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ANIL KAPOOR
DEBUTS ON
TIKTOK
13 VIVACITY

Peaceful stirs aid democracy: Pranab

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

PNS ■ NEW DELHI
Weighing in on the ongoing protests across the country, former President Pranab Mukherjee on Thursday said the present wave of largely peaceful protests that have "gripped" the country will once again help deepening India's democratic roots.

Addressing the first Sukumar Sen Memorial lecture series at Pravasi Bharatiya Kendra on Thursday, former President said the last few months have witnessed people, particularly the youth, come out on the streets in large numbers to voice their views on issues "which in their view are important".

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



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

While Mukherjee did not name the Citizenship (Amendment) Act or CAA, in his address, his remarks, particularly his reference to belief of the youth in upholding the Constitution of India, have come against the backdrop of protests against the CAA.

Incidentally, at several places protesters, mainly youths, grabbed headlines by simply reading the Preamble of the Constitution.

The Modi Government has faced several protests during its second term across the country on issues such as CAA/NRC/NPR, abrogation of Article 370, and Triple Talaq.

Mukherjee's daughter Sharmistha Mukherjee, a Congress leader, has supported the ongoing protests against the CAA and she was detained. This is not the first time that he has spoken out on issues of national importance. Mukherjee had raked up a major controversy by visiting the RSS headquarters in Nagpur two years ago. At that time even people within his own party, the Congress, criticised him for showing proximity to the ruling BJP at the Centre.

On December 19 last year, speaking at the second Atal Bihari Vajpayee Memorial Lecture at the India Foundation, Mukherjee had cautioned against a "majoritarian Government" against the backdrop of pan-India protests against the CAA.

"A numerical majority in the elections only gives a political party the right to form a stable Government and not a majoritarian one. A numerical majority in elections gives you the right to make a stable government. The lack of popular majority forbids you from (becoming) a majoritarian government. That is the message and essence of our parliamentary democracy," Mukherjee said.

The former President also pointed out that while people have given "strong majorities" to various parties since 1952, not a single one has been elected with over 50 per cent vote.

Similarly, delivering Rajendra Mathur Memorial Lecture, organised annually by the Editors Guild of India in December last year, Mukherjee had emphasised that a democracy without a free press is like a "blank piece of paper".

"Selective, orchestrated, one-sided, out of context, or motivated reporting and display, aimed at pushing the partisan agendas of one group or the other cannot or should not ever be the nature and character of journalism," he had said.

In October last year, Mukherjee pressed on the importance of dialogue in a democracy while delivering the North East Institute of Advanced Studies Foundation Day lecture in memory of Justice (Retd) KN Saikia in Guwahati, Assam. Mukherjee stated that the soul of India resides in pluralism and celebration of its diversity.

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Jail readies noose, Nirbhaya convicts' lawyer plans delay



STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

With nine days left for their execution, the four death-row convicts in the Nirbhaya gangrape case are yet to inform the Tihar jail authorities about when they want to meet their families for the last time or whom they want to will their assets and the money that they have earned during their incarceration.

Delhi Prisons authorities have begun preparations for the execution of the four convicts on February 1 and have contracted Pawan, the hangman from Meerut who would be paid ₹15,000 for each hanging.

Meanwhile, the counsel for the convicts, AP Singh told *The Pioneer* that options are there before him as Akshay Singh and Pawan Gupta's curative petitions are yet to be filed before the Supreme Court. Once the petitions are filed, the hanging will be stayed till the petitions are decided.

The four convicts, Vinay Shrama (26), Akshay Singh (31), Mukesh Kumar (32) and Pawan Gupta (25), who are lodged in separate cells of Jail No 3 where the execution will take place, are scheduled to be hanged at 6 am on February 1, in case they fail to file the curative petition.

According to AP Singh, Pawan and Akshay still have options to file curative petitions in the Supreme Court. Pawan and Akshay are yet to request for the "Presidential pardon".

A petition of Pawan claiming to be juvenile at the time of crime was rejected by the

Supreme Court recently but the advocate said Pawan is still left with option to move a curative petition in the Supreme Court. The lawyer also claimed that Akshay is also left with option to file curative petition.

Meanwhile, a senior jail official while elaborating about the procedure before executing death-row convicts said after the death warrants were issued, the convicts were asked when they would like to meet their respective families for the last time and if so, who all do they wish to meet. But none of them have responded yet.

The official said the convicts were also asked if they would want to prepare their will, but they have not responded yet. "The families of all the four convicts are allowed to meet them twice a week but the last date of meeting has not been fixed because they still have not responded," he said.

"Dummy execution of the four death-row convicts was performed in the prison last week. The officials recorded the weights of the convicts and then prepared the dummies accordingly with sacks filled with debris and stones," a senior jail official said.

The execution will take place in Jail No 3, the official said, adding that the Uttar Pradesh Prison authority has confirmed that Pawan jallad from Meerut will be sent to hang the four convicts.

All the four are likely to be hanged simultaneously. *Continued on Page 4*

Coronavirus locks down 5 Chinese cities

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

PTI ■ BEIJING

China on Thursday locked down five cities, including Wuhan, suspending all public transport in an unprecedented move to contain the coronavirus that has infected over 630 people and left 17 others dead, dampening the celebrations of the Lunar New Year.

On Thursday evening, Chinese officials announced suspension of public transport in five cities — Huanggang, Ezhou, Zhijiang, Qianjiang and Wuhan in Hubei province — official media reported.

Wuhan, the city of 11 million people where the virus is believed to have first emerged, has no trains or planes in or out. Nationwide, a total of 17 people have died, all of them in and around Wuhan. The vic-

tims' average age was 73, with the oldest 89 and the youngest 48. So far 631 cases have been confirmed in 25 provincial-level regions in the country.

The Government has sealed Wuhan and Huanggang, a prefecture level city with over 7.4 million people, in an unprecedented effort to curb the spread of the deadly novel coronavirus. The other three cities too have substantial population. From 10 am on Thursday, all public transportation, including city buses, subways, ferries and long-distance coaches in Wuhan were suspended, and outbound channels at airports and railway stations closed until further notice. The city officials have asked people in both the cities not to leave.

Continued on Page 4



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

AP

Kerala nurse in Saudi infected

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

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

India berates Pak for spewing venom, false narrative on Kashmir

PNS/PTI ■ NEW DELHI/ UNITED NATIONS

Brushing aside Prime Minister Imran Khan's plea for global intervention to prevent a showdown between "two nuclear armed" nations, New Delhi on Thursday rejected President Donald Trump's offer of "help" to resolve the matter insisting that Kashmir issue was a bilateral one.

India also asked Pakistan to take verifiable action against terror groups active there and blamed it for "spewing venom and false narratives" in the United Nations, saying it takes to hate speech like "a fish takes to water" on the Kashmir issue.

Addressing the media along with the Pakistan Prime Minister in Davos on Tuesday,

Trump said the US was watching the developments related to Kashmir "very closely" and repeated his offer to "help" resolve the matter.

Reacting to Khan's call to the global community, the External Affairs Ministry Spokesman Raveesh Kumar said Pakistan efforts would be better spent in taking verifiable action against terror groups on its territory than trying to "disrupt" the global community.

In an interview on the sidelines of the Davos meet, Imran Khan had urged international powers — including the UN and the US — to help de-escalate tensions between India and Pakistan before things get to a point of no return.

Continued on Page 4



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

PTI

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

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

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

The Chief Minister also expressed his strong displeasure and objection over Varma, a national general secretary of the party, sharing on the social

media a letter wherein he had made mention of the Chief Minister having expressed apprehensions "in private" about the BJP's "divisive" agenda.

"He is a learned man for whom I have a lot of respect even if he may not have similar sentiments for me. But is it proper to share such things in public and not on a party forum? What if I start sharing what he said to me in public?" Nitish told reporters in Patna.

On Varma's repeated demands for "ideological clarity", Nitish said, "The JD(U)'s stand is very clear... He is free to go wherever he likes".

Continued on Page 4

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

Both campaign in Matiala Assembly seat

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

With Delhi Assembly elections just 16 days away, ruling AAP and the BJP stepped on the gas to woo the voters. Delhi Chief Minister and AAP convener Arvind Kejriwal and Union Home Minister Amit Shah were in Matiala Assembly constituency on Thursday to drum up support for their candidates.

Kejriwal held roadshows in Uttam Nagar and Vikaspuri areas while Shah held roadshows in Uttam Nagar, Palam and Nagloi Jat.

Kejriwal, atop an open yellow coloured jeep, waved to the public and shook hands with them as his roadshow passed from the narrow lanes of Matiala, Uttam Nagar and Vikaspuri. He was accompanied by the MLAs of the three areas.

While Kejriwal sought vote for the good works of the Government, the Union Home Minister launched a tirade on AAP chief and said if a competition to make false promises is held in the country, Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal will win the first prize.

He also alleged that the AAP leader had forgotten the promises he had made to the people of Delhi. "If there is a competition in the country of making false promises, Kejriwal would definitely get the first prize. I have come to remind you that you forgot the promises you made, but neither the

people of Delhi nor BJP workers have forgotten," said the Union Home Minister while addressing a public meeting in West Delhi's Matiala constituency ahead of the Assembly polls on February 8.

"You became CM with the help of Anna Hazare but couldn't bring a law for Lokpal



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



Ranjan Dimri | Pioneer/PTI

and when Modi ji brought it you didn't implement it here," he said. For four and a half years the Chief Minister kept saying Prime Minister Narendra Modi did not let him work so development could not be done in Delhi, Shah said. *Continued on Page 4*

CAPSULE

DEATH SENTENCE CAN'T REMAIN OPEN-ENDED: SC
New Delhi: The Supreme Court on Thursday said the finality of death sentence is extremely important and a convict should not be under the impression that it remains open-ended, which leads to its questioning.

DELAY IN PROJECTS UNACCEPTABLE: GADKARI
New Delhi: Terminating delays in projects as "unacceptable", Highway Minister Nitin Gadkari asked officials and developers to strictly adhere to schedules.

SC: WILL CONSIDER GIVING RAM SETU HERITAGE TAG
New Delhi: The SC on Thursday said it will consider after three months the plea of BJP leader Subramanian Swamy seeking a direction for declaring 'Ram Setu' as a heritage monument.

Projects shelved to save Chambal ecology

ARCHANA JYOTI ■ NEW DELHI

The Centre has put on hold the Madhya Pradesh Government's proposal for laying of freshwater pipe and construction of inland wells in the Chambal river citing threat to endangered species such as crocodiles, gharials, turtles and dolphins found in the region. The project was red-flagged by the State Chief Wildlife Warden due to threat to the river ecology and wildlife, but it was cleared by the State board for wildlife. In a recent meeting, the Standing Committee of the National Board of Wildlife (SC-NBWL) noted that in proposal required diversion of 1.267 hectares from the National Chambal Sanctuary for the construction of intake



well in the Chambal river and for laying of drinking water pipeline to meet the demand of the locals from Sheopur district. The members also noted that the State Chief Wildlife Warden didn't clear the proposal on the ground that construction of intake well is in close proximity of the habitat of crocodile, gharial, Indian skimmers, turtle and dolphin. The board also took cognisance of the Wildlife Institute of India's (WII) past stand that the minimum flow required to sustain the ideal habitat for gharial in Chambal river is 151-165 m3/sec and for the dolphin 266.42 - 289.67 m3/sec. But in December 2017 when the Dehradun-based agency again monitored the discharge of the Chambal river, it found the flow had receded to 67 m3/sec. "So taking water from the

Chambal river will affect the wildlife adversely in the long run for sustaining viable population of critically endangered schedule I species," the NBWL said.

In 2011, the SC-NBWL had said that no new projects would be considered for withdrawing water from the Chambal river which is already witnessing receding water flow.

A report prepared by a team led by the Superintendent, National Chambal Sanctuary, Sheopur which inspected the site on July 4, 2019 too had red-flagged the project. It pointed out that the construction might affect the nesting sites of gharial, turtle and mugger which are almost 800 to 1,000 metres upstream from the proposed location of the intake well.

Continued on Page 4

7 students, woman hurt in bus collision

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

A school bus collided with a cluster bus on Thursday morning, leaving seven students and a woman attendant injured, police said.

The incident occurred at west Delhi's Naraina area. Police said students and a woman attendant suffered minor injuries on their hands, legs and faces in the incident.

According to the Fire Department, it received a call at 7.10 am regarding the accident. "The seven students, who were injured in the collision, were rushed to nearby Mehta Hospital and Kapoor Nursing Home with the help of locals and Police Control Room (PCR) vans," the official said.

The injured students have been identified as Vishant, Vansh, Vishank, Aryan, Shooksham, Tanya and Méhul. Geeta Chauhan, an attendant in the school bus,

According to the Fire Department, it received a call at 7.10 am regarding the accident. "The seven students, who were injured in the collision, were rushed to nearby Mehta Hospital and Kapoor Nursing Home with the help of locals and Police Control Room (PCR) vans," the official said.

"Acting on the call a police team was dispatched for the spot. When the police team reached on the spot they found that one Cluster Bus had hit a school bus, carrying school children of



Salwan Public school Rajendra Nagar

Further injured children were rushed to hospital and out of

27 children two children Harshsheep Kaur and Riyan sustained injuries in the accident.

Meanwhile, police said that a police control room (PCR) call was received at around 7:12 am regarding an accident near Sagar Ratna Red Light in Naraina.

"Acting on the call a police team was dispatched for the spot. When the police team reached on the spot they

found that one Cluster Bus had hit a school bus, carrying school children of Salwan Public school Rajendra Nagar," said a senior police official.

"Further injured children were rushed to hospital and out of 27 children two children Harshsheep Kaur and

Riyan sustained injuries in the accident. On the statement of the injured and witnesses, a case under section 279/337 of Indian Penal Code (IPC) has been registered at Naraina police station and the accused driver of the cluster bus, Parbhat Malik has been arrested," said a police officer.

Reeta Singh (29), who has been employed as a marshal in the cluster bus for the last three months, said their vehicle started from Shivaji Stadium for Madhu Vihar and the accident occurred at around 7 am.

"Usually, I always sit in the last row of the bus but on Thursday, I sat in the front seat meant for the staff. There were hardly four-five passengers on the bus. The accident occurred near the signal when the bus was coming down from a flyover," she said.

"It all happened suddenly. The impact was such that the school bus rolled sideways. I fell down from my seat. One of the woman passenger in the bus started shouting. I calmed her down and went to check the school children. They were injured and were accompanied by a woman. I had pain in right hand, chest and leg. But I called up ambulance and informed the police," said Singh.

GDA's meet discusses RRTS land

SP SINGH ■ GAHZIABAD

Ghaziabad Development Authority (GDA)'s 155th board meeting held on Thursday deliberated over the demand of 30 hectare land by the Regional Rail Transit System (RRTS) in Madhuban-Bapudham area and sent the file containing details to the Uttar Pradesh Government.

GDA in its communiqué to the State Government has sought guidelines for the project as there are certain ambiguities.

The other proposals in the meeting were GDA's efforts to push to improve its finances by selling its 2,235 unsold properties. The financial controller presented the balance sheet before the board with ₹1,325 crore as reserve funds. The GDA owes a loan of ₹1,600 crore from banks and other financial institutions and an investment to the tune of ₹908 crore has been shown in different financial institutions.

The GDA Chairperson and Divisional Commissioner, Anita C Meshram, who chaired the meeting said, "The board meeting discussed 20 proposals on Thursday. The proposal to develop a residential complex on its land in Nehru Nagar has been put on hold. The elected members proposed to seek objections from the people vis-à-vis this project, which accepted by the board. The residential complex would come up only after seeking public opinion for the project".

In another significant decision the board also put on hold the proposal of converting of single unit residential plot into multi residential property. The matter has been referred for further clarification to the State Government.

The GDA board also



extended the grace period of auction for the fast development and to facilitate to real estate developers such as Integrated and Hi-tech townships being developed by Ansal's and Uppal Chaddha group respectively, an official added.

Other proposals including minor amendments in the layout plans in Indirapuram, CNG pump stations, empanelment of lawyers and denotifying the land use for PM Avas Yojna was also given the go ahead by the board, the official said.

ED seizes 100 bottles of illegal liquor being served to guests at farmhouse

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Delhi Excise department has seized around 100 bottles of liquor after a raid was conducted at a farmhouse in South Delhi on Wednesday night where non-duty paid liquor was being served to guests.

According to excise department officials, the information was received that a high-profile party was being organised at the farmhouse and liquor meant for sale in Haryana was being served to guests there.

"Acting on the inputs a raid was conducted at the farmhouse in south Delhi last night. During the raid, illegal liquor from Haryana was seized from the party," said the officials.

An First Information Report (FIR) has been registered under the Delhi Excise Act at Maidan Garhi police station, the official said, adding the organiser of party and the



farmhouse manager have been arrested in connection with the case.

"The party was being organised after getting P-10 license from the excise department. With this license, organiser can only serve duty paid liquor at the party, but liquor of Haryana was also being served to guests," the official said.

"The excise department will blacklist the farmhouse. Over 100 liquor bottles have been seized by the department," the official added.

Aircraft makes emergency landing after engine failure

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

A micro-light aircraft used by the National Cadet Corps (NCC) made an emergency landing on the Eastern Peripheral Expressway (EPE) on Thursday.

The aircraft owned by the Army Aviation Core was forced to land following a technical glitch leading to engine failure. The two pilots who were flying the trainer aircraft were found hale and hearty.

"The incident took place around 1:45 pm on the highway near Sadarpur village, Ghaziabad. The plane had two pilots onboard and both of them are safe," said Kalanidhi Naithani, Senior Superintendent of Police (SSP) Ghaziabad.

According to a Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) official, the aircraft made an emergency landing in Meerut at 2 pm following engine failure.

"The left wing of the aircraft, which departed from Bareilly for the Hindon airbase



at 11.16 am, suffered some damages in the incident but traffic movement on the highway remained normal," said the official.

"The NCC has been using

the aircraft for training," Deputy Superintendent of police (Sadar) Anshu Jain said.

The Eastern Peripheral Expressway or Kundli-Ghaziabad-Palwal Expressway

or National Expressway 2 is a 135-km-long, six-lane expressway passing through the states of Haryana and Uttar Pradesh. It is located around 50 km from the national capital.

Judge who issued death warrant against Nirbhaya convicts takes SC job

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The Sessions judge who recently issued death warrants against the four death row convicts in the 2012 Nirbhaya gang rape and murder case has been transferred.

Additional Sessions Judge Satish Kumar Arora has been transferred to the Supreme Court as an Additional Registrar on deputation basis for one year, said a letter sent by Registrar General, Delhi High Court, to the District Judge, Patiala House Courts.

Before his transfer, Arora was hearing the Nirbhaya rape case and other cases, including those lodged by the special cell of Delhi Police.

The case is likely to be assigned to new judge soon who will be entitled to entertain any plea related to the Nirbhaya case in the trial courts. The letter dated January 20 has sought to relieve Arora immediately.

