

**OPINION 8**  
NEED TO OBJECTIFY  
HISTORY

**WORLD 11**  
IRAN'S TOP LEADER STRIKES DEFIANT  
TONE AMID MONTH OF TURMOIL

**SPORT 16**  
INDIA HUNT KANGAROOS  
IN RAJKOT

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## Nirbhaya rapists get 10 more days to live

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

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

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

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

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

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

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



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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

## Missing Mumbai blasts convict held in Kanpur

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

In a major breakthrough, the Anti-Terrorists Squad (ATS) of Uttar Pradesh Police nabbed dreaded Jaish-e-Mohammed terrorist and Mumbai serial blasts convict Dr Jalish Ansari who jumped his parole from Mumbai and was trying to flee to Nepal through Uttar Pradesh border.

Director General of Police OP Singh disclosed that the missing terrorist, who is serving life term in Ajmer jail in Rajasthan, was arrested from Faithfulganj area of Kanpur City on Friday afternoon.

He said that the terrorist, who was involved in the Mumbai serial blasts of 1993 along with other terror attacks, was going to his native Amardova village in Sant Kabir Nagar district of UP and then would have escaped to Nepal.

"The police recovered Rs 47,780 in cash, his Aadhaar card, a mobile phone and a pocket diary from the possession of the terrorist," the DGP said.

Dr Ansari was released on parole for 21 days on December 28, 2019 and had to return to jail on January 17. But on Thursday, Ansari did not go to Agtpara police station in Mumbai to register his attendance between 1000 hours to 1200 hours and his relatives said that they did not know



about his whereabouts.

Thereafter, a red alert was sounded and the Mumbai police contacted their UP counterpart at 10 pm on Thursday as it was believed that he could be in the state and go to his native place. The dreaded terrorist was involved in more than 50 terror incidents in the country, including the Rajdhani Express, Pune and Mumbai serial blasts and other attacks.

Dr Ansari had obtained MBBS degree from Mumbai in 1882 and later came in touch with Abdul Karim Tunda to manufacture explosives. He is said to be an expert in TNT and time bomb.

Dr Ansari was being brought to Lucknow from Kanpur and would be sent to Mumbai by air to lodge him back in jail.

## Swatantra Dev confirmed as UP BJP chief

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

Swatantra Dev Singh was Selected unopposed as the president of Uttar Pradesh unit of Bharatiya Janata Party.

BJP national general secretary and central observer Bhubendra Yadav announced the name of the new elected state president here on Friday.

Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath was among the first to greet Swatantra Dev Singh for being elected as the president of the BJP's UP unit. Singh was the only candidate who had filed nomination paper for the post of UP BJP president on Thursday and the formal announcement of his election was made on Friday.

Singh was appointed president of UP BJP on July 19, 2019. Later, addressing the party workers, Yogi Adityanath said the BJP would gain from the leadership of Singh.

"He is a multi-dimensional leader. He has vast experience in the organisation and he has excelled. When he was made minister in the government, he did exceptional work," the chief minister said.

Yogi said that as state president, Singh would give new direction to the party and will take BJP to new heights.

## Opp-ruled States object to NPR format

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

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

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

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

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



questions in NPR are impractical, like questions related to the birth place of parents. There are many people in the country who even don't know what was their birth place. I don't know what is the purpose of such questions and we demanded in the meeting to remove such questions," Gupta told reporters after the meeting. He said the Central Government officials told them that answers to all such questions are not mandatory but voluntary and no one is going to force anyone to reply any question. "They said such questions were asked earlier also and this time they have just linked with an individual's place of birth with his or her parent's place of birth. But they said answer to this question is not mandatory," he said.

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## After Kerala, Punjab adopts resolution to challenge CAA in SC

MONIKA MALIK ■ CHANDIGARH

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

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

Clearly, no lessons had been learnt from history, said

a visibly anguished Chief Minister during the discussion on the resolution, which also urged the Centre to put on hold the work on the National Population Register (NPR), till forms or documents associated with it are amended suitably, in order to allay apprehensions that it is a prelude to the National Register of Citizens (NRC) and designed to deprive a section of persons from citizenship of India and implement CAA.

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

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

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## Quick justice: City man gets death for raping minor

PTI ■ LUCKNOW

A special POCSCO court on Friday awarded capital punishment to a man for raping and killing a six-year-old girl in the old city area here after an expeditious trial that took just a little over four months.

Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act Special judge Arvind Mishra said the case falls into the "rarest of rare" category because of the manner in which the crime was committed and therefore the convict, Bablu alias Arfat, deserved no less than death sentence.

The judge referred the case file to the high court for confirmation of the sentence.

The court said that the convict shall be hanged till death.

The court also imposed a fine of Rs 40,000 on the convict and the amount will be handed over to the mother of the victim girl.

The incident took place on September 15, 2019. The convict Bablu was said to be an

uncle of the victim. The girl's body was recovered from under the bed of the convict in his house.

"The convict committed the crime only to satisfy his lust," the judge said.

