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IRAN'S TOP LEADER STRIKES DEFIANT TONE AMID MONTH OF TURMOIL

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INDIA HUNT KANGAROOS IN RAJKOT

Published From
DELHI LUCKNOW BHOPAL BHUBANESWAR
RANCHI RAIPUR CHANDIGARH
DEHRADUN HYDERABAD VIJAYWADA

Late City Vol. 16 Issue 17
*Air Surcharge Extra if Applicable

BHUBANESWAR, SATURDAY JANUARY 18, 2020; PAGES 16 ₹3



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13 VIVACITY



Nirbhaya rapists get 10 more days to live

Fresh death warrant issued for Feb 1 as President rejects mercy plea

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

After President Ram Nath Kovind on Friday rejected the mercy petition of Nirbhaya's death-row convict Mukesh Kumar, a Delhi court issued fresh death warrants against all the four rapists-killers for hanging on February 1. Earlier the death warrant was issued for January 22.

In a fresh development, that may further delay the execution of the four convicts, another death-row convict Pawan Kumar moved the Supreme Court on Friday challenging the Delhi High Court's order dismissing his claim of being a juvenile at the time of the offence in December 2012.

The President rejected Mukesh's mercy plea after the Union Home Ministry forwarded the petition to his office late on Thursday night. On Friday, the Ministry forwarded the President decision to the Delhi Government and Tihar Jail, where the four men have been lodged.

Soon after the rejection of the mercy plea by the President, the Tihar jail authorities, via Public Prosecutor Irfan Ahmed, sought issuance of fresh death warrants against the four convicts Mukesh, Vinay Sharma, Pawan Gupta and Akshay Thakur.

Additional Sessions Judge (AS) of Patiala House courts Satish Kumar Arora was hearing a plea by one of the four death-row convicts in the case. "This case presents a scenario



when convicts were given the opportunity to file mercy, but only one availed the opportunity. There might be delay tactics. For how long will this go

on? Had death warrant not been issued, the convicts would not have initiated using their legal remedies," the court said. Distraught over the hang-

ing of his 23-year-old daughter's rapists-murderers being further delayed due to the legalities, her father hoped that the convicts will not escape the

gallows. His comments came after the President rejected the mercy plea of Mukesh.

"We are happy that the chances of them getting hanged have increased. We are assured that as soon as they file mercy pleas they will be rejected," he said, adding that the news of the execution not happening on January 22 had disheartened them but Friday's developments have ignited their hope.

Incidentally, Delhi Lieutenant Governor Anil Baijal's office had sent Mukesh's mercy petition to the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) on Thursday, a day after the Delhi Government recommended its rejection.

"The MHA has forwarded the mercy petition of Mukesh to the President. The Ministry has reiterated the recommendation of the Lieutenant Governor of Delhi for its rejection," a Home Ministry official said on Friday morning.

Meanwhile, denying the Delhi Government's role in delaying the hanging of the Nirbhaya case convicts, Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal on Friday said the victim's mother is being "misguided" and accused BJP leader and I&B Minister Prakash Javadekar of politicising the matter.

Kejriwal, who is the AAP's national convener, told reporters that whatever responsibilities the Delhi Government had, it had finished them within a few hours.

"We sent the mercy petition within hours, so the Delhi

Government has no role in delaying the hanging of the convicts," he said.

Six people — Mukesh, Vinay Sharma, Akshay Kumar Singh, Pawan Gupta, Ram Singh and a juvenile — were named as accused in the brutal gangrape and murder of Nirbhaya. The trial of the five adult men began in a special fast-track court in March 2013 while the juvenile was tried by juvenile justice board, and is now free.

The prime accused, Ram Singh, committed suicide by hanging himself in Tihar jail days after the trial began. The juvenile, who was said to be the most brutal of the attackers, was put in a correctional home for three years. He was released in 2015 and sent to an undisclosed location amid concerns over a threat to his life.

The juvenile, when released, was 20 years old. Mukesh, Vinay, Akshay and Pawan were convicted and sentenced to death in September 2013.

Meanwhile, Sandeep Goyal, Director General, Delhi Prisons, denied charges made by Vinay's lawyer that he had tried to end his life.

"Vinay was slightly unwell and he was attended by prison doctors and his health condition is normal. However, he sometimes refuses to have meal and jail wardens keep a watch on him. All four the convicts are under round the clock watch in the executions cell," said Goyal.

BJP's 1st list of 57 bets big on civic poll feats

Party picks 11 SC candidates for Delhi polls

SAPNA SINGH ■ NEW DELHI

The Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) on Friday announced candidates for 57 Assembly seats for the February 8 Delhi polls picking 11 SC and four women candidates.

Delhi BJP chief Manoj Tiwari, joined by senior BJP leader Prakash Javadekar, announced the list finalised at party's Central Election Committee (CEC) meeting on Thursday night.

It seems that the BJP, which swept the 2017 civic polls in Delhi, is betting big on its municipal leaders to shore up the party's fortune for in the Assembly polls. Therefore, the BJP gave poll tickets to nearly 20 municipal leaders, including four former mayors, as many ex-deputy mayors and a host of sitting and former councillors.

Former Delhi Minister Kapil Mishra has been fielded from Model Town. Karwal Nagar seat, from where Mishra had won on AAP ticket, has gone to old war horse and four-term MLA Mohan Singh Bisht.



Delhi BJP State president Manoj Tiwari during the release of BJP's first list of 57 candidates for Delhi Assembly polls, at BJP headquarters in New Delhi on Friday

The BJP has not declared candidate against Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal from New Delhi seat.

JD(U)'s Shilendra Kumar filed nomination from Burari which the latter has demanded from the BJP. JD(U) has staked claim for Badarpur seat too but the BJP has fielded seasoned politician Ram Singh Bidhuri who had won this seat thrice.

The BJP central command is mulling over to field a strong candidate against Kejriwal.

B'patna ex-MLA in Vigilance net

BHAWANIPATNA: The Vigilance police on Friday conducted raids on the residence of former Bhawanipatna MLA Anam Naik and detected assets worth Rs 3.43 crore allegedly disproportionate to his know sources of income

During the course of search and inventory, Naik and his family members were found in possession of assets worth Rs. 3.43 crore including a

₹3.43-cr assets detected



triple-storied building, a duplex lodge with a foreign liquor shop, two market complexes, two single-storied buildings and a garage, six plots of land, a tractor, two four-wheelers, three two-wheelers, deposits in different banks amounting to over Rs 49 lakh, investment in insurance policies, gold ornaments and household articles.

Reports said allegation of corruption was earlier levelled against the 55-year-old ex-MLA while his son was arrested in a cheating case. Naik was a BJD MLA from 2014 to 2019.

Opp-ruled States object to NPR format

States' concerns unwarranted, one can skip some of questions: Centre

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Centre on Friday clarified to the States opposing the National Population Register exercise that their concerns about the nature of questions in the NPR format was unwarranted saying it was not mandatory to answer some newly-introduced questions. No official from the West Bengal Government attended the meeting, an official said.

Congress-ruled Rajasthan and some other Opposition-ruled States raised these concerns at a day-long conference convened by the Union Home Ministry to discuss the modalities to be adopted during the House listing phase of the Census 2021 and the NPR to be carried out from April 1 to September 30.

Rajasthan Chief Secretary DB Gupta said he and the representatives of a few other States raised objections to a few questions to be asked by enumerators to people during the NPR exercise. "We said certain



questions in NPR are impractical, like questions related to the birth place of parents. There are many people in the country who even don't know what was their birth place. I don't know what is the purpose of such questions and we demanded in the meeting to remove such questions," Gupta told reporters after the meeting.

He said the Central Government officials told them that answers to all such questions are not mandatory but voluntary and no one is going to force anyone to reply any question. "They said such questions were asked earlier also and this time they have just linked with an individual's place of birth with his or her parent's place of birth. But they said answer to this question is not mandatory," he said.

After Kerala, Punjab adopts resolution to challenge CAA in SC

MONIKA MALIK ■ CHANDIGARH

Minutes after the Punjab Vidhan Sabha passed a resolution against the BJP-led Government's Citizenship (Amendment) Act on Friday, Chief Minister Capt Amarinder Singh declared that the border State will join Kerala in challenging the newly-amended law in the apex court.

Describing the controversial legislation as 'inherently discriminatory and a negation of the very secular fabric on which the Constitution of India is based, the Punjab Assembly adopted, by voice vote, a hard-hitting resolution seeking immediate repeal of the unconstitutional Citizenship Amendment Act, 2019 (CAA), which the Chief Minister Capt Amarinder Singh compared with the ethnic and religious cleansing of Hitler's Germany.

Clearly, no lessons had been learnt from history, said a visibly anguished Chief Minister during the discussion on the resolution, which also urged the Centre to put on hold the work on the National Population Register (NPR), till forms or documents associated with it are amended suitably, in order to allay apprehensions that it is a prelude to the National Register of Citizens (NRC) and designed to deprive a section of persons from citizenship of India and implement CAA.

"Like Kerala, the Government will approach the Supreme Court on the issue," said Capt Amarinder while talking with the media after the conclusion of the two-day special Assembly session.

He said that the Centre would have to make the necessary amendments to CAA if it had to be implemented in Punjab and other States opposing the legislation.

'BJP's priority would be to serve people'

Mohanty takes charge as party State chief

PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

Samir Mohanty, who took charge as BJP State president on Friday, said his priority would be to serve people of the State and strengthen all 37,000 booth-level organisations across the State.

Mohanty too said his party would work to ensure that benefits of welfare works of the Narendra Modi Government reach all eligible beneficiaries at the grassroots level.

"I am a common worker of the party. I am committed to work for the party as a convener or a facilitator. I thank all workers working at the 37,000 booths dedicatedly for the party," said Mohanty.

Union Minister Dharmendra Pradhan said the party would make all efforts to make Odisha number one

State. Union Minister Pratap Sarangi called upon party workers to work hard so that the party would form the next Government in the State.

Leader of Opposition in the State Assembly Pradipta Naik asserted that the BJP

Mohanty. Among others, BJP national assistant secretary (organisation) Soudan Singh, Odisha-in-charge Arun Singh, Union Ministers Dharmendra Pradhan and Pratap Sarangi, national vice-president Baijyant



would be strengthened under the leadership of Mohanty. Outgoing president Basant Panda handed over charges to

Panda, MP Aparajita Sarangi, former president KV Singh Deo and all MLAs and MPs greeted Mohanty.

DCC presidents' selection soon: Jitendra

PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

A selection process for appointment of presidents of District Congress Committees (DCCs) and also appointment of functionaries in the Pradesh Congress Committee would be initiated in the State soon.

This was informed by All India Congress Committee general secretary and Odisha-in-charge Jitendra Singh at a Press meet here on Friday.

Singh said he along with PCC president Niranjana Patnaik and others met workers and leaders in 16 districts and discussed with them about strengthening the Congress in grassroots level. "We want to appoint young leaders as DCC presidents for which we have undertaken a talent search drive. The search is about to be completed and we would soon



inform about appointment of DCC chiefs and PCC functionaries," Singh said.

Adding that the BJD is 'B' team of the BJP and they are not opposing each other on important issues, Singh said the

Congress would work as the main Opposition party in the State.

"I heard newly elected Odisha BJP president Samir Mohanty saying he will work for development of the State in

coordination with the BJD Government. While the BJD is not opposing corruption in the Ujjwala Yojana, the BJP is keeping mum on the KALLA irregularities. The BJP and the BJD have united," he said.

Cultural events at Ekamra Haat daily



PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

Cultural events would now be held at the Ekamra Haat here every day. The OLL & Culture Department of the State Government has taken a decision in this regard. The department in collaboration with the Odisha Tourism

would organise the programmes. The move is aimed at boosting the art and culture of Odisha and providing a regular platform to artists from across the State, official sources said. However, cultural events on a daily basis would not be organised during rainy season, the sources added.

Girl got pregnant after rape in Delhi attempts suicide

PNS ■ SAMBALPUR

A 19-year-old girl of Sambalpur district, who was allegedly raped and impregnated by a youth in Delhi last year, attempted to commit suicide a few days ago.

The victim, a resident of Kisinga in the district, was staying in Delhi and working as a domestic help at a person's house in Noida. During the period, a youth established physical relation with her on the pretext of marrying her. Later, the girl was found preg-

nant and disengaged from work by her employer. She then returned to her village.

On January 13, she consumed poison in a bid to end her life fearing social stigma. She was rescued by her family members and admitted to the VIMSAR at Burla. During treatment on January 15, she gave birth to a premature baby boy, who died after the delivery.

No police complaint has been lodged by the girl's parents in this regard.

CM to officers: Treat people with dignity

Administers oath to them

PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik on Friday advised senior government officials to treat people with dignity and in a professional and ethical manner.

"Every person visiting any institution will be treated with dignity and his issues have to be treated in a professional and ethical manner," said he while addressing a senior officers' conference at the Lok Seva Bhawan here.

Patnaik also administered an oath to this effect to all officers present at the conference.

He said people are the real masters and those who work in the Government are paid by them. "People are the soul of democracy. Every institution in a democracy is for the people



created by their money to empower and serve them," he observed. Patnaik described the senior officers of the Government as 'the drivers of the transformation agenda'.

"I have a family of four and a half crore people of Odisha. With their blessings, I am serving them for the last 20 years. I want our children to have quality education, our brothers and sisters to have good jobs and our elders to have good healthcare facilities," the Chief

Minister stated. Patnaik told the senior officers to share their transformational game-changing ideas with him.

On day-2 on Saturday, the officers would be engaged in outdoor and off-site learning situations in the Eco Retreat camp at Konark. They would have field-level experience sharing and motivational talks on citizen-centric governance, people's empowerment and ethical service delivery.

IAS officer arrest: Wife alleges conspiracy

PNS ■ CUTTACK

After almost three weeks of the arrest of IAS officer Bijay Ketan Upadhyaya in a corruption case, his doctor-wife Tushima Mishra on Friday came out alleging that her husband was innocent and he was a victim of a conspiracy. Refusing to name the conspirators, Dr Mishra, who is a doctor in a Government hospital, also apprehended that there is a threat to her career also.

Upadhyaya, who was working as Director of Horticulture, was arrested by the Vigilance police last month for allegedly seeking a bribe of Rs 1 lakh from a supplier through a manager of a private bank. The manager of the bank, which services the accounts of the horticulture department, was also arrested by the Vigilance in the same case.

Speaking to the media, the IAS officer's wife questioned her husband's arrest pointing out that the alleged bribe money was reportedly recovered from the bank manager's possession. "My husband is an honest officer and he had no role in the said corruption case," she said repeatedly but refused to name the conspirators.

Ever since his arrest on December 30, Upadhyaya is in judicial remand except only the five days of initial police remand. His bail applications have been rejected by the vigilance court as well as the Khurda District Sessions Court. Also questioning the conduct of the Public Prosecutor during the course of hearings of her husband's bail pleas in the lower courts, Tushima said her husband was mocked in the courtroom as if he was a terrorist or a rapist.

'Cong rival is BJD-BJP combine in Odisha'

No democracy prevalent in State: Digvijay

PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

Senior Congress leader and former Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister Digvijay Singh alleged here on Friday that the BJD and the BJP have united and democracy is hardly seen prevalent in Odisha's governance.

"Naveen Patnaik is with the BJP Government (at the Centre). The BJD is supporting the Union Government on every issue. It supported the Citizenship Amendment Bill in Parliament but ambiguously refused to implement the NRC," said Singh at a Press

meet here. He said people's representatives hardly rule the State now. "Ministers and MLAs have no access to the Chief Minister. The IAS officer, who has become the 5-T Secretary, is taking all the decisions," he alleged.

To a question as to which party is Congress' main rival,

Parliamentary Committee on Urban Development, said, "There was no requirement of the CAA at all. The Government has enacted the law to avoid people's attention towards price rise, unemployment and economic slowdown and its all other failures."

Among others, party Odisha in-charge Jitendra



Singh said, "It is the BJP at the Centre and the BJD-BJP combine in Odisha."

Hitting out at the NDA Government at the Centre, Singh, who is now Chairman of

Singh, PCC president Niranjan Patnaik, former Finance Minister Panchanan Kanungo and spokesperson Satyaprakash Nayak were present.

Doctors, equipment at VSS Nagar hospital soon

PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

Members of the VSS Nagar Unnayan Parishad held a meeting with the Bhubaneswar Municipal Corporation Commissioner on Thursday and held discussions for smooth running of the Veera Surendra Sai (VSS) Nagar hospital.

Bhubaneswar North MLA Sushant Kumar Rout, BMC Commissioner Prem Chandra Chaudhary and Parishad general secretary Dillip Dashsharma, treasurer Maheswar Biswal and joint secretary Nimai Charan Das were present in the meeting and held discussions.

Chaudhary assured that doctors would be recruited within a week and before that medical equipment would be provided. Parishad members thanked Rout for holding the meet with the Commissioner.

Road Safety Week in G'pati

Cops gift bitter gourd to traffic violators

PNS ■ PARALAKHEMUNDI

In a bid to make people aware on road safety rules, the Gajapati police conducted a campaign by distributing chocolates to the motorists who wore helmets and put on seatbelts at Station Square here on Friday.

Gajapati SP Sarah Sharma, motivating people to follow traffic rules, offered chocolates among those who abided by the norms but distributed bitter gourds and alma to hel-

metless riders and motorists who had not put on their seatbelts.

On the occasion, helmets were also provided at affordable prices.

Sharma said the awareness campaign has been undertaken to observe the 31st Road Safety Week. Among others, RTO-cum-Sub-Collector Rajnikant Swain, SDPO PK Jena, MVI Basant Kumar Mahapatra and Paralakhemundi PS IIC Vivekananda Swain were present.

Post SC order

State to get ₹1,850 cr from mining firms

PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

On the basis of recent direction of the Supreme Court, more than Rs 1,850 crore may come to Odisha State treasury. After hearing two interlocutory applications, a three-judge Bench of the Supreme Court headed by Chief Justice SA Bobde has passed such order.

Notably, an organisation namely Common Cause had knocked the door of justice in the year 2014 to curb illegal mining in the country. In this case Sarda Mines Pvt. Ltd (SMPL) which was granted lease of Thakurani Block-B iron ore mines in Keonjhar district approached the apex court seeking appropriate direction for resumption of its mining operation which was stopped since March, 2014.

Earlier as per the direction of the apex court, the Central Environment Committee (CEC) had inquired into the matter and submitted its report in 2019 indicating 135,34,703 tons of excess/illegal mining of iron ore by SMPL in violation of environmental clearance granted by the Union Environment and Forest Ministry.

Accordingly the CEC in its report stated that the SMPL is liable to pay Rs 933,60,79,689 in terms of judgment of the apex court. Thereafter, another committee in its report noted that there was no violation of legal provision with respect to mining by SMPL.

The SMPL argued before the SC that the company had suffered irreparable injury because of closer of the mine for more than five and a half

years. Therefore, the company prayed the court to allow them to resume mining operations on certain conditions.

After hearing of the matter at length, the SC granted one month time to SMPL to deposit the dues as assessed by CEC on May 8 last.

Further the court directed SMPL to file an undertaking to comply with all the rules, regulations and other mandatory provisions for carrying out mining operations.

Another company namely Mideast through another interim application prayed the SC to permit them to sell 23,51,027.83 tons of iron ore which had been stacked at the dispatched site within the lease hold area and to permit them to deposit the consideration money received from the buyers to the State of Odisha

towards demand notice.

Mideast was granted licence for setting up a pig iron and steel manufacturing plant near Duburi. The company was also granted mining lease over 104.68 hectares of Roida-1 iron ore mine near Barbil in Keonjhar district which is valid till 31.03.2020.

Notwithstanding the statutory embargo the Mideast extracted mineral over and above the permissible limit. As the company was found liable to compensate for the illegal extraction, a demand notice for payment of Rs 924,75,24,283 to be paid by 31.12.2017 was served upon. The mining operation was stopped from January 1, 2018 by which date extracted mineral of more than 23.51 lakh ton was stacked in the mining area.

The company approached the court to permit them to sell their stacked iron ore under supervision of State authorities and to deposit the sell proceeds towards outstanding dues. The court in its order allowed the Mideast to sell the iron ore already mined and stacked by it before January 1, 2018 under supervision of an authority to be appointed by the Odisha Government.

The court has categorically held that the sell proceeds in this regard is to be deposited with the Special Purpose Vehicle (OMBADC) towards State arrears. The State Government is also directed to appoint supervisory authority within two weeks and the sell process shall preferably be completed within two months thereafter.

Police submit charge sheet against 3 accused

Attack on Sikh citizen in city

PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

The Commissionerate police on Friday submitted charge-sheet against three persons in connection with the attack on the Sikh businessman at Laxmisagar in the city on Tuesday.

Report of the Medical Officer, CCTV footages and witnesses' statements are being relied upon in the case while a prayer has been made by the law enforcement agency before the Court of SDJM here for early cognisance and trial, police sources said.

Notably, the accused, identified as Sankar Rout, Deepak

Mohanty and Deepak Jena, were arrested, but they later secured bail in a matter of a few hours.

Assault victim Parvinder Pal Singh has claimed that police did not book the attackers under stringent sections of the IPC, including Section 307 (attempt to murder), for which they were granted bail. He further accused the Commissionerate police of having a nexus with the accused resulting in inadequate action against them.

Singh had been assaulted by a group of youths despite the presence of police at the spot. The attack followed when he asked occupants of a car to move the vehicle as it was parked on road near an apartment causing inconvenience in



vehicular movement.

However, they abused Singh, following which he sought the help of police by dialling 100. As cops reached the spot in a PCR van, Singh went near the policemen to apprise them about the matter.

But the accused thrashed Singh and hit his head and eye with a stone injuring him grievously. The assault took place in the presence of cops.

Contemporaries

Let not curative petition be ground to delay justice



S JYOTIRANJANA

This Tuesday, the Supreme Court dismissed a curative petition of two of the four death row convicts in the 2012 Nirbhaya gang-rape and murder case, which paved for their execution along with two other convicts. It was the unanimous decision of the bench of Justices NV Ramana, Arun Mishra, RF Nariman, R Banumathi and Ashok Bhushan that there was no merit in the curative petition of Vinay Kumar Sharma and Mukesh Singh seeking reconsideration of death sentence awarded.

Both of them had moved a curative petition in the apex court after a trial court in Delhi issued death warrant in their name scheduling their date of execution to January 22. However, both of them moved to the President of India with mercy petition but the President rejected one of the accused Mukesh Singh's mercy

plea on January 17, latest by the time of writing of this piece of article. But this is not the end of the process of postponement of execution for now, since the other two accused persons haven't yet filed the curative petitions or mercy pleas.

On the judicial side, a curative petition is the last constitutional remedy available to a person whose review petition has been dismissed by the Supreme Court. Constitution quite explicitly speaks about the review power under Article 137; however, it is completely silent about the 'curative power'.

This is in fact an act of judicial innovation and has come to existence in the case of Rupa Ashok Hurra v. Ashok Hurra and another, where the apex court innovated this to prevent miscarriage of justice and abuse of process. The curative power of the court flows from Article 142 of the Constitution, which actually gives the power to optimise the process of justice delivery by doing complete justice. In the case of Rupa Hurra, the Constitution bench of the Supreme Court observed, "We are of the view that though Judges of the highest court do their best, subject of course to the limitation of human fallibility, yet situations may arise, in the rarest of the rare cases, which would require reconsideration of a final judgment to set right miscarriage of justice complained of. In such case it would not only be proper but also obligatory both legally and morally to rectify the error."

The bench further remarked, "Rectification of an order thus stems from the fundamental principle that justice is above all. It is exercised to remove the error and not for disturbing finality. When the Constitution was framed the substantive power to rectify or recall the order passed by the apex court was specifically provided by Article 137 of the Constitution. And Article 145(c) permitted the apex court to frame rules as to the conditions subject to which any judgment or order may be reviewed." And while putting primacy over the need to uphold the cause of justice, it observed, "The court is thus not precluded from recalling or reviewing its own order if it is satisfied that it is necessary to do so for the sake of justice."

While dealing with this case the court has relied on the Latin maxim "actus curiae neminem gravabit", which means an act of the court shall prejudice no one. The applicability of this maxim is attracted when the court is set under an obligation to rectify a wrong committed by the act of the court itself.

Actually, the curative petition is a means to request the court to rethink and revise their own decision once the review petition is dismissed or not considered. However, the court has adopted a cautious approach in considering such petitions. The Supreme Court has clearly stated that such petitions may be used in rarity and

to ensure it, it has framed guidelines for filing of the petition, and has further reiterated that such petitions to be entertained only when there is a gross violation of natural justice. While writing his concurring judgment in the Rupa Hurra Case, Justice Banerjee added that, "Curative petitions ought to be treated as a rarity rather than regular."

As a precautionary measure, it is laid down that, the grounds for filing such a petition to be clearly verified and certified by a senior advocate. The same is to be reviewed by three senior most judges along with the judges who passed the direction or judgment and if the majority so opines that there is a violation, the curative petition is to be allowed.

Another significant feature of the curative petition is that, there is no limitation in filing of the petition, but it should be filed within reasonable period of time. One of the instances where curative petition was allowed is Navneet Kaur Vs State of NCT of Delhi, where the curative petition was filed by the wife of the convict against the dismissal of a review petition, where she had prayed for setting aside the death sentence since there was an inordinate delay of 8 years in disposal of the mercy petition. The Supreme Court in this case allowed the curative petition by commuting the death sentence to life imprisonment on the ground of such inordinate delay and on the ground of

insanity.

The courts have always well acknowledged and therefore ruled out the state of absolute infallibility of the judges, since man is to err is as much an axiom, as other axioms of nature. So, the judicial apparatus of curative petition has been devised and designed as a last remedy or course correction in case of an prejudice or any other form of injustice that might have crept in, even while delivering justice after last scrutiny in the penultimate stage of review.

However, the noble intent behind curative petitions shouldn't be allowed as a means to frustrate the process of justice. Therefore, it is expedient that, when such petition is being filed by the convicts in rarest of rare crimes, it should be barred by limitation, which may suitably be stipulated by law and in such cases, where there are more than one convict for the same cause of action and offence, separate curative petitions shouldn't be allowed. And if any of them prefers not to proceed with the curative petition at the same time with the other or others, his right to file the petition should be deemed to have been waived by choice. This shall defeat the dilatory tactics adopted by the convicts in such cases and shall credibly uphold the ends of justice.

(The writer is a lawyer and can be reached at sjyotiranjana3@gmail.com)

ICSI meet on corporate, business laws opens

PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

A two-day seminar on the theme "An Insight on Corporate and Business Laws", organised by the Institute of Company Secretaries of India (ICSI), Bhubaneswar Chapter, was inaugurated here on Friday.

Inaugurating the seminar, Principal Secretary to Governor, Madhu Sudan Padhi, said the Company Secretaries are not only the compliance officer but also educators to the management of the companies. He also apprised about the role and duties of independent directors



and opined that the corporate professionals should be an independent director.

Nalco CMD Sridhar Patra apprised about the role of Company Secretaries in corporate sectors. The Company Secretaries role is not only confined in the company law but also other laws to be applic-

able for the companies.

Chapter Chairman Soumya Sujit Mishra, Vice-Chairman Rajendra Kumar Kar and EIRC Vice-Chairman Priyadarshi Nayak also spoke in the seminar, which will be attended by about 150 corporate professionals, executives from different States.

Poor BSNL internet hits Baleswar post office work

Rural people in unbanked areas suffer

UBACHAK MOHANTY ■
BALESWAR

The functioning of the Post Offices in rural pockets in Baleswar district is adversely affected due to nagging problems of link failure of Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited (BSNL) services. The bottleneck not only affects the post offices business, it also impacts mainly the rural populace who largely depend on the Post Offices for various services, where banks are not available. While almost all transactions in the Post Offices are being made online through the internet survives, the post offices are connected with the BSNL. Many a time, the Post

Offices as well as customers suffer either due to link failure or low-speed of internet.

Under the Jaleswar main Post Offices, as many as 22 Sub Post Offices and 183 branch post offices are operational covering Bhograi, Amarda road, Baliapal, Churmara, Chandanesar, Kamrada, Laxmannath, Nampo Singla and Dahamunda, etc.

Despite having a vast network, the Post Offices established in these pockets are not able to deliver services including stamp sale registration, speed post, parcel, postal life insurance (PLI), RPLI, saving and RD deposits and withdrawal and Aadhaar link, payment of bills, telephone, electricity, etc., due to the poor service of the service provider, i.e., the BSNL.

Sources said that not only the internet glitches, inadequate manpower also affects the function of main Post Offices.

Youth's charred body found in Ganjam

Identity yet to be ascertained; murder suspected

PNS ■
BRAHMAPUR

Mystery shrouded the death of a youth, whose half-charred body was found in Sunapalli village under the Kabisuryanagar police station in Ganjam district on Friday morning.

As per initial reports, the identity of the youth was yet to be known.

The incident came to light after some locals spotted smoke emanating from a paddy haystack and rushed to the spot. Upon reaching the area, the villagers found the half-

burnt body that might have been set on fire on Thursday night.

Being informed, police reached the spot and sent the body for postmortem.



While the exact circumstances that led to the death of the youth were yet to be ascertained, it was suspected that he was allegedly murdered somewhere and later his body was dumped at Sunapalli and set on fire.

While the mouth of the youth was stuffed with a handkerchief, a gold chain donned by him was recovered, sources added.

8th UPHC opens at Brahmapur

PNS ■
BRAHMAPUR

The 8th Urban Primary Health Centre (UPHC) by the Brahmapur Municipal Corporation (BeMC) under the National Health Mission was inaugurated at SNT Road here recently.



Brahmapur MP Chandra Sekhar Sahu and MLA Bikram Panda and Ganjam district Collector Vijay Amruta Kulange and CDMO Dr Bijay Kumar Panigrahi attended as guests and inaugurated the centre.

As many as 12 healthcare facilities under the Ayushman Bharat Yojana would be provided in the centre, which has been upgraded from the Red

Cross Hospital. People of five wards under the BeMC would be benefited by the centre, which would be managed by an NGO.