"I am directed to say that the chief justice (of Delhi High Court) has been pleased to appoint Satish Kumar Arora, an officer of higher judicial service, as Additional Registrar, Supreme Court of India on deputation basis, initially for a period of one year.



"I, therefore, request you to kindly relieve immediately Satish Kumar Arora, so as to enable him to join his new assignment," joint registrar, Anil Kumar Arora, said in a letter on behalf of Registrar General of the Delhi high court.

As per the last order passed by the court, the hanging of all the four convicts — Vinay Sharma (26), Akshay Kumar Singh (31), Mukesh Kumar Singh (32) and Pawan (25) — is to take place on February 1 at 6 am.

A 23-year-old paramedic student, referred to as Nirbhaya, was gang-raped and brutally assaulted on the intervening night of December 16-17, 2012, in a moving bus in south Delhi by six people before she was thrown out on the road.

PUBLIC NOTICE

Form No INC-26
[Pursuant to rule 30 the Companies (Incorporation) Rules, 2014] Before the Central Government NCT of Delhi Region
In the matter of sub-section (4) of Section 13 of Companies Act, 2013 and clause (a) of sub-rule (5) of rule 30 of the Companies (Incorporation) Rules, 2014
AND
In the matter of Mindworx Advisory Private Limited having its registered office at
53, Naval Apartment Plot No. 14, Vasundhara Enclave, Delhi-110096, Petitioner
Notice is hereby given to the General Public that the company proposes to make application to the Central Government under section 13 of the Companies Act, 2013 seeking confirmation of alteration of the Memorandum of Association of the Company in terms of the special resolution passed at Extra ordinary general meeting held on 09th December, 2019 to enable the company to change its Registered Office from "State of NCT of Delhi" to "State of Uttar Pradesh". Any person whose interest is likely to be affected by the proposed change of the registered office of the company may deliver either on the MCA-21 portal (www.mca.gov.in) by filing investor complaint form or cause to be delivered or sent by registered post of his/her objections supported by an affidavit stating the nature of his/her interest and grounds of opposition to the Regional Director at the address B-2 Wing, 2nd Floor, Paryavaran Bhawan, CGO Complex, New Delhi-110003 within fourteen days of the date of publication of this notice with a copy to the applicant company with a copy of the applicant company at its registered office at the address mentioned below:
For and on behalf of Mindworx Advisory Private Limited
Sd/-
Gindrita Majumdar (Director)
DIN: 06825685
Address: Flat No.-102, Plot No. 419 Sector - 4, Vaishali, I.E. Sahibabad Ghaziabad, Uttar Pradesh 201010 Date: 11.01.2020 Place: Delhi



A view of illuminated Rashtrapati Bhavan, South Block and North Block, in New Delhi on Thursday

PTI

Congress' Harnam Singh joins AAP

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

In a major setback for Congress, senior leader and party spokesperson Harnam Singh on Thursday joined Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) in presence of senior party leader and Rajya Sabha MP Sanjay Singh and Ramnivas Goyal.

Singh, a former secretary of All India Congress Committee, was also in-charge of Congress in Chhattisgarh, Tamilnadu, Andhra Pradesh and Puducherry. He is known as a prominent leader of the Balmiki society.

Besides, three-time councillor from Shahadara Preeti, former Lok Janshakti party general secretary Bilal Chaudhary and former Independent councillor from Chhatarpur ward Anita Tyagi also joined AAP along with their supporters.

Woman with dementia goes missing from AIIMS

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

A 55-year-old woman suffering with dementia has gone missing from All India Institute of Medical Sciences



(AIIMS) since January 21, 2020, where her relatives had brought her for the medical checkup.

The Delhi Police has registered an FIR in the case at Hauz Khas police station under the relevant section and asking for help in finding Laxshmbai Dattu Kaldhug. Her family members say that they are concerned of her safety as she knows only Marathi language. Laxshmbai is fair-complexioned, wearing printed saree in Maharashtrian style and black sweater. Any person getting any clue about her can contact her son Ganesh Kalhughe on 8857011972/08287494886 or Hauz Khas police.

Security stepped up for R-Day

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Following the Republic Day celebrations on January 26 in national Capital, thousands of security personnel have been deployed and CCTV cameras installed at strategic locations in the national capital to keep vigil ahead of the Republic Day celebrations.

According to police, multi-layered security arrangements are in place. "Sharpshooters and snipers will be deployed atop high-rise buildings to keep a watch on the 8km-long parade route from Rajpath to the Red Fort on January 26," said police.

Police personnel have been directed to stay alert since Delhi polls are also around the corner. Anti-terror measures like tenant and servant verification, border checking, security of vital installations, malls and markets, patrolling in heavy foot fall areas are being taken.

"We have intensified patrolling in and around public places. Group patrolling, night patrolling and vehicle checking is being carried out with the help of Central Armed Police Forces. Frisking at metro stations, railway stations, airport and bus terminals have also been tightened," a senior police official said.

"At least 150 CCTV cameras have been installed in areas covering Red Fort, Chandni Chowk and Yamuna Khadar. The police have also asked hotels, taxi and auto drivers to remain alert. Besides, security guards and members of Delhi Police's eyes and ear scheme' were also briefed," said the senior police official.

The security personnel have identified vulnerable spots such as crowded markets, railway stations, bus stands and other high-value establishments and efforts are being made to secure them with deployment of extra



police force.

A traffic advisory has also been issued about the police's elaborate arrangement about route diversions for the Republic Day.

"No traffic will be allowed on Rajpath from Vijay Chowk to India Gate from 6 pm on

Saturday till the parade gets over on Sunday. Flying of sub-conventional aerial platforms like para-gliders, para-motors, hang gliders, UAVs, UASs, micro-light aircraft, remotely piloted aircraft, hot air balloons, small size powered aircraft, quadcopters or para

jumping over aircraft are prohibited over the jurisdiction of the National Capital Territory of Delhi till February 15," according to the advisory.

It asked people to report to the nearest police station in case any unidentified object or suspicious person is seen.

Shaheen Bagh is mini Pak, many mini-Pak in Delhi: BJP's Kapil



STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Former Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) leader-turned BJP candidate from Model Town Assembly constituency, Kapil Mishra, termed the ongoing protest against the Citizen Amendment Act (CAA) at Delhi's Shaheen Bagh as mini Pakistan while his senior party colleagues dubbed Shaheen Bagh "shame bagh" and likened the protesters to anarchists.

In a series of provocative tweets, the BJP's candidate from Model Town also said Pakistani rioters have taken over the streets of Delhi. He made no specific mention of the movement against the CAA but sharply attacked the protest at Shaheen Bagh and other places in the city.

"Pakistan has made its entry in Shaheen Bagh. Many mini Pakistans are being formed in Delhi. Indian law is not being followed in Shaheen Bagh, Chandbagh, Indralok," Mishra tweeted.

"Pakistan rioters have encroached on the roads of Delhi (Pakistan ki entry Shaheen

- ◆ In a series of provocative tweets, the BJP's candidate from Model Town also said Pakistani rioters have taken over the streets of Delhi
- ◆ Pakistan has made its entry in Shaheen Bagh. Many mini Pakistans are being

formed in Delhi. Indian law is not being followed in Shaheen Bagh, Chandbagh, Indralok

◆ Later, at a Press conference, BJP national spokesperson Sambit Patra slammed the ruling party over the Shaheen Bagh

protest, saying that the anarchist stands with anarchist

◆ Hitting hard at the AAP, Vijay Goel, senior BJP leader and Rajya Sabha MP said that the AAP is running away from its responsibilities. "Why haven't AAP leaders gone to Shaheen Bagh yet?...Shaheen Bagh has become Shame Bagh," said Goel. He also said the CAA does not take away anyone's citizenship rights.

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Hitting hard at the AAP, Vijay Goel, senior BJP leader and Rajya Sabha MP said that the AAP is running away from its responsibilities. "Why haven't AAP leaders gone to Shaheen Bagh yet?...Shaheen Bagh has become Shame Bagh," said Goel. He also said the CAA does not take away anyone's citizenship rights.

"Some people are sitting in protest against CAA but not a single Congress leader has condemned it, that is their character..." said BJP President J P Nadda at a public meeting in Palam.

In a veiled attack on Delhi Deputy Chief Minister Manish Sisodia, who told a TV channel that he stood with the Shaheen Bagh protesters, Nadda added, "Vote comes first for them and country later. For us, country is important not the vote."

Meanwhile, taking a swipe at Mishra's contest remark, senior Aam Aadmi Party leader and Rajya Sabha MP Sanjay Singh asked, "Has he joined BCCI? I had no idea."

Nadda: Vote comes first, country later for parties backing anti-CAA protest

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

BJP national president Jagat Prakash Nadda on Thursday launched a scathing attack on political parties supporting protests against the Citizenship Amendment Act.

Nadda said vote comes first for them and country later. Slamming the Congress for backing the Shaheen Bagh protest, the newly appointed BJP president said that in 2003, the then Leader of Opposition (LOP) in the Rajya Sabha Manmohan Singh had urged deputy Prime Minister LK Advani to grant citizenship to minorities in Bangladesh.

"Some people are sitting in protest against CAA but not a single Congress leader has condemned it, that is their character. If anything happens in JNU, they reach there without any delay and start crying foul," Nadda said, addressing a public meeting in Palam constituency.

In a veiled attack on Delhi's Deputy Chief Minister Manish Sisodia for supporting



BJP National President JP Nadda speaks during Palam Assembly Organisational review meeting at Mehrauli in New Delhi on Thursday

the Shaheen Bagh protest, Nadda said, "Vote comes first for them and country later. For us country is important not the vote". He added that those opposing CAA should explain what is wrong with the act.

In an interaction with a news channel, Sisodia said he stood with the Shaheen Bagh protesters.

Nadda claimed that there are parties in the upcoming Delhi Assembly elections that "do not have leaders, workers and policy".

"Kejriwal said he will open 500 schools, 20 colleges and buy 5,000 buses but failed to keep these promises. People should vote for BJP for development in Delhi," he said.

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

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

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

Ahmedabad-based Praful Billore, who is popularly known as 'MBA Chaiwala', opened a tea stall at the AAP headquarters in Delhi on Thursday. The tea stall, bearing a huge banner that highlights the work done by the Arvind Kejriwal Government, doubles up as a mode of publicity.

Party functionaries said

Billor contacted the Delhi Chief Minister directly and offered to spread through the tea stall concept information about the work done by the Kejriwal Government.

From 'shiksha wali chai' to 'swasthya wali chai' and 'vikas wali chai', varieties of tea named after the different achievements of the AAP-led Delhi Government will now be served at tea stalls

Billor said he is not associated with any political party but doesn't hesitate to appreciate anyone doing good work. He said he decided to come all the way from Ahmedabad to put up a tea stall here as he believes that Kejriwal has delivered good governance in Delhi, which is evident on the ground and needs no promotion.



Constituency profile

Locals yearn for basic amenities

SHEKHAR SINGH ■ NEW DELHI

The Aam Aadmi Party's (AAP) promises to install CCTVs and free WiFi in Delhi, have failed to cut ice with the residents of Chhatarpur Assembly constituency, which was formed in 2008.

Besides the swanky farm-houses and the posh South Delhi localities that surround the area, people in this constituency crave for better roads, sewerage, water and electricity supply and decongestion. Prior to 2008, it was part of the Mehrauli Assembly constituency. It comprises largely of rural populace and immigrants living in unauthorised colonies.

The Chhatarpur constituency comprises of Saidulajab, Neb Sarai, Maidan Garh, Rajpur Khurd, Fatehpur Beri, Jonapur, Sultan Pur, Ghitorni, Aya Nagar, Dera Village, Bhatti Mines, Mangla Puri, Satbari, Chandan Hulla, Shahurpur and Asola and there are about 1,24,073 eligible voters in this constituency. BJP, AAP and Congress has won this constituency one time each out of the three Delhi elections.

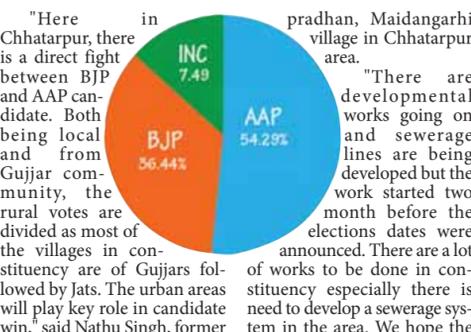
The Pioneer visited the Chhatarpur constituency and found the water logging and pathetic sewerage system plague certain pockets in there and the roads are also maze of uneven tarred stretches. Security for women is another major area of concern, according to residents.

The constituency also lacks infrastructure such as schools and colleges. The fight this time in the constituency is between Satish Lohia of the Congress, Brahm Singh Tanwar from the BJP and Kartar Singh of the AAP.

In 2008, Balram Tanwar was the first elected Member of the Legislative Assembly (MLA) from Chhatarpur. In 2013, he was defeated by the BJP's Brahm Singh Tanwar. In 2015 the seat came in basket of Kartar Singh of AAP. This time Congress has fielded Lohia, who will play key role in dividing and grabbing the vote bank of the BJP and AAP candidates.



ELECTION	MEMBER	PARTY
2008	Balram Tanwar	Congress
2013	Brahm Singh Tanwar	BJP
2015	Kartar Singh Tanwar	AAP



next MLA from our constituency will take it up on priority. There are several dark spots in the area and women safety is a big concern," said Rahul Singh, a proprietor in Chhatarpur enclave phase-II.

Majority of the Muslims living were cross with the AAP candidate and alleged that he did not even showed his face after winning 2015 election but they said that they will vote for AAP not any other party.

"Though Kartar Singh had not visited in our area but we will vote him as we expect he would bring some changes in constituency. We don't want BJP candidate to win as whenever he wins crime graph in this area increases," said a woman, who does not wished to be named and resident of Dhan Mill in the constituency.



"The roads are in bad condition here and there has been no development works in villages. Still there are several places in the area where water is stagnated and this stagnant water is inviting diseases. We believe to vote a candidate who promises to resolve our issues on a strict note," said Sangram Singh, a lawyer and resident of Chhatarpur.

"There are always long queues of traffic at traffic signal on 100 feet road in Chhatarpur. For last one decade not a single process has been initiated to ease traffic movement. This not the only place, the entire stretch from Chhatarpur Metro Station to Fatehpur Beri during the day remains choked. Traffic moves in snail pace and during office hours it takes around half hour to cover a kilometer. Who should be held responsible? Now elections have come and candidates are promising to resolve every issue," Singh said.

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Time to revisit history, says Vice President

PTI ■ CHENNAI

Lamenting that several stalwarts of the country's Independence movement such as Sardar Vallabhai Patel and Netaji Subash Chandra Bose had been neglected, Vice President M Venkaiah Naidu on Thursday said it was time to revisit history and highlight sacrifices made by them.

Unveiling a statue of Bose at the Raj Bhavan here in commemoration of his birth anniversary, he said history should inspire today's children and they should read about the life of heroes of the country's freedom struggle.

"Unfortunately, our text books have not given adequate importance to all the freedom fighters," he said adding the need of the hour was to high-

light sacrifices of such leaders.

Referring to leaders like Subhash Chandra Bose and Sardar Patel, he said in Tamil Nadu too there were freedom fighters including Pasumpun Muthuramalinga Thevar and V O Chidambaram Pillai.

"Great people. (But) you do not find adequate mention of those people in the Indian history... We have neglected these heroes. It is time we revisit the history," the Vice-President said.

Naidu said India's history must be "comprehensive" and it should inspire children, about the past of freedom fighters, their glory and the sacrifices made by them.

"We are a free India now, we must take pride in that and respect these great leaders. Our children must read their

lives," he said.

People should draw inspiration from the sacrifices made by the freedom fighters and build a 'inclusive peaceful and harmonious nation', he said.

Referring to his recent visit to the Cellular Jail in Andaman and Nicobar Islands, where several freedom fighters were incarcerated by the British, Naidu said he wanted to show his grand children the sacrifices made by these great people.

"I suggest all the children across the country not only children, even politicians, particularly, the MLAs, MPs please visit Andaman and Nicobar, see the cellular jail, and then you will understand the sacrifices, dedication, devotion of these great sons of this great country," he said.

If CAA is upheld, it would be end of secularism: Digvijaya

Bhopal: Senior Congress leader Digvijaya Singh said on Thursday that if the Supreme Court held the Citizenship (Amendment) Act (CAA) as constitutional, it would be the "last nail in the coffin of secularism". The Muslim community in the country was living in "fear" and looking up to the Supreme Court before which the constitutionality of the law has been challenged, Singh said here.

"Unity in diversity is the biggest strength of our country, which has been spoiled by (Prime Minister Narendra) Modi-ji and (Union home minister) Amit Shah-ji," he told reporters here.

"Digvijaya Singh is being dubbed as pro-Muslim. I am neither pro-Hindu nor pro-Muslim. I am pro-Indian," the Rajya Sabha MP said.

"Muslims are (living) in fear...They are disappointed with the system, political parties and police. Their only ray of hope is the judiciary," Singh said.

"They (Muslims) are waiting for the verdict of Supreme Court on the

unconstitutional CAA," he said.

"If they (the SC) uphold the Modi-Shah government's decision considering this unconstitutional law as constitutional, it will be the last nail in the coffin of secularism," the veteran Congress leader said.

Singh also said that the anti-CAA movement was now "out of our hands" and being run "entirely by women and children".

He also questioned the need for bringing in the CAA when the Union government was already empowered to grant citizenship through a certain procedure.

The CAA grants citizenship to non-Muslim refugees from Pakistan, Afghanistan and Bangladesh who migrated to India fleeing religious persecution.

"This law has been brought to threaten and frighten the Muslims," Singh alleged.

The Congress leader also asked why Jammu and Kashmir police officer Devendra Singh, arrested while allegedly accompanying a terrorist, was not booked for "treason." **PTI**

Saibaba birthplace row: Pathri residents to approach court

Aurangabad: Residents of Pathri in Parbhani district on Thursday decided to approach court to get legal sanctity to their claim that 19th century saint Saibaba was born in their village.

Members of the Sai Janmabhoomi Pathri Sansthan said they will file a petition in the Aurangabad bench of the Bombay High Court with evidence to prove that Saibaba was born in Pathri.

A controversy has erupted over the purported birthplace of the revered saint, 102 years after he took 'samadhi' in Shirdi. Some residents claimed that Maharashtra Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray had retracted his statement on Pathri being Saibaba's birthplace under pressure from the Shirdi temple trust.

MLC and president of the action committee, Babajani Durrani, said Pathri residents will move court on the issue.

"Shiv Sena MP Sanjay Jadhav had met Thackeray to seek his appointment for meeting Pathri residents but it was denied

and we were told not to take the controversy any further," Durrani told **PTI**.

"We have decided to go for legal procedure to resolve this issue and won't be meeting Thackeray. A team of advocates will visit Pathri and we will file a petition in the court next week," he said.

