IPC. Police found that the accused financed three scooters from different showrooms and finance companies to evade suspicion.

Notably, Santosh Vermo who is posted as police constable in Raisen lost his purse in Raisen market and later he found that scooters have been financed in his name.

After the accused were nabbed they confessed the modus operandi that Rahil used to work as vehicle finance

while Mohammad Khalid after finding documents of Santosh informed Rahil and they used the documents and cheque book of bank account which was not opened and financed three scooters. They introduced Riyazuddin as Santosh.

The three scooters were financed from Samridhi Showroom Itwara, My Bike showroom Koh-e-Fiza and Yash Suzuki Berasia. The three were using the scooters without registration. Rahil helped in facilitating cheque book of Axis bank from Imami Gate branch with the help of Abhisek who is yet to be arrested.

Indian Karting Race 2020: 24 cars make it to next round

STAFF REPORTER ■ BHOPAL

A total of twenty-four cars made it to the next round by going through the dynamic round on the third day of the Indian Karting Race 2020.

The Indian Karting Race 2020 is organised in collaboration with the Radharaman Group and the Imperial Society of Innovative Engineers at the Radharaman Group campus.

During the race, acceleration and brake tests were prominent in this round. For these rounds, experts from other companies including Mahindra and Mahindra, TVS and Bosh were present as judges. In this process which lasted all day, the participants were seen totally enthusiastic.

Marking the third day on Thursday, the contestants once

again rejoined their cars, who were advised to make amends due to deficiencies in yesterday's round.

Notably, on the fourth day of the competition there will be another dynamic round in which all the cars will be tested. After this, all the cars selected on January 25 will race for the championship in the final round.

It is to be noted that all the karting race cars are designed by the students. Besides, more than 50 teams from different engineering colleges located in 19 states are participating in this competition organized to promote eco-friendly technology.

Moreover, representatives from Mahindra and Mahindra, TVS, Basch, Reno, Ashok Leyland, Hero and Tech Imperial are playing expert roles as judges for the selection of the winners.

Man dies under mysterious circumstances

STAFF REPORTER ■ BHOPAL

A 42-year-old man was found dead under suspicious circumstances at Piparia village under Misrod police station area. The man went missing on Tuesday night after he had left for his brother-in-law's house in Piparia village.

According to the police, the deceased, Fundilal, was found in bushes at farms of Vikram Singh in Piparia village.

Police found that Fundilal had earlier visited brother-in-law's house on January 19 with his wife and they left the house after having dinner. Later in the evening on Tuesday, Fundilal left house for brother-in-law's house and found dead on Wednesday.

The body was sent to the post mortem after the preliminary investigation. The police have registered a case under section 174 of the CrPC and have started further investigation.

समस्त देशवासियों को नव वर्ष
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IN BRIEF

RAJ BHAVAN WILL REMAIN OPEN FROM JAN 24 TO 26
Bhopal: Governor Lajji Tandon directed to keep the Raj Bhavan open for General Public on the occasion of Republic Day from January 24 to 26. As per the instructions, the Raj Bhavan will remain open for general public on the above mentioned dates from 6 pm to 10 pm. General public can visit Raj Bhavan to see magnificent lighting. A photo exhibition will also be organised on this occasion.

STATE'S POWER GENERATION CAPACITY INCREASED
Bhopal: Energy Minister Priyavrat Singh has informed that the State's 1,731 MW power generation capacity has been increased in one year. During this period, 11 new ultra high power sub centres have been established and capacity of 3,212 MBA ultra high power transformers have been increased. Singh informed that 2237 circuit kilometers of very high pressure lines have been laid in the last one year. In addition to this, 202 sub-stations of 33/11 KV, 433 power transformers and one lakh 5 thousand 540 distribution transformers have been established. He informed that 2138 km 33 KV lines, 46030 km 11 KV lines, 21627 km low pressure lines have also been laid during this period.

PREZ HONOURS TWO GIRLS OF STATE
Bhopal: President Ramnath Kovind has honoured two girls of the State, Riya Jain and Sudeepti Hajela with Pradhan Mantri Rashtriya Bal Puraskar-2020 at a programme held at Rashtrapati Bhavan. Riya Jain of Bhopal has been honoured for her outstanding work in the field of art and culture. She has exhibited outstanding talent at the national and international level in the field of painting. Similarly, in the field of sports, Sudeepti Hazela of Indore has been honoured for her outstanding performance in the equestrian sports. She has mastery in the toughest category of equestrian. It may be mentioned that the above said awards are given to children aged 5 to 18 years in various fields for their special talent. Awards carry medal, letter of appreciation, certificate and reward of ₹1 lakh.

DHANPRASAD AHIRWAR'S DEMISE CONDOLED
Bhopal: New and Renewable Energy Minister Harsh Yadav has expressed deep grief over the demise of Dhanprasad Ahirwar, a resident of Sagar. Yadav has also sanctioned ₹60,000 from voluntary grant to the family of Ahirwar. Financial assistance has been granted by the Government to the bereaved family before also. Minister Harsh Yadav said that the demise of Dhanprasad is unfortunate. He was sent to New Delhi for best treatment. Arrangements were made to provide the best treatment to the victim. Yadav said that the State Government stands with the victim's family.

SAINIK KALYAN BOARD'S ASST DIR'S CONTRACTUAL APPOINTMENT TERMINATED
Bhopal: Contractual appointment of Col (Retd) Ashvini Kumar, working as the Assistant Director at Directorate of Sainik Kalyan Board has been terminated, owing to the financial irregularities during his tenure. A show cause notice pertaining to the irregularities was issued to the Col Ashvini Kumar. Reply submitted by him was not found satisfactory. The deeds of Ashvini Kumar have been considered as the violation of Madhya Pradesh Civil Service Conduct Rules. Owing to the serious financial irregularities, his contractual appointment has been terminated with immediate effect, as the appointment rules of one month advance notice and conditions related to payment of salary are not applicable in this case. There is an allegation of financial embezzlement and transfer of large amount to private bank accounts. It has been decided by the Government to investigate the entire matter by forming a Special Investigation Team under the Department of Crime Research (CID).

CENTRE RELEASES FUND FOR FLOOD-HIT PEOPLE
Bhopal: Union Government has released an amount of ₹13 crore 43 lakh 50 thousand to provide relief assistance to the families of deceased and seriously injured persons, who fell victim to floods and excessive rainfall in the State. This amount has been transferred by the Prime Minister's Office in the accounts of the Chief Executive Officers of 43 districts excluding Shajapur, Datia, Sheopur, Bhand, Sidhi, Singrauli, Chhatrapur, Shahdol and Bhopal. The District wise information pertaining to loss of life and property in 43 flood and excessive rainfall affected districts was sent by the State Government to the Union Government. An additional ex-gratia amount of ₹2 lakh for deceased and ₹50,000 for seriously injured persons have been sanctioned by the Union Government. A compensation amount of ₹84 lakh has been given to each of the most flood affected Mandusar and Chhindwara districts in the state. Similarly, an amount of ₹4 lakh has been given to each district of Satna, Damoh, Tikamgarh and Balaghat as lowest loss has been assessed in these districts.

Young girl commits suicide

Bhopal: An 18-year-old married girl committed suicide under Piplani police station area on Thursday. The deceased, identified as Anam Qureshi, was found hanging with the ceiling at her house and was declared dead when taken to hospital. The police have registered a case under section 174 of the CrPC and started further investigation. Reason behind the suicide remained unknown and would be investigated. SR

'Nath's Govt has brought lawlessness across State'

STAFF REPORTER ■ BHOPAL

BJP's State Vice President Vijesh Lunawat has alleged that the Congress Government of Chief Minister Kamal Nath in the State has created atmosphere of lawlessness across the State as in the name of mafia and encroachments poor people of the State and BJP party workers are targeted and encroachment by Congressmen remained untouched. While talking to media persons here on Thursday, Lunawat has warned that BJP would organise Statewide protest against the discrimi-

nation in which every BJP party worker would gherao district collector office on January 24. He said that allegations raised by BJP are not baseless as CM Kamal Nath and note sheet by Chief Secretary is proof of support. The CM has accepted that during the anti encroachment drive against mafia people of the state faced problems and had written that for building permission like small things thousands of notices have been issued. Police and administration are involved while in the orders it was clearly mentioned that action should be taken on mafia and not on people of the state.

In the State complete lawlessness is prevalent as illegal liquor, mining mafia and transport mafia is active still no action is taken against them. The Congressmen in collusion with officials are encroaching government lands, alleged Lunawat. The list of mafia prepared by government should be made public and if failing to provide the list BJP would provide list to the CM. The BJP state president Rakesh Singh would lead in Indore, former CM Shivraj Singh Chouhan and Bhopal MP Pragy Singh Thakur would lead protest in Bhopal.



Lightings nearby Raj Bhawan ahead of Republic Day celebrations in Bhopal on Thursday Pioneer photo

Residents crave for better basic amenities

SHEKHAR SINGH ■ NEW DELHI

The Aam Aadmi Party's (AAP) promises to install CCTVs and free WiFi in Delhi, has failed to cut ice with the residents of

Chhatrapur Assembly constituency, which was formed in 2008. Besides the swanky farmhouses and the posh South Delhi localities that surround the area, people in this constituency crave for better roads, sewerage, water and

electricity supply and decongestion. Prior to 2008, it was part of the Mehrauli Assembly constituency. It comprises largely of rural populace and immigrants living in unauthorised colonies.



Artists from Chhindwara perform at a cultural programme "Umang" during HIV/AIDS awareness programme under National Youth Day fortnight celebrations by Nehru Yuva Kendra Sangathan, at State Assembly auditorium in Bhopal on Thursday Pioneer photo

AAP's 'kaam ki chai' to highlight Govt dev projects

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) launched a "unique" campaign "Kaam ki Chai" in which tea with different names after the projects undertaken by the AAP Government would be sold. The party's election in-charge for Delhi and Rajya Sabha MP Sanjay Singh inaugurated the tea stall.

Ahmedabad-based Praful Billore, who is popularly known as 'MBA Chaiwala', opened a tea stall at the AAP headquarters in Delhi on Thursday

Billor contacted the Delhi Chief Minister directly and offered to spread through the tea stall concept information about the work done by the Kejriwal Government. From 'shiksha wali chai' to 'swasthya wali chai' and 'vikas wali chai', varieties of tea named after the different achievements of the AAP-led Delhi Government will now be served at tea stalls. Billor said he is not associated with any political party but doesn't hesitate to appreciate anyone doing good work.

ing a huge banner that highlights the work done by the Arvind Kejriwal Government, doubles up as a mode of publicity. Party functionaries said

Aadhar Housing Finance Ltd.
 Corporate Office: 201, Raheja Point-1, Near Shamrao Vitthal Bank, Nehru Road, Vakola Santacruz (E), Mumbai-400055
 Bhopal Branch : 2Nd Floor, Alankar Complex, Plot No.-10 & 11, Mp Nagar Zone-II Bhopal - 462001 (Madhya Pradesh)

APPENDIX IV POSSESSION NOTICE (for immovable property)

Whereas, the undersigned being the Authorized Officer of **Aadhar Housing Finance Limited (AHFL)** under the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act 2002 and in exercise of powers conferred under section 13(12) read with Rule 3 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules 2002, Demand Notice(s) issued by the Authorised Officer of the company to the Borrower(s) / Guarantor(s) mentioned herein below to repay the amount mentioned in the notice within 60 days from the date of receipt of the said notice. The borrower having failed to repay the amount, notice is hereby given to the Borrower(s) / Guarantor(s) and the public in general that the undersigned has taken possession of the property described herein below in exercise of powers conferred on him under Sub-Section (4) of the Section 13 of the said Act read with Rule 8 of the Security Interest Enforcement rules, 2002. The borrower's attention is invited to provisions of sub section (8) of section 13 of the Act, in respect of time available, to redeem the secured assets. The borrower in particular and the public in general are hereby cautioned not to deal with the property and any dealings with the property will be subject to the charge of AHFL for an amount as mentioned herein under with interest thereon.

S. No.	Name of the Borrower(s)/ Co-Borrower(s) (Name of the Branch)	Description of Secured Asset (Immovable Property)	Demand Notice Date & Amount	Date of Possession
1.	(App No. 00092838/ Bhopal Branch) Himmat Singh Varma (Borrower), Lalata Bai (Co-Borrower)	All that part & parcel of property bearing, House No. 64, Ward No. 14, Brindavan Colony, Near Shining School, Patandev Raisen, Raisen, M.P.-464551. Boundaries: East: Remaining Plot No. 65 of Seller, West: Plot No. 63, North: Other Plot, South: Colony Road	12-10-2017 ₹ 7,42,267/- Rs. Seven Lakh Forty Two Thousand Two Hundred Sixty Seven Only.	22.01.2020

Place : Bhopal Date : 24.01.2020
 Authorised Officer Aadhar Housing Finance Limited

AXIS BANK LTD.
 Registered Office : "Trishul", Opp. Samartheswar Temple, Law Garden Ellisbridge, Ahmedabad - 380006, Gujarat
 Retail Asset Centre : Plot No. 77, Prashanti Tower, Zone II, M.P. Nagar, Bhopal, Madhya Pradesh

POSSESSION NOTICE For Immovable Property (As per Appendix IV read with rule 8(1) of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002)

Whereas, the undersigned being the Authorised Officer of the **Axis Bank Ltd.** under the Securitization and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 and in exercise of powers conferred under section 13(2) read with rule 9 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002 issued a demand notice calling upon the borrowers/s/guarantors to repay the amount mentioned in the notice along with contractual rate of interest plus penal interest, charges, costs etc. within 60 days from the date of the said notice. The borrower/guarantor, having failed to repay the amount, notice is hereby given to the borrower, in particular and the public, in general, that the undersigned has taken possession of the property described herein below in exercise of powers conferred on him under section 13(4) of the said Act read with rule 9 of the said Rules on the date mentioned herein after. The borrower/guarantor, in particular, and the public, in general, are hereby cautioned not to deal with the property and any dealings with the property will be subject to the charge of the Axis Bank Ltd., for an amount mentioned in the notice along with interest thereon and penal interest, charges, costs etc. from date of demand notice.

Sr. No.	Name of Borrowers/ Guarantor/ Partner	Amount Due as of Notice date	Demand Notice Dt. Possession Date	Description of Property
1.	Mr. Ravi Rahul & Mrs. Rani Rahul	₹ 23,10,953/- as on 19.10.2019	29.10.2019 18.01.2020	All That Piece And Parcel Of The Property In The Name Of Mr. Ravi Rahul S/o Mr. Dayaram Rahul Of House No. A-73, Ward No.39, Shri Balaji Puram, Tilakhedi, Tehsil & Dist-vidisha (M.P) Admeasuring Area 880 Sq. Ft. (81.68 Sq.mt) Constructed Ground Floor 72.69 Sq. Mt Constructed First Floor 34.69 Sq. Mt, Boundaries: East : House No. A-72, West : House No. A-74, North : Road, South: Boundrywall
2.	Mr. Sunil Tripathi, Mrs. Urmila Tripathi & Mr. Santosh Tripathi	₹ 24,17,646/- as on 23.11.2018	26.11.2018 22.01.2020	All That Piece And Parcel Of The Property In The Name Of Mr. Santosh Tripathi S/o. Shri M.P. Tripathi And Mrs. Urmila Tripathi W/o Shri Santosh Tripathi Of Purchase Plot No. A-86, "Exotica Villas", Situated At Suvdih Vihar, Village Gondarnau, Municipal Ward No. 01, Teh. Huzur, Dist. Bhopal (M.P.) Land Admeasuring 1350 Sq. Ft., Boundaries: East : Plot No. A-85, West : Road, North : Plot No. A-87, South : Road
3.	Mrs. Nilam Sharma & Mr. Pankaj Sharma	₹ 15,97,127/- as on 19.10.2019	29.10.2019 21.01.2020	All That Piece And Parcel Of The Property In The Name Of Mrs. Nilam Sharma W/o. Shri Pankaj Sharma, One Residential Duplex No. 134, Part Of Kharsa No. 133, 136/1, 134/2/1/2, 134/2/2/2, 173/2/1, 173/2/2, 173/1/2 & 179/2/4, P. H. No 04, "Bhavya City", Mandideep Nagar Palika, Ward No. 26, Village Sarakiva, Tehsil Goharganj, Distt Raisen (M.P.) Land Admeasuring 540 Sq. Ft (50.18 Sq.mt.) Constructed Ground Floor 50.18 Sq.mt And Constructed First Floor 50.18 Sq.mt, Boundaries: East : Road, West: Plot No. 127, North: Plot No. 133, South: Plot No. 135.
4.	Mrs. Nilam Sharma & Mr. Pankaj Sharma	₹ 17,45,799/- as on 19.10.2019	29.10.2019 21.01.2020	All That Piece And Parcel Of The Property In The Name Of Mrs. Nilam Sharma W/o. Shri Pankaj Sharma, One Residential Flat No. T-01 2 BHK, Third Floor, Part of Kharsa No. 221/2/1 & 221/2/2, Plot No. 49, Sector-A, "vansh Tower", Natraj Grah Nirman Sahkari Samiti Maryadit, P. H. No 26/42, Nagar Nigam Ward No. 84, Tehsil Huzur, Distt Bhopal (M.P.) Land Admeasuring 756.78 Sq. Ft (70.33 Sq.mt.), Boundaries: East :Service Road Of Colony, West:Flat No. T-07, North : Jeena, South:Service Road of Colony.

Date : 24.01.2020 Place : Bhopal
 (Authorized Officer) Axis Bank Ltd.

RELIANCE HOME FINANCE
 Branch Office: Reliance Home Finance Ltd., 103/104 Capt C.S. Naidu Arcade, Old Palasia Near Greater Kailash Hospital Indore-452010, Branch Office: Reliance Home Finance Ltd., FF-16, Mansarovar Complex, 2nd Floor, Block-C, Near RTO Office, Bhopal-462016 Corporate & Registered Office:- Reliance Centre, 6th Floor, South Wing, Near Prabhat Colony, Santacruz (East), Mumbai - 400055

DEMAND NOTICE

Whereas the borrowers/co-borrowers/mortgagors mentioned hereunder had availed the financial assistance from Reliance Home Finance Ltd. We state that despite having availed the financial assistance, the borrowers/guarantors/mortgagors have committed various defaults in repayment of interest and principal amounts as per due dates. The account has been classified as Non Performing Asset on the respective dates mentioned hereunder, in the books of RHF in accordance with the directives relating to asset classification issued by the National Housing Bank, consequent to the Authorized Officer of Reliance Home Finance Ltd. under Securitization and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 & in exercise of powers conferred under Section 13(12) read with Rule 3 of Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002 issued Demand Notices on respective dates mentioned herein below under Section 13(2) of SARFAESI Act, 2002 calling upon the following borrowers /guarantors /mortgagors to repay the amount mentioned in the notices together with further interest on the contractual rate on the amount mentioned in the notices and incidental expenses, cost, charges etc until the date of payment within 60 days from the date of receipt of notices. The notices issued to them on their last known addresses have returned un-served and as such they are hereby informed by way of public notice about the same.

LAN	Name of Borrower/ Co-Borrower/ Guarantor	Address of Borrower/ Co-Borrower/ Guarantor	NPA Date	Date of Demand Notice	Outstanding Amount As per 13 (2) Notice	Property Address of Secured Assets
1	RHATND 000053293 & RHAHND 000051075	Imran Mohammad / Aaliya Khan Plot No 1166 Vishwas Nagar Colony Gram Pan Gram Banjari Teh Mhow Indore Madhya Pradesh	11th DEC., 2019	16th DEC., 2019	13,08,525/-	All that piece and parcel of immovable property of Plot NO. 1166, VISHWAS NAGAR COLONY" Village Banjari, Tehsil Mhow, Indore measuring 450 sq.ft.
2	RHAHND 000065902	Kalu Marmat / Hemlata Marmat / Rajesh Narwariya B 128 Anju Shri Colony Max Marg Ujain Madhya Pradesh	11th DEC., 2019	16th DEC., 2019	7,70,287/-	All that piece and parcel of immovable property of Plot No. 10, Total Area 36-00 sq.mt. situated at "RAJ ROYAL ENCLAVE" Village Ujain Tehsil & District Ujain
3	RHLPBH 0000035156	Prashant Bijwe / Bhaskar Rao Bijwe / Sayli Kapile 38 Betava Apartment Roshanpura Teh Huzur Infront of Roshanpura Bhopal Madhya Pradesh	16th DEC., 2019	16th DEC., 2019	25,53,152/-	All that piece and parcel of immovable property of One leasehold Plot NO. B-177 together with a house constructed thereon comprising of plot area 95.62 sq.mtr. Or 1028.87 sq.ft. situated at Schema of the indra complex, circle no. Bhopal Division NO. II, Tehsil & District Vidisha, which is bounded in East by Gali, in West By Plot no. 178, in North By W.B.M road of bus stand in south by asphalted Road,
4	RHAHND 000060127	Kishan Sen / Shubham Sen / Kiran Sen / Anokhilal Sen Ward No 14/P2 51 Jay Nagar Saket Nagar Pithampur S O Dhar Pithampur Madhya Pradesh	11th DEC., 2019	16th DEC., 2019	6,44,746/-	All that piece and parcel of immovable property of Western Part (Corner) of Colony No. 139 - A, Jainagar Colony, Sector - Q - 4,Pithampur, Dhar Measuring 500 sq.ft.
5	RHAHBH 0000028683	Ram Pyari Soni / Neelesh Kumar Soni Flat No 511 Type 2 Bhk, Fifth Floor Block B Swastik Paras Enclave Village Jatkhedhi Bhopal Madhya Pradesh	16th DEC., 2019	20th DEC., 2019	12,30,329/-	All that piece and parcel of immovable property of One Flat NO. 511, Type 2 BHK on Fifth Floor of Block no B, comprising of an area 72.58 sq.mtrs. Or 781.00 sq.ft. which is a part of land of revenue survey no 14711 & 14713, Situated at Swastik Paras Enclave, Situated at Village Jatkhedhi P.H.No. 42/50, Tehsil Huzur, District Bhopal.
6	RHAHBH 0000045007	Ravindra Kumar / Rani Pathror 4A-H No 112 Bda Colony Saket Nagar Huzur H.E. Hospital Bhopal Madhya Pradesh	11th DEC., 2019	16th DEC., 2019	12,41,871/-	All that piece and parcel of immovable property of One Residential Plot NO.73, comprising of area 600 sq.ft. which is part of revenue survey No. 371/1/1, 371/1/1/4, (old NO. 371/K, 371/GH) Situated at Rohitas Nagar, Village Khajuri Katan, Tehsil Huzur, District Bhopal (M.P.) Which is bounded in East By Road, in West by Plot no. 78, in North by Plot no. 72 and South By Plot no 74
7	RHAHBH 0000028811	Vikas Mishra / Pratima Mani / Ashok Kumar Sharma / Ashwini Kumar Mishra / Aakar Builder And Developers H N 125 Shubhalaya Parisar Near Radhapuram Hoshangabad Road Bhopal Madhya Pradesh	16th DEC., 2019	20th DEC., 2019	15,91,391/-	All that piece and parcel of immovable property of One Residential House NO. 125 (Corner) comprising area 558 sq.ft. which is part of revenue survey No. 75/2/2 situated at (Paris Gnh Niman Sah. Samiti mydt) Village Shubhalaya Parisar ,Samaraha Kalliasot Tehsil Huzur, District Bhopal (M.P.)
8	RHAHND 000065321	Yogesh Lalawat / Sunita Lalawat / Basantilal Lalawat / Mahesh Sharma 67 Gopal Pura Maxi Road Ujain Madhya Pradesh	11th DEC., 2019	16th DEC., 2019	7,52,180/-	All that piece and parcel of immovable property of Plot NO. 29 E.W.S. Block no 10, Total Area 36-00 sq.mt. situated at "RAJ ROYAL ENCLAVE" Village Ujain Tehsil & district Ujain

In the circumstances as aforesaid, the notice is hereby given to the above borrowers, co-borrowers and/or their guarantors (where ever applicable) to pay the outstanding dues as mentioned above along with future interest and applicable charges within 60 days from the date of the publication of this notice failing which further steps will be taken after the expiry of 60 days of the date of this notice against the secured assets including taking possession of the secured assets of the borrowers and the mortgagors under Section 13(4) of Securitisation and Re-construction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 and the applicable rules thereunder. Please note that under Section 13 (13) of the said Act, no Borrower shall, transfer by way of sale, lease or otherwise any of his secured assets referred to in the notice, without prior written consent of the secured creditor.

Place: Bhopal/ Indore Date: 24-01-2020
 (Gyanendra Kumar Jha), Authorized Officer, Reliance Home Finance Limited

पावरग्रिड POWERGRID

1. Misc. Petition for Approval under sub-section(4) of Section 28 of Electricity Act 2003 for determination of: (i) Truing up of Charges for the period 2014-19 block. (ii) Fees and Charges for the period 2019-24 block for Unified Load Despatch & Communication Scheme (POWERGRID portion i.e. Communication system portion and SLDC system retained by the petitioner after formation of POSOCO) in Western Region

2. The beneficiaries of the above mentioned Transmission system are: (a)NTPC (b)NTPC-Vindhyachal (c)NTPC-Korba (d)NTPC-Kavas (e)NTPC-Gandhar (f) NTPC-Sipat (g)NPCIL (h)NPCIL- Kakrapar (i)NPCIL- Tarapur (j) Narmada Control Authority (k) Jindal Power Limited (l) CSPDCL (m) Lanco Power Limited (n) GUVNL (o) MSEDC (p) MP Power Trading Company Limited (q) Goa Electricity Department (r) Electricity Department, Union Territory of Daman and Diu (s) Secretariat, Electricity Department Dadar Nagar Havelli (t) Western Region Transmission (Maharashtra) Pvt. Ltd. (u) Western Region Transmission (Gujarat) Pvt. Ltd.

3. Tariff details:
 a. Revised Fees and Charges for 2014-19 Block: (Rs. in Lakh)

Petition details	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19
Petition-1					
Non-Microwave Portion					
Central Portion	1076.81	1046.11	1066.47	1145.64	1212.93
State SCADA Portion	831.34	831.99	416.53	-	-
Balance State Portion	370.33	371.32	374.95	376.83	379.80

b. Fees and Charges for 2019-24 Block:

Petition details	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
Petition1					
Central Portion	1042.00	896.13	166.54	166.54	166.53
State Portion	376.78	313.99	-	-	-

4. A copy of the application made for determination of tariff is posted on the website of the applicant at www.powergridindia.com

5. The suggestions and objections, if any, on the proposals for determination of tariff contained in the application be filed by any person, including the beneficiary before the Secretary, Central Electricity Regulatory Commission, 3 & 4th floor, Chandralok Building, Janpath, New Delhi - 110 001 (or other address where the office of the Commission is situated), with a copy to the applicant at the address of its corporate office within 30 days of publication of this notice.

Place: Gurugram Date: 17.01.2020
 Sd/- Dy. General Manager (Commercial)

POWER GRID CORPORATION OF INDIA LIMITED
 (A Government of India Enterprise)
 Corp. Office: "Saudamini", Plot No. 2, Sector-29, Gurugram-120001, (Haryana) Tel.: 0124-2571700-719
 Reg. Office: B-9, Qutub Institutional Area, Kirti Khera, New Delhi-110016, Tel.: 011-26560112, 26560121
 www.powergridindia.com. CIN : L40101DL1989G0308121
 A Maharatna PSU

E-Rickshaw welfare society protests against ban

PNS ■ DEHRADUN

The members of Devbhoomi E-Rickshaw Welfare Society held a protest on Thursday against a ban imposed on the operation of e-rickshaws on the main roads of the city.

Alleging unfair treatment and harassment, they are planning to rally to the Chief Minister's residence on Monday and escalate their protest further if nothing is done to address their grievance. According to district pres-



Members of the society, Ravindra Tyagi. "The authorities are saying that e-rickshaws cause traffic jam on the roads."

There are only 2600 registered e-rickshaws that run in the city.

On the other hand, only 795 three-wheelers (Vikrams) are registered but around 5000 are running on the roads.

Netaji statue at Joda lies neglected

Civic body callous

year but in vain. When contacted, Joda

PNS ■ CHAMPUA

January 23 being the birth anniversary of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose, programmes will be held at different places as mark of respect to the great freedom fighter.

But if one looks at the statue of the Netaji in the premises of the Hindi High School near the Old Municipality gate at Joda, the situation is deplorable. The statue has been lying neglected and standing in a broken condition for years together.

It was hoped that the authorities would rise to the occasion and bring the statue to good shape before the leader's birth anniversary this



Municipality Executive Officer Suryamani Patjoshi assured that steps would be taken immediately for restoration of the statue.

Cabinet expansion deferred due to Chaibasa massacre

PNS ■ RANCHI

Confusion still prevails over the Cabinet expansion of the Hemant Soren Government. On Thursday speculation were rife after Chief Minister visited Raj Bhawan in the morning. It was also speculated that the CM had submitted the list of lawmakers, who will be inducted in Cabinet, however, in the evening Chief Minister again visited Raj Bhawan urging the Governor to defer the date of Cabinet expansion.