Among others, BeMC Health Officer Dr Lalatendu Dash, Dr NC Padhy, Dr KK Panigrahi, DPM Shyam Sudar Tripathy, DRDA PD Lambodar Digal and former MLA Dr Ramesh Chandra Chyau Patnaik were present.

Boat carrying 30 passengers stranded in sea



PNS ■ KENDRAPADA

As many as 30 passengers aboard a motorboat were stranded in sea off the State's coast when the vessel lost its direction due to poor visibility caused by a dense fog on Friday morning.

The incident took place while the boat was on its way from Talachua in Kendrapada

district to Chandbali in Bhadrak district.

According to reports, the boat was stranded after it lost direction in middle of the sea. The passengers on board were left without food for several hours.

The boat resumed its journey towards Chandbali after the fog subsided.

Car hits truck, damaged in Gajapati



PNS ■ PARALAKHEMUNDI

Four persons were injured when a car dashed against a mini-truck from behind due to poor visibility for fog at Padrima village in Gajapati district early on Friday morning.

Six persons were en route to Brahmapur from Mohana at around 6.30 am. Due to poor visibility, it hit the truck, which was stranded on roadside. The intensity of the collision was so high that the front portion of the car was completely damaged. Locals came to the victims' rescue and rushed them to a hos-

pital in Mohana. On receiving information, police reached the spot and made an inquiry.

Intense fog in morning has been continuing to blanket several parts of the State, including Twin City Bhubaneswar and Cuttack, since last few days disrupting vehicular movement.

Coop body secy charred to death

Kin allege murder; locals seek thorough probe

PNS ■ BRAHMAPUR

A day after Jagannath Patro, Secretary of Locchapada Seva Samabaya in Ganjam died in a fire mishap on Thursday, his family members on Friday alleged that his death was a well-planned murder.

A few days ago, Patro was attacked near his house at Locchapada with iron rods by some miscreants.

After Patro's charred body was found in his office, preliminary investigations have revealed that the fire started

due to a short circuit.

Forensic and police teams have conducted investigations. But the locals have demanded an impartial and thorough probe into the incident. The Sadar police have lodged an UD case and sent the dead body to the MKCG Medical College Hospital for postmortem.

Further investigations are on into the incident, said Sadar PS IIC Santoshini Oram. Following Patro's death a pall of gloom has descended in the area.

Jumbo on rampage on road, topples vehicle

PNS ■ ANGUL

Commuters on the Chhendipada-Jarapada road under the Chhendipada Forest Range in Angul district were panicked when a wild elephant came out of nowhere and went on a rampage on the highway on Friday morning.

Vehicular movements on the road came to a grinding halt for around two hours after the tusker, which strayed out of the forest along the main road near Patugadia. The animal was seen chasing the commuters. In a video of the incident, the elephant can also be seen flipping a motorcycle, parked on the roadside by a reporter, who had gone there to cover the inci-



dent. The vehicle was partially damaged.

A huge crowd gathered on both sides of the road and screamed in a bid to drive away the elephant. Vehicular movements resumed when the jumbo went back into the forest.

According to reports, after

being separated from a herd, the pachyderm has been straying into human habitation for the last two months. It was seen roaming in Talcher town two days ago. Meanwhile, locals expressed strong discontentment over the failure of forest officials in driving away the elephant.

Bypoll over, Bijepur promises forgotten

RAKESH JOSHI ■ BARGARH

After the recent Assembly by-election in Bijepur, no developmental works have been taken up and poll promises have been forgotten, alleged the locals.

CM Naveen Patnaik had declared to take care of all developmental projects in Bijepur but here all the projects have been moving slow, they alleged.

The CM had promised to make Bijepur a model constituency and declared many packages on the development of road, drainage system, construction of town hall, park, market complex and community centre in the NAC of Bijepur. The district administration also have made survey work and prepared DPR. But

the works are moving at a snail's pace, alleged Surendra Kumar, a local.

Rs 2 crore for development of NAC, Rs 3 crore for the development of drainage system in the Bijepur town, Rs 1 crore each for the development of playground, market complex, community centres, Kalyan Mandap and Bus stand have been allocated, but most of the projects are very slow.

The CM had declared a special package for the development of Bijepur constituency before election. In this connection more than 20 packages were declared. CM himself declared to review the Bijepur developmental work once in two month. But no tangible actions have been taken ever since, the locals lamented.

Lake Tampara in Ganjam set for facelift

Additional ₹8 cr to be spent

PNS ■ BRAHMAPUR

Ganjam district's lake Tampara, 25 km from here and two km from National Highway-16, is all set to get a facelift at a cost of over Rs eight crore as the Brahmapur Development Authority (BeDA) has finalised additional infrastructure projects at the tourist destination.

The projects would be undertaken under the Central Government's Swadesh Darshan scheme. The BeDA, which has been executing developmental projects also worth Rs 8 crore at the lake in the first phase, is expected to complete the works by April this year, a BeDA official said. BeDA's Vice-Chairman

Chakravarti Singh Rathore said, "The BeDA has finalised the second-phase projects worth around Rs 8 crore in its meeting held on Thursday. The work has been awarded to a contractor, who has been asked to complete it within 11 months."

Under the new projects, a jetty, landscape, trekking, a second food court, a tourist reception centre and an entrance gate would be developed near the lake, he said.

Notably, the infrastructure of Tampara was severely damaged due to Cyclone Phailin, which hit the State in October



2013.

Landscaping, widening of the road from the NH to the lake, a food court, illumination and sitting facilities have been undertaken in the first phase, Rathore said. The State Government sanctioned Rs 33.43 crore under the scheme

for tourism development of the water body two years ago.

The Government has planned to make Tampara a major tourist destination; and a water-sports facility was introduced at the site last month under public-private partnership.

Utkalika Club gifts clothes to orphans



PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

Members of the Utkalika Ladies' Club, a socio-cultural organisation of wives of officers of the Central Mine Planning and Design Institute (CMPDI), recently distributed winter clothes to inmates of the Aadruta Children's Home.

The Aadruta Children's Home for orphan children is located at Gadakan,

Bhubaneswar.

Led by Meeta Saran, wife of the CPMDI CMD, and the Regional Director's wife Purnima Mohapatra, the women also gave away some other household articles to the inmates.

The charity programme was conducted under the supervision of RK Mohapatra, Alekh Naik and some other senior officers of CMPDI.

Maoists' arms, ammos seized after encounter

PNS ■ MALKANGIRI

A huge cache of arms, ammunition and other articles used by Maoists were recovered after a gunfight between the Red rebels and security forces in Malkangiri district on Thursday.

The seizures were made during a combing operation led by Malkangiri SP Rishidish D Khillari and SDPO Prahallad Sahai Meena along with a team of BSF District Voluntary Force (DVF) and Special Operations Group (SOG) commandoes.

According to sources, the anti-Maoist drive was launched following inputs regarding movement of 15 to 20 armed Maoists in Goegurha-Uttamgurha area under the Mudulipada police station. During the exchange of fire, Maoists managed to flee from the spot taking advantage of darkness but left behind their belongings and articles.



An AK-47, 10 detonators, electric wire, cameras, electric extension cord, battery solar panel, three pairs of Maoist uniforms, medicines, Maoist litera-

ture, blankets, among other articles were seized from the spot.

"This seizure points to the fact that the outlawed CPI (Maoist) organisations are try-

ing to wage war against the State by attacking the security forces. Any such attempt would be dealt through action as per law," the police said in a release.

Road accident deaths reduced in Sambalpur

Proposals discussed at road safety meet

NIMAI CHARAN SAHU ■ SAMBALPUR

Deaths due to road accidents have reduced appreciably in Sambalpur and it is below the stipulated target of Supreme Court of India, informed RTO of Sambalpur Lalit Mohan Behera during the Road Safety Committee meeting here where

PD DRDA of Sambalpur, Sukant Kumar Tripathy presided.

"Number of deaths due to road accident in the year 2018 was 235. But it was 203 in 2019," informed RTO Behera. "The Supreme Court gave the entire country a direction to reduce the accidental death rate at least by 10 per cent. But here in Sambalpur we have achieved more than 15 per cent and we are in efforts to decrease number of deaths further," Behera added.

PD DRDA Tripathy asked the RTO, MVI, heads of the engineering departments and all the members present for implementation of all proposals taken in the meeting so that

it could yield good results and save valuable lives. He also narrated the vulnerable points in the district showing some photographs where little precautions could avert accidents from rural to urban area.

It was further decided to sensitise the school and college students to obey traffic rules. Traffic symbols must be painted in each school boundary that can better guide small boys and girls including public, suggested Tripathy. He asked the District Education Officer (DEO) Meena Rani Mangal to ensure all schools to have such wall paintings.

Construction of FOBs (foot over bridges) in front of every school facing main road,

under bridges in places where it is necessary including in front of the new RTO office at Naxapali, filling of the washed away portion near a bridge to Birsingharh, cutting old trees on road sides and many other proposals were taken. It was further discussed to improve the U trun at Bhalupali on SH 10, and the rumbles at Sarla on NH 53 to prevent accidents as they have been almost proved accident-prone zones.

All the members present also came up with specific suggestions to prevent accident and thereby save valuable lives. The members stressed on the need for fixing speed limit boards inside town, and SH and NH to curb speed driving.

Naveen receives CSI E-Ratna Award

For e-Governance, ICT initiatives

PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

On the occasion of its 53rd annual convention, the Computer Society of India (CSI) honoured Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik with the 'CSI E-Ratna Award' for recognition of his selfless service to its citizens and State through e-Governance and ICT initiatives.

MP Dr Achutya Samanta and convener CSI 2020 Manas Ranjan Patnaik were present among others on the second day of the largest and prestigious IT convention of CSI held for the first time in Bhubaneswar at the KIIT University.

Speaking on the occasion, CM Patnaik said, "I congratulate the CSI for holding the IT Convention in Odisha. We in Odisha are transforming the State through 5T and we have

taken up many developmental issues through Information Technology in Odisha."

sessions and seminar on theme digital democracy and e-democracy. Hundreds of dele-



The other eminent dignitaries who were felicitated include Satish KK, Prof Dr Sasmita Samanta, Minister of State, E and IT and Sports Tushar Kanti Behera, Dr Gulshan Rai and Dr AK Saini. The day included technical

gates from different walks of life including industry experts, educationists, Government officials and students joined. The convention had exhibition stalls which showcased emerging products and services of the industry.

2 die in separate road accidents in JSpur

JAGATSingHPUR: In two separate road accidents, two persons were killed in Jagatsinghpur district in past 24 hours. On Thursday afternoon, retired Lecturer Bishnu Charana Datta of Praharajpur under the Kissan Nagar police limits died at Kantuar on the Cuttack-Paradip road. He was going to Raghunathpur by his scooter when an SUV hit him from behind.

Soon after the death, hundreds of villagers staged a road blockade with Datta's body on the road. Police dispersed the mob and seized the body for legal formalities. On the other hand, some villagers followed the SUV, which was spotted at Sirla without its riders. Police seized the car and a search drive was launched to nab its driver.

In the other accident that occurred at Erasama, a bike rider, Jitu Biswal, was killed and one Ullas Ojha sustained injuries. A resident of Ichhapur under Balikuda block, Jitu was returning home accompanied by his friend Ullas. A cement-laden pickup van coming from Erasama rammed into Jitu's bike head on; as a result, he died on the spot.

'Good teachers can be role models for students'

PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

A three-day 11th Alma Fiesta, the annual socio-cultural fest of Indian Institute of Technology (IIT), began with its cultural theme "India's Cultural Melange: A Voyage to India's Heritage Roots" and social theme "Jal Sanrakshit, Bhavishya Surakshit" here on Friday.

Chief guest Indian Council of Social Science Research (ICSSR) National Fellow Pro-Vice Chancellor Dr Kshiti Bhusan Das reinforced the importance of classical music and dance among the students for enhancing technical creativity.

He also expressed happiness at the rapid growth strides by the IIT Bhubaneswar and congratulated the institute and complimented Director Prof RV Raja Kumar. He also stressed on the importance of having good teachers as role models for the students to take up careers in science, technology and creative arts.

Prof Kumar said that the fest has become a beacon of culture and it has made a mark unprecedented and unachievable by its contemporaries. "There is a great sense of importance of Indian classical music and dance in today's times, and I urge each and every student to use the fine arts as a medium to enhance their technical creativity," he added.

On the occasion, a children's fest "Bachpan Ka Rangmanch" was organised in which more than 150 orphanage children participated in events ranging from music and dance competition and many more fun activities for them with a motto to give them a day of profound happiness.

The three-day fest includes dance, music, dramatics and fine arts, literary, technical workshops such as Android App development and self-driving cars, Star Nites (DJ Tejas and Akasa Singh-Bollywood Singer, Cyber Crusades and many more.

INBRIEF

YOUTH ELECTROCUTED AT CUTTACK RLY STATION

Cuttack: A youth was charred to death when he touched a high-voltage overhead electric wire at the Cuttack railway station on Friday. The victim, believed to be mentally-ill, climbed atop a goods train halted at platform number 7 and touched the high-voltage overhead electric wire, resulting in his death on the spot. GRP personnel reached the spot and recovered the body.

PURI WOMAN JOURNALIST FELICITATED



Puri: Journalist Bijaylaxmi Mohanty (60) was felicitated by the Goseva Gobinda Godham Trust in a religious function at Alipada village near Brahmagiri on Wednesday. She was honoured for her outstanding performance in coverage of spiritual and religious events. A housewife, she has been sparing time for newspaper reporting for over last two decades. Besides development and crime news, she always prioritises spiritual events in Puri. Spouse of journalist Nimai Charan Mohanty, she is also a good orator.

Haryana to employ 1652 home guards in hospitals

Chandigarh: Taking note of increasing incidents of scuffle at hospitals in Haryana, the State Government has decided to deploy 1652 home guards on outsourcing basis for ensuring the security of the medical practitioners and for other security arrangements in all primary health centers, community health centers, and district hospitals in the State. Talking to reporters, the Health Minister Anil Vij said that there will be no compromise on security of doctors working in various hospitals of the State.

Inefficient contractor given IFFCO 132-KV line work

Weak foundation poses dangers to people

PNS ■ PARADIP

A 32-KV DC line work of the IFFCO was reportedly done by a contractor who allegedly has neither standard qualifications nor any experience in electrical works.

While the tender procedure was illegal, the Odisha Power Transmission Corporation Limited (OPTCL) and the Odisha Electricity Regulations Authority have remained silent, alleged the Odisha Electricity Board Workers Association.

The OPTCL called a tender for the Paradip IFFCO 132-KV DC line in 2018-19. The tender was awarded to Bhubaneswar-based Abhisek Contech Private India Ltd, which had no experience in piling and foundation works

in electrical pillars installation. Foundation work was not done as per rules. It was not done on proper location and soil test was not done. While the regions is very low in altitude and has salty and sandy soil, electrical foundation work is very important for installation of 132-KV lines.

The 1999 Super Cyclone had destroyed the electrical pillars of the PPT and the PPL, but the then Oswal Fertilizer and Chemical (Presently IFFCO) pillars were strong. So, the PPT and PPL had black-listed two contractors for low-grade work with use of sub-standard materials.

As it lacked knowledge, the Abhisek Contech did the work with Cuttack-based Shree Engineering and Associate.

Sources also said the Shree Engineering has also lacked experience in piling and foundation work. Thus, it took help of the Gupta Power and Infrastructure Ltd. However, the Gupta Engineering cancelled the agreement with Shree engineering later. So the guarantee certificate of Shree Engineering was valueless for the OPTCL.

The electrical works are of low grade and posing dangers for public.

Kendrapada Pentha geo synthetic seawall inspected

PNS ■ KENDRAPADA

As a threat is looming large over the stability of the geo synthetic tube seawall following miscreants torched high tensile ropes used in the gabion boxes, a high level team on Friday paid a visit to the site and inspected the sea wall.

The team comprising Engineer-in-Chief of Water Resource Department Akshya Kumar Banarjee, Chief Engineer (Flood Control) Jugal Kishore Pattanaik, Chief Engineer (drainage) Jyoti Rath, Chief Engineer (designs) Pradip Mohanty, Chief Construction Engineer Rengal project, Susant Kumar Rath, Superintending Engineer Chandikhol,



Chandeswar Behera and senior officials of Aul Saline Embankment visited Pentha and inspected the wall. The high level team discussed with the locals about the geo synthetic sea wall and also came to know about the damage of the structure.

It is the responsibility of the locals to protect and preserve

the sea wall that was laid on the coast to save the life and property of village. But such act of damaging the geo-synthetic sea wall, which is purely intentional and man-made, in regular intervals would spell dooms for the sea side villages in future, Engineer-in-Chief Banarjee told.

Amway fashion show held in Bhubaneswar

PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

The Amway India organised a fashion fiesta, Amway Fashion Show here that included a myriad display of colours and talent with Amway Direct Sellers walking the ramp with style.

The show displayed vibrancy through its theme-based Sports Champion, Bollywood Superstar and Ethnic Rockstar rounds. The female contestants wore 'Attitude' colours and the male contestants walked in their alluring styles.

Suryashrat Sharmawas

crowned as the winner and Anisha Parida as the runners-up of the Sports Champion round. Sushmita and Lopamudra were crowned as the winning duo of the Bollywood Superstar round and Dr Ravi and Abhijeet as the runners-up. Sangeeta Mohapatra won the Ethnic Rockstar round and Biswabandita Rout won the runners-up title.

Sukanya Das won the Glister Smile round for her glittering smile and the Satinique Style Icon round was won by



Esha Rout for the best hairstyle.

Subhashree Roy's style quotient won her the title of Attitude Diva and Umesh Nayak was proclaimed the Dynamite Hero for his Uber cool style. Chandra Bhushan Chakraborty, vice-president, East, Amway India, said, "Every edition of the Amway Fashion Show receives immense love and response from our audience."

Police beat house at VSS Airport delayed

Thanks to no approval from AAI

RAJ KUMAR SHARMA ■ JHARSUGUDA

These days, the number of commuters at the Jharsuguda Veer Surendra Sai (VSS) Airport is increasing. The importance of the airport has been increased due to incoming of VVIP passengers.

Unfortunately, the security aspect of the airport appears to have been missed somewhere in absence of a police station in the airport premises. Till setting up a police station, the police administration has taken steps for setting up a police beat house.

But, the airport authorities are delaying for necessary permission resulting in abnormal delay for the beat house. In the recent past, discussion about setting up of a beat house was made in the Airport Advisory Committee meeting and a place was also identified for the same near toilet in the airport premises.

While the police administration took steps for the same, it could not materialise in absence of requisite permission from the airport authorities.

When asked, Director of the VSS Airport SK Chouhan



said that a letter has been sent to airport authorities for necessary approval about the setting up of a police beat house. But in absence of any permission, the setting up of the proposed police beat house in airport premises is getting delayed, said Chouhan.

Road safety week observed in Paradip

PNS ■ PARADIP

The RTO, Jagatsinghpur and the Odisha Road Safety Organisation, Cuttack and the IFFCO Paradip organised awareness programmes to observe the 31st Road Safety Week here recently.

IFFCO Unit Head KG Patel, GM Suresh Goyal, Joint GM JP Shrivastav, DGM (P&A) Abhay Kumar Malla, DGM (HR) Gyanachand Acharya, Jagatsinghpur MVI Prashant Kumar Mahapatra attended as guests.

A drama was performed by artists of the Satyavama Television directed by



Abhay Kumar Das. Two tableaux were also inaugurated which will move in different parts of Jagatsinghpur and Cuttack to spread awareness. Among others, IFFCO Chief Manager Bijay Kumar Parida, IFFCO Employees' Association President Suwendu Majhi, Secretary Truptinjan Puhon, Officers' Association President Mangala Murti, Secretary Subhasis Mishra, IFFCO PRO Prasanna Kumar Beura were present.

Don't support CAA, NPR: Srikant to Naveen

PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

Former Union Minister Srikant Kumar Jena in a letter to Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik on Friday said the Citizenship Amended Act

(CAA) and National Population Register (NPR) should be revoked. Jena stated the Constitution has clearly stated that no law can be enacted on the basis of religion. India has as special identity as a secular country.

"Now, there is an attempt to destroy that tradition and identity. Hope that your party (BJD), which has supported the CAA and NPR would take a stand to bury the soul of India," he stated. The Constitution was prepared by Dr BR Ambedkar to build a India dream by Mahatma Gandhi.

How did you vow before the forces who are trying to destroy the constitution, he questioned. The CAA is not only meant to deprive a particular minority community of their rights but it also push the dalits, Adivasis and other underprivileged people in a awkward position, he said.

Jena requested Patnaik to withdraw his support to the CAA and the NPR.

AFFIDAVIT

By virtue of an affidavit sworn before the Notary Public, Phulbani, I, Sanjiba Pradhan, aged about 32 years, S/O - Dada Pradhan of village Sandhakupa, P.O. - Gumamaha, P.S. - Raikia, Dist. - Kandhamal do hereby state that, my name was wrongly mentioned as Sanjiba Behera, S/O - Dada Behera instead of Sanjiba Pradhan, S/O - Dada Pradhan in my Aadhar Card. Henceforth, I shall be known as Sanjiba Pradhan, S/O - Dada Pradhan for all purposes.

Sd/- Sanjiba Pradhan

INVITATIONS FOR BIDS (IFB)
Lr. No.- 246 Dtd.13.01.2020
Invitation for Bids
Bid Identification No. EE PWD DGR No. 07 of 2019-20

1. The Executive Engineer, Deogarh (R&B) Division, Deogarh, on behalf of Governor of Odisha, invites percentage rate bids in single/ double cover system in ONLINE MODE only, for Special Repair of Road works as detailed below.

2. Nature of work	: Building works
3. No. of work	: Building 03 Nos
4. Bid Cost	: Rs.10,000/-
5. Class of Contractor	: "A", "B" Class
6. Availability of Bid Documents in the website	: From dt. 20.01.2020 to 17:00 hours of dt.04.02.2020
7. Date of Opening of Technical Bid	: Dt. 07.02.2020 at 11:30 AM.

8. The Bidders have to participate in ONLINE bidding only. Further details can be seen from the website: <https://tendersodisha.gov.in>. Any addendum / corrigendum / cancellation of tender can also be seen in the said website only.

Sd/-
Executive Engineer
Deogarh (R&B) Division

34061/11/0005/1920

GOVERNEMENT OF ODISHA e-PROCUREMENT NOTICE
Bid Identification No. E.E. CBT (R&B) 38/ 2019-20

i. Name of the work	: Road work - 7 Nos
ii. Estimated cost	: Rs. 10,50,388/- to 44,25,086/-
iii. Period of completion	: 01 month (30 days)
iv. Date & time of availability of Bid documents in the portal	: from 10.00 AM of 18.01.2020 to 28.01.2020 up to 5 PM for "online" bidding
v. Last date/ time for receipt of Bids in the portal	: 28.01.2020 upto 5 PM.
vi. Name and address of the officer inviting Bid	: Executive Engineer Charbatia (R&B) Division, Choudwar

Further details can be seen from the e-procurement portal <http://www.tendersorissa.gov.in>. Any addendum/ corrigendum/ cancellation of tender can also be seen in the said website.

Sd/-
Executive Engineer
Charbatia (R&B) Division
Choudwar

34092/11/0012/1920

IN THE COURT OF JUDGE FAMILY COURT, BERHAMPUR
C.P CASE NO. 352/2018

Niranjan Dash ... Petitioner

Vrs.

Dimple Sahu, W/O Niranjan Dash ... Respondent

To,
Dimple Sahu, R/o Rout Pentha Street , City Post Office, PS: Bada bazar, Berhampur, Dist: Ganjam...
Respondent

NOTICE U/0.5, Rule 20 of C.P.C.

Whereas the above named petitioner Niranjan Dash has filed the above noted case against you under Sec. 6 of the Hindu Minority and Guardianship Act R/W Sec. 9 of Guardian and ward Act. That in spite of summons issued against you several times in your house address you have neither received the same nor appeared before this court. It appear that you are avoiding the summons issued against you from time to time.

Hence you are hereby summoned to appear in this case in person or through a pleader duly instructed to answer all the material questions regarding this case on **03.03.2020 at 10.30 AM**, failing which this court after hearing from the side of the petitioner will pass judgment and decree in your absence.

Given under my hand and seal of the court this.....day of2020.

Sd/-
Judge Family Court
Berhampur, Ganjam, Odisha

e-PROCUREMENT NOTICE
Tender Online No. 06 of 2019-20

1 Name of the Work	Building & Road works for 2019-20 mentioned in column 2 of table of N.I.T.
2 Estimated cost	Specified against each work in column 3 of table of N.I.T. excluding Goods and Services Tax.
3 Earnest Money Deposit	Specified against each work in column 4 of table of N.I.T.
4 Period of completion	Specified against each work in column 6 of table of N.I.T.
5 Class of contractors	Specified against each work in column 5 of table of N.I.T.
6 Cost of Tender Paper	Specified against each work in column 7 of table of N.I.T.

Other details for the N.I.T.:

1 Procurement Officer	Executive Engineer, Rural Works Division, Jagatsinghpur
2 Date & time of availability of bid documents in Portal	18/01/2020 at 11:00 hrs
3 Last date & time for receipt of bids in Portal	24/01/2020 at 11:00 hrs
4 Opening of tender	27/01/2020 at 11:00 hrs at the Office of Executive Engineer, Rural Works Division, Jagatsinghpur.

Further details can be seen from the Government website: www.tendersorissa.gov.in

Sd/-
Executive Engineer
Rural Works Division
Jagatsinghpur

25056/11/0004/1920

Nadda dares RaGa to speak 10 lines on CAA

Says he is misleading mass

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Casting doubts on Congress leader Rahul Gandhi's understanding of Citizenship (Amendment) Act, BJP working president J P Nadda on Friday challenged him to speak 10 sentences on the law. Nadda also accused him of misleading the country on the legislation. Nadda, who is next week expected to take over from Amit Shah the full-time charge of the party, said it is "unfortunate" for the country that some people "exhibit their wisdom" without understanding the issue so as to mislead the mass. "The Congress is opposing the CAA. I dare Rahul Gandhi

to speak 10 sentences on the law. He should tell us in two sentences what is his problem with the CAA... He is leading such a big party and has to decide himself how he has to do it, but he should not mislead the country," the BJP working president said. The amendments in the citizenship law are meant to give citizenship to members of minority communities - Hindus, Christians, Sikhs, Parsis, Buddhists, Jains- who fled Pakistan, Bangladesh and Afghanistan due to religious persecution and took refuge in India, he said. Likes of Mahatma Gandhi, Jawaharlal Nehru and Indira

- ◆ Nadda, who is next week expected to take over from Amit Shah the full-time charge of the party, said it is "unfortunate" for the country that some people "exhibit their wisdom" without understanding the issue so as to mislead the mass.
- ◆ The Congress is opposing the CAA. I dare Rahul Gandhi to speak 10 sentences on the law. He should tell us in two sentences what is his problem with the CAA
- ◆ The amendments in the citizenship law are meant to give citizenship to members of minority communities - Hindus, Christians, Sikhs, Parsis, Buddhists, Jains- who fled Pakistan, Bangladesh and Afghanistan due to religious persecution and took refuge in India, he said



Gandhi had advocated giving citizenship to these persecuted minorities but the Congress does not have any leader now who could understand the issue, Nadda said. Since coming to power for a second term, the Modi government has in six months resolved issues which had been pending for 70 years, he asserted, adding that opposition parties were left without any issue and had seized on the CAA to mislead the country. "For the Congress and the Left, their vote bank comes before the country. For Prime Minister Narendra Modi, the country comes first and votes later," he said. Critics are claiming that crores of people will arrive and settle in India due to this law,

but the fact is that it is for those who arrived here by December 31, 2014, he added. Opposition parties believe in keeping problems unresolved so that they could do politics over it while the Modi government has addressed issues like Article 370, he said. He claimed minorities were persecuted in Pakistan and Bangladesh and their population, he claimed, fell to three and seven per cent respectively there from 23 per cent in 1947. According to a section of Pakistani media quoting census report, the total percentage of minorities in Pakistan including the erstwhile East Pakistan (now Bangladesh) was only about 14.50 per cent following the partition.

DAVINDER ARREST

Cong slams NIA probe, wants re-investigation into Pulwama attack

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI



The Congress on Friday demanded a fair probe within six months into the case involving Jammu & Kashmir DSP Davinder Singh, arrested with Hizbul terrorists in south Kashmir, as Rahul Gandhi alleged the case was handed over to the NIA to "silence" Singh. The party also sought a re-investigation into the February 2019 Pulwama terrorist attack and Singh's role in it as he had been posted in the district as DSP at the time. Questioning the Government's "conspicuous silence", it demanded the Prime Minister and the Home Minister to answer questions raised by people after Singh's arrest last week. The grand old party alleged NIA's role has been questionable in the probes against Swami Assemananda and Pragna Thakur. Congress demanded a fast track court to look into the entire activities and the DSP's role. The best way to "silence" Singh was to hand the investigation against him to NIA chief Y C Modi, under whose care the case will be "as good as dead", Rahul alleged. Calling the National Investigation Agency (NIA) "another Modi", the Congress leader said he had investigated the 2002 Gujarat riots and the killing of former Gujarat home minister Haren Pandya in 2003. "The best way to silence Terrorist DSP Davinder, is to hand the case to the NIA,"

Rahul said on Twitter, adding, "In YK's care, the case is as good as dead." The former Congress chief put out the Twitter post using the hashtag "WhoWantsTerroristDavinderSilenced" and asked "why". Congress spokesperson Supriya Srinate said serious questions are being raised on national security. She said Singh was not "just any other officer" as three days before his arrest, he was entrusted with the security of foreign diplomats visiting Jammu and Kashmir and prior to that, he was DSP in Pulwama when the terror attack happened. She said Singh also faced three FIRs for extortion. When Singh was arrested in Kulgam, he was accompanied by Hizbul Mujahideen terrorists Naveed Baba and Altaf and a lawyer operating as an overground worker for terrorist groups. "Why is the government conspicuously silent. The conspicuous silence of the government raises so many questions. It is government's moral responsibility to conduct a fair probe so that there are no doubts," the Congress spokesperson said.