"We won't mind if the Government grant for Pathri doesn't come but we will never give up our claim that Pathri is the birthplace of Saibaba," he said.

The Sena on Tuesday said Thackeray should not be blamed for the "uncalled for" controversy over the birthplace of Saibaba as nobody can tell whether the 19th century saint was actually born in Shirdi.

Noting that the Shirdi Saibaba Sansthan's assets are worth over ₹ 2,600 crore out of which social works are done, an editorial in Sena mouthpiece 'Saamana' had said Shirdi became rich because of the saint, and none can snatch away the richness of the town where he died. **PTI**

Kejriwal seeks votes...

From Page 1

"Now, you (Kejriwal) are saying that you developed Delhi in five years so 'lage raho Kejriwal'," he added.

Earlier in the day, hundreds of AAP supporters holding placards in support of various schemes of the Government, including free healthcare, electricity and water, surrounded party national convener Kejriwal during his roadshow held in Matiala and Kalkaji Assembly constituency on Thursday.

The AAP supporters danced to the tune of 'Lage Raho Kejriwal' (the party's anthem). Kejriwal, atop an open yellow coloured jeep, waved to the public and shook hands with them as his roadshow moved through the narrow lanes of the Matiala Assembly. He was accompanied by Matiala MLA Gulab Singh Yadav.

"Mass gathering in Kalkaji Assembly constituency. We get strength after seeing such enthusiasm among people for the Aam Aadmi Party," he tweeted in Hindi.

Meena Devi, a 48-year-old house-

wife was standing out of his home in the same constituency and seemed very ecstatic after waiving to Kejriwal and being waived back by the Chief Minister.

"AAP chief has done all the work we expected him to do in last five years. He has built schools, constructed mohalla clinics and laid pipe lines in our area to ensure 24 hours uninterrupted water supply. I will vote for the party as it has worked more than any party I have seen," she said.

Rahul Bansal, who runs a glossary shop in the area said, "I am a BJP supporter but I will be voting for the AAP on the name of development and providing succor to people by ensuring free electricity, water and health care."

In the last phase of campaigning, Kejriwal will hold eight 'Town Hall' sessions at different locations of Delhi and will also carry out regular roadshows in different Assembly constituencies.

Delhi Assembly polls will be held on February 8 and the counting of votes will take place on February 11.

Projects shelved...

From Page 1

After deliberation, the SC-NBWL decided to defer the proposal asking the State Government to explore alternative source of water following sustainable goal objectives.

Welcoming the Centre's move to put on hold the project, wildlife scientist from the WII, SA Hussain, said the region is very important site for the critically endangered Schedule I species like gharial, Batagur turtle, Indian skimmer. He also pointed out the region also teems with national aquatic animal Gangetic dolphin, State fish Golden Mahaseer, most of these being critically endangered schedule I species. There are other sources of water like Tigma reservoir and Quawari river in the region, which can be utilised to meet the water need of the people, he suggested.

SC says it will consider after 3 months Swamy's plea for giving Ram Setu national heritage status

New Delhi: The Supreme Court on Thursday said it will consider after three months the plea of BJP leader Subramanian Swamy seeking a direction to the Centre for declaring 'Ram Setu' as a national heritage monument.

Ram Setu is a chain of limestone shoals between coasts of India and Sri Lanka. According to the epic Ramayana, the Ram Setu bridge was built by the 'Vanara army' to rescue Sita, who was kidnapped by Ravana.

A bench headed by Chief Justice SA Bobde took note of the submissions of Swamy that his interim application be listed for urgent hearing for declaring the Sethu a national heritage monument by the Archaeological Survey of India. "You please mention this after three months. We will entertain this then," the bench which also comprised

justices SA Nazeer and Sanjiv Khanna said.

The BJP leader submitted that he has already won the first round of the litigation in which the Centre accepted the existence of Ram Setu. He further said the union minister concerned had called a meeting in 2017 to consider his demand to declare the Sethu as a national heritage monument but subsequently nothing happened.

The top court referred to pendency of several cases before it and asked Swamy to mention his plea after three months for an urgent hearing.

The BJP leader had earlier raised the issue of declaring Ram Setu as a national monument in his PIL against the controversial Sethusamudram Ship Channel project, initiated by the UPA-I government. **PTI**

Centre seeks urgent hearing in SC on plea for fixing 7-day deadline for executing death penalty

New Delhi: The Centre on Thursday mentioned for urgent hearing in the Supreme Court its plea seeking fixing of a 7-day deadline for execution of death penalty after the issuance of black warrant saying the condemned prisoners take "judicial process for a ride".

A bench of Chief Justice S A Bobde and Justices S A Nazeer and Sanjiv Khanna was told by Solicitor General Tushar Mehta that the plea of Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) be taken up and the directions issued in 2014 in the Shatrughan Chauhan case, which was convict-centric, be modified and be made victim-centric. "You argue this when your (MHA's) petition comes up for hearing," the bench told Mehta who was arguing on

behalf of Uttar Pradesh government to oppose the review of two death row convicts.

A bench, meanwhile, reserved its verdict on the review pleas of woman and her lover, both natives of Amroha in UP, for killing seven members of her family including parents, two brothers and their wives and strangulating her 10-month-old nephew in 2008.

The MHA plea said: "All the guidelines provided... Are accused-centric. These guidelines, however, do not take into account an irreparable mental trauma, agony, upheaval and derangement of the victims and their family members, the collective conscience of the nation and the deterrent effect which the capital punishment intends to make." **PTI**

Nitish dares Pavan Varma to...

From Page 1

On his part, the JD(U) general secretary said he will decide his next course of action depending on the reply from party president Nitish Kumar to his letter and asserted that he will continue to speak "what he believes is for the good of the country and the party".

Varma reacted after Nitish snubbed him saying he is free to go wherever he wants and slammed him for raising his concerns over the party's stand on a host of citizenship measures of the Modi Government. "I have not received a reply. Depending on the reply from the party president or its absence I will decide on my course of action. I will continue to speak what I believe is right, what is for the good of the country and the party," the former Rajya Sabha member said. The former diplomat has distanced himself from the JD(U) over its support to the amended citizenship law and the national population register exercise, as he has often claimed that these measures along with the national citizenship register, which is on the BJP's agenda, are divisive for the country.

time of the commission of offence.

A Single Judge Bench of Justice Suresh Kumar Kait had concluded that the plea was filed only to delay the execution of the four convicts in the Nirbhaya gang rape case. The matter was thereafter placed before the Bar Council of Delhi which issued a notice to AP Singh.

The 23-year-old paramedic student Nirbhaya was gang-raped and brutally assaulted on the intervening night of December 16-17, 2012 inside a moving bus in south Delhi by six persons before being thrown out on the road.

She died on December 29, 2012 at Mount Elizabeth Hospital in Singapore. Ram Singh, one of the six accused, allegedly committed suicide in Tihar Jail. A juvenile, who was among the accused, was convicted by a juvenile justice board and was released from a reformation home after serving a three-year term.

J&K Lt Guv assures protection of land, jobs

PTI ■ JAMMU

Seeking to allay apprehensions around the domicile rights of people of Jammu & Kashmir, Lt Governor G C Murmu on Thursday assured protection of land and jobs subject to certain exceptions in the Union Territory.

He also said around 1,000 development projects have been completed in the UT in the last 18 months and an equal number would be completed soon.

"There have been certain apprehensions around the domicile rights of the people of Jammu & Kashmir (after the abrogation of Article 370 provisions in August last year). Keeping in view the interest of the UT, protection of land and jobs for the locals would be ensured subject to certain exceptions," Murmu said. Participating in a public outreach programme of the Centre along with Union Minister of State for Agriculture and Farmers Welfare Parshottam Rupala at Miran Sahib here, the Lt Governor reiterated the government's commitment for implementation of the 74th Constitutional Amendment to strengthen the Urban Local

Bodies (ULBs) in J&K.

He also informed that the Government is relooking at the reservation policy so that no section of society is left behind.

"In the last 18 months, around 1000 developmental projects have been completed and an equal number would be completed soon. Earlier, only 20 percent amount was spent out of the Prime Ministers' Development Package (PMDP) but in the last one year, the expenditure saw a further increase of 26 percent," he said.

The Lt Governor said that with the revival of power projects, the Government is committed to tapping the power sector to its full potential.

"Unbundling of Power Development Department will witness a positive change in the power scenario in the next two years," he said.

Referring to the week-long public outreach programme of the Centre, Murmu said the purpose of the initiative is to spread the awareness of Central government's developmental and public welfare initiatives and to have a first-hand appraisal of the public issues and demands.

Peaceful... Cononavirus locks down 5 Chinese cities

From Page 1

"India's nationhood is not one language, one religion, one enemy. It is the 'perennial universalism' of 1.3 billion people who use more than 122 languages and 1,600 dialects in their everyday lives, practice seven major religions, belong to three major ethnic groups — Caucasians, Mongoloids, and Dravidians live under one system, one flag and one identity of being Indian or bhartiya and have no enemies. That is what makes Bharat a diverse and united nation," he stated.

At the Thursday function, the former President said the Election Commission has served its purpose well and any attempt at its denigration will amount to denigrating the electoral process. "People's mandate is sacrosanct and its sanctity supreme. Onus of ensuring this lies with the Election Commission. They must do so & put any speculations to rest," he said.

In his opening remarks, Chief Election Commissioner Sunil Arora said, "Election Commission of India is indebted to Mukherjee for kindly agreeing to deliver the First Sukumar Sen Memorial Lecture. There could not be a harmonious combination of theme and the speaker for this evening - a savant and a rajrishi."

From Page 1

Wuhan is a major transportation hub and home to many universities.

The Wuhan lockdown is a cause of concern for Indian students who still remained there. The city has about 700 Indian students, majority of them studying medicine. However, most of the students have apparently left for home for the holidays.

As concerns grew over their safety, the Indian Embassy on Thursday opened helplines and established contacts with the concerned Chinese officials to ensure food and other supplies for those who remained in the city.

In new disclosure, Chinese officials on Thursday confirmed fresh cases of coronavirus in people who did not even travel to Wuhan recently. The National Health Commission also reported increasing number of cases with no exposure to Wuhan's Huanan seafood wholesale market, which is believed to be related to most of the infected cases. The cases without confirmed exposure to the market have been found overseas.

The virus, which a doctor in Wuhan told BBC is spreading at an alarming rate, has dampened the Chinese New Year celebrations beginning Friday.

Chinese all over the world formally bid goodbye to the year of the pig and welcome the year of rat on Friday. The Chinese government has given week long holiday.

In view of virus scare, several cities including Beijing have cancelled special events. The festival is also known as the Spring Festival.

Large cultural activities during spring festival in Beijing such as temple fairs were cancelled to prevent the spread of the virus, state-run Global Times reported.

An official statement said that Beijing's sprawling imperial palace 'Forbidden City' will close on Saturday until further notice to "avoid cross-infection caused by the gathering of people".

A Chinese government announcement said citizens in Wuhan and Huanggang should not leave without specific reasons. As medical consumable such as surgical masks, protective clothing and disinfectant are running short, the Red Cross Society of China's Wuhan branch opened a 24-hour hotline to receive donated emergency stocks. All residents in the province have been ordered to wear masks.

"Staff of state organs, enterprises and institutions shall wear masks at work, and operators of public venues should set up eye-catching signs to request residents to put on masks before entering," said a notice issued by the Wuhan municipal government.

"Those who disregard the warning will be punished according to relevant laws and regulations," it added. Many local residents are busy purchasing food and daily

necessities for the festival, state-run Xinhua news agency reported.

According to the provincial commerce department, the Hubei province will strengthen the monitoring of grain, oil, meat, eggs and vegetables, increase stocks during the spring festival holiday to ensure stable supply, and intensify environmental sanitation control.

Hubei Province has alone reported 444 cases of coronavirus infections. All 17 deaths were reported from the province. Among the confirmed cases, 399 patients are receiving treatment in hospitals, with 71 in severe condition and 24 in critical condition, said Yang Yunyan, vice governor of the province.

Confirmed cases have also been reported from several regions including Xinjiang and Hong Kong, Macao and Taiwan, as well as in the US, Japan, the Republic of Korea, Thailand, Singapore and Vietnam. The World Health Organisation (WHO) on Wednesday extended to Thursday its emergency talks on whether the coronavirus outbreak in China constitutes a public health emergency of international concern. Lauding China's immediate detecting and sharing of the sequencing of the virus, WHO Director-General Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus believed that those actions will "minimize the chances of this outbreak spreading internationally." **PTI**

Jail readies noose, Nirbhaya...

From Page 1

The jail authorities were also holding conversations with them on a daily basis to ensure that they were in a good mental state, the official said.

On Wednesday, in a plea filed by the Centre before the Supreme Court, the Ministry of Home Affairs said heinous crime convicts are taking the judicial process for a ride. They demanded fixing a seven-day deadline for execution of condemned prisoners after issuance of black warrant, amid the delay in the hanging of the four death row convicts in the Nirbhaya gangrape-murder case.

On January 18, following a Delhi High Court direction to take necessary action against the counsel for Nirbhaya convict, Pawan, the Bar Council of Delhi has issued notice to Advocate AP Singh.

The High Court had passed the direction while dismissing Pawan's plea to establish that he was a juvenile at the

time of the commission of offence.

A Single Judge Bench of Justice Suresh Kumar Kait had concluded that the plea was filed only to delay the execution of the four convicts in the Nirbhaya gang rape case. The matter was thereafter placed before the Bar Council of Delhi which issued a notice to AP Singh.

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India berates Pak for spewing venom...

From Page 1

"You cannot have two nuclear-armed countries even contemplating a conflict," he said, claiming that there was every possibility of India trying to raise tensions at the border to "divert attention from domestic issues" such as protests against the Citizenship Amendment Act(CAA). Among the demands made by the Pakistan Prime Minister was the positioning of a UN Military Observer Group along the Line of Control (LoC) between the two countries.

Meanwhile, India's Deputy Permanent Representative to the United Nations (UN) Ambassador K Nagaraj Naidu, slammed Pakistan for "spewing venom and false narratives" of monumental proportions in the United Nations.

He said it (Pakistan) takes to hate

speech like a "fish takes to water" and "obfuscates" the international community from the truth as Islamabad yet again raked up the Kashmir issue at the world body.

Pakistan has repeatedly brought up the Kashmir issue at various UN platforms in a bid to internationalise it but has failed to get any support. Last week, Islamabad failed in its efforts to get any traction from the membership of the UN Security Council when its 'all-weather ally' China made another pitch to raise the issue in the 15-nation Council. There was consensus among the rest of the Council members that Kashmir is a bilateral matter between India and Pakistan.

Speaking at a session of the General Assembly on 'Report of the Secretary-General on the Work of the Organization' on Wednesday in New York, Naidu said Pakistan "indulges in confabulations and obfuscates the international community from the

truth" instead of putting an end to the "bellicose and vitriolic diatribe" and taking steps to restore normal ties.

"Just like a fish takes to water, one delegation has again taken to hate speech. Every time this delegation speaks, it spews venom and false narratives of monumental proportions.

"It's extremely surprising that a country that has completely decimated its minority population talks about protecting minorities. Pakistan's practice of using false pretences to distract from addressing the malaise that afflicts it has run its course. Pakistan needs to reflect that there are no takers for its false rhetoric and should get down to the normal business of diplomacy," Naidu said.

The Indian response came after Saad Ahmad Warraich, Counsellor at Pakistan mission to the UN, raised the issue of Jammu & Kashmir in his remarks during the session.

In New Delhi, the External Affairs Ministry spokesperson said regarding the Pakistan Prime Minister's plea, "his remarks suggest that he is desperate and rapidly losing hope. The global com-

munity can now see through their double standards. While they pretend to be victims of terrorism on the one hand, they foster extremists who spread terrorism in India and other countries on the other," he said.

Kumar also said Pakistan's attempts to create an "alarmist situation" in Kashmir have failed miserably. "Our position on Kashmir has been clear and consistent through the years. These are bilateral issues that need to be discussed between India and Pakistan, and there is no role for a third party in this situation," he said, adding that Imran Khan should resolve issues in "his own country" before looking elsewhere.

These observations came after Trump's offer to mediate during his meeting with the Pakistan Prime Minister in Davos on Tuesday, Kumar said there is no role for any third party in the Kashmir issue which has to be resolved bilaterally with Pakistan and the onus is on Islamabad to create an environment for engagement. He also maintained that the World Economic Forum was not an appropriate platform to discuss such issues.

community can now see through their double standards. While they pretend to be victims of terrorism on the one hand, they foster extremists who spread terrorism in India and other countries on the other," he said.

Kumar also said Pakistan's attempts to create an "alarmist situation" in Kashmir have failed miserably. "Our position on Kashmir has been clear and consistent through the years. These are bilateral issues that need to be discussed between India and Pakistan, and there is no role for a third party in this situation," he said, adding that Imran Khan should resolve issues in "his own country" before looking elsewhere.

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WESTERN RAILWAY
CORRIGENDUM No. 1
 To Advertised Tender Through E Mode Notice No. WTR/17/2019/05 Dated 23.12.2019. Item No. of tender notice : 1. Tender No. : 196040. Description of Item : Various types of bolts. Item to be modified : Date of closing tender. From : 28.01.2020. To : 17.02.2020. Uploaded on website www.ireps.gov.in
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THE PIONEER CLASSIFIEDS

THANKSGIVING

Thank you Holy Spirit for Blessings Celine PD(8776)C

Thank you Holy Spirit for Blessings Celine PD(8777)C

Thank you Holy Spirit for Blessings Celine PD(8778)C

Modern Coach Factory, Raebareli

E-Tender Notice
 E-Tender Notice No.-ELECT-PS-20531 Date: 21.01.2020
 On behalf of the President of India, Dy. Chief Electrical Engineer(PS), Modern Coach Factory, Raebareli is inviting open e-tender, based on single packet system from capable & experienced tenderers through Indian Railways portal www.ireps.gov.in for the under mentioned work:
Details:-

1. Name of Work	Comprehensive annual maintenance contract for 500 KWABB make solar inverter for three years.
2. Place of work	Modern Coach Factory Lalganj, Distt. Raebareli.
3. Approx cost	Rs. 2495700.00 (Twenty four lac ninety five thousand seven hundred only)
4. Cost of tender	Rs. 3000.00 (Three thousand only).
5. Earnest Money	Rs. 49900.00 (Forty nine thousand nine hundred only)
6. Date & Times of closing of tender	20.02.2020 at 15.30 hrs.
7. Term & Condition	Other details, terms & condition are available in tender documents on www.ireps.gov.in.

Dy. Chief Electrical Engineer/PS
 SERVING CUSTOMERS WITH A SMILE

RaGa's nationwide rallies to begin in Jaipur on Tue

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

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

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

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



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

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

P Chidambaram attacks Modi Govt over Democracy Index

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

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

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

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

on Twitter.

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

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

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

possession.