By afternoon MLAs from both Congress and JMM camp said that Soren Government's first Cabinet expansion will take place on Friday. Congress MLA from Lohardaga and Minister in Soren's Cabinet Rameshwar Oroan said, "Even we had the idea that Soren's first Cabinet expansion will take place on Friday."

The Soren Government decided to defer the date for



Governor Droupadi Murmu and Chief Minister Hemant Soren during a meeting at Raj Bhawan in Ranchi on Thursday. Pioneer photo

Cabinet expansion as State has witnessed two back to back incidents at Chaibasa and Lohardaga. Hemant Soren said, "As the State has wit-

nessed shocking incident at Chaibasa, in which seven innocent people were killed, we had decided to defer the oath ceremony as this is not

the time for celebration."

Seven villagers were killed in the jungles of Burugeliker village of West Singhbhum district, by the Pathalgadhi sup-

porters. The incident came to light when the seven villagers who had opposed to Pathalgadhi movement went missing from the village.

Also on Thursday violence broke out in Lohardaga after pro CAA March was attacked by anti-social elements. After the incident, violence broke out in the area in which half a dozen people including police personnel were injured.

Friday was said to first Cabinet expansion of Soren government after he took oath as 11th Chief Minister of State on December 29.

Three MLAs including two from Congress (Alamgir Alam and Rameshwar Oroan) and one RJD MLA Satyanand Bhokta took oath along with Soren at the function held at historic Morhabadi ground. Sources said that on Friday eight MLAs will take oath which includes five from JMM quota and three from Congress were to take oath.

From Congress camp, names of Bermo MLA and trade union leader Rajendra Prasad Singh, first time MLA from Mahagama Deepika Pandey Singh who was also in Rahul Gandhi team holding the post of national general secretary in Youth Congress and Congress in-charge of North East. The name of Jamshepur West MLA Banna Gupta and first time Congress MLA from Ramgarh Mamata Devi was doing rounds.

However, sources said that the Soren government decided to defer the Cabinet expansion as both the parties have not reached a consensus on number of ministerial berths both the parties will get and probable faces in new Cabinet.

Sources said that on Thursday evening State Congress in-charge RPN Singh met Congress president Sonia Gandhi to finalize the names of ministers from Congress camp.

BJP attacks Soren Govt on law and order

PNS ■ RANCHI

The BJP on Thursday attacked the Hemant Soren Government on the law and order situation in State. Union Tribal Affairs minister, Arjun Munda attacking Soren Government over Chaibasa and Lohardaga incident said that law and order comes under State Government and it is duty of State Government to check such incidents.

Munda was talking to media persons on the sidelines of a function organized by Vikas Bharti on agriculture and livelihood marking the birth anniversary of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose in State Capital. On the media query that police have recovered the bodies of seven villagers who were in West Singhbhum district for allegedly opposing Pathalgadhi, Munda said, "It is duty of State Government to maintain law and order in State. If the State Government needs any help and assistance from Centre the Union Government is always ready to help."



Union Minister for Tribal Affairs Arjun Munda, secretary Vikash Bharti, Ashok Bhagat and others release brochures during a programme in Ranchi on Thursday. Ratan Lal | Pioneer Photo

Munda said that the police are investigating the case and exact reason behind the Chaibasa incident can be known after investigation is complete. However, police have said that all seven kidnapped people including a deputy mukhiya have been allegedly killed by pro-Pathalgadhi supporters in West Singhbhum district.

These people were allegedly kidnapped by pro-Pathalgadhi supporters for staging protest against Pathalgadhi movement. On the issue of Lohardaga incident Munda said, "The incident is unfortunate, police should deal strictly with people indulging in such type of incidents. It is duty of State Government to maintain law and

order." Stones were hurled at a rally taken out in support of the Citizenship Amendment Act in Lohardaga district on Thursday, sparking tensions in the area. After the stone pelting there was large scale violence in the area with protestors targeting police van, shops and business establishments.

Reacting strongly to the violent incident that took place in Lohardaga, State BJP president Laxman Gilua said that incident of sponsored stone pelting, arson and violence on peaceful procession in support of CAA in Lohardaga today is condemnable.

Gilua said that incident of sponsored stone pelting, arson and violence on peaceful procession in support of CAA in Lohardaga today is condemnable. The procession was taken out peacefully by the route set by the administration, which included thousands of men and women. Gilua also attacked State Government for poor law and order situation in State.

He said, "On one hand there is genocide of tribals, violence is being

done in a peaceful procession, it is not a good sign for state as there is serious administrative lapses on both the incidents." Gilua said, "If such type of incidents are not checked that the BJP will not sit silent. We will not allow the state to become anarchic under any circumstances."

The State BJP has strongly condemned violence in Lohardaga and termed it as State Government and local administration failure. BJP state spokesperson Pratul Shahdeo said that people were taking out a peaceful march supporting Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA) in town when they were attacked by anti-social elements with petrol bombs and stones.

The protestors attacked the mob with swords and poles. Shahdeo said that the manner in which the peacefully protesting procession was attacked seems to be part of a larger conspiracy. The BJP spokesperson claimed that law and order situation in state has worsened after new government formation.

Extremist carrying ₹5L reward surrenders

PNS ■ RANCHI

An extremist carrying reward of ₹5 Lakh Vasudev Ganjhu alias Gopal Ganjhu surrendered with arms on Thursday in the State Capital.

Ganjhu belongs to Tritiya Prastuti Committee (TPC) and was working as Sub-Zonal Area Commander of the organisation. He surrendered in Ranchi before Ranchi Senior Superintendent of Police (SSP), Anish Gupta.

Addressing a press meet Ranchi SSP, Gupta said that there were a total of 29 cases registered in Latehar District against him. Ganjhu was formerly associated with the Communist Party of India (Maoist) from 2003 to 2013 and was working as Area Commander after that he joined TPC in 2013, he added.

During his surrender, the District Police also handed Ganjhu a check of Rs five lakh under the surrender policy of the



TPC Sub-Zonal Commander Gopal Ganjhu surrendering with arms in front of Ranchi SSP Anish Gupta and senior officials during operation 'Nai Disha' at Collectorate in Ranchi on Thursday. Vinay Murmu | Pioneer Photo

State Government, said Gupta.

Speaking on the occasion the SSP said that Ganjhu was involved in various cases of crime under various Police Stations such

as Latehar Police Station, Chandawa Police Station, Balumath Police Station, Herhanj Police Station, Manika Police Station and Barwadhi Police Station.

Cong, SAD, BJP, AAP join hands to save Punjab waters

PNS ■ CHANDIGARH

Transcending political barriers, Punjab's all prominent parties — Congress, Shiromani Akali Dal (SAD), Bharatiya Janta Party (BJP), Aam Aadmi Party (AAP), besides others — come together on one platform on Thursday with the sole aim of saving Punjab waters.

During the all-party meeting convened by the Chief Minister Capt Amarinder Singh, all political fronts unanimously demanded reassessment of the state's water availability and resolved that the Centre should ensure that Punjab's river water is not in any way transferred from basin to non-basin areas of the state's three rivers.

Expressing concern over the state's critical water situation, all parties also unanimously demanded suitable amendments to the proposed Inter-State River Water Disputes Act to set up a new tribunal, besides ensuring that Punjab gets adequate water "in a just and equitable manner in keeping with its total demand and securing livelihood of the future generations."

"Punjab does not have surplus water and is facing a threat of desertification with declining availability of its river water and fast depleting groundwater. The state's groundwater that meets 73 percent of its irrigation requirements, has declined to alarming levels, threatening the livelihood of farmers," the resolution read.

It added, "In such a situation, it is unanimously resolved that the Government of India should ensure that Punjab river water is not in any way transferred from basin to non-basin areas of the Ravi, Sutlej and Beas as per the internationally accepted riparian principle.

Further, alternatives should be ascertained, including amendments to the proposed Inter State River Water Disputes Act to set up a new tribunal for a complete assessment of availability of river waters before the decision, to harness, develop and provide adequate water to Punjab in a just and equitable manner in keeping with its

total demand and securing livelihood of the future generations."

The resolution was moved by Water Resources Minister Sukhbinder Singh Sarkaria at an all-party meeting convened by the Chief Minister Capt Amarinder Singh to ascertain ways to address the state's continuously aggravating water crisis.

Though the resolution did not mention the Sutlej Yamuna Link (SYL) canal, leaders of all political parties, including the SAD and AAP, maintained that any move to construct the controversial canal with Haryana could be fatal for the State.

FILE ANOTHER SUIT IN SC SEEKING FRESH ASSESSMENT OF PUNJAB WATER: AAP

Extending full support to the government in promoting crop diversification to enable water conservation, AAP MLA and the Leader of Opposition in Vidhan Sabha Harpal Singh Cheema suggested that Punjab should file another suit in the Supreme Court seeking fresh assessment of the available water in the State. He added that the state should insist on redistribution of water on riparian laws.

"The situation in Malwa is bad," he said, citing the growing number of cancer cases resulting from industrial water pollution, especially in Buddha Nullah. AAP MLA from Sunam Aman Arora urged the State Government to form a sub-committee of Minister, officers and representatives of all political parties to further work on the vital issue.

BESIDES LEGAL REMEDIES, PURSUE SYL ISSUE POLITICALLY TOO: SAD

Terming Sutlej Yamuna Link Canal (SYL) a major issue, SAD's senior leader Balwinder Singh Bhundur said that apart from legal remedies, "it is important to pursue the matter politically also."

le the crisis, Bhundur said that reassessment of the water levels in Punjab's rivers was imperative. Also urging all parties not to indulge in blame game, Bhundur said that all parties should unite to protect Punjab's water resources. Dubbing SYL as "suicidal" for Punjab, SAD's former Minister Mahesh Inder Singh Grewal endorsed the Chief Minister's oft repeated warning that it would lead to violence and possible revival of terrorism in the State.

"The Supreme Court should hear a fresh petition and stay its decree on construction of SYL. If the Centre's fresh legislation for a new tribunal is passed, it would spell disaster for Punjab," he added. Calling for change in Section 12 of the Inter-State River Water Dispute (Amendment) Bill, 2019, to protect Punjab's water interests, he underlined the need to put up a united front on the issue.

SAD senior leader Prem Singh Chandumajra was also of the view that riparian laws need to be followed in water allocation to Punjab. "Nothing short of riparian principle would be acceptable as the basis for a solution to the issue of waters of all three Punjab rivers. The party also demanded the deletion of Clause 5 of the Punjab Termination of Agreements Act-2004 as it violates the Riparian Principle," he said.

"SAD has made supreme sacrifices and launched major Morchas to secure Punjab's right on the waters of its rivers on the basis of the Riparian Principle under which non-Riparian State like Rajasthan and Haryana have no right on even a single drop from the waters from Punjab rivers. It is unfortunate that in the past, some parties, notably the Congress opposed the SAD on the issue. But we feel vindicated that today finally, all political parties have accepted the correctness and constitutional and legal soundness of the Akali demand," he said.

He also expressed satisfaction over "SAD's success in getting the Chief Minister to agree to convene a special session of Punjab Vidhan Sabha to state that no exception

would be made to the Riparian Principle in the final settlement of the River Waters dispute and to consider deletion of Clause 5 from the Punjab Termination of Agreement Act".

"We wanted the all party meet to reject the Clause 5 of the Punjab Termination of Agreements of Act today itself as it constitutes an exception in so far as it violates the Riparian Principle and should therefore be deleted in the Special Session of the Punjab Legislative Assembly to be called for the purpose.

Although the final resolution of the all party meet did not include our demand for deletion of that Clause, but we were able to get the other parties to agree to consider it during the special session of the Vidhan Sabha. We will insist on its deletion in the special session," he said adding that AAP did not support our demand for the deletion of this clause.

Chandumajra also urged the Chief Minister to demand royalty for waters already given from Punjab's rivers to Haryana and Rajasthan. "They have been using our waters against all constitutional and legal norms, precedents and principles. There are strong precedents supporting Punjab's demand for royalty from Rajasthan and Haryana," he said.

BREAK WHEAT-PADDY CYCLE, ENSURE DIVERSIFICATION: BJP

Former Minister and senior BJP leader Madan Mohan Mittal stressed on the importance of breaking the paddy-wheat cycle and ensuring diversification, along with regeneration of ground water, to boost the income of Punjab's farmers, who were reeling under major debts despite their contribution to the nation's food security.

Mittal, who thanked the Chief Minister for bringing all parties on one platform on the critical issue, also agreed with the State Government's stand for minimum support price (MSP) support by the Centre for crop diversification.

Electric buses soon to ply on city roads

DIVYA MODI ■ RANCHI

In order to give a boost to the public transport system, the residents of Ranchi will soon get shuttle bus service with electric and CNG powered buses plying on the city roads.

As per the directions of the Principal Secretary of the State Urban Development Department Ajay Kumar Singh, the Ranchi Smart City Corporation Limited (RSCCL) has chalked out two routes for the first phase of the proposed bus service.

"It is a pan city project. Bus routes have been identified long with the seating capacity and models. The purpose is to promote public transport among the residents of Ranchi. Keeping the rising pollution levels in mind, electric and CNG buses will be used," said Ranchi Municipal Commissioner Manoj Kumar.

In the first phase 50 such buses will be functional on two round trip routes. Depending on the distance and the areas to be covered, the number of buses for each route is yet to be finalized. The service is expected to hit the city roads in about six months time.



A representational view of electric bus. Pioneer Photo

Kutchery Chowk, Circular Road, Lalpur Chowk and Dangratoli Chowk.

The second proposed route will begin from Booty More and cover a stretch of nearly 29 Kms. Crossing Khelgaon roundabout, Sujata Chowk, Rajendra Chowk, Hinoo Chowk, Satellite Chowk, Harmu, Sahjanand Chowk, Ratu Road, Suchna Bhawan, Machli Ghar, and Bariatu Road- this too will be a round trip.

"As per the directives of the principal secretary, the bus service will soon be implemented in the crowded areas.

The buses will be available at the identified stops at an interval of about 10 minutes each. This move will also help in boosting the public transport system in the City," said Amit Kumar, public relations officer, (RSCCL)

In the second phase six more routes will be added along with another 150 such buses. In the third phase of the proposed plan, the existing buses being operated by Ranchi Municipal Corporation will ply on the ring road along the periphery of the City.

Keeping the environmental concerns in mind, the first

50 buses being introduced will be battery operated while the next 150 buses will be CNG operated. The buses will be of low floor configuration and will have a seating capacity of 14 in the first phase and 29 in the second phase.

RSCCL also plans to make both online and offline ticket booking facility available to the passengers.

The buses will also be equipped with Wi-Fi facility and some will also be air conditioned. Seats will also be reserved for women, senior citizens and the differently abled.

RaGa to address rallies, first in Jaipur on January 28

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

Congress leader Rahul Gandhi will hold public rallies and meetings across the country starting with Jaipur on January 28 to highlight the country's "economic problems" including rising unemployment.

A Congress office bearer said Rahul's address in Jaipur will focus on the youth and students who are facing problems because of lack of jobs and rising unemployment due to the prevailing economic situation in the country. The public rally comes ahead of the Union budget scheduled to be presented on February 1.

Party sources said the former Congress chief also intends to address a rally in Madhya Pradesh, where he will focus on issues confronting the farmers, tribals and rural workers. Further, he is likely to address a meeting of small and medi-



um industrialists, traders and professionals at Mumbai, the party leaders said. Congress General Secretary Priyanka Gandhi is likely to join her brother Rahul in any one of them to address the rally.

There are other places being worked out for similar rally focusing particular segments. "The Jaipur rally will give a message in the country and will attract attention of Centre on the burning issues of country," said the party sources

pointing the success of Bharat Bachao Rally held last month which saw a huge turnout.

A senior Congress leader alleged the Modi Government was not taking any concrete step on the issues of public interest and the economy, but was busy "diverting" public attention by bringing laws which are unnecessary.

"For the first time, protests are happening in different parts of the country against a law passed by the Parliament.

P Chidambaram attacks Modi Govt over Democracy Index

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Congress on Thursday targeted Modi Government over India slipping 10 ranks on the Democracy Index, saying democracy has been eroded and democratic institutions debilitated under the 'tukde tukde gang' in power, and this should alarm every Indian.

Senior party leader P Chidambaram said, "Anyone who has closely observed the events of the last two years knows that democracy has been eroded and democratic institutions have been debilitated those who are in power are the real 'tukde tukde' gang."

"The world is alarmed by the direction INDIA is taking. Every patriotic INDIAN should be alarmed too," he said

on Twitter.

For his part, Congress spokesperson Abhishek Singhvi said it is natural that every proud Indian will deeply feel hurt and pained on finding that India has slipped 10 ranks from 41 to 51 on the Democracy Index which is computed by a well-known renowned and a very objectively known entity.

The index for India should be rising as it is one of those few countries who have solid democracy, he said, adding that is the first time since 2006 when it has declined to this figure.

"This is a red-flag which should remind us every minute of our existence that Diminishing Democracy is what we have to be eternally vigilant against. This is our proud heritage, it is our proudest

possession.

We can't allow it to dilute or diminish even by one millimetre," he told reporters. Singhvi said democracy has been vibrant, alive and kicking in a big measure only in India, unlike in several other colonial countries. He said that one parameter was of fear.

"Is there not fear palpable in this country? Whether within the ruling party or outside it, whether it is because of misuse of government's power and agencies or of snooping and surveillance. I don't think

we need a thermometer to measure that. We all understand and we all know it. Well, that diminishes democracy. This DD factor is what we are talking about - Diminishing Democracy," he said.

INSHORT

KERALA FAILS TO PROVIDE UTILISATION CERTIFICATES

New Delhi: The Kerala Govt has failed to provide utilisation certificates for at least half of the over ₹3,000 crore given to it a year ago as relief for the 2018 floods that claimed around 488 lives and caused major devastation, officials said on Thursday. The State Govt has sought ₹2,000 crore more from Centre for flood damages in 2019, despite its inability to show spending in reconstruction works after 2018 deluge, they said.

NEW ARMY VICE CHIEF TO TAKE OVER ON JAN 25

New Delhi: Lt Gen YK Joshi has been appointed as the new Northern Army Commander while Lt Gen GP Mohanty has been appointed as the next Southern Army Commander where he would replace Lt Gen SK Saini. Saini is taking over as Vice Chief of Army Staff on January 25. Joshi will replace Lt Gen Ranbir Singh who is superannuating on January 31.

Delays in projects are unacceptable: Gadkari

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Road Transport and Highways Minister Nitin Gadkari on Thursday asked officials and developers to strictly adhere to project schedules. "Delays in projects are unacceptable. Adhere strictly to project schedules," Gadkari told officials and developers on the first day of two days review meeting of projects worth ₹3-lakh crore.

Gadkari told that any inter-Ministerial issue holding up a project may be brought to the notice of the Ministry for intervention to expedite resolution. Projects from southern and central zones, including Tamil Nadu, Kerala, Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh, Puducherry, Telangana, Gujarat, Chhattisgarh, Rajasthan and Madhya Pradesh, were on review on Thursday.

A total of 500 highway projects worth ₹3 lakh crore are being taken up for review on Thursday and Fri with a view to fast-track them. All devel-

opers, contractors and officers of NHAI are linked to portal and it will help sharing of all project-related information for speedy implementation.

The projects from north-eastern States, Maha, Uttarakhand, Punjab, J&K, Ladakh, Haryana, Bihar, Odisha, Jharkhand, West Bengal and UP will be reviewed Friday. Issues related to projects in northeastern States and under National Highways and Infrastructure Development Corporation Ltd have already been reviewed in a separate meeting held on Jan 7.

Gadkari, along with Minister of State for Road Transport and Highways VK Singh, launched online web portal 'GATI', which has been created by the National Highways Authority of India on the lines of PRAGATI.

An official said "Gadkari will also personally monitor the projects". The portal 'GATI' can be accessed from NHAI's website, and contractors and concessionaires can raise any pro-

ject-related issues on the platform, according to a statement by the Ministry of Road Transport and Highways.

"The issue will immediately come to the notice of everyone...HQ NHAI including top management, and immediate action will be taken by the concerned officer duly updating on the portal," it said.

The issues raised on 'GATI' will be daily monitored by a team of NHAI officers and will be constantly reviewed by the senior officers of the National Highways Authority of India (NHAI) and the Ministry of Road Transport and Highways, the statement said. This will bring transparency and speed up the decision making in highway construction, it added.

During the meeting the new union territory of Dadra & Nagar Haveli and Daman and Diu has been assigned new vehicle registration mark 'DD' after the headquarters of the merged union territories of Daman and Diu, and Dadra and Nagar Haveli.

CBI conducts searches in Radical Foods Ltd case

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

After registering a case against city-based Radical Foods Ltd and its directors for allegedly duping a consortium of 10 banks led by SBI to the tune of ₹820 crore, the CBI on Thursday conducted searches at the residence of the accused persons.

The agency claimed to have recovered incriminating documents after the searches. The agency has booked the accused persons and the entity under Indian Penal Code charges relating to criminal conspiracy, cheating.

Forgery of documents and presenting forged documents as genuine besides relevant provisions of Prevention of Corruption Act on a complaint from State Bank of India (SBI), leading the consortium of banks.

"It was alleged that the said company availed credit facilities to the tune of ₹732 crore (approximately) and cheated the complainant bank and other consortium banks by

way of forgery and using forged documents as genuine," the CBI said in a statement.

An alleged loss of ₹819.48 crore as on April 1, 2018 was caused to the banks. The consortium banks consisted of 10 banks-State Bank of India, Indian Overseas Bank, Oriental Bank of Commerce, Exim Bank, Bank of India, IDBI

Bank, Bank of Maharashtra, CSB Bank, Vijaya Bank (now Bank of Baroda) and UCO Bank.

The accused entities and persons include Delhi-based Radical Foods Limited, Directors of the accused firm Siddharth Chaudhary and Anju Chaudhary besides unknown public servants.

CBI takes over killing of Rama Lengaw Natesan in UAE

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The CBI has taken over the probe into the killing of a man named Rama Lengaw Natesan in the United Arab Emirates allegedly by a fellow Indian over some money dispute in 2008.

The case has been taken over after a request from the UAE Government under the extradition treaty between the two countries. Article 5 of the

treaty prohibits extradition of own nationals by requested state, subject to the condition that the requested state shall prosecute the accused under its own law.

In accordance with the provision, the UAE Government had written to India on October last year seeking prosecution of Indre Jeet Singh, who is accused of killing Natesan in 2008 in that country.

CORONA VIRUS

Over 100 Indian nurses tested; one infected

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Minister of State for External Affairs, V Muraleedharan on Wednesday said that about 100 Indian nurses mostly from Kerala who are working at Al-Hayat hospital in Saudi Arabia have been tested for Corona virus, which has killed at least 17 people in China and none except one was found to be infected with the pathogen.

He tweeted that the affected nurse is being treated at Aseer National Hospital and is recovering well. The virus has killed at least 17 people and infected over 570 people in China. The virus has also spread to other countries, including South Korea, Japan, Thailand etc.

A senior Union Health

Affected nurse is being treated at Aseer National Hospital

Ministry said that Indian Mission in China is in touch with Indians in Wuhan and relevant Chinese authorities. "We are closely monitoring the evolving situation. We have also started hotlines (+8618612083629/+8618612083617) for those who wish to get in touch with the Mission.

As on 22nd January, 2020, 12,828 passengers from 60 flights have been screened for Novel Coronavirus symptoms, and no passenger has been detected in India so far, said the official.

Shah-led GoM to look after disposal of over 9.4K enemy properties

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

A Group of Ministers (GoM), headed by Union Home Minister Amit Shah, will monitor the disposal of over 9,400 enemy properties, which are likely to fetch about ₹1 lakh crore to the exchequer.

According to an official order, two other high-level committees, one to be headed by Cabinet Secretary Rajiv Gauba and other to be co-chaired by Union Home Secretary Ajay Bhalla, will also be set up for disposal of immovable enemy properties vested in the Custodian of Enemy Property for India under the Enemy Property Act.

Enemy properties were those left behind by the people who took citizenship of Pakistan and China. The order said an Inter-Ministerial Group will be constituted for the disposal of enemy properties and it will be co-chaired by the Union Home

Secretary and the Secretary of the Department of Investment and Public Asset Management. Representatives of the Ministry of Home Affairs, dept of economic affairs, dept of expenditure, dept of public enterprises, dept of legal affairs, ministry of corporate affairs among others will be members of the inter-ministerial group.

The order said central Govt may constitute an alternative mechanism comprising Home Minister Shah, Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman and Minister of Road Transport and Highways Nitin Gadkari. There are 9,280 properties left behind by Pakistani nationals and 126 properties left behind by Chinese nationals.

Among the 9,280 properties left behind by Pakistani nationals, the highest 4,991 properties are located in UP followed by West Bengal which has 2,735 such estates. There are 487 such properties in Delhi.

Former IPS KM Singh to be awarded Subhash Chandra Bose Aapda Prabandhan Puraskar

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Disaster Mitigation and Management Centre in Uttarakhand and former IPS officer KM Singh have been selected for the Subhash Chandra Bose Aapda Prabandhan Puraskar for their commendable work in disaster management, the Home Ministry announced on Thursday.

While the Disaster Mitigation and Management Centre (DMMC) in Uttarakhand, an organisation working in the field of natural calamity relief, has been selected in the institution category and will be given a certificate and a cash prize of ₹51 lakh, Singh, who has been working in the same area, has been selected for the individual category and will be given ₹5 lakh along with a certificate.

The award is given in order to recognise the excellent work done by individuals and institutions in the country in the field of disaster management, according to a Home Ministry

Award is given in order to recognise the excellent work done by individuals and institutions in the country in the field of disaster management

The award is announced every year on January 23, the birth anniversary of Netaji Subhash Chandra Bose.

The award scheme for the year 2020 was given wide publicity, and nominations for the award were solicited from August 1 last year onwards. The last date for receipt of nominations was October 15, 2019. The response to the award scheme was overwhelming, with about 330 nominations from institutions and individuals. For the selection of award, the nominations were scrutinised by the two high-level committees.

The DMMC in

Uttarakhand discharges the functions of the State Disaster Management Authority under the Government of Uttarakhand. Since its establishment in 2006, it has coordinated various post-disaster functions relating to coordination, requisition, information exchange and media briefing, including those after 2010, 2012 and 2013 major disaster incidents.

M K Singh was appointed founder member of the NDMA in 2005, following his commendable work during 2004 Indian Ocean Tsunami. In the NDMA, Singh envisioned and had taken painstaking efforts to establish, one of its kind specialist response force, the 'National Disaster Response Force' from scratch to today's strong force of 14,000 personnel comprising of 12 battalions.

Under the superintendence and directions of Singh, the NDRF delivered commendable response in its nascent phase itself during the devastating 2008 Kosi floods, the statement said.

Brazilian envoy: CAA, Kashmir internal issues of India

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The amended citizenship law and the situation in Kashmir are internal issues of India and the country with its dynamic democracy will find solutions to these "challenges", Brazilian envoy Andre Aranha Correa do Lago said on Thursday. The envoy told PTI in an interview that his country was following developments on the two issues "with great interest".

His comments on the two issues comes a day ahead of Brazilian President Jair Bolsonaro's maiden visit to India after he assumed power in January last year following a sweeping electoral victory.

Lago said over 15 agreements will be signed during the Brazilian president's visit, including one on the investment protection and facilitation treaty.

"These (Citizenship (Amendment) Act and

Kashmir situation) are two internal issues of India that obviously we are following with great interest.

Naturally, in the conversations probably the Indian government will bring elements about this but we see this very clearly as internal questions of India," he said.

"India being such a dynamic democracy with such fantastic institutions and civil society, we know that with this a very open society, you will discuss and you (will) go ahead with solutions for these challenges," the Brazilian envoy said.

His remarks comes days after envoys of 15 countries, including the US, visited the Kashmir valley where they interacted with select political representatives, civil society members as well as military top brass.

Brazilian envoy Lago was also scheduled to visit Jammu and Kashmir, however, he had backed out because of his pre-

occupation here.

Brazilian President Bolsonaro will on Friday begin a four-day visit to India, primarily as the chief guest on Republic Day and also to explore ways to boost trade ties at a time both the large economies are hit by slow-downs.

On whether the slowdown of the Indian economy was a matter of concern, the Brazilian envoy said it was not as India will probably grow at above five per cent.

"We are struggling to grow at 2 per cent. We are the country that has been facing more difficult times. We had two years of recession and two years of very low growth, but we have a very good perspective of growing above 2 per cent this year," Lago asserted.

"So, it is not a question of concern, it has to be interpreted as an opportunity because India wants to grow," he said.

PM Modi to pay homage at National War Memorial this R-Day

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Breaking away from tradition, Prime Minister Narendra Modi will pay homage to fallen soldiers at the newly-built National War Memorial here on the Republic Day instead of Amar Jawan Jyoti beneath the India Gate arch. Modi had inaugurated the War Memorial in the India Gate complex behind the canopy on February 25 last year.