INSHORT

JP NADDA SET TO BE BJP PRESIDENT ON JAN 20

New Delhi: The nominations for the election to the post of the BJP national president will be filed on January 20, and polling, if required, will take place the next day, the party announced on Friday. The elevation of BJP working president J P Nadda to the top party post is all but certain as he is likely to be elected unopposed, party sources have said. He will succeed Amit Shah.

SONIA, RAHUL MEET CONG MLAS FROM JHARKHAND

New Delhi: Congress president Sonia Gandhi and party leader Rahul Gandhi met the newly-elected party legislators from Jharkhand at the former's residence here on Friday. "Both Sonia Gandhi and Rahul Gandhi asked the MLAs to work for the welfare and aspirations of people of Jharkhand and fulfil the commitments made to them," AICC in-charge for Jharkhand R P N Singh said.

HYD ENCOUNTER: SC DEFINES POWER, DUTIES

New Delhi: The Supreme Court has defined the power and duties of a three-member commission headed by a former apex court judge set up to inquire into the alleged encounter killing of the four accused in the gang-rape and murder case of a woman veterinarian in Hyderabad. A Bench of Chief Justice SA Bobde and Justices BR Gavi and Surya Kant said if any offence appears to have been committed in the course, the responsibility of erring officials will be fixed.

DECIDE REPRESENTATION TO SET UP KVS, SAYS SC

New Delhi: The Supreme Court on Friday asked the Centre to decide the representation of BJP leader Ashwini Kumar Upadhyay within three months on a plea seeking to set up Kendriya Vidyalayas (KVs) in every tehsil across the country. A bench headed by Justices N V Ramana said that courts cannot decide as to what school should be opened where.

Panel formed to look into Swapan Dasgupta case

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

The Visva Bharati University has informed the HRD Ministry that they have set up a three-member committee to look into the incident of BJP MP Swapan Dasgupta confined in a room for several hours when he visited the campus on January 8 to deliver a lecture on the new citizenship law. Dasgupta, Vice Chancellor Bidyut Chakraborty and others were confined for six hours in a university building as hundreds of Left-leaning students staged a sit-in outside accusing the politician of promoting hatred among communities. "The university has formed a three-member committee to look into the matter where BJP leader Swapan Dasgupta had said that he was locked in a room with a mob outside, at the university, where he was addressing a meeting on Citizenship Amendment Act on January 8," said a senior

HRD Ministry official. Dasgupta had taken to Twitter to inform about the incident. The panel will also look into alleged clash between two groups of students of the university on January 15. According to police officials, armed with rods and sticks, a group of men attacked the students of a boys' hostel inside the Visva Bharati campus on Wednesday night leaving several of them injured. At the backdrop of the controversy and unrest in premier universities like JNU, Jamia Milia Islamia, AMU, the Visva Bharati university officials informed the HRD Ministry about the incident and that they would enquire into the incident and submit the report at earliest. "How does it feel to have a mob attack a peaceful meeting on CAA and intimidation students? This is what is happening to a meeting I am addressing at Vishwa Bharati now. Locked into the room now with mob outside," Swapan had tweeted.

Jaishankar holds talks with EU high representative, S African FM

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

India discussed an entire range of issues with European Union and South Africa here on Friday during two separate meetings between External Affairs S Jaishankar and the two nations. While bilateral talks were held with European Union High Representative for Foreign Affairs Josep Borrell, South African foreign minister Naledi Pandor held parleys with his Indian counterpart. In his meeting with Borrell, Jaishankar discussed global and regional issues, multilateralism, connectivity and counter terrorism. "A great meeting with HRVP @JosepBorrellFF of European Union. Productive discussions on global and regional issues, multilateralism, connectivity and counter terrorism. Underlined our climate change coop-

eration. Agreed to keep in close touch," Jaishankar said in a tweet. The Ministry of External Affairs (MEA), in a statement, said Jaishankar and Borrell took stock of the India-EU relations and the way forward, ahead of the planned summit in March 2020 and discussed the possible deliverables. "Both agreed to further enlarge the existing bilateral political, security, economic and trade cooperation and identify new areas for cooperation in connectivity, Indo-Pacific Region, data adequacy etc," the MEA said. After his meeting with Pandor, Jaishankar said in a tweet, "Co-chaired a fruitful Joint Ministerial Commission with FM Naledi Pandor of South Africa. Our traditional friendship and cooperation stands re-energised. Deeply appreciate her #Raisina participation."

No doubts on India's Kashmir approach: Russia

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Two days after Pakistan's efforts to raise the Kashmir issue through China in the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) failed, Russia on Friday said it has "no doubts" about India's approach on Kashmir, which is a strictly bilateral matter between India and Pakistan. Making this clear, Russian ambassador to New Delhi Nikolay Kudashev said "those having doubts over India's approach on Kashmir can go there, we don't have any doubt," he said on not being invited to visit Jammu & Kashmir. His assertion comes ahead of External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar's visit to Russia on March 22 and March 23 to

Conveyed our concerns to India on 'Quad' on multiple occasions: Russian Ambassador

The Russian Ambassador also said it has conveyed to India on multiple occasions its concerns over the US-backed Quadrilateral coalition for the Indo-Pacific and held that introduction of competitive structures will create friction among the countries of the region. Kudashev said Moscow was "concerned and apprehensive" over the Indo-Pacific strategy of the US as it has completely ignored existence of Russia and China while pushing forward its agenda for the strategically key region. In November 2017, India, the US, Australia and Japan gave shape to the long-pending "Quad" coalition to work closely in the Indo-Pacific region.



attend a meeting of the Russia-India-China trilateral, Kudashev said. On China's attempt to raise the issue of Kashmir at the Security Council, Kudashev said, "It's a strictly bilateral matter to discuss between India and Pakistan based on Shimla Agreement and Lahore Declaration. Russia is a long-standing ally for India on the abrogation of Article 370 giving special status to Jammu and Kashmir. A after the government abrogated Article 370 in August last year, Russia had become the first UNSC permanent member to come out in support of India as it stated that the move was carried out "within the framework of the Constitution of the Republic of India".

Fund utilisation in development schemes improved, finds study

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

A study on spending on schemes at the district level by Centre for Budget and Governance Accountability (CBGA) and Tata Trusts has concluded that fund utilisation in development schemes has improved significantly, but quality of spending not satisfactory yet. Ahead of the annual Budget, both the organisations together hosted "The Budget Trails", to share and discuss the insights from a two-year long project, which studied fund-flow mechanism at the district level, across 10 development schemes. The consultation aims to

develop a roadmap for fiscal governance reforms that are needed to ensure significant improvement in resource absorption in development schemes, leading to better development outcomes. This is a first of its kind study that analyses bottlenecks in fund utilisation, at the district level, by placing a District Budget Analyst (DBA) in each of the selected district headquarters. Prof Abhijit Sen, former Member 14th Finance Commission and Planning Commission, remarked in his keynote address that such discussions need to note there is a general scare of increasing

regular public employment. Dr. Poornima Dore, Head of Data Driven Governance at the Tata Trusts was also present. "The rigorous two year research project, focused on 10 social sector schemes (SSA, MDM, NHM, ICDS, SBM, NRDWP, MGNREGS, NSAP, PMAY, PMFBY and RKVY) in five districts of Balasore and Bolangir in Odisha, Chandrapur in Maharashtra, East Singhbhum in Jharkhand, and Krishna in Andhra Pradesh. For these schemes, the districts have reported better utilisation of funds available; with over 85 per cent fund utilisation reported for the financial years 2017-18 and 2018-19.

SC agrees to hear pleas against land acquisition process for bullet train project

New Delhi: The Supreme Court on Friday agreed to examine a batch of pleas filed by farmers against the Gujarat High Court verdict which had dismissed their petitions challenging the process of land acquisition for the ambitious Ahmedabad-Mumbai bullet train project. The bullet train project was launched by Prime Minister Narendra Modi and his Japanese counterpart Shinzo Abe in September 2017. The train will run at a speed of 320-350 kmph, and will have 12 stations

across its 508-km stretch from Ahmedabad to Mumbai. A bench of Justices Deepak Gupta and Aniruddha Bose issued notices to the Centre, Gujarat government and others on a batch of appeals challenging September 19 last year verdict of the high court. As an interim relief, the plea has sought to restrain the Gujarat Government from proceeding ahead with the process of land acquisition for the purpose of the bullet train project.

SC seeks Centre's reply on PIL for converting public transport, Govt vehicles into electric ones

New Delhi: The Supreme Court Friday sought the Centre's reply on a PIL seeking implementation of the National E-Mobility Mission Plan (NEMMP), 2020 which recommended gradual conversion all public transport and Government vehicles into electric vehicles (EVs) to curb air pollution. A bench headed by Chief Justice

S A Bobde decided to make the Ministry of Surface Transport and Highways and the minister concerned parties to the petition and listed it for hearing after four weeks. The PIL alleged that the citizens' rights to health and clean environment under the Constitution are being "violated due to governmental apathy" in mitigating the impact of climate change and air pollution "partly attributable to emissions from vehicles that burn fossil fuels".



CORONAVIRUS SPREAD IN CHINA

India issues travel advisory

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

In the wake of the outbreak of deadly Coronavirus in China which is causing respiratory problems, India on Friday issued a travel advisory asking citizens to follow certain precautionary measures such as avoiding travel to farms, live animal markets or where animals are slaughtered, and refrain consuming "raw or undercooked meat" while visiting the neighbouring country. Coronaviruses are a large family of viruses, which cause illnesses to people and also circulate in animals including camels, cats and bats. Rarely, animal coronaviruses can also evolve and infect people. The advisory issued by the Union Health Ministry stated that even though the mode of transmission of the Coronavirus is unclear as of now, those visiting China are advised to avoid travel to farms, live animal markets or where animals are slaughtered,



and refrain consuming "raw or undercooked meat". It suggested avoiding close contact with people who are unwell or showing symptoms of illness, such as cough, runny nose among others. The advisory asks travellers to China to follow some "public health measures at all times" like observing good personal hygiene, practice frequent hand-washing with soap and follow etiquettes like covering mouth when coughing or sneezing. It also stated that as on January 11, 2020 as many as 41 confirmed cases of infection with the novel coronavirus have been reported so far, of which one person has died.

"Only travel-related cases have been reported (one each) in Thailand and Japan. The clinical signs and symptoms are mainly fever with a few patients having difficulty in breathing. The mode of transmission is unclear as of now. However, so far there is little evidence of significant human-to-human transmission. Although as per the World Health Organisation's risk assessment, the risk for global spread has been stated as low," the advisory read. All travellers to China, in particular to Wuhan city, have been advised to monitor their health closely. As a precaution, the Ministry has instructed screening of international travellers from China at designated airports namely, Delhi, Mumbai and Kolkata through thermal scanners. "If you feel sick within a span of one month after return from China, report the illness to the nearest health facility and also inform the treating doctor regarding your travel history," the advisory states.



Prime Minister Narendra Modi meeting with Council of Ministers, in New Delhi on Friday

Youth Parliament programme set to go online

New Delhi: The annual Youth Parliament Programme run by the Ministry of Parliamentary Affairs every year is set to go online as the country celebrates 70th anniversary of adoption of the Indian constitution. The Ministry of Parliament Affairs has partnered with the Human Resource Development Ministry for making the programme online through the web portal of the National Youth Parliament Scheme. The off-line Youth Parliament programme is being implemented since 1966 in schools under the

Delhi's Directorate of Education, NDMC schools, Kendriya Vidyalayas, Jawahar Navodaya Vidyalayas and universities and colleges. "Around 18,000 students of 300 educational institutions participate through off-line Youth Parliament programme every year. So far, the programme was organised in competition format which was limiting the participation of the institutions and thus not fulfilling the core purpose of the scheme in the desired manner. "For overcoming this limitation, which is impeding the

expansion of the scheme, the ministry has developed a web portal of the National Youth Parliament Scheme to increase the coverage of the programme manifold to hitherto untouched sections and corners of the country," a senior HRD Ministry official said. President Ram Nath Kovind had launched the web portal in November last year on the occasion to commemorate the 70th anniversary of the Constitution being celebrated as 'Samvidhan Diwas'.

1981 BEHMAI MASSACRE CASE

Special court likely to give verdict today

Kanpur: A special court is expected to pronounce its verdict here on Saturday on the massacre of 20 people in Behmai village in Kanpur Dehat district, allegedly by bandit Phoolan Devi nearly four decades ago.



"We have much hope that the trial court is likely to deliver its judgment in Behmai massacre today," District Government counsel (criminal) Rajeev Porwal told PTI on Friday.

Porwal said that defense counsel Girish Narain Dubey has submitted certain rulings of the Allahabad High Court and the Supreme Court before the trial court with a request to take cognisance of those rulings while delivering its judgment against the alleged accused.

The court is now expected to give its verdict on the role of the four surviving accused — Poshha, Bhikha, Vishwanath and Shyambabu.

While Poshha is still in jail, Bhikha, Vishwanath and Shyambabu are out on bail.

Three other dacoits includ-

ing Man Singh are still absconding.

The special court for hearing dacoity-related cases was expected to deliver the verdict in the 1981 Behmai massacre case on January 6, but it allowed the defence counsel to submit its written arguments by January 16, District Government counsel Raju Porwal said.

Defence counsel Dubey had appeared before the court on January 6, seeking more time to submit written arguments and was granted 10 more days, the Government counsel said.

"Bandit Queen" Phoolan Devi, who later turned to politics, along with her gang mem-

bers were accused of killing the 20 people belonging to the Thakur community at Behmai village in Kanpur Dehat on February 14, 1981.

The non-descript Behmai village, that shot into prominence after the killings, is 170 km from state capital Lucknow and over 400 km from national capital New Delhi.

Phoolan Devi had stormed into Behmai in what was described as an attack to avenge her alleged rape there by two other bandits — Lala Ram and Sri Ram — both Thakurs, a dominant caste in the village.

Two years after the incident, she had surrendered to the Madhya Pradesh police in 1983 and went on to become a Lok Sabha MP from Mirzapur. She was shot dead outside her MP bungalow in New Delhi on July 25, 2001.

Initially, 35 people, including Phoolan Devi, were named as accused in the case. Eight of them were reportedly killed by police in separate encounters. Three others were reportedly absconding.

ISRO's GSAT-30 satellite successfully launched by Ariane Rocket

PTI ■ BENGALURU

India's communication satellite GSAT-30, aimed at providing high-quality television, telecommunications and broadcasting services, was successfully launched onboard Ariane 5 rocket from French Guiana early on Friday.

Blasting off from the Ariane Launch Complex in Kourou, a French territory located in northeastern coast of South America at 2:35 a.M IST, the European launch provider Arianespace's Ariane 5 injected the "high power" spacecraft into the orbit in a flawless flight lasting about 38 minutes and 25 seconds.

"India's communication satellite #GSAT30 was successfully launched into a Geosynchronous Transfer Orbit by #Ariane5 #VA251. Thanks for your support !!!" ISRO tweeted soon after deploying the satellite into the transfer orbit.

Confirming the successful launch, Arianespace CEO Stéphane Israel tweeted, "A strong start to 2020 as #Ariane5 successfully deploys its two satellite passengers EUTELSAT KONNECT and GSAT-30 into geostationary transfer orbit! I appreciate the trust from the two customers on this mission: @Eutelsat_SA



and @ISRO #VA251 #MissiontoSuccess."

GSAT-30 is the first satellite launch for ISRO in 2020, during which the space agency has planned about 25 missions.

ISRO's U R Rao Satellite Centre Director P Kunhikrishnan, who was present in Kourou, congratulated the ISRO community and Arianespace team on the successful launch.

Calling it an "excellent start" to 2020 for ISRO with the launch, he said, "The mission team at the master control facility have already acquired the satellite and they will immediately complete the post launch operations..."

ISRO's Master Control Facility (MCF) at Hassan in Karnataka took over the command and control of GSAT-30 immediately after its separation from the launch vehicle and preliminary health checks of the satellite revealed its normal health, the space agency said in a statement later in the day.

In the days ahead, orbit-raising manoeuvres will be performed to place the satellite in Geostationary Orbit (36,000 km above the equator) by using its onboard propulsion system.

During the final stages of its orbit raising operations, the two solar arrays and the antenna reflectors of GSAT-30 will

be deployed, ISRO said adding following this, the satellite will

be put in its final orbital configuration.

The satellite will be operational after the successful completion of all in-orbit tests.

The 3,357-kg satellite, which was deployed from the lower passenger position of Ariane-5 launch vehicle (VA 251) into geostationary transfer orbit (GTO), is configured on ISRO's enhanced I-3K Bus structure to provide communication services from geostationary orbit in C and Ku bands.

The satellite derives its heritage from ISRO's earlier INSAT/GSAT satellite series, and is equipped with 12 C and 12 Ku band transponders.

PM congratulates ISRO

New Delhi: Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Friday congratulated the Indian Space Research Organisation for the launch of its first satellite in the year 2020, saying it will help in enhancing DTH services, ATM and stock exchange connectivity.

"Congratulations to our @isro team for the first satellite launch of 2020. GSAT-30, with its unique configuration will provide DTH Television services, connectivity to ATMs, stock exchanges and e-Governance. Wish many more successful missions to ISRO in the year," the Prime Minister's Office said in a tweet quoting Modi. India's "high power" communication satellite GSAT-30, aimed at providing high-quality television, telecommunications and broadcasting services was launched successfully by Ariane space rocket from French Guiana in the early hours of Friday.



Buddhist monks from Bhutan perform a traditional 'Black Hat' dance in a Buddhist monastery, in Bodhi Gaya on Friday

J&K Congress passes resolution seeking restoration of Statehood

Jammu: To revive its fortunes in Jammu & Kashmir and resurrect the party base, especially in Jammu region, the State unit of the Congress party on Friday sought immediate restoration of statehood and constitutional guarantees for the protection over lands and jobs and release of all political workers.

The State unit also demanded removal of all sorts of restrictions and curbs upon them to create conducive atmosphere for paving way for holding of early Assembly elections in Jammu & Kashmir.

It is for the first time, executive committee meeting of the congress party was organised after the abrogation of Article 370 and reorganisation of the State in to two Union Territories.

Briefing media persons after attending the JKPC executive meeting, Ghulam Nabi Azad, leader of the opposition in Rajya Sabha flanked by Ambika Soni, incharge J&K Affairs and JKPC Chief, GA Mir, told reporters, "we have passed a resolution in the meeting which sought

immediate release of all political leaders and activists of congress and other mainstream parties and lifting of all sorts of restrictions on the political activities."

Azad said, "Unless it is done no political process can take off and succeed, to create conducive atmosphere for the holding of Assembly elections in Jammu & Kashmir". Azad said, "we have also sought immediate restoration of statehood status and adequate legal and constitutional guarantees to safeguard the rights over land and jobs and admissions to professional courses and higher portals of education to the local youth."

The executive committee meeting was attended by around 300 delegates from Kashmir & Jammu region including senior functionaries of PCC, former Ministers, ex-legislators, Heads of Frontal Wings and DCC Presidents besides Corporators and other members of the Executive Committee.

The executive committee meeting followed detailed deliberations,

the two AICC leaders had with top leaders of the party on Thursday over the state of affairs in Jammu & Kashmir after the abrogation of special status and dividing & disbanding of the State into UT, apart from detentions of several Congress and important mainstream leaders and workers in the valley and most parts of the erstwhile state.

During the meeting, large number of participants from Kashmir Valley and Jammu region representing different districts and sections of society and wings of the party appraised the visiting leaders and participants about their experiences of the situation and the feelings of the people from different parts over current status.

The participants in the meeting took a resolve to launch a movement throughout Jammu & Kashmir to highlight the aspirations of the people especially with regard to the restoration of statehood status to Jammu & Kashmir besides constitutional safeguards to protect their rights over land and jobs etc. PNS

GUJ TEJAS EXPRESS FLAGGED OFF

Railway unions protest, 30 detained

PTI ■ AHMEDABAD

At least 30 railway union functionaries were detained on Friday in Ahmedabad in Gujarat for holding a protest ahead of the inauguration of a premium Tejas train to be operated by PSU Indian Railway Catering and Tourism Corporation (IRCTC).

The Ahmedabad-Mumbai Tejas train was flagged off by Gujarat Chief Minister Vijay Rupani on Friday morning.

Members of the Western Railway Employees Union and Western Railway Mazdoor Sangh held a protest outside Kalapur railway station against what they claimed was moves by the Narendra Modi Government to privatise the public transporter.

Mizoram parties, civil society bodies hail Bru agreement

Aizawl: Political parties and civil society organisations of Mizoram on Friday welcomed the agreement that puts an end to the over two-decade-old Bru refugee crisis. Thousands of Bru community people have been living in relief camps in Tripura since 1997. They had fled their homeland Mizoram to reach the neighbouring State because of ethnic clashes. By now, the number of these internally displaced people has risen to over 30,000.

Many Bru families have refused to return to Mizoram, citing security concerns and inadequate rehabilitation package. There has also been a demand for a separate autonomous council for the community.

Following an agreement signed by representatives of the Brus, the central, Tripura and Mizoram

Governments in New Delhi on Thursday, these tribal people will permanently settle in Tripura.

Political parties such as the ruling Mizo National Front (MNF), Congress and the BJP, and civil society organisations like the Yong Mizo Association (YMA) and student bodies expressed happiness over the pact.

"It is a matter of joy that a pact, which would finally resolve the Brus imbroglio, has been finally inked. We are highly indebted to Union Ministry of Home Affairs and the Mizoram government for their outstanding effort in signing the historic agreement," YMA Central Committee general secretary Prof Lalnunluanga said in a statement.

One good thing about the pact is names of the Bru people would now be permanently deleted from

the state's voter list, the YMA said.

Hailing the agreement as "historic", the MNF expressed hope that the pact is materialised quickly.

In a statement, the Congress said it had made earnest efforts during its regime in the State to repatriate the Bru people or allow them to permanently settle in Tripura.

The party claimed that former Chief Minister Lal Thanhawla had proposed that those Bru people who are unwilling to return to Mizoram be allowed to live permanently in Tripura but it could not be materialised because of objections raised by the CPI(M)-led Left Front government.

The State BJP said neither the Congress nor the MNF could resolve the crisis for more than 20 years.

'Justice Clock' on Calcutta HC premises to display status of pending cases at subordinate courts

Kolkata: A 'Justice Clock' will be installed at the Calcutta High Court on January 22, displaying the status of cases in subordinate courts of West Bengal, an official said here.

The electronic LED display board beside the 'E' gate of the high court will be inaugurated by Chief Justice TBN Radhakrishnan, its Registrar General Rai Chatterjee said.

The 'Justice Clock' will show the number of cases pending before all district and subordinate courts in the State and the status of each, Chatterjee said. It will also display the ranking of the courts, based on their performance in disposing of the cases.

There are at least 22.81 lakh cases pending before different courts in the state, of which 17.7 lakh are criminal suits, according to the National Judicial Data Grid. Of the total pending cases in the state, including civil and criminal, over three lakh have been pending for more than 10 years, as per the grid.

Nagas very close to settlement of vexed political issue: Guv

Kohima: The talks to end the decades-old Naga insurgency have "successfully concluded" and Nagaland could be "very close" to a resolution of the conflict, Governor RN Ravi told the State Assembly on Friday, raising fresh hopes among people of return to normal life.

In his maiden address to the state Assembly after taking up the gubernatorial assignment in August 2019, Ravi said the Peoples Democratic Alliance (PDA) Government in Nagaland always considered a settlement to the Naga political issue its most important agenda.

"The negotiations which were going on for the past many years between the Government of India and the Naga political groups have been successfully concluded. It

gives me great pleasure to share with you that we could be now very close to it," Ravi, who was for long the Centre's interlocuter for talks with insurgent groups, said.

To resolve the Naga political problem, a framework agreement was signed on August 3, 2015 between the NSCN-IM and the government in the presence of Prime Minister Narendra Modi. However, the details of the framework agreement was never made public.

"My government conveys its deepest appreciation to all the stakeholders for exhibiting utmost sincerity, foresightedness and a spirit of understanding in helping create a conducive atmosphere for conclusion of the talks in a positive manner," Ravi said.

The governor thanked

Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Home Minister Amit Shah for their "unwavering commitment, determination and constant guidance", which he said, ensured the progress of talks in the most "purposeful and determined" manner leading to its successful conclusion.

Ravi did not spell out the terms for the resolution of the conflict, but warned, "If we fail this time, then we will be missing a golden opportunity."

On behalf of the Nagaland government, Ravi also made an appeal to the Governments and people of the neighbouring states to extend cooperation so that the peace process, which has now reached a very "critical juncture", concludes in a successful manner in the interest of "enduring peace and stability" in the entire region.

Yogi: Apathy of previous Govts forced farmers to commit suicide

PTI ■ LUCKNOW

Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath on Friday said due to the "apathy" of previous Governments in the State, farmers were forced to commit suicide but the situation has changed for the better under the BJP rule.

Addressing a conference of progressive farmers here, Adityanath said the State Government was aiming to open Farmer Producer Organisations (FPOs) in all gram panchayats that will bring about a major change in the agriculture sector and help farmers in many ways.

"There was everything in the state earlier, but due to the apathy of the previous Governments, the farmers were in a pitiable condition. They were committing suicide and were thinking of

whether to continue with farming or not. In two years, we were able to bring a lot of change," he said.

Highlighting his Government's achievements, Adityanath said, "We waived loans of up to Rs one lakh for small-marginal farmers in the first cabinet meeting and gave relief to potato farmers through market intervention scheme."

"Paddy and wheat were procured in record quantity at minimum support price (MSP) and the money was sent to farmers' account within 72 hours. So far, ₹ 11,594.18 crore have been sent to the account of about 1.83 crore farmers," he added.

Alleging that during the previous governments rule, the payment of sugarcane farmers was stopped, Adityanath said: "The sugar mills were getting closed and

being sold. We paid a record ₹ 82 thousand crore and opened new mills. Today 121 mills are running instead of 116 in the state."

"Old mills are being modernised and their capacity is being expanded. There is a clear instruction to the mill owners that as long as there is sugarcane in the farmer's field, the mills should function. This is the reason why the mills kept running till mid-June in the last crushing season," he said.

For increasing the income of farmers, the CM said, emphasis is on maximum production at minimum cost.

"That is why the efficient modes of irrigation, drip and sprinkler, are being made mandatory with boring schemes given on grant," he said. Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla who was present as the

chief guest, said in terms of population, the largest State of the country and the world, has immense potential in the agriculture sector.

"The Ganga basin here is most fertile. Abundant water supply, human resources and diversified climate further increases these possibilities.

The image and fate of the state can be transformed with all these things. The situation has changed under the able leadership of Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath," he said.

"For this phase of change to continue, instead of traditional farming, agricultural diversification will have to be encouraged. If the Government gets its products processed according to market demand, the entire world will be the market for agricultural products of UP," he said.



Street graffiti as part of preparation ahead of Children's film festival in Kolkata on Friday

PTI

'93 Mumbai blasts: Missing Dr Bomb nabbed in Kanpur

Mumbai: A convict in the 1993 Mumbai serial bomb blasts case, Jalees Ansari, who went 'missing' while on parole, was arrested on Friday from Kanpur.

Ansari (68), a Mumbai resident who was serving a life term in a Rajasthan jail, was nabbed in a joint operation of Maharashtra's Anti-Terrorism Squad and the Uttar Pradesh Special Task Force (STF), he said.

Ansari, known as Dr Bomb for his suspected involvement in more than 52 blast cases across the country, went "missing" on early Thursday morning.

He was on a 21-day parole and was expected to return to Ajmer Central Jail by Friday evening after end of the parole period, he said.

Ansari, a resident of Mominpura in Agra in central Mumbai, is a MBBS doctor by training.

While on parole, he was ordered to visit the Agra police station every day between 10.30 am and 12 pm to mark attendance, he said.

However, Ansari did not visit the police station on Thursday during the designated time, the official said.

In the afternoon, his 35-year-old son, Jaid Ansari, approached the police station with a complaint about his "missing" father, he said.

According to the complaint, Jalees Ansari woke up in the early hours and told family members he is going to offer namaz, but did not return home.

On his complaint, the Agra Police registered a missing case, he said. The Crime Branch of the Mumbai Police, the Maharashtra ATS and other agencies launched a massive manhunt for the terror convict, he said.

Jalees was allegedly connected with terror outfits like SIMI and Indian Mujahideen and taught their members how to make bombs, which earned him the sobriquet Dr Bomb, he said.

He was also questioned by the NIA in 2011 in connection with the 2008 bomb blast in Mumbai, he said. **PTI**

Beef delicacy tweet kicks up row

No aim to hurt anyone's religious beliefs: Kerala

Thiruvananthapuram: After a storm erupted over a "beef fry" tweet by Kerala Tourism on Makarankranti day, a Hindu festival celebrated as Pongal, Bihu and Lohri in other parts of the country.

Surendran said those trying to communalise the matter were the ones who were creating a controversy by saying that pictures of pork dishes should also be uploaded by the department.

Tourism Minister Kadakampally Surendran criticised those who were trying to give a communal colour to the Tourism department tweet on the Kerala delicacy — "Beef Ularthiyathu" and said in the southern state none links food with religion.

"Tender chunks of beef, slow-roasted with aromatic spices, coconut pieces, and curry leaves. A recipe for the most classic dish, Beef Ularthiyathu, the stuff of legends, from the land of spices, Kerala," the tweet read along with a recipe link.

Some Twitter users had

showed their displeasure as the tweet had appeared on January 15 on Makarankranti day, a Hindu festival celebrated as Pongal, Bihu and Lohri in other parts of the country.

Surendran said those trying to communalise the matter were the ones who were creating a controversy by saying that pictures of pork dishes should also be uploaded by the department.