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

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

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

INSHORT

KERALA FAILS TO PROVIDE UTILISATION CERTIFICATES

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

ARMY VICE CHIEF TO TAKE CHARGE ON JAN 25

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

Delays in projects are unacceptable: Gadkari

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

CBI conducts searches in Radikal Foods loan scam

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

CBI probes Rama Lengaw Natesan's murder in UAE

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

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

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

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

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

CORONAVIRUS

Over 100 Indian nurses tested; one infected

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

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

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

A senior Union Health

Affected nurse is being treated at Aseer National Hospital

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

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

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

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

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

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

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

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

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

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

Ex-cop KM Singh to be awarded Subhash Chandra Bose Aapda Prabandhan Puraskar

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

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

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

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

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

statement.

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

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

The DMMC in

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

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

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

Brazilian envoy: CAA, Kashmir internal issues of India

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

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

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

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

"These (Citizenship (Amendment) Act and

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

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

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

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

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

occupation here.

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

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

"We are struggling to grow at 2 per cent. We are the country that has been facing more difficult times.

We had two years of recession and two years of very low growth, but we have a very good perspective of growing above 2 per cent this year," Lago asserted.

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

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

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

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

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



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

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

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

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

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

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

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

The memorial is dedicated

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

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

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

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

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

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

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

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

Two weeks back the Defence Ministry had

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

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

CITIZENSHIP AMENDMENT ACT

Cong suffering from mental bankruptcy: Nadda

PTI ■ AGRA (UP)

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

"The Congress has lost all hopes. Its leadership is suffering from 'manasik diwaliyapan' (mental bankruptcy). The statements issued by the party in the last eight months reflect that they are intended to help Pakistan," he said.

Daring Congress leader Rahul Gandhi to "speak even ten lines" on the Citizenship (Amendment) Act, Nadda said the Congress was provoking

Muslims.

"If he (Rahul) speaks even ten lines on CAA, then we will acknowledge him," he said.

The BJP chief said there was no need to be afraid of the CAA as it was the law of the people and accused the Congress of conspiring to fan riots in the state and the country.

"Congress leaders have supported those who spread violence. The party is upset and their leaders have given statements in the language of Pakistan," he said.

Seeking to allay "apprehensions created by the Congress" that minority community members will lose their citizenship under the new law, the BJP chief said, "The CAA is to give citizenship and not to



snatch it. Those who do not know anything about the law are misguiding the people."

Nadda was addressing a public meeting here in support of the amended law three days after taking over the reins from Union Home Minister Amit Shah.

The 59-year-old leader from Himachal Pradesh was elected as BJP's 11th president on Monday after he emerged as

the only nominee in the fray.

In an apparent reference to the leaders of the BSP and the SP, he said, "These days Dalit leaders are opposing the CAA. These Dalit leaders and the Congress hardly know anything about the CAA and are only spreading canards to mislead people."

Nadda said the political innings of the two parties was over and they have understood that times have changed and the country is marching rapidly under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath said in his address said that in a democracy, everyone has the right to speak in a democratic way but those who cause chaos should not be under any kind of illusion as the government has a solution to every problem.

"The Government will recover the losses from those who damaged public property," he said. He said protesters who destroyed public property on the signal of PFI and SIMI have now realised that their assets will be confiscated. "Now, these people are trying to ruin the atmosphere by using their women and children as a shield," he said, adding that previous governments used to plead with miscreants.

Stressing that opposition

parties have created their vote banks by focussing on conflicts between communities, Adityanath said ever since Prime Minister Narendra Modi came to power, all such issues have been resolved.

Therefore, the opposition parties "are trying to spread confusion", he said. "The Opposition is upset with the abrogation of Article 370. They are speaking the language of Pakistan," he added.

The Chief Minister further said, "The CAA is connected with India's heritage. It has been the tradition of India to protect the people who come here for shelter. The CAA is a law for granting citizenship not for taking citizenship away. The opposition must understand its reality."



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



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

Act wake-up call for N-E States: UDP

Shillong: The United Democratic Party (UDP), a coalition partner of the ruling Meghalaya Democratic Alliance (MDA), on Thursday said the Citizenship Amendment Act is a wake up call for all States in the North-East to act against illegal immigration from neighbouring countries and influx of non-indigenous people.

The UDP executive met here and debated at length on the issue of CAA and the Inner Line Permit, according to its general secretary Jemino Mawthoh.

He said the UDP opposed the CAA in principle. We are opposing it because we don't see any rationale here. Let us wait for the wisdom of the Supreme Court to make its interpretation in this regard.

When CAA was passed, it was a wakeup call for the States of N-E and for the people of Meghalaya. Although this issue is a common one for the North East and the Centres approach is fragmented, all the states in the region must work together to find a solution against illegal immigration from the neighbouring countries and influx of non-indigenous people, Mawthoh told journalists after the meeting.

He said, We have been battling the issues of influx and illegal immigration for the last four decades now. This is the right time for the North East states to come up with something which is concrete for the protection and safeguard of the indigenous people.

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

Bengaluru: JD(S) patriarch HD Deve Gowda on Thursday called on secular regional parties and Congress to fight against the "divisive policies" of the Central Government like the Citizenship Amendment Act and National Register of Citizens with a Common Minimum Programme.

The former Prime Minister also accused Prime Minister Narendra Modi of fulfilling the "long standing anti-Muslim agenda" of Jana Sangh and Hindu Mahasabha, and leading the country to the margins of danger.

Gowda said that during these trying times, regional parties and the Congress still believing in secular principles have to fight with a CMP "to avert the disaster that may explode anytime."

It was a matter left for bigger leaders to decide, but the JD(S), being a small party, should be ready to fight these acts at any level and be ready to go to jail if such a situation arose, he said, addressing a

JD(S) convention here.

Alleging that attempts were being made to treat Muslims as second grade citizens of the country, he accused Modi of "fulfilling the nearly 70-year-old anti Muslim agenda" of the Jana Sangh and Hindu Mahasabha, after his party won over 300 seats in the Lok Sabha in the 2019 parliamentary polls.

Pointing to nationwide agitations, he said "this government has led the country to the margins of danger..."

Noting that Congress and JD(S) as "secular parties", had formed a coalition Government in Karnataka that eventually collapsed, the regional party's national President said he would not discuss who was right or wrong and reasons for the Government to fall. "But somewhere we have stumbled," he said. "How the BJP Government was formed in Karnataka, how long will it survive, where did we stumble...Let's not discuss about it."

Opp slams UP CM for warning protesters

Lucknow: The Opposition parties on Thursday slammed Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath for warning anti-CAA protesters that "azadi" slogans raised by them will be treated as sedition.

While the Samajwadi Party drew an analogy with the British rule, the Congress termed it "a language of dictators."

The UP CM in a rally in Kanpur on Wednesday had said, "If azadi slogans are raised here like they used to be raised in Kashmir, then it will come in the category of sedition and stringent action will be taken by the government."

Reacting to it, Senior SP leader Ram Govind Chaudhary said the British too "had described freedom fighters as terrorists". "Now their successors or those who had sided with them are terming those raising azadi slogans traitors," he said. He said there was no need to get "perturbed" by such warnings. "Their countdown has started and that is why they are ranting," Chaudhary said.

The SP leader alleged that the CM was threatening women against those hell bent on dividing the country. "Azadi is the birthing of all countrymen and those denying it will have to depart in the same manner as Hitler," the SP leader said.

Kashmiri leaders seek release of political detainees on R-Day

Jammu: Two prominent Kashmiri leaders on Thursday advocated the release of all political detainees, including three former Chief Ministers, as a goodwill gesture on the Republic Day.

Ghulam Hassan Mir and Mohammad Dilawar Mir, both former ministers, also demanded the restoration of broadband services to mediapersons and traders besides compensation to those involved in the agriculture and horticulture sectors.

"The country is celebrating the Republic Day (January 26) and the tradition has been the release of some detainees. Even some convicted persons used to get relief in the country on the occasion," they said.

"People are in preventive detention and it would be good if all of them, including the former chief ministers, are released as a goodwill gesture," Hassan, who is the president of the Jammu and Kashmir Democratic Party Nationalist, told reporters here.

He said some of the people, who are lodged in jails outside the Union Territory, should be brought back if their detention is imperative on security reasons.

The duo, who was part of a group of former ministers and legislators led by Altaf Bukhari who met the Lt Governor G C Murmu early this month, also batted for the restoration of broadband services to mediapersons and businessmen.

"At a time when the country is celebrating the Republic Day, the people of Jammu and Kashmir should be freed from the curb. We want to live a normal life," Hassan said.

Referring to their meeting with the Lt Governor on January 7, Hassan said the delegation submitted a memorandum on socio-political and economic interests of people.

"After our meeting, we noticed some positive headway on some of our demands like the release of some political leaders and the youth lodged in

outside jails," he said.

"The restoration of the Internet is the demand from both regions of Kashmir and Jammu and it should be made fully functional," he said, adding reports of the restoration of the facility in Kashmir is not a reality.

The leaders also asked the Union government to tell the positives that have emerged following the scrapping of the special status of J-K in August last year.

In response to a question on the week-long public outreach programme by the BJP, he said, "We should not feel obsessed with it. If they have come on a visit, it is good and they will themselves see the ground situation. The question will be raised what they have done after their visit."

On the possibility of assembly elections, he said it is premature to talk about it at the moment because the assembly seats have to be increased in accordance with the reorganisation act.

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

Srinagar: To promote healthcare based on alternative medicine in Jammu & Kashmir, the Government will set up 50-bedded hospitals in every district of the newly created Union Territory at a cost of ₹ 12 crore each, Union Minister Shripad Nayak said Thursday.

The Union Minister of state for AYUSH and defence also said the hill-resorts of Gulmarg, Patnitop and Pahalgam will be promoted as medical tourism destinations.

Addressing an event at SKICC, he gave an overview of wellness centres being established in J&K to promote affordable healthcare, particularly in rural areas, and assured liberal funding for upgrading the health infrastructure. He cited the success of the 100-bedded All India Institute of Ayurveda in New Delhi, established in 2016, and said similar hospitals will be set up across India, including Jammu & Kashmir.

"Everyday 2,000 patients visit the hospital for treatment.

It will be setup in other places across India including J&K," he said.

The Union Minister later inaugurated various projects, which included heritage lighting from Dalgate to Nishat and Nishat to Hazratbal at an estimated cost of ₹ 9.98 crore.

An official spokesperson said a number of delegations met the Minister and raised their issues. The business community sought his help to make the Jammu-Srinagar highway an all-weather road.

Several ministers visited the Kashmir valley as part of a public outreach programme. Union Minister for Law and Justice Ravi Shankar Prasad inaugurated an indoor sports stadium in Baramulla in north Kashmir and participated in events related to the socio-economic development of the district.

The M inister also laid the foundation stone of a mini-pavilion block at Jhelum Stadium in Baramulla, the spokesman said.

Davinder case: NIA raids many Srinagar locations

RAKESH K SINGH ■ NEW DELHI

The National Investigation Agency, probing the case of arrested Jammu & Kashmir Police DSP Davinder Singh, on Thursday carried out searches at multiple locations in Srinagar.

The searched locations include one residence of Dr Murtaza at Gulshan Nagar area in Srinagar where Singh allegedly used to provide shelter to the terrorists including Naveed Babu of Hizbul Mujahideen.

Preliminary probe has revealed that Singh not only used his residence at Indiranagar but also houses at Chanpora and Sanat Nagar for providing shelter to the terrorists who were facilitated by the disgraced police officer. Besides owning a house each in Indiranagar and Sanatnagar, Singh also had a home in Jammu which are suspected to have been built from the "proceeds of crime" of

Six serving senior police officers are under the scanner of the probe agencies for their suspected collusion with Singh

facilitating the terrorists' movement in and out of the Valley.

A five-member NIA team is stationed in Srinagar for further probe even as senior supervisory officials have returned to the national Capital.

Background checks of Singh by the federal probe agency has revealed that in 1997 he was accused in a theft of a Amul butter van owned by the family members of a former Deputy CM.

However, he was said to have been taken off the hook at the behest of his then boss and SSP despite an FIR being registered in connection with the incident, sources said.

In 1992, Singh had allegedly sold the drugs seized from smugglers and the police department had suspended him and recommended his

dismissal from service. However, an Inspector General of the Jammu & Kashmir police had saved him from adverse departmental action, sources said.

They said about six serving senior police officers are under the scanner of the probe agencies for their suspected collusion with Singh.

Meanwhile, the NIA on Thursday produced Singh before a designated court in Jammu that granted his 15-day NIA custody along with four other accused in the case.

"Today, five arrested accused namely Davinder Singh, Syed Naveed Mushtaq Shah, Irfan Shafi Mir, Rafi Ahmad Rather and Syed Irfan Ahmad in case RC-1/2020/NIA/Jammu, were produced before the NIA Special Court, Jammu. The Court has granted 15 days' custody of the accused to NIA till February 6, 2020," the NIA said in a statement. All the five accused will be subjected to custodial interrogation by the NIA.



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

Army chief visits forward posts in J&K

PNS ■ JAMMU

The Chief of Army Staff (COAS) Gen Manoj Mukund Naravane on Thursday visited forward areas along the Line of Control in Jammu region to review the prevailing security situation with field commanders on ground zero. Army Chief was briefed and updated by Lt Gen Harsha Gupta, General Officer Commanding, White Knight Corps and commanders on ground.

Before heading for the field visit, Army Chief was briefed by Lt Gen Ranbir Singh, Army Commander Northern Command on the prevailing situation along the Line of Control and also in the hinterland at Udhampur based Northern command headquarters.

Ministry of Defence PRO in Udhampur, in a press statement said, "The Army Chief was appreciative of the efforts put in by Northern Command to meet the challenges posed by inimical elements."



Defence PRO said, during his visit to the forward location Army

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

gencies was also reinforced by COAS during his interaction with the troops", Defence PRO said.

Army Chief also commended the standard operating procedures institutionalized to ensure safe-secure environment and mission readiness of the troops. He conveyed his satisfaction on the people friendly measures undertaken in quick time frame.

In the evening, Army Chief Gen Manoj Mukund Naravane along with Lt-Gen Ranbir Singh called on Girish Chandra Murmu, Lieutenant Governor, J&K and discussed prevailing security situation. Defence PRO said, "The Lieutenant Governor was appreciative of the synergy between the Army, other security forces and the civil administration in maintaining peaceful law and order situation."

13 stranded sailors rescued from tanker

TN RAGHUNATHA ■ MUMBAI:

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

Upon receiving a distress call at 8: 05 am that a tanker had reported flooding in engine room and was sinking rapidly, the Maritime Rescue Co-ordination Centre, (MRCC), Mumbai, established contact with both the ship and MRCC Karachi as the position was 90 Nautical Miles inside Pakistan Search and Rescue Region.



The MRCC — which works under the ICG and is responsible for co-ordinating the air-sea rescue in Mumbai and an extensive area of the Arabian Sea and also the territorial waters of Mumbai — identified MV Ganga which was operating in close vicinity and directed the vessel to rescue the crew in distress.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

MNS launches Raj Thackeray's son Amit into mainstream politics

TN RAGHUNATHA ■ MUMBAI:

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

On January 27 last year,

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

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

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

LJP hails Centre's move to do away with NPR parents birth details

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

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

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

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

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

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

Student punished with 450 sit-ups falls ill, private tutor booked

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

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

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

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

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

11k Brus living in relief camps to lose voting rights in Mizoram

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

After Savarkar, Bal Thackeray espoused Hindutva: Raut

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

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

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

Deport all illegal Pakistani, Bangladeshi immigrants: Raj Thackeray

TN RAGHUNATHA ■ MUMBAI:

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Their roots have now spread. So systematically we will take legal action against them and thereby enforce control," he added. Recently state Home Minister Basavaraj Bommai had said that steps had been initiated for legal action and banning organisations like Popular Front of India (PFI) which are allegedly involved in anti-social and terror-related activities in Karnataka. PTI

essential steps in this regard and we will continue to take necessary steps.

Their roots have now spread. So systematically we will take legal action against them and thereby enforce control," he added. Recently state Home Minister Basavaraj Bommai had said that steps had been initiated for legal action and banning organisations like Popular Front of India (PFI) which are allegedly involved in anti-social and terror-related activities in Karnataka. PTI

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

DGIPR/2019/2020/4641

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

TN RAGHUNATHA ■ MUMBAI:

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

हरीयाणा सरकार

TENDER NOTICE

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

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION KINDLY VISIT : www.haryanaeprocurement.gov.in or www.etenders.hry.nic.in RO NO. 79678

SEARCH FOR MISSING/KIDNAPPED

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

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

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

THE KANGRA CO-OPERATIVE BANK LTD.

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

APPENDIX II
[See rule 4(2)]
INVENTORY

Inventory of hypothecated movable secured asset: vehicle taken possession in loan account bearing No. GP/2827, Loan a/c No. 00068194592.

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

(1) Description of article/vehicle : Innova Crysta 2.4 G, DL-12A-7/196, Engine No. ZGDA044587, Chassis No. MBJJBEM401506913, Model: 2016, Color : White, Make Toyota, Fuel : Diesel, Estimated Value : ₹ 8,00,000/-. Place where kept for sale custody (Name of the person if necessary): Parking area, Janakpuri West Metro Station. (1) Description of article/vehicle : Document Received at the Time of Possession: (1) Insurance, (2) Permit, (3) Fitness, (4) Pollution Certificate. Note: Registration Certificate not received. Estimated Value : ₹ 8,00,000/-. Place where kept for sale custody (Name of the person if necessary): Parking area, Janakpuri West Metro Station.

Panchas:
Name and Address of Panch : (1) Vikash Chand R/o. B-5/202, Sector-5, Rohini, Delhi-110085. (2) Amarjeet Singh, D-169, Ganesh Nagar, Delhi-110092.

Signature

PAPER WITH PASSION

A really bad year

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



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

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

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

An astronaut's friend

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



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

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

Illogic and the showman

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



BHOPINDER SINGH

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

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

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

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



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

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

A thoroughbred professional, Mattis became a typical suf-

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

SOUNDBITE

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

BJP chief —JP Nadda



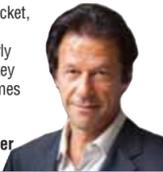
They (Government) are asking those who have been living here for four generations to prove that they are Indians. This is sad. I think everyone should speak up.

Actor —Nandita Das



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

Pakistan Prime Minister —Imran Khan



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

West Bengal CM —Mamata Banerjee



LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Change of guard

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

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

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

R Narayanan Navi Mumbai

CAA: Flawed on several counts

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

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



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

G David Milton Maruthancode

Silent killer

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

resort at Daman, a popular tourist destination in Nepal.