In the verdict, the court said that the convict had allured the girl with toffee and took her to his house.

He raped her there and then he tried to slit her throat. Later, he strangled her to death, the verdict said.

"The girl would call the convict 'Mamu (maternal uncle)," mentioned the court in the judgment.

"The convict has committed the rape and murder in such a manner that if he was not awarded death penalty, it would have adverse impact on the society," the court added.

Earlier, additional district government counsel (ADGC) Naveen Tripathi and special public prosecutor Abhishek Upadhyay had demanded capital sentence for the convict, arguing that the case fell into the rarest of rare category.

## NDFB lays down its arms, signs peace pact with Centre, Assam

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Bodo insurgent group of Boroland (NDFB) on Friday signed a tripartite agreement with the Centre and the Assam Government for suspension of operations. According to the pact, the NDFB under the leadership of its "president" B Saoraigra will abjure violence and join in peace talks with the Government.

Active members of the NDFB, including Saoraigra, were brought back from Myanmar on January 11.

Top leaders, including Saoraigra, its "general secretary", "commander-in-chief" and "finance secretary" were part of the group, an official said. The group carried 25 weapons, more than 50 magazines, more than 900 assorted ammunition and communication equipment with them. Four family members also accompanied the group.

Saoraigra's group was active in Myanmar and is only active Bodo insurgent group operating in Assam seeking a separate Bodo state.

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## Imported onions tear Govt up

### Centre wants to sell it off to Dhaka, Lanka, Maldives at cost price

RAJESH KUMAR ■ NEW DELHI

Onion is turning out to be a tear-jerker for the Modi Government.

First it was the scarcity of onions that gave headache to the Government. Now, it's the other way round. The Government is grappling to find a way to dispose of huge quantity of onions it imported from Turkey, Egypt and Iran.

The States have refused to accept the imported onions because they don't excite the domestic taste buds. A drop in the price of the desi variant has also posed a challenge to imported onions.

The Modi Government has



now approached Maldives, Nepal and Sri Lanka to sell these onions at "no profit no loss" basis. The Government has made a similar request to Bangladesh.

According to Department of Consumer Affairs, over 20,000 tonnes imported onions

are available in the stock. In the retail market, onion is being sold between ₹40 and ₹60 a kg.

Officials of the Department of Consumer Affairs said talks are being held with Nepal, Sri Lanka and Maldives to sell the commodity. Indian missions have been directed to persuade these countries to buy onions from India as arrival of desi onions has increased. India is the main supplier of onions to these countries.

According to officials, a business delegation of Bangladesh is in India and the Government has asked acting Bangladesh High Commissioner Rokebul Haque to buy the imported onions. India had earlier imposed ban on onion export to Bangladesh to ease rising prices of the domestic onions at domestic markets.

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## This desi gel can take a bite out of frostbite

ARCHANA JYOTI ■ NEW DELHI

Mountaineers, soldiers posted in extreme regions, winter sports enthusiasts, and those visiting/living in snow-bound area at high-altitudes like Siachen or Ladakh have now an on-site treatment available for frostbites — a medical condition involving damage to skin and tissues due to extreme cold.

Scientists from the Institute of Nano Science and Technology (INST) in Mohali, an autonomous institution under the Department of Science & Technology (DST), Defence Institute of High Altitude Research (DIAR), DRDO and Panjab University have developed a cold-stable spray gel "Nano-Spray Gel" that could be administered on-site for the immediate treatment of frostbite injuries. If

frostbite is not treated promptly, it can lead to gangrene and amputation of the affected limbs.

The innovation of Nano-Spray Gel, which is a combination of NSAID (painkiller) and anti-inflammatory) and clotbuster drugs (thrombolytic) for rapid relief and effective management of frostbite injury, has been published in the peer reviewed journal "American Chemical Society Biomaterials Science & Engineering".

Frostbite can occur when the skin is exposed to a temperature of 0°C (32°F) or lower. It can be difficult to get treated quickly in remote, snow-bound areas. This is also a serious medical problem for the armed forces operating in snow-bound areas at high altitudes like Siachen, Ladhak and so on, said lead author Kalpesh Vaghayasha from INST.



He said that the spray gel has been prepared using heparin, an anticoagulant that improves blood flow by reducing clotting and aiding in blood vessel repair. The researchers packaged heparin into liposomes — lipid carriers, thus

helping deliver the anticoagulant deep inside the skin.

Then they embedded the heparin-loaded liposomes in a sprayable hydrogel that also contained ibuprofen (a painkiller and anti-inflammatory drug) and propylene gly-

col, which helped keep the spray from freezing at very low temperatures.

The researchers tested the spray gel on rats with frostbite, and found that the treatment completely healed the injuries within 14 days. In comparison, untreated injuries were only about 40 per cent healed, while wounds treated with an antibiotic cream were about 80 per cent healed.