Various dishes made of pork are already on the website, he pointed out.

Shobha Karandlaje, BJP MP from Udipi, wrote "the state government is taking a ride on Hindu sentiments by glorifying Beef on #Makarankranti day. Sick mindset of Commies of Kerala is out for display. Communism is a disease, shame on u @KeralaTourism!" the BJP leader tweeted.

Another Twitter user wrote: "Are you out of your mind? on Pongal and Sankranti when we revere Cows, Oxen, and Cattle for their contribution to mankind's easy existence

and culture... On one hand we have Gangireddula McLam in Telugu states, Jallikattu in TN, and Kambala races in Karnataka and you showcase this."

However, it was not only brickbats alone for Kerala Tourism, as many came out in support for the "beef fry tweet".

"One Porotta and beef fry - a match made in heaven" was the response of a Kerala twitter user who had also shared a picture of the dish.

Another twitter user shared an old video of BJP's Rajya Sabha MP Suresh Gopi talking about how he gained weight after consuming beef.

"Dear Bhakts, This is Malayalam actor Suresh Gopi... apparently he is also an MP of BJP (not elected by people, of course)," the tweet said.

Some pointed out that pork is also much desired dish of the Keralites.

"We even have hit movie based on pork business. Maybe you should come out of your well," the tweet read. **PTI**

Bengaluru: Terror module busted, 6 SDPI members held

Bengaluru: A Bengaluru terror module has been busted with the arrest of six members of the Social Democratic Party of India who had allegedly attempted to kill an RSS worker on December 22 for taking part in a pro-CAA rally, police said on Friday.

The arrested have been identified as Irfan, Syed Akbar, Syed Siddiqui, Akbar Basha, Sanaula and Sadiq Amin alias 'Sound Amin', all residents of KG Halli in the city, Bengaluru Police Commissioner Bhaskar Rao told reporters here.

BJP Bengaluru south MP Tejasvi Surya and right wing leader Chakravarthy Sulibele were among the prominent speakers at last month's pro-Citizenship Amendment Act rally.

According to Rao, the SDPI members reached the venue on three stolen motorcycles.

They wanted to storm into the crowd initially but due to heavy police presence, they could not. They wanted to create a panic situation by hurling stones so that people will flee deserting their leaders making it eas-

ier to eliminate their targets, the commissioner said.

However, the stones missed the target.

They later decided to zero in on RSS worker Varun who was supplying water and taking care of the participants at the rally. When he was on his way home, the SDPI activists way-laid and attacked him, Rao said.

According to the commissioner, Varun survived due to timely medical assistance. They wanted to carry out the act to create a lot of disturbance in the city, Rao said.

"All of them are from the SDPI and they wanted to carry out the dastardly act to create lot of disturbance in Bengaluru City on December 22," Rao told reporters here.

They were being paid ₹ 10,000 per month from their handlers to carry out their agenda, the commissioner said, adding the matter has now been handed over to the Anti-Terror Squad.

In addition to it, a Special Investigation Team will be formed to ensure that such people do not create any disturbance, Rao said. **PTI**

Police bust sex racket, rescues 3 actresses: Mumbai

TN RAGHUNATHA ■ MUMBAI

The social service branch personnel of the Mumbai police have rescued three small-time television actresses, including a minor girl, after blowing the lid off a sex racket operating out of a three-star hotel at Andheri in north Mumbai.

Acting on a tip-off that lady models were available for pleasure at as high cost as ₹ 1 lakh per model for an outing, the police raided three-star Dragonfly Hotel at Andheri (east) on late on Thursday, arrested a 29-year-old woman behind the prostitutes' racket and rescued three small-time actresses.

Of the rescued actresses, one is minor girl. But, all three of them are working in television and web serials. One of them has worked in Marathi television serial, while another has worked in 'Savdhan India' serial.

Identifying the mistress behind the sex racket as one Priya Sharma, the police said that she operated the alleged sex racket under the banner of her tours and travel firm M/S Vinayak Vacation and



Holidays.

"We used some of our constables as decoy. Posing themselves as customers, they established contact with the mistress and called her to the hotel to strike a deal.

She came to the hotel with three actresses. At the hotel, our team arrested accused mistress and rescued three actresses, including a minor girl," a senior police officer said.

Investigations have revealed that three young brokers from New Delhi — as Avesh, Vinay and Kuldeep Jani — have been helping the accused mistress luring in young and attractive girls to the alleged sex racket. They have been named as absconding accused in the case.

The accused mistress Priya Sharma and three absconding accused have been booked under the Immoral Traffic (Prevention) Act and relevant sections of the IPC.

Bengal BJP warns against not filling CAA papers

CM misleading people by asking to reject, boycott law: Ghosh

SAUGAR SENGUPTA ■ KOLKATA

Bengal BJP president Dilip Ghosh on Friday warned immigrants from Bangladesh against falling into the 'trap' of Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee by not applying for citizenship and not providing the related documents for the same.

Addressing a crowd during an Abhinandan, Yata Ghosh said, "I must warn one and all, particularly those who have migrated from Bangladesh before 2014 to apply for citizenship by providing all the relevant information... this is an utmost requisite because Prime Minister Narendra Modi will wait for another 2-3 months after which the Government will take appropriate action."

Accusing Banerjee for misleading the people by asking them not to abide by the Citizenship Amendment Act which is a central statute, Ghosh said "the Chief Minister is misleading the people by asking them to reject and boycott the law. Those who will fall in that trap, will do themselves great harm. They will not file the documents at their own peril because the Prime

Minister will wait for another 2-3 months where after the Government will act."

Like it happened during the protest against the GST "when people who refused to register had to do so afterwards by paying fine this time also CAA will be implemented at any cost," he said.

He also iterated that Aadhar card or voters' identity card were not the right documents to prove citizenship. "The new law is there to give you citizenship and not to snatch it from you. So those who have come before 2014 are required to report it to the Government through proper document and apply for citizenship.

Not doing so at the instigation of Mamata Banerjee will amount to invite trouble," Ghosh said rejecting allegations brought by the Chief Minister and even the Left and the Congress that one has produce the birth certificates of their parents to prove their bonafide.

"This is all bunkum. You will not be required to produce the birth certificates of your parents... they are only spreading disinformation about this.

You will only have to apply for citizenship with right documents so as to get citizenship," he said.

Slamming the civil society members for taking out rallies against CAA Ghosh said "these so called members of the intelligentsia class are only half-educated people. Today they are descending on the streets against CAA but we want to ask them where they were when thousands of Hindus were massacred by fanatic Muslims in Bangladesh... where they were when our Hindu brothers and sisters had to flee that country leaving their home and hearth everything."

Meanwhile, the Chief Minister has decided not to attend an all-party meeting called by Governor Jagdeep Dhankhar citing "preoccupations."

The Governor had called the meeting to discuss two bills held up at the Raj Bhavan, officials said. The refusal of the Chief Minister to attend the meeting and calling by the Governor of an all-party meeting is seen as an extension of the ongoing face-off between Nabanna (State Secretariat) and Raj Bhavan.



Artists participate in a rally to protest against CAA, NPR and NRC in Kolkata on Friday **PTI**

Catholic priest slams Syro-Malabar synod for CAA, love jihad statements

Kochi: A Catholic priest has slammed the statements of Synod of Syro-Malabar Church on CAA and 'Love Jihad', saying they had not taken a clear stand against the law and it was not the right time to say something about the latter when the nation is 'polarised along religious lines.'

Syro-Malabar Church priest Fr Kuriaakose Mundadan condemned his Bishops' stand over the two controversial issues in his column "in between lines" in "Sathyadeepam", a weekly run by the Ernakulam-Angamaly Archdiocese. **PTI**

Students, activists hold protest outside IIMA against CAA, NRC

PTI ■ AHMEDABAD

Around 70 students and activists on Friday held a peaceful protest outside the Indian Institute of Management Ahmedabad (IIMA) here against the Citizenship (Amendment) Act (CAA) and National Register of Citizens (NRC).

The protesters also expressed their solidarity with the students of Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU) in New Delhi and denounced the violence that took place there earlier this month.

This is the third such protest held outside the IIMA

campus by activists and students, mostly from prominent education institutions like CEPT University, Gujarat Vidyapeeth and Ahmedabad University, activist-lawyer Shamshad Pathan said. The protesters expressed their dissent by holding posters with slogans — "You can't shut our voices", "No CAA- No NRC", "Stop violence", "Ahmedabad supports JNU", "Kagaz nah dikhaenge" (Won't show documents).

Since the police had granted permission to the protest, nobody was detained from the spot, inspector of Gujarat University Police Station H M Vyasa said.

WESTERN RAILWAY
EXPRESSION OF INTEREST FOR ONBOARD SHOPPING SERVICES
 Executive: Sr. DCM. EOJ Notice No.: CA/11/EOJ/Onboard shopping/2019, dated: 16.01.2020. Work and location: Expression of Interest for Onboard shopping services in 01 no. of AC EMU rake from Churghate to Virar (Up/Dn) of Mumbai Division. Website where EOJ Notice available: www.wr.indianrailways.gov.in. Date & Time of closing of EOJ: Upto 15.00 hrs. on 27.01.2020. Date & Time of opening of EOJ: At 15.30 hrs. on 27.01.2020. Note: Please visit our website www.wr.indianrailways.gov.in to download the Expression of interest Notice. Bidder should regularly visit website to keep themselves updated for any corrigendum/amendments.
 Like us on: Facebook.com/WesternRly

BEFORE DEBTS RECOVERY TRIBUNAL-II, DELHI
 4th Floor, Jeevan Tara Building, Parliament Street, New Delhi - 110001
 OA No. 226/19 DATE: 10.01.2020
KOTAK MAHINDRA BANK LTD. APPLICANT
 VERSUS
SH. MANOJ KUMAR VIJAY & ORS. RESPONDENT

Mumbai to be 24x7 city from Jan 26

TN RAGHUNATHA ■ MUMBAI

Maximum city' proposal.

As per the decision taken by the State Government, all restaurants, malls, multiplexes and shopping plazas falling within-gated-gate-communities, non-residential zones with security, CCTVs and parking areas in the maximum city can remain open round-the-clock from January 26 onwards.

Thursday's meeting, where the crucial decision was taken, was attended among others by Aditya, Municipal Commissioner Pravin Pardeshi and Sanjay Barve.

Currently, the restaurants and bars close down at 1.30 am. However, once Aditya's proposal gets implemented, these establishments will remain through the night — provided these establishments are not in designated residential areas.

Known for pursuing his pet projects, Aditya had pushed the

VIBRANT MUMBAI NIGHTLIFE

legislated on by the state in 2017, to let non-residential areas in Mumbai and other cities to remain open 24/7. The proposal for Mumbai is awaiting your approval from the Home department for a few months now and is fool-proof."

Reiterating the stand that he had taken three years ago, Aditya wrote in his letter sent to the chief minister December 27, 2018: "The move would give our State more employment and revenue from safe and legal places. What is legal during the day cannot be illegal at night. Legal establishments in malls and mill compounds will be a boon for Maharashtra. We need to trust our citizens and give them more space and time to unwind after hours of work."

proposed once again in the run-up days to January 1, 2019. In a letter written on December 27, 2018, Aditya had reminded then chief minister Devendra Fadnavis about a request he had made three years earlier to put in place the laws which make Mumbai a "live 24/7" city.

Aditya had requested Fadnavis to allow Mumbai, Thane, Navi Mumbai, Pune and other cities "that wish to celebrate New Year" to remain open all night "for legal activities of entertainment and celebration, especially in non-residential areas."

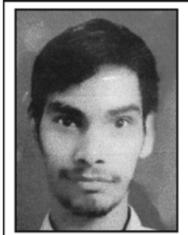
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SEARCH FOR MISSING/KIDNAPED



Bharat

Sincere efforts have been made by local police to trace out the boy but no clue has come to light so far. If any one having any information about this boy please inform undersigned.

E-mail : cic@cbi.gov.in
 Ph.: 011-24368638, 24368641
 Fax : 011-24368639

General public is hereby informed that a boy namely **Bharat** S/o Munna Lal R/o H.No.1135, L 1st, Gali No. 25, Near Asthal Mandir Sangam Vihar, New Delhi Age-24 years, Height- 5'11", Face-Long, Built: Normal, Complexion-Fair, Wearing-Shallow Colour Jarsi Black Colour Pant and Pink Colour Cap has been missing/ kidnapped since dated 31.11.2019 at about 4:00 PM from Area of PS. Neb Sarai. In this regard a **DD No. 41A Dated 05.12.2019** has been lodged at **P.S. Neb Sarai, New Delhi.**

SHO
 P.S. Neb Sarai, New Delhi
 Ph.: 011-29551597
 8750870835

SR NO.	NAME OF DEPARTMENT/NT/BOARD/CORP./AUTH	NAME OF WORK/NOTICE/TENDER	OPENING DATE CLOSING DATE (TIME)	AMOUNT/EMD (APPROX.) in Rupees	WEBSITE OF THE DEPARTMENT	NODAL OFFICER/CONTACT DETAILS/EMAIL	TENDER REF. NO./TENDER NO.
1	Uttar Haryana Bijli Vitran Nigam	Whole current AC Single phase two wire 24MS compliant static energy meter (10-90A) of accuracy class 1.0 with communication facility with self locking type polycarbonate meter box conforming to Nigam's technical specification no. CS-C-47/Rev-VIII(DH)/W/P/BD/2017 -18 with latest amendments and as per relevant ISS thereof.	Last date of submission: 10-02-2020 upto 15:00 Hrs.	30.0 Cr./ EMD 2.00 Lacs	uhvbn.org.in, uhvbn.org.in	eamn@uhvbn.org.in 9357199013	Notice Inviting Tender No. 9/04/MM-1/04-12545 dated 16-01-2020

SR NO.	LETTER / MEMO NO. & DATE	NAME OF DEPARTMENT/ BOARD/ CORP./ AUTH	OLD REFERENCE / NIT/ TENDER RE. NO.	NATURE OF CORRIGENDUM	WEBSITE OF DEPARTMENT/ BOARD/ CORP./ AUTH	NODAL OFFICER/ CONTACT DETAILS/ EMAIL
1	Letter No. 332 Dt. 15-01-2020	Development and Panchayat Department	Letter No. 6230 dt. 30-12-2019	Tender date extended due to administrative reasons.	https://haryanaepr.ocurement.gov.in	Executive Engineer

Executive Engineer, Panchayati Raj, Sonapat

Teacher asks girl students to go to Pak if unwilling to accept CAA; suspended

Thiruvananthapuram: A teacher of a Government girls school at Kodungallur in Kerala has been suspended after he allegedly asked students to go to Pakistan if they were not willing to accept the Citizenship Amendment Act.

According to officials, the action was taken against the Hindi teacher Kaleshan on Thursday, after the Education department deputy director here inquired into the incident following a complaint filed by the father of a student through social media. According to the education department, Kaleshan, who was suspended

pending inquiry, had entered a class and addressed the students on the CAA and told them that if they were not willing to accept the new law, they should move to Pakistan.

Several students had also complained to the headmaster of the Kodungallur girls higher secondary school against the teacher, who also allegedly used to speak in a sexually coloured manner to the students, officials said.

The teacher was suspended after a disciplinary committee found substance in the allegations against the teacher, they added. **PTI**

UJVN Limited
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 Telephone: 0135-2763808 & Fax: 0135- 2763508
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TENDER NOTICE

Office of the Executive Engineer (Civil-SHP), UJVN Limited, Munyari, district-Pithoragarh (Uttarakhand) invites sealed and separate tenders from interested bidders. Brief summary of tenders are given below :-

Tender No.	Name of work
03/EE(Civil-SHP)/Munysari/ 2019-20	Repair & maintenance of approach road upto power house of Suringad-II SHP.
04/EE(Civil-SHP)/Munysari/ 2019-20	Protection works at river bank for feeder pipe of Suringad-II SHP.

Estimated value of work : ₹ 23.86 Lac, ₹ 9.46 Lac respectively.
 Earnest Money : ₹ 59650.00, ₹ 23700.00 respectively.
 Tender fee : ₹ 1180.00, ₹ 590.00.

Availability of tenders on website : 16/01/2020
 Last date for submission of tender : 15/02/2020 upto 15:00 hrs.
 Date of opening of tender : 18/02/2020 at 15:00 hrs.

For full & further details, kindly visit our website. The tender documents can be downloaded from the Nigam's website "www.ujvnl.com".

Executive Engineer (Civil-SHP), Munyari

तार सं. 23 - 17/01/2020
 "Avoid wasteful use of Electricity"

Talks with Pakistan?

While UNSC backs India on Kashmir and insists on it being discussed bilaterally, our SCO invite is a smart move



Pakistan may have nudged its all-weather friend China into raising the Kashmir dispute at the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) yet again — perhaps going by Western concerns about the continued lockdowns in the erstwhile State that is now a Union Territory — but failed with a big thud. This is the second time that such an attempt, either in the nature of informal consultations or closed door meetings of the Council's permanent members, has been thwarted convincingly. The message is quite clear. The remaining Big Four (US, Russia, France, UK) are still committed to their position that Kashmir is a bilateral issue between India and Pakistan to be settled within the paradigm of dialogue set by existing agreements among the neighbours. It also means that the UK and the US, while responding to criticism on shutdown in the Valley, have delinked it from the larger Kashmir question and would much rather address it one-to-one. At the same time, certain facts cannot be ignored like China being allowed to raise the issue despite no significant change in collective viewpoints. Or that Pakistan's lobbying is high-pitch, with its Foreign Minister Shah Mehmood Qureshi believed to be in New York while China moved the motion. He even met the UN Secretary-General. Clearly, given the emphasis on bilaterals, at some point both India and Pakistan have to sit across the table and look to engage with each other. Perhaps, India's invitation to Pakistan for a meeting of the regional alliance called Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) is an opportunity to thaw relations and set up some sort of interaction on the sidelines. Besides, China is scheduled to take over the rotational presidency at UNSC in March and without some movement from India, it will have no point to neutralise Pakistan with, much as it would want to keep its working relationship with India going. Besides, it has to show something for giving assent to the declaration of Jaish chief Masood Azhar as a UN-designated global terrorist. China and Pakistan back each other up on the world stage, representing each other in official groups of nations where the other is not present. For instance, Pakistan stands up for China in the Non-Aligned Movement and in return, it gets China's veto power in the UNSC.

India's bigger challenge though is to manage the SCO, where both China and Pakistan are key members, for its strategic imperatives. Already, we have made noises about jointly strengthening the fight against terrorism, extremism, drug trafficking and organised crime to corner Pakistan as a sponsor of terror. India has to also walk cautiously on economic cooperation with members and ensure that China does not surreptitiously ensure its overlordship as the latter has proposed a free trade area for all. Most members are yet to feel comfortable on multi-lateral trade and cooperation. Besides, all other SCO members have embraced the Chinese Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), which India is opposing. In fact, Russia, Kazakhstan, Belarus, Armenia and Kyrgyzstan formed the Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU), which has signed a non-preferential trade and economic cooperation agreement with China. For all of India's efforts to highlight its connectivity corridors, like the Chabahar port and India-Myanmar-Thailand highway, Pakistan will always counter their significance with that of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC). Negotiating terrain with both Pakistan and China, India must find its feet in the SCO if it wants to strengthen its footprint in Central Asia, a diplomatic initiative that the Modi Government is keen on. India's other counter-balancing act is between Russia and China, both of whom have come closer but are wary of eating into each other's sphere of influence. India can be the counterweight and use that status to extract its gains. Besides, India needs to work on its economic heft vis-a-vis the SCO majors. Our trade with Russia stands at about a little over \$10 billion and is projected to be \$30 billion by 2025. In contrast, China's trade with Russia has already crossed \$100 billion. A similar lopsided volume prevails with Central Asian republics. The lack of connectivity has stifled energy cooperation between the hydrocarbon-rich region and India. We cannot miss the bus as the SCO accounts for 20 per cent of the world's GDP and can guarantee its relevance in the region. But can its bilateral differences with Pakistan and China mean SCO members could set up their own mini-groupings of mutual benefit and derail its very purpose? That's for India to understand and move adroitly.

Bezos' bumper trip

From getting a Gandhi quote wrong to drawing the ire of the BJP, the Amazon CEO's latest trip didn't go that well



In terms of disastrous visits to India, Amazon's Chief Executive Jeffery Bezos's latest trip wasn't quite up there. No, it will take a lot more to top the stupendous failure of Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau's visit a few years ago. Despite misquoting Gandhi. Yet, Bezos' rap on the knuckles delivered by Commerce Minister Piyush Goyal, where he straight up accused Amazon of funding its losses in India with its latest investment, was harsh. Even though Goyal was forced to backtrack and claimed that his quote was taken "out of context," it was strange that a Minister, who speaks decent English, is taken out of context time and again. But the message was clear: Bezos' ownership of *The Washington Post* and articles published by it against Prime Minister Narendra Modi counted against him. Also the fact that the BJP still draws huge support from the trading community, which has deeply been affected by the advent of online retailing, has meant that Bezos has had a problematic visit to the country this time. He has even eschewed both the Government and media interactions. Indeed, Bezos' most high-profile interactions were in Mumbai where he celebrated the success of Amazon's video streaming service *Amazon Prime* with Bollywood's elite and the honchos of several Indian conglomerates.

While Goyal was surprised by the way some reacted to his comments, they did have an element of truth. Although reactions were delivered with the grace of a dancer wearing work boots and quickly retracted, there was no hiding from the fact that the Government wanted Bezos to know it is not very happy with Amazon and his ownership of *The Washington Post*. While Bezos is unlikely to interfere in the editorial process of his newspaper, it is also clear that he needs India as a market. Most American internet giants are locked out of China and India is the "it" market. This is the case not just for Amazon but also Google, Facebook and Uber. And as India becomes more aware of this, it will flex its muscles economically. Recent actions against Malaysia are a case in point and a decision is also likely to be taken against Turkey for its support to Pakistan-sponsored separatists. It is unlikely that India will act against Amazon in the immediate future but the firm does need to answer some questions as to how it is abusing (or not) its market position. The BJP, too, should understand that it cannot control the narrative in the foreign media. It needs to have better spokespersons who can defend the Government's position or change perceptions.

opinion 08

Need to objectify history

As India charts its course through the 21st century, the liberation we all need is not from the glories of the past but from its burdens — communal, economic and psychological



AVIK CHANDA

Why, when the nation should be focussing all its resources on remedying its economic slowdown in a fascinating but disruptive world driven by automation and Artificial intelligence (AI), should we continue to be obsessed with the past? Well, because history is no longer the sole purview for reclusive academics tucked away amid lengths of dust-laden bookshelves. It's being revisited and morphed, banded about by politicians and re-branded in the media everyday. It's used as a veritable psychological battleground and there's a war, for our allegiance. It's a campaign characterised by selective erasure, of highlighting specific events, the systematic reduction of historical figures to mere unidimensional labels and retro-fitting them into contemporary political positions.

Take the case of Dara Shukoh, the would-be emperor of Hindustan, haloed in his timeless promise of ideal kingship. The traditional tack of pitting him against his nemesis, Aurangzeb, has imploded in recent times. So much so that even the debate of "good Muslim versus bad Muslim, good Mughal versus bad Mughal" has faded away. Dara Shukoh, rescued from centuries of indifference, has re-emerged in his new avatar as "the emblem of Indianness", confident and consummate. Dara the eternal victim is a notion of the past and we can all pretend that his belligerent brother never existed. Ample reasons are being furnished for this new, posthumous *khilat*. The Mughal prince was a deeply syncretic thinker, accomplished scholar, poet and a theologian of unusual merit; a calligraphist and connoisseur of the fine arts as well as a dutiful son and warm-hearted family man.

The first stumbling block comes in the nature of an anachronistic fallacy: The idea of retrospectively imposing the concept of "Indianness" — and by corollary, nationhood and nation-state and more specifically, the personification thereof in the form of a deified "Bharat Mata" — onto the Mughal empire of the 17th century. The fact is that in our land, the consciousness of nationhood has evolved as the end-result of a much later historical process: The idealistic, patriotic reaction to the brutal British colonial experience and rather more tenuous associations with 19th century European history such as the Germanic *Freiheitkampf* (freedom struggle) during the Napoleonic regime. This is brought out very clearly in Sugata Bose's book, *The Nation as Mother and Other Visions of Nationhood*.

There is, however, another challenge. The cherry-picking of only the syncretic attributes of Dara completely leaves out other aspects of his personality. He was habitually cold and arrogant towards the mass of courtiers and commanders, who he felt, were intellectually inferior to him. He was highly superstitious by nature, easily swayed by mystery, magic and all manner of self-styled gnomes, a conspicuously uninspiring military



commander and an alarmingly poor judge of human character. One can well wonder whether, even assuming he had managed to ascend the throne, his eclectic nature but indifference towards administrative and military matters would have enabled him to hold the empire together. In the years between 1654 and September 1657, when Shah Jahan fell grievously ill — the War of Succession broke out soon thereafter — Dara was the *de facto* ruler of the empire. This period was characterised by moves to thwart campaigns of territorial expansion in the Deccan and Kashmir, coupled with a reclusive temperament and highly creative outpouring of a philosophical nature. In terms of court politics, Dara displayed a steady, cold hostility towards the senior imperial advisors and commanders and his mutually acrimonious exchanges with the seasoned *wazir*, Saadullah Khan, almost mirrors the rivalry between the crown prince Salim (later, the emperor Jahangir) and Abul Fazl. But the moot question is: Would the current unidimensional narrative about Dara have even brought up these other facets of his personality and objectively looked at the man in the context of his times?

Separated from Dara Shukoh by almost two-and-a-half centuries but basking in this same Lazarus light is Vinayak Damodar Savarkar. Stymied

through the prime of his life by the draconian prisons of the British Raj and then after Independence, even posthumously, by a succession of Congress-led Governments, only in recent years has his release from oblivion taken place. The image of the controversial political leader has been resurrected by the present administration to larger-than-life proportions and with it, his ethos of Hindutva. This very term has come to denote a number of aspects in our common perception, the re-establishment of rituals and religious practices (including the cult of cow worship) in the heart of societal life, the retention — and at times, deepening — of the fault-lines of caste and a steadfast advocacy of vegetarianism, among other things. Consequently, the image of Savarkar looms before us as an austere, conservative traditionalist, steeped in the rituals of his faith, a sort of archetypal Hindu counterpoint to the ulema. And politically, a Hindu Jinnah.

But is that who he was, in reality? A recent biography, sourcing the treatises, letters and speeches of this polemic leader in the original Marathi, reveals a very different picture. Savarkar's conception of Hindutva, the book informs us, was essentially political, a move to galvanise the eternally splintered Hindu communities into a homogenous whole — and not an ultra-religious manifesto. In Savarkar's credo, the key to achieving this was the uniting and unionising of the Hindu polity, across caste lines. Far from being a traditionalist, this high-caste Chitpavan Brahmin established a Patit Pavan temple open to all castes, organised inter-caste dinners and marriages and did not personally care for rituals, including that of cow worship. In this more objective narrative, Savarkar emerges not as a fanatic but an astute rationalist, who rejected the Gandhian project, and wholeheartedly espoused industrialisation as the vehicle of progress in the future.



A significant aspect of Savarkar's life, unravelled in the biography, further belies the unidimensional label adduced to him. In *The Indian War of Independence*, his first major literary work that catapulted him to fame — and in the eyes of the colonial rulers, notoriety — he presented his narrative as a unified uprising against the British oppressors, stemming from a strong sense of nationhood. Savarkar's position in this book is unambiguously secular — Hindu satraps and commanders had rallied in unison against the British under the flag of the Muslim Mughal titular monarch, Bahadur Shah Zafar. There's no hint of any deep-seated hatred of the Muslims, which henceforth became the quintessential trait associated with him. In fact, it was

only later, triggered by particular experiences and tribulations during his long incarceration in the Cellular Jail of the Andamans, that Savarkar developed his animosity towards the Muslims.

We're now faced with a lingering, larger question, which is central to this whole issue. Is there still a purpose to all this indulging in history in today's world? The Churchillian, though unoriginal, viewpoint purported to answer this question: "Those who fail to learn from history are condemned to repeat it." But such aphorisms have long since dissolved into clichés.

Contemporary thinkers such as Yuval Noah Harari are not only more ambitious, they're also more persistent when demanding our participation: "Though historians occasionally try their hand at prophecy (without notable success), the study of history aims above all to make us aware of possibilities we don't normally consider. Historians study the past not in order to avoid repeating it — or perpetuate it — but in order to be liberated from it."

As India charts its course through the 21st century, the liberation we all need is not from the glories of the past but from its burdens — communal, economic and psychological.

(The writer is a columnist, business advisor and entrepreneur. He is the author of Dara Shukoh: The Man Who Would Be King)

SOUNDBITE

The Congress is opposing the CAA. I dare Rahul Gandhi to speak 10 sentences on the law. He should tell us in two sentences what is his problem with the CAA.

BJP working president —JP Nadda



I was very naughty in class but I was a teacher's pet. When the teacher was out, I was making dirty jokes and I was grabbing boys and kissing them. I was terrible!

Actor —Kalki Koechlin



Our Government wants peace in the neighbourhood. But we are not prepared to pay any price, certainly not without resolving the Kashmir dispute in a just manner.

Pakistan's Foreign Minister —Shah M Qureshi



I want to inform the CDS, if you want to deradicalise, then you first read the Juvenile Act. IPC is not applicable to children. What de-radicalisation are you talking about?

AIMIM chief —Asaduddin Owaisi



LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Act responsibly

Sir — It is disappointing that educated politicians speak irresponsibly. Congress leader Shashi Tharoor criticised Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal by comparing him to a "eunuch." Leaders must inspire the masses, otherwise their words can adversely impact the mindset of their supporters.