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

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

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

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

M Pradyu Kannur

No, thank you

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

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

Aditi Via email

Send your feedback to: letterstopioneer@gmail.com

FIRST COLUMN

Aim for green industrial growth

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



KUMARDEEP BANERJEE

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

POINTCOUNTERPOINT

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

—UNION HOME MINISTER
AMIT SHAH



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

—AIMIM CHIEF
ASADUDDIN OWAIISI

List of expectations

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

MSMEs need more incentives



RACHIT CHAWLA

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

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

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

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

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

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

Give IT sops to boost EV sales



PANKAJ MUNJAL

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

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

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

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

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

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

Formulate retail policy soon



RAVINDER SINGH

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Derivatives are a double-edged sword

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



HIMA BINDU KOTA

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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



FOREIGN EYE



WITH FRIENDS LIKE THESE...

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

(The Guardian editorial)

Coronavirus scare grips Asian currencies

₹ declines 7 paise

PTI ■ MUMBAI

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

However, softening crude prices and strong domestic equity market restricted the rupee's fall, forex dealers said. At the interbank foreign exchange market, the local currency opened on a weak note at 71.21. During the day, it swung between a high of 71.16 and a low of 71.35.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

India Inc expecting Budget to lower personal I-T rates

PTI ■ MUMBAI

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

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

The majority of respondents also feel that the government in the forthcoming Budget to be unveiled on February 1 will increase the standard deduction and give more incentives for housing loans. The Government had slashed corporate tax rates to 25 per cent for old companies and to 15 per cent for new companies provided they are ready to forego all the existing exemptions.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Niti to develop National Data Platform

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

OIL and GAIL, which were

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

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

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

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

Asked about the credit crunch in the Indian economy, State Bank of India Chairman Rajnish Kumar said he believes the credit market will be back to stability and normalcy soon. "There has been a series of steps... Bank recapitalisation has happened, PSU banks, which control about 60 per cent of the assets in the country are returning to profits...", he said. He added the course correction that was required has happened and banks are much more cautious than what we were earlier. He further stressed that "we are ready to lend".

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

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

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

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

crore for AGR. This includes advance money that company has paid for the month of January, 2020," the source said. The company has made provision of ₹177 crore to pay for the Government revenue share based on the Supreme Court judgement dated

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

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

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

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

PRADHAN SAYS NON-TELCOS NOT LIABLE

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

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

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

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

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

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

modification petition filed seeking relaxation in payments, they said.

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

He said parallel to discussions with the DoT, the Supreme Court has been approached on the issue. The government's demand from such companies increased many times more than their net worth and the Centre asked them to go to the Supreme Court against such dues.

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

Indian economy poised to take off: Goyal

PTI ■ DAVOS

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

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

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

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



an "unbalanced trade agreement, which was really not fulfilling the guiding principles on which RCEP started about eight years ago, therefore India chose not to participate in it". Out of the RCEP countries India already has bilateral trade agreements with ASEAN 10 with Japan and Korea, we are

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

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

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

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Asked about the credit crunch in the Indian economy, State Bank of India Chairman Rajnish Kumar said he believes the credit market will be back to stability and normalcy soon. "There has been a series of steps... Bank recapitalisation has happened, PSU banks, which control about 60 per cent of the assets in the country are returning to profits...", he said. He added the course correction that was required has happened and banks are much more cautious than what we were earlier. He further stressed that "we are ready to lend".

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

PTI ■ DAVOS

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Davos: The World Economic Forum on Thursday announced new internet security principles, developed by a group of leading ISPs and multilateral organisations, to help protect up to one billion users. Unveiling the new initiative here at its 50th annual meeting, the WEF said BT, Deutsche Telekom, Du Telecom, Europol, Global Cyber Alliance, Internet Society, Korea Telecom, Proximus, Saudi Telecom, Singtel, Telstra and ITU endorse these new principles combatting high-volume cyberattacks, protecting up to one billion consumers in 180 countries.

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

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

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

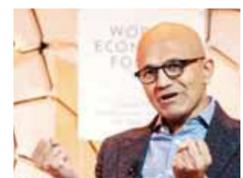
PTI ■ DAVOS

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

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

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

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



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

MoS Mansukh meets IMO Secy Gen at Davos

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

ADITYA BIRLA CAPITAL
PROTECTING INVESTING FINANCING ADVISING

Aditya Birla Finance Limited

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

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

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

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

DESCRIPTION OF THE IMMOVABLE PROPERTY: -

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

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

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

PLACE : Delhi
DATE : 24-01-2020

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

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

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

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

Quantity :- 01 Job
Earnest Money (Rs. in lacs) :- 0.035
Cost of tender document :- Rs. 200
Period of completion :- 15 days
Class of contractor :- Approved contractors/Registered firms/Authorized dealers/Workshop owners having experience in small hydro - Mechanical / Electrical Works.

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

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

Sensex rises 271 pts on value buying, L&T up 3 pc

PTI ■ MUMBAI

Snapping its three-day losing run, market benchmark index Sensex rose by 271 points on Thursday following gains in banking and energy stocks despite a massive sell-off in global equities.

The 30-share BSE Sensex settled 271.02 points, or 0.66%, higher at 41,386.40. It hit an intra-day high of 41,413.96 and a low of 41,098.91.

The broader NSE Nifty gained 73.45 points, or 0.61%, to end at 12,180.35, ending its four-day losing streak.

Larsen & Toubro (L&T) was the top gainer in the Sensex pack, rising by 2.98%, after the company reported a 15 per cent rise in its consolidated net profit at ₹2,560.32 crore for quarter to December 2019.

Bharti Airtel, which is facing ₹35,586 crore demand for AGR dues, rose by 1.8% after the telecom firm said it would wait for the outcome of modification petition listed for hearing before the Supreme Court next week. Sources also said that the DoT has advised its departments to not take any coercive action against the telcos for failing to pay AGR dues by the January 23 deadline set by the Supreme Court.

Banking stocks also recovered after recent losses. SBI rose

by 2.26%, Axis Bank by 1.41%, Kotak Bank by 1.14% and ICICI Bank by 0.96%.

ONGC gained 1.12% amid a fall in global crude oil prices. Other gainers included M&M, Titan, Infosys, and Ultratech Cement.

Tech Mahindra, PowerGrid, TCS, Bajaj Auto, Reliance Industries and Maruti ended in the red.

According to experts, despite carnage in other Asian equities amid fears of contagion after a deadly virus emerged from China, stock-specific action kept domestic benchmarks buoyed.

Vinod Nair, Head of Research AT Geojit Financial Services, said, "The market is marginally up today due to the bounce back by banks, auto, and mid & small caps after a mild consolidation during the week. We feel that a cautious trend will be maintained in the near-term since a lot has been factored in the market about budget wish list and revival in earnings growth, while the start to Q3 result is below par."

Hemang Kapasi, portfolio manager (equity investment products), Sanctum Wealth Management, said, "Nifty snapped a four-day losing streak on the back of short covering. While, the performance of headline index is not very

spectacular over couple of weeks, the midcaps are gaining traction."

Midcaps have delivered 8% return over last one month while Nifty has given marginally negative return, he added.

All sectoral indices ended on a positive note, with BSE capital goods, realty, oil and gas, telecom, consumer durables, industrials and utilities settling up to 2.33% higher.

Broader BSE midcap and smallcap rallied up to 1.06%.

Modest fall in crude oil price and sharp upsurge in Larsen & Toubro stock post the results helped bulls maintain positive sentiment in the market, Shrikant Chouhan, Senior vice-president (equity technical research), Kotak Securities, commented.

Bourses in Shanghai, Hong Kong, Tokyo and Seoul declined up to 2.75%. European markets were also trading on a negative note in their early sessions. Brent crude oil futures fell 1.22 per cent to USD 62.44 per barrel.

The rupee depreciated by 7 paise to close at 71.26 against the US dollar on Thursday. At the interbank foreign exchange market, the local currency opened on a weak note at 71.21. During the day, it swung between a high of 71.16 and a low of 71.35 and finally settled at 71.26.

CII for higher tax benefits for homebuyers to boost demand in real estate sector

New Delhi (PTI): Industry chamber CII on Thursday urged the government to increase tax benefits for home buyers to boost demand in the liquidity-hit real estate sector.

The chamber said that in order to meet a minimum GDP growth target of 6 to 7 per cent, it was important to have a definitive plan for boosting the demand in the sector. The sector needs more liquidity support and steps to boost demand, the it said in a statement.

"CII has urged the government to increase the tax benefits to home buyers and extend income limit under Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana to boost demand in the sector which is battling stress and liquidity issues for the past year," it added.

It has also proposed a focused action plan to boost the sector as part of its pre-budget suggestions. "To meet a minimum GDP growth target of 6 to 7 per cent it is very important to have a definitive plan for boost-

ing the demand in the real estate sector, which will have significant impact on job creation in both formal and informal sector, as well as a multiplier effect on overall demand," Chandrajit Banerjee, Director General of the Confederation of Indian Industry said.

"The maximum available deduction on interest payment of home loan taken for all the property/(ies) should be increased from ₹2,00,000 to ₹25,00,000," it said.

The government should also consider increasing the income criteria under PMAY scheme to ₹18 and ₹25 lakh from the current ₹12 and ₹18 lakh in the MIG I and II categories, respectively. "This would allow a wider section of the society to benefit from the scheme pushing demand," it said.

Further, the CII said granting infrastructure status to integrated townships and overall housing sector, would help developers access priority funding at a lower cost.

ONGC gets 28 bids for 50 oil, gas fields in first bid round

New Delhi (PTI): State-owned ONGC has received bids for 50 out of the 64 small and marginal oil and gas fields it has offered in a first of its kind bid round for raising production by involving private companies. As many as 12 companies made 28 bids for 50 fields at the close of bidding on January 17, sources privy to the development said.

QUARTERLY RESULTS

NIPPON LIFE INDIA ASSET MANAGEMENT Q3 PAT UP 36% AT ₹149 CR

New Delhi: Nippon Life India Asset Management on Thursday reported a 36 per cent jump in profit after tax (PAT) at ₹149 crore for the third quarter ended December 31, 2019. The company had posted a PAT of ₹109.62 crore in the year-ago period, Nippon Life India Asset Management said in a regulatory filing to the stock exchanges. The company's total income dropped to ₹360.64 crore during the October-December quarter of the current financial year from ₹403.97 crore in the same period last fiscal. Nippon Life India Asset Management, formerly known as Reliance Nippon Life Asset Management, said its asset base stood at ₹3,10,100 crore at the end of December 2019. "Post rebranding, overall feedback from our customers and distributors has been very positive. This is also reflected in our AUM (assets under management) inflows, we have seen return of several leading corporates, SMEs and HNIs," Nippon Life India Asset Management ED and CEO Sundeeep Sikka said. During the quarter, digital purchase transactions rose to 11 lakh, an increase of 38 per cent from the year-ago period. Digital contribute over 40 per cent to total new purchase transactions.

CANARA BANK'S NET PROFIT RISES 3.8%

Mumbai: State-owned Canara Bank on Thursday reported a 3.8 per cent rise in its net profit to ₹329.62 crore in the third quarter of the current financial year, mainly due to a decline in proportion of bad loans. The bank's profit was ₹317.52 crore during the December 2018 quarter. Its total income stood at ₹14,001.63 crore during the quarter ended December 2019, up from ₹13,153.35 crore in the year-ago period, Canara Bank said in a stock exchange filing. The net non-performing assets (NPAs) as a percentage of total assets stood at 5.05 per cent, down from 6.37 per cent a year ago. Similarly, the percentage of gross NPAs also narrowed to 8.36 per cent from 10.25 per cent. In absolute terms, the net NPAs stood at ₹21,337.74 crore, down from 26,591.07 crore. The

bank made a provisioning of ₹1,802.91 crore during the quarter under review, compared with ₹1,977.34 crore a year ago.

OBC Q3 PROFIT JUMPS 39.1%

Mumbai: State-owned Oriental Bank of Commerce (OBC) on Thursday reported a 39.11 per cent jump in net profit at ₹201.66 crore for the quarter ended December 2019, mainly due to reduction in bad loans. The bank, which is going to be merged with another state-run lender Punjab National Bank, had reported a profit of ₹144.96 crore in October-December quarter a year ago. The bank's total income during December quarter stood at ₹5,642.61 crore as compared with ₹5,127.98 crore a year ago, it said in a regulatory filing. Income from interest stood at ₹4,659.93 crore as against ₹4,561.12 crore during October-December quarter of previous fiscal. The ratio of net non-performing assets (NPAs) reduced to 5.98 per cent during the quarter under review from 7.15 per cent in the year-ago period. Gross NPAs also fell to 12.64 per cent from 15.82 per cent. In absolute terms, net NPAs stood at ₹9,507.53 crore, down from ₹9,972.61 in the corresponding period during the last financial year.

DHFL POSTS NET LOSS OF ₹6.64 CR IN JULY-SEPTEMBER PERIOD

New Delhi: Debt-ridden housing finance firm DHFL on Thursday has reported a consolidated net loss of ₹6,640.62 crore for the quarter ended September 30, 2019. It had posted consolidated net profit of ₹439.51 crore in the year-ago period, Dewan Housing Finance Corporation (DHFL) said in a filing to BSE. The company said that the net loss/profit after tax was "fully attributable to the owners of the parent". The consolidated total revenue from operations of DHFL in July-September period dropped to ₹2,106.71 crore over ₹3,483.32 crore in the year-ago period. Pursuant to an order dated December 3, 2019 of the National Company Law Tribunal, Mumbai Bench, Corporate Insolvency Resolution Process has been initiated against the company as per the provisions of the Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code, 2016.

NIFTY 50

SCRIP	OPEN	High	Low	LTP	CHANGE
NIFTY 50	12123.75	12189.00	12094.10	12179.00	73.00
YESBANK	38.55	41.40	38.35	41.00	2.55
IOC	115.10	120.90	115.05	120.30	6.65
GAIL	125.70	130.70	125.20	129.45	5.55
LT	1307.00	1339.85	1306.00	1330.45	36.25
BPCL	459.50	471.80	457.00	467.95	12.50
M&M	553.50	567.40	549.55	566.20	12.60
SBN	316.00	324.80	314.15	323.15	7.00
TIITAN	1176.00	1206.65	1175.00	1203.00	25.35
BHARTIARTL	515.00	526.00	512.35	525.45	10.95
GRASIM	785.00	811.95	783.00	809.60	16.70
AXISBANK	725.05	737.55	719.40	723.90	11.30
INFY	777.10	785.50	776.70	782.35	12.15
TATAMOTORS	186.75	190.40	183.80	188.10	2.50
KOTAKBANK	1588.00	1608.40	1581.30	1606.90	21.40
HEROMOTOCO	2397.00	2443.85	2380.00	2431.00	31.95
ULTRACEMCO	4470.00	4540.00	4446.05	4535.00	58.05
WIPRO	246.45	249.10	245.35	248.95	3.10
NTPC	112.60	114.45	112.30	113.55	1.40
HCLTECH	590.10	599.95	587.00	598.00	7.35
TATASTEEL	475.90	481.85	473.15	479.95	4.90
ICICIBANK	521.40	530.25	517.05	527.75	4.90
ONGC	117.25	118.95	116.40	117.40	1.00
SUNPHARMA	447.20	452.20	445.00	450.00	3.70
VEDL	153.60	155.40	152.35	154.10	0.90
BRITANNIA	3103.85	3122.90	3068.10	3122.90	16.55
HDFC	2422.00	2436.40	2404.35	2429.00	12.40
HINDALCO	203.60	205.35	202.75	204.50	1.90
ADANIPORTS	384.45	386.75	380.75	385.00	1.40
HDFCBANK	1240.00	1246.85	1231.00	1245.50	4.50
HINDUNILVR	2051.75	2060.85	2035.00	2057.00	5.30
INDUSINDBK	1330.00	1339.80	1320.10	1330.20	2.80
JSWSTEEL	266.00	268.95	264.10	266.20	0.35
INFRAEEL	239.20	243.75	235.45	241.20	0.20
NESTLEIND	15500.00	15625.00	15455.00	15550.00	13.00
BAJFINANCE	4123.00	4163.85	4085.00	4142.00	-0.20
MARUTI	7145.40	7220.00	7123.15	7132.95	-2.65
ITC	238.10	238.75	236.90	237.95	-0.10
ASIANPAINT	1779.00	1789.00	1757.10	1778.10	-1.15
RELIANCE	1536.50	1541.95	1520.70	1529.60	-3.75
COALINDIA	192.05	195.20	189.85	191.40	-0.50
BAJAJ-AUTO	3021.00	3089.95	3051.10	3068.00	-8.40
BAJAJFINSV	9547.90	9596.00	9484.15	9509.40	-38.10
TCS	2299.80	2317.75	2183.70	2188.00	-13.00
ECHERMOT	21070.00	21196.00	20780.50	20905.00	-195.00
TREDDY	3055.30	3078.70	3024.00	3032.10	-29.95
TECHM	777.25	780.45	766.90	769.50	-9.25
POWERGRID	196.75	207.40	193.90	197.55	-2.50
CIL	464.50	475.85	459.35	465.00	-6.60
UPL	560.00	564.55	540.30	540.50	-22.45
ZEE	295.10	297.00	277.60	278.70	-21.65

NIFTY NEXT 50

SCRIP	OPEN	High	Low	LTP	CHANGE
NIFTY NEXT 50	28638.35	28936.75	28049.95	28897.85	304.85
PFC	109.00	116.15	108.10	115.20	6.35
IBULHSGFIN	296.65	317.60	296.60	313.45	17.15
IDEA	5.60	6.10	5.60	5.90	0.30
PEL	1610.00	1699.80	1595.50	1686.55	78.60
NAVEL	600.50	621.00	600.00	619.00	19.00
HINDALCO	160.50	167.90	158.20	163.50	4.35
BERGEPAPNT	540.55	555.50	538.50	554.30	14.45
GICRE	249.95	263.60	246.15	255.05	6.10
PETRONET	121.00	127.50	120.85	127.00	6.15
ICICI	270.00	277.50	270.05	277.00	6.15
ICICIGI	230.00	235.75	230.05	234.00	29.40
DIVISLAB	1855.00	1902.40	1853.00	1895.20	40.05
BOSCHLTD	1479.00	1530.00	1462.00	1490.00	29.45
NHPC	26.55	29.00	24.85	26.65	0.50
GODREJCP	729.40	743.00	724.00	739.40	13.30
PAGEIND	25350.00	25990.00	25350.00	25877.55	49.35
ACC	1526.25	1554.90	1525.00	1550.00	25.60
AMBUJACEM	210.00	214.95	209.45	213.65	3.30
L&T	117.00	119.85	116.80	118.90	1.75
MOTHERSUMI	138.40	141.45	138.00	140.80	2.05
PNB	61.05	62.35	61.00	61.85	0.85
HDFCAMC	3171.40	3240.00	3171.40	3218.00	40.25
DABUR	486.70	492.00	482.75	492.00	5.20
BANKBARODA	94.20	96.25	94.00	95.25	0.95
PIDILITIND	1429.05	1447.00	1420.00	1441.50	12.95
DLF	128.10	132.00	127.00	130.45	2.35
COLPAL	1477.90	1492.00	1476.95	1491.00	13.00
ASHOKLEY	85.60	87.00	85.80	86.60	0.70
OFSS	295.00	300.15	294.00	297.00	22.00
HDCLIFE	613.30	621.90	611.50	619.95	4.20
SKTRANSEN	1081.75	1088.95	1075.50	1082.00	6.95
DMART	1920.00	1929.05	1910.10	1926.00	11.30
BIOCON	294.00	296.80	291.25	294.30	1.65
SBI	985.40	1004.00	980.20	986.50	4.80
CONCOR	549.05	555.35	547.30	552.20	2.20
SIEMENS	1578.35	1594.80	1569.15	1583.80	6.15
SHRECEM	23016.70	23200.00	22911.10	23100.00	83.30
HINDPetro	249.00	251.25	244.30	245.50	0.35
CADILAC	268.20	272.00	268.60	269.10	-0.10
LUPIN	738.40	743.95	736.00	739.50	-0.50
BAJAJHLDNG	3353.20	3372.90	3330.05	3348.00	-5.20
PGHIL	1136.00	1147.00	1110.00	1125.00	-21.25
MARICO	314.70	335.80	312.00	333.90	-0.75
BANDHANBNK	478.00	480.30	474.00	474.05	-1.45
ICICIPRULI	509.00	514.65	504.85	504.85	-1.65
UBL	1268.50	1272.25	1257.10	1263.00	-5.10
HINDZINC	210.25	210.70	207.50	208.35	-0.85
INDIGO	1485.00	1485.00	1451.30	1461.30	-7.00
MCDOWELL-N	588.90	590.70	580.20	581.70	-0.80
AUROPHARMA	498.75	499.80	487.35	491.50	-6.45
NMDC	131.90	139.70	127.00	129.65	-2.45

BSE 500

Script	Open
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Democrats face risks and limits in Trump's impeachment trial

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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



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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Impeachment trial not ready for broadcast prime time

AP ■ NEW YORK

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

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

CNN and MSNBC carried the trial in full. Fox News Channel, after showing Rep. Adam Schiff speak for about a half hour, interrupted for a story about a child support case involving former Vice President Joe Biden's son Hunter, and never returned.