Amar Jawan Jyoti is symbolised by an inverted bayonet and soldier's helmet over it with an eternal flame burning beside it. It was built in 1972 underneath the India Gate arch to commemorate soldiers martyred in the India-Pakistan war of 1971. The three Services



chiefs pay respect on occasions of national importance at the Amar Jawan Jyoti.

Before commencement of the Republic Day parade this year, Prime Minister Narendra Modi will lead the nation in paying homage to the fallen soldiers by laying a wreath at

the National War Memorial, the flame of the immortal warrior, at India Gate, Major General Alok Kacker, Chief of Staff Delhi Area said here on Thursday in an interaction with the media.

This will also be the first time, Chief of the Defence

Staff (CDS) will take part in the Republic Day celebrations. Former Army chief General Bipin Rawat on January 1 had taken charge as the country's first CDS.

Spread over an area of approximately 40 acres, National War Memorial comprises four concentric circles, namely -- the 'Amar Chakra', 'Veerta Chakra', 'Tyag Chakra' and the 'Rakshak Chakra' with names of 25,942 soldiers inscribed in golden letters on granite tablets.

It also includes a central 15.5-m obelisk, an eternal flame and six bronze murals depicting famous battles fought by the Indian Army, Air Force and the Navy in a covered gallery (Veerta Chakra).

The memorial is dedicated

to soldiers killed during the India-China War in 1962, Indo-Pak Wars in 1947, 1965 and 1971, Indian Peace Keeping Force Operations (IPKF) in Sri Lanka and in the Kargil Conflict in 1999, and also those in the UN peacekeeping missions.

The 42 m-high India Gate was built during the British Raj as the All India War Memorial Arch to honour the soldiers who died in the First World War (1914-1918) and the Third Anglo-Afghan War (1919). The landmark has the names of soldiers inscribed on its surface.

Over 80,000 Indian laid their lives in those campaigns and India Gate bears names of 13,516 etched over its surface. Amar Jawan Jyoti was built to commemorate India's

victory in the Indo-Pak War of 1971. So, both flames will have their own importance, officials had said ahead of the inauguration of the National War Memorial.

Meanwhile, 16 marching contingents this year including six from the Army and 22 tableaux from various states and departments will take part in the Republic Day parade at Rajpath, Kacker said. The Army will be represented by a Mounted Column of 61 Cavalry, eight mechanised columns, six marching contingents and a fly past by Rudra and Dhruv Advanced Light Helicopters of Army Aviation, he added. The Army's Signal Corps contingent will be led by woman officer Captain Tanya Shergill.

Hymn 'Abide with me' back on list of Beating Retreat tunes

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The traditional Christian hymn 'Abide with me,' a favourite of Mahatma Gandhi is back on the list of tunes for this year's Beating the Retreat ceremony at Vijay Chowk here on January 29. The tune was part of the annual ceremony every year since 1950. Beating 'The Retreat' is performed every year marking the end of the Republic Day celebrations.

Two weeks back the Defence Ministry had

dropped 'Abide with me' from the tunes to be played this year which officials said was part of an "annual review to introduce new tunes." However, the move drew sharp criticism from various quarters as the ceremony this year was end with the national song Vande Matram instead of 'Abide with me.'

There are about 30-35 tunes played at the ceremony every year some of which are changed but 'Abide with me' has always been there. "

A really bad year

India slips on the global democracy index from 2018 even as Thailand goes up. We are losing the war of perception



As the world's largest democracy, no matter how grudging an admission this might be by assessors of the Western world, we should at least be held up as tolerable and accommodative if not the best. So India dropping by 10 places to 51st on *The Economist's* Democracy Index 2019, is a cause for worry rather than an easy example of Western bias. Simply because the publication has earned global respect and acceptability as least biased and careful about facts. And as a member of the Fourth Estate, it fulfils its

responsibility of upholding what global regimes are flawed at, in political, economic and social liberalism. So it is considered credible enough. Also, it has never rated India so harshly or lowly ever since it began the index 12 years ago. So what is alarming? India's decline in its overall score from 7.23 in 2018 to 6.9 last year and its classification as a "flawed democracy," just two steps away from being called an authoritarian regime. Given our much-claimed vibrancy, we should have scored at least eight or thereabouts on all counts. The index termed the erosion of civil liberties as the primary cause of our democratic regression. Which means that even by the Modi regime's own standing since 2014, the last six months have severely damaged perception. Except for pluralism and electoral processes, where we scored 8.67, there has been a drastic slide in the perception of governance, political culture and civil liberties. In short, it is the functionality and leadership of the Government that has clearly been put under the scanner. Before we dismiss these observations as part of a worldwide conspiracy hatched by a minuscule group of "urban Naxals," "funded academics" or give in to the compulsive urge to generate counter-propaganda, we must stop to think that the idea of democracy suffering in India has never been a talking point. This is simply because it has always been seen as a descendant of its civilisational moorings, its liberal ethos and, therefore, incapable of forced human constructs of oppression and supremacy. This is the reason why the world supported the abrogation of Article 370 only because the Government argued it as an issue within our constitutional space and never thought that it would be followed by authoritarian clampdowns or adventurism. That acceptance was followed by a significant review of citizenship laws and a renewed impetus on re-establishing majoritarian Hindu pride through the Ram temple. Considering their upending tectonics and the monolithic aggression that went against our grain of consensus politics, dissent was but natural. But the Government, instead of sizing up its destructive potential and neutralising it through a process of dialogue, went about hammering it with mindless brutality. Contentious politics cannot be force-fed in a democracy and for a Government that rests on a valid people's verdict, undermining it would only backflush on its true intentions.

The countrywide internet shutdowns on dissenting voices and protests have given us the dubious distinction of authorising over 67 per cent of the world's internet shutdowns. Holding up the information highway has become the latest tool for authoritarian governments around the world to control the political narrative on their terms and carpet-bomb any opinion or emotion against it. We are guilty of it while claiming to be a democracy. The otherisation and ghettoisation of politics, perpetuated through citizenship laws and a census based on profiling, are clearly divisive in intent and end up playing a nation's people against each other. The crackdown on students and civil society protests have been the proverbial last straw. The restrictive and biased media has relegated itself to being the Government's official propagandist than a conscience-keeper. The discourse in the country has been polarised to such an extent that we fail to realise that every argument is justified on its axis and needs to be heard, judged and then decided on its merit or demerit. That is the democratic process, which is now being dumped as a liability than an asset. And if free speech is under threat, then obviously the estimation of India as a democracy will be called into question. Going by the study, almost one-half (48.4 per cent) of the world's population lives in a democracy of some sort although only 5.7 per cent reside in a "full democracy." As the world's largest democracy, imagine the diplomatic sweep India can harness for the future. Critics might draw some solace from the fact that the US had also been demoted from a "full democracy" to a "flawed democracy" in 2016. But then the number of "full democracies" increased to 22 in 2019, with Chile, France and Portugal joining the top-ranked countries. Even Thailand, for long considered running a faux model, had the biggest improvement in score. Should we still be defending ourselves?

An astronaut's friend

ISRO is using a half-humanoid robot to smoothen out creases for Gaganyaan, our manned mission



So what if we have to wait awhile to send an Indian woman into space, we have a half-humanoid robot in the shape of one doing so. And she will test-pilot drills for our first manned mission as part of the Gaganyaan project. The Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) will be sending Vyommitra to mimic humanistic functions in the spacecraft, even converse with intended astronauts and respond to their queries. This preparatory drill is being done to ensure that Indian astronauts can complete their historic manoeuvre without a glitch. India though is not the first nation to send a robot into space to ensure safety of manned flights. NASA had sent Robonaut 2 to the International Space Station (ISS) in 2011 and Japan's Kirobo had landed there in 2014. Advanced versions are being developed to do a recon for human settlements. Post the failed lunar mission last year, ISRO seems to have learnt its lessons well and is proceeding with extreme caution with AI-aided dry runs.

While the nation would rather not talk about Chandrayaan 2 simply because its rover failed to land on the dark side of the moon, it has had its own success. Forget the lost rover, at the end of the day, it is indigenously developed and manufactured and is testimony to not only R&D and innovation but the ability of home-grown companies to expand capabilities. The Gaganyaan is a logical follow-through of this mission. India has already set a benchmark in PSLV and GSLV launches. It recently launched the high-power communication satellite GSAT-30. This is expected to provide improved coverage and will enable Indian broadcasters to air content in the Middle East, Australia and other parts of Asia, widening the arc of our soft diplomacy. The commercial satellite launch market is estimated to be \$30 billion by 2025 and ISRO is certain to be a top player in it. With Vyommitra, ISRO hopes to expand its ability to analyse data and ensure trajectory and payload optimisation for bigger missions. NASA is using AI for its next rover mission to Mars, too. But then a word of caution here. Robots aren't heroes. As much they promise a new era in space exploration, they must ascend the curve with utmost care.

Illogic and the showman

The US under the Trump administration typifies the reckless decision-making of military imperatives without prior experience, counsel or professional advice



BHOPINDER SINGH

Traditionally, the US administration has benefitted from the military experience that resides in the "White House." Prior to their political ascendancy, around 29 of the 45 US Presidents have held military experience. However, the incumbent President Donald Trump has been an exception. He has had a controversial past of medical deferment that purportedly kept him out of military enrollment during the Vietnam War. Post the World War II, in the midst of the cold war era, nine successive US Presidents were former combatants till the tenures of Bill Clinton, Barack Obama and now Trump. Even the US Congress and Senate have had a substantial presence of veterans (they represented more than half of Congress for much of the late 20th century), who have debated and drafted security policies in pursuance of national objectives.

Given that the post World War II period entailed bloody American military involvement in places like Korea, Vietnam, the Middle East, Somalia and Afghanistan as well as other covert wars and operations, the reassuring presence and understanding of the accompanying security sensitivities added the necessary nuance, steel and perspective on governance. But the last 12 years have seen a gradual reduction in the representation of veterans (till very recently) in both Houses. Trump though has displayed himself with misplaced enthusiasm for military trappings, bravado and parades to posit his own surrogate muscularity in pursuit of politics.

Most of his interventions, allusions and invocation with military imperatives have been high on instinctive showmanship and theatrics but have been low on efficacy. He started his tenure by appointing the iconic Marine Corps General James Mattis as the Secretary of Defence. The latter was found to be too rational, grounded and a well-read professional for Trump's boorish and fickle preferences. The US President authorised the usage of the "mother of all bombs" (GBU-43/B Massive Ordnance Air Blast, the most powerful non-nuclear explosive) in Afghanistan. Today, he is negotiating "peace talks" with the Taliban, which has already accounted for well over 2,000 US casualties. He got the US military to rashly rain 59 Tomahawk cruise missiles (each costing approximately a million and a half dollars) on a dilapidated airbase and then another hundred on an industrial site in Syria, among other military commitments. Today, most Syrian lands have been lost to his *bête noire*, Bashar al-Assad's Syrian Government.

Units of the US Special Forces, in conjunction with allies — Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates — conducted operations along with supporting militias in the Yemen theatre. As a result, a ragtag Army of Iran-supported Houthi rebels have been coking a snook at the much larger, affluent and better armed forces of the US and



its allies. While he did get to "take out" a past his prime Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi and more recently the Iranian Commander of Quds Force, Major General Qassem Soleimani, the essential American foothold in the Middle East remains shaky and is desperately in need of a "pull-out" to limit further damage.

Taking militaristic decisions is inevitable for a superpower that is mired in protecting its hegemonic interests across the globe. However, recent decisions and the fate of the Trump-led US military's involvement across the globe warrant serious introspection. It's not that "team" Trump did not have competency but his impatience with reason and restraint has ensured that the likes of Mattis have left, got fired, joined his "echo chamber" or, as mentioned in the famously anonymous Op-ed in *The New York Times*, are part of the silent "resistance working within the Trump administration." The Op-ed, authored by a senior person in the Trump administration, evocatively noted his leadership style to be "impetuous, adversarial, petty and ineffective." Further, it went to express the conundrum of the hapless staff, who would "privately admit their daily disbelief at the commander-in-chief's comments and actions."

A thoroughbred professional, Mattis became a typical suf-

“ IT'S NOT THAT TEAM TRUMP DID NOT HAVE COMPETENCY BUT HIS IMPATIENCE WITH REASON AND RESTRAINT HAS ENSURED THAT THE LIKES OF MATTIS HAVE LEFT, GOT FIRED, JOINED HIS ECHO CHAMBER OR, AS MENTIONED IN AN OP-ED IN THE NEW YORK TIMES, ARE PART OF THE SILENT RESISTANCE WORKING WITHIN THE TRUMP ADMINISTRATION ”

ferer of Trump's foolhardiness when he refused to carry out killing orders of Syrian leader Bashar al-Assad, to make war plans to attack Iranian facilities and opposed the decision of the US' troop withdrawal from Syria. On Mattis' resignation, the former combatant was hailed as the "last adult" in the Trump administration. Questions now abound if Soleimani would have been "taken out" today if Mattis was still around.

The decision to up the ante with Iran did have the backing of some veterans like four-star general Jack Keane and former Director of the Central Intelligence Agency David Petraeus among others. But as Congressman Adam Smith said, "Trump has no idea what he's doing but isn't afraid to do it." This unheeding trait has led to multiple forms of military adventurism with little to show on the ground at a time when Trump is in the last leg of his first tenure.

The usual phenomenon of spectacular military actions, resulting in a bipartisan "rallying around the flag" and, thereby, bumping up the crucial presidential approval ratings, is an old hat (in all democracies). After the Gulf War, former US President George HW Bush's approval ratings went up from 58 per cent to 89 per cent. His son, George W Bush's invasion of Iraq got a similar spike from

58 per cent to 71 per cent. Barack Obama's elimination of Osama bin Laden took his ratings from 44 per cent to 51 per cent. But Trump's Soleimani action did not result in any noticeable jump. He continues to languish in the mid-40 approval percentages. Clearly, Trump has politically abused the "military card" too often and it no longer resonates. On the contrary, his embarrassing description of "beautiful weapons" in the serious business of deploying the "last resort" responsibly diminishes the statesmanship and restraint required of his position.

What deliberately polarising politicians like Trump also achieve is that they dangerously "divide" perceptions within the veteran community, which is usually bipartisan on security matters and goes by military "facts." This sort of brazen politics has alienated the likes of Trump's fellow Republican and former combatant Senator John McCain, whose professional integrity as a soldier was affronted by usurpers like him.

Matters of military need to be spared from political appropriations. Else, the required institutional ethos and perceptions are weakened. Following this, the overall national security preparedness, too, would stand diminished.

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

SOUNDBITE

The Congress leadership is suffering from *manasik diwalyapan* (mental bankruptcy). Statements issued by it in the past months reflect that these are intended to help Pakistan.



BJP chief — J.P. Nadda

They (Government) are asking those who have been living here for four generations to prove that they are Indians. This is sad. I think everyone should speak up.



Actor — Nandita Das

When I was playing cricket, India was seven times our size but we regularly quashed them. In hockey and so many other games also. We were great.



Pakistan Prime Minister — Imran Khan

Netaji had opposed the Hindu Mahasabha's divisive politics. He had fought for a secular India. Now efforts are on to oust those who follow secularism.



West Bengal CM — Mamata Banerjee

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Change of guard

Sir — This refers to the editorial, "BJP's new chief" (January 21). With the advent of J.P. Nadda as the BJP president, the party may see a change from the diktat-style of the earlier dispensation to one of consultation, if not consensus.

Voices of the BJP cadre from the State as well as district levels may yet get a chance to be heard. And that should prove useful after a string of recent poll reverses, equally attributable to a failing economy, consolidation of the Opposition, protests against the Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA) and amorphous ideologies clouding local issues.

That said, the policy approach that ran the party till now is getting transplanted to Home Affairs in the national canvas. Federalism is losing currency and an unfamiliar brand of nationalism is being sought to be implemented. As unease of the States and the common man gets palpable by the day, the future does not augur well. Nadda will have an important role in deciding what the party must focus on next.

R Narayanan
Navi Mumbai

CAA: Flawed on several counts

Nobody expected the Supreme Court to stay the Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA). And it did not, on the presumption that the law passed by Parliament is constitutionally valid until it hears both the petitioners challenging its constitutionality and the Central Government — "presumption" being the operative word. Hence, there is no cause for the Government to celebrate prematurely. Before going ahead with the implementation of the CAA, the Government will do well to remember the apex court's observation that "nothing is irreversible." When the Sabarimala case was referred to a larger Constitution Bench, the original ruling, allowing entry of women of all ages into the temple, was held in abeyance or at least its implementation was not favoured by the BJP even in the absence of any stay on the ruling. Similarly, the Government can put on hold the implementation of the CAA till the top court's final ruling.

Home Minister Amit Shah has refused to make a gesture towards the opinion of the anti-CAA protesters



and ruled out a repeal of the law. Critics of CAA plead the case for the inclusion of Muslims as the seventh religious group to make the law "religion-neutral." Secular India cannot and should not discriminate between a Hindu from Pakistan, a Rohingya Muslim from Myanmar and a Sri Lanka refugee of any faith on granting citizenship.

G David Milton
Maruthancode

Silent killer

Sir — In a shocking tragedy, eight Indian tourists from Kerala, including four children, died this week due to a possible gas leak from a room heater at a resort in Daman in Makwanpur district of Nepal. They were part of a 17-member tourist group who had checked into Everest Panorama

resort at Daman, a popular tourist destination in Nepal.

According to the SP of District Police Office, Makwanpur, the tourists turned on the gas heater in the room and later suffocated due to some defect in the device, leading to carbon monoxide leak resulting in death.

The group — travelling to Pokhara from Kerala — were returning home. On the way,

they had stopped at Everest Panorama Resort in Daman. Gas heaters that are not installed correctly or have become faulty over time can cause a carbon monoxide leak. As carbon monoxide is a colourless, odourless and tasteless gas, it becomes difficult to detect it. To prevent such hazards, hotels should inspect and rectify such appliances regularly. The tourism Ministry in Nepal, too,

should have mechanisms to avoid such mishaps. Also, tourists staying in hotels in cold places should be aware of such silent dangers.

M Pradyu
Kannur

No, thank you

Sir — At a time when he is embroiled in impeachment proceedings, US President Donald Trump has once again expressed his desire to "help" India and Pakistan resolve their dispute. With elections round the corner, it is all but common for politicians to intensively work towards improving their image.

However, New Delhi must be complimented for beating off another unwanted diplomatic advance by making it clear that there is no scope for mediation by anybody. Now, the ruling Government must refrain from gaining unwanted attention on the Kashmir issue. It must strike a conversation with all stakeholders and leaders in the Valley.

Aditi
Via email

Send your feedback to:
letterstopioneer@gmail.com

FIRST COLUMN

Aim for green industrial growth

Centre, States must create a sustainable business environment and impactful economy while integrating with global benchmarks and practices



KUMARDEEP BANERJEE

The world is moving towards sustainable businesses to tackle the challenges of climate change, empowerment of communities, health, education and other social causes to ensure the survival of life on the planet. From Davos, where the world's most powerful people gather, to a humble policy document emerging from a bureaucrat's desk, the theme is sustainability. In the midst of the clamour for making the blue planet a safer, healthier zone, lies the underlining theme of slowing the world order and tightening cross-border flows of goods, services and people. India, with its goal of a \$5 trillion economy by 2024 in the middle of ominous forecasts of slow GDP growth, is facing a double challenge of sustainable growth vs a steroid shot of booster measures to put the economy on the fast track. While the full Union Budget 2020 will deliver parts of the promise and create hopes for more, the door is ajar for two important policies under consideration by the Government — the industrial policy and the e-commerce policy.

The proposed industrial policy (third after 1956 and 1991) ought to be a North Star for making India a global innovation, R&D and manufacturing hub, thereby achieving the \$5-10 trillion target in the next decade. However, it must be kept in mind by lawmakers that this policy is coming at a time when the world has shifted towards Industry 4.0 and the global economy determinants are increasingly sinking into computing prowess of latest chips and bots while facing tremendous ecological challenges. This policy has a stated objective to develop and sustain global competitiveness for India; increase technology depth of the industry; increase employment avenues; increase share in global merchandise exports and reduce the environmental footprint. The stated vision is a one trillion gross value addition in manufacturing by 2025, (even though with right policy measures this target can be moved up). The Government at this stage is in focussed stakeholder consultations to devise the right strategy for pushing India up in the world economic order.

The key questions being asked under the stated targets are how to bring the cost of capital expenditure in large-scale manufacturing in value terms for land, electricity and money at par with the globe benchmarks? How to reduce regulations and promote ease of doing business? How to develop India as a research, design and innovation hub by removing hurdles which are fully-integrated with the new asks from a connected digital economy? How to promote skills and workforce education as well as upskilling of the existing workforce to be able to function in the new industrial arena? How to focus on quality checks, testing and standards practices while recognising that we need to align with global benchmarks? Also, how to increase India's global share in exports with a focus on our policy? Assist and put all industries on technology-aided platforms to enjoy the true benefits of a connected global economy? Achieve a stable, predictable, industry, consumer and economy-friendly policy framework to foster higher growth? Increase foreign direct investments? Promote sustainability as the core objective of all businesses in the country?

All these are commendable strategy directions which ask the right questions for an increasingly coagulating global order where technology innovations are diminishing physical barriers in fractions of seconds while protective Governments are putting iron fences around their economies and reducing global agreements to pieces of paper.

It is in this context that the new industrial policy seeks to achieve significance, as it comes at a time when every citizen is feeling the impact of the crumbling economy, job losses and more important, climate change. From extreme weather conditions being reported around the globe, to rising costs of providing basics to humans, not to forget, extinction of species, are a real danger today.

India needs to walk the tightrope of creating a sustainable business environment and impactful economy while getting more integrated with global benchmarks and practices. The new industrial policy needs a series of deliberations and clause by clause analysis of the vision, objectives before being drafted.

The Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade has formulated a working group to finalise the policy which includes a couple of key State Governments. Nobody can deny the role States are likely to play in shaping the next economic growth for India. State Governments in the past have organised successful roadshows or "invest inwards" summits, promising big ticket businesses free land, cheap electricity and fast Government clearances for new projects. However, now they need to align with the Central Government and put in their key demands, challenges and proposed solutions towards developing their States which are sustainable, long-term and more importantly can survive changing regimes. It is a long shot but in the spirit of federalism, States need to get their records straight on power subsidies, clamp down on existing businesses using local administration and similar regulatory challenges. The deliberations so far have been behind closed doors. For a global "outward"-looking industrial policy, there should be an open consultation process, especially at the State Government level.

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

POINT COUNTERPOINT

I'M HERE TO TELL ALL OF YOU. MAMATA BANERJEE, RAHUL GANDHI, COME AND DEBATE CAA WITH ME. I HAD PILOTTED THE BILL IN THE PARLIAMENT.

—UNION HOME MINISTER
AMIT SHAH



YOU SHOULD DEBATE WITH ME. WHY DEBATE WITH THEM? THE DEBATE SHOULD BE WITH A BEARDED MAN. I CAN DEBATE WITH BJP ON CAA, NPR AND NRC.

—AIMIM CHIEF
ASADUDDIN OWAIISI

List of expectations

As Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman gears up to present the Union Budget on February 1, India Inc shares its hopes and concerns

MSMEs need more incentives



RACHIT CHAWLA

At a time when the economy of India is experiencing a slow-down, the country is hoping for a balanced Union Budget by Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman on February 1. The middle-class is anticipating relief in income tax and Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) are looking for incentives. It is also crucial for the FM to formulate policies which ascertain 6.5 per cent real GDP growth for the fiscal year 2020-21.

Time to revamp MSMEs: While the economy is still facing a liquidity issue and MSMEs are bearing the brunt of the deceleration, achieving 6.5 per cent growth is a challenge but not impossible. If the Government could save Non-Banking Financial Companies (NBFCs) and MSMEs, the scenario would turn favourable within a few months. Recently, the PHD Chamber of Commerce and Industry (PHDCCI) requested the Government to change the definition of MSMEs in response to alterations in the economic environment of the country in the last couple of years. MSMEs are the backbone of the Indian economy and the country cannot compromise with their health. Hence, a changed definition will help the sector enhance its contribution to employment-generation, poverty-alleviation and resource improvisation. A large number of MSMEs are struggling with financial challenges and without subsidies their sustenance is difficult. It is shocking that out of the 6.33 crore MSMEs in the country, only 0.05 lakh are medium enterprises. They are usually deprived of the Public Procurement Policy which mandates 25 per cent procurement from the micro and small enterprises. They are also barred from availing delayed payment reliefs through facilitation councils.

Need for sector-specific measures: Besides considering the problems of MSMEs, Sitharaman must also address the issues of under-performing sectors such as real estate, energy and telecom. There is an urgent need to reinforce sectors which strengthen the infrastructure of the country but are reeling under the impact of the downturn. Last year, Sitharaman relieved large businesses by cutting corporate tax to 22 per cent, but businesses cannot flourish until MSMEs become secure and stable. The Government should also lower the tax burden on MSMEs by slashing the Goods and Services Tax in key sectors. The real estate sector, which is one of the growth propellers of the economy, has been struggling for almost a decade. To infuse life into this sector, the Government must consider its long-pending demands such as getting industry status, a single-window clearance mechanism, dropping the circle rate section from the Income Tax Act, elimination of taxes on vacant property, reduced land acquisition cost and tax rationalisation on Real Estate Investment Trusts.

Telecom, yet another crucial sector is hopeful that the Government will take measures to resolve the burgeoning debt issues in the Budget. Telecom companies are also demanding reduction in licence fee, Spectrum Usage Charges and relief in levies.

No compromise with liquidity: The next big challenge before Sitharaman is increasing liquidity in the market because it is directly proportional to the growth of MSMEs, especially start-ups. The IL&FS and DHFL fiascos had drastic repercussions on the financial markets, and one of the main reasons for the huge impact is the lack of availability of alternative options to bank funding. Now, Public Sector Banks have decided to cut their Marginal Cost of Funds-based Lending Rates (MCLR) which will be beneficial for the economy as it will improve liquidity in the market. Lower MCLR will mean that NBFCs can borrow from banks at lower rates and the NBFCs that operate in SME lending and housing will benefit the most. It will strengthen the capitalisation structures of HFCs and help revive the real estate sector. Also, to bring back positive sentiments in the market and to counter the decelerating growth, better liquidity is needed and a lower MCLR would help meet this to a great extent. Industry pundits believe that stability in the sector will be regained by the first quarter of 2020. They are optimistic about increased demand for credit because urbanisation is taking place at a fast pace. Plus, there is a thriving start-up culture in the country and retail and e-commerce sectors have high penetration even in semi-urban areas. The Government should also keep inflation under control and it must not go beyond six per cent for at least three quarters. If all these issues are addressed, making India a \$5 trillion economy will be a realistic goal.

(The writer is founder, CEO, of an investment management firm)

Give IT sops to boost EV sales



PANKAJ MUNJAL

The Union Budget announced in 2019 was in many ways a landmark one for pushing e-mobility. Not only was the Goods and Services Tax (GST) on electric vehicles slashed to five per cent, the Budget also offered major incentives for buyers of electric vehicles (EVs) in the form of income tax rebates on loan. These measures were designed to push the sale of EVs, which have been on the top of the Government's priority list in recent years. These incentives were additionally to the major commitment announced under the Faster Adoption and Manufacturing of Hybrid and Electric Vehicles (FAME-II) scheme to boost EV infrastructure. However, the sale of EVs remained lukewarm with an analysis suggesting that just 1,309 units of e-cars were sold between April and November 2019. With the economic slow-down and falling demand hitting the auto sector hard, the industry needs a slew of measures that will address concerns on both the demand and supply sides. With the Union Budget round the corner, there are hopes that the Finance Minister (FM) will announce measures to revive consumption, put more disposable income into the hands of the people as well as more sops for EVs. Importantly, the FM must give a policy push to e-bicycles which have the potential to be at the forefront of an e-mobility revolution.

Revive demand: In its annual review, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) said that the declining consumption and investment, accompanied by falling tax revenue have arrested India's GDP growth. The IMF also called for "urgent" policy actions to reverse this slow-down. Falling demand has been at the centre of the current slow-down and the country needs measures that can put more incomes into the hands of people and revive consumption. Cutting income tax rates and readjusting income tax slabs might be a tough call at a time when the Government's revenues are shrinking but it might also be the bitter pill the economy needs. An income tax exemption on income up to ₹5 lakh can positively impact salaried taxpayers and boost consumption. It can also spur buying among people who have deferred automobile purchases in view of the deceleration. However, just monetary measures will not be sufficient. The economy also needs a major fiscal policy push to increase employment and income. The Government must announce broad measures to infuse expenditure in strategic sectors like manufacturing and infrastructure and create income-generating avenues in the rural economy. This also includes revisions in GST slabs to create a low tax economy.

Institute a supportive scrapping policy: Earlier this year, the FM announced a scrap policy aimed at shunting out old vehicles and increasing production. The policy is aimed at serving the twin objectives of reducing emissions and boosting consumer demand. The Government must ensure a quick rollout of the scrap policy to encourage the replacement of older vehicles and must also lay down positive incentives for customers to push the disposal of older vehicles. The incentives may include exemption on road taxes for consumers and low interest loan schemes for purchase of new commercial vehicles. According to the Society of Indian Automobile Manufacturers (SIAM), the commercial vehicle industry suffered a decline of 22 per cent in sales between April and November 2019. We hope a supportive scrapping policy can help revive some of this lost demand.