Ravi Via email

Experiment first

Sir — This refers to the editorial, "SC to the rescue" (January 16). There have been several controversies about the educational qualifications of some of our Ministers. A complete mismatch between the claims made by them and their marks in their certificates has been found. How then do they expect the citizens to have all necessary documents? If there is merit in the Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA), it must be explained. Before it is applied throughout the country, our leaders must first pass the CAA test. Even then questions will

Government must rise above politics

Union Minister Piyush Goyal seems to have jumped the gun by saying that Amazon is not doing a favour to the country by investing \$1 billion and that this was probably on account of a need to fund losses. To recall, Amazon had promised to create more than 25,000 jobs on a new campus in Long Island City, New York, in return for nearly \$3 billion in Government incentives. It was a cocky and raw business approach in a nation that is a votary of pure capitalism. Yet, it failed in this venture mostly due to the growing influence of the progressive Left in New York.

In its current home in Seattle, Amazon is being criticised for impacting house prices and growing inequality that has damaged the city. Now, the Minister in our own Right of the Central Government has chosen to cast a barb on its predatory pricing policies. This might well be due to the party's concerns on saving its trader vote bank. But the remarks, though credible, could as well have come from a party func-



tionary than a Cabinet Minister. That, too, one who holds a crucial portfolio as that of Commerce and Trade. As is its wont, the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) is known to put its concerns over elections ahead of those that actually should. The state of the economy and growing unemployment should worry it more.

R Narayanan Navi Mumbai

Space dreams

Sir — The Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) must be complimented for successfully launching the GSAT-30 into the orbit. After last year's setback, where the Chandrayaan-2 mission failed to touch down on the lunar surface, this is its first launch this year. GSAT-30 is

aimed at eliminating the technical bottlenecks not only for the country's communication system but also of a large number of Asian countries. Given that ISRO has helped India earn several firsts through its space missions in the recent past, hopefully, it will continue pushing the boundaries of Indian space science.

Yugal Kishore Sharma Faridabad

Healthy lifestyle

Sir — Kudos to the Ministry of AYUSH for coming out with an excellent initiative to make people at work destress and refresh themselves through Y-BREAK or Yoga break — a five-minute exercise designed to make professionals at workplaces get some physical activity. It will help keep the mind tension-free and also enhance lifestyle apart from increasing productivity. This project may soon become a part of the schedule at all Government institutions and corporate bodies. Around 15 institutions, including corporate houses like Tata Chemicals, Axis Bank and Ernst & Young Global Consulting Services, have volunteered to join the project.

Booklets and videos on how to practise yoga will be given to the staff at the work places. Besides, the Ministry would also provide all possible help and support to see that this programme is inculcated among all.

M Pradyu Kannur

Send your feedback to: letterstopioneer@gmail.com

FIRST COLUMN

Tectonic shift in US' attitude

The US no longer views West Asia as critical to its economic well-being as it did in the past, when it depended on the oil from that region



DEEPAK SINHA

Karl Marx once wrote, "History repeats itself, first as tragedy, second as farce." But often times events tend to combine both the tragic and the farcical in equal measure, just as we are seeing them play out between the Iranians and the Americans. US President Donald Trump's recent actions remind one of the Hollywood blockbuster, *Gunfight at the OK Corral*, except for the minor aberration that West Asia is no Wild West and Trump is certainly no Marshal Wyatt Earp.

Whatever reasons he may put forward for his actions, the targeted execution of a serving Iranian General and war hero, Qasem Soleimani, while on an official visit to Iraq raises serious questions of sovereignty, morality, ethical conduct and can never be justified in any civilized society. It was, in fact, a blatant act of aggression in clear violation of international law and a war crime, made even more heinous because neither America nor Iran is at war with each other. It shows up the true face of America for what it is and has been these past decades, a global bully.

More importantly, the rationale and timing of the attack raise grave suspicions as to Trump's motives. The late General Soleimani was by no means a tactical commander and his neutralisation would hardly stop operations in progress, in this case the launch of "imminent attacks" on American embassies, as has been alleged by the President. What is more likely is that Trump ordered this rash and utterly immoral attack in the vain hope that it would divert attention from his forthcoming impeachment trial, while at the same time make him appear to be a strong and decisive leader. However, make no mistake General Soleimani's killing was a grievous loss to the Iranian establishment, especially to its "Irregular Warfare" capabilities, something that will take time to rebuild.

While Trump's action was totally transactional and short-term in nature, it coincided with the American deep state's far more long-term strategy there, the necessity to squeeze China. Over the past two decades there has been a tectonic shift in the manner the United States (US) views West Asia, ever since it became one of the world's leading oil producers, exporting more oil than Saudi Arabia. In March last year, the Energy Information Administration (EIA) reported that the US exported more crude and petroleum products than it imported. As senior partner Per Magnus Nysveen of Rystad Energy, a global oil consulting and analysis firm, put it, "The oil market is overly preoccupied with short-term US crude stocks but the big picture tells a new story. Increasingly profitable shale production and a robust global appetite for light oil and gasoline is poised to bring the US to a position of oil dominance in the next few years."

This fact obviously suggests that the US no longer views West Asia as critically important to its economic well-being as it did in the past, when its economy depended on the oil from that region. For it, the geostrategic value of that region lies more in the adverse impact that any exacerbation of tensions there would have on the Chinese economy, as it is bound to, given Chinese dependence on oil from that region. It, therefore, stands to reason that it no longer finds it necessary to maintain a large troop presence in the region and can achieve its long-term aims through the use of proxies such as Saudi Arabia and Israel. In this context, much has been made of the Russian attempts to fill the vacuum that the US withdrawal has left. However, President Putin must be aware that he is punching well above his weight given the fact that the Russian economy is just around 1/20th that of the US.

Finally, with regard to the US-Iran imbroglio, while it is certainly extremely far-fetched to suggest that World War-III is just around the corner, one can also safely assume that the existing stalemate is not going to last forever and probably the situation is going to get far worse, before it gets better. This is more so if in the coming months the Iranians attempt to utilise their considerable irregular warfare assets to force the Americans out of Iraq, if not the Middle East. Escalation in tensions would then be unavoidable and that would have serious repercussions, with unintended and unpredictable consequences for the world at large.

In this context we would do well to recall the innocuous events that triggered one of the darkest chapters in world history, the assassination of Archduke Franz Ferdinand of Austria and his wife by a 19-year-old Serbian terrorist, Gavrilo Princip. While that event may have occurred in far-away Sarajevo, it did set the world aflame, bringing untold misery to tens of millions over the next four years. It would indeed be unfortunate if this tragedy were to be repeated.

(The writer, a military veteran, is a Consultant with the Observer Research Foundation and a Senior Visiting Fellow with The Peninsula Foundation, Chennai)

I WANT TO TELL AAP THAT AFTER THE REJECTION OF THE REVIEW PETITION, BECAUSE OF YOU THE CONVICTS COULDN'T BE HANGED IN TIME.

—UNION MINISTER SMRITI IRANI

POINT COUNTERPOINT



PLEASE DON'T DO POLITICS ON THIS. I DON'T BLAME THE CENTRAL GOVERNMENT FOR THIS. BOTH GOVERNMENTS ARE TRYING EVERYTHING THEY CAN.

—DELHI CHIEF MINISTER ARVIND KEJRIWAL

Change or perish

There is no alternative to sustainability and the present trajectory of economic growth divorced from environmental considerations is dragging us towards mass extinction



BKP SINHA

Despite the concerns of policymakers and planners regarding the efficient management of natural resources, the threat to them is growing exponentially by the day. This is because the country's efforts towards market-led development are eating up our social, natural and cultural capital faster than ever. Unfortunately today, the core issue of a preferred pattern of growth is hidden behind the innocuous facade of Gross Domestic Product (GDP) growth as the supreme objective. Decisions on all matters related to development require the adoption of a holistic approach because the need for environmental improvement is not able to attract appropriate investments. This is mostly owing to the fact that they are essentially long-term in nature and their support to sustained economic growth is seldom appreciated or quantified. In a world which refuses to adopt the concept of a steady state of long-term economic growth, sustainability is seen as absurdity.

Gradually, however, the world is coming to realise that there is no alternative to sustainability and the present trajectory of economic growth divorced from environmental considerations is dragging us towards the reckless path of mass extinction. The fact remains that there is no alternative to a concerted effort towards sustainable management of natural resources that demands collective action at the regional, national and global level.

The key areas in which action is required are big investments designed towards land, water, and biodiversity conservation, apart from simultaneous reduction in emissions on a mass scale. That includes Herculean efforts in jealously safeguarding forests; reduction and diversion in investment in new sources of energy away from dirty sources like coal, crude and nuclear power; improvement in availability and affordability of public transport systems with metro and light rail systems everywhere; switching to material and energy-efficient houses; smart electrical grids carrying renewable energy and all these supported by massive research efforts to improve efficiencies as we move on. Considering the increase in the pressure on forests, sincere efforts to mobilise agroforestry initiatives coupled with adequate scientific support, extension and education in resource literacy are a must. This great leap, however, will necessitate the shedding of our preoccupation with short-term gains that creates hurdles in integrating economic growth-related issues and sustainable management of natural resources. In short, the planners have to accept without any inhibitions the holistic approach which considers ecology, economics and ethics as a part of a whole interconnected circle — which at present appears to have been broken.

A careful consideration of the policy impact of different sectors, the essential trade-off between different sectors for restoration and development of natural resources, would have created huge economic demand and job opportunities for a wider base of poor like tribals and others residing in far-flung areas. One cannot overlook the fact that the economic health of any society or country in the ultimate analysis is supported by its basic ecological status.

Let us take forests as their management is important. However, effective linkage of forestry with other important sectors of the economy is not yet in place. Forest-based activities have largest forward and backward economic linkages. Just to elaborate: Along with the flexibility of capital, skill and energy requirement; it has a spectrum of activities, ranging from value-

“ A CAREFUL CONSIDERATION OF THE POLICY IMPACT OF DIFFERENT SECTORS, THE ESSENTIAL TRADE-OFF BETWEEN DIFFERENT SECTORS FOR RESTORATION AND DEVELOPMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES, WOULD HAVE CREATED HUGE ECONOMIC DEMAND AND JOB OPPORTUNITIES FOR A WIDER BASE OF POOR LIKE TRIBALS AND OTHERS RESIDING IN FAR-FLUNG AREAS. ONE CANNOT OVERLOOK THE FACT THAT THE ECONOMIC HEALTH OF ANY SOCIETY OR COUNTRY IN THE ULTIMATE ANALYSIS IS SUPPORTED BY ITS BASIC ECOLOGICAL STATUS ”



addition activity at the household level to micro industries and small sawmills to forest-based industries and to a totally computerised ayurvedic drug as also the paper industry. Policy measures and activities in other sectors mar the ability of the forests to perform their economic, social and environmental roles, as much as the policies set in forestry do.

In fact, policy decisions taken outside the forestry sector may be detrimental or beneficial for effective functioning of services from forests on a long-term basis. Let us take, for example, the development of infrastructure. The policy instruments attempting modernisation of transport, telecommunication and highways do create both positive and negative impacts for forest conservation and development. They do improve forest firefighting and public awareness of environmental issues but also create backlash in the shape of forest degradation. Pucca roads through forest habitats serve as barrier for dissemination of pollen grains, mating of smaller animals and recharging of underground water reserves, loss of hybrid vigour due to inbreeding and related extinction, noise and other disturbances resulting in the decline of reproduction or mating of many wildlife species. Measures are needed to strengthen the positive impacts and reduce the negative fallouts.

Careful planning and strict implementation could avoid many such backlashes. Provision of compensatory afforestation elsewhere can never be a substitute for loss of natural forest and its ecosystem services at the point of concern.

An overarching policy of creating a platform for dialogue can remove barriers between sectors and institutions currently working with different myopic mandates. Understanding of involved trade-offs in natural ecosystems and benefits of harmony among forestry and other land-based sectors are urgently needed. Canada

already has the provision for removing barriers between institutions and orienting them towards a philosophy of common goals. An outcome of this is a model forest programme in which forests are managed by a partnership of diverse interest groups of industry, conservationists, community, aboriginals and so on.

Professional forestry in a country like India needs a radical change. Our Government, committed to social justice, has so far failed to adequately recognise that the services needed by people cannot come from the Forest Department staffed by men trained as professional foresters in the core subject.

It is well understood by now that forest ecosystems have multifarious roles to play in helping the country in halting the downward spiral of land degradation; in restoring the vitality of the land; in protecting land from wind and water erosion; in job creation in far-flung areas; in carbon sequestration and of course in combatting climate change-related problems.

A location-specific proper model of agroforestry can promote and sustain an intrinsically-sustainable and resilient agriculture system especially under marginal conditions. There is a whole range of local problems of forestry that requires different solutions based on different strategies. Placements of Indian Forest Service Officers in different Development Ministries are adequate proof of the fact that forestry professionals can handle various dimensions of administrative work. Their special inputs, in fact, through provision of new insights in relating conservation and sustainable management of natural resources to their respective sectors of economy will be their most worthwhile contribution to the country.

Gradually provisions are being made for placement of environmental personnel in industries and other Government departments too. Their roles, more often

than not, are generally confined towards pollution abatement measures. It will be better if they are designated as natural resource managers with additional mandate of looking at the use or abuse of natural resources for sustainable development. In addition, the time has come for university courses to be re-designed and made compulsory in all branches of education apart from promoting and subsidising the courses of management of natural resources on a sustainable base as the core subject.

The horizon of knowledge about natural resources is ever-expanding and accordingly conservation is reinventing itself. New models in forestry as well as agriculture incorporating the role of trees that are known to exert an influence far beyond their immediate environment, can go a long way to save the farmers from committing suicides and help them go ahead on the path of sustainable development.

Conservation of resources and sustainable development is the bedrock of survival of mankind but conservation today is much more than merely a choice in favour of one's long-term economic self-interest.

It entails moral choices and responsibilities, too, involving the community of all life forms in the company of which we have evolved and to which we essentially belong. Further, it has to be alive to the issues of inter-generational equity. Conservation and sustainable management of natural resources, within this perspective, is a radical endeavour to save Earth itself and that will essentially have to derive strength from knowledge, ethical value, wealth of our dreams and an understanding of nature as a sacred space.

(The writer is Advisor at Amity University and former Principal Chief Conservator of Forests, Uttar Pradesh)

States also responsible for economic growth

If we take stock of all the major areas which need improvement for attracting investment then, barring fiscal and monetary policies, almost all the key items are either in the State List or the Concurrent List of the Constitution



SHSHANK SAUROV

Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman will present her first full Union Budget on February 1 and people are expecting some out of the box initiatives to stimulate the economic growth of the country. Some of the key macroeconomic indicators like the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) growth, tax collection, credit growth and so on, indicate that the economy is grappling with a slowdown which is largely due to a decline in demand.

Global trade protectionism, a looming oil crisis and a rise in retail inflation are further aggravating the situation. Given the current economic scenario, it would be too optimistic to believe that growth will jump and

the private sector will start investing all of a sudden in the coming fiscal.

India has a federal structure where sufficient autonomy has been given to State Governments. This autonomy is not just for making legislations and administration over the territory but it extends to the fiscal arena also. The States are getting their fair share of revenue after the implementation of the recommendations of the Fourteenth Finance Commission.

Our constitutional mechanism empowers the State Governments to deal with the matters which come under the State List, as per the Seventh Schedule of the Constitution, and they have joint control over the matters coming under the Concurrent List.

Despite the enormous powers given to States and the responsibility entrusted upon the State Legislature, it is a fact that whenever the question of economic growth arises, people always look to the Union Government. The fact that the union is nothing but a sum of all States should be appreciated and,

therefore, the journey towards economic prosperity is the equal responsibility of both the Centre and the States. A common man doesn't want to be entangled in a tug of war between warring politicians but unfortunately, gaining and retaining power is more important for people who are sitting at the helm of affairs than the welfare of the people who put them there.

There is a general perception that a State which is ruled by the same political faction for a relatively longer period offers far more policy certainty and enhances its ability to attract investors. It is also perceived that having a Government of the same party/coalition at both the Centre and State helps in the unimpeded growth of the State.

However, if we see the data for the two most populous States of the country viz. Uttar Pradesh (UP) and Bihar, then these notions will prove to be a myth.

Bihar has been continuously ruled by Nitish Kumar for the last 15 years (except for a short while when Jitan Ram Manjhi was at the helm).

In the case of UP, most of the time the State was ruled by Governments which had allies at the Centre.

However, despite this favourable political environment, these States are not doing well economically and are called the BIMARU States. This means that the State-level politicians are not doing good enough work for their development. This lackadaisical attitude of State Governments stems from the fact that economic growth and job creation are considered the sole responsibility of the Union Government, which it is not.

For Chief Ministers it is easy to pass the buck on to the Centre in case questions regarding the economy and development are asked.

The persona-centric politics of the major parties like the BJP and the Congress is also to be blamed for not grooming the State leadership and not pushing regional leaders to present a development role model for others.

The people of the country all want jobs and a higher income and

a better quality of life. For this, we have to start making State-level leaders accountable and question their inability to deliver on their promises made during the election campaigns.

Economic reforms are an ongoing process and investors continuously evaluate various investment options before committing their resources. Land and labour reforms are the most critical of all the structural changes which this country needs. Land comes under the State List and matters related to labour are part of the Concurrent List. Among various things, an investor looks for infrastructure and the law and order situation. These two vital prerequisites for development also fall under the domain of States. If we take stock of all the major areas which need improvement for attracting investment then, barring fiscal and monetary policies, almost all the key items are either in the State List or the Concurrent List of the Constitution.

The rural economy and the Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSME) sector are fac-

ing severe distress. The rural economy is largely driven by agricultural activities and as a matter of fact, the farm sector accounts for almost half of the workforce employed in our country and contributes 18 per cent to the GDP. Similarly, the MSME sector contributes almost 29 per cent to the GDP and more than 45 per cent of product exports come from this sector. State Governments are uniquely positioned to understand local needs and tailor schemes as per those requirements, including tax concessions by reducing State Goods and Services Tax rates. Central schemes are applied across the country and "one size fits all" may not be true in every situation.

If India has to grow, then State Governments should take ownership for development and people should also ask regional leaders to deliver on their promises. This nation belongs to all and therefore development is the collective responsibility of all of us, particularly those who have been given the mandate to rule.

(The writer is a Chartered Accountant)



FOREIGN EYE



TRUMP'S TRIAL A DEFINING MOMENT

US President Trump's trial is not just a defining moment for him but also for the presidency and the Senate. If the Senate votes on party lines to acquit and Trump is then re-elected, this would be an infamous outcome. The idea that a president can abuse his office would be accepted. A new and lawless presidential legitimacy would be sanctioned. And the checks and balances of the US constitution would no longer exist and would need to be built afresh.

(The Guardian editorial)

AMAZON ROW 'Foreign investments must adhere to law of the land'

PTI ■ AHMEDABAD/NEW DELHI

A day after he scoffed at Amazon.Com founder Jeff Bezos' offer to invest USD 1 billion in India, Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal on Friday tried to do damage control saying the country welcomes all kinds of investments that follow the "letter and spirit" of the law.

Goyal clarified his remarks on Twitter as well as to reporters saying some people have misconstrued his remarks by suggesting that he had said something negative against Amazon.

"I was only saying that investment should come as per the rules and regulation," he told reporters in Ahmedabad.

Big-ticket investments in the retail space should not hurt small traders who do not have "lakhs and crores" of rupees, Goyal said.

"We welcome all kinds of investment. However, the necessary legal process would follow if any investment is made outside the purview of law," he said.

While Goyal had on Thursday raised questions



about Amazon's business practices saying the company had done no big favours to India by announcing a new USD 1 billion investment, his party's foreign cell head Vijay Chauthaiwale tweeted barely-veiled criticism of Bezos-owned the Washington Post, which has been criticized by the BJP for its coverage of the Modi government's increasingly right-wing policies.

Bezos who topped up his announcement of investing

More than 300 items may see customs duty hike in Budget

FIANS ■ NEW DELHI

As a measure to boost domestic small and medium industry, the Government may consider a hike in customs duty on over 300 items like toys, furniture, footwear, coated paper, rubber items among other in the Union Budget.

Besides giving relief to the domestic industry and boosting employment, the move to keep imports down and help to raise revenue. Many of these are industries which are essentially concentrated in the small and medium sectors and employment intensive.

The Commerce and Industry Ministry in its budget recommendations has proposed rationalisation of basic customs on over 300 items across sectors including furniture, chemicals, rubber, coated paper and paper boards.

On footwear and related products, the Ministry has suggested increase in duty to 35 per cent from the current 25



per cent while for new pneumatic tyres of rubber, it has proposed to hike customs duty to 40 per cent from the current 10-15 per cent.

The import duty hike on footwear is a move to thwart the increase in imports of undervalued and cheap footwear. While the majority of imports are coming from ASEAN countries, with which

India has a free trade agreement, it is suspected that China is re-routing large quantities of footwear through these countries.

The ministry has proposed to increase import duty on wooden furniture to 30 per cent from the current 20 per cent. For coated paper, paper boards and hand made papers, it has suggested doubling the duty to 20 per cent.

The Ministry has asked for the removal of import duty on waste paper and wood pulp, which is currently at 10 per cent and 5 per cent, respectively. The paper industry has expressed concerns about cheap imports and a surge in inbound shipments.

For wood, metal and plastic toys, the ministry has suggested increase in import duty to up to 100 per cent from the current 20 per cent. Import of these toys increased to \$304 million in 2018-19 from \$281.82 million in 2017-18 from China and Hong Kong.

BUSINESS CORNER

SUBODH GUPTA, DIRECTOR (FINANCE), BHEL, RECOGNISED FOR HIS FINANCE LEADERSHIP

New Delhi: Subodh Gupta, Director (Finance), Bharat Heavy Electricals Limited (BHEL) has been awarded the "TOP RANKERS Excellence Award 2020" for Best Finance Professional of the year. The award has been conferred on Gupta in recognition of his finance leadership.



Gupta has been instrumental in revamping the financial systems and procedures in the company and ensuring best corporate practices. The award was presented to Gupta at the 21st National Management Summit being held in New Delhi.

PFC ISSUES SENIOR UNSECURED USD BONDS

New Delhi: Power Finance Corporation Ltd (PFC), the leading NBFC in power sector, successfully carried out the issuance of 10.25 year \$750 million bonds on 15th January 2020 under Reg S & 144 A route. The bonds have a fixed coupon of 3.95 per cent p.a. and a yield of 4.066 per cent. With this offering, PFC becomes the first Indian Public Sector Company to issue senior unsecured USD bonds with a tenure of more than 10 years. This is also PFC's third international bond issuance in FY 19-20 as well as PFC's largest single tranche bond. The final order book amounted to more than \$2.2 billion, attracting active and wider participation from investors across US, European and Asian markets, with around 42 per cent participation from the US market.

Amazon to create one million jobs in India by 2025, says Jeff Bezos

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

World's largest online shopping platform Amazon on Friday announced plans to create one million new jobs in India over the next five years as it firefights comments from Commerce Minister Piyush Goyal on the firm not doing a favour to the country by making the investments.

Amazon founder and CEO Jeff Bezos, in a statement on Friday, said the company plans to create one million new jobs in India over the next five years. The new jobs — created both directly and indirectly — will be across industries, including IT, skill development, content creation, retail, logistics, and manufacturing.

These jobs are in addition to the seven lakh jobs Amazon's investments have enabled over the last six years in the country.

The statement comes a day after Goyal said the US-based company was not doing a favour to the country by the investments, and questioned how the online retailing major could incur such "big" losses but for its predatory pricing.

Bezos, who is in India this week, had on Wednesday



announced \$1 billion (over ₹7,000 crore) investment in the country to help bring small and medium businesses online and committed to exporting \$10 billion worth of India-made goods by 2025.

"We've seen huge contributions from our employees, extraordinary creativity from the small businesses we've partnered with, and great enthusiasm from the customers who shop with us - and we're excited about what lies ahead," Bezos said in the statement on Friday.

The company noted that the Indian government has prioritised job creation and skilling initiatives — including the training of more than 400 million people by 2022 — in rural and urban areas.

USD 1 billion to help bring small and medium business online, with an announcement of creating one million new jobs in India over the next five years.

With an association of small traders aligned with the BJP holding demonstrations against his visit and India plans, the world's richest person visited a neighbourhood store in Mumbai, met Bollywood stars and captains of industry.

"Our country has some rules for e-commerce industry. We welcome all those investments which come as per these rules. However, it should not create unfair competition for the small traders of India. They do not get zero per cent loans. They do not have lakhs and crores of rupees. They do business with small capital," said Goyal on Friday.

On Thursday, he had questioned why the e-commerce market place should make losses but for its predatory pricing.

Jet Airways to sell Netherlands business to KLM

New Delhi: Bankrupt Jet Airways plans to sell its Netherlands business to KLM Royal Dutch Airlines, according to a regulatory filing.

The domestic full-service carrier, which shuttered operations last April, is undergoing insolvency resolution process.

The insolvency resolution professional managing the affairs of Jet Airways said various options are being explored for the "company's resolution and maximising the value for its stakeholders", as per the filing on Friday. Providing an update, the company said there is a separate liquidation proceeding ongoing in the Netherlands and that the resolution professional has agreed a co-operation protocol with the Dutch trustee appointed by the local court.

PTI

Banks' risk on ₹1.5L cr lent to telcos up after SC ruling

FIANS ■ NEW DELHI

The risk for Indian banks on their loans to the telecom sector appear to have risen a notch higher for both public and private sector lenders who have a combined exposure of ₹1.51 lakh crore, following the Supreme Court rejecting the review petition of the three incumbent telcos. The apex court has mandated that Airtel, Vodafone Idea and Tata Teleservices pay nearly ₹1.02 lakh crore as a statutory payments to the Government by January 23.

According to banking sources, state-run State Bank of India (₹42,400 crore), HDFC Bank (₹24,500 crore), Axis Bank (₹16,600 crore), Bank of Baroda (₹14,400 crore), Indusind Bank (₹8,800 crore), Canara Bank (₹6,100 crore) and Punjab National Bank (₹8,400 crore) have high exposures to the telecom sector.

These debts, however, are not classed as non-performing assets (NPAs or bad loans).

Banks don't reveal client specific information and queries sent to them on their loans disbursed to the telecom sector did not elicit any response. The Union Bank of India which has loaned ₹15,200 crore to the sector said it does not have any outstanding on account of Airtel or Vodafone Idea. Bank CMD Raj Kiran Rai its exposure is among the public sector undertakings (PSUs) and not in the privately-run Airtel and Vodafone Idea.

Kotak Mahindra Bank and Federal Bank have ₹4,700 crore and ₹1,600 crore exposure to the telecom sector, while RBL Bank has lent the telcos ₹500 crore. There are other telecom companies who have to pay dues to the Department of Telecom but are defunct now or have been acquired.

Reliance reports record quarterly net profit of ₹11,640 crore in Q3

PTI ■ MUMBAI/NEW DELHI

India's most valuable company Reliance Industries on Friday posted a record quarterly net profit of ₹11,640 crore as a turnaround in oil refining business together with the continued rise in the share of its consumer businesses of retail and telecom countered lower profitability in petrochemicals.

The oil-to-telecom conglomerate, led by richest Indian Mukesh Ambani, reported a net profit of ₹11,640 crore, or ₹18.4 per share, in October-December, up from ₹10,251 crore, or ₹17.3 a share, in the same period of the previous financial year, the company said in a statement.

This is the highest quarterly net profit earned by any private company, surpassing its own previous best of ₹11,262 crore in the July-September

2019 period. State-owned Indian Oil Corp (IOC) holds the distinction of posting the highest ever quarterly profit by any Indian firm when it had reported a net profit of ₹14,512.81 crore in January-March 2013.

However, consolidated revenue fell 1.4 per cent to ₹1,68,858 crore in the third quarter of 2019-20. While oil refining margins rose after six straight quarters of decline, the company opened 415 more retail stores and added 37.1 million subscribers to its Jio mobile phone service that helped increase the profitability of the venture. But the weakness in its traditional petrochemical businesses continued.

The operator of the world's largest oil refining complex saw pre-tax earnings from the business rise 12 per cent to ₹5,657 crore in the third quarter of the current fiscal year.

It earned \$9.2 on turning every barrel of crude oil into fuel as compared to a gross refining margin (GRM) of \$8.8 per barrel in the October-December 2018. The GRM was, however, lower than USD 9.4 per barrel earned in July-September 2019. Reliance reported record pre-tax profit from its retail and telecom businesses. The two segments now account for nearly 40 per cent of its EBITDA, up from close to 25 per cent last financial year.

With its retail store strength rising to 11,316 from 10,901 at the end of the second quarter, the retail business posted a 58 per cent jump in pre-tax profit to ₹2,389 crore and a 27 per cent rise in revenue at ₹45,327 crore.

China's economy slumps to 6.1% in 2019; lowest in 29 yrs

PTI ■ BEIJING

China's GDP grew by 6.1 per cent last year, the lowest in 29 years, the Government said on Friday, as sluggish domestic demand and the bruising 18-month trade war with the US seriously impacted the world's second-largest economy.

The new GDP data released by the National Bureau of Statistics (NBS) comes a day after China and the US signed

a long-awaited phase one deal, marking a ceasefire in the 18-month trade war which saw the world's two largest economies slap 25 per cent tariffs on about half a trillion-dollar worth of each other's exports.

China's economy grew by 6.1 per cent last year, its worst performance since 1990, but it remained above the psychologically important six per cent mark. The GDP growth remained well within the 6 to

6.5 target set by the government, the NBS said. However, significant from the Chinese government's perspective, the GDP expanded to \$14.38 trillion from last year's \$13.1 trillion.

In 2018, China's economy sank to a 28-year low slowing down to 6.6 per cent year on year, lower than the 6.8 per cent growth registered in 2017 as it grappled with the continued slowdown amid the trade war with US and declining

Global equities burst higher on trade deal

AFP ■ LONDON

Global equities rose Friday as investors, still buoyed by a landmark China-US trade deal, turned their focus to the earnings season and the global outlook, while also cheered by Chinese economic data.

In early afternoon European trade, London rose 1.0 per cent, Frankfurt jumped 0.7 per cent and Paris added 0.9 per cent, aided by news that China's economy appears to be stabilising.