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

The calls Wednesday night are significant because if the top networks decided not to pre-empt programming on the first full night the case against Trump was laid out, chances are they won't reverse course later unless the unexpected happens.

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

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

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

Vietnam confirms two cases of SARS-like coronavirus

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

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

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

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

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

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

"We should immediately



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

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

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

US expects UK trade deal 'this year': Mnuchin

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

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

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

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

ment as quickly as possible," the spokesman said.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

N Korea to make Munich Security Conference debut in 2020

AFP ■ BERLIN

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

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

The announcement comes a month after Pyongyang declared it was abandoning moratoriums on nuclear and intercontinental ballistic missile tests.

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

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

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



NEW TEETH GEL MAY PREVENT DENTAL CAVITIES

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

SIX MALI SOLDIERS KILLED IN OVERNIGHT AMBUSH

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

1 killed, 7 injured in US shooting

WASHINGTON

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

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

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

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

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

An early test will be a "mil-

lion-man" demonstration against the American presence, called for by influential Shiite cleric Moqtada al-Sadr and scheduled for Friday.

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

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

Islamic leaders make 'groundbreaking' visit to Auschwitz

Warsaw: A high-level delegation of Muslim religious leaders visited Auschwitz on Thursday along with a Jewish group in what organizers called "the most senior Islamic leadership delegation" to visit the site of a Nazi German death camp.

The interfaith visit came four days before the 75th anniversary of the Jan. 27, 1945, liberation of the camp by Soviet forces, and as world leaders gathered in Jerusalem on Thursday to commemorate the Holocaust.

The visit was led by the secretary general of the Muslim World League, Mohammad bin Abdulkarim Al-Issa, and the CEO of the American Jewish Committee, David Harris. In a statement, the AJC said that Al-Issa, who is based in Mecca, Saudi Arabia, led a delegation of 62 Muslims, including 25 prominent religious leaders, from some 28 countries on several continents.

It called the visit "groundbreaking". The AJC delegation included members of the organisation, among them some children of Holocaust survivors.

"To be here, among the children of Holocaust survivors and members of the Jewish and Islamic communities, is both a sacred duty and a profound honour," Al-Issa said.

"The unconscionable crimes to which we bear witness today are truly crimes against humanity. That is to say, a violation of us all, an affront to all of God's children." AP

THE KANGRA CO-OPERATIVE BANK LTD.
C-29, Community Centre, Pankha Road, Janakpuri, New Delhi-110038
Phone: 011-25611041, 25611042, 25611043, 25611044
E-mail: keagal@kangrabank.com, legal1@kangrabank.com Website: www.kangrabank.com

APPENDIX I
[See rule 4(1)]
PANCHNAMA

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

The above mentioned Panch on being called by Harish Sharma, Authorised officer of The Kangra Co-operative Bank Ltd., Head office at C-29, Community Centre Pankha Road, Janakpuri, Delhi-110038, and having its Registered office at 1916, Chuna Mandi, Paharganj, New Delhi-110055, under The Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest (Act, 2002 (54 of 2002) and in exercise of the powers under section 13 (4) of the said [Act] entered the premises of Sh. Ramandeep Singh S/o Sh. Kamaljeet Singh R/o. B-22-23, Top Floor, Near MCD School, Pandav Nagar, Delhi-110092, and demanded the payment of the dues mentioned in the demand notice dated 02-03-2019, in respect of loan account.

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

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

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

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

NOTICE OF BOARD MEETING

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

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

For Perfectpac Limited
Sanjay Rajgarhia
Managing Director

Place: New Delhi
Date: 23.01.2020

Three US firefighters killed in Australia water bomber crash

AFP ■ SYDNEY

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

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

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

making flying the big tankers "very difficult".

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

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

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

Pak conducts test launch of nuclear-capable ballistic missile

PTI ■ ISLAMABAD

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

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

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

UN court orders Myanmar to prevent Rohingya genocide

AP ■ THE HAGUE

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

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

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

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

Rights activists immediately welcomed the unanimous decision.

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

WESTERN RAILWAY
PROVISION OF CONTRACTUAL AC COACH ATTENDANT

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

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

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

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UTTAR HARYANA BIJLI VITRAN NIGAM
PUBLIC NOTICE

Sr. No.	Name of Board/Corp./Auth	Name of Work/Notice/Tender	Opening Date	Closing Date (Time)	Amount/EMD (Approx.) in Rupees	Website of the Board/Corp./Auth	Nodal Officer/Contact Details/Email	Tender Ref. No./Tender No.
1	Uttar Haryana Bijli Vitran Nigam	Registration for trading of power through Power Exchanges (RE & PVE) for the year 2020-21	Start Time: 21-01-2020 (10:00 hrs)	End Time: 04-02-2020 (16:00 Hrs)	Rs. 5,00,000/- (Five Lakhs Only)	uhbv.org.in , stenders@uhbv.org.in	9871610222 ce@uhbv.org.in	VI/No. 64/HPPC

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

CHANGE OF NAME

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

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

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

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

TENDER NOTICE

Sr. No.	Name of Board/Corp./Auth	Name of Work/Notice/Tender	Opening Date	Closing Date (Time)	Amount/EMD (Approx.) in Rupees	Website of the Board/Corp./Auth	Nodal Officer/Contact Details/Email
1	PT. LAKHMI CHAND STATE UNIVERSITY OF PERFORMING & VISUAL ARTS, SECTOR-6, ROHTAK	PURCHASE OF STILL CAMERAS IN FACULTY OF FILM & TELEVISION DEPARTMENT (FTV)	21.01.2020	11.02.2020	42.65 LACS	www.etenders.hry.nic.in	9466628298 devenderrathoe918@gmail.com
2	PT. LAKHMI CHAND STATE UNIVERSITY OF PERFORMING & VISUAL ARTS, SECTOR-6, ROHTAK	PURCHASE OF COMPUTERS FOR VARIOUS DEPARTMENTS AT PLCSUPVA ROHTAK	15.01.2020	04.02.2020	84 LACS	www.etenders.hry.nic.in	ce.supva@gmail.com
3	PT. B.D. SHARMA PGIMS ROHTAK	SHORT TERM E-TENDER NOTICE NO UHSR/PURCHASE/2020/1 DT. 20.01.2020 REGARDING PURCHASE OF M8S/ M8E ETC. FOR USE IN PGIMS/UHS ROHTAK.	CLOSING DATE	05.02.2020	NIL	a) www.uhsr.ac.in b) www.etenders.hry.nic.in	9255169924 purchase.section@gmail.com
4	GMDA, GURUGRAM	ANNUAL MAINTENANCE OF MASTER ROAD OF SECTOR 58 TO 67 (ROAD TRANSFERRED FROM HSPV), GURUGRAM	20.01.2020	03.02.2020	152.41 LACS	https://www.gmda.gov.in/	0124-2746614 set4.gmda@gov.in
5	K.U.KURUKSHETRA	SUPPLY, ERECTION, TESTING & COMMISSIONING OF WRV AC PLANT AS PER DMIT OF SENATE HALL (BHAGWAT GEETA SADAN) AT KURUKSHETRA UNIVERSITY KURUKSHETRA	24.01.2020	10.02.2020	50 LACS	https://etenders.hry.nic.in	Executive Engineer
6	DEENBANDHU CHHOTU RAM UNIVERSITY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY, MURTHAL	WALK-IN-INTERVIEW FOR ENGAGEMENT OF VISITING FACULTIES IN VARIOUS TEACHING DEPARTMENTS	27.01.2020	28.01.2020	NIL	www.dcrustm.ac.in	ASSTT, REGISTRAR
7	DEPARTMENT OF CENTRE FOR MEDICAL BIOTECHNOLOGY, MAHARSHI DAYANAND UNIVERSITY ROHTAK	PUBLICATION OF E-TENDER NOTICE FOR THE PURCHASE OF THE INSTRUMENT	21.01.2020	06.02.2020	14 LACS	www.mdurhtak.ac.in	Dir.cmbt@mdurhtak.ac.in

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

Trend Blazer

Anil debuts on TikTok

Actor ANIL KAPOOR has joined the "fun outlet for creativity" — TikTok.

The *Welcome* actor is quite active on social media and often takes to different digital platforms to share updates about his projects or hilarious videos, the recent one on coffee addiction, which was in response to his *Malang* co-star Disha Patani.

He has now made his debut on TikTok. The app is the destination for short-form mobile videos that saw Anil making his first appearance during *The Kapil Sharma Show*.

He was on the TV show to promote *Malang* along with its cast Aditya Roy Kapur, Disha and Kunal Kemmu.



'I would like to wish the entire nation a Happy Republic Day. This day is extremely important as

it stands for unity in India. I would urge everyone to participate in this and be a part of the flag hoisting ceremony. Indians needs to know about their glorious past. We are a very young country and we have to empower the women in India even more.'

—Shama Sikander

Actor ANGAD BEDI has started shooting for Ekta Kapoor's web series *MumBhai*. He has been preparing for his role of a Mumbai police officer in the series by spending time with senior cops of the Mumbai Police Force.



"Meeting cops and hearing their stories have been the most exciting part of my preparation. These men have lived life on the edge. I wouldn't try to romanticise that but their energy is infectious," Angad said.

Damon to play detective in his next

Actor MATT DAMON is reuniting with his *Ford v Ferrari* director James Mangold for a film titled *The Force*. He will be essaying the role of a detective.

Mangold has been developing the Don Winslow bestseller since 2017. *The Force* centers on corrupt NYPD officers with Damon set to play detective Denny Malone, who runs an elite crime fighting squad but becomes ensnared in a corruption scandal.

Damon recently wrapped up the drama *Stillwater*, directed by Tom McCarthy. He is starring with Jodie Comer, Adam Driver and Ben Affleck in *The Last Duel*, with Ridley Scott serving as a director.



Saving the Lion King

From shooting during monsoon to following certain rules and regulations of not entering the restricted areas, producer and director UPMA BHATNAGAR tells AYUSHI SHARMA that wildlife filming demands a lot of patience, perseverance and attention

Can you recall the news-flash of 1994 when approximately 30 per cent of the lions living in Serengeti National Park, Tanzania, died from an outbreak of Canine Distemper Virus (CDV)? The virus, which is normally associated with dogs, wasn't till then thought of as deadly enough to threaten big cats until epidemic history among other species in sanctuaries suggested otherwise. In 2018, the disease broke out in India killing Asiatic lions in the Gir forest sanctuary in Gujarat. It became an alarming concern for conservationists. Filmmaker and executive producer of Optimum Television, Upma Bhatnagar will take viewers to the forefront of India's battle with the deadly virus through her 10-part series, *The Lion Kingdom*. The epidemic threatened to wipe out the last of the surviving Asiatic lions in the world living in the wilds of the Gir National Park.

The Lion Kingdom is a story of how the forest department of Gir National Park worked round the clock to try and save the king of the jungle while battling heavy rains and flooding and dealing with a sudden increase in the number of crocodiles in the area. Not only will the audience get to witness the functioning of the veterinarian hospital in Gir but they will also get to marvel at the transformation of Gir during the monsoon as this is the first time ever the national park has been filmed during the rains. Upma discusses the highlights of her latest series.

What drove you to the world of wildlife? How did you conceptualise the series?

It was the most serious alarm not only in Gir but in India's entire conservation history since independence. At stake was the existence of an entire species of Asiatic lions that does not exist anywhere else in the world. When I heard scientists and conservationists expressing fears that the Indian lion may not be able to come out of this crisis, I was really worried. Gir is very special to me. This is where I had filmed my first TV series, *The Lion Queens of India*. I enjoy a special bond with the land, its people and its majestic animals.

We spoke with Discovery India who sensed the gravity of the situation and gave us their full creative and logistic support. Early in 2019, we started our research. We wanted to film during the monsoon and usually the forest department does not permit shoots at that time as it is almost impossible to conduct safaris. Gir is closed from June to October. But we managed to get through despite the outbreak of the disease. The series features renowned veterinary surgeon Steve Leonard as the host. He has worked with other species and he knows how the lions were treated in Tanzania.

How did the virus come to India?

A major way diseases mutate is by jumping between species. Middle Eastern Respiratory Syndrome, Ebola, and the H1N1 Swine Flu... all jumped from animal to animal before crossing into humans. Similarly, there is a chain of other species in between. Domestic dogs living in areas surrounding the national park were respon-

sible for the continued presence of the disease. It is transmitted through the air and infected body secretions. The symptoms generally include a high fever, inflammation of the eyes and nose and coughing. Now that they know that something like this can happen, they are taking measures to vaccinate the cattle around the area. Healthy lions from the Gir forests were also shifted to an alternative location. Shots of CDV vaccine were also imported from the US. They regularly monitored the moves of lions.

Does filming in proximity with the animals in the jungle disturb them? What were the rules and regulations that you had to follow?

I have been filming wildlife for a decade now and yes, we are not supposed to disturb the animals. There are certain rules that as a filmmaker I must follow. The first one is that you are not supposed to go very near to their respective habitats. We never go beyond the restricted area. As a result, it gets difficult to capture the animals but thanks to technological advancements, we have various types of camera lenses — wide angle, zoom, telephoto and many such. It gets easier to get all the close up shots without disturbing them. For instance, if they are roaming around in groups or the cubs are headed to play, we use long lenses to capture their everyday activities. We are told to not make too much of noise, otherwise it would scare them.

What were the on-ground challenges and how difficult was it to manage the crew members?

The biggest challenge in India is the shrinking habitat for

our wildlife because India is growing at such a fast pace. You want your conservation efforts to become a success story and you are also happy to see the increasing number of particular species but then the question is — where is the space? Our country has history, mythology, culture, and everything has taught us to be tolerant of other living beings. We would not deliberately want to harm the wildlife but when conflict happens, it's basically learning to co-exist with it, which our ancestors have done fantastically so far. We need to make corridors for animals so that they can have safe passages.

As a filmmaker, I can raise awareness among the common public and tell them what are the challenges that they face. We need to start inculcating certain values in the young generation and let them know about the wonderful forest diversity that India has.

Can you share some of your anecdotes?

We were shooting with a specific tribe, so we got to know them well. Over a period of time, we were following a lioness who had just given birth to cubs. And there were other male lions who wanted to take over the area. The lioness tried very hard to hide her cubs and keep the place safe but eventually the cubs were killed. That was a heart breaking moment for all of us. We couldn't do anything about it as we could not interfere with the ways of the habitat. Such incidents always stay with you.

What are the ground realities in national parks that lead to the extinction of various species? What can a common man do to help in conservation?

The biggest challenge in India is the shrinking habitat for

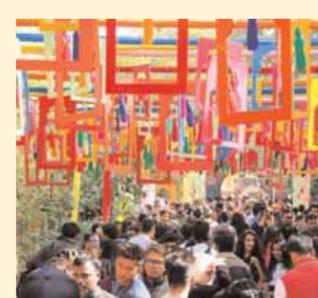
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The series premieres on January 27 at 9 pm on Animal Planet and Animal Planet HD.)



JLF welcomes a breeze of ideas

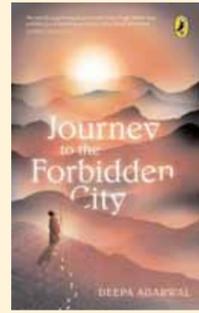
As the pleasant winters wrap up paving way for spring, the Jaipur Literature Festival (JLF) makes a comeback here in Diggy Palace to bring in fresh breeze of ideas, debates, dialogues and perspectives on subjects ranging from Kashmir to Indian Constitution, to climate change to artificial intelligence among many others, which have been discussed on the global map.

The festival will continue till January 27 witnessing interesting sessions a few of which include *Kashmir: Of Barbed Wires And Almond Blossom*, *Of The People, By The People: The Indian Constitution and Vivekanand, Savarkar And Patel: Echoes From The Past*.

Puffin also announced the release of author Deepa Agarwal's latest book, *Journey to the Forbidden City*. The book is a fascinating account of Nain Singh Rawat, an unsung Kumaoni hero, who mapped Tibet in disguise in the 19th century. Simple and accessible, this is one of the only books on Nain Singh, whose contribution was recognised by institutions like the Royal Geographical Society and Paris Geographical Society.

Deepa said, "This is a book I have dreamt of writing for many years. I had heard of my grandfather's uncle Pundit Nain Singh's achievements from childhood. Stories were told about his daring adventures, his quick intelligence and the honours he had received for his exploits. Apart from his manual of survey methods, Akshaansh Darpan, he had even written a family history. Ithas Rawat Kaum. There were always heated arguments about whether he should be described as a spy or not. Whatever information he might have gathered on his journeys, Nain Singh's extraordinary contribution to the map of the world remains most important to me."

Namita Gokhale, co-director of Jaipur Literature Festival (JLF), said, "As many as 550 speakers will be participating in the festival. Out of these, 120 are award winning speakers. Once again, the world visits Jaipur and Jaipur visits the world."