Extend FAME II benefits to E-bicycles: E-bicycles have recently been categorised under EVs to get tax benefits. However, they do not get the benefits designated under the FAME-II scheme. We hope the Government recognises the need to promote e-bicycles as much as the need to promote e-cars. While e-cars address the concern of pollution, they do not solve the problem of traffic congestion. E-bicycles are both eco-friendly, space-friendly and also offer a viable solution to the anxiety that comes with lack of charging infrastructure as they can be easily pedalled back in case of battery loss.

Policy measures to reduce viability gap of EVs: More measures might be needed to reduce the viability gap of EVs. The Government must support the sector in different ways to make EVs more affordable and viable. These measures can include exemption on road tax, lower power tariffs for charging EVs, exemption of parking fees for EV users and exemption of permit costs among other measures.

(The writer is Chairman and MD of a leading motor company)

Formulate retail policy soon



RAVINDER SINGH

India is one of the fastest-growing economies in the world and the drivers of this growth can be credited to the burgeoning millennial population, growing middle-income households and an increasing representation of women in the workforce. All these factors contribute to economic growth by boosting retail consumption, thereby providing a highly positive outlook for businesses in the country. Meanwhile, as far as the market potential is concerned, the retail industry provides a robust platform for multiple stakeholders, including the consumers, distributors, manufacturers and additional sectors like transportation, logistics and so on. In fact, according to the Retailers Association of India (RAI), around 43 million people in the country are employed in the retail sector and the industries that support those businesses. In fact, the sector is generating employment at a fast pace, taking the second position after agriculture in terms of creating direct as well as indirect employment opportunities.

Despite the retail industry's positive contribution towards the country's economy, 2019 witnessed many players struggling to sustain the growth chart. Even though they are expecting growth to rebound in 2020, it will all depend on factors like the recovery in the manufacturing and other sectors, availability of finances in the hands of consumers to make easy retail consumption decisions and of course, the forthcoming Union Budget 2020 that will be presented by Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman on February 1. This will be her second Union Budget and the retailers have many expectations from the Modi Government in its second term.

Accelerating the process of national retail policy: It is a harsh reality that India to date has been unable to develop a robust manufacturing sector despite two decades of economic and trade liberalisation. Structural issues like scarcity of resources in the form of raw materials and trained labour force, lack of capital and credit facilities and inadequate infrastructure are causing major hindrances in the operations of small retail traders. This is also affecting the export-competitiveness of a large number of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs). So, in this year's Union Budget, these players want the Government to speed up the formulation and implementation of the National Retail Policy, as this would provide a significant boost to the development of 65 million small traders in the country's retail sector and expedite/promote the ease of doing business in the country.

Promotion of digital and modern retail: The Indian retail industry is currently dominated by e-commerce and it is expected to grow to \$200 billion by 2026 driven by rising smartphone penetration, the launch of 4G networks and increasing disposable incomes. That said, the competition is only increasing day by day. Bearing in mind the new-age consumers' speedy adoption of technology, offline retail players must also modify their strategies to keep their brands relevant, the brand experience even and their products and services accessible across multiple channels. They are expecting the Government to modernise its retail by upgrading the use of Point of Sale Machines that would help retailers to access the customers' information and efficiently manage their inventory, thereby improving their revenue-generation and profitability.

Boosting the consumption story: Due to the deceleration in the economy, retailers both small and premium ones, are bearing the brunt of a consumer class that has become careful in its purchasing decisions. This slowdown in consumption has dampened the demand in the retail segment. Retail players are hoping that the Union Budget will be pro-consumption and will come out with a slew of measures that will make small-ticket credit and additional cash accessible in the hands of the middle class. This will positively impact the retail industry by increasing demand and also provide a much-needed boost to the economy.

GST on clothes: Clothes are subject to five per cent GST if the taxable value of the goods is less than ₹1,000 per piece, whereas, the sale value of clothing that exceeds ₹1,000 is subject to 12 per cent GST. Retailers expect the Budget to focus on increasing the threshold for the five per cent slab to ₹2,000 from the ₹1,000 that is levied at present to give a fillip to the sector.

(The writer is Founding Director of a chain of value retail stores)

Derivatives are a double-edged sword

Used both for hedging and speculation, the derivatives markets worldwide have grown to a humongous level, reaching about \$1.2 quadrillion. However, their use has also brought giant corporations to their knees, hence investors must exercise caution



HIMA BINDU KOTA

The term "financial weapons of mass destruction", coined by billionaire Warren Buffett for derivatives, is not without reason. They can be used both for hedging and speculation and their markets worldwide have grown to a humongous level, reaching about \$1.2 quadrillion, almost 10 times that of the world GDP.

However, the use of derivatives has also brought giant corporations to their knees during past global financial meltdowns. One cannot forget the bankruptcy of corporations like Enron and Barings Banks due to wrong speculative moves involving

derivatives. Since they are a double-edged sword, one has to be extra cautious while using them.

What are derivatives anyway? These are instruments that derive their value from any underlying asset, which could be either a stock or a commodity.

Any investor or corporation can put money in any one of the popular derivatives for hedging or speculative purposes. Corporations use them for hedging if they want to reduce an existing risk or protect themselves from any volatility in the price of an underlying asset by taking an offsetting position, whereas speculation is trying to make profit due to any price changes.

Several analysts believe that the Indian stock markets are set to rise further in 2020 and may end higher by at least 13 per cent. It is being predicted that Nifty might end above the 13,000 mark. Similarly, the expectation for the BSE Sensex is that it will go above the 46,000 level. So, if we consider a bullish market for this year, what are the derivative strategies that

an investor can use in this type of market where the prices of underlying assets are set to rise? Although the general belief is that stock markets will be bullish, there will certainly be variations as is natural.

In case the markets are extremely bullish, investors should go ahead with a long-call strategy. This is one of the simplest approaches and can be used by beginners in the derivatives market. There is only one transaction involved, i.e., buying call options. It helps investors use the power of leverage and make potentially unlimited profits and at the same time cap their losses. In the worst case scenario, when the markets do not behave as anticipated, loss is limited to the price of buying the call options.

A reverse call ratio spread is also an extremely bullish strategy where an investor can sell an option at a lower price, usually in-the-money or at-the-money and buy more options at the higher strike price, which is out-of-the-money, of the same underlying asset. So if an investor sells one

option and buys two options with a higher strike price, a reverse call option strategy is created.

When the market outlook is moderately bullish and the investor is expecting some upward movement in the underlying asset, a long-call ladder strategy could be initiated. This strategy has the potential of earning from time decay if it expires in the range of the strike price. This strategy is created by buying one in-the-money call, selling one at-the-money call and selling one out-of-the-money call of the same underlying asset with the same expiry. Experiments can also be made with different strike prices.

Another income-generating strategy that can be initiated in a moderately bullish market is a covered call option which can be created by using a stock and an option. This strategy is created by purchasing a stock and simultaneously selling a call option, which is out-of-the-money, usually on the higher side.

When the markets are becoming more neutral, buying a long-call

would not be the best strategy to use. In a moderately bullish market, investors could take a short put option strategy, wherein they go short on a put position, i.e., they are obliged to buy the underlying asset in future at a predetermined price if the buyer wishes to exercise his option. This strategy will be helpful for investors if the price of the underlying asset increases moderately or even remains at the same level. In a flat market, this strategy will be beneficial as it gives investors a chance to earn some upfront money in the form of premium which can be adjusted against some margins.

Another strategy for a more neutral or flat market with a bullish view is bull put spread option, which involves two put options, both short and long. It is created by one short put with a higher strike price and one long put with a lower strike price. But here the expiration date remains the same. This strategy has a higher potential of being profitable as it is beneficial in situations when the prices are steady or are rising.

In case an investor has suffered any losses due to price fall, a stock repair strategy is there and can help the investor recover their losses even if the prices of the underlying asset show slight improvement.

This strategy is created by buying one at-the-money call and at the same time selling two out-of-the-money call, of the same underlying asset with the same expiration. The trick here, though, is that the strike price of the sale should be very close to the buying price.

As one can see, there are different derivative strategies for different market outlooks. However, taking a bet with derivatives can be very dangerous as by paying a small premium, investors can end up initiating very large transactions and if the markets do not move the way the investors anticipated, the losses can be huge. These transactions should only be undertaken by an expert with knowledge about stock markets and in particular, derivatives.

(The writer is Associate Professor, Amity University, Noida)



FOREIGN EYE

WITH FRIENDS LIKE THESE...

The world turned a blind eye to Saudi Arabia's behaviour because it suited it. Now the costs are clearer as an investigation found billionaire Jeff Bezos had his mobile phone hacked after receiving a WhatsApp message apparently sent from the account of the Saudi crown prince. A year after journalist Khashoggi's death, many of those who had pulled out of the 2018 investment summit were present. Yet many of them are doubtless in urgent talks with their digital security consultants.

(The Guardian editorial)

CITIZENSHIP AMENDMENT ACT

Cong suffering from mental bankruptcy: Nadda

PTI ■ AGRA (UP)
 Newly elected BJP national president JP Nadda on Thursday slammed the Congress for opposing the CAA, saying the leadership of the party was suffering from "mental bankruptcy" and dared Rahul Gandhi to "speak even ten lines" on the amended law.

Muslims.
 "If he (Rahul) speaks even ten lines on CAA, then we will acknowledge him," he said. The BJP chief said there was no need to be afraid of the CAA as it was the law of the people and accused the Congress of conspiring to fan riots in the state and the country. "Congress leaders have supported those who spread violence. The party is upset and their leaders have given statements in the language of Pakistan," he said. Seeking to allay "apprehensions created by the Congress" that minority community members will lose their citizenship under the new law, the BJP chief said, "The CAA is to give citizenship and not to



snatch it. Those who do not know anything about the law are misguiding the people." Nadda was addressing a public meeting here in support of the amended law three days after taking over the reins from Union Home Minister Amit Shah. The 59-year-old leader from Himachal Pradesh was elected as BJP's 11th president on Monday after he emerged as

the only nominee in the fray. In an apparent reference to the leaders of the BSP and the SP, he said, "These days Dalit leaders are opposing the CAA. These Dalit leaders and the Congress hardly know anything about the CAA and are only spreading canards to mislead people." Nadda said the political innings of the two parties was over and they have understood that times have changed and the country is marching rapidly under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi. Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath said in his address that in a democracy, everyone has the right to speak in a democratic way but those who cause chaos should not be under any kind of illusion as the government has a solution to every problem. "The Government will recover the losses from those who damaged public property," he said. He said protesters who destroyed public property on the signal of PFI and SIMI have now realised that their assets will be confiscated. "Now, these people are trying to ruin the atmosphere by using their women and children as a shield," he said, adding that previous governments used to plead with miscreants. Stressing that opposition

parties have created their vote banks by focussing on conflicts between communities. Adityanath said ever since Prime Minister Narendra Modi came to power, all such issues have been resolved. Therefore, the opposition parties "are trying to spread confusion", he said. "The Opposition is upset with the abrogation of Article 370. They are speaking the language of Pakistan," he added. The Chief Minister further said, "The CAA is connected with India's heritage. It has been the tradition of India to protect the people who come here for shelter. The CAA is a law for granting citizenship not for taking citizenship away. The opposition must understand its reality."



Activist Ayesha Renna, a student of Jamia Millia Islamia, addresses the participants during a protest against CAA, NRC, NPR, in Chennai on Thursday PTI



BJP supporters take part in a pro-Citizenship Amendment Act rally, in Agra on Thursday PTI

Act wake up call for N-E States: UDP

Shillong: The United Democratic Party (UDP), a coalition partner of the ruling Meghalaya Democratic Alliance (MDA), on Thursday said the Citizenship Amendment Act is a wake up call for all States in the North-East to act against illegal immigration from neighbouring countries and influx of non-indigenous people. The UDP executive met here and debated at length on the issue of CAA and the Inner Line Permit, according to its general secretary Jemino Mawthoh. He said the UDP opposed the CAA in principle. We are opposing it because we don't see any rationale here. Let us wait for the wisdom of the Supreme Court to make its interpretation in this regard. When CAA was passed, it was a wake up call for the States of N-E and for the people of Meghalaya. Although this issue is a common one for the North East and the Centres approach is fragmented, all the states in the region must work together to find a solution against illegal immigration from the neighbouring countries and influx of non-indigenous people, Mawthoh told journalists after the meeting. He said, We have been battling the issues of influx and illegal immigration for the last four decades now. This is the right time for the North East states to come up with something which is concrete for the protection and safeguard of the indigenous people. PTI

PM fulfilling 'anti-Muslim agenda' of Jana Sangh, Hindu Mahasabha: Gowda

Bengaluru: JD(S) patriarch HD Deve Gowda on Thursday called on secular regional parties and Congress to fight against the "divisive policies" of the Central Government like the Citizenship Amendment Act and National Register of Citizens with a Common Minimum Programme. The former Prime Minister also accused Prime Minister Narendra Modi of fulfilling the "long standing anti-Muslim agenda" of Jana Sangh and Hindu Mahasabha, and leading the country to the margins of danger. Gowda said that during these trying times, regional parties and the Congress still believing in secular principles have to fight with a CMP "to avert the disaster that may explode anytime." It was a matter left for bigger leaders to decide, but the JD(S), being a small party, should be ready to fight these acts at any level and be ready to go to jail if such a situation arose, he said, addressing a

Opp slams UP CM for warning protesters

Lucknow: The Opposition parties on Thursday slammed Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath for warning anti-CAA protesters that "azadi" slogans raised by them will be treated as sedition. While the Samajwadi Party drew an analogy with the British rule, the Congress termed it "a language of dictators." The UP CM in a rally in Kanpur on Wednesday had said, "If azadi slogans are raised here like they used to be raised in Kashmir, then it will come in the category of sedition and stringent action will be taken by the government." Reacting to it, Senior SP leader Ram Govind Chaudhary said the British too "had described freedom fighters as terrorists." "Now their successors or those who had sided with them are terming those raising azadi slogans traitors," he said. He said there was no need to get "perturbed" by such warnings. "Their countdown has started and that is why they are ranting," Chaudhary said. The SP leader alleged that the CM was threatening women against those hell bent on dividing the country. "Azadi is the birthright of all countrymen and those denying it will have to depart in the same manner as Hitler," the SP leader said. PTI

Kashmiri leaders seek release of political detainees on R-Day

Jammu: Two prominent Kashmiri leaders on Thursday advocated the release of all political detainees, including three former Chief Ministers, as a goodwill gesture on the Republic Day. Ghulam Hassan Mir and Mohammad Dilawar Mir, both former ministers, also demanded the restoration of broadband services to mediapersons and traders besides compensation to those involved in the agriculture and horticulture sectors. "The country is celebrating the Republic Day (January 26) and the tradition has been the release of some detainees. Even some convicted persons used to get relief in the country on the occasion," they said. "People are in preventive detention and it would be good if all of them, including the former chief ministers, are released as a goodwill gesture," Hassan, who is the president of the Jammu and Kashmir Democratic Party Nationalist, told reporters here. He said some of the people, who are lodged in jails outside the Union Territory, should be brought back if their detention is imperative on security reasons. The duo, who was part of a group of former ministers and legislators led by Altaf Bukhari who met the Lt Governor G C Murmu early this month, also batted for the restoration of broadband services to mediapersons and businessmen. "At a time when the country is celebrating the Republic Day, the people of Jammu and Kashmir should be freed from the curb. We want to live a normal life," Hassan said. Referring to their meeting with the Lt Governor on January 7, Hassan said the delegation submitted a memorandum on socio-political and economic interests of people. "After our meeting, we noticed some positive headway on some of our demands like the release of some political leaders and the youth lodged in

Min: 50-bedded AYUSH hospitals to be set up in every district of J&K

Srinagar: To promote healthcare based on alternative medicine in Jammu & Kashmir, the Government will set up 50-bedded hospitals in every district of the newly created Union Territory at a cost of ₹ 12 crore each, Union Minister Shripad Nayak said Thursday. The Union Minister of state for AYUSH and defence also said the hill-resorts of Gulmarg, Patnitop and Pahalgam will be promoted as medical tourism destinations. Addressing an event at SKICC, he gave an overview of wellness centres being established in J&K to promote affordable healthcare, particularly in rural areas, and assured liberal funding for upgrading the health infrastructure. He cited the success of the 100-bedded All India Institute of Ayurveda in New Delhi, established in 2016, and said similar hospitals will be set up across India, including Jammu & Kashmir. "Everyday 2,000 patients visit the hospital for treatment. It will be setup in other places across India including J&K," he said. The Union Minister later inaugurated various projects, which included heritage lighting from Dalgate to Nishat and Nishat to Hazratbal at an estimated cost of ₹ 9.98 crore. An official spokesperson said a number of delegations met the Minister and raised their issues. The business community sought his help to make the Jammu-Srinagar highway an all-weather road. Several ministers visited the Kashmir valley as part of a public outreach programme. Union Minister for Law and Justice Ravi Shankar Prasad inaugurated an indoor sports stadium in Baramulla in north Kashmir and participated in events related to the socio-economic development of the district. The M inister also laid the foundation stone of a mini-pavilion block at Jhelum Stadium in Baramulla, the spokesman said. PTI

Davinder case: NIA raids many Srinagar locations

RAKESH K SINGH ■ NEW DELHI
 The National Investigation Agency, probing the case of arrested Jammu & Kashmir Police DSP Davinder Singh, on Thursday carried out searches at multiple locations in Srinagar. The searched locations include one residence of Dr Murtaza at Gulshan Nagar area in Srinagar where Singh allegedly used to provide shelter to the terrorists including Naveed Babu of Hizbul Mujahideen. Preliminary probe has revealed that Singh not only used his residence at Indiranagar but also houses at Chanpora and Sanat Nagar for providing shelter to the terrorists who were facilitated by the disgraced police officer. Besides owning a house each in Indiranagar and Sanatnagar, Singh also had a home in Jammu which are suspected to have been built from the "proceeds of crime" of facilitating the terrorists' movement in and out of the Valley. A five-member NIA team is stationed in Srinagar for further probe even as senior supervisory officials have returned to the national Capital. Background checks of Singh by the federal probe agency has revealed that in 1997 he was accused in a theft of a Amul butter van owned by the family members of a former Deputy CM. However, he was said to have been taken off the hook at the behest of his then boss and SSP despite an FIR being registered in connection with the incident, sources said. In 1992, Singh had allegedly sold the drugs seized from smugglers and the police department had suspended him and recommended his dismissal from service. However, an Inspector General of the Jammu & Kashmir police had saved him from adverse departmental action, sources said. They said about six serving senior police officers are under the scanner of the probe agencies for their suspected collusion with Singh. Meanwhile, the NIA on Thursday produced Singh before a designated court in Jammu that granted his 15-day NIA custody along with four other accused in the case. "Today, five arrested accused namely Davinder Singh, Syed Naveed Mushtaq Shah, Irfan Shafi Mir, Rafi Ahmad Rather and Syed Irfan Ahmad in case RC-1/2020/NIA/Jammu, were produced before the NIA Special Court, Jammu. The Court has granted 15 days' custody of the accused to NIA till February 6, 2020," the NIA said in a statement. All the five accused will be subjected to custodial interrogation by the NIA.



A view of make-shift tents prepared for pilgrims, during ongoing Magh Mela festival at Sangam, in Prayagraj (Allahabad) on Thursday PTI

Army chief visits forward posts in J&K

PNS ■ JAMMU
 The Chief of Army Staff (COAS) Gen Manoj Mukund Naravane on Thursday visited forward areas along the Line of Control in Jammu region to review the prevailing security situation with field commanders on ground zero. Army Chief was briefed and updated by Lt Gen Harsha Gupta, General Officer Commanding, White Knight Corps and commanders on ground. Before heading for the field visit, Army Chief was briefed by Lt Gen Ranbir Singh, Army Commander Northern Command on the prevailing situation along the Line of Control and also in the hinterland at Udhampur based Northern command headquarters. Ministry of Defence PRO in Udhampur, in a press statement said, "The Army Chief was appreciative of the efforts put in by Northern Command to meet the challenges posed by inimical elements. Defence PRO said, during his visit to the forward location Army



Chief also interacted with the soldiers and lauded them for their unwavering dedication to duty, selfless devotion and high standard of professionalism. "The need to remain prepared for all contin-

gencies was also reinforced by COAS during his interaction with the troops", Defence PRO said. Army Chief also commended the standard operating procedures institutionalized to ensure safe-secure environment and mission readiness of the troops. He conveyed his satisfaction on the people friendly measures undertaken in quick time frame. In the evening, Army Chief Gen Manoj Mukund Naravane along with Lt-Gen Ranbir Singh called on Girish Chandra Murmu, Lieutenant Governor, J&K and discussed prevailing security situation. Defence PRO said, "The Lieutenant Governor was appreciative of the synergy between the Army, other security forces and the civil administration in maintaining peaceful law and order situation."

13 stranded sailors rescued from tanker

TN RAGHUNATHA ■ MUMBAI:

In a meticulous operation, the Indian Coast Guard (ICG) on Thursday coordinated the rescue of 13 Indian sailors from a distressed Merchant tanker MT Reem 5 which was on passage from Basrah in Iran to Hazira in India, about 210 NM from Okha.



Upon receiving a distress call at 8: 05 am that a tanker had reported flooding in engine room and was sinking rapidly, the Maritime Rescue Co-ordination Centre, (MRCC), Mumbai, established contact with both the ship and MRCC Karachi as the position was 90 Nautical Miles inside Pakistan Search and Rescue Region. The MRCC — which works under the ICG and is responsible for co-ordinating the air-sea rescue in Mumbai and an extensive area of the Arabian Sea and also the territorial waters of Mumbai — identified MV Ganga which was operating in close vicinity and directed the vessel to rescue the crew in distress.

"All the 13 crew have been rescued by MV Ganga at 1140 hours today despite severe rough sea conditions. Status of MT REEM 5 is being monitored closely," an ICG spokesperson said here in the evening.

Minorities not against Sena; wanted BJP out of power, says Pawar

TN RAGHUNATHA ■ MUMBAI:

Mumbai: NCP chief Sharad Pawar said on Thursday that representatives of minority communities had conveyed that they would not mind if his party joined hands with the Shiv Sena, but the BJP must be kept away from power in Maharashtra.

The Shiv Sena and BJP contested the State Assembly polls together in October last year, but parted ways following disagreement over sharing the chief ministerial post for two-and-half years on rotational basis. The Shiv Sena, NCP and Congress then came together and formed government in the state after long deliberations, notwithstanding the Sena's aggressive Hindutva ideology.

Referring to it, Pawar, at an event organised by the NCP's minority cell, recalled that no step was being taken (at that time) in the state for three-four weeks (by the Shiv Sena-BJP) towards Government formation.

Pawar said suggestions were invited about a possible tie-up with the Shiv Sena from people in Maharashtra as well as Uttar Pradesh, Bihar and Delhi.

"We were told on behalf of the minorities that if you want to take Shiv Sena along, you can do so, but keep the BJP away. The minorities welcomed that step (of taking the Shiv Sena on board)," Pawar told the gathering. PTI

MNS launches Raj Thackeray's son Amit into mainstream politics

TN RAGHUNATHA ■ MUMBAI:

In yet another son rise in the Thackeray family, the Maharashtra Navnirman Sena (MNS) on Thursday launched its chief Raj Thackeray's son Amit Thackeray in active politics and declared his election as a leader of MNS.

Nearly ten years after late Shiv Sena chief Bal Thackeray launched his grandson Aditya at a Dussehra rally, MNS' senior leader Bala Nandgaonkar, a confidant of Raj, announced the launch of Amit Thackeray into active politics and declared that he had been elected as the party leader.

Amit's mother Sharmila, wife Mitali, grandmother Kundatai and sister Urvashi were present along with him on the stage on the occasion. Raj was, however, not present on

the stage on the occasion. The MNS chief was watching the proceedings from a nearby room, party sources said.

After Nandgaonkar declared Amit Thackeray's election as the MNS leader, he was honoured on behalf of the party's youth wing with a shawl and sword, amid thunderous applause from the party workers present on the occasion.

Born in Mumbai on May 24, 1992, 27-year-old Amit is popular among the MNS' youth wing workers, through his posts on Facebook, Instagram and other social media.

Having graduated from Mumbai's Ruparel College, Amit has completed his studies in architecture. Like his father Raj, Amit is also a good cartoonist. He is football player. On January 27 last year,

Amit married Mitali Borude, a professional fashion designer. Amit's wife Mitali and sister Urvashi are good friends. Together, they launched a cloth brand "The Rock" a few years ago.

The launch of Amit Thackeray into active politics brought back the memories of Aditya Thackeray's initiation into politics at the hands of his grandfather Bal Thackeray. At the Dussehra rally held on October 17, 2010, Bal Thackeray launched the party's youth wing and anointed as his grandson Aditya as its head.

In the run-up to the October 2019, Aditya took a plunge into electoral politics, contested the Assembly elections from Worli constituency and is now a Cabinet Minister in the Maharashtra Cabinet, headed by his father Uddhav.

LJP hails Centre's move of answering question on parents birth optional

New Delhi: BJP ally Lok Janshakti Party on Thursday welcomed the Centre's decision that giving details about parents' birth will be optional for people during the NPR exercise.

LJP president Chirag Paswan expressed confidence that it will help end "confusion" over the issue. Paswan said his party had suggested to the Government that answering some of the questions, which have created confusion among people or are used by opposition parties to "mislead" them, in the National Population Register exercise should be made optional.

It was being said that many people may not have birth details of their parents, and the

entire issue was used by opposition parties for their divisive politics and spreading confusion, he said, asserting that the government has taken a good decision and his party welcomes it.

Union Minister Prakash Javadekar had said on Wednesday that giving date of birth or place of birth of parents is optional in the exercise. "If you don't have it or don't remember, don't give it ... Answering many any questions are optional," he said.

Opposition parties, which have been protesting against the exercise, have said that a large number of people, especially the poor, in the country do not have details of their parents' birth dates or places. PNS

Student punished with 450 sit-ups, taken ill, teacher booked

Thane: A private tuition teacher here in Maharashtra has been booked for allegedly asking an eight-year-old student to do "450 sit-ups" for not completing her homework, police said on Thursday.

The girl, studying in Class 3 at a school in Thane district, took ill after the incident on Friday and had to be admitted to a hospital, they said.

Before this incident, the teacher, identified as Lata, last month also allegedly stripped the girl and beat her with a cane stick for not doing the homework, Naya Nagar police station sub-inspector Sohel

Pathan said quoting the complaint filed by the child's mother. On Friday, the teacher asked the girl, a resident of Shanti Nagar locality in Mira Road area, to do 450 sit-ups as punishment for not doing her homework, the official said.

When the girl returned home from the tuition classes, her mother saw the child was unable to walk and found swelling in both her legs, he said. PTI

Bru voters to be deleted from Mizoram electoral roll

TN RAGHUNATHA ■ MUMBAI:

Aizawl: Names of more than 11,000 Bru community people living in relief camps in Tripura will be deleted from voters' list of their homeland Mizoram, following an agreement that allows the tribals to permanently settle in Tripura, a senior official said on Thursday.

Thousands of Bru community people have been living in relief camps in Tripura since 1997. They had fled Mizoram to reach the neighbouring state because of ethnic clashes. By now, the total number of these internally displaced people has risen to around 34,000.

The process of deletion of Bru voters from the state voters' list is likely to be undertaken once the relief camps are closed down, Mizoram Chief Electoral Officer (CEO) Ahish Kudran told PTI.

"The action regarding deletion of names of the Bru voters will be taken probably during the next roll

revision following provisions of the Representation of the People Act and taking approval from the Election Commission," he said.

There were a total of 12,081 Bru voters in six relief camps in Tripura in the Lok Sabha polls in April last year. Only 33.54 per cent of those voters exercised their franchise at 15 polling booths set up exclusively for them at a village on the Mizoram-Tripura border. Kudra said the exact number of Bru voters could not be determined now as a section of them have returned to Mizoram during the final and ninth round repatriation in October after the last roll revision.

He expressed hope that the Bru voters, who did not return to Mizoram before the quadripartite agreement signed on January 16, would be included in Tripura's electoral roll.

The pact signed by representatives of the Brus, the central, Tripura

and Mizoram governments in New Delhi allows these tribal people to permanently settle in Tripura.

The agreement was signed one-and-a-half months after the latest initiative to send the Bru refugees back to Mizoram failed. Of the targeted 4,447 families, Tripura Chief Minister Biplab Kumar Deb last week said only 350 families could be repatriated.

Deb said it will take at least six months to resettle the 34,000 odd members of the community who are living in Tripura for 23 years. The Brus are staying in six camps at Kanchanpur and Panisagar subdivisions of North Tripura district. They get free ration and a cash dole from the Centre.