"Stock markets in Europe are higher this morning as the bullish move in Asia overnight has influenced traders in this part of the world," said CMC Markets analyst David Madden.

"China released some broadly positive economic reports, which has boosted sentiment around the globe."

All three main indexes on Wall Street ended at record highs Thursday, boosted by the Senate's approval of a new North American free-trade deal, while Google parent Alphabet joined Apple and

Microsoft to become a trillion-dollar firm for the first time.

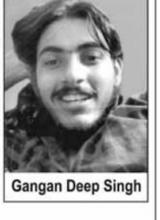
The positive energy fuelled through to Asia, where Hong Kong gained 0.6 per cent, Tokyo ended 0.5 per cent higher, Shanghai rose 0.1 per cent and Sydney added 0.3 per cent. Apart from last week's blip caused by the US assassination of Iran's top general, markets have enjoyed a strong start to the new decade, building on the rally of late 2019.

The gains have been fanned by the "phase one" trade agreement as well as signs of improvement in world-wide economies, lower interest rates, government stimulus and easing Brexit concerns.

And with the prospect of a healthy batch of company reports, there are hopes for further advances. "It's very hard to be bearish here," Linda Duessel, at Federated Investors Management, told Bloomberg TV. "We could have really good earnings surprises to the upside" as more profit reports roll in, she said.

SEARCH FOR MISSING/KIDNAPPED

General public is hereby informed that a man namely Gangan Deep Singh, S/o Kripal Singh, R/o A-22, Gali No. 07, Sanjay Nagar, Delhi has been missing/kidnapped since 14/01/2020. In this regard D.D. No. 18-A, dated 14/01/2020 has been registered at P.S. Mahender Park, Delhi. Sincere efforts have been made by the local police to trace out the missing/kidnapped man but no clue has come to light so far. The description of the missing/ kidnapped man is as under:



Name: Gangan Deep Singh, Gender: Male, Age: 21 years, Height: 5'7", Complexion: Shallow, Face: Round, Build: Medium, Hair: Black, Wearing: Charee colour jacket, black colour shirt, blue colour jeans and blue colour shoes in his feet. If anyone has any information regarding this missing/kidnapped man, kindly inform SHO/Mahender Park, Delhi. E-mail: cic@cbi.gov.in Ph.: 011-24368638, 24368641 Fax : 011-24368639

SHO P.S. Mahender Park, Delhi Ph. No.: 011-27632501, 27632023 DP/9681/NW/2020

SEARCH FOR MISSING/KIDNAPPED MALE

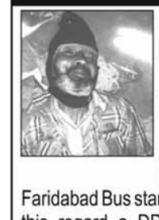
General Public is hereby informed that one male (depicted in the photo) namely Ram Sanjivan S/o Late Sh. Ramdhan R/o H.No.1557/1558, J-Block, Jahangir Puri, Delhi Aged-72 Years has been reported missing/kidnapped since 01.12.2019 vide DD No.06A Dated 22.12.2019 registered at Police Station Mahendra Prak, Delhi. His physical description is as under:-



Complexion: Shallow, Height: 5'5", Face: Long, Build: Thin, Clothing: Yellow coloured shirt, Black coloured pajama, sky coloured jacket and slipper in feet. Any person having any information/Clue about this missing/kidnapped male, may inform SHO, Mahendra Park, Delhi at E-mail : cic@cbi.gov.in or website : http://cbi.nic.in

Tele No. : 011-24368638 or 24368641 Sd/- FAX No. : 011-24368639 SHO, Mahendra Park, Delhi Tel.: 011-27632501, 27632502 DP/9680/NW/2020

APPEAL FOR IDENTIFICATION



General public is hereby informed that this person Name: Unknown, S/o: Unknown, R/o: Unknown, Age: 50-55 Years, Sex: Male, Height: 5'5", Face: Long, Build: Thin, Complexion: Shallow, Wearing: Green Checkdar Shirt and blue pant bare footed, Near Power House Pusta Road behind Faridabad Bus stand Yamuna Bazar Kashmere Gate, Delhi In this regard a DD No.06-A, dated 11.01.2020 has been registered at P.S. Kashmere Gate, New Delhi. Sincere efforts have been made by local police to trace out information about this person but no clue has come to light so far. Any person having any information or clue about this person may kindly inform to the following.

SHO P.S. Kashmere Gate, Delhi Ph.: 011-23967889, 8750870123 DP/890/N/2020

PROCLAMATION REQUIRING THE APPEARANCE OF A PERSON ACCUSED

Whereas complaint has been made before me that accused Sachin, S/o Singhashen, R/o Jhuggi No. 230, Near Balmiki Mandir, Shahbad Dairy, Delhi is involved in case FIR No. 433/18 & 437/18, u/s 457/411 IPC & 25 Arms Act, at P.S. Shahbad Dairy, Delhi and it has been returned to a warrant of arrest thereupon issued that the said accused Sachin, cannot be found and whereas it has been shown to my satisfaction that the said accused Sachin, has absconded (or is concealing himself to avoid the service of the said warrant) Proclamation is hereby made that the said accused Sachin, in case FIR No. 433/18 & 437/18, u/s 457/411 IPC & 25 Arms Act, at P.S. Shahbad Dairy, Delhi is required to appear on this Court to answer the said complaint on or before 18.02.2020. By Order Sh. Vaibhav Mehta Metropolitan Magistrate - 05 (North), Court Room No. 114, 1st Floor Rohini Courts, Delhi DP/934/ON/2020-(Court Matter)

PROCLAMATION REQUIRING THE APPEARANCE OF ACCUSED PERSONS

Whereas complaint has been made before me that Anuradha W/o Sh. Arjun and Sh. Arjun Mehawat S/o Sh. Attar Singh R/o Flat No. 10/289, Sai Apartment, Maidan Garhi, New Delhi have committed (or are suspected to have committed) the offence in case FIR No. 2548/15, U/s 354/509/506/323/34 IPC & 2 POCSO Act at P.S. Mehrauli, New Delhi and it has been returned to a warrant of arrest thereupon issued that the said accused Anuradha and Arjun Mehawat cannot be found and whereas it has been shown to my satisfaction that the said accused Anuradha and Arjun Mehawat have absconded (or are concealing themselves to avoid the service of the said warrant). Proclamation is hereby made that the said accused Anuradha and Arjun Mehawat of FIR No. 2548/15, U/s 354/509/506/323/34 IPC & 2 POCSO Act at P.S. Mehrauli, New Delhi are required to appear before this Court to answer the said complaint on or before 24.02.2020. By Order Ms. Jyoti Kler, Additional Session Judge-05, Room No. 605, Saket Court Complex, New Delhi DP/5918/SD/2020

PROCLAMATION REQUIRING THE APPEARANCE OF ACCUSED PERSON

Whereas complaint has been made before me that accused Praveen Kumar S/o Satish Kumar, R/o H. No. 164, Devi Village, New Delhi is involved in case FIR No. 187/16 u/s 420/34 IPC, P.S. Neb Sarai, New Delhi and it has been returned to a warrant of arrest thereupon issued that the said accused Praveen Kumar cannot be found and whereas it has been shown to my satisfaction that the said accused Praveen Kumar has absconded (or is concealing himself to avoid the service of the said warrant). Processing U/s 82 Cr. P.C. has been initiated in the case. Proclamation is hereby made that the said accused Praveen Kumar, case FIR No. 187/16 u/s 420/34 IPC, P.S. Neb Sarai, New Delhi is required to appear in this Court to answer the said complaint on or before 20.02.2020. By Order Sh. Anuj Kumar Singh Metropolitan Magistrate Saket Court, New Delhi DP/5905/SD/2020-(Court Matter)

Market ends flat; banks slide on NPA concerns after SC's AGR ruling

PTI ■ MUMBAI

Market gauges Sensex and Nifty gave up early gains to close on a flat note on Friday as investors moved to the sidelines amid concerns that the Supreme Court ruling on telecom AGR issue might further aggravate stressed assets problem in the banking sector.

At the closing bell, the BSE benchmark Sensex was up 12.81 points or 0.03 per cent at 41,945.37. The index also marked its new all-time high of 42,063.93 in intraday trading, before surrendering some of its gains.

The broader Nifty, however, settled 3.15 points or 0.025 per cent lower at 12,352.35. The NSE barometer too touched its life-time intraday peak of 12,385.45 in early deals before losing momentum.

During the week, the Sensex advanced 345.65 points or 0.83 per cent; while the Nifty rose 95.55 points or 0.77 per cent.

In a session marked by high volatility, gains in Reliance Industries offset losses in other heavyweights HDFC, ICICI Bank and TCS.

On the Sensex chart, Bharti Airtel was the top gainer, rallying 5.47 per cent, after experts said the Supreme Court's rejection of a review of its order that put ₹1.47 lakh crore liability of past dues on telcos, will weaken Vodafone Idea's ability to compete in the Indian market; in turn, providing an opportunity for Bharti Airtel and Reliance Jio to gain market share.

Shares of Vodafone Idea plunged 25.21 per cent. Ahead of their quarterly earnings, Reliance Industries and HCL Tech advanced up to 2.79 per cent, while TCS fell 0.79 per cent.

Heavyweight HDFC dropped 1.23 per cent. In percentage terms, IndusInd Bank, SBI, HDFC, ICICI Bank and L&T were among the top losers.

On the contrary, Bharti Airtel, Reliance, Sun Pharma, HCL Tech and Maruti Suzuki emerged as major gainers.

Sectorally, BSE bankex, metal, finance, capital goods and IT indices fell up to 0.78 per cent. While energy, telecom, healthcare, consumer durables, power and auto indices rose up to 1.79 per cent.

In the broader market, BSE midcap and smallcap indices rose up to 0.54 per cent.

"As anticipated, mid and small caps are outpacing the broader market... Main indices are impacted by Supreme Court verdict on

AGR, having an effect on telecom and banking sectors which are already facing NPA problem. The pre-budget rally has been very solid on a month-on-month basis, market may consolidate in the short-term and take cues from the actual budget and on-going results", Vinod Nair, head of research at Geojit Financial Services, said.

The Supreme Court on Thursday dismissed review petitions filed by telecom companies against its October 24, 2019 order that asked for inclusion of non-telecom revenues for calculating statutory dues such as licence fee and spectrum usage charge.

Dues, which total to ₹1.47 lakh crore for 15 telecom companies including Airtel and Vodafone Idea, as per the October order, have to be paid by January 23.

According to traders, domestic investors are awaiting directional cues from key corporate results for cues amid concerns over higher bank non-performing assets and a spike in retail inflation.

"Global markets witnessed a strong rally as easing trade tensions and promising economic data buoyed the sentiments. Indian markets too ended the week with strong gains especially in midcaps

and small caps. Midcap and small caps have significantly outperformed the Nifty... We are seeing strong traction in the broader market with revived risk appetite among investors ahead of Budget, Hemang Kapasi, portfolio manager (equity investment products) at Sanctum Wealth Management, said.

Bourses in Shanghai, Hong Kong, Tokyo and Seoul ended higher. European markets also started on a positive note.

Brent crude oil futures rose 0.36 per cent to USD 64.86 per barrel.

RUPEE DROPS 15 PAISE

The Indian rupee dropped 15 paise to close at 71.08 against the US dollar on Friday amid strengthening of the Indian currency overseas and the American currency rising and crude prices.

At the interbank foreign exchange market, the rupee opened lower at 70.98 to the US dollar and lost further momentum to touch a low of 71.10. It finally settled the day at 71.08, showing a fall of 15 paise over its previous close.

The dollar index, which gauges the greenback's strength against a basket of six currencies, fell by 0.17 per cent to 97.48.

During the week the rupee has depreciated by 14 paise

Vodafone Idea's ability to compete in Indian market may weaken: Moody's

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

With the Supreme Court rejecting a review of its order that put ₹1.47 lakh crore liability of past dues on telecom firms, Vodafone Idea's ability to compete in the Indian market is likely to weaken and this will provide an opportunity for Bharti Airtel and Reliance Jio to gain market share, Moody's Investors Service said on Friday.

"The financial burden will likely further weaken Vodafone Idea's ability to compete in the Indian market, potentially providing an opportunity for competitors Bharti and Jio to gain market share," the US-based agency said.

Moody's further added: "While a fresh blow, the judgment is no real surprise and Bharti has already made provisions to help offset the impact on its balance sheet. Nevertheless, the impact on its credit profile will likely be significant, with both debt and leverage set to rise."

Meanwhile, Bharti Airtel and Vodafone Idea are evaluating filing a curative petition before the apex court for relaxation on penalties and payment deadline. In a statement, Bharti Airtel, which faces a liability of nearly ₹35,586 crore, said it was disappointed by the order and was now "evaluating filing a

curative petition". Vodafone Idea, which has to pay ₹53,038 crore, said it was also "exploring further options, including filing of a curative petition".

MOODY'S PLACES YES BANK'S RATINGS UNDER REVIEW

Moody's Investors Service has placed Yes Bank's long-term foreign currency issuer rating of B2 under review, with the direction uncertain, citing "slowness in raising new capital".

"The placing of Yes Bank's deposit rating of B2 under review reflects Moody's expectation that the bank's standalone viability is getting increasingly challenged by its slowness in raising new capital," the US-based agency has said in a statement.

It further said the potential credit risk to the bank's senior creditors is uncertain, because there are a number of diverse scenarios that could affect the rating in either positive or negative directions.

Yes Bank is in discussions with a number of investors to raise new equity capital, which would be credit positive if executed successfully, Moody's said adding that "If the bank successfully recapitalises and repairs and cleans its balance sheet, its ratings could stabilise or face upward pressure".

TCS Q3 net profit marginally up

Mumbai (PTI): Country's largest software services major Tata Consultancy Services (TCS) on Friday reported a muted 0.2 per cent growth in consolidated net profit at ₹8,118 crore for the third quarter ended December 2019. This is against a net profit of ₹8,105 crore in the year-ago period, TCS said in a BSE filing.

Revenue of the city-based firm grew 6.7 per cent in the quarter under review to ₹39,854 crore from ₹37,338 crore in the corresponding period of the last fiscal, it added.

"We saw the sectoral trends of the first half of the year continue to play out in the third quarter. Our robust order book during the quarter reflects our ability to pitch innovative technology solutions to address the business needs of different stakeholders in the enterprise, and participate in our customers' enterprise-wide transformation initiatives," TCS CEO and managing director Rajesh Gopinathan said in a statement. This is helping deepen and broaden the company's customer relationships and make the business more resilient, he added.

The TCS board has declared a third interim dividend of ₹5 per equity Share of ₹1 each of the company.

HCL TECH Q3 NET PROFIT RISES 13% TO ₹2,944 CR

New Delhi (PTI): IT major HCL Technologies on Friday posted a 13 per cent rise in its consolidated net profit at ₹2,944 crore for the December 2019 quarter. The company had registered a net profit of ₹2,605 crore in the year-ago period as per Indian Accounting Standards, HCL Technologies said in a statement.

Its revenue from operations grew 15.5 per cent to ₹18,135 crore in the quarter under review, from ₹15,699 crore in the year-ago period. The company has revised its revenue growth outlook to 16.5-17 per cent for 2019-20 from its previous forecast of 15-17 per cent topline growth in constant currency terms.

HCL Technologies' board has declared a dividend of ₹2 per share.

"We continue our stellar performance over the years and have now crossed a revenue run rate of USD 10 billion this quarter. Our revenues have grown 16.4 per cent year-on-year in constant currency and we have delivered a strong 20.2 per cent earnings before interest and taxes (EBIT)," HCL Technologies President and CEO C Vijayakumar said. He added that within two quarters of its inception, HCL Software has already onboarded 4,600 customers. "I am pleased that our results continue to validate and reinforce our growth, profitability and investment strategies," Vijayakumar said.

NIFTY 50

Table with columns: SCRIP, OPEN, HIGH, LOW, LTP, CHANGE. Lists various stocks and their price movements.

NIFTY NEXT 50

Table with columns: SCRIP, OPEN, HIGH, LOW, LTP, CHANGE. Lists various stocks and their price movements.

BSE 500

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RUPEE vs Dollar 71.08



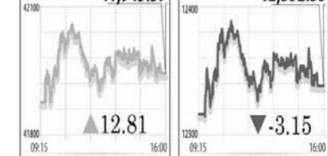
TOP GAINERS

Table listing top gainers: Bharti Airtel 5.47, Sun Pharma 2.24, HCL Tech 1.22, etc.

TOP LOSERS

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BSE Sensex 41,945.37



NSE Nifty 12,352.35



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US PRESIDENT impeachment

Trump's trial begins at start of election yr

GLOBE TROTTING PUTIN TO ATTEND LIBYA PEACE CONFERENCE

AP ■ WASHINGTON

The US Senate opened the impeachment trial of President Donald Trump with quiet ceremony Thursday — senators standing at their desks to swear an oath of “impartial justice” as jurors, House prosecutors formally reciting the charges and Chief Justice John Roberts presiding.

The trial, only the third such undertaking in American history, is unfolding at the start of the election year, a time of deep political division in the nation. Four of the senators sitting in judgment on Trump are running for the Democratic Party's nomination to challenge him in the fall.

“Hear ye, hear ye, hear ye!” intoned the Senate's sergeant at arms, calling the



proceedings to order just past noon. Senators filled the chamber, an unusual sight in itself, sitting silently under strict rules that prohibit talking or cellphones, for a trial that will test not only Trump's presi-

street from the Supreme Court to the Capitol.

He has long insisted judges are not politicians and is expected to serve as a referee for the proceedings. Senators rose quickly when he appeared in his plain black robe.

“Will all senators now stand, and remain standing, and raise their right hand,” Roberts said. “Do you solemnly swear that in all things appertaining to the trial of the impeachment of Donald John Trump, president of the United States, now pending, you will do impartial justice according to the Constitution and laws, so help you God?” The senators responded they would, and then they lined up to sign an oath book.

Trump faces two charges after the House voted to

impeach him last month. One, that he abused his presidential power by pressuring Ukraine to investigate Democratic rival Joe Biden, using military aid to the country as leverage. Trump is also charged with obstructing Congress' ensuing probe.

The President insists he did nothing wrong, and he dismissed the trial anew on Thursday at the White House, “It's totally partisan. It's a hoax.”

Eventual acquittal is expected in the Republican-controlled Senate. However, new revelations are mounting about Trump's actions toward Ukraine. The Government Accountability Office said Thursday that the White House violated federal law in withholding the security assistance to Ukraine, which shares a border with hostile Russia.

At the same time, an indicted associate of Trump's personal lawyer Rudy Giuliani, Lev Parnas, has turned over to prosecutors new documents linking the president to the shadow foreign policy being run by Giuliani.

The developments applied fresh pressure to senators to call more witnesses for the trial, a main source of contention that is still to be resolved. The White House has instructed officials not to comply with subpoenas from Congress requesting witnesses or other information. “What is the president hiding? What is he afraid of?” asked Senate Democratic leader Chuck Schumer.

“The gravity of these charges is self-evident,” he said. “The House of Representatives has accused

the president of trying to shake down a foreign leader for personal gain.” House Speaker Nancy Pelosi said the new information from Parnas demands an investigation, which she doesn't expect from Trump's attorney general.

“This is an example of all of the president's henchmen, and I hope that the senators do not become part of the president's henchmen.”

Before the swearing-in, House Democrats prosecuting the case stood before the Senate and Rep. Adam Schiff of the Intelligence Committee formally read the articles of impeachment.

Seven lawmakers, led by Schiff and Rep. Jerrold Nadler of the Judiciary Committee, made the solemn walk across the Capitol for a second day.

RUSSIA'S FM SLAMS 'AGGRESSIVE' US POLICIES

Moscow: Russia's foreign policy chief on Friday blamed what he described as “aggressive” US policies for growing global tensions, noting Washington's reluctance to extend a key nuclear arms pact. Sergey Lavrov, who serves as acting foreign minister in the wake of Wednesday's resignation of the Russian Cabinet, said this week's meeting of top U.S. and Russian diplomats on strategic stability didn't achieve any immediate results, adding that “dialogue is continuing.”

Russia-US relations have been at post-Cold War lows since Moscow's 2014 annexation of Ukraine's Crimea.

Ukraine PM offers to resign after leaked recording

Iran's top leader strikes defiant tone amid month of turmoil

AFP ■ KIEV

Ukraine's Prime Minister offered his resignation on Friday after audio was leaked of him questioning President Volodymyr Zelensky's grasp of economics, in the first major political test for the inexperienced leader.

It was unclear whether Zelensky would accept Oleksiy Goncharuk's offer, which came after a recording emerged of him reportedly saying the president had a “primitive understanding” of the economy.

Zelensky, a comedian with no previous political experience, came to power after a landslide election win last year and his “Servant of the People” party later won a strong majority in parliament.

He has been embroiled in the US impeachment process and faced tough talks with Russian President Vladimir

Putin, but had so far managed to avoid any significant domestic political problems.

The audio recording was leaked on social media on Wednesday and reportedly came from an informal December meeting between ministers and senior officials from the National Bank.

According to local media reports, the participants discussed how to explain recent economic developments to Zelensky. “Zelensky has a very primitive understanding of economic processes, or rather a simple understanding,” Goncharuk reportedly said on the recording, adding that he himself was an economic “ignoramus.”

After initially denying reports he would step down, Goncharuk announced on his official Facebook page on Friday that he had offered to resign.

AP ■ TEHRAN

Iran's supreme leader lashed out at Western countries as he led Friday prayers in Tehran for the first time in eight years, dismissing “American clowns” who he said pretend to support the Iranian nation but want to stick their “poisoned dagger” into its back.

Ayatollah Ali Khamenei used his rare appearance at the weekly prayers to deliver a fiery address in which he insisted Iran would not bow to US pressure after months of crushing sanctions and a series of recent crises — from the killing of a top Iranian general to the accidental shooting down of a Ukrainian passenger plane.

Khamenei said the mass funerals for General Qassem Soleimani, who was killed in a US airstrike earlier this month, show that the Iranian people support the Islamic Republic despite its recent trials.

He said the “cowardly” hit on Soleimani had taken out the



In this photo released by the official website of the office of the Iranian supreme leader, Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, centre, leads the Friday prayers at Imam Khomeini Grand Mosque in Tehran on Friday.

most effective commander in the battle against the Islamic State group.

In response to Soleimani's killing, Iran launched a barrage of ballistic missiles targeting US troops in Iraq, without causing serious injuries. Khamenei said the strike had dealt a “blow to America's image” as a superpower. In the part of his sermon delivered in Arabic, he said the “real punishment” would be in forcing the US to withdraw from the Middle

East.

After the missile strike, as Iran's Revolutionary Guard braced for an American counterattack that never came, it mistakenly shot down a Ukrainian jetliner shortly after takeoff from Tehran's international airport, killing all 176 passengers on board, mostly Iranians.

Authorities concealed their role in the tragedy for three days, initially blaming the crash on a technical problem. When

it came, their admission of responsibility triggered days of street protests, which security forces dispersed with live ammunition and tear gas.

Khamenei called the shooting down of the plane a “bitter accident” that had saddened Iran as much as it made its enemies happy.

'Bitter plane tragedy should not cloud Soleimani's sacrifice'

AFP ■ TEHRAN

Iran's supreme leader called the accidental downing of a Ukrainian airliner a “bitter” tragedy on Friday but said it should not overshadow the “sacrifice” of a top commander killed in a US drone strike.

“The plane crash was a bitter accident, it burned through our heart,” Khamenei said. “But some tried to... Portray it in a way to forget the great martyrdom and sacrifice” of Major General Qasem Soleimani, the head of the foreign operations arm of Iran's Revolutionary Guards.

“Our enemies were as happy about the plane crash as we were sad... Happy that they found something to question the Guards, the armed forces, the system.”

Rouhani: Iran wants dialogue, working to 'prevent war'

Teheran: Iranian President Hassan Rouhani said on Friday he wants to avoid war after Tehran and Washington appeared on the brink of direct military confrontation in early January for the second time in less than a year. Ahead of parliamentary elections on February 21 — predicted to be a challenge for Rouhani's camp — and amid high tensions between Tehran and the West over Iran's nuclear programme, the president said dialogue with the world was still “possible.”

“The Government is working daily to prevent military confrontation or war,” Rouhani said in a televised speech. The region seemed on the brink of new conflict earlier in January after the US killed top Iranian general Qasem Soleimani in a drone strike in Baghdad, prompting Iran to retaliate against US military targets in Iraq with a volley of missiles days later. **AFP**

US WARSHIP SAILS THROUGH TAIWAN STRAIT

Taipei: A US warship has sailed through the Taiwan Strait, mainland and Taipei officials said Friday, the first such passage since the island resoundingly rejected its independence-leaning president. The warship was on a “routine mission” on Thursday, Taiwan's defence ministry said, as it traversed the stretch of water that divides the self-ruling island from the authoritarian Chinese mainland.

'MORE THAN 9L PEOPLE SPEAK IN HINDI IN US'

Washington: More than nine lakh people speak Hindi in the US, a top Indian diplomat has said, as the Indian Embassy here conducts free Hindi classes for Americans and foreign nationals. Happy to note that Hindi is spoken and taught widely in the US, Amit Kumar, Charge d' Affairs, Indian Embassy here, said in his remarks during the ‘Vishwa Hindi Divas’ celebrations at the Indian Embassy. He also said Hindi is taught in many schools in the US.

CHINA BIRTH RATE HITS LOWEST LEVEL SINCE 1949

Beijing: China's birth rate dropped last year to its lowest level since the Communist country was founded in 1949, adding to concerns that an ageing society and shrinking workforce will pile pressure on a slowing economy.

Xi vows ties with Myanmar to new level as China eyes opening into Indian Ocean

PTI ■ NAY PYI TAW

President Xi Jinping on Friday vowed to take China's ties with Myanmar to a “new level” during his maiden visit, which aims at boosting the Communist giant's investments in mammoth infrastructure projects, including a USD 1.3-billion port deal that will provide Beijing a stepping stone to the Indian Ocean.

On his arrival in Myanmar, the first by a Chinese leader in 19 years, President Xi received a royal welcome with two fighter jets escorting his plane after it entered the country's airspace. As his plane touched down in Nay Pyi Taw, children presented him flowers before he was whisked off to a greeting party, China's state-run Xinhua news agency reported.

Huge portraits of the Chinese President and banners celebrating the China-Myanmar friendship and cooperation were put up along Xi's route from the airport to downtown.

According to Xinhua, Xi told Myanmar leaders that he was convinced that his visit will “take the bilateral ties to a new level and into a new era.”

China, which for decades has maintained close ties with Myanmar military even when the Myanmar State Counsellor, Suu Kyi, was incarcerated for years, has again become an important ally to fend off global isolation of Nay Pyi Taw in the wake of the Rohingya crisis.

Once-submerged island ready for Rohingya: B'desh

AP ■ DHAKA

Bangladeshi island regularly submerged by monsoon rains is ready to house 100,000 Rohingya refugees, but no date has been announced to relocate people from the crowded and squalid camps where they've lived for years, officials said Thursday.

Flood protection embankments, houses, hospitals and mosques have been built on Bhasan Char, or floating island, in the Bay of Bengal, officials said.

“Bhasan Char is ready for habitation. Everything has been put in place,” Bangladesh refugee, relief and repatriation commissioner Mahbub Alam Talukder told The Associated Press.

The island is built to accommodate 100,000 people, just a fraction of the million Rohingya Muslims who have fled waves of violent persecution in their native Myanmar.

About 700,000 people came after August 2017, when the military in Buddhist-majority Myanmar began a harsh crackdown against Rohingya in response to an attack by insurgents. Global rights groups and the UN called the campaign ethnic cleansing involving rapes, killings and torching of thousands of homes.

Foreign media have not been permitted to visit the island. Saleh Noman, a Bangladeshi freelance journalist who recently visited, described a community emerging there.

CORRIGENDUM NOTICE					
SR. No.	NAME OF BOARD CORP./AUTH	OLD REFERENCE/NOT NO.	NATURE OF CORRIGENDUM	WEBSITE OF THE BOARD CORP./AUTH	NODAL OFFICER/CONTACT DETAILS/EMAIL
1	CAD DIVISION, FATEHABAD.	1466/10-A DATED: 31/12/2019	Postpond on Technical Ground and further Opening of tender on dated 27.01.2020	www.etenders.hry.nic.in	xenfathehabad@gmail.com
2	HPGCL, PANCHKULA.	11/CE/PLG/WYC/SPP-271/VOL-II DATED 29.10.2019	The due date of Bid submission is extended up to 29.01.2020 till 13.00 hrs and opening of Part-I (Technical Bid) shall be on 31.01.2020 at 15.00 hrs. (Please check department website for further details).	www.hpgcl.org.in https://etenders.hry.nic.in	0172-5022439 rajesh.verma@hpgcl.org.in cep@hpgcl.org.in
3	HVPNL PANCHKULA	10/CCO-274 DATED 20.12.2019	The last date of online bid submission is extended up to 24.01.2020	https://haryanaeprocurement.gov.in https://www.hvnpn.org.in	0172-2583789 pr@hvnpn.org
4	HPGCL, PANCHKULA.	TENDER REFERENCE NO. 9/CE/PLG/NTPC/PTPS/FGD-249/CORRIGENDUM - 1 DATED 13.12.2019, CORRIGENDUM - 2 DATED 20.12.2019 & CORRIGENDUM - 3 DATED 30.12.2019 & CORRIGENDUM - 4 DATED 04.01.2020 TENDER ID : 2019_HBC_110592_1	Clarifications regarding bidding documents. (Please check department website for further details).	www.hpgcl.org.in https://etenders.hry.nic.in	0172-5022439 cep@hpgcl.org.in hirmanshu.gupta@hpgcl.org.in
5	HPGCL, PANCHKULA.	TENDER REFERENCE NO. 9/CE/PLG/NTPC/PTPS/FGD-249/CORRIGENDUM - 1 DATED 13.12.2019, CORRIGENDUM - 2 DATED 20.12.2019 & CORRIGENDUM - 3 DATED 30.12.2019	Clarifications regarding bidding documents. (Please check department website for further details).	www.hpgcl.org.in https://etenders.hry.nic.in	0172-5022439 cep@hpgcl.org.in hirmanshu.gupta@hpgcl.org.in
6	CAD DIVISION, HISAR	NO. 13-45/10-A DATED 01/01/2020	Postpond on Technical Ground and further Opening of tender on dated 29/01/2020	www.etenders.hry.nic.in	xenhisarcad@gmail.com

BEFORE DEBT'S RECOVERY TRIBUNAL-II, DELHI
4th FLOOR JEEVAN TARA BUILDING PARLIAMENT STREET NEW DELHI - 110001

OA No. 587/18 Date: 06.01.2020

UCO BANK Versus APPLICANT
MS. AARTI MALHOTRA & ORS. Versus RESPONDENT

3. MISNIVAS PROMOTERS PVT. LTD.
Plot No. 9F & 9G, KH No. 171, 2nd Floor 2A, Street No. 3, Wazirabad Extension, Wazirabad, Delhi-84

Whereas the above named applicant(s) has/have instituted a case for recovery of Rs.19,39,246/- (Rupees Nineteen Lakh Thirty Nine Thousand Two Hundred and Forty Six Only) against you and where as it has been shown to the satisfaction of the Tribunal that it is not possible to serve you in ordinary way therefore, this notice is given by advertisement directing you to make appearance in this Tribunal on 20.02.2020 at 10.30 A.M.