KUSHAN MITRA



Few vehicles have been so anticipated in the Indian market as the Kia Carnival has been. Not so much for the car itself but for the competition it will supposedly bring. So is it the Innova beater everyone wants it to be?



The Toyota MPV in all its forms — Qualis, Innova and Crysta — has been an unqualified success story in India. There are enough people out there that are on their second, third and fourth purchase. This success has been built on a bedrock of extreme reliability, amazing resale value and just a bit of boredom. And somehow no one has managed to knock the Japanese off their perch, and they have tried. You had the Nissan Evalia, which sank with little trace and then the Chevrolet Tavera, which was well, inadequate. But buyers in this segment have been clamouring for more choice. Toyotas are expensive and despite the price, they are a bit light on features, particularly on the technology front — still no native smartphone interface like Apple CarPlay and Android Auto. If you want to guess why the Liva and Yaris didn't have the sales that some expected, this is one reason why.

A big tent

product in its own right and while it might take away some Innova sales, particularly at the top of the range, it is not an Innova "killer." There are very compelling reasons to consider the Carnival, if you're someone who spends a few thousand kilometres on the road every month, going to the interiors of the country and want a degree of comfort. That is, if you're a politician, this is possibly the best vehicle you can get. Heck, I believe that the Carnival can challenge the Fortuner as India's political wagon of choice.

There are a couple of reasons for this, first and foremost, the Kia Carnival will not challenge the Innova's dominance in fleet sales, at least initially. The Carnival is available with a 2.2 litre 200PS engine driving the front wheels mated to an eight-speed automatic transmission, and while these are good things, they will limit its appeal in the taxi market. That is because this is clearly not a taxi, Kia

would like you to believe that this is a luxury liner and well in limousine trim, it certainly is quite luxurious indeed. The Carnival, which will have seven, eight and nine seat variants, is a large car with immense amount of space as well as, and this is critical, easy to manipulate seats. In addition, it has a boatload of features that marks it out as far more luxurious. But all of this comes at a price, not just a real price, which is that even entry-level variants of the Carnival are expected to cost ₹25 lakh at the very minimum. The top-spec limousine variant will top out at close to ₹35 lakh, according to market buzz.

Make no mistake, for that kind of money you get a lot. Not only are the second row seats "captain" seats, they can be adjusted six ways. It would have been a nice touch if both second-row seats were electronically controlled but that is nit-picking. The optional technology packet sees 10-inch



Android touchscreens installed on the back of the headrests, which you can use in a pinch to watch a movie that can be played back through a USB drive. What is nice is that Kia is providing a lot of charging points, including one 220V two-pin point on the second row, which is really appreciated. And multiple points to charge your phones, from a wireless induction plate in the front, to multiple USB points on three rows in addition to regular 12V points. This coupled with the fact that the rear

sunroof also opens makes the Carnival a great place to sit in. It would be nicer still had Kia installed ventilated seats on the second row as well, but that might be asking for too much.

How is the Carnival to drive? When you see the size of the car and hear about the smallest motor coupled to a front-wheel drive, you might think it is sluggish and you would be partially right. Well, the eight-speed gearbox mitigates that to a certain degree and once you are at speed, it can cruise comfortably

at the speed limit without any hesitation. And this is not a performance car by any stretch, it is meant to be a comfortable vehicle. With excellent ride as well as the fact that body roll has been minimised, the Carnival is a great car to sit in.

Let's be honest, nobody who buys the Carnival will buy it to drive themselves. It is going to be a vehicle that you get driven around in and on that front, the flat floor, the sliding doors and the adjustable seating options make this a winner if you have a large family or just want to move around in a large vehicle. If you're a politician or a chief executive, the Carnival makes sense. It does have issues, it may not fit into some parking slots in Indian malls, it certainly can't replace the Innova as a camera car - the shoots for the Carnival used the Innova as the camera car. And the Carnival will not be cheap. Base versions will cost as much as the top-end of the Innova range. So as I said earlier, this is not an Innova (and Fortuner) killer — it will take some sales away — but this is a unique vehicle in its own right and should make its own mark on the market.

Ditch that extra bite

Here are some ways of sticking to healthy food resolutions

For many of us, January is all about giving things up: Maybe we're going to stop eating meat and embrace a plant-based diet. Or we're ready to kick excess sugar to the curb after a holiday season awash in sweets. Or we're committed to avoiding fast food.

Starting the year with noble goals for eating well is a modern rite of passage. But it's just as common to ditch those grand plans within a few weeks. This year, how can we do it right? If we're pledging to make better food choices, which strategies can help us stick with them?

START SMALL

The consensus among experts is clear: It's tempting to begin with dramatic gestures, but the key to lasting change is setting goals that are small enough we won't scrap them by Valentine's Day.

Manageable, measurable goals can create long-term change, says Leila Azarbad, associate professor of psychology at North Central College in Naperville, Illinois. When people set lofty goals, they can get discouraged after a couple weeks. "Our self-efficacy, that belief in our own ability, tanks. And that's a huge predictor: If you don't feel confident in your ability to make the change, you're going to discontinue trying," she says.

Picture this, says Dana White, a sports dietitian and clinical associate professor at Quinnipiac University: You want to lose 20 pounds and you know that every afternoon you visit the office vending machine for a snack to boost your energy. So begin packing a healthy afternoon snack — not something punitive, but something healthier that you'll enjoy — and have that instead of a vending machine candy bar.

It's a measurable, specific change that won't be unpleasant. And if it eliminates 200 calories, that shift will make a difference over the coming weeks and months. Once that new behaviour is in place, you can add another small but meaningful change.

The same thinking works if you're eliminating animal products: Rather than going cold turkey (cold tofu?), begin by replacing one dinner per week with a vegetarian meal. Plan it for a night when you won't be rushed and can make an appealing recipe, or budget for going out once a week to a vegetarian restaurant.

Then track that change for



three weeks, says Anna Baker, assistant professor of psychology at Bucknell University, who researches the connection between behavioral factors such as self-management and health outcomes.

"You hear that it takes 21 days to create habit. There's debate about whether it's 21 exactly, but you need a certain amount of time of continuing to do something before it becomes a habit. Once you do kind of get used to that change and you're doing it regularly, then you can add in another thing," Baker says.

If you make that one good shift for three weeks, congratulate yourself. Then maintain that behaviour and add another small change, like drinking more water.

It's tempting to try making a half-dozen changes all at once, White says. But by focusing on individual, small, unhealthy behaviours and "really identifying what the triggers are that lead to those behaviors," she says, people "can have a tremendous amount of success without torturing themselves."

BE PATIENT

If your goal is to lose 20 pounds, for example, it really will take four or five months — and it should, says Alex Montoyo, assistant professor of clinical exercise physiology at Alma College in Alma, Michigan.

Losing a pound a week is "really the maximum sustainable weight loss," Montoyo says. Much as it surprises people, "2 pounds a week is pretty extreme."

So aim to lose 5 pounds over the next six weeks through small behavioral shifts, and measure your behavior along the way. Apps and fitness track-

ers can help, as can a notebook where you list what you've eaten.

Researchers have found "that we are notoriously bad at estimating how many calories we're taking in," Azarbad says. "We tend to underestimate what we're eating, because we forget. When we're cooking, we taste the pasta sauce a few times and those are calories. Or we walk past our colleague's desk and they had a jar of M&M's and we took a few, but those add up. That can be the difference between you losing a pound a week and you not."

DON'T BE TOO HARD ON YOURSELF

Accept that mistakes are a normal part of building a new habit. If you know an event is coming up where you'll want to divert from your eating goals, accept that you may slip a bit then. Aim for "consistency, not perfection," says Baker. "You have to plan in advance that you're going to screw up. We're not perfect."

ENLIST FRIENDS

Lastly, "tell everybody you know that you're doing this because social support is huge," Azarbad says. "If you're going out to eat and they know you're trying to change your diet, they can help choose a restaurant that will accommodate you," she says.

And the need to save face may keep you on track. "Once you put it out there on social media and you tell everybody that 'I'm going to do this. I'm going to lose 10 pounds by spring break, you feel that people are watching,'" Azarbad says. "We don't want other people to see us fail."

—AP

NATURE'S PILL

If you think the words healthy and tasty are diametrically opposed to each other, Fig@Museo will make you change your mind, says SHAMBHAVI SURI



as well as the sourness of the tomatoes come through very well, I wish the tacos would have been crispier.

While I am still relishing the fresh smoothies, the Chipotle chicken soft taco makes its way to my table. The tacos, served in a thin ceramic plate that resembles the colour of soil, are filled with the chipotle chicken while the dollops of sour cream and guacamole round it off. One bite into the taco and I realise that its shell is very soft and gets pulled apart very easily. Even though the sweetness

tacos replicate the taste of the chipotle chicken ones, the only difference being that the meat is replaced with kidney beans here. These are sweet and satisfying.

The next dish arrives and turns out to be probably one of the healthiest breakfast dishes and also a trendsetter. It is the avocado toast or as they call it, *Trio tartines*. A toasty and crunchy

sourdough bread is the base of the dish. It is topped with a thick layer of hass avocado and garnished with goat cheese and sun-dried cherry tomatoes. The combination tastes as heavenly as it sounds. It begins from the crunchiness of the sourdough toast paired with the creaminess of mashed avocado and ends with the sweet and tart taste of the tomatoes. I must say, it is earthy and lip-smackingly delicious. The dish is such that I could savour it for an entire lifetime.

Next up is the Quinoa, roasted potato and poached

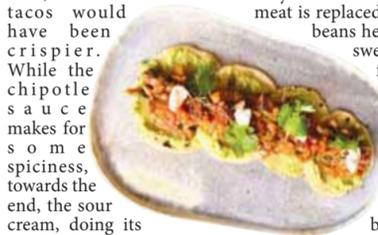
beetroot salad (gluten-free). The salad, almost replicating all the elements found in a garden, tastes amazing. The topping of pumpkin seeds and a pinch of lemon olive oil make all the difference, giving it a more refreshing taste.

For the main course, I order the Pumpkin massaman curry and the Thai *krpao* (gluten-free). The former is a vegetarian curry filled with roasted pumpkin and boiled potatoes. It has flavours of peanut and red chilli, which also give it a vibrant orange colour. Served with jasmine rice on the side, this luscious, thick gravy is nutty and a little spicy but makes sure that it leaves you wanting for more.

The Thai *krpao* is a non-vegetarian curry made with Thai basil chicken in soy and jaggery sauce, which lends it a velvety, dark brown texture. And like any other Thai dish, this curry too is spicy. The jaggery's sweetness is felt towards the end, relieving the taste-buds of all the spices. Undoubtedly, the two are the tastiest and healthiest meals of the day. And I can't draw a comparison between them. They're equally comforting!

However, there is always room for some dessert. To end the healthiest meal on an even healthier note, the Bailey's Tiramisu (gluten-free) is served. I can't figure out whether it is the Bailey's that is adding to its taste (and my excitement) or the dish completely replicates the flavour of the traditional tiramisu. It is this even though the savoiardi (low density, dry, egg-based, sweet sponge biscuit) is gluten-free.

The place will make you believe what it stands by — healthy is happy. If you're looking to spend the day wherein you can relax, rejuvenate and feel healthy, this is the place for you — a day where you can concentrate on yourself.



Another plate of the vegetarian

gorge us

On this Republic day, The Lalit Mangar offers a speciality brunch with organic food served in sakuras to give a rustic feel. There will be engaging activities, board games, magician, pottery making, camel rides and more. Eat healthy, stay fit and enjoy a memorable time amidst nature and youthful celebrations. **Time:** 12:30 pm to 3:30 pm **Date:** January 26 **Price:** ₹2,000 plus taxes (per person) **Venue:** The Lalit Mangar, Camp Wild Road, Dera Mandi, Faridabad.



The Westin Gurgaon is giving a patriotic flavour to its dishes.

For the Republic Day there will be a special brunch with more focus on traditional Indian specialities. It features delicacies like *Gilawat ke kebab*, Tiranga-chicken tikka, *Murg malai tikka* and *Haryali kebab*, *Murg changezi*, *Ker sangri*, *Gatta curry*, *Sarson ka saag* and *Makki ki roti*, *Chole kulchey*, *Idiyappam* with stew and many other all-time favourites. **Time:** 12:30 pm to 4 pm **Date:** Every Sunday (Till February 2) **Price:** ₹2,537 per person **Venue:** Seasonal Tastes, The Westin Gurgaon, New Delhi.



One8 Commune has a specially curated menu for the Republic day. It offers refreshing smoothies, shakes and mocktails at ₹71 to mark the 71st Republic Day.

On the menu are passion fruit and greens smoothie, oats and berries smoothie, chocolate and mango shakes along with watermelon and guava freezer and much more. **Date:** January 25 and 26 **Venue:** One8 Commune, Worldmark 2, Aerocity.



Celebrate this Republic Day at Imperfecto Patio with their tricolour drinks. It includes Tricolour virgin mojito, Rise of republic, Constitution of India by corporate mixologist Mahendar Manne. **Date:** January 25 and 26 **Time:** 12 pm to 9 pm **Price:** ₹225 per drink (plus taxes) **Venue:** Imperfecto Patio, Sector 51, Gurugram.



Glasshouse, Hilton Garden Inn celebrates Republic Day with Tricolour salad, Republic day macarons, Tirangaa *paneer tikka*, Tirangaa *pulao*, Tricolour *rasgulla* and much more, specially curated by chef Manoj Rawat. **Date:** January 26 **Time:** 12:30 pm to 3:30 pm **Price:** ₹2,000 (per person) **Venue:** Glass House, Hilton Garden Inn, Gurgaon Baani Square.



The Leela Ambience Convention Hotel is celebrating Republic day at their outdoor patio Frangipani. They will offer delicacies like Tirangaa *barfi*, tricolour rice and much more. There will also be a live band to enhance the festivity mood. **Date:** January 26



RECIPES

TRICOLOUR VIRGIN MOJITO

WHAT YOU NEED

- Mint leaves
- Lime wedges: 5
- Lime juice: 25 ml
- Coco mint syrup: 20 ml
- Orange marmalade: 1 bar spoon
- Orange juice: for topping

METHOD

- Muddle lime wedges and then put mint leaves on it.
- Add lime juice and mojito syrup at the base of the glass and mix it well.
- Put crushed ice in the glass and add soda.
- Put more crushed ice and finally add the orange marmalade mixture.
- Top it with orange juice.
- Garnish it with a slice of orange on the glass.

Courtesy: Corporate mixologist, Mahendar Manne at Imperfecto Patio.



TRICOLOUR IDLI

WHAT YOU NEED

- Idli rice: 175 gm
- Urad dal: 75 gm
- Salt: 10 gm
- Carrot puree: 25 gm
- Boiled spinach puree: 25 gm

METHOD

- Soak rice and dal for two hours and then grind it until smooth.
- Add salt and mix well.
- Keep for fermentation for 12 hours at room temperature.
- Divide the batter into three parts.



- Mix carrot and spinach puree separately for red and green colours.
- Place the red batter in a round mould followed by the white then the green in the end.

- Steam in oven for 20 minutes or till it's done.
- Serve with tomato, coconut and green coriander chutney.

Courtesy: Ajay Kumar, executive chef, Jaypee Vasant Continental.

TACOS WITH TOMATO SALSA, SOUR CREAM AND GAUCAMOLE

WHAT YOU NEED

- Flour tortilla:
- Refined flour: 125 gm
- Maze flour: 25 gm
- Salt to taste
- Sugar: 2 gm
- Baking powder: 2 gm

Tomato salsa:

- Tomato: 50 gm
- Onion: 10 gm
- Green chilli: 2 gm
- Fresh coriander: 4 gm
- Tomato juice: 10 ml
- Tabasco sauce: 2 ml



Sour cream:

- Hung curd: 25 ml
- Fresh cream: 25 ml
- Salt: 2 gm
- Fresh coriander: 2 gm
- Lemon juice: 3 ml

Guacamole:

- Avocado: 80 gm
- Salt to taste
- Pepper: 1 gm
- Lemon juice: 3 ml
- Onion: 4 gm

Other ingredients:

- Apple wedges: 80 gm
- Bread crumb: 100 gm
- Salt to taste
- Pepper: 1 gm
- Spinach julienne: 10 gm
- Radish julienne: 10 gm

- Carrot julienne: 10 gm
- Turnips slice: 5 gm
- Bell pepper: 3 gm

METHOD

- Mix all the ingredients of flour tortilla and knead well.
- Separately mix all ingredients of tomato salsa, sour cream and guacamole.
- Make four flat sheets of flour dough on skillet and cook slightly from both sides.
- Boil apple wedges in cinnamon and lemon-flavoured water.
- Add salt and pepper in apple wedges.
- Serve tacos with salsa, sour cream and guacamole.

Courtesy: Avinash Kumar, executive chef, Novotel Imagica Khopoli.

AFP ■ MELBOURNE

Rafael Nadal and Nick Kyrgios reached the Australian Open third round on Thursday after the weather-disrupted tournament faced a new challenge: dirty rain which left courts muddy and unplayable.

After a day of clean-up operations and delays, Australia's Kyrgios fought his way past Frenchman Gilles Simon in four sets and Wimbledon champion Simona Halep stamped her class with a win over Britain's Harriet Dart.

Nadal, a 6-3, 7-6 (7/4), 6-1 winner over Argentina's Federico Delbonis, miscued a shot that hit a ballgirl in the head, but he melted hearts when he apologised and gave her a kiss on the cheek.

"I was so scared for her, honestly," the 19-time Grand Slam winner said. "The ball was quick and straight on the head. She's a very brave girl."

Kyrgios, increasingly popular with home fans after his fundraising efforts for Australia's bushfire crisis, was cruising at two sets up when he dropped the third set and with it, his composure.

But just when it looked like he would suffer one of his trademark implosions, he rallied for a 6-2, 6-4, 4-6, 7-5 victory.

"I definitely lost my way a little bit... but I decided to refocus," Kyrgios said of his mini-meltdown in the third set. "I could have gone to a very dark place in the fourth set but I put it away."

Kyrgios and Nadal stay on course for a fourth-round clash and the next instalment in their grudge match after the Aussie hit back at criticism from the "super salty" Spaniard last year.

Their victories followed a day of upheaval caused by the dirty rain, the latest weather problem at a tournament which has contended with bushfire smoke, heavy downpours and strong wind.

Rain mixed with a dust storm coated the Melbourne Park facilities in a fine layer of mud which took hours to clean and made many outside courts temporarily unusable.

'I WAS FREAKING OUT'

As action resumed Alexander Zverev, another man who has a running feud with Kyrgios, showed signs of a return to form as he

RAFA TRIUMPHS

World No1 defeats Federico to reach AO third round for 14th time



Rafael Nadal hands a ball girl his bandana after a ball hit her during his second round match against Federico Delbonis

downed Egor Gerasimov 7-6 (7/5), 6-4, 7-5.

The German seventh seed has been practising up to seven hours a day after a winless ATP Cup and the hard work paid off as he safely reached the third round.