The vexed Bru issue started from September, 1997, following demands of a separate autonomous district council by carving out areas of western Mizoram adjoining Bangladesh and Tripura. PTI

After Savarkar, Bal Thackeray espoused Hindutva: Raut

Mumbai: Shiv Sena leader Sanjay Raut claimed on Thursday that after Vinayak Damodar Savarkar, Bal Thackeray was the one who championed Hindutva in Indian politics, and now some people were trying to follow the suit.

January 23 is the birth anniversary of the late Shiv Sena founder. Speaking to reporters here, Raut said Thackeray did not hold any Government post, but he conducted himself like Greek king Alexander.

"He united people and inspired them to fight. After Veer Savarkar, it was Bal Thackeray who lit the flame of hardline Hindutva," he said. PTI

Deport all illegal Pakistani, Bangladeshi immigrants: Raj Thackeray

TN RAGHUNATHA ■ MUMBAI:

Maharashtra Navnirman Sena (MNS) chief Raj Thackeray said here on Thursday that more than the Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA) and National Citizens Register (NCR) which would happen in due course, the Centre's top priority should be to 'deport' all illegal Muslim immigrants from Pakistan and Bangladesh to their respective countries and his party would extend its full support to the Modi Government in this task.

Addressing his party workers at a State MNS convention held at the NESCO grounds at Goregaon in north Mumbai, Raj said: "Like other countries, India should also become very strict in enforcing immigration

laws. We may be in inconvenienced a bit, but it is okay. Mind you, our country is sitting on a volcano or live bombs. We have no idea what will happen when. Things like CAA and NRC will happen. But, the Centre's top priority should be to throw out illegal Muslim immigrants from Pakistan and Bangladesh. For the purpose, I will extend my full support to the Union Government."

Raj said that he had received some "explosive information" which he would pass onto Union Home Minister Amit Shah and state chief minister Uddhav Thackeray. "I do not know about other states. But, there are some places in Maharashtra moulvis from different go there. We do not know what they do there. We do not

get know anything there because even the police are not allowed inside these places. The hunch of the police officials is that a big conspiracy is being hatched at these places. I do not want to talk about it here. I will meet them and pass on the information to the Union Home Minister and state chief minister," Raj said.

The MNS chief announced that his party would take out a massive morchha to the Azad Maidan on February 9 to demand immediate deportation of illegal Muslim immigrants from Pakistan and Bangladesh to their respective countries.

Extending his indirect support to CAA and NRC, Raj said: "There can be a debate on CAA and NRC. ... But, suddenly there are so many mor-

chas against CAA and NRC. Thousands of Muslims have come on the streets. Some people told me that the Muslims are venting out their pent up anger against the revocation of Article 370 in Kashmir and the Supreme Court verdict on the Ram Jannabhoomi. I would like to know as to how many Indian Muslims participated in these morchhas and how many are from outside. If so many Muslims from outside are participating in these morchhas, why should we support these morchhas?" Alluding to the speculation that his party was changing his party's ideology, Raj indirectly hinted at the possibility of his party getting closer to Hindutva ideology. said: "I am both Marathi and Hindu. I have not changed my

religion. If some people try to undermine Marathi, I will go after them. Similarly, if someone tries to undermine Hindu religion, he would not retaliate".

Raj said that he would support all the honest Muslims in the country. "Muslims like late President Abdul Kalam, former test cricketer Zahir Khan and lyricist Javed Akhtar are ours. I am not opposed to Muslims practising their religion quietly. But, why do the Muslims need to use loudspeakers at Masjids while offering Namaz. When we Hindus do not disturb you through our aaratis, why there should be a disturbance to us because namaaz. Please offer namaz but why do you need loudspeakers for that?" The MNS chief took an

indirect pot shot at Shiv Sena by saying: "I am not the one who change my colours to be a part of a government? (in reference to the Sena joining hands with the NCP and Congress to form a government in the state). I am the same that I was. My opinions have not changed. I am not the one who changes my colour and becomes a part of a government".

"I am not the one to criticise someone for the sake of mere criticism. I had criticised Prime Minister Narendra whenever necessary. There have also been occasions when I have congratulated him on the issues like abrogation of Article 370 from the Constitution and Supreme Court verdict on the Ram Mandir issue," the MNS chief said.

Karnataka Govt: Have taken steps to ban outfits involved in anti-social activities

Bengaluru: The Karnataka Government on Thursday said it has taken necessary steps to ban organisations involved in anti-social activities and has sent the required information to the Centre in this regard.

Deputy Chief Minister C.N Ashwathnarayantold reporters in Mysuru that 'merciless action' would be taken against such outfits and they would also be banned.

"To ban them we have sent justification to the central government and have taken necessary steps in this regard and we will continue to take necessary steps.

Their roots have now spread. So systematically we will take legal action against them and thereby enforce control," he added.

Recently state Home Minister Basavaraj Bommai had said that steps had been initiated for legal action and banning organisations like Popular Front of India (PFI) which are allegedly involved in anti-social and terror-related activities in Karnataka. PTI

Public Works Department Government Resolution Number CAT-2017/C.R.8/Building-2, Dated 12th April, 2017.

FORM-1
Government of Maharashtra
Public Works Department
North Mumbai (P.W.) Division, Andheri
Telephone No. 02226231964
E-Tender Notice No. 40 (2019-2020.)

E-mail address:- northmumbai.ee@mahapwd.com Telephone/Fax Number 26231964/26205788

E-Tender for the following work in B-1 Form is invited via online e-tendering system from Registered / Non Registered Contractor of Eligible Class by the Executive Engineer, North Mumbai (P.W.) Division, Andheri (w), Mumbai-58 in behalf of Government of Maharashtra. Tender Documents are downloaded from Government of Maharashtra portal <https://mahatenders.gov.in> & www.mahapwd.com. Right to select or reject is reserved by The Superintending Engineer, Mumbai (P.W.) Circle, Mumbai & Executive Engineer, North Mumbai (P.W.) Division, Andheri (w), Mumbai-58. Tender with conditions never accepted.

Sr. No.	Name of Work	Estimated Cost
1.	Providing & Constructing RCC Boundary Compound wall, Children Aid Compound at Children Aid Society, Mankhurd Mumbai.	Rs. 2,38,87,191/-

The Superintending Engineer, Mumbai (P.W.) Circle, Mumbai & Executive Engineer, North Mumbai (P.W.) Division, Andheri (w), Mumbai-58. Reserves right to accept or reject any tender without assigning any reason. The Conditional tender will not be acceptable.

Note: - Any changes in the scope/ conditions and any other information in the Tender document will be intimated on the same web site. All registered contractor should note

E-Tender Submission Date- 23/01/2020 to 06/02/2020

Pre-Bid Date -29/01/2020 at 12.00 pm in the office of the Superintending Engineer Mumbai (P.W.) Circle Mumbai, 25, Marzban Road, Fort, Mumbai-400 001

E-Tender Opening Date- 07/02/2020. at 15.00 Hrs.

Sd/-
Executive Engineer,
North Mumbai (P.W.) Division,
Andheri (West), Mumbai

DGIPR/2019/2020/4641

PUNE-SATARA HIGHWAY Activist lodges complaint with CBI against illegal toll collection

TN RAGHUNATHA ■ MUMBAI:

Pravin Wategaonkar and Sanjay Shirodkar have lodged a complaint with the CBI, Mumbai, against a private road toll collection company, a special purpose vehicle promoted among others by M/s Reliance Infrastructure and JTEG, China Consortium and Axis Bank had illegally collected ₹1,780 crore from the user of Pune-Satara Highway during the last six years.

In their complaint lodged with the CBI on Wednesday, Wategaonkar - who is a Thane-based RTI activist -- and Shirodkar - an activist from Pune, alleged that M/s P.S. Toll Road Pvt. Ltd, Special Purpose Vehicle promoted by

various companies was - as per the contract - was to complete construction of the six-laning of 140 km Pune-Satara Highway in 30 months from October 1, 2010 to March 31, 2013.

"The construction is still incomplete. NHAI had specifically rejected request for longer construction period of 3.5 years instead of 2.5 yrs in the pre-bid meeting. Completion of six laning in 2.5 yrs was therefore essence of the contract," the complaint stated.

According to the complainants, the Ministry of Road Transport & Highways (MORTH) had on December 16, 2013 issued amended rules governing levy of toll on National Highways and pro-

hibited collection of user fees/ toll on Highways where Six-laning was delayed beyond the scheduled completion dates.

In case of Pune Satara, six laning was scheduled to be completed by March 31, 2013 and taking into account permissible extension solely due to default on part of NHAI, by another nine months i.e. December 31, 2013.

"P.S.Toll Road Pvt Limited had no authority in view of amended rules to collect user fees since January 1, 2014 without completing construction of six laning. Extensions granted by NHAI to construction schedule are in violation of bidding terms and amount to favoring concessionaire," Wategaonkar alleged.

"User fees/ toll collected since Last 6 years is illegal, mala fide and amounts to cheating vehicle users on Pune-Satara Highway by M/s P.S. Toll Road. Toll Revenue of about ₹ 1,780 crore has been illegally collected in the last six years," the two activists alleged.

Another allegation that the complainants have made is in respect of fund diversion of toll collected, in violation of contract, by concessionaire of about ₹ 225 crore upto March 2012 until detected by CAG in March- July 2014.

SEARCH FOR MISSING/KIDNAPPED

General public is hereby informed that a girl (depicted in the photo), **Name:** Ankita D/o Sh. Rajender R/o G-12, Gali No. 12, Rajiv Nagar Extn., Begumpur, Rohini, Delhi has been missing/kidnapped since 12.01.2020 from the area of PS Begumpur, Delhi. In this regard a case vide FIR No. 19/2020 dated 14.01.2020 has been registered at P.S. Begumpur, Delhi. Her physical description is as under:-

Age : 17 years, **Height :** 5', **Complexion :** Shallow, **Face :** Round, **Wearing :** Pink Colour Top and Blue Colour Jeans. Any person having any information/clue about this missing/kidnapped girl, may inform SHO, Begumpur, Delhi at E-mail : cic@cbi.gov.in or Website: <http://cbi.nic.in>.

SHO
Phone: 011-24368638, 24368641 P.S. Begumpur, Delhi
Fax No. 011-24368639 Rohini Distt. Delhi
DP/3654/RD/2020 Ph. No. 011-27579029, 27579030

THE KANGRA CO-OPERATIVE BANK LTD.
 C-29, Community Centre, Pankha Road, Janakpuri, New Delhi-110058
 Phone : 011-25611041, 25611042, 25611043, 25611044
 E-mail: legal@kangrabank.com, legal1@kangrabank.com Website : www.kangrabank.com

APPENDIX II
[See rule 4(2)]
INVENTORY

Inventory of hypothecated movable secured asset: vehicle taken possession in loan account bearing No. GP/2627, Loan a/c No. 00068194592.

Inventory of the hypothecated movable secured asset vehicle taken possession by the bank in the case of Sh. Ramandeep Singh S/o. Sh. Kamaljeet Singh R/o. B-22-23, Top Floor, Near MCD School, Pandav Nagar, Delhi-110092, under section 13(4) of the Securitisation and Reconstruction of financial assets and Enforcement of Security Interest [Act], 2002 and the Security Interest [Enforcement] Rules, 2002 made thereunder, on 22nd day of January 2020 by Authorised officer of The Kangra Co-Operative Bank Ltd., Head office at C-29, Community Centre, Pankha Road, Janakpuri, New Delhi-110058 and having its registered office at 1916, Chuna Mandi, Pahar Ganj, Delhi-110055, under the said [Act], during the hours 9:45 am/10 to 10:15 am/pm.

(1) Description of article/vehicle : Innova Crysta 2.4 G, DL-12A-7/196, Engine No. ZGDA044587, Chassis No. MBJUEM401506913, Model: 2016, Color : White, Make Toyota, Fuel : Diesel, Estimated Value : ₹ 8,00,000/-. Place where kept for sale custody (Name of the person if necessary): Parking area, Janakpuri West Metro Station. (2) Description of article/vehicle : Document Received at the Time of Possession: 1) Insurance, 2) Permit, 3) Fitness, 4) Pollution Certificate. Note: Registration Certificate not received. Estimated Value : ₹ 8,00,000/-. Place where kept for sale custody (Name of the person if necessary): Parking area, Janakpuri West Metro Station.

Panchas:
 Name and Address of Panch : (1) Vikash Chand R/o. B-5/202, Sector-5, Rohini, Delhi-110065. (2) Amarjeet Singh, D-169, Ganesh Nagar, Delhi-110092.

Signature

हरीयाणा सरकार

TENDER NOTICE

SR. NO.	NAME OF DEPARTMENT	NAME OF WORK/NOTICE/TENDER	OPENING DATE CLOSING DATE	AMOUNT/TEND (APPROX.) in Rupees	WEBSITE OF THE DEPARTMENT	NODAL OFFICER
1	FOREST DEPARTMENT, FATEHABAD	RENOVATION AND REPAIR OF RFO RESIDENCE AND OFFICE BUILDING	21.01.2020 28.01.2020	EMD 6000	https://etenders.hry.nic.in	01667-220313 dfo.fatehabad@yahoo.co.in 01746-222282
2	PWD B&R KATHAL	SPECIAL REPAIR FOR RENOVATION OF OLD SE OFFICE IN PWD B&R OFFICE AT KATHAL (IN KATHAL DISTT.)	CLOSING DATE 04.02.2020	13.71 LACS	https://etenders.hry.nic.in	01251-254118 prexeeng_jr@hry.nic.in
3	PANCHAYATI RAJ JHAJJAR	CONST. OF 2 NOS. COMMUNITY CENTRE (RE-TENDER)	22.01.2020 27.01.2020	38 LACS	https://etenders.hry.nic.in	01251-254118 prexeeng_jr@hry.nic.in
4	PANCHAYATI RAJ JHAJJAR	CONST. OF RASTA AND OTHER DEVELOPMENT WORKS (LABOUR RATE) RE-TENDER	22.01.2020 28.01.2020	35.72 LACS	https://etenders.hry.nic.in	prexeeng_jr@hry.nic.in
5	IRRIGATION & WATER RESOURCES DEPARTMENT, SAFIDON	LAYING PIPE LINE FOR DEWATERING OF FIELD WATER TO DITCH DRAIN IN VILLAGE NIMNABAD INCLUDING CONSTRUCTION OF PERMANENT PUMP HOUSE. + 1 OTHER WORK	CLOSING DATE 11.02.2020	495 LACS	https://etenders.hry.nic.in	xensafidon@yahoo.com

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION KINDLY VISIT : www.haryanaeprocurement.gov.in or www.etenders.hry.nic.in

RO NO. 79678

Coronavirus scare grips Asian currencies

₹ declines 7 paise

PTI ■ MUMBAI

The rupee depreciated by 7 paise to close at 71.26 against the US dollar on Thursday as the spread of a deadly new virus from China stoked fears of a global pandemic.

However, softening crude prices and strong domestic equity market restricted the rupee's fall, forex dealers said.

At the interbank foreign exchange market, the local currency opened on a weak note at 71.21. During the day, it swung between a high of 71.16 and a low of 71.35.

The Indian currency finally settled at 71.26, registering a loss of 7 paise over the previous close. "USD/INR Pair traded in range of 71.20-71.30, as markets looks out for new triggers rupee keeps trading in

range but with weak bias due to corona virus being spread in China, which can dampen investment infusion. Rupee can be range of 71.20-71.35 in coming sessions," Jateen Trivedi, Senior Research Analyst (Commodity & Currency) at LKP Securities said. Investor remained anxious over the spread of a deadly new virus from China as it is big export market for many countries. More than 570 people have been infected with the corona virus.

"In the last couple of sessions most Asian currencies were weighed down as the spread of a flu-like virus in China stoked fears of a global pandemic. Euro rose ahead of the important ECB policy statement that will be released today; expectation is that the central bank could hold rates unchanged. We expect the USD/INR (Spot) to quote in the

range of 71.05 and 71.50," Gaurang Somaiya, Forex & Bullion Analyst, Motilal Oswal Financial Services said.

Global crude benchmark Brent was trading 1.46 per cent down at USD 62.29 per barrel. Meanwhile, the dollar index, which gauges the greenback's strength against a basket of six currencies, fell 0.03 per cent to 97.49.

The BSE Sensex settled 271.02 points, or 0.66 per cent, higher at 41,386.40. Likewise, the broader NSE Nifty closed 73.45 points, or 0.61 per cent, down at 12,180.35.

The 10-year Indian government bond yield was at 6.63 per cent. In the fourth special open market operation (OMO) auctions, the Reserve Bank of India on Thursday bought ₹10,000 crore worth of long-term securities and sold ₹2,950 crore worth of short-term Government bonds.

Jio pays ₹195 cr to DoT to clear all AGR dues in advance

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Reliance Jio on Thursday paid ₹195 crore to the telecom department to clear all adjusted gross revenue dues accounted till January 31, 2020, according to an official source. "Reliance Jio has paid ₹195

The company has made provision of ₹177 crore to pay for the Government revenue share based on the Supreme Court judgement dated October 24, 2019

crore for AGR. This includes advance money that company has paid for the month of January, 2020," the source said.

The company has made provision of ₹177 crore to pay for the Government revenue share based on the Supreme Court judgement dated

October 24, 2019. Rivals of Jio, Bharti Airtel and Vodafone Idea have cumulative liability of ₹88,624 crore and have sought more time from the department.

The apex court has set January 23 as the deadline to pay adjusted gross revenue

(AGR) dues. However, companies have requested the DoT (Department of Telecom) to give them time to make payment based on the outcome of their modification petition listed for hearing before the Supreme Court next week, sources said.

DoT orders no coercive action on defaulting Airtel, Voda-Idea

PRADHAN SAYS NON-TELCOS NOT LIABLE

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

On a day when the Supreme Court-mandated deadline for Bharti Airtel and Vodafone Idea to pay ₹88,624 crore in past dues ended, the Department of Telecommunications (DoT) on Thursday decided not to take coercive action against defaulters during pendency of their appeals in the apex court for relaxations in the order.

While Bharti Airtel and Vodafone Idea did not pay the dues, billionaire Mukesh Ambani-led Reliance Jio paid ₹195 crore to clear all outstanding against it, official sources said.

Parallely, Oil Minister Dharmendra Pradhan said the ₹3-lakh crore sought by the DoT from non-telecom PSUs, such as GAIL, Oil India Ltd and PowerGrid, was a result of "communication gap" as these firms are not liable to pay any dues following the Supreme Court's October 24 ruling that non-telecom revenues of telecom firms should be included for considering payments of Government dues.

OIL and GAIL, which were not a party to the litigation that led to the October 24 order, filed clarificatory applications in the Supreme Court.

Following the October 24 order, the DoT had sought ₹1.47 lakh crore from Bharti Airtel, Vodafone Idea and 13 other telecom companies. Parallely, it raised a demand of ₹1.72 lakh crore from gas utility GAIL India Ltd, ₹48,000 crore from Oil India Ltd, ₹40,000 crore from PowerGrid, ₹15,019 crore from Gujarat Narmada Valley Fertilizers and a few more demands on firms such as RailTel.

Official sources said the director of the licensing finance policy (LFP) wing has issued a direction that departments concerned should not take any coercive action, until further orders, against the licensees in case they fail to comply with the Supreme Court order.

Bharti Airtel and Vodafone Idea, whose review petitions against the October 24 order was rejected by the Supreme Court last week, communicated to the DoT that they will not pay the dues by the deadline and will instead away for the outcome of the subsequent

modification petition filed seeking relaxation in payments, they said.

The petition is listed for hearing in the Supreme Court next week. Tata Communications, in which the government holds 26.12 per stake, has also made no provision for the DoT's demand of ₹6,633 crore. "We are in discussion with the telecom ministry. We had given them our reply (on the demand raised)," Pradhan told reporters here. "Possibly because of a communication gap, the Government of India's one department has raised such demand on PSUs under another government department."

He said parallel to discussions with the DoT, the Supreme Court has been approached on the issue.

The government's demand from such companies increased many times more than their net worth and the Centre asked them to go to the Supreme Court against such dues.

While Oil India Ltd filed a clarificatory/modificatory petition on Wednesday, GAIL approached the apex court on Thursday.

BUSINESS CORNER

OBC HOLDS MEET FOR APPROVAL OF FINANCIAL RESULTS

New Delhi: On January 23, 2020, Board of Directors of Oriental Bank of Commerce conducted its meeting at Corporate Office, Gurugram for approval of financial results for the quarter ended 31st December 2019. The audited financial performance and results were presented by MD & CEO Sh Mukesh Kumar Jain and the same have been approved by the Board of Directors.

NHPC ORGANISES FREE MEDICAL CAMP

New Delhi: Under CSR-SDScheme, NHPC Limited, India's premier hydropower company in association with Department of Health, Haryana, ORG Hospital, Faridabad organised a free medical camp at village Pali, Faridabad on January 23, 2020. The camp was highly successful with more than 685 people from surrounding areas availing the benefits of free medical camp.



COMMEMORATIVE COIN SALE COUNTER INAUGURATED

New Delhi: A Commemorative Coin Sale Counter has been inaugurated on January 20, 2020, by Tripti Patra Ghosh, CMD, SPMCIL, in presence of Ajai Kumar Srivastav, Director (Technical), SK Siraha, Director (HR), Ajay Agarwal, Director (Finance), Mamta Singh, CVO, BJ Gupta, General Manager (HR) at SPMCIL, 1st Floor, Jawahar Vyapar Bhawan, Janpath, New Delhi. The inaugural function witnessed a sizable number of customers for purchase of Commemorative Coins on the first day of opening of Sale Counter.



MOU SIGNED BETWEEN NIOS, FSSAI

New Delhi: An MOU was signed on January 22, 2020, between National Institute of Open Schooling (NIOS) and Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) to create awareness in the field of Food Safety, Hygiene and Nutrition. The occasion was graced by Pawan Kumar Agarwal, IAS, CEO, FSSAI, Prof CB Sharma, Chairman, NIOS, Anjani Kumar, Secretary NIOS, Dr AS Bahal, Director Vocational and other senior officers from both the organisations.



India Inc expecting Budget to lower personal I-T rates

PTI ■ MUMBAI

India Inc is banking on the budget to see a reduction in personal income tax to revive the sagging consumption demand after getting the biggest tax break by way of a steep reduction in corporate tax rates, says a pre-budget survey.

Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman will increase the income tax exemption limit from ₹2.5 lakh per annum currently, majority of respondents surveyed by tax consultancy firm KPMG opined.

The majority of respondents also feel that the government in the forthcoming Budget will increase the standard deduction and give more incentives for housing loans. The Government had slashed corporate tax rates to 25 per cent for old companies and to 15 per cent for new companies provided they are ready to forego all the existing exemptions.

Though the move was hailed by many as a booster dose to revive growth it has belied the expectation as growth has since then fallen to more than six-year low of 4.5 per cent in the September quarter from 5 per cent in the previous quarter. What more the advance estimate last week has pegged the full-year real GDP growth at 5 per cent while the nominal GDP growth at a 48-year low of 7.5 per cent, down from the budget estimate of 13 per cent.

Also, most of the old-generation companies have decided to draw from the existing

incentives and not to switch to the new tax regime. However, in the pre-budget survey involving 215 companies by KPMG India this month, more than half of the respondents plan to opt for the lower tax regime of 22 per cent by giving up available incentives from next fiscal.

A majority of respondents also believe that the tax rate for foreign companies should also be reduced in light of tax cuts for domestic companies.

A further stimulus by way of personal tax cuts is also anticipated. "Majority anticipate the basic exemption limit of ₹2.5 lakh for individuals will be increased. They also expect an increase in the income limit at which the maximum marginal rate of 30 per cent kicks in. If implemented, this can help spur consumer demand by complementing the interest rate cuts delivered since last year," says the survey.

A majority of the respondents also believe that the finance minister will not introduce an inheritance tax. This is in line with the overall expectation, that there exists a need to provide a fiscal stimulus by reducing taxes on individuals. About 50 per cent of the respondents expect tax holiday for exports available to SEZ units to be extended to units set up beyond March 2020.

Dispute resolution continues to be an area of concern for most companies with almost half of them believing that the approach of taxmen to tax disputes are not in line with international norms.

Niti to develop National Data Platform

New Delhi: Government think-tank Niti Aayog will develop a national data and analytics platform to make all government data accessible to stakeholders in a user-friendly manner. Releasing the Vision Document for the National Data and Analytics Platform (NDAP), Niti Aayog vice-chairman Rajiv Kumar said that the NDAP will strive to ensure that the data is assured, consistent, coherent and credible.

PTI

Indian economy poised to take off: Goyal

PTI ■ DAVOS

Asserting that the Indian economy is well-poised to take off, Union minister Piyush Goyal on Thursday said there is a lot of enthusiasm for making investments in the country.

Speaking at a session at the World Economic Forum (WEF) annual summit here, the Commerce and Industry Minister also said the government will hold discussions with Britain and European Union on free trade agreements. Britain is set to leave the European Union by end of January.

"... Things have once again started showing an upturn... Economy is well poised to take off from here," Goyal said.

According to him, the enthusiasm to make investments in India is infectious. At least four or five companies have said that more than 50 per cent of their total workforce would operate out of India in the coming years. Some of them are big names, he noted. On RCEP, Goyal said it was



an "unbalanced trade agreement, which was really not fulfilling the guiding principles on which RCEP started about eight years ago, therefore India chose not to participate in it".

Out of the RCEP countries India already has bilateral trade agreements with ASEAN 10 with Japan and Korea, we are

close to concluding negotiations with Australia which we have restarted now and in the next 6 to 8 months we are can close a bilateral trade partnership with Australia, he said.

"RCEP was effectively becoming a free trade agreement between China and India. I don't think India is ready to

engage unless we see open government, better transparency, regulatory practices being followed, and a greater market access for Indian goods and services on a reciprocal basis," he said.

Speaking at a session on 'Strategic Outlook: India' at the WEF 2020 here, Goyal said "trade negotiations are very complex issues. You do not negotiate trade with deadlines and in a hurry".

Asked about the credit crunch in the Indian economy, State Bank of India Chairman Rajnish Kumar said he believes the credit market will be back to stability and normalcy soon.

"There has been a series of steps... Bank recapitalisation has happened, PSU banks, which control about 60 per cent of the assets in the country are returning to profits...", he said.

He added the course correction that was required has happened and banks are much more cautious than what we were earlier. He further stressed that "we are ready to lend".

'If I were not a Minister today, I would be bidding for Air India'

PTI ■ DAVOS

As the Government works on divesting debt-laden Air India, Union Minister Piyush Goyal on Thursday said if he was not a minister, he would be bidding for the airline. Air India has been in the red for long and the government is now in the process of finalising the contours for its disinvestment.

Responding to a query about proposed disinvestment of Air India, BPCL and other companies, Goyal said in the first term, the Government had inherited an economy which was in pretty terrible shape.

Steps were taken to put the

economy back in shape and if the government had looked at divesting these jewels, it would not have got a great value.

He was talking at a session on 'Strategic Outlook: India' at the WEF 2020 here.

"If I weren't a minister today, I would be bidding for Air India. It has some of the best bilaterals the world over... A well managed and efficient Air India with lot more good aircraft put in using these bilaterals is nothing short of a gold mine to my mind," Goyal said.

Bilaterals refers to an agreement between two countries that allows each other's airlines to operate services with a specific number of seats.

WEF unveils new internet security principles to help protect up to 1bn users

PTI ■ DAVOS

Davos: The World Economic Forum on Thursday announced new internet security principles, developed by a group of leading ISPs and multilateral organisations, to help protect up to one billion users.

Unveiling the new initiative here at its 50th annual meeting, the WEF said BT, Deutsche Telekom, Du Telecom, Europol, Global Cyber Alliance, Internet Society, Korea Telecom, Proximus, Saudi Telecom, Singtel, Telstra and ITU endorse these new principles combatting high-volume cyberattacks, protecting up to one billion consumers in 180 countries.

While certain cyberattacks focus on specific organisations, the majority target the largest number of internet users possible. Such attacks are often relatively easy for cybercriminals to undertake and can cause serious harm.

The impact of indiscriminate malicious activity online can be significant and carries an estimated global price tag of USD 6 trillion in 2021, the WEF said. The new principles ask ISPs to protect consumers by default from widespread cyberattacks and act collectively with peers to identify and respond to known threats.

Data privacy must be seen as a human right, says Nadella

PTI ■ DAVOS

Microsoft CEO Satya Nadella on Thursday said data privacy must be seen as a human right that needs to be protected and have full transparency.

Speaking here at the World Economic Forum (WEF) Annual Summit 2020, Nadella said it also needs to be ensured that the huge data being used with consent is for the good of the society. During a conversation with WEF Founder and Executive Chairman Klaus Schwab, Nadella also favoured a debate on CEO pay and all kinds of remuneration, including return on capital.

Asked what was his recipe for doing good and at the same time doing well as the most valuable company in the world, Nadella said, "It comes down to having that core business design: when you do well, the world around you does well." "People and institutions are all part of our society, so if you don't think about the broader systems, it's not stable," he added. "The question ultimately goes back to what is the market saying and what is society saying?"