Take notice that in default of your appearance on the day before the mentioned, the case will be heard and determined in your absence.

By Order of this Tribunal,
SECTION OFFICER, DRT-II, DELHI

Government of Maharashtra
Office of the Executive Engineer
Construction Division (Special Project) Nagpur

E-Mail:- constdivnagpur.ee@mahapwd.com Telephone No 0712-2562976

E-Tender Notice No. 56 Year 2019-20

Subject:- Hybrid Annuity Mode, Upgradation of Roads Under Public Works Circle, Nagpur

The Government of Maharashtra had entrusted to the Authority the development, maintenance and management of State Highways and Major District Roads of State of Maharashtra. The authority had resolved to augment the existing roads in the State of Maharashtra by improvement thereof (The "Project") on "Hybrid Annuity" basis and has decided to carry out the bidding process for selection of (a Private Entity) as the Bidder to whom the project may be awarded.

Brief particulars of the projects are as follows:-

Sr. No	Hybrid Annuity Mode Package No.	Name of work	Length (in Km.)	Estimated Cost (in Rs.Crore)
1	Package No.161,162	A) Construction of Kamptee-Ghorpad-Dhargaoon-Kapsi- Tarodi-Khedi-Adka-Shioni Chikhali-Zarap-Vambha-SH 341 Road (Under Annuity Length 39.00 KM.) Distt. Nagpur. B) Construction of S.H.341 Ajni-Lihgaon-Kadoli-Sawali-Umri-Wadoda-Asalwada-Kesori-Bhamewada-Chafegadi Road (Under Annuity Length 38.00 KM.) in Tah. Kamptee Distt. Nagpur.	77.00	Rs. 117.65 Crore

Tender Download: As per e-tender schedule uploaded on e-portal <http://mahatenders.gov.in>
Tender pre-Bid Meeting : As per e-tender schedule uploaded on e-portal <http://mahatenders.gov.in>
E-Tender Opening:- Online Time Table will be applicable and it will be Final.

- All information of e-tendering is available on the following websites / Notes Board
a) <http://www.mahapwd.com> (Informatory Notice) b) <https://mahatenders.gov.in>
- The complete bid document can be viewed/downloaded from a e-procurement portal as per online schedule and Bid must be submitted online only.
- The e-procurement portal is given <https://mahatenders.gov.in>
- E-Tender Schedule is per online tender schedule.
- Online Schedule will be applicable and Final
- Note:- a) Bid submitted through any other mode shall not be entertained. However, Bid Security, Proof of online payment of Cost of Bid Document, Power of Attorney and joint bidding agreement etc. as specified in Clause 2.11.2 of the RFP shall be submitted physically by the bidder as per online schedule please note that the Public Works Department reserves the right to accept or reject all or any of the Bids without assigning any reason whatsoever.
- Other terms and conditions are detailed in online e-tender form. Right to reject any or all online bid of work, without assigning any reasons thereof, is reserved with department.

Outward No 130 /Tender/Dt. 10/01/2020

Office of the Executive Engineer,
Construction Division (S.P.)
Civil Lines Nagpur 440001

Sd/-
(Satish Ambhore)
Executive Engineer,
Construction Division (S.P.)
Nagpur

DGRPR/2019/2020/4529

CHITTARANJAN LOCOMOTIVE WORKS

E-TENDER NOTICE

E-tenders are invited for and on behalf of the President of India for the following work: **Sl.No.;** Tender No.; Name of the work; Tender value (₹); Cost of tender document (₹); Earnest money (₹); Period of completion (in months): [01]; Engg/41/2019-20; Providing colour coated sheet in Indoor Stadium; 27,27,510.30; 3,000.00; 54,600.00; 06 months [02]; Engg/42/2019-20; Making iron fencing wall in front of Environment Park at Chittaranjan.; 14,48,509.65; 2,000.00; 29,000.00; 06 months [03]; Engg/43/2019-20; Diversion of water pipeline (loading line) from 'Y' bridge to Fatehpur OH tank.; 95,36,070.80; 5,000.00; 1,90,700.00; 12 months [04]; Engg/44/2019-20; Renovation of Staff Quarters (D/S) at Jhilpahari (2nd phase).; 38,57,331.45; 3,000.00; 77,200.00; 09 months [05]; Engg/45/2019-20; Construction of pucca drain along the boundary wall side of railway track to avoid water logging on track inside workshop.; 15,34,161.10; 2,000.00; 30,700.00; 04 months [06]; Engg/46/2019-20; Construction of Motor Cycle stand (50m x 7m) each near TO Gate, TM Gate & RK Gate.; 12,50,031.33; 2,000.00; 25,000.00; 06 months [07]; Engg/47/2019-20; Replacement of damaged slab over trench/ drain inside workshop.; 16,51,187.38; 2,000.00; 33,000.00; 06 months [08]; Engg/48/2019-20; Providing, fixing boulder pitching at upstream side of Fatehpur dam and providing proper spillway at Chittaranjan.; 19,85,320.83; 2,000.00; 39,700.00; 09 months [09]; Engg/49/2019-20; Providing additional 100 nos. Fire hydrant in fabricating and bogie shop formerly DLCF including office etc. at DKAE.; 30,86,845.39; 3,000.00; 61,700.00; 06 months. **NOTE:** (i) Date of closing-20.02.2020 at 13.00 hrs. (ii) Complete details can be seen in the Railways website: www.ireps.gov.in & www.civilianrailways.gov.in (iii) Contact Number: 9136640202. Divisional Engineer CLW/Chittaranjan RDS-289

Like us on: www.facebook.com/clwrailways

WESTERN RAILWAY
CONSTRUCTION RELATED WORKS AT VADDORA DIVISION

Dy. Chief Engineer (Construction), Western Railway, Pratapnagar, Vaddora-390 004, invites E-tender as per the details given below: **E-Tender No.:** Dy.CEO/IBRC/CTD-Dhar/111. **Name of the work:** Construction of Station building, Service building, Platforms, overhead tank, water tank staging, RCC overflow tank, sump, approach road, fencing, cover sheets, water supply arrangements, pump house, toilet blocks, water huts etc. with other ancillary works on new line project of CTD-Dhar section in connection with Construction of New BG line between Chhotaudepur-Dhar. **Approx cost:** ₹3629.70 lakhs. **EMD:** ₹1964900/- **Availability of online Tender for bidding:** From 21.01.2020 at 11.00 Hrs. To 04.02.2020 up to 15.00 Hrs. **Note-1:** Regarding detailed notice containing cost of tender document (non refundable), EMD, eligibility criteria, Similar Nature of work, detailed tender conditions, please visit www.ireps.gov.in 2) Opening of price Bid will be advised later on, after Technical suitability of the Bidders. **Manual offers will not be considered.**

Like us on: www.facebook.com/WesternRly

SR NO.	NAME OF DEPARTMENT/ BOARD/ CORP/ AUTH	NAME OF WORK/ NOTICE / TENDER	OPENING DATE CLOSING DATE (TIME)	AMOUNT / EMD (APPROX.) in Rupees	WEBSITE OF THE DEPARTMENT	NODAL OFFICER/ CONTACT DETAILS/ EMAIL	TENDER REF. NO./ TENDER NO.
1	Chief Technology Officer	Appointment of an agency to Design, Develop and maintain an application for meter reading, bill distribution and spot billing of Consumers for Haryana Discoms.	Closing date 03.02.2020 (upto 13:00 Hrs) Opening date 04.02.2020 (at 15:00 Hrs)	2,00,000/-	etenders.hry.nic.in	9317554907 seprojects@uhvsn.org.in	29/MPBD/ Projects/2020

RO NO. 79941N Dt. 17-01-2020



MALLIKA SHERAWAT
The stay on hanging of Nirbhaya convicts is demoralising. No one can imagine what her parents must be going through. Earlier, for saying this, media said I'm tarnishing our country's image. But I love my country, which is why I draw attention to this issue. Nothing can be more important than women.



JUHI CHAWLA
I recall he (son) had mentioned to me that 500 million animals have been killed in the Australian bushfires and asked me 'What are you doing about it?' I said I'm helping plant trees in our country in the Cauvery Calling project. That was it. A day later he said 'I've sent 300 pounds from my pocket money. I hope it goes to right place.'



RASIKA DUGAL
I am the happiest when I am working and there is no better way to celebrate my birthday than doing what I love the most. *Delhi Crime* is a project which has been special in many ways. It makes me very happy to start the second season right after my birthday.



IMTIAZ ALI
I don't know what the relevance of love is, but I feel everything in the universe somehow moves because of it. If a man and a woman are in love, it is through it that the universe is moving around. I want to explore these things more. It's not easy to explain the knowledge of love that you had when you are young.

EMMA WATSON
Our closets impact the planet more than you can imagine, which is why I am proud to partner with ThredUP to launch new Fashion Footprint Calculator. They've created an easy-to-use tool. I'm so excited to help people discover the carbon impact of wardrobes and how many pounds of CO2 it produces.



SHORT CIRCUITS

ENCOUNTER 30 MINUTES

RHYTHM IS A DANCER

Indian contemporary choreographer ASTAD DEBOO talks about how his travels across the world have shaped his unique artform. By TEAM VIVA

◆ You were born in the same year as India. How have you seen it change?

Yes, 1947. But by the time I came back to India to introduce a new dance form, there was a lot of resentment in government cultural institutions, Ministry of Culture and even from classical gurus. As if what I did was perfidy. Not that people themselves weren't receptive to my experimental workshops, they were afraid that their gurus would get upset. I won't take any names but there were a lot of cases. It was my determination and perseverance that kept me going and I am grateful to the media as they spoke about my work.

Still the peer criticism was all around. A very established dancer once said that if somebody works once in a year, it is obvious that everyone will talk about it considering the big names did 30 to 40 shows in a year. Yet I derived much of my thematic strength from the many interpretations of Krishna or Shiva. In the beginning, few people in the audience and the ones who came were writers or musicians. Slowly, word got around. The best form of publicity is word-of-mouth. Everybody went happy and I stuck to my guns. In those early days, I spent six months here and six overseas. Though I have studied kathak and kathakali, there is not one complete *tukda* in the Indian classical style in my work. But I am using the technique.

Earlier I was a solo dancer and very energetic. But doing a slow movement and being in sync is more difficult than doing something fast. When I collaborate with somebody, something sparks during the process that I have never tried before. Because you need someone to trigger that. I worked with Bahauddin Dagar recently. We were talking. And he is a great artist. He said, "It is not just your show but our show. You are not accompanying me. We are working together to create something good."

◆ Talking about Jose Limon technique and the way it seems to defy gravity, how difficult is it to perfect, especially when you are using it in conjunction with Martha Graham?

I took these classes when I was already 24. When you are young, your body is supple. I imbibed only those things which my body could accept. So I cannot claim perfection in them. All that experience of how these school's practitioners worked with their bodies and their breath control influenced me deeply. This was a whole new teaching process. I studied a lot of dance forms and ended up using a lot of Balinese movements in my work. Then there is the Japanese *butoh*. All this experience has enriched me as an individual. When I start creating, I figure out which of my inspirations work or not.

◆ Mukhabhinay is an important part of your dance technique...

Mukhabhinay is something that is ingrained in me as I learnt it for 16 years. It comes naturally. *Abhinay* is used a lot but not all the time.

◆ You hitchhiked to the US. What made you do that? How have your travels contributed to your art?

I left the country in 1969 on a cargo ship with goats, sheep and other workers who would get off at Dubai or Bahrain. Eventually the voyage ended at Khorramshah in Iran. Till then I had had studied Indian classical dance, beginning with kathak. And then my father put the brakes. After all, he had at least let a Parsi person take dancing lessons in the first place. I then took up economics at Bombay University. Destiny called again as it was at this point of time that I watched an American dance company perform in the city. A new dimension of dancers as a collective using a defined space opened up before me. Nothing like that existed in India and my father didn't have the means to invest in my passion. The spirit of adventure was there and I just set off.

I hadn't considered hitch-hiking as rare because it was a part of the youth culture then. Nobody thought anything about travelling with strangers. But then there were robberies and murders, too. My magic trail took me from Iran, through Turkey, Greece, Italy, Austria, Belgium, Germany... till I took the ferry across to Dover. And then hitchhiked to London.

There was so much of living colour and monuments that I could have written a journal like the famous travellers have documented in history. A friend's daughter said she was so much in awe of my experience. But now many young people are doing it. But in a much different form. It is more hiking rather than hitchhiking.

I also wanted to study the piano but my father refused, saying if at all I wanted to master music, I could only play Indian classical instruments. Those days, it was hard and frus-



trating to be accepted as a liberal artiste but I had the support and blessings of my parents. I could come back to a happy home and that was a big blessing. Even today, many boys find it hard to rationalise their choice as performers. My father, on the other hand, said, "I am sorry we do not have enough connections to help you out." Had it been an unhappy home, I would not have been able to handle the rejections which I faced constantly.

My original plan was to go to the US but my papers were not in order. I travelled the world and explored different cultures for seven and a half years instead. I travelled to Canada and hitchhiked from Montreal to Vancouver. Then went east, crossed the ocean, went to Japan and stayed there for a year. I just hitchhiked, studied, absorbed and learnt. I went to Australia and New Zealand on a cheap budget. I looked at each day as a gift of meeting people. I stayed in a youth hostel picking up tips to survive.

◆ Is that why you connect to young people from varied backgrounds? You've also worked with hearing-impaired children and those from the Salaam Baalak Trust...

I worked with children of Salaam Baalak Trust and the drummers of Manipur. They wait for me to take them out, they are survivors and they have the instinct to explore.

I have worked with the deaf after I came across a friend who was working with a deaf theatre company in Kolkata. I was frustrated that I couldn't get enough dancers to do a workshop and then I thought why not try something new? I was not trained to work with them but learnt on the job. After a three-week workshop, it was possible to create an entire experience with them able to express themselves. I learnt so much from them like lip-reading and sign language. I use myself as a catalyst and then mentor and nurture them. They get confidence and become role models. All these kids were excited because they got a sense of achievement as they saw their photos. There was a sense of pride. I am not doing it for my glorification, am doing it so that I can demonstrate what can be done with hard work and perseverance.

◆ What keeps you young? While dancers half your age follow the set patterns, you keep extending your boundaries. Add to it Kathak and Kathakali.

I keep pushing myself physically and also picking up projects through which I can create awareness. I have been working for 14 years in Manipur. And Kathakali was always a group performance. Earlier, it was the martial arts and now it is the drummers. They just did their own demonstration. It wasn't really a full performance but it was all very fragmented. However, I brought them into my work while keeping their tradition intact. I still feel tradition is very important and it gives you grounding.

When something has a strong foundation, only then it can grow. One should be open to absorbing and looking at things with an open eye. In my new routine, two new boys who haven't worked with me before have been trained in *chhau*. It was a whole new process and experience for them since they had to sustain that position. But they have been open to it, because then you feel like you are wasting your time and also that of the person who wants you to be a part of the project.

◆ Your choice of venues have been eclectic to say the least, for instance, The Great Wall of China, amid artefacts in a museum and more...

People are used to watching a performance in a theatre. But when I select a space, it has to speak to me, for example, at Triveni I will have people sitting around me in an open air amphitheatre and I will perform within them. Some performances work better in an enclosed environment.

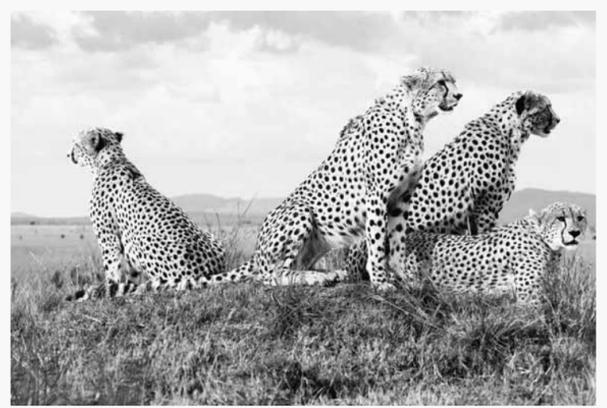
◆ What is your credo?

My movements must hypnotise you. I must be able to push my body and not do just what people do. I am doing a lot of work with my back. A lot of movement that involves just holding back and not falling. That becomes a new form of movement.

Photo: Pankaj Kumar

'I hadn't considered hitch-hiking as rare because it was a part of the youth culture initially. Nobody thought anything about travelling with strangers. And then there were robberies and murders, too. But my magic trail took me from Iran, through Turkey, Greece, Italy, Austria, Belgium, Germany and finally to Dover'

STUDIO CHAT 15 MINUTES



It's a wild wild world
Wildlife photographer VIKRAM POTDAR says that the places with civilisations look more or less similar but nature is always different in different parts of the world. By TEAM VIVA

□ Share with us your insights on witnessing the wildlife across seven continents.

My insight in witnessing the world across seven continents is that if you visit any European city, you will find that the interiors of the city is similar to Helsinki or Berlin or Frankfurt, even Vienna, the inner city has cobblestone streets, Roman Gothic architecture and town halls. And if you go to the newly developed cities, you see glass facade, aluminum composite panel and contemporary styled buildings. But if you visit the flora and fauna, the forest and the countryside, those are unique. So I have found that the places with civilisations look more or less similar. But nature is always different in different parts of the world.

□ What has been your biggest takeaway from your journey around the world?

I have witnessed and observed habitat loss and melting of ice in polar regions. So the best way to preserve this natural wealth is to leave it alone. If we leave the nature as it is, it will certainly take its own course. That is the best way to preserve the wildlife.

□ How relevant do you find Sony BBC Earth's show *Seven Worlds, One Planet*?

I have earlier highlighted the similarity in urban areas and uniqueness in forests and jungles. So the variety of nature is a binding thread in all the seven worlds, or rather, I would say, wildlife binds all the continents together. This show on Sony BBC Earth aptly named as *Seven Worlds, One Planet* does justice to the natural wealth, surroundings, flora and fauna around us.

□ How has climate change affected the natural world around each of the continent?

The climate change has affected natural world quite a lot over the last 40 years, almost 30 to 40 per cent of bird and mammal population is wiped out. It is further going down due to the constant pressure on the habitats and natural resources. So the climate change effects are at an alarming rate.

□ What drove you to the world of wildlife? Tell us about your very first experience as a wildlife photographer?

Since childhood, I was very much fond of nature. But I seldom took out time to pursue my hobby as I was busy with nature of living, jobs, marriage and settlement. So I never really cared about my passion and what I really wanted to do. I was engrossed in daily chores of life. It was in 2006 when I visited Nagarhole National Park in South India, where I witnessed wild animals



— deers, elephants, Indian gaurs for the first time. That's when I realised that this is my destiny. This is what I wanted to do. And thereby wildlife photography started actually.

□ Have you watched any shows on Sony BBC Earth? If given an opportunity, would you be interested in being a part of any locally produced show?

I don't watch television much, but yes if opportunity is given, I would like to be a part of the show.

□ Can you share any memorable stories from any of the continents? Some anecdotes or incident you remember.

I went to Churchill in Northern Canada, Manitoba province to photograph polar bear mother and cub in the Dane. The temperature was minus 40 degree celsius. As I come from the tropical climate area, it was really difficult for me to stay in such a cold weather. But somehow, I managed by wearing six layers of heavy clothing and two layers of hand gloves. Even photography was quite a challenge there.

□ What do you think makes for a perfect wildlife shot?

Well, the taste of each photographer varies, but according to me, the best wildlife shot is the one which depicts the habitat. Over the years my signature style of photography has transformed into habitat sort, it means that the animal will be small in the frame. Suppose I'm shooting a tiger in the forest of Tadoba, then maybe 90 per cent of the frame will be the forest and 10 per cent will be tiger. So it will show the habitat of the Tiger. I don't like shooting tight frames, and portraits of animals which shows nothing but the animal. I like to show the habitat, the animal and the trees of the surrounding. So the best ever wildlife photography image is one depicts habitat and has some story in it.

(*Seven Worlds, One Planet* premieres on January 20, 9 pm on Sony BBC Earth.)

CONVERSATION 45 MINUTES

LIGHTS, CAMERA, TRAVEL

ZAREEN KHAN's TV debut show, *Jeep Bollywood Trails*, is your chance at reliving Bollywood blockbusters through the locales they were shot at. By CHAHAK MITTAL



Did you feel like going on a trekking trip to Manali after watching *Yeh Jawaani Hai Diwani*? Or going on a family vacation to Kolkata after watching *Piku*? Or perhaps taking a trip to Leh Ladakh and visit the famous Pangong Lake after watching *3 Idiots*? Bollywood films have also been about their exotic shooting locations as much as they have been about their actors and dreamy plots. Remember the Swarovski Kristallwelten in Wattens, Austria, in *Chal Mere Bhai* where Salman Khan and Karishma Kapoor take a short detour? Also, Indian tourists flocking to Switzerland after watching the 1995 blockbuster *DDLJ (Dilwale Dulhania Le Jayenge)* is yet another example of how people have associated their aspirations with film locales. However, ever heard of the background stories of what went into the making of the film at such spots?

Actor Zareen Khan, who is set to make her small screen debut, will bring all such locations under one roof and meet the Bollywood directors of the films that have been shot there in AXN's *Jeep Bollywood Trails*. Hosting the show, she will travel across the length and breadth of India in a Jeep revisiting the exact locations where films like *3 Idiots*, *Jab We Met*, *Dhadak* and more were shot.

"I am so excited for the show to go on air since it's my TV debut and I have been a passionate traveller. I am going to relive the iconic locations featured in blockbuster films. It would be a delight for the audience to see

'WE ARE SHOWCASING HOW BOLLYWOOD DIRECTORS HAVE TAKEN INSPIRATION FROM THE RICH HISTORY, CULTURE, PEOPLE AND NATURAL LANDSCAPES TO MAKE INDIAN DESTINATIONS WORTH A VISIT. THE FILMS HAVE IN A WAY GIVEN A SPECIAL IDENTITY TO THESE PLACES AS WELL'

how film directors think of a certain location and make them part of their stories. It's exciting for me to weave together these stories for the audience. What more could I have asked for?" she says and laughs.

Discussing more about the show has to offer, she tells us that the series begins with her driving to Ladakh to revisit the Chail Palace, the Druk School and Pangong Lake, where *3 Idiots* was extensively shot. It features a discussion between her and director Rajkumar Hirani who talks about his early life and his love for mountains which inspired him to pick Ladakh as one of the locations for the film.

She adds, "From eating their favourite to going to their favourite spots in that city, the directors explore a lot more than just the film background in the show. And we are doing it all on wheels, while driving. I drive all over the country and when you are doing that, you get an even better experience of the location you're in."

The other locations and directors covered in the series are Manali for *Jab We Met* featuring Imtiaz Ali, Shimla for *Bang Bang* featuring Siddharth Anand, Varanasi for *Raanjhanaa* featuring Anand L Rai and Udaipur for *Dhadak* featuring Shashank Khaitan.

In a way, the show also aims at reviving the essence of a particular film through the location it was shot at. However, since old time classics have been a huge mirror to tourists making their way to such locations, shouldn't they have been included too? These are all recent contemporary films. Zareen agrees. She says, "Of course, but this is what the makers of the show decided as of now. But I am also sure that once it clicks with the audience, they are going to look into the past. Maybe when we get into the second season of the show, then they might choose some classics. Currently, we are aiming at

showcasing how these Bollywood directors have taken inspiration from the rich history, culture, people and natural landscapes to make all these destinations worth a visit. These films have in a way given a special identity to these places as well."

Travelling with a crew comes with its own challenges. On one hand, where Ladakh is about adventure and thrill, Udaipur, on the other, is more about history, heritage and culture. So how challenging it was to get accustomed to different places, varying in temperatures as well as ethnicity? Zareen says, "I think challenges double up for people when they are not frequent travellers. And if somebody who hasn't explored much was made a part of this show, s/he would have faced a lot of difficulty. But I have been an avid traveller and I am very well aware how different places have different joys to offer. And I just cherish that rather than looking it as a challenge."

However, there was one time when it all seemed too difficult for Zareen.

She shares an anecdote, "When you are travelling to different places, there are so many things happening on the go. I remember that in Ladakh, it was a very challenging drive. We hadn't realised that while driving

up the hill pass, we'll have to be really prepared for it. None of us were, neither with clothes nor with the vehicles.

Of course, Jeep was head on but other cars weren't.

The more they went up, the more they started slipping back since the roads were on a slope and there was snow. Even though you have known that it's a difficult terrain, driving and experiencing it yourself makes you believe it. It was very difficult. We were freezing and almost exhausted while driving up the slopes for three hours. But then, finally, the moment we reached the Pangong Lake, we forgot all about it. It was worth all the hassle! And I think that's the beauty of travelling."

(The show will air every Saturday at 8 pm from January 25 on AXN.)



CELEB TALK 30 MINUTES

The strangers' secrets

Actor CHRIS HEMSWORTH says that through his role in *Bad Times at the El Royale*, he wanted to highlight toxic masculinity in the world. Hence, there was something sexist about the character addicted to power and control. By TEAM VIVA

Set in the year 1969, *Bad Times at the El Royale*, revolves around the seven strangers and their seven secrets in search of their own identity or either running away from something. Each living in their own universe ends up to El Royale hotel near the California-Nevada border that carries a dark past. A series of events unfold at the hotel, the strangers become acquaintances by sharing their shady secrets. What happens next is robbery, surveillance, death, revenge, defiance, and survival.

Chris Hemsworth views on his experience of working in this neo-noir thriller:

◆ How did you land up with this role?

I have known Drew Goddard from *The Cabin in the Woods*. We worked together years ago. One day when I contacted him, this film was in process. As I got to know about it, I immediately rang him and said, 'why you haven't offered this film to me?' I then read the script and right away said yes, lets go and never looked back. This was an opportunity for me to work with him again.

◆ How was your experience working in the *Bad Times at the El Royale*?

Before signing up for this film, I had a detailed look at the script. The idea of a neo-noir thriller film with such a storyline made me readily agree for a role. The whole shooting sequence went like bliss and was enjoyable due to the immense hard work put in by the entire team. The script is one of the best things I have ever read, the cast was incredible. I heard great things about the script and saw amazing work by the



cast. Everybody was in an integral place in this puzzle. Even if one person did not drop the ball or did not show up, it seemed as if there was something missing on the sets. I am very happy that everyone just put in so much for their roles. It is one of the most collaborated and enjoyable film set I have ever been on.

◆ Tell us about your character and its challenges.

I felt everything very different from what I have done before. Surprisingly, the role was easy may be due to such an amazing script. It signalled that you can't go anywhere else but on this terrain you got to roll the dice and take that kind of risk. Yes, it was very satisfying. Billy Lee, my character is a coke leader who is manipulative, and charismatic, which is kind of essential for the script. There had to be a sense of humour but also true set of manip-

ulation and sociopath kind of guy. He might look like he is giving answers and trying to help but it is actually just an opportunity for him to feel responsible. I just wanted to highlight this kind of toxic masculinity in the world. Hence, there was something sexist about the guy addicted to power and control.

◆ What time is the film set in?

The film is set in a hotel, where seven strangers have seven secrets, all searching for something, maybe an answer or object, trying to find who they are and what is their place in the world. But at the same time, they all collide which pretty much ends as a chaotic situation at the El Royale. The film is a beautiful shot with amazing soundtrack.

(The film is set to be previewed on Sunday, January 19 on Star Movies.)

American singer Gloria Gaynor sees the hand of god in every aspect of her life, particularly when it comes to the tune that may be the most famous disco song every created.

She recalls when she first was presented with *I Will Survive*, it was intended to be the B-side of another song, meaning it wasn't the one that was promoted to be a hit. She clearly remembers calling it a stupid decision, and lobbied for *I Will Survive* to get top billing, which won over the songwriters of the now classic song. "I've always believed that god told them, 'Look, sit down, write a song, hold onto it, I'm going to send you somebody,'" she said. "Another divine appointment... it was meant to be the core of my purpose," she added.

Gaynor won her first and only Grammy for *I Will Survive* in 1980. Now, 40 years later, she has a chance to add two more trophies to her collection, thanks to her first gospel album *Testimony*, which is nominated for best roots gospel album, and *Talking About Jesus*, which is up for best gospel performance. She's giddy to get back in the Grammy mix.

"I'm waiting to see the fashions, of course, everybody all dressed and looking wonderful and feeling good and happy and all of that," she said of the January 26 ceremony, "and hoping, of course, that I win at least one Grammy. It will be awesome if I could win them both."

Gaynor shared recently about her nominations, persevering in the music industry despite health challenges and her divine connection to her most famous song.

◆ What made you want to do a gospel album?

I just wanted to share the love and the knowledge of Christ through my music. I felt that that was what I was called to do.