"Definitely much better than the ATP Cup. Now in the third round, I'm very happy about that," said the 22-year-old, who beat Italy's Marco Cecchinato in round one.

However, fifth seed Dominic Thiem had a scare as he was taken to five sets by Australia's 140th-ranked Alex Bolt before recovering his composure to win 6-2, 5-7, 6-7 (5/7), 6-1, 6-2.

"It was all of a sudden a really tight third set that shouldn't happen.



Simona Halep reacts after defeating Harriet Dart

That's why I was freaking out inside and also outside today," said the two-time French Open finalist.

A nosebleed was one of Daniil Medvedev's biggest challenges in his win over Spanish qualifier Pedro Martinez, while Gael Monfils, who injured his racket hand playing computer games before the tournament, downed Ivo Karlovic.

In the women's draw Halep beat Dart 6-2, 6-4, while Belinda Bencic knocked out former French Open champion Jelena Ostapenko — she was playing despite the sudden death of her father this month.

Two-time Major winner Garbine Muguruza, who scaled Mount Kilimanjaro in the off-season as she searches for a return to form, dispatched home hope Ajla Tomljanovic 6-3, 3-6, 6-3.

SANIA EXITS WITH CALF INJURY



MELBOURNE: Sania Mirza's first Grand Slam outing after maternity leave ended with an early exit as the Indian ace retired mid-way into her women's doubles first-round match due to a calf injury.

Sania and her Ukrainian partner Nadiia Kichenok, who came into the major after winning the doubles title at the Hobart International, were trailing 2-6, 0-1 against the Chinese team of Xinyun Han and Lin Zhu when the Indian called it quits.

Sania has injured her leg during practice. Her right calf strapped heavily, Sania struggled to move freely on the court. It also affected her serve.

Kichenok was also struggling at the net, often missing easy put-away volleys.

Serving at 2-4, Sania was broken by the Chinese and they served out the set easily.

The Indian took a media time-out after the first set. Soon after, the Indo-Ukrainian pair was broken in the first game of the second set and Sania found it difficult to continue.

Sania had also pulled out of the mixed doubles event, forcing compatriot Rohan Bopanna to pair with Kichenok.

Also representing India in the mixed doubles is veteran Leander Paes, who has teamed up with Jelena Ostapenko, who had won 2017 French Open.

They are pitted against local wild card entrants Storm Sanders and Marc Polmans.



Manchester United manager Ole Gunnar Solskjaer, left, and Burnley manager Sean Dyche watch from the touchline during Premier League match at Old Trafford

'Embarrassed' Utd suffer fresh woe

Pressure mounts on Solskjaer after 0-2 home defeat against Burnley

AFP ■ MANCHESTER

Manchester United were labelled an "embarrassment" as pressure mounted on Ole Gunnar Solskjaer following Burnley's shock 2-0 victory, while Tottenham boosted their top four prospects with a 2-1 win over Norwich on Wednesday.

Solskjaer's side suffered a third defeat in their last four Premier League games to put the United boss's job security back under the microscope.

Burnley's first top-flight win at Old Trafford since 1962, secured by Chris Wood's 39th minute opener and a Jay Rodriguez thunderbolt after the break, exposed the flaws in the lacklustre United side who have made their worst start to a season since 1989-90.

The majority of Old Trafford was on its feet when chants of "stand up if you hate Glazers" echoed around the ground in reference to United's owners.

Executive vice-chairman Ed Woodward was also subjected to many other abusive chants, while those few fans who remained in the stadium booed Solskjaer and his players at full-time.

Former United defender Rio Ferdinand, a Premier League and Champions League winner with the club, slammed the performance and called for the US-based Glazer family to take action to stop the rot.

"I can't defend this," Ferdinand told BT Sport. "These young kids now in schools around the country, they are not going to be wearing Manchester United shirts."

"Fans are walking out after 84 minutes! It's an embarrassment. People at the top need to look and see this and make changes, put a plan in place that people can sit there and see where we are going now. I don't see it."

Fifth placed United are six points behind fourth placed Chelsea as they battle to qualify for next season's Champions League via a top four finish.

Solskjaer admitted United had only themselves to blame, but he claimed the youngsters in his side deserved some patience.

"The boys have given every-

thing they've got. They are experiencing this period for the first time in their lives, some of them," he said.

"Of course I'm going to back them. I'm going to be here to help them get through this. When you're at Man United there's always going to be criticism.

"We can't do anything but hold our hands up and say 'this isn't good enough for this club.' Of course we're disappointed in the points tally and performances, we're still fifth in the table."

Tottenham needed a late winner from Son Heung-min to snap a four-game winless streak in the league and breathe new life into their push for a top-four spot.

ALLI ENDS DROUGHT

Dele Alli's opener had ended a three-game run without even scoring in the league for sixth placed Spurs before Teemu Pukki's penalty 20 minutes from time for bottom-of-the-table Norwich.

South Korea forward Son's stooping header 11 minutes from time hauled Jose Mourinho's men within six points of Chelsea.

Elsewhere, Ayoze Perez scored twice as third placed Leicester ended their two-match winless league run with a 4-1 victory over West Ham that was marred by an injury to their leading scorer Jamie Vardy.

Vardy limped off just before half-time at the King Power Stadium with his side 1-0 ahead thanks to Harvey Barnes' 24th-minute opener, with the winger then setting up Ricardo Pereira to fire home the second in added time.

Five minutes after the interval, Wilfred Ndidi was adjudged to have bundled Sebastian Haller over in the area and Mark Noble scored from the penalty spot.

However, Leicester earned a debatable penalty of their own when Kelechi Iheanacho was deemed to have been brought down by Angelo Ogbonna and Perez made no mistake from 12 yards.

The former Newcastle player then swept home his side's fourth goal to lift them back within three points of second-placed Manchester City.

AFP ■ MADRID

La Liga's heavyweights were both given a scare by third tier opponents in the Copa del Rey on Wednesday as Barcelona needed two late goals to beat Ibiza and Real Madrid dug deep for victory over Unionistas de Salamanca.

Barca sit 44 places ahead of Ibiza and Madrid 56 above Unionistas but the lowly duo both came close to extraordinary upsets, only for Ibiza to lose 2-1 and Unionistas 3-1 in front of their jubilant home fans.

With Lionel Messi rested and not even on the bench, Antoine Griezmann proved the saviour for Barcelona, scoring twice in the second half, including a 94th-minute winner, after Pep Caballe had given the hosts a fairytale lead at Can Misas.

"Scoring gave them confidence," said Barca coach Quique Setien. "We were a bit sloppy, we gave the ball away and that gave them life. It wasn't easy."

Discomfort was more fleeting for Madrid, who conceded an equaliser in the second half following a brilliant run and finish from Unionistas' Alvaro Romero, only to restore their advantage five minutes later.

Third division scare

Barca, Madrid made to sweat by Ibiza and Unionistas



Antoine Griezmann celebrates after scoring winner

Juan Gonga turned the ball into his own net after Gareth Bale, back from injury and illness, scored his first goal for his club since September 1.

Bale's celebrations were notably muted and he had to go off in the second half.

"He sprained his ankle a little," said coach Zinedine Zidane. "I don't think it's much but tomorrow we'll see."

At the end, Unionistas fans were waving their scarves with pride just as Ibiza's supporters had applauded their team off, even though Griezmann had dashed their hopes just moments before.

Elsewhere, holders Valencia beat Logrones 1-0 while Segunda strugglers Tenerife knocked out La Liga's Real Valladolid with a surprise 2-1 win.

Seven for CR7 against Roma

Cristiano headlines Juventus 3-1 win



Cristiano Ronaldo celebrates after scoring Juventus opening goal

AFP ■ TURIN

Juventus coach Maurizio Sarri complimented Cristiano Ronaldo's mother as the Portuguese star extended his scoring streak in a 3-1 win over Roma to advance to the Italian Cup semi-finals on Wednesday.

The Portuguese star picked up a Gonzalo Higuain cross after 26 minutes, finishing off from an angle in the Allianz Stadium.

It was the 34-year-old's 12th goal in eight consecutive games in which he has played in all competitions for the

Turin giants but his first in the Italian Cup.

The five-time Ballon d'Or winner has also scored seven goals in four matches played in 2020. "I believe that the compliments should be made to his mother," said Sarri of Ronaldo who has now scored in 15 different club competitions throughout his career.

"He is in super form physically. In terms of explosiveness he is doing well, he takes great care of the details.

"It is difficult to improve on an individual level. We are talking about one of the greatest of all time and I would like to help him win a sixth Ballon d'Or.

Rodrigo Bentancur added a second goal after 38 minutes with defender Leonardo Bonucci nodding in a third just before the break.

Cengiz Under pulled a goal back for Roma five minutes after the break, rifling in from a distance with the ball hitting the crossbar and bouncing in off goalkeeper Gianluigi Buffon in the Juventus goal.

Buffon denied Alessandro Florenzi and Aleksandar Kolarov to keep Juventus on course in the competition they have won 13 times.

Juventus will play either AC Milan or Torino in the semi-finals.

Indian TT teams a win away from Olympics



Indian Table Tennis team players pose for a group photo

PTI ■ GONDOMAR

Indian men and women Lare just one win away from securing their maiden qualification for Olympics, following their contrasting victories against Luxembourg and Sweden respectively in the Team Qualifier here on Wednesday.

India's men's highest ranked player G Sathyan took some time adjusting to the pimped rubber of Luka Mladenovic but other than that it was a straight forward tie for the fifth seeds who play 11th seeds Slovenia in the all-important round of 16 clash today.

A quarterfinal finish guarantees qualification for the Tokyo Olympics. India has never qualified as a team in Olympic history, limiting its participation to individual events.

Sharath Kamal and Harmeet Desai got India off to a winning start, beating Gilles Michely and Eric Glod 11-9, 16-14, 116 in the opening doubles.

In the subsequent singles, world number 30 Sathyan lost the first two games against Mladenovic before fighting back to prevail 8-11, 9-11, 11-3, 13-11, 11-6.

Veteran Sharath, ranked 33, conceded a game to Glod but eventually won 11-3, 11-3, 12-14, 11-5 to complete a 3-0 vic-

tory.

The seedings suggest that India are a much better side than Slovenia but Sharath said it will be 50-50 contest.

"They have a pretty balanced team," he said, referring to the presence of 40th ranked Darko Jorgic and 62nd ranked Bojan Tokic in the Slovenian camp.

Slovenia beat Iran 3-1 in their round of 32 match. Like the men, the Indian women too are a win away from creating history. The 17th seeds pipped 11th seeds Sweden 3-2 after Archana Kamath saved a match point to beat Linda Bergstrom in the fifth and deciding rubber. She won 11-8, 8-11, 9-11, 11-7, 13-11.

However, the foundation of the memorable victory was laid by top-ranked Indian Manika Batra, who won both her singles, beating Bergstrom and Christina Kallberg 3-1 and 3-2 respectively.

The Indians will have to produce something special if they are to down a much stronger Romania in the pre-quarterfinals.

Manika, ranked at 61, is the sole Indian in the top-100 while Romania boast of 19th ranked Bernadette Szocs and 31st ranked Elizabeta Samara.



Nianzou Kouassi celebrates with Neymar after scoring Paris Saint-Germain third goal against Reims

Neymar sets final showdown

PARIS: Neymar set up the first two goals with curling set pieces as Paris Saint-Germain won their French League Cup semi-final 3-0 away to Reims on a chilly Wednesday night.

PSG will face Lyon, who beat Lille on penalties on Tuesday, in the final at the Stade de France on April 4.

This was PSG's second cup match in three days and coach Thomas Tuchel continued to shuffle his squad.

Neymar and Kylian Mbappe, who were unused substitutes as PSG won in the French Cup at Lorient on Sunday, started while Mauro Icardi and Angel di Maria who began that game, shivered on the bench on a below-freezing evening in Champagne country. Neymar set up the first goal for his fellow Brazilian Marquinhos, another star brought back after a coach-enforced rest, after nine minutes.

Marquinhos, playing in central defence and as captain, raced in to meet an outswinging Neymar corner.

He outleaped the static Reims defenders and his powerful downward header had rebounded into the roof of the net before goalkeeper Predrag Rajkovic could get close to it. After 31 minutes, Neymar again aimed for Marquinhos with an in swinging free kick.

When the centre-back missed the ball it caught the man marking him, Alaixys Romao, by surprise and he nodded it toward goal where fullback Ghislain Konan sliced the ball into his own net.

Neymar, who produced a combative display, and Mbappe, booked for a late handball, played the full 90 minutes even though the game was settled by the 77th minute.

After 73 minutes, Reims midfielder Marshall Munetsi received a straight red card for scything down Marco Verratti.

Four minutes later, substitute Nianzou Kouassi forced a rebound over the line to put PSG, eliminated in the quarter-finals last year, three up and sure of a place in the final.

Yet to decide when to hang up boots: Chhetri

PTI ■ PUNE

Indian football team captain Sunil Chhetri on Thursday made it clear that he is yet to decide when to hang up his boots though he did not have many games left for the country.

The 35-year-old Chhetri recently said that he did not have too many games left to play with the national side and that is the reason why he won't set himself any long-term goals going forward.

"I am on the other side of my career. I have already played 112 games for my country and I am not going to play 250 games. That is what I meant that I do not have many games left. I do not know when I am going to stop but I love this game," Chhetri, said.

Chhetri, the second highest international goal-scorer among active players after Cristiano Ronaldo said, "I feel really energetic. So I will keep going as much as possible. But the fact is, I am on other side of my career and not going to play 100 games more for my country. So, whatever it is, 10, 20, 30, 40, 60, I



Sunil Chhetri in a file picture

don't know how many, but as many as I can, I will give my best," he said.

He also said that Indian football was going in the right direction but there was a long way to go.

"We have improved a little bit and have to go a long way. I think everyone who is involved with it, corporate houses, players, coaches, government, AIFF, fans, media have to come together and put the best foot forward to take it to a different level. We are going in the right direction, but the goal is far. We have to work really hard," he signed off.

Black & Blue

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

PTI ■ AUCKLAND

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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



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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

As always, they have a dearth of all-rounders to choose from but need to balance with pickings in the pace department,

which is missing the services of Trent Boult, Matt Henry and Lockie Ferguson owing to injuries.

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

TEAMS

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

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

No revenge in mind against 'nice guys'



Virat Kohli during India's nets session. PTI

PTI ■ AUCKLAND

The loss still rankles him but Virat Kohli on Thursday said he can't really bring himself to think of revenge when India take on New Zealand for the first time after the Kiwis sent his side packing from the ODI World Cup last year. The Black Caps defeated pre-tournament favourites India by 18 runs in the semifinals of the showpiece in England and today's tour-opening T20I is the first clash between the two sides since then. Kohli has spoken repeatedly about how devastating the loss was for him personally.

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

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

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

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



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

India U-19 side look for hat-trick

PTI ■ BLOEMFONTEIN

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

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

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

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

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

Having won the warm up matches against Zimbabwe and Afghanistan and the quadrangular series, the Indian team would not want to lose the rhythm at any cost. In their previous outing, India leg-spinner Ravi Bishnoi (4/5) took four wickets while pacers Kartik Tyagi (3/10) and Akash Singh (2/11) shared five scalps among themselves to help the four-time champions bundle out Japan for 41.

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

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

SINGLES

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

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

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

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

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

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



India ODI skipper Mithali Raj along side NZ players. ICC

Christchurch will host 2021 WWC final

AUCKLAND: Christchurch's Hagley Oval will host the summit clash of next year's Women's Cricket ODI World Cup, it was announced on Thursday.

The 50-over tournament which will run from February 6 to March 7 will be played across six cities.

Auckland will host a bumper opening weekend at Eden Park, before the focus shifts to matches in Wellington, Hamilton, Tauranga, Dunedin and Christchurch.

The tournament, featuring 31 matches between February 6 and March 7, will be capped by a final in Christchurch under lights at the Hagley Oval, one of New Zealand's main Test venues.

Handling pressure will be key in T20 WC: Harmanpreet

PTI ■ MUMBAI

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

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

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

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



Indian skipper Harmanpreet Kaur and coach WV Raman answer to media queries. PTI

The 30-year-old batswoman, who has played 104 T20s, said the team needs focus on enhancing skills instead of thinking about the pressure of being at a big stage.

"Last few World Cups, we put ourselves under too much pressure of playing in a big tournament. This time

rather thinking that we are going for a big tournament, we just want to focus on our skills, how we should play and how to make the team win," she said.

"That will be very important for us and when we focus on these things, we (will) produce better results," she added. She counted spin bowling as one of

the strengths of her team.

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

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

"They both (Smriti and Shafali) are very important for the team and they always give their best...The first six overs are going to be important for us."

"Good start is important for the team and whenever they get a good start, we never look back. They both have very big role to play," she said.

Asked what will be her message for new players like Shafali and the 16-year-old Richa Ghosh, Harmanpreet said they would be encouraged to play their natural game.

"...Don't take any pressure because if we play freely without any pressure, you will give your 100 per cent," she said.

Root facing 'good selection headache'



Joe Root in action during third Test. AP

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

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

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

selection headache".

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Pak need Malik & Hafeez's experience

PTI ■ LAHORE

Pakistan's T20 skipper Babar Azam has defended the decision to recall veterans Shoaib Malik and Mohammad Hafeez, saying the experienced duo's presence will help the team in its pursuit of retaining the number one spot in the shortest format.

Desperate to hold on to its numero uno status in T20 rankings, Pakistan has recalled Malik and Hafeez in the team for the three-match series against Bangladesh.

"I felt that we needed these two (Malik, Hafeez) seniors. They were part of the number one team last year," he said.



Shoaib Malik in practice session. AP

"I gave my opinion to the selectors and they heard me. Their presence will help me and the team. I will learn from them on captaincy as well," Babar added.

The 25-year-old bats-

man also said Pakistan is under no pressure in the series against Bangladesh, especially after the thrashing in last T20 series against Sri Lanka at home.

"No there is no pressure for us because what is done is done but we will not try to repeat the same mistakes we did against the Lankans," Babar said.

He made it clear that they were not taking Bangladesh lightly.

"Bangladesh have a good combination of youngsters and seniors and it will be a good competitive series. Their players have the advantage of having come here fresh out of the BPL (Bangladesh Premier League)," he said.

Lakmal sets up Sri Lanka win

HARARE: Suranga Lakmal took four for 27 to set up Sri Lanka for a 10-wicket win over Zimbabwe in the first Test on Thursday.

Resuming on 30 without loss and needing 157 to make Sri Lanka bat again, Zimbabwe recovered from the loss of three early wickets to Lakmal to reach lunch at 120 for three.

The tall pace bowler struck again immediately after, removing Brendan Taylor for 38, and Zimbabwe slumped to 170 all out, losing their last seven wickets for 50.

Sri Lanka needed just 14 to win and the openers Oshada Fernando and Dimuth



Karunaratne knocked off the runs in three overs. Angelo Mathews was named man of the match for his 200 not out in Sri Lanka's first innings of 515 for nine declared. AFP