Referring to the book 'The Narrow Corridor', he said you have to find what works, so no one loses out. It is in the long-term interest of the shareholders that we do the right thing by the stakeholders, he emphasised.



said. "CEOs in today's world have more to do to communicate that stakeholder capitalism is for the shareholders' long-term benefit," Nadella said.

He said there are four interconnected components needed for the world to collectively achieve more this decade — power broad economic growth through tech intensity; ensure that this economic growth is inclusive; build trust in technology and its use; and commit to a sustainable future.

Asked about a possible bifurcation of economy and tech between China and the US, Nadella said, "Every country cares about their national security, I would urge us to think about what should happen." "If we should consciously decouple, all we will do is increase the overall transactional costs of our economy. "The last 30-year period has been an amazing period of market access, but we need to grow up because the world is more complicated," he said.

MoS Mansukh meets IMO Secy Gen at Davos

PTI ■ DAVOS

New Delhi: Union Minister of State for Shipping (Independent Charge) and Chemicals & Fertilizers Mansukh Mandaviya on Thursday met Secretary General of International Maritime Organization (IMO) Kitack Lim at the 50th Annual Meeting of World Economic Forum at Davos, Switzerland. Mansukh Mandaviya (I/C) and Chemical & Fertilizers with the Secretary General, IMO Kitack Lim in meeting at the 50th Annual Meeting of World Economic Forum at Davos, Switzerland. In this meeting, mutual discussions were held regarding various Global Maritime issues concerning India like Ban on Single Use Plastic by India for reducing Marine Pollution, Availability of low Sulphur fuel complying to IMO 2020 Convention and installation of Mahatma Gandhi Bust at IMO Headquarter, London.



ADITYA BIRLA CAPITAL PROTECTING INVESTING FINANCING ADVISING

Aditya Birla Finance Limited

Registered Office: Indian Rayon Compound, Veraval, Gujarat - 362 266
CIN: U65990GJ1991PLC064603

"APPENDIX- IV-A"
[See Proviso to Rule 8 (6)]
SALE NOTICE FOR SALE OF IMMOVABLE PROPERTIES

Auction Sale Notice for Sale of Immovable Assets under the Securitization and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 read with proviso to Rule 8 (6) of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002.

Notice is hereby given to the public in general and in particular to the Borrower (s) and Guarantor (s) that the below described immovable property mortgaged to the Secured Creditor the physical possession of which has been taken by the Authorized Officer of Aditya Birla Finance Limited Secured Creditor, will be sold on "As is where is", "As is what is", and "Whatever there is" on 10th February 2020, for recovery of Rs. 3,43,92, 342.75 (Rupees Three Crores Forty Three Lacs Ninety Two Thousand Three Hundred Forty Two And Seventy Five Paise) due to the Aditya Birla Finance Limited Secured Creditor from M/s Shalini Impex Private Limited, Mr. Sanjay Kuma, Ms. Shalini Verma, Mr. Rajiv Kumar, Ms. Malini Verma, Mr. Siddhartha Sanjay. The reserve price will be for Property is Rs.1, 85, 00,000/- (Rupees One Crore Eighty Five Lakhs Only) and the earnest money deposit will be For Property is Rs 18, 50,000/- (Rupees Eighteen Lakhs Fifty Thousand Only)

DESCRIPTION OF THE IMMOVABLE PROPERTY: -

All that part and parcel of the property consisting of Apartment No. 301, Duplex on 3rd & 4th Floor, Block No. 2, namely, Heritage City and having super area 1849.00 Sq. feet (171.84 Sq. meter) along with Terrace Area 230 Sq. ft., comprising of Drawing-cum-Dining Room, One Bed Room with attached Toilet, Kitchen, Servant Room with W.C. & Terrace on 3rd Floor and Two Bed Rooms with attached Toilets and Terrace on 4th Floor. In the said Group Housing Complex, Heritage City, situated at Village Sirhaal, Tehsil & District, Gurgaon (Haryana) Direction at Site:- North:- Entry, South:- Other Property, East :- Other Property, West :- Other Property

For detailed terms and conditions of the sale, please refer to the link provided in Secured Creditor's website i.e. www.adityabirlafinance.com

Tarun Sharma (Ph. No. 9540178178)
Sd/- Authorised Officer
Aditya Birla Finance Limited

PLACE : Delhi
DATE : 24-01-2020

GOVERNMENT OF JAMMU & KASHMIR
OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER, MECHANICAL IRRIGATION DIVISION,
AKHNOOR/NOWSHERA Tele/Fax : 01924-253998, E-mail : ifcjmiddakhnoor@gmail.com

NOTICE INVITING TENDER
e-NIT No. 46/MID/AN, Dated 18.01.2020

For and on behalf of the President of India, Executive Engineer, Mechanical Irrigation Division Akhnoor/Nowshera invites e-tenders from approved contractors/ Registered firms/Authorized dealers/ Workshop owners having experience in small hydro Mechanical/Electrical Works.

S.No. 1, Name of Work :- Restoration / Reconditioning / face-lifting of pump house and suction pipes and other allied works at LIS Bal.

Quantity :- 01 Job

Earliest Money (Rs. in lacs) :- 0.035
Cost of tender document :- Rs. 200
Period of completion :- 15 days

Class of contractor :- Approved contractors/Registered firms/Authorized dealers/Workshop owners having experience in small hydro - Mechanical / Electrical Works.

1. The bidding documents can be seen and downloaded from the website <http://www.jktenders.gov.in> from 18/01/2020 (04:00PM) to 27/01/2020 (03:00 PM).

No. DIP/J-12634/19
Dated:- 22.01.2020

Democrats face risks and limits in Trump's impeachment trial

Washington: The challenge is becoming increasingly clear for House Democrats prosecuting President Donald Trump's impeachment case as the Senate convenes for a second day of arguments in the landmark trial.

No matter how overwhelming the evidence confronting Trump, it becomes less compelling when presented again and again, day after day, as Democrats try to convince not just fidgety senators but an American public deeply divided over the Republican president in an election year.

The team led by Rep. Adam Schiff, the chairman of House Intelligence Committee, constructed a gripping account of Trump's political pressure on Ukraine and attempt to cover up the "corrupt scheme" central to the charges.

But the limits are apparent. Prosecutors must rely on the same loops of videotaped testimony — ambassadors, nation-

al security officials and even the president himself — after Trump's GOP Senate allies blocked new witnesses.

Democrats were once reluctant to take on impeachment during an election year but are marching toward a decision by the Senate that the American public also will judge.

"We're trying this case to two juries — the Senate and the American people," Schiff acknowledged Wednesday ahead of opening arguments.

"The American people are watching. The American people are listening. And they do have an open mind."

Trump blasted the proceedings in a Thursday morning tweet, declaring them the "Most unfair & corrupt hearing in Congressional history!"

House Democrats impeached Trump last month, arguing he abused his office by asking Ukraine to investigate political rival Joe Biden while withholding crucial military



Night falls on the Capitol, in Washington on Wednesday evening during the impeachment trial of President Donald Trump. House prosecutors are outlining what they refer to as President Donald Trump's "corrupt scheme" to abuse power and obstruct Congress as they open six days of arguments in his trial. AP

aid. They also charged him with obstructing Congress by refusing to turn over documents or allow officials to testify in the House probe.

Republicans have defended Trump's actions as appropriate and cast the process as a

stronger and harder to beat if he survives this? Yes, probably. But Congress has no choice," he said. Senators must cast their votes and "live with that in history." Each side has 24 hours over three days to present their case. After the House prosecutors finish Friday, the president's lawyers will follow. They are expected to take only Sunday off and push into next week.

Then there will be 16 hours for senators, who must sit quietly at their desks, no speeches or cellphones, to ask written question, and another four hours for deliberations.

"There's a lot of things I'd like to rebut," said Trump lawyer Jay Sekulow at the Capitol, "and we will rebut."

On the first day of opening arguments, Schiff appealed to senators not to be "cynical" about politics, but to draw on the intent of the nation's Founding Fathers in providing the remedy of impeachment and removal. AP

Impeachment trial not ready for broadcast prime time

AP ■ NEW YORK

The first night of arguments in favor of President Donald Trump's impeachment before the US Senate was judged not ready for prime time by many of the nation's television executives.

ABC, CBS and NBC all stuck with regularly scheduled programs like "Chicago Med," "Criminal Minds" and "Modern Family" Wednesday evening instead of showing the House managers' evening session at the impeachment trial. That lasted about two hours, 15 minutes.

CNN and MSNBC carried the trial in full. Fox News

Channel, after showing Rep. Adam Schiff speak for about a half hour, interrupted for a story about a child support case involving former Vice President Joe Biden's son Hunter, and never returned.

Even two PBS stations in the New York area showed science programming and "Antiques Roadshow" instead of the trial Wednesday evening. PBS said it gave its local stations the option to show the trial or not.

The calls Wednesday night are significant because if the top networks decided not to pre-empt programming on the first full night the case against Trump was laid out,

chances are they won't reverse course later unless the unexpected happens.

Daytime was an intriguing contrast, since the top three broadcasters and cable news outlets all carried Schiff's initial stand at the podium, which lasted more than two hours.

It was rare for anyone in today's media world to command full television attention to that extent.

The Senate's rules for the trial, which required using a single camera on the speaker and didn't allow reaction shots of senators, only served to accentuate Schiff's message.

Vietnam confirms two cases of SARS-like coronavirus

Hanoi: Two Chinese nationals in Vietnam have tested positive for the SARS-like coronavirus and are being treated in hospital, officials said on Thursday.

A Chinese man living in Ho Chi Minh City was infected by his father who travelled to Vietnam on January 13 from the Chinese city of Wuhan, the epicentre of the virus.

The father was hospitalised on January 17 with a high fever, days before his son showed symptoms, health officials said.

Both were quarantined and tested positive for coronavirus, a new infection that has already killed 17 people in China and infected more than 570.

"The patients have shown signs of good recovery, (their) fever has reduced and they can eat now," Doctor Nguyen Ngoc Sang said Thursday at a meeting at Ho Chi Minh City's Cho Ray hospital.

Vietnam's deputy health minister urged all precautions to avoid any further spread.

"We should immediately



test any suspected cases so that we can detect (the disease) quicker. We don't want it to spread to the public," Nguyen Trung Son said at the meeting attended by reporters.

Vietnam shares a long porous border with China and welcomes millions of visitors a year from its northern neighbour.

Japan, Hong Kong, Macau, South Korea, Taiwan, Thailand, Singapore and the United States have all reported confirmed cases of the new virus after it first emerged in China on December 31. AFP

US expects UK trade deal 'this year': Mnuchin

Davos: US Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin on Thursday said a post-Brexit trade deal between the United States and Britain was a top priority and he expected such an agreement by the end of the year.

The top US economic official made his comments before heading to London to lay out ways the two countries could reach a quick accord after the UK leaves the EU on January 31.

Responding to Mnuchin's remarks, the spokesman for British Prime Minister Boris Johnson declined to offer a timetable.

"Both sides have been clear in public that they want to agree an ambitious free trade agree-

ment as quickly as possible," the spokesman said.

"Once we have left the EU in just over a week's time we'll be free to start having discussions with countries around the world including the US," he added.

Mnuchin's UK counterpart, Sajid Javid, will embark on trade talks with both the EU and the US, in the hope of sparing the British economy any short or medium-term shocks of Brexit.

Javid told the US "they wanted to accomplish both these deals in 2020. That's obviously an aggressive timeline," Mnuchin said on the sidelines of the World Economic Forum in Davos.

A UK-US deal "is an absolute priority for President (Donald) Trump and we expect to complete that with them this year, which we think will be great for them and great for us," he added.

US Commerce Secretary Wilbur Ross insisted the UK and US would have an easier time striking the deal than the EU, given close existing ties.

"There are far fewer issues between the UK and US than there are between either of us and the EU because our economies are both very similar," Ross said.

Stressing financial services, Ross underlined "there's already a pretty high degree of integration and coordination." AFP

N Korea to make Munich Security Conference debut in 2020

AFP ■ BERLIN

North Korea will send a delegation to the Munich Security Conference for the first time in the 56-year history of the top diplomatic gathering, organisers said on Thursday.

An MSC spokesperson confirmed that North Korean vice Foreign Minister Kim Son Gyeong would attend next month's event.

The announcement comes a month after Pyongyang declared it was abandoning moratoriums on nuclear and

intercontinental ballistic missile tests.

The self-imposed ban on tests had been the centrepiece of two years of nuclear diplomacy between the US and North Korea, including three meetings between the two countries' leaders Donald Trump and Kim Jong Un.

Also expected to attend the Munich talks this year are US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo, Defense Secretary Mark Esper and the leader of the House of Representatives Nancy Pelosi.

The Iranian foreign minister Mohammad Javad Zarif is likewise expected to attend.

Founded in 1963, the Munich Security Conference hosts hundreds of high-ranking officials and dozens of world leaders each year to discuss security challenges.

The 2020 edition will be held from February 14 to 16.

The programme and full list of participants is to be published in the coming weeks.



NEW TEETH GEL MAY PREVENT DENTAL CAVITIES

Hong Kong: Researchers have developed a bioactive peptide that coats tooth surfaces, helping prevent new cavities and heal existing ones in lab experiments. Cavities, or dental caries, are the most widespread non-communicable disease globally, according to the World Health Organisation.

RUSSIAN STRIKES KILL 8 IN SYRIA'S IDLIB: MONITOR

Beirut: Russian air strikes in Syria's Idlib on Thursday killed eight civilians, including five children, a war monitor said.

SYRIAN REBELS FIRE MORTAR SHELLS ON ALEPPO DAMASCUS

Damascus: Dozens of mortar shells hit the northern Syrian city of Aleppo city, the latest in a series of rebels' mortar attacks on the city's residential areas. The dozens of shells slammed several residential areas, caused injuries particularly among children, said the Syrian Observatory for Human Rights on Wednesday. Xinhua news agency reported.

SIX MALI SOLDIERS KILLED IN OVERNIGHT AMBUSH

Bamako: Six soldiers were killed and several were wounded in an overnight attack in central Mali, the army said Thursday, in fresh violence in the war-torn West African State.

1 killed, 7 injured in US shooting

IAN ■ WASHINGTON

One person was killed and seven others injured when a gunman opened fire in a busy downtown area of the US city Seattle, police said on Twitter, adding they were searching for suspects.

The police said at least one suspect was being sought in connection with the incident, which took place on Wednesday. Footage from the scene showed officers tending to casualties on the pavement near Third Avenue and Pine Street, BBC reported.

Iran uses violence, politics to try to push US out of Iraq

Beirut: Iran has long sought the withdrawal of American forces from neighbouring Iraq, but the US killing of an Iranian general and an Iraqi militia commander in Baghdad has added new impetus to the effort, stoking anti-American feelings that Tehran hopes to exploit to help realize the goal.

The January 3 killing has led Iraq's parliament to call for the ouster of US troops, but there are many lingering questions over whether Iran will be able to capitalize on the sentiment.

An early test will be a "million-man" demonstration against the American presence, called for by influential Shiite cleric Moqtada al-Sadr and scheduled for Friday.

It is not clear whether the protesters will try to recreate a New Year's Eve attack on the US Embassy compound in Baghdad by Iran-supported militias in the wake of US airstrikes that killed 25 militiamen along the border with Syria.

Iran might simply try to use the march to telegraph its intention to keep up the pressure on US troops in Iraq. AP



Pak conducts test launch of nuclear-capable ballistic missile

PTI ■ ISLAMABAD

Pakistan on Thursday conducted a successful training launch of nuclear-capable surface-to-surface ballistic missile 'Ghaznavi', which can strike targets up to 290 kilometers.

The training launch was part of Field Training Exercise of Army Strategic Forces Command aimed at rehearsing operational readiness procedures during day and night," the Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR), the media wing of the army, said in a statement.

The 'Ghaznavi' missile is capable of delivering multiple types of warheads up to a range of 290 kilometers, the statement said.

UN court orders Myanmar to prevent Rohingya genocide

AP ■ THE HAGUE

In a sweeping legal victory for members of the Rohingya Muslim minority, the United Nations' top court on Thursday ordered Myanmar take all measures in its power to prevent genocide against the Rohingya people.

The court's president, Judge Abdulqawi Ahmed Yusuf, said the International Court of Justice "is of the opinion that the Rohingya in Myanmar remain extremely vulnerable."

The court added that its order for so-called provisional measures intended to protect the Rohingya is binding "and creates international legal obligations" on Myanmar.

At the end of an hour-long

sitting in the court's wood-paneled Great Hall of Justice, judges also ordered Myanmar to report to them in four months on what measures the country has taken to comply with the order and then to report every six months as the case moves slowly through the world court.

Rights activists immediately welcomed the unanimous decision.

"The ICJ order to Myanmar to take concrete steps to prevent the genocide of the Rohingya is a landmark step to stop further atrocities against one of the world's most persecuted people," said Param-Preet Singh, associate international justice director of New York-based Human Rights Watch.

Three US firefighters killed in Australia water bomber crash

AFP ■ SYDNEY

A large water-bombing plane crashed while fighting fires southwest of Sydney on Thursday, killing all three US crew on board, Australian officials said.

New South Wales Rural Fire Service commissioner Shane Fitzsimmons said authorities lost contact with the Canada-owned C-130 Hercules aircraft, which was operating in the Snowy Monaro region, shortly before 1:30 pm (0230 GMT) Thursday.

Fitzsimmons said all three people killed in the crash were residents of the United States,

one of several countries that have sent crews of specialist firefighters to help battle Australia's devastating bush fires.

"Our hearts are with all those that are suffering what is the loss of three remarkable, well-respected crew that have invested so many decades of their life into firefighting and fire management," he said.

The incident brought the death toll in Australia's bush fires to at least 32 since the crisis began in September.

The cause of the crash was not immediately known, but Fitzsimmons had said earlier in the day that high winds were

making flying the big tankers "very difficult."

Canadian firm Coulson Aviation, which owned the plane, grounded operations of its other large air tankers fighting fires in New South Wales and Victoria states "pending review" of the aircraft, Fitzsimmons said.

Initial reports suggested a "large fireball" was caused when the plane "impacted heavily with the ground," he said.

"We've got a number of firefighters and a number of crew that are in the area and working to contain and work around the fire," he said.

THE KANGRA CO-OPERATIVE BANK LTD.
C-29, Community Centre, Pankha Road, Janakpuri, New Delhi-110058
Phone : 011-25611041, 25611042, 25611043, 25611044
E-mail: keagal@kangrabank.com, legal1@kangrabank.com Website : www.kangrabank.com

APPENDIX I (See rule 4(1))
PANCHNAMA

Whereas We
(1) Name of Panch and Father's / Husband's Name : Vikas Chand, S/o. Kuldeep Chand. Address: B-5/202, Sector-5, Rohini, Delhi-110085. Age: 38, Occupation: Service.
(2) Name of Panch and Father's / Husband's Name : Amarjeet Singh, Address: D-169, Ganesh Nagar, Delhi-110092. Age: 42, Occupation: Service.

The above mentioned Panch on being called by Harish Sharma, Authorised officer of The Kangra Co-operative Bank Ltd., Head office at C-29, Community Centre Pankha Road, Janakpuri, Delhi-110058, and having its Registered office at 1916, Chuna Mandi, Paharganj, New Delhi-110055, under The Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest (Act, 2002 (54 of 2002) and in exercise of the powers under section 13 (4) of the said [Act] entered the premises of Sh. Ramandeep Singh S/o Sh. Kamaljeet Singh R/o. B-22-23, Top Floor, Near MCD School, Pandav Nagar, Delhi-110092, and demanded the payment of the dues mentioned in the demand notice dated 02-03-2019, in respect of loan account.

We also hereby state that during take over of possession of the vehicle no untoward incident had occurred as known to the knowledge and belief of the Authorised Officer of the Bank.

Therefore, we declare that the fact of the Panchnama mentioned herein are true and correct to the best of our observations and knowledge.

1) Name : Vikas Chand R/o. B-5/202, Sector-5, Rohini, Delhi-110085, Date : 22-01-2020 Time : 9:45 am. 2) Name : Amarjeet Singh R/o. D-169, Ganesh Nagar, Date : 22-01-2020 Time : 9:45 am
Drawn before me Authorised Officer

PERFECTPAC LIMITED
CIN: L72100DL1972PLC005971
Regd. Off.: 910, Chiranjiv Tower-43, Nehru Place, New Delhi-110019
Ph: 011-26441015-18, E-mail: info@perfectpac.com
Website: www.perfectpac.com

NOTICE OF BOARD MEETING

Notice is hereby given that pursuant to Regulation 29 read with Regulation 47 of the Securities and Exchange Board of India (Listing Obligations and Disclosure Requirements) Regulations, 2015 that the meeting of the Board of Directors of the Company is scheduled to be held on **Saturday, February 01, 2020, inter-alia**, to consider and approve the Unaudited Financial Results of the Company for the quarter and nine months ended December 31, 2019 (the "Financial Results").

A copy of this Notice and Financial Results shall also be available at the Company's website www.perfectpac.com and the website of the Stock Exchanges-BSE: www.bseindia.com and CSE: www.cse-india.com.

For Perfectpac Limited
Sanjay Rajgarhia
Managing Director

Place: New Delhi
Date: 23.01.2020

WESTERN RAILWAY
PROVISION OF CONTRACTUAL AC COACH ATTENDANT

Tender Notice No. & Date : M137/59 (CACCA - ST - BL) Dtd : 21.01.2020.

Name of Work : Provision of Contractual AC Coach Attendant in AC Coaches of Surat / Udhna and Valsad Area Trains for 02 Years. Approx. Cost of Work (in ₹) : ₹ 3,46,89,344.32 (All Inclusive). EMD (in ₹) : ₹ 3,23,500/-

Time : 17.02.2020 at 15:00 hrs. Note : For more details please visit our website www.irps.gov.in Manual offer will not be considered.

Like us on www.facebook.com/WesternRly

UTTAR HARYANA BIJLI VITRAN NIGAM
PUBLIC NOTICE

Sr. No.	Name of Board/Deptt./Auth	Name of Work/Notice/Tender	Opening Date Closing Date (Time)	Amount/EMD (Approx.) in Rupees	Website of the Board/Deptt./Auth	Nodal Officer/Contact Details/Email	Tender Ref. No./Tender No.
1	Uttar Haryana Bijli Vitran Nigam	Registration for testing of power through Power Exchanges (E&P) for the year 2020-21	Start Time: 21-01-2020 (10:00 hrs) Last Time: 04-02-2020 (16:00 Hrs)	Rs. 5,00,000/- (Rs. Five Lakhs only)	uhvn.org.in ehenders@uhvn.org.in	9271610222 ehenders@uhvn.org.in	VI No. 64/HPPC

RO NO. 70986/N Dt. 22-01-2020

CHANGE OF NAME

I, Aadesh Narayan Sharma S/o Sh. Laxmi Narayan Sharma R/o T-393-396, 1st Floor, left side, Baljeet Nagar, Patel Nagar, New Delhi - 110 008 state that both the names Aadesh Narayan Sharma and Aadesh Narayan Sharma are of same person and I will be known as Aadesh Narayan Sharma for all future purposes and due to oversight in my intermediate certificate my father name was wrongly mentioned Laxmi Narayana Sharma instead of correct name Laxmi Narayan Sharma.

Metro Railway, Kolkata
Kolkata's Pride
REPAIRING OF BATTERY CHARGER

Dy. Chief Electrical Engineer/RS/NOA, Dum Dum Car Depot Complex, Metro Railway, Kolkata-700090 for and on behalf of the President of India invites tender through e-tendering for the following work : Name of work: Repairing of M/s Signotron Make Battery Charger of Model No.: PREC 130-220. Tender value: ₹ 2,34,960 only. Earnest money: ₹ 4,700 only. Date and Time of closing: Up to 15.00 hours (IST) of 27.02.2020. Notice Board Address: Office of the Dy.CEE/RS, at above address. Website particulars: <https://www.irps.gov.in>

E-Tender No.: MR-EL-RS-NOA-OT-18-19-14
FASTER • SAFER • SMOOTHER • CLEANER

TENDER NOTICE

Sr. No.	Name of Board/Corp./Auth	Name of Work Notice Tender	Opening Date Closing Date (Time)	Amount / EMD (Approx.) in Rupees	Website of the Board Corp./Auth	Nodal Officer/Contact Details/Email
1	PT. LAKHMI CHAND STATE UNIVERSITY OF PERFORMING & VISUAL ARTS, SECTOR-6, ROHTAK	PURCHASE OF STILL CAMERAS IN FACULTY OF FILM & TELEVISION DEPARTMENT (FTV)	21.01.2020 11.02.2020	42.65 LACS	www.etenders.hry.nic.in	9466628298 devenderrathoe918@gmail.com
2	PT. LAKHMI CHAND STATE UNIVERSITY OF PERFORMING & VISUAL ARTS, SECTOR-6, ROHTAK	PURCHASE OF COMPUTERS FOR VARIOUS DEPARTMENTS AT PLCSUPVA ROHTAK	15.01.2020 04.02.2020	84 LACS	www.etenders.hry.nic.in	ce.supva@gmail.com
3	PT. B.D. SHARMA PGIMS ROHTAK	SHORT TERM E-TENDER NOTICE NO UHSR/PURCHASE/2020/1 DT. 20.01.2020 REGARDING PURCHASE OF MBS/ MBE ETC. FOR USE IN PGIMS/UHS ROHTAK.	CLOSING DATE 05.02.2020	NIL	a) www.uhsr.ac.in b) www.etenders.hry.nic.in	9255169924 purchase.section@gmail.com
4	GMDA, GURUGRAM	ANNUAL MAINTENANCE OF MASTER ROAD OF SECTOR 58 TO 67 (ROAD TRANSFERRED FROM HSPV), GURUGRAM	20.01.2020 03.02.2020	152.41 LACS	https://www.gmda.gov.in/	0124-2746614 set4.gmda@gov.in
5	K.U. KURUKSHETRA	SUPPLY, ERECTION, TESTING & COMMISSIONING OF VRV AC PLANT AS PER DMIT OF SENATE HALL (BHAGWAT GEETA SADAN) AT KURUKSHETRA UNIVERSITY KURUKSHETRA	24.01.2020 10.02.2020	50 LACS	https://etenders.hry.nic.in	Executive Engineer
6	DEENBANDHU CHHOTU RAM UNIVERSITY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY, MURTHAL	WALK-IN-INTERVIEW FOR ENGAGEMENT OF VISITING FACULTIES IN VARIOUS TEACHING DEPARTMENTS	27.01.2020 28.01.2020	NIL	www.dcrustm.ac.in	ASSTT, REGISTRAR
7	DEPARTMENT OF CENTRE FOR MEDICAL BIOTECHNOLOGY, MAHARSHI DAYANAND UNIVERSITY ROHTAK	PUBLICATION OF E-TENDER NOTICE FOR THE PURCHASE OF THE INSTRUMENT	21.01.2020 06.02.2020	14 LACS	www.mdurhtak.ac.in	Dir.cmbt@mdurhtak.ac.in

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION KINDLY VISIT : www.haryanaeprocurement.gov.in or www.etenders.hry.nic.in RO NO. 79670

Black & Blue

Upbeat India take on injury-struck Kiwis as build-up to T20 World Cup continues

PTI ■ AUCKLAND

Preparations for the World Cup on top of their agenda, India will take on an injury-hit New Zealand in a rare five-match T20 International series starting today during which seam-friendly wickets would be a major challenge for the visitors.

Unlike most overseas tours, this will be a quick start for the Indian team. The team arrived in Auckland on Tuesday and Thursday was when they hit the nets ahead of the tour-opening game.

On the plus side, this hectic schedule helps the team management maintain consistency in team selection as they continue experimenting across the available squad in a World Cup year.

Despite injury issues to key white-ball personnel like Shikhar Dhawan, Hardik Pandya, Deepak Chahar and Bhuvneshwar Kumar this past home season, the bench strength has come across adequate and raring to go for challenges ahead.

It begins at the top where KL Rahul has stepped up as a key part of India's white-ball plans.

Skipper Virat Kohli dropped hints that Rahul's newfound confidence in his dual role as batsman-keeper has given vital options to the team.

According to Kohli, Rahul will continue to keep wickets in both ODIs and T20s, but will open in the shortest format while returning to the middle-order in the 50-over format.

It could mean that Prithvi Shaw is being primed for an ODI debut and a potential pairing with Rohit when the three-match series begins on February 5.

The skipper also indicated a change in middle order plans. With Rahul keep-



Indian captain Virat Kohli and New Zealand skipper Kane Williamson pose with the T20 trophy on the eve of 1st game at Eden Park in Auckland. Black Caps/Twitter

ing wickets, the fit-again Rishabh Pant could lose his spot in the playing eleven.

Manish Pandey is expected to play as the fifth specialist batsman and Shreyas Iyer will regain his spot at number four.

Pandey, Iyer and Pant batted together in the nets on Thursday, while Sanju Samson hung around, only to pad up later on. The Kerala batsman didn't seem to be in contention for the first T20I.