◆ This album comprises of new material, some which you co-wrote; even the song *Amazing Grace* is a new tune. What made you decide to go that route?

Well, I feel I've always been a bit innovative. I mean, if somebody writes a song that I want to sing and

'Well with my soul'

Singer GLORIA GAYNOR says that she always leaves the stage hoping that the audience has had as good a time as she did



◆ This song has endured for so long, but have you ever been frustrated that this was your biggest song?

At first I thought that this is a double-edged sword. People think I'm not able to sing anything else except *I Will Survive*. They don't want to hear anything else... I'm not sick of the song, but I wish they would recognise that I could do something else, that I've recorded so many other great songs. And then when I came to the understanding that it was the core of my purpose, I kind of settled in and was okay with it. As the song says, *It is well with my soul*.

◆ You've faced a lot physically, with several back surgeries. How are you doing today?

I've had five back surgeries and each one has stopped me for a minute... The last one threatened to stop me for good... With a lot of prayer and faith, we found a doctor in California who did this wonderful surgery, two surgeries on me, two totaling 18 hours and put 12 rods in my back. And now I'm pain free... I'm still performing. I do better on stage and in everyday life. That is why I give credit to god and the audience because the love that comes from them really sustains me during that period of time when I'm on stage. And it's just a wonderful time for me. I always leave the stage hoping that the audience has had as good a time as I did.

◆ Could you see yourself making more dance music?

Well, the only dance music I'm planning is music on which you can dance like David danced, dance unto the Lord.

they've put something in it with bad grammar, I can't sing it. I just have to fix it. I just do it. And I wasn't trying to fix *Amazing Grace* except that I was trying to make it fit into my life. And the more it is about my story than the original, the better it is. That's why we went that way with it.

◆ What has it been like to not only have the Grammy nominations but also have this type of success?

Well, I did an album some time ago and felt that I kind of ran out ahead of god. And, when you do that, you find yourself out there by yourself. So it didn't do well at all. And then when this album happened, it was successful and was quickly received by people. They were writing to me that they not only

enjoyed the music, but that the songs were ministering to them... this was my purpose to do through the music. So I felt like I was right this time. This is God's timing and I'm on point.

◆ What has *I Will Survive* meant to you over the years?

At first it was something that I was singing for other people. And then as time went on, different things happened to me and it became my mantra as well. And through the death of my mother, my siblings, through my divorce, I mean, when I did my divorce, I did a marathon version... So the song has really meant a lot to me as well as to other people. I fully understand because I've experienced what the song can do for you.

India launch Olympic bid with pro opener

Manpreet led side host the Netherlands in FIH pro league game today

PTI ■ BHUBANESWAR

The Olympics-bound Indian men's hockey team will kick-start its preparations for the quadrennial showpiece when it debuts in the FIH Pro League against world No.3 the Netherlands here on Saturday.

After having missed the first edition of the event, India will take on the 2019 Pro League and European Bronze medal winners, the Netherlands, in two matches in their opening tie at the Kalinga Stadium here. The second match will be played on Sunday.

With all the top teams of the world in fray, the home-and-away Pro League will be ideal preparation for world No 5 India ahead of the Summer Games later this year.

After the Dutch side, India will host world champions Belgium on February 8 and 9 followed by two more home fixtures against Australia on February 22 and 23.

The Indian team will then leave for the away games in Germany (April 25 and 26) and Great Britain (May 2 and 3).

India will return to play on home soil on May 23 and 24 against New Zealand before travelling to Argentina to play on June 5 and 6.

The Manpreet Singh-led side will play the last leg of the Pro League round-robin matches in Spain on June 13 and 14.

India's head coach Graham Reid will be aware of the challenges that await his team in the Pro League opener.

Having served as a former assistant coach to the Dutch, Reid knows exactly what to expect from Netherlands in the double header.

The matches will also provide India a chance to avenge their heart-breaking 1-2 loss in the quarterfinal of the 2018 World Cup.

A look at the previous 10 meetings between the two teams reveals



Manpreet Singh in a file picture

Manpreet Singh/Twitter

that there is little to choose between them.

The Netherlands have won five of those meetings, with India victorious on four occasions and one match ending in a draw.

Reid too insisted that they are looking at the Pro League outings as a platform for Olympic preparation.

"It will be important to start strong and sharp in the Pro League with our first three encounters against the top three teams in the world," Reid has said.

"We will be focussing on getting our structures right and honing our set plays as preparation for our Olympic campaign."

The Indians would also benefit from their familiarity with the Kalinga Stadium turf, having trained and played numerous matches here.

It is the same venue where the eight-time Olympic champions qualified for the 2020 Games after thrashing Russia 11-3 on aggregate in the two-leg FIH Qualifiers in November last year.

"The matches against India are a very important opener. Playing against India at their home ground is challenging no doubt but it is also very exciting because we love playing in Bhubaneswar," Netherlands coach Max Caldas said.

Caldas too is looking at the Pro League as preparation for Olympics.

The players and combinations we wanted to test were experimented during the previous edition of Pro League. This edition we will have our most competitive team as this will be the stepping-stone for us to be the best at Tokyo," he said.

India will field a full-strength team which will witness the return of midfielders Chinglensana Singh and Sumit, who were out with injuries.

Chinglensana was on the sidelines with an ankle fracture since the National Championship last year, while Sumit suffered a wrist injury in June during the FIH Men's Series Final.



Sania Mirza in action during Hobart International Hobart International/Twitter

Sania storms into Hobart final

PTI ■ HOBART

Indian tennis ace Sania Mirza cruised into the women's doubles final of the Hobart International with her Ukrainian partner Nadiia Kichenok here on Friday.

Sania and Kichenok sailed past the Slovenian-Czech pair of Tamara Zidansek and Marie Bouzkova 7-6 (3) 6-2 in the semifinal contest that lasted one hour and 24 minutes.

The fifth-seeded Indo-Ukrainian combination will lock horns with second seeds Shuai Peng and Shuai Zhang of China. The Chinese pair got a walkover after Belgium's Kirsten Flipkens and Alison Van Uytvanck conceded the other semifinal match because of injury.

While Sania and Kichenok had to fight hard in the opening set, the second set was a cakewalk for the combination.

The first set was a tough contest between the two pairs, bringing the tie-breaker into the equation after it was level at 6-6.

In the tie-breaker, Sania and Kichenok upped their game by a few notches to out-

smart their opponents and take the lead.

The second set was a no contest as Sania and Kichenok broke their opponents thrice - in the second, sixth and eighth game - to easily pocket the set and a place in the summit clash.

Sania and Kichenok got 11 break chances out of which they converted four, while their opponents utilised two out of the five break chances that came their way.

The 33-year-old Sania is returning to WTA circuit after two years. During her time away from the game, she battled injury breakdowns before taking a formal break in April 2018 to give birth to her son Izaan. She is married to Pakistani cricketer Shoaib Malik.

Before the ongoing event, Sania last played at China Open in October 2017.

A trailblazer in Indian tennis, Sania is a former world No.1 in doubles and has six Grand Slam titles to her credit.

She retired from the singles competition in 2013 after becoming the most successful Indian woman tennis player.

Title most imp goal for Salah



Moh Salah celebrates with Sadio Mane after scoring

Liverpool/Twitter

AFP ■ LIVERPOOL

Mohamed Salah says Liverpool's focus is solely on ending a 30-year wait to win the Premier League title, rather than doing so by going the whole season unbeaten.

Jürgen Klopp's men have dropped just two points in 21 games to set a new record for Europe's top five leagues of 61 points from a possible 63 to start the campaign.

That has propelled the European champions into a

14-point lead over title holders Manchester City with a game in hand, but Salah insists the Reds are still taking their title challenge one game at a time ahead of Manchester United's visit to Anfield on Sunday.

"We don't think about being unbeaten until the end of the season. If we do that, it would be great, but at the end of the day we just want to win the Premier League. That's the most important thing," Salah told Premier League

Productions. "Unbeaten or not, it's not necessary - we want to win the Premier League."

Liverpool could move a massive 30 points clear of United with victory on Sunday, but the Red Devils are the only side to take points off them this season after a 1-1 draw at Old Trafford in October.

Salah missed that match through injury and is keen to make up for lost time in the clash between English football's two most successful sides.

Harry replaces Young as captain

AFP ■ MANCHESTER

Ole Gunnar Solskjaer has confirmed Harry Maguire as Manchester United's new captain less than six months after his £80 million (\$104 million) move from Leicester.

Maguire will take over as skipper from Ashley Young, who is expected to complete his move to Inter Milan on Friday.

The England international, 26, has led the side in games when Young has been absent and was an obvious choice for the role having played in every Premier League match this season.

"Harry has been wearing the captain's armband and he will keep wearing it," said Solskjaer, whose side take on runaway leaders Liverpool at Anfield on Sunday. "He's come in and been a leader in the group. I have not been surprised

but I've been impressed by his leadership skills."

"He is part of a group that we've had that have been leading this young group," added Solskjaer.

"Ashley has been of course, Marcus (Rashford) is a young lad but he has been involved, David (de Gea) and Harry, so Harry will keep on wearing the armband now."

Young, who moved to Old Trafford in 2011, will link up at the San Siro with former United teammates Romelu Lukaku and Alexis Sanchez.

"Ashley has been a good servant for the club, he's been captain, he's won trophies, the league, various cups," said Solskjaer.

"But we've got players coming through and when Ashley's head and mindset was, I want to try this, why not do it now?"

"We need to win, we need to carry on in our way - the way we've been doing since the beginning of the season and since last year," added the Egyptian.

"Of course we know it's big for the fans, for the city and for us. But at the end of the day, we play the game to win."

Yastremska downs Sabalenka for finals place

AFP ■ ADELAIDE

Ukraine's Dayana Yastremska defeated her third top 20 opponent in a row to make the Adelaide International finals with a 6-4, 7-6 (7/4) win over Aryna Sabalenka on Friday.

The 19-year-old's blitzed world number 20 Donna Vekic

in the quarter-finals of the Memorial Drive tournament a day after 18th-ranked Angelique Kerber retired from their match with back pain from a set down.

Yastremska, ranked 24th, will play for the fourth title of her career on Saturday against either Australian world number one Ashleigh Barty or American Danielle Collins.

"I'm pretty happy, this new season is off to a good start," Yastremska said after defeating Sabalenka of Belarus for their third match in as many meetings.

"I'm just doing my job on court, playing my game. I do what I can on court."

"I feel confidence heading to the Australian Open." Yastremska broke once per set while losing her own service once in the 106-minute showdown.

She finished on a third match point in the tiebreaker as Sabalenka hit the net on a return.

Yastremska claimed two WTA trophies last season at Strasbourg and Hua Hin, Thailand.



Prajnesh out of Australian Open



Prajnesh Gunneswaran plays a return shot AFP

PTI ■ MELBOURNE

India's top-ranked player Prajnesh Gunneswaran failed to make the main draw of the Australian Open men's singles event after going down in straight sets to Ernests Gulbis of Latvia in the final round of the qualifiers here on Friday.

Prajnesh, ranked 122nd in the world and seeded 17th in the qualifiers, lost 6-7 (2) 2-6 to Gulbis in his final round qualifying match.

Prajnesh had earlier defeated local wildcard Harry Bourchier and Germany's Yannick Hanfmann.

It was a close first set which went into tie-break, where Prajnesh faltered to hand early advantage to his opponent.

In the second set, Gulbis broke Prajnesh in the first and third games to race to a 3-0 lead.

From there on, the Indian found it tough as Gulbis held his serve to close out the contest that lasted for one hour and 20 minutes.

With Prajnesh's ouster, India's campaign in the singles ended in the qualifiers.

Earlier, Sumit Nagal suffered a straight-set loss to Mohamed Safwat of Egypt to crash out in the first round of the qualifiers on Thursday.

AFP ■ BERLIN

Jürgen Klinsmann is planning a party if Hertha Berlin beat his former employers Bayern Munich on Sunday despite doubts about the validity of his coaching licence, as the Bundesliga resumes this weekend after a four-week break.

Since taking charge in November, the 55-year-old former Germany and US national team coach has pulled Hertha up from the relegation places to mid-table with 10 points from a possible 12 going into their clash with third-placed Bayern at Berlin's Olympic Stadium.

However Klinsmann, who led both the US and Germany at World Cup finals, has been left red-faced after it emerged his coaching licence, held since 2000, may no longer be valid and the relevant paperwork is at the family home in California.

"It's just been a bit of a chance for the media to let off a bit of steam," Klinsmann told Sky as questions over his licence became a hot topic in the German media.

Klinsmann back to hurt Bayern



Hertha BSC Berlin head coach Jurgen Klinsmann attends a news conference AP

"No one has ever approached me about a licence in 20 years - whether as coach of Germany, the USA or Bayern. Now they have looked

into it and it's expired." The matter remains unresolved but Klinsmann insists he has sent the necessary paperwork to the German FA and that there is

no problem at all".

He has a point to prove against Bayern, who sacked him in 2009 after just nine months and 43 games in charge.

Bayern striker Robert Lewandowski has recovered from recent groin surgery and will look to pick up where he left off after scoring 19 goals in the first 17 games.

The defending champions trail leaders RB Leipzig by four points and are without wingers Kingsley Coman (knee) and Serge Gnabry, who injured his Achilles tendon during a training camp in Qatar.

Bayern suffered a shock 2-0 defeat when they last travelled to Hertha in September 2018 and Klinsmann said a repeat result would spark a party in the capital.

"We have nothing to lose," he said. "Let's take a point - brilliant! Let's take three, then we'll have a party."

"We'll go in there with the

confidence of four games without defeat." One to watch: Erling Braut Haaland

Borussia Dortmund made the league's standout signing during the winter break when they paid Red Bull Salzburg 20 million euros (\$22m) for the 19-year-old Norway striker.

Haaland attracted attention last September when, aged 19 years and 58 days, he became the third youngest player to score a Champions League hat-trick in a 6-2 victory over Genk, finishing with eight goals in six group games.

"I don't think we've had that kind of striker since Robert Lewandowski," Dortmund captain Marco Reus told Sky.

Head coach Lucien Favre has not said when Haaland will make his debut. Fourth-placed Dortmund hope a deluge of goals by their latest signing will help close the seven-point deficit to RB Leipzig, starting with a win at Augsburg on Saturday.

Quique era starts in Barca

AFP ■ MADRID

Barcelona's appointment of Quique Setien, a fervent disciple of Johan Cruyff, came the day after Zinedine Zidane won his ninth final out of nine as coach of Real Madrid.

With both teams level on points at the top of La Liga, Spain's closest title race in years will be as much a contest of identity and beliefs as points won and lost.

Real Madrid, the club that defines itself by winning, against Barcelona, where winning is seen as the result of something more profound, a style heralded by Cruyff that has become their footballing philosophy.

Atletico Madrid and Sevilla, both five points behind, are still in touch but playing catch-up.

Setien once said he would have given his little finger to play under Cruyff. Now, 34 years later, he has the chance to resuscitate those ideals after



two years under Ernesto Valverde when pragmatism took a greater hold.

Barca's new coach is not well-known outside of Spain and, at 61, he may be in the twilight years of his career.

"For me this is the pinnacle," he said at his unveiling on Tuesday.

His previous clubs are not illustrious. They include Lugo, Logrones, Las Palmas, Poli Ejido, Racing Santander, Real

Betis and one game in charge of Equatorial Guinea. His list of trophies begins and ends with one Spanish Super Cup in 1985 with Atletico Madrid.

But his work and words up to this point could leave the impression of someone that has been preparing to coach Barcelona his entire life.

"When I was a player, coaches tried to set guidelines for me," Setien, a former Spanish international, told Marca in 2018.

It remains to be seen how Setien's appointment will affect La Liga's title race. Will Real Madrid's players feel their chances are boosted or harmed by Valverde's removal? They are now up against a team with a coach that has never won, or even competed for, a top-flight trophy. But they might feel wary too, of the possibility Barcelona could be released by Setien's attacking beliefs and accelerate.

INDIA HUNT KANGAROOOS IN RAJKOT

Top order's show complimented by bowlers help Men in Blue level series

PTI ■ RAJKOT

Kuldeep Yadav bowled a game-changing 38th over to complement a KL Rahul blinder as India levelled the series with a comfortable 36-run victory over Australia in second ODI here on Friday.

Put into bat, India put up a much-improved batting performance with Rahul's blistering 52-ball-80 taking India to 340 for six after Shikhar Dhawan (96 off 90 balls) and skipper Virat Kohli (78 off 76 balls) laid the foundation.

Australia were in the game till Steven Smith (98) carried the battle back to the enemy camp but Kuldeep's ninth over turned out to be a game-changer as he first dismissed wicketkeeper Alex Carey and then had a delivery that bounced extra to have Smith played out. The visitors were all-out for 304 in 49.1 overs.



Indian players celebrate the dismissal of Australia's Steve Smith in Rajkot



Kuldeep's final figures of 2 for 65 may not be mind-blowing but did just enough damage to see that the third ODI in Bengaluru doesn't lose context.

in 10 overs) and Navdeep Saini (2/62 in 10 overs) then bowled some exquisite toe-crushers to put an end to the contest. Jasprit Bumrah (1/32 in 9.1 overs) was economical as ever and his contribution cannot be overlooked.

However on a placid track, Smith, a proverbial thorn in India's flesh was again proving to be dangerous along with Marnus Labuschagne (44) as they added 96 in quick time.

Ravindra Jadeja (2/58 in 10 overs) steady spell and got rid of Labuschagne in nick of time to upset Smith's rhythm after he had hit nine fours and a six off 102 balls.

However this match also brings to fore Rahul's emergence as proper keeper-batsman option for white-ball cricket as his extra runs coming in at No 5, proving to be valuable in the end.

Not to forget his reasonably decent keeping effecting

K S Bharat named cover for Pant

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Andhra Pradesh wicket-keeper-batsman K S Bharat was on Friday called in as back-up for Rishabh Pant, who was ruled out of India's second ODI against Australia due to a concussion.

The 26-year-old Bharat is uncapped and has an experience of 74 first-class matches with 4143 runs. He has a strike rate of over 100 in T20s.

"The All-India Senior Selection Committee has named K S Bharat as the back-up wicket-keeper for the 2nd ODI in Rajkot against Australia," BCCI Secretary Jay Shah said in a statement.

"With Sanju Samson and Ishan Kishan being a part of the India A side in New Zealand, the selection committee decided to name K S Bharat as back-up wicket-keeper," he added.

The call was taken after Pant flew to Bengaluru to undergo his rehabilitation in the National Cricket Academy.

The wicket-keeper batsman was hit on the helmet while batting in the first ODI in Mumbai and was ruled out of the game in Rajkot on Friday.

"His recovery is being monitored and a call on his availability for the final ODI in Bengaluru will be taken accordingly," the BCCI said.

a stumping and also took two catches. More importantly, his keeping down the leg-side was far better than Rishabh Pant, who is currently recovering from concussion.

Earlier, it was Dhawan, who missed a well-deserved ton by a whisker but laid a solid platform for the aggressive duo of skipper Kohli and Rahul to ensure a commanding total.

Ruturaj, Shubman, Surya shine for Ind A

PTI ■ LINCOLN (NEW ZEALAND)

India A top-order warmed-up nicely for their upcoming one-day series with a 92-run win against New Zealand XI in the first of the two practise games here on Friday.

Batting first, India A scored 279 for 8 in 50 overs and then dismissed New Zealand XI for 187 in 41.1 overs with let-arm pacer Khaleel Ahmed getting four wickets.

Batting first, skipper Gill (50 off 66 balls) hit a half-century adding 89 runs for the second wicket with another specialist opener Ruturaj Gaikwad (93 off 103 balls), who came in at one drop to accommodate senior team player Mayank Agarwal (8).

Once Gill was out hitting seven fours, Gaikwad was joined by Suryakumar Yadav, who hit a 48-ball-50 with four fours and two sixes as the duo added 89 runs. As Surya attacked, Gaikwad held anchor at one end.

During the back-end, Krunal Pandya scored a 31-ball 41 while Sanju Samson (4) and Vijay Shankar (13) failed to make an impact.

New Zealand A started off with an 82-run opening stand between Jakob Bhula (50) and Jack Boyle (42) but Khaleel (4/43 in 9.1 overs) and Mohammed Siraj (2/33 in 8 overs) caused the bulk of the damage.

Brief Scores: India A 279/8 in 50 overs (Ruturaj Gaikwad 93 off 103 balls, Suryakumar Yadav 50 off 48 balls, Shubman Gill 50 off 66 balls).

New Zealand XI 187 in 41.1 overs (Jakob Bhula 50, Khaleel Ahmed 4/43 in 9.1 overs). India A won by 92 runs.

AFP ■ PORT ELIZABETH

Stokes, Pope punish SA

Ben Stokes and Ollie Pope hit centuries as England built a strong position on the second day of the third Test against South Africa and England at St George's Park on Friday.

England were 426 for eight at tea. The four-match series is tied at 1-1.

World player of the year Stokes hit 120, his ninth Test century, while Pope was unbeaten on 106, his maiden Test hundred.

Stokes and Pope put on 203 for the fifth wicket after coming together on the first day when their side were struggling at 148 for four.

In contrast to an attritional first day, when England could only score 224 for four in 90 overs, England scored freely for most of the day, although Pope made hard work of moving from his score of 75 at lunch to his century, needing most of the afternoon before he punched Anrich Nortje through mid-wicket for his 14th boundary after facing 190 balls.

While Pope moved cautiously to join Dom Sibley in scoring a maiden Test hundred during the series, Sam Curran provided the impetus for England as he hit an aggressive 44 off 50 balls, with six fours and a six. He and Pope put on 59 for the seventh wicket, with Pope contributing 13.

Hit by the news that strike bowler Kagiso Rabada would miss the fourth and final Test after incurring a fourth disciplinary demerit point within 24 months, South Africa's bowlers neither posed a significant threat nor were able to exert the control they did on the first day as Stokes and Pope dominated the morning with-



England's Ben Stokes celebrates reaching his century with Ollie Pope

Rabada banned for final test over Root celeb

AP ■ PORT ELIZABETH

South Africa fast bowler Kagiso Rabada has been banned from the series-deciding final cricket Test against England.

Rabada was given a one-Test ban after breaching the International Cricket Council code of conduct for his celebration after getting England captain Joe Root out on the first day of the ongoing third test in Port Elizabeth.

Rabada ran through and celebrated - fists pumping and screaming - close to Root after bowling him.

He was found guilty of "using language, actions or gestures" which could pro-

voke an aggressive response from the batsman. The 24-year-old Rabada was given one demerit point for the offense but it's his fourth demerit in the last two years, which results in a one-match ban.

Rabada was charged with the offense in Port Elizabeth by match referee Andy Pycroft. He pleaded guilty and accepted the punishment.

It's a major boost for England's hopes of winning the four-test series and a major blow for South Africa's. Rabada is the No. 4-ranked bowler in the world and South Africa's spearhead.

STOKES AND POPE PUT ON 203 FOR THE FIFTH WICKET AFTER COMING TOGETHER ON THE FIRST DAY WHEN THEIR SIDE WERE STRUGGLING AT 148 FOR FOUR

out being parted. Stokes eventually sliced a catch to backward point off debutant Dane Paterson after making 120 off 214 balls with 12 fours and two sixes.

South Africa had a better afternoon, picking up four wickets, with three of them taken by left-arm spinner Keshav Maharaj, who had figures of four for 135. Having conceded only 55 runs in 32 overs on Thursday, Maharaj gave up another 80 runs in 21.2 overs on Friday.

Maharaj was attacked by Stokes, who hit sixes in both of the spin bowler's first two overs, one of which sailed out of the ground beyond mid-wicket



MS Dhoni chats with Rishabh Pant

'No rustiness as Dhoni looks in complete control'

IAN S ■ NEW DELHI

Former India skipper Mahendra Singh Dhoni has stunned Jharkhand coach Rajiv Kumar with his fluent batting even as the stumper started training for the first time since India's loss in the semifinal of the 2019 World Cup against New Zealand in July last year.

Speaking to IANS, Kumar said that he was expecting a little rustiness from the batsman, but the balls seemed to be hitting the middle of the bat. The coach went on to add that the Chennai Super Kings skipper's preparations have begun for the 2020 edition of the Indian Premier League.

"I will be honest... I thought there will be a bit of rustiness as Dhoni has not trained for quite some time. The last time we had spoken, he had said that he would start in January and here you go. He is a man of his words and it came as no surprise that he was out there training with the guys just like any other regular Jharkhand player. But what surprised me most was how

he muddled almost every ball, be it in the pacer's net or the spinner's net. He even took throwdowns just like a player going through the batting drills does.

"I haven't had any talks with him with regards to the national team and him donning the India jersey again. But, his preparations for the next edition of the IPL has begun and while the senior team will be busy playing the Ranji Trophy game from Sunday, Dhoni will continue training till the time he is in Ranchi," the coach pointed out.

Asked if Dhoni did anything specific in the two days that he has trained so far, Kumar said the former skipper spent a lot of time talking to the bowlers.

"He is such a professional and has been going on spending time with the youngsters, especially the bowlers. He is discussing the line and length that they should target and the ways to fox the opposition batsmen. He has been as vocal as can be expected from a senior player like Dhoni," Kumar said.



De Villiers flags desire to play ODI cricket

IAN S ■ MELBOURNE

Days after expressing his desire to play for South Africa in the T20 World Cup, former Proteas batsman AB de Villiers has now revealed his wish to represent the country in ODI cricket.

de Villiers reaffirmed his desire to return to 50-overs cricket while speaking to commentator Adam Gilchrist during Melbourne Heat's loss to the Adelaide Strikers in the ongoing edition

of the Big Bash League (BBL).

"I would love to play, that was never the problem," de Villiers, who had hung up his Proteas shirt in May 2018, was quoted as saying by Fox Sports.

"I always wanted to play for South Africa, it's a great honour to play international cricket," he added.

The 35-year-old believes the appointment of Graeme Smith and Mark Boucher to key roles in Cricket South Africa will help him return to the

two shorter formats for his country.

"I've been chatting with Mark Boucher, Smithy and some of the guys involved so hopefully it all works out," he said.

"We've had a few good discussions about the possible way forward. I'm going to have to score some runs obviously.

"Watching some of the Test matches over December 1 was definitely thinking it would be really nice to be

out there, but things have changed in my life... I don't want to play 11 months of the year any more, it's too much.

"ODIs I wouldn't take completely out of the equation, but for Test matches it's pretty much done," said the 114-Tests veteran.

de Villiers had tried to come out of retirement ahead of the 2019 World Cup, making himself available for selection. However, CSA selectors felt it was too late.

Hafeez to retire after Twenty20 WC

AFP ■ LAHORE

Recalled Pakistan allrounder Mohammad Hafeez Friday said he will retire from international cricket after the Twenty20 World Cup later this year, vowing to end his career on a positive note.

The 38-year-old was Thursday recalled to Pakistan's Twenty20 series against Bangladesh starting in Lahore from January 24.

Hafeez has been one of Pakistan's key players — in all three formats, as a top order batsman and a handy off-spinner — since making his debut during an England tour in 2003.

But his career was dogged by questions over the legality of his bowling action, reported on three occasions during international matches. He was also



Mohammad Hafeez in a file picture

Hafeez retired from Tests in December 2018 after playing 55 Tests. He was more successful in limited over formats, scoring 6,614 runs and took 139 wickets in 218 one-day internationals.

His last ODI was during the World Cup (50 overs) in England last year, and he has not been selected for that format since then.

His tally in 89 Twenty20 internationals stands at 54 wickets and 1,908 runs.

"I have played 17 years for Pakistan and tried my level best. At times I missed my bowling," said Hafeez, who also captained Pakistan in 29 Twenty20 internationals, winning 17 and losing 11 with one ending in a tie.

The Twenty20 World Cup will be held in Australia in October-November this year.

PTI ■ ROME

A dominant Vinesh Phogat downed two tough Chinese rivals on her way to the 53kg final of the Rome Ranking Series event after teen sensation Anshu Malik settled for a Silver medal in 57kg competition, here on Friday.

Vinesh won by technical superiority against Khrystyna Bereza (10-0) and Lannuan Luo (15-5) before getting the better of Qianyu Pang (4-2).

If the win against Ukrainian Bereza was about spectacular double leg attacks, the quarter-final win over the Luo was much tougher than the what the scoreline suggested.

Luo was a strong opponent, who led 5-2 at the end of first period but Vinesh turned it around with smart point-scoring moves from nowhere in the



second period. Twice she threw Luo with moves from between the legs when the Chinese was holding her from the back.

With two wrestlers, having

immense upper-body strength, jostling for upper hand from standing position was a sight to watch.

Fighting a measured bout against Pang, Vinesh was in

control in the semi-final. With two take downs in each period she led 4-0 and conceded points only towards the end of the fight.

Vinesh will now fight for her first gold of the season with Ecuador's Luisa Elizabeth Valverde Melemdres.

The 18-year-old Anshu carried her sparkling form from the trials at her maiden international tournament at the senior level but could not replicate it in the gold medal bout, losing to Nigeria's Oduwayo Adekuoroye.

The 18-year-old was very dominant till the final, beating American Jenna Rose Burkert, Grace Bullen of Norway, 2019 world champion from Canada Linda Morais en route the final.

Anshu had upset world champion Bronze medalist Pooja Dhanda during the trials. But Divya Kakran returned

empty-handed after losing the 68kg Bronze medal play-off bout to Danielle Suzanne Lappage of Canada.

Also in medal contention is Nirmala Devi, who will fight for 50kg Bronze after losing her semi-final to Sarah Ann Hildebrandt.

Nirmala was aggressive throughout, going for leg attacks, but the American stayed solid in her defence, reminding the tactics that Vinesh had employed against her at the 2019 World Championship in Nur Sultan.

Nirmala has another American in her way as she will lock horns with Victoria Lacey Anthony.

In the men's freestyle competition, Satyawart Kadiyan (97kg) and Sumit Maik (125kg) exited following their quarter-final defeats.