Pant and Pandey could both fit into the playing eleven should India opt for five bowlers and leave out the sixth option in Shivam Dube. Washington Sundar and Ravindra Jadeja are the other two all-round options.

The Yuzvendra Chahal-Kuldeep Yadav combination is yet to play a game together since the 2019 ODI World Cup, and it remains to be seen if things will change in this aspect.

In the pace department, Mohammed Shami and Jasprit Bumrah are assured

starters, while the toss-up will be between Shardul Thakur and Navdeep Saini.

New Zealand had beaten India 2-1 in the T20I series last year. The Black Caps also won 2-1 in the T20I series during their Sri Lanka tour, and then drew 2-2 at home against England in a five-match series.

Despite the recent good record in the shortest format, there is a downbeat mood in the hosts' dressing room thanks to the 3-0 shellacking received in Australia over the past month.

It hasn't helped matters that the disappointing loss to their trans-Tasman rivals has raised questions about Kane Williamson's future as captain.

For the moment, New Zealand's leading batsman is happy to lead the side across all formats, but his position is up for review after the shattering defeat to Australia.

As always, they have a dearth of all-rounders to choose from but need to bal-

ance with pickings in the pace department, which is missing the services of Trent Boult, Matt Henry and Lockie Ferguson owing to injuries.

It remains to be seen if the Black Caps opt for two spinners in Ish Sodhi and Mitchell Santner given the really short boundaries at Eden Park, venue for the first two T20Is.

TEAMS

India: Virat Kohli (capt), Rohit Sharma, KL Rahul (wk), Manish Pandey, Rishabh Pant, Sanju Samson, Shreyas Iyer, Shivam Dube, Ravindra Jadeja, Kuldeep Yadav, Yuzvendra Chahal, Mohammed Shami, Jasprit Bumrah, Shardul Thakur, Navdeep Saini, Washington Sundar.

New Zealand: Kane Williamson (capt), Martin Guptill, Ross Taylor, Scott Kuggeleijn, Colin Munro, Colin de Grandhomme, Tom Bruce, Daryl Mitchell, Mitchell Santner, Tim Seifert (wk), Hamish Bennett, Ish Sodhi, Tim Southee, Blair Tickner.

No revenge in mind against 'nice guys'



Virat Kohli during India's nets session. PTI

PTI ■ AUCKLAND

The loss still rankles him but Virat Kohli on Thursday said he can't really bring himself to think of revenge when India take on New Zealand for the first time after the Kiwis sent his side packing from the ODI World Cup last year.

The Black Caps defeated pre-tournament favourites India by 18 runs in the semifinals of the showpiece in England and today's tour-opening T20I is the first clash between the two sides since then. Kohli has spoken repeatedly about how devastating the loss was for him personally.

"Even if you want to think of revenge, these guys are so nice you cannot get into that zone," said Kohli at the pre-match press conference.

"We get along really well with these guys and it's all about being competitive on the field. As I said in England, they are probably one side that has set the example for teams to play international cricket," he reasoned.

Williamson and his men had drawn effusive praise for their grace in the aftermath of a heartbreaking World Cup final loss to England, a game that was decided on boundary count after scores were tied.

"It is not about any kind of revenge — it is two quality sides playing good cricket. It is a challenge to beat New Zealand here and we are totally up for it," Kohli said.



Indian U-19 players celebrate after win. CWC/Twitter

India U-19 side look for hat-trick

PTI ■ BLOEMFONTEIN

India vs NZ (U-19 WC) Live from 1:15pm IST. STAR SPORTS 2 NETWORK

Already through to the quarterfinals after two resounding wins on the trot, defending champions India will be keen to maintain their unbeaten run when they face New Zealand in the final Group A tie of the ICC U-19 World Cup here today.

India, who are atop their group with four points, had cruised to a 90-run victory over Sri Lanka in their opening encounter before outclassing debutants Japan by 10 wickets with disciplined bowling effort. The Priyam Garg-led side will start as favourites against New Zealand.

New Zealand, on the other hand, were unlucky to share a point with Japan after their match was washed out in Potchefstroom last week. However, they managed to clinch a late winner against Sri Lanka and book a place in the last eight.

New Zealand, who had finished eighth on home soil in 2018, will be looking to follow a similar trajectory as their senior counterparts, who reached the finals of the men's World Cup last year, in this edition of the U-19 showpiece.

Having won the warm up matches against Zimbabwe and Afghanistan and the quadrangular series, the Indian team would not want to lose the rhythm at any cost.

In their previous outing, India leg-spinner Ravi Bishnoi (4/5) took four wickets while pacers Kartik Tyagi (3/10) and Akash Singh (2/11) shared five scalps among themselves to help the four-time champions bundle out Japan for 41.

Also on the batting front, Jaiswal (59), Garg (56) and wicketkeeper Dhruv Jurel (52 not out) impressed with half centuries against Sri Lanka while Tilak Varma (46) and Siddhesh Veer (44 not out) also provided useful contributions.

However, the Indian team is yet to be tested against a strong opposition.

SINGLES

BFI OFFERED TO HOST OLYMPIC QUALIFIERS

NEW DELHI: The Boxing Federation of India (BFI) has offered to host next month's Olympic Qualifying Tournament, which has been cancelled in the Chinese city of Wuhan following the outbreak of coronavirus. The qualifiers are scheduled from February 3 to 15 but the schedule has now become uncertain following the health crisis in Wuhan, which has so far claimed 17 lives and infected over 550 people. "...Due to any reason, if the event is to be shifted to a different country, BFI would be willing to host this Asian and Oceania Qualification Event 2020," BFI President stated in a letter to the Chairman of the IOC's Task Force (Boxing).

SHIVA, SONIA LATHER ENTER STRANDJA S/F

NEW DELHI: Former world medalists Shiva Thapa (63kg) and Sonia Lather (57kg) assured themselves of medals at the 71st Strandja Memorial Boxing Tournament by advancing to the semifinals. Joining them was Mohammed Hussamuddin (57kg). He outpunched Ireland's Kurt Walker 5-0 to make the medal rounds. Former world Silver-winner Lather (57kg) clinched a 3-2 triumph over Michaela Walsh in a hard-fought contest to enter the last-four stage. Thapa got the better of George Bates in his quarterfinal clash.

WORLD ARCHERY LIFTS SUSPENSION ON INDIA

KOLKATA: In a big boost to Indian archers' preparations for the Tokyo Olympics, the world body on Thursday conditionally lifted the suspension on India, less than a week after the embattled national federation held its elections. While lifting the ban, World Archery instructed AAI to make changes in its constitution regarding athlete membership, resolve governance issues and develop a strategic plan. It also asked AAI to furnish a quarterly progress report on these issues. After lifting the ban, the Indian archers are now free to compete under the Indian flag. India currently has three men's and one women's quota place at 2020 Tokyo Olympics.

RFI LIFTS BHOKANAL'S BAN

NEW DELHI: Rower Dattu Bhokanal's two-year suspension on charges of tanking a race during the 2018 Asian Games was lifted by the national federation (RFI) after the intervention of the IOA Narinder Batra. Bhokanal was a member of the Indian quartet that won a Gold in the men's quadruple sculls event in the Asian Games but later left the single sculls race midway. He was banned by the RFI in March last year. In his explanation, Bhokanal had said that he fell off the boat as it overturned and he was also not well on that day. But after Batra asked the RFI to review its decision, they informed Bhokanal's suspension has been lifted.

CASSELL JOINS RR AS FAST BOWLING COACH

MUMBAI: Rajasthan Royals on Thursday appointed former Australian first class cricketer Rob Cassell as their new fast bowling coach for the upcoming Indian Premier League. Cassell has had success of working with, and developing fast bowlers during his previous coaching and development roles at South Australia and Ireland men's cricket team. The Australian represented his country at the 2002 U-19 World Cup in New Zealand but never played for the senior team.

STAFANIE TAYLOR TO LEAD WEST INDIES WOMEN

BARBADOS: Stafanie Taylor will lead West Indies women in the upcoming T20 World Cup slated to be played in Australia from February 21- March 8. The team, led by Taylor, sees the return of Deandra Dottin to international cricket after eight months out of the squad following corrective surgery and rehabilitation. "The World Cup squad continues to show a blend of experience and young emerging players. It is boosted by the return of captain Stafanie Taylor, who was out of the T20 series against India through injury," chief selector Ann Browne-John said. AGENCIES

'Handling pressure will be key'

PTI ■ MUMBAI

The Indian women's cricket captain Harmanpreet Kaur in her pre-departure press conference for T20 World Cup on Thursday said handling pressure would be crucial in the upcoming ICC Women's tournament in Australia, something that her side couldn't do in the last two global showpieces.

India made a semi-final exit from the last T20 World Cup and in the previous ODI World Cup, they had finished as runners-up.

"We were quite close in the last two World Cups, the only thing is we have to keep in mind how to handle pressure in the tournaments, last two World Cups we lacked in handling pressure," Harmanpreet said.

"This time we want to enjoy rather than taking more pressure on ourselves, thinking that it is a big tournament. We have to avoid thinking like that and focus on giving our best," she added.

The 30-year-old batswoman, who

has played 104 T20s, said the team needs focus on enhancing skills instead of thinking about the pressure of being at a big stage.

"Last few World Cups, we put ourselves under too much pressure of playing in a big tournament. This time rather thinking that we are going for a big tournament, we just want to focus on our skills, how we should play and how to make the team win," she said.

"That will be very important for us and when we focus on these things, we (will) produce better results," she added.

She counted spin bowling as one of the strengths of her team.

"...They always give us breakthroughs. So I am looking forward to how our spinners perform there (in Australia) and see what they do for the team," said the skipper.

India will, in all likelihood, open with the experienced Smriti Mandhana and young Shafali Verma and according to Harmanpreet, the duo will have a crucial role to play.

Root facing 'good selection headache'



Joe Root in action during third Test. AP

JOHANNESBURG: England captain Joe Root on Thursday was looking forward to the prospect of two of the world's fastest bowlers operating on a pace-friendly pitch in the fourth and final Test against South Africa, starting at the Wanderers today.

Root said Jofra Archer had bowled with "good pace" in practice on Wednesday after recovering from an elbow injury which kept him out of the second and third Tests — both of which England won.

He said that if Archer had no lingering signs of injury or soreness, England would have a "really good

selection headache".

Mark Wood startled several of the South African batsmen in the third Test in Port Elizabeth, bowling bouncers at around 150kmh.

Archer is also among the world's small club of 150kmh bowlers.

"It would be nice to see how they go together," said Root. "I think they would be a relentless barrage of pace which is exciting, especially on a surface such as you typically get here at the Wanderers."

He also said that it would be "a very big achievement" if England could complete a series win.

Meanwhile, South African skipper Faf du Plessis said his side needed to dig deep to salvage a series draw.

"How strong are we mentally in this last hurdle? We know where we have been a little bit poor in our game plans," he said.

Du Plessis said Temba Bavuma would replace Zubayr Hamza in the XI, but there would also be a change in the batting order, with Rassie van der Dussen moving up to number three, the position filled by Hamza in the first three Tests.

He is also hoping that Vernon Philander, who will retire from international cricket after the match, would finish his Test career "with the storybook ending he deserves" on a pitch where he has done well in the past. AFP

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MAKING GUEST FEEL WELCOME IS THE KEY TO A GOOD TIME TOGETHER

Time is an important factor and it is important to know when to expect your guests. Make sure to give them plenty of advance notice — at least a week, and even more if the occasion is very important, writes **TEAM VIVA**



Even the most casual get-together requires some planning and preparations. Being a good host and making guest feel welcome is the key to a good time together. Having friends around is fun and all, but not for them if you're a bad host.

We know that to some degree, the rules for hosting depend on the guest and the situation. Perhaps you are hosting an overnight guest, or maybe you're having a dinner party. If it's a very close friend or family member, you can be a bit more relaxed. However, if your family member is bringing a stranger to your home, you may need to step up your host game. No matter the guest or the situation, there are a few guidelines that you can follow to help your guests feel at home.

Never bother to invite people if they don't appeal to you or you have no intention of growing close with them. Choosing good guests may enable you to be a better host. Consider also how well the guests will get along with each other. Try not to invite people that you know won't mesh well, or that have a history of winding up at each other's throats.

In case if it is the first time at your house, give them a 'house tour', to let them know where everything is. Be alert to the fact that it's better to show guests the bathroom and let them know where they can do such things as change a baby's diaper, grab a glass of water, etc. without having to ask you directly. If there is somewhere your friends shouldn't go, such as a baby's room, an elderly person's room, etc., make this clear. It's better than having them embarrassed by wandering into baby's room and waking baby up when looking for the bathroom, etc.

Time is an important factor and it is important to know when to expect your guests. Make sure to give them plenty of advance notice — at least a week, and even more if the occasion is very important. Assume that they will also need to work around their own schedules. Don't tell them to come "sometime" if you really want them to show up. Tell them specifically when to come so that it feels more like an invitation. A range of times is also okay, but it should be no longer than a few hours.

No matter if your guests show up late,

try to make them feel welcome. Do not sulk for the rest of the evening, or you may compound the problem. Just continue laughing and ignore the fact they were late.

Try to tell your guest in advance is just a matter of courtesy. If they know what to expect, it will be much easier for them to plan their schedules around it.

After your guests arrive, open the door and show them where to put their things. Show them the bathroom on the way in before taking them to the living room and offering them a seat. Never leave them hanging at the front door; don't expect them to follow you if you don't say anything. If you still have things to prepare, engage with your guests whilst organizing what you have left. By now, you should have finished tidying the area, so that you have only the food to finish.

Involve and engage your guests in conversation and talk about things that they want to talk about. Ask questions about their work, their travels, their families. Don't complain about how your child was sick all week or how you are having family issues. Show interest in

HAVE YOUR FAMILY OR A HOUSEMATE ENGAGE THE GUESTS SO THAT YOU CAN FINISH PREPARING THE REST OF THE FOOD. KEEP FINGER FOOD ON THE COFFEE TABLE IN THE LIVING ROOM TO WHET EVERYONE'S APPETITES. ASK YOUR GUESTS IF THEY WOULD LIKE A DRINK

what your guest has to say. Build on the conversation and let it flow. Business can be a good subject, but be careful with whom you bring it up. Many people like to separate their work from their social lives. Take cues from your guests, and don't try to force any topic.

Have your family or a housemate engage the guests so that you can finish preparing the rest of the food. Keep finger food on the coffee table in the living room to whet everyone's appetites. Ask your guests if they would like a drink. Offer them at least two options — whatever you think is most suitable for the event. The options could range between coffee, tea, water, beer, and wine.

Make your guests feel appreciated. If they want to leave, ask them to stay a bit longer since you have enjoyed their company. Tell them it has been a lovely time, and you are keen to see them again. If you noticed that they enjoyed part of the meal in particular, consider giving a portion of it to them. Tell them you won't need it; say that it's a pleasure to see someone enjoy your food.

If you are constantly with someone, they won't get the chance to absorb the

environment, and they might be distracted while you are with them later. This does not mean leave them for a long time — a minute or two tops should do it. People like having things to do with their hands. So having a drink or munchies can help. Don't offer your guest food and not eat yourself, they will feel rude and gluttonous. Take some snacks too.

Apart from other things your biggest jobs as the host is to keep everything going smoothly. You will need to set a positive tone, and act as moderator if anything goes awry. Be prepared to smooth tensions: always be ready to change the subject or talk to anyone who's causing trouble. Your social "job" as the host is to make sure that your home is a safe and welcoming space for all who enter — no matter who is causing the problems.

With everything you do while you have guests, try to run your life as you always would and fold them into it. It's a great sign of trust that you can do this with them, and it will make both of your visits more enjoyable and more often to happen again soon if you feel like having guests enlarges your life instead of taking wind out of your sails.

Trend Blazer

Anil debuts on TikTok

Actor **ANIL KAPOOR** has joined the "fun outlet for creativity" — TikTok.

The *Welcome* actor is quite active on social media and often takes to different digital platforms to share updates about his projects or hilarious videos, the recent one on coffee addiction, which was in response to his *Malang* co-star Disha Patani.

He has now made his debut on TikTok. The app is the destination for short-form mobile videos that saw Anil making his first appearance during *The Kapil Sharma Show*.

He was on the TV show to promote *Malang* along with its cast Aditya Roy Kapur, Disha and Kunal Kemmu.



'I would like to wish the entire nation a Happy Republic Day. This day is extremely important as

it stands for unity in India. I would urge everyone to participate in this and be a part of the flag hoisting ceremony. Indians needs to know about their glorious past. We are a very young country and we have to empower the women in India even more.'

—Shama Sikander

Actor **ANGAD BEDI** has started shooting for Ekta Kapoor's web series *MumBhai*. He has been preparing for his role of a Mumbai police officer in the series by spending time with senior cops of the Mumbai Police Force.



"Meeting cops and hearing their stories have been the most exciting part of my preparation. These men have lived life on the edge. I wouldn't try to romanticise that but their energy is infectious," Angad said.

Damon to play detective in his next

Actor **MATT DAMON** is reuniting with his *Ford v Ferrari* director James Mangold for a film titled *The Force*. He will be essaying the role of a detective.

Mangold has been developing the Don Winslow bestseller since 2017. *The Force* centers on corrupt NYPD officers with Damon set to play detective

Denny Malone, who runs an elite crime fighting squad but becomes ensnared in a corruption scandal.

Damon recently wrapped up the drama *Stillwater*, directed by Tom McCarthy. He is starring with Jodie Comer, Adam Driver and Ben Affleck in *The Last Duel*, with Ridley Scott serving as a director.



Saving the Lion King

From shooting during monsoon to following certain rules and regulations of not entering the restricted areas, producer and director **UPMA BHATNAGAR** tells **AYUSHI SHARMA** that wildlife filming demands a lot of patience, perseverance and attention

Can you recall the news-flash of 1994 when approximately 30 per cent of the lions living in Serengeti National Park, Tanzania, died from an outbreak of Canine Distemper Virus (CDV)? The virus, which is normally associated with dogs, wasn't till then thought of as deadly enough to threaten big cats until epidemic history among other species in sanctuaries suggested otherwise. In 2018, the disease broke out in India killing Asiatic lions in the Gir forest sanctuary in Gujarat. It became an alarming concern for conservationists. Filmmaker and executive producer of Optimum Television, Upma Bhatnagar will take viewers to the forefront of India's battle with the deadly virus through her 10-part series, *The Lion Kingdom*. The epidemic threatened to wipe out the last of the surviving Asiatic lions in the world living in the wilds of the Gir National Park.

The Lion Kingdom is a story of how the forest department of Gir National Park worked round the clock to try and save the king of the jungle while battling heavy rains and flooding and dealing with a sudden increase in the number of crocodiles in the area. Not only will the audience get to witness the functioning of the veterinarian hospital in Gir but they will also get to marvel at the transformation of Gir during the monsoon as this is the first time ever the national park has been filmed during the rains. Upma discusses the highlights of her latest series.

What drove you to the world of wildlife? How did you conceptualise the series?

It was the most serious alarm not only in Gir but in India's entire conservation history since independence. At stake was the existence of an entire species of Asiatic lions that does not exist anywhere else in the world. When I heard scientists and conservationists expressing fears that the Indian lion may not be able to come out of this crisis, I was really worried. Gir is very special to me. This is where I had filmed my first TV series, *The Lion Queens of India*. I enjoy a special bond with the land, its people and its majestic animals.

We spoke with Discovery India who sensed the gravity of the situation and gave us their full creative and logistic support. Early in 2019, we started our research. We wanted to film during the monsoon and usually the forest department does not permit shoots at that time as it is almost impossible to conduct safaris. Gir is closed from June to October. But we managed to get through despite the outbreak of the disease. The series features renowned veterinary surgeon Steve Leonard as the host. He has worked with other species and he knows how the lions were treated in Tanzania.

How did the virus come to India?

A major way diseases mutate is by jumping between species. Middle Eastern Respiratory Syndrome, Ebola, and the H1N1 Swine Flu... all jumped from animal to animal before crossing into humans. Similarly, there is a chain of other species in between. Domestic dogs living in areas surrounding the national park were respon-

sible for the continued presence of the disease. It is transmitted through the air and infected body secretions. The symptoms generally include a high fever, inflammation of the eyes and nose and coughing. Now that they know that something like this can happen, they are taking measures to vaccinate the cattle around the area. Healthy lions from the Gir forests were also shifted to an alternative location. Shots of CDV vaccine were also imported from the US. They regularly monitored the moves of lions.

Does filming in proximity with the animals in the jungle disturb them? What were the rules and regulations that you had to follow?

I have been filming wildlife for a decade now and yes, we are not supposed to disturb the animals. There are certain rules that as a filmmaker I must follow. The first one is that you are not supposed to go very near to their respective habitats. We never go beyond the restricted area. As a result, it gets difficult to capture the animals but thanks to technological advancements, we have various types of camera lenses — wide angle, zoom, telephoto and many such. It gets easier to get all the close up shots without disturbing them. For instance, if they are roaming around in groups or the cubs are headed to play, we use long lenses to capture their everyday activities. We are told to not make too much of noise, otherwise it would scare them.

What were the on-ground challenges and how difficult was it to manage the crew

members?

The biggest challenge was that we were shooting during the monsoon. The rain poured thrice a day and the camera's visibility was heavily affected. It's not always necessary that animals (lions) would come out of their dens during heavy rainfall. Our filming equipment were very expensive so we didn't want it to get wet or damaged because of rain. We could get wet but not the equipment, of course (laughs).

I am lucky that I have a young crew of camera persons. The toughest thing about wildlife filming is that you have to get up at very odd hours because the best time to shoot is either early morning or evening, before the sun goes down. During the day, it gets difficult because the animals are usually resting. No movement can be seen. Wildlife filming is very demanding in that sense. It takes a lot from your soul. There have been so many days when we were just waiting for the rains to stop so that we could start shooting. As a producer, you start worrying about your crew, the project that you started but then suddenly one day, you get the perfect shots. There are never any fixed schedules, so it requires a lot of patience, attention and hard work. I am really thankful for the support and cooperation from my team.

What are the ground realities in national parks that lead to the extinction of various species? What can a common man do to help in conservation?

The biggest challenge in India is the shrinking habitat for

our wildlife because India is growing at such a fast pace. You want your conservation efforts to become a success story and you are also happy to see the increasing number of particular species but then the question is — where is the space? Our country has history, mythology, culture, and everything has taught us to be tolerant of other living beings. We would not deliberately want to harm the wildlife but when conflict happens, it's basically learning to co-exist with it, which our ancestors have done fantastically so far. We need to make corridors for animals so that they can have safe passages.

As a filmmaker, I can raise awareness among the common public and tell them what are the challenges that they face. We need to start inculcating certain values in the young generation and let them know about the wonderful forest diversity that India has.

Can you share some of your anecdotes?

We were shooting with a specific tribe, so we got to know them well. Over a period of time, we were following a lioness who had just given birth to cubs. And there were other male lions who wanted to take over the area. The lioness tried very hard to hide her cubs and keep the place safe but eventually the cubs were killed. That was a heart breaking moment for all of us. We couldn't do anything about it as we could not interfere with the ways of the habitat. Such incidents always stay with you.

(The series premieres on January 27 at 9 pm on Animal Planet and Animal Planet HD.)



JLF welcomes a breeze of ideas

As the pleasant winters wrap up paving way for spring, the Jaipur Literature Festival (JLF) makes a comeback here in Diggy Palace to bring in fresh breeze of ideas, debates, dialogues and perspectives on subjects ranging from Kashmir to Indian Constitution, to climate change to artificial intelligence among many others, which have been discussed on the global map.

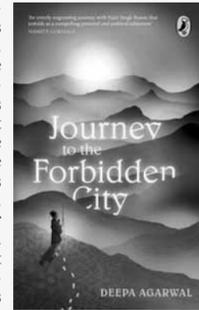
The festival will continue till January 27 witnessing interesting sessions a few of which include *Kashmir: Of Barbed Wires And Almond Blossom*, *Of The People, By The People: The Indian Constitution and Vivekanand, Savarkar And Patel: Echoes From The Past*.

Puffin also announced the release of author Deepa Agarwal's latest book, *Journey to the Forbidden City*. The book is a fascinating account of Nain Singh Rawat, an unsung Kumaoni hero, who mapped Tibet in disguise in the 19th century. Simple and accessible, this is one of the only books on Nain Singh, whose contribution was recognised by institutions like the Royal Geographical Society and Paris Geographical Society.

Deepa said, "This is a book I have dreamt of writing for many years. I had heard of my grandfather's uncle Pundit Nain Singh's achievements from childhood. Stories were told about his daring adventures, his quick intelligence and the honours he had received for his exploits. Apart from his manual of survey methods, Akshaansh Darpan, he had even written a family history.

Whether he should be described as a spy or not. Whatever information he might have gathered on his journeys, Nain Singh's extraordinary contribution to the map of the world remains most important to me."

Namita Gokhale, co-director of Jaipur Literature Festival (JLF), said, "As many as 550 speakers will be participating in the festival. Out of these, 120 are award winning speakers. Once again, the world visits Jaipur and Jaipur visits the world."



KUSHAN MITRA



Few vehicles have been so anticipated in the Indian market as the Kia Carnival has been. Not so much for the car itself but for the competition it will supposedly bring. So is it the Innova beater everyone wants it to be?



The Toyota MPV in all its forms — Qualis, Innova and Crysta — has been an unqualified success story in India. There are enough people out there that are on their second, third and fourth purchase.

This success has been built on a bedrock of extreme reliability, amazing resale value and just a bit of boredom. And somehow no one has managed to knock the Japanese off their perch, and they have tried. You had the Nissan Evalia, which sank with little trace and then the Chevrolet Tavera, which was well, inadequate. But buyers in this segment have been clamouring for more choice. Toyotas are expensive and despite the price, they are a bit light on features, particularly on the technology front — still no native smartphone interface like Apple CarPlay and Android Auto. If you want to guess why the Liva and Yaris didn't have the sales that some expected, this is one reason why.

But this isn't a story about Toyota, this is about the Kia Carnival, the white knight that some motoring journalists would have you believe has come to slay the evil Toyota dragon. At the very outset let me get something straight, the Carnival is a fabulous

A big tent

product in its own right and while it might take away some Innova sales, particularly at the top of the range, it is not an Innova "killer." There are very compelling reasons to consider the Carnival, if you're someone who spends a few thousand kilometres on the road every month, going to the interiors of the country and want a degree of comfort. That is, if you're a politician, this is possibly the best vehicle you can get. Heck, I believe that the Carnival can challenge the Fortuner as India's political wagon of choice.

There are a couple of reasons for this, first and foremost, the Kia Carnival will not challenge the Innova's dominance in fleet sales, at least initially. The Carnival is available with a 2.2 litre 200PS engine driving the front wheels mated to an eight-speed automatic transmission, and while these are good things, they will limit its appeal in the taxi market. That is because this is clearly not a taxi, Kia

would like you to believe that this is a luxury liner and well in limousine trim, it certainly is quite luxurious indeed. The Carnival, which will have seven, eight and nine seat variants, is a large car with immense amount of space as well as, and this is critical, easy to manipulate seats. In addition, it has a boatload of features that marks it out as far more luxurious. But all of this comes at a price, not just a real price, which is that even entry-level variants of the Carnival are expected to cost ₹25 lakh at the very minimum. The top-spec limousine variant will top out at close to ₹35 lakh, according to market buzz.

Make no mistake, for that kind of money you get a lot. Not only are the second row seats "captain" seats, they can be adjusted six ways. It would have been a nice touch if both second-row seats were electronically controlled but that is nit-picking. The optional technology packet sees 10-inch



Android touchscreens installed on the back of the headrests, which you can use in a pinch to watch a movie that can be played back through a USB drive. What is nice is that Kia is providing a lot of charging points, including one 220V two-pin point on the second row, which is really appreciated. And multiple points to charge your phones, from a wireless induction plate in the front, to multiple USB points on three rows in addition to regular 12V points. This coupled with the fact that the rear

sunroof also opens makes the Carnival a great place to sit in. It would be nicer still had Kia installed ventilated seats on the second row as well, but that might be asking for too much.

How is the Carnival to drive? When you see the size of the car and hear about the smallest motor coupled to a front-wheel drive, you might think it is sluggish and you would be partially right. Well, the eight-speed gearbox mitigates that to a certain degree and once you are at speed, it can cruise comfortably

at the speed limit without any hesitation. And this is not a performance car by any stretch, it is meant to be a comfortable vehicle. With excellent ride as well as the fact that body roll has been minimised, the Carnival is a great car to sit in.

Let's be honest, nobody who buys the Carnival will buy it to drive themselves. It is going to be a vehicle that you get driven around in and on that front, the flat floor, the sliding doors and the adjustable seating options make this a winner if you have a large family or just want to move around in a large vehicle. If you're a politician or a chief executive, the Carnival makes sense. It does have issues, it may not fit into some parking slots in Indian malls, it certainly can't replace the Innova as a camera car — the shoots for the Carnival used the Innova as the camera car. And the Carnival will not be cheap. Base versions will cost as much as the top-end of the Innova range. So as I said earlier, this is not an Innova (and Fortuner) killer — it will take some sales away — but this is a unique vehicle in its own right and should make its own mark on the market.



It's a warm winter afternoon. The sun is shining bright. The birds chirp in the distance. The plants rustle as the wind blows through them. The ambience, filled with rustic wooden chairs and tables and green plants around me, seems to be the perfect setting for a lunch date with myself. Fig@Museo in Gurugram lets you sink in the warmth of mother nature and reconnect with yourself as easily as a phone connects with the home WiFi. Located in Asia's largest photography museum, there are some elements of both cosy and chic in the café. While one can enjoy the cosyness and relish the aroma of the bakery indoors, the outdoor seating makes for a fresh atmosphere, perfect for ambling conversations during a winter date.

Jumping to grabbing something to sip on to, I order two smoothies — Kale and avocado, and Wild berry (vegan, no dairy). While the former seems to match with the greenery around me, the latter derives its hue from the red anthuriums. Well, the taste turns out to be quite similar to their colour comparisons too. The kale and avocado smoothie is leafy in its texture but absolutely refreshing and delicious. The wild berries smoothie is sweet and sour, that leaves a perfect tanginess on my tastebuds. Though sweeter than the former, there can't be any probable comparison between both.

While I am still relishing the fresh smoothies, the Chipotle chicken soft taco makes its way to my table. The tacos, served in a thin ceramic plate that resembles the colour of soil, are filled with the chipotle chicken while the dollops of sour cream and guacamole round it off. One bite into the taco and I realise that its shell is very soft and gets pulled apart very easily. Even though the sweetness

NATURE'S PILL

If you think the words healthy and tasty are diametrically opposed to each other, Fig@Museo will make you change your mind, says SHAMBHAVI SURI



as well as the sourness of the tomatoes come through very well, I wish the tacos would have been crispier. While the chipotle sauce makes for some spiciness, towards the end, the sour cream, doing its job perfectly, cools off this roller-coaster of flavours. Another plate of the vegetarian tacos is served. These

tacos replicate the taste of the chipotle chicken ones, the only difference being that the meat is replaced with kidney beans here. These are sweet and satisfying. The next dish arrives and turns out to be probably one of the healthiest breakfast dishes and also a trendsetter. It is the avocado toast or as they call it, *Trio tartines*. A toasty and crunchy

sourdough bread is the base of the dish. It is topped with a thick layer of hass avocado and garnished with goat cheese and sun-dried cherry tomatoes. The combination tastes as heavenly as it sounds. It begins from the crunchiness of the sourdough toast paired with the creaminess of mashed avocado and ends with the sweet and tart taste of the tomatoes. I must say, it is earthy and lip-smackingly delicious. The dish is such that I could savour it for an entire lifetime.

Next up is the Quinoa, roasted potato and poached

beetroot salad (gluten-free). The salad, almost replicating all the elements found in a garden, tastes amazing. The topping of pumpkin seeds and a pinch of lemon olive oil make all the difference, giving it a more refreshing taste.

For the main course, I order the Pumpkin massaman curry and the Thai *krpao* (gluten-free). The former is a vegetarian curry filled with roasted pumpkin and boiled potatoes. It has flavours of peanut and red chilli, which also give it a vibrant orange colour. Served with jasmine rice on the side, this luscious, thick gravy is nutty and a little spicy but makes sure that it leaves you wanting for more.

The Thai *krpao* is a non-vegetarian curry made with Thai basil chicken in soy and jaggery sauce, which lends it a velvety, dark brown texture. And like any other Thai dish, this curry too is spicy. The jaggery's sweetness is felt towards the end, relieving the taste-buds of all the spices. Undoubtedly, the two are the tastiest and healthiest meals of the day. And I can't draw a comparison between them. They're equally comforting!

However, there is always room for some dessert. To end the healthiest meal on an even healthier note, the Bailey's Tiramisu (gluten-free) is served. I can't figure out whether it is the Bailey's that is adding to its taste (and my excitement) or the dish completely replicates the flavour of the traditional tiramisu. It is this even though the savoiardi (low density, dry, egg-based, sweet sponge biscuit) is gluten-free.

The place will make you believe what it stands by — healthy is happy. If you're looking to spend the day wherein you can relax, rejuvenate and feel healthy, this is the place for you — a day where you can concentrate on yourself.

Ditch that extra bite

Here are some ways of sticking to healthy food resolutions

For many of us, January is all about giving things up: Maybe we're going to stop eating meat and embrace a plant-based diet. Or we're ready to kick excess sugar to the curb after a holiday season awash in sweets. Or we're committed to avoiding fast food.

Starting the year with noble goals for eating well is a modern rite of passage. But it's just as common to ditch those grand plans within a few weeks. This year, how can we do it right? If we're pledging to make better food choices, which strategies can help us stick with them?

START SMALL

The consensus among experts is clear: It's tempting to begin with dramatic gestures, but the key to lasting change is setting goals that are small enough we won't scrap them by Valentine's Day.

Manageable, measurable goals can create long-term change, says Leila Azarbad, associate professor of psychology at North Central College in Naperville, Illinois. When people set lofty goals, they can get discouraged after a couple weeks. "Our self-efficacy, that belief in our own ability, tanks. And that's a huge predictor: If you don't feel confident in your ability to make the change, you're going to discontinue trying," she says.

Picture this, says Dana White, a sports dietician and clinical associate professor at Quinnipiac University: You want to lose 20 pounds and you know that every afternoon you visit the office vending machine for a snack to boost your energy. So begin packing a healthy afternoon snack — not something punitive, but something healthier that you'll enjoy — and have that instead of a vending machine candy bar.

It's a measurable, specific change that won't be unpleasant. And if it eliminates 200 calories, that shift will make a difference over the coming weeks and months. Once that new behaviour is in place, you can add another small but meaningful change.

The same thinking works if you're eliminating animal products: Rather than going cold turkey (cold tofu?), begin by replacing one dinner per week with a vegetarian meal. Plan it for a night when you won't be rushed and can make an appealing recipe, or budget for going out once a week to a vegetarian restaurant.

Then track that change for



three weeks, says Anna Baker, assistant professor of psychology at Bucknell University, who researches the connection between behavioral factors such as self-management and health outcomes.

"You hear that it takes 21 days to create habit. There's debate about whether it's 21 exactly, but you need a certain amount of time of continuing to do something before it becomes a habit. Once you do kind of get used to that change and you're doing it regularly, then you can add in another thing," Baker says.

If you make that one good shift for three weeks, congratulate yourself. Then maintain that behaviour and add another small change, like drinking more water.

It's tempting to try making a half-dozen changes all at once, White says. But by focusing on individual, small, unhealthy behaviours and "really identifying what the triggers are that lead to those behaviors," she says, people "can have a tremendous amount of success without torturing themselves."

BE PATIENT

If your goal is to lose 20 pounds, for example, it really will take four or five months — and it should, says Alex Montoyo, assistant professor of clinical exercise physiology at Alma College in Alma, Michigan.

Losing a pound a week is "really the maximum sustainable weight loss," Montoyo says. Much as it surprises people, "2 pounds a week is pretty extreme."

So aim to lose 5 pounds over the next six weeks through small behavioral shifts, and measure your behavior along the way. Apps and fitness track-

ers can help, as can a notebook where you list what you've eaten.

Researchers have found "that we are notoriously bad at estimating how many calories we're taking in," Azarbad says. "We tend to underestimate what we're eating, because we forget. When we're cooking, we taste the pasta sauce a few times and those are calories. Or we walk past our colleague's desk and they had a jar of M&M's and we took a few, but those add up. That can be the difference between you losing a pound a week and you not."

DON'T BE TOO HARD ON YOURSELF

Accept that mistakes are a normal part of building a new habit. If you know an event is coming up where you'll want to divert from your eating goals, accept that you may slip a bit then. Aim for "consistency, not perfection," says Baker. "You have to plan in advance that you're going to screw up. We're not perfect."

ENLIST FRIENDS

Lastly, "tell everybody you know that you're doing this because social support is huge," Azarbad says. "If you're going out to eat and they know you're trying to change your diet, they can help choose a restaurant that will accommodate you," she says.

And the need to save face may keep you on track. "Once you put it out there on social media and you tell everybody that 'I'm going to do this. I'm going to lose 10 pounds by spring break, you feel that people are watching,'" Azarbad says. "We don't want other people to see us fail."

—AP

gorge us

On this Republic day, The Lalit Mangar offers a speciality brunch with organic food served in sakuras to give a rustic feel. There will be engaging activities, board games, magician, pottery making, camel rides and more. Eat healthy, stay fit and enjoy a memorable time amidst nature and youthful celebrations. **Time:** 12:30 pm to 3:30 pm **Date:** January 26 **Price:** ₹2,000 plus taxes (per person) **Venue:** The Lalit Mangar, Camp Wild Road, Dera Mandi, Faridabad.



The Westin Gurgaon is giving a patriotic flavour to its dishes. For the Republic Day there will be a special brunch with more focus on traditional Indian specialities. It features delicacies like *Gilawat ke kebab*, Tiranga-chicken tikka, *Murg malai tikka* and *Haryali kebab*, *Murg changezi*, *Ker sangri*, *Gatta curry*, *Sarson ka saag* and *Makki ki roti*, *Chole kulchey*, *Idiyappam* with stew and many other all-time favourites. **Time:** 12:30 pm to 4 pm **Date:** Every Sunday (Till February 2) **Price:** ₹2,537 per person **Venue:** Seasonal Tastes, The Westin Gurgaon, New Delhi.



One8 Commune has a specially curated menu for the Republic day. It offers refreshing smoothies, shakes and mocktails at ₹71 to mark the 71st Republic Day. On the menu are passion fruit and greens smoothie, oats and berries smoothie, chocolate and mango shakes along with watermelon and guava freezer and much more. **Date:** January 26 **Venue:** One8 Commune, Worldmark 2, Aerocity.

Celebrate this Republic Day at Imperfecto Patio with their tricolour drinks. It includes Tricolor virgin mojito, Rise of republic, Constitution of India by corporate mixologist Mahendar Manne. **Date:** January 25 and 26 **Time:** 12 pm to 9 pm **Price:** ₹225 per drink (plus taxes) **Venue:** Imperfecto Patio, Sector 51, Gurugram.



Glasshouse, Hilton Garden Inn celebrates Republic Day with Tricolour salad, Republic day macaroons, Tirangaa *paneer tikka*, Tirangaa *pulao*, Tricolour *rasgulla* and much more, specially curated by chef Manoj Rawat. **Date:** January 26 **Time:** 12:30 pm to 3:30 pm **Price:** ₹2,000 (per person) **Venue:** Glass House, Hilton Garden Inn, Gurgaon Baani Square.



The Leela Ambience Convention Hotel is celebrating Republic day at their outdoor patio Frangipani. They will offer delicacies like Tirangaa *barfi*, tricolour rice and much more. There will also be a live band to enhance the festivity mood. **Date:** January 26



RECIPES

TRICOLOUR VIRGIN MOJITO

WHAT YOU NEED

- Mint leaves
- Lime wedges: 5
- Lime juice: 25 ml
- Coco mint syrup: 20 ml
- Orange marmalade: 1 bar spoon
- Orange juice: for topping

METHOD

- Muddle lime wedges and then put mint leaves on it.
- Add lime juice and mojito syrup at the base of the glass and mix it well.
- Put crushed ice in the glass and add soda.
- Put more crushed ice and finally add the orange marmalade mixture.
- Top it with orange juice.
- Garnish it with a slice of orange on the glass.

Courtesy: Corporate mixologist, Mahendar Manne at Imperfecto Patio.



TRICOLOUR IDLI

WHAT YOU NEED

- Idli rice: 175 gm
- Urad dal: 75 gm
- Salt: 10 gm
- Carrot puree: 25 gm
- Boiled spinach puree: 25 gm

METHOD

- Soak rice and dal for two hours and then grind it until smooth.
- Add salt and mix well.
- Keep for fermentation for 12 hours at room temperature.
- Divide the batter into three parts.



- Mix carrot and spinach puree separately for red and green colours.
- Place the red batter in a round mould followed by the white then the green in the end.
- Steam in oven for 20 minutes or till it's done.
- Serve with tomato, coconut and green coriander chutney.

Courtesy: Ajay Kumar, executive chef, Jaypee Vasant Continental.

TACOS WITH TOMATO SALSA, SOUR CREAM AND GAUCAMOLE

WHAT YOU NEED

- Flour tortilla:**
 - Refined flour: 125 gm
 - Maze flour: 25 gm
 - Salt to taste
 - Sugar: 2 gm
 - Baking powder: 2 gm
- Tomato salsa:**
 - Tomato: 50 gm
 - Onion: 10 gm
 - Green chilli: 2 gm
 - Fresh coriander: 4 gm
 - Tomato juice: 10 ml
 - Tabasco sauce: 2 ml



Sour cream:

- Hung curd: 25 ml
- Fresh cream: 25 ml
- Salt: 2 gm
- Fresh coriander: 2 gm
- Lemon juice: 3 ml

Guacamole:

- Avocado: 80 gm
- Salt to taste
- Pepper: 1 gm
- Lemon juice: 3 ml
- Onion: 4 gm

Other ingredients:

- Apple wedges: 80 gm
- Bread crumb: 100 gm
- Salt to taste
- Pepper: 1 gm
- Spinach julienne: 10 gm
- Radish julienne: 10 gm

- Carrot julienne: 10 gm
- Turnips slice: 5 gm
- Bell pepper: 3 gm

METHOD

- Mix all the ingredients of flour tortilla and knead well.
- Separately mix all ingredients of tomato salsa, sour cream and guacamole.
- Make four flat sheets of flour dough on skillet and cook slightly from both sides.
- Boil apple wedges in cinnamon and lemon-flavoured water.
- Add salt and pepper in apple wedges.
- Serve tacos with salsa, sour cream and guacamole.

Courtesy: Avinash Kumar, executive chef, Novotel Imagica Khopoli.

AFP ■ MELBOURNE

Rafael Nadal and Nick Kyrgios reached the Australian Open third round on Thursday after the weather-disrupted tournament faced a new challenge: dirty rain which left courts muddy and unplayable.

After a day of clean-up operations and delays, Australia's Kyrgios fought his way past Frenchman Gilles Simon in four sets and Wimbledon champion Simona Halep stamped her class with a win over Britain's Harriet Dart.

Nadal, a 6-3, 7-6 (7/4), 6-1 winner over Argentina's Federico Delbonis, miscued a shot that hit a ballgirl in the head, but he melted hearts when he apologised and gave her a kiss on the cheek.

"I was so scared for her, honestly," the 19-time Grand Slam winner said. "The ball was quick and straight on the head. She's a very brave girl."

Kyrgios, increasingly popular with home fans after his fundraising efforts for Australia's bushfire crisis, was cruising at two sets up when he dropped the third set and with it, his composure.

But just when it looked like he would suffer one of his trademark implosions, he rallied for a 6-2, 6-4, 4-6, 7-5 victory.

"I definitely lost my way a little bit... but I decided to refocus," Kyrgios said of his mini-meltdown in the third set. "I could have gone to a very dark place in the fourth set but I put it away."

Kyrgios and Nadal stay on course for a fourth-round clash and the next instalment in their grudge match after the Aussie hit back at criticism from the "super salty" Spaniard last year.

Their victories followed a day of upheaval caused by the dirty rain, the latest weather problem at a tournament which has contended with bushfire smoke, heavy downpours and strong wind.

Rain mixed with a dust storm coated the Melbourne Park facilities in a fine layer of mud which took hours to clean and made many outside courts temporarily unusable.

'I WAS FREAKING OUT'

As action resumed Alexander Zverev, another man who has a running feud with Kyrgios, showed signs of a return to form as he

RAFA TRIUMPHS

World No1 defeats Federico to reach AO third round for 14th time



Rafael Nadal hands a ball girl his bandana after a ball hit her during his second round match against Federico Delbonis

downed Egor Gerasimov 7-6 (7/5), 6-4, 7-5.

The German seventh seed has been practising up to seven hours a day after a winless ATP Cup and the hard work paid off as he safely reached the third round.

"Definitely much better than the ATP Cup. Now in the third round, I'm very happy about that," said the 22-year-old, who beat Italy's Marco Cecchinato in round one.

However, fifth seed Dominic Thiem had a scare as he was taken to five sets by Australia's 140th-ranked Alex Bolt before recovering his composure to win 6-2, 5-7, 6-7 (5/7), 6-1, 6-2.

"It was all of a sudden a really tight third set that shouldn't happen.



Simona Halep reacts after defeating Harriet Dart

That's why I was freaking out inside and also outside today," said the two-time French Open finalist.

A nosebleed was one of Daniil Medvedev's biggest challenges in his win over Spanish qualifier Pedro Martinez, while Gael Monfils, who injured his racket hand playing computer games before the tournament, downed Ivo Karlovic.

In the women's draw Halep beat Dart 6-2, 6-4, while Belinda Bencic knocked out former French Open champion Jelena Ostapenko — she was playing despite the sudden death of her father this month.

Two-time Major winner Garbine Muguruza, who scaled Mount Kilimanjaro in the off-season as she searches for a return to form, dispatched home hope Ajla Tomljanovic 6-3, 3-6, 6-3.

Injured Sania exits with calf injury



MELBOURNE: Sania Mirza's first Grand Slam outing after maternity leave ended with an early exit as the Indian ace retired mid-way into her women's doubles first-round match due to a calf injury.

Sania and her Ukrainian partner Nadiia Kichenok, who came into the major after winning the doubles title at the Hobart International, were trailing 2-6, 0-1 against the Chinese team of Xinyun Han and Lin Zhu when the Indian called it quits.

Sania has injured her leg during practice. Her right calf strapped heavily, Sania struggled to move freely on the court. It also affected her serve.

Kichenok was also struggling at the net, often missing easy put-away volleys.

Serving at 2-4, Sania was broken by the Chinese and they served out the set easily.

The Indian took a media time-out after the first set. Soon after, the Indo-Ukrainian pair was broken in the first game of the second set and Sania found it difficult to continue.

Sania had also pulled out of the mixed doubles event, forcing compatriot Rohan Bopanna to pair with Kichenok.

Also representing India in the mixed doubles is veteran Leander Paes, who has teamed up with Jelena Ostapenko, who had won 2017 French Open.

They are pitted against local wild card entrants Storm Sanders and Marc Polmans.



Manchester United manager Ole Gunnar Solskjaer, left, and Burnley manager Sean Dyche watch from the touchline during Premier League match at Old Trafford

'Embarrassing' Utd suffer fresh woe

Pressure mounts on Solskjaer after 0-2 home defeat against Burnley

AFP ■ MANCHESTER

Manchester United were labelled an "embarrassment" as pressure mounted on Ole Gunnar Solskjaer following Burnley's shock 2-0 victory, while Tottenham boosted their top four prospects with a 2-1 win over Norwich on Wednesday.

Solskjaer's side suffered a third defeat in their last four Premier League games to put the United boss's job security back under the microscope.

Burnley's first top-flight win at Old Trafford since 1962, secured by Chris Wood's 39th minute opener and a Jay Rodriguez thunderbolt after the break, exposed the flaws in a lacklustre United side who have made their worst start to a season since 1989-90.

The majority of Old Trafford was on its feet when chants of "stand up if you hate Glazers" echoed around the ground in reference to United's owners.

Executive vice-chairman Ed Woodward was also subjected to many other abusive chants, while those few fans who remained in the stadium booed Solskjaer and his players at full-time.

Former United defender Rio Ferdinand, a Premier League and Champions League winner with the club, slammed the performance and called for the US-based Glazer family to take action to stop the rot.

"I can't defend this," Ferdinand told BT Sport. "These young kids now in schools around the country, they are not going to be wearing Manchester United shirts."

"Fans are walking out after 84 minutes! It's an embarrassment. People at the top need to look and see this and make changes, put a plan in place that people can sit there and see where we are going now. I don't see it."

Fifth placed United are six points behind fourth placed Chelsea as they battle to qualify for next season's Champions League via a top four finish.

Solskjaer admitted United had only themselves to blame, but he claimed the youngsters in his side deserved some patience.

"The boys have given every-

thing they've got. They are experiencing this period for the first time in their lives, some of them," he said.

"Of course I'm going to back them. I'm going to be here to help them get through this. When you're at Man United there's always going to be criticism.

"We can't do anything but hold our hands up and say 'this isn't good enough for this club.' Of course we're disappointed in the points tally and performances, we're still fifth in the table."

Tottenham needed a late winner from Son Heung-min to snap a four-game winless streak in the league and breathe new life into their push for a top-four spot.

ALLI ENDS DROUGHT

Dele Alli's opener had ended a three-game run without even scoring in the league for sixth placed Spurs before Teemu Pukki's penalty 20 minutes from time for bottom-of-the-table Norwich.

South Korea forward Son's stooping header 11 minutes from time hauled Jose Mourinho's men within six points of Chelsea.

Elsewhere, Ayoze Perez scored twice as third placed Leicester ended their two-match winless league run with a 4-1 victory over West Ham that was marred by an injury to their leading scorer Jamie Vardy.

Vardy limped off just before half-time at the King Power Stadium with his side 1-0 ahead thanks to Harvey Barnes' 24th-minute opener, with the winger then setting up Ricardo Pereira to fire home the second in added time.

Five minutes after the interval, Wilfred Ndidi was adjudged to have bundled Sebastian Haller over in the area and Mark Noble scored from the penalty spot.

However, Leicester earned a debatable penalty of their own when Kelechi Iheanacho was deemed to have been brought down by Angelo Ogbonna and Perez made no mistake from 12 yards.

The former Newcastle player then swept home his side's fourth goal to lift them back within three points of second-placed Manchester City.

AFP ■ MADRID

La Liga's heavyweights were both given a scare by third tier opponents in the Copa del Rey on Wednesday as Barcelona needed two late goals to beat Ibiza and Real Madrid dug deep for victory over Unionistas de Salamanca.

Barca sit 44 places ahead of Ibiza and Madrid 56 above Unionistas but the lowly duo both came close to extraordinary upsets, only for Ibiza to lose 2-1 and Unionistas 3-1 in front of their jubilant home fans.

With Lionel Messi rested and not even on the bench, Antoine Griezmann proved the saviour for Barcelona, scoring twice in the second half, including a 94th-minute winner, after Pep Caballe had given the hosts a fairytale lead at Camp Nou.

"Scoring gave them confidence," said Barca coach Quique Setien. "We were a bit sloppy, we gave the ball away and that gave them life. It wasn't easy."

Discomfort was more fleeting for Madrid, who conceded an equaliser in the second half following a brilliant run and finish from Unionistas' Alvaro Romero, only to restore their advantage five minutes later.

Third division scare

Barca, Madrid made to sweat by Ibiza and Unionistas



Antoine Griezmann celebrates after scoring winner

Juan Gonga turned the ball into his own net after Gareth Bale, back from injury and illness, scored his first goal for his club since September 1.

Bale's celebrations were notably muted and he had to go off in the second half.

"He sprained his ankle a little," said coach Zinedine Zidane. "I don't think it's much but tomorrow we'll see."

At the end, Unionistas fans were waving their scarves with pride just as Ibiza's supporters had applauded their team off, even though Griezmann had dashed their hopes just moments before.

Elsewhere, holders Valencia beat Logrones 1-0 while Segunda strugglers Tenerife knocked out La Liga's Real Valladolid with a surprise 2-1 win.



Nianzou Kouassi celebrates with Neymar after scoring Paris Saint-Germain third goal against Reims

Neymar sets final showdown

PARIS: Neymar set up the first two goals with curling set pieces as Paris Saint-Germain won their French League Cup semi-final 3-0 away to Reims on a chilly Wednesday night.

PSG will face Lyon, who beat Lille on penalties on Tuesday, in the final at the Stade de France on April 4.

This was PSG's second cup match in three days and coach Thomas Tuchel continued to shuffle his squad.

Neymar and Kylian Mbappe, who were unused substitutes as PSG won in the French Cup at Lorient on Sunday, started while Mauro Icardi and Angel di Maria who began that game, shivered on the bench on a below-freezing evening in Champagne country. Neymar set up the first goal for his fellow Brazilian Marquinhos, another star brought back after a coach-enforced rest, after nine minutes.

Marquinhos, playing in central defence and as captain, raced in to meet an outswinging Neymar corner.

He outleaped the static Reims defenders and his powerful downward header had rebounded into the roof of the net before goalkeeper Predrag Rajkovic could get close to it. After 31 minutes, Neymar again aimed for Marquinhos with an in-swinging free kick.

When the centre-back missed the ball it caught the man marking him, Alaixys Romao, by surprise and he nodded it toward goal where fullback Ghislain Konan sliced the ball into his own net.

Neymar, who produced a combative display, and Mbappe, booked for a late handball, played the full 90 minutes even though the game was settled by the 77th minute.

Seven for CR7 against Roma

Cristiano headlines Juventus 3-1 win



Cristiano Ronaldo celebrates after scoring Juventus opening goal

Turin giants but his first in the Italian Cup.

The five-time Ballon d'Or winner has also scored seven goals in four matches played in 2020. "I believe that the compliments should be made to his mother," said Sarri of Ronaldo who has now scored in 15 different club competitions throughout his career.

"He is in super form physically. In terms of explosiveness he is doing well, he takes great care of the details.

"It is difficult to improve on an individual level. We are talking about one of the greatest of all time and I would like to help him win a sixth Ballon d'Or.

Rodrigo Bentancur added a second goal after 38 minutes with defender Leonardo Bonucci nodding in a third just before the break.

Cengiz Under pulled a goal back for Roma five minutes after the break, rifling in from a distance with the ball hitting the crossbar and bouncing in off goalkeeper Gianluigi Buffon in the Juventus goal.

Buffon denied Alessandro Florenzi and Aleksandar Kolarov to keep Juventus on course in the competition they have won 13 times.

Juventus will play either AC Milan or Torino in the semi-finals.

Indian TT teams a win away from Olympics



Indian Table Tennis team players pose for a group photo

PTI ■ GONDOMAR

Indian men and women Lare just one win away from securing their maiden qualification for Olympics, following their contrasting victories against Luxembourg and Sweden respectively in the Team Qualifier here on Wednesday.

India's men's highest ranked player G Sathyan took some time adjusting to the pimped rubber of Luka Mladenovic but other than that it was a straight forward tie for the fifth seeds who play 11th seeds Slovenia in the all-important round of 16 clash today.

A quarterfinal finish

guarantees qualification for the Tokyo Olympics. India has never qualified as a team in Olympic history, limiting its participation to individual events.

Sharath Kamal and Harmeet Desai got India off to a winning start, beating Gilles Michely and Eric Glod 11-9, 16-14, 116 in the opening doubles.

In the subsequent singles, world number 30 Sathyan lost the first two games against Mladenovic before fighting back to prevail 8-11, 9-11, 11-3, 13-11, 11-6.

Veteran Sharath, ranked 33, conceded a game to Glod but eventually won 11-3, 11-3, 12-14, 11-5 to complete a 3-0 vic-

tory. The seedings suggest that India are a much better side than Slovenia but Sharath said it will be 50-50 contest.

"They have a pretty balanced team," he said, referring to the presence of 40th ranked Darko Jorgic and 62nd ranked Bojan Tokic in the Slovenian camp.

Slovenia beat Iran 3-1 in their round of 32 match. Like the men, the Indian women too are a win away from creating history. The 17th seeds pipped 11th seeds Sweden 3-2 after Archana Kamath saved a match point to beat Linda Bergstrom in the fifth and deciding rubber. She won 11-8, 8-11, 9-11, 11-7, 13-11.

However, the foundation of the memorable victory was laid by top-ranked Indian Manika Batra, who won both her singles, beating Bergstrom and Christina Kallberg 3-1 and 3-2 respectively.

The Indians will have to produce something special if they are to down a much stronger Romania in the pre-quarterfinals.

Manika, ranked at 61, is the sole Indian in the top-100 while Romania boast of 19th ranked Bernadette Szocs and 31st ranked Elizabeta Samara.

Yet to decide when to hang up boots: Chhetri

PTI ■ PUNE

Indian football team captain Sunil Chhetri on Thursday made it clear that he is yet to decide when to hang up his boots though he did not have many games left for the country.

The 35-year-old Chhetri recently said that he did not have too many games left to play with the national side and that is the reason why he won't set himself any long-term goals going forward.

"I am on the other side of my career. I have already played 112 games for my country and I am not going to play 250 games. That is what I meant that I do not have many games left. I do not know when I am going to stop but I love this game," Chhetri, said.

Chhetri, the second highest international goal-scorer among active players after Cristiano Ronaldo said, "I feel really energetic. So I will keep going as much as possible. But the fact is, I am on other side of my career and not going to play 100 games more for my country. So, whatever it is, 10, 20, 30, 40, 60, I



Sunil Chhetri in a file picture

don't know how many, but as many as I can, I will give my best," he said.

He also said that Indian football was going in the right direction but there was a long way to go.

"We have improved a little bit and have to go a long way. I think everyone who is involved with it, corporate houses, players, coaches, government, AIFF, fans, media have to come together and put the best foot forward to take it to a different level. We are going in the right direction, but the goal is far. We have to work really hard," he signed off.