The spray reduced levels of inflammatory cytokines at the wound site and in the blood circulation, which likely accelerated healing, the study 'Heparin-Encapsulated Metered-Dose Topical 'Nano-Spray Gel' Liposomal Formulation Ensures Rapid On-Site Management of Frostbite Injury by Inflammatory Cytokines Scavenging' said.

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# State govts must implement CAA: Birla

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

Amid the raging controversy over the Citizenship (Amendment) Act, Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla said that citizenship was a subject of the Centre as per the Constitution of India and all state governments would have to implement the new citizenship law passed by both Houses of Parliament in December last year.

Birla also said the unlimited rights of state assembly speakers on anti-defections law were likely to be curtailed as courts had made adverse comments on the conduct of speakers of several state assemblies on the disqualification of MLAs.

Kerala and Punjab state assemblies have passed resolutions against the implementation of the CAA while other opposition-ruled state have announced that they would not implement the new citizenship law.

"The rights and subjects of the Centre and the states are clearly defined in the Constitution. The states can enact legislation on the subjects listed in the State List while the Centre alone can enact laws on the subjects listed in Central List of the Constitution. Both states and the Centre can enact a legislation on subjects mentioned in the Concurrent List," the Lok Sabha Speaker said here on Friday.

The CAA provides for granting citizenship to the persecuted minority communities like Hindu, Sikh, Jain, Buddhist, Parsi and Christian from Pakistan, Bangladesh and Afghanistan. Exclusion of Muslims from these three countries has caused the controversy and sparked nation-wide protests.

"The issue of curtailing the unlimited rights of the presiding officers (speakers) of the state assemblies was discussed during the Dehradun conference of the presiding officers in 2018. A committee headed by PC Joshi, Speaker of the Rajasthan Assembly, is looking into the matter and as soon as the report is received, efforts will be made for consensus among all the speakers of the state assemblies for curtailing the unlimited rights of the presiding officers of the state assemblies," Om Birla said.

## COMMONWEALTH PARLIAMENTARY ASSOCIATION INDIA REGION CONFERENCE

LUCKNOW, UTTAR PRADESH, 15-19 JANUARY, 2020



Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla addressing the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association's India Region conference in Lucknow on Friday. Also seen in the picture in UP Assembly Speaker HN Dikshit

He said the idea behind curtailing the powers of the speakers was seamless and meaningful conduct of the proceedings of the legislature. He said another committee headed by UP Assembly Speaker HN Dikshit was working on ways and means to end the frequent disruptions leading to adjournment of the proceedings of the legislature.

"If consensus is arrived at, rules will be framed for dealing with the disruptions in the House," he said.

The Lok Sabha Speaker said a conference of the presiding officers of state assemblies and parliamentary affairs ministers would also be organised soon and the report of the three committees would be placed in the conference for reaching a consensus on the findings of the committees.

Om Birla said the research and reference wing of the Lok Sabha secretariat, in association with the state assemblies, was working on a project for digitisation of the records of the proceedings of Parliament and state assemblies so that the entire record was available on one platform to the people. He said records of 40 lakh debates of

the Lok Sabha had so far been digitised and the work was likely to be completed by the end of the 2020.

The Lok Sabha Speaker said for ensuring accountability of the executive towards the legislature, a conference of the chairpersons of Public Accounts Committees (PAC) of all legislatures would be held next year. He said the members of the PACs of all state assemblies would also attend the conference apart from economists and experts.

He said the idea behind the conference was to ensure proper utilisation of budgetary grants so as to benefit the common man.

"The Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (CPA) meeting also decided that for capacity building of the elected representatives, regular training programme for MLAs will be organised by the Lok Sabha secretariat in next three years. Similar programmes are also proposed to be organised for the other elected representatives of urban local bodies and three-tier panchayat institutions so that they conduct their affairs in more organised manner after debate over the budget and its utilisation," Birla said.

# Beat policing back in UP

Lucknow (PNS): Amidst rapid modernisation of technology in the law enforcing system, Uttar Pradesh police would once again go back to age-old beat policing system. The system, which was initially kicked off in 100 police stations of the state on Thursday, would now further spread to one police station each of 50 more districts of the state.

"To improve law and order situation and crime control, beat policing system has already been introduced in 100 police stations of the state on the direction of DGP OP Singh on Thursday," said an official communiqué of the state government on Friday. The release said that the exercise was part of a pilot project of the DGP to re-start traditional policing system.

According to the release, the beat police system started on Thursday in two police stations of each range headquarter districts like Lucknow, Faizabad, Kanpur, Jhansi, Agra, Aligarh, Meerut, Saharanpur, Bareilly, Moradabad, Varanasi, Mirzapur, Azamgarh, Gorakhpur, Basti, Deopatan, Prayagraj, Chitrakoot, along with Ghaziabad, Noida, Muzaffarnagar, Bijnor, Sitapur, Mathura, and Jaunpur. Besides, in at least 50 other districts of the state, directions have been given to immediately introduce the beat policing system in one police station of the district.

At least 40 per cent of police strength of the police station selected under this project will be engaged in beat policing. The cops deployed for beat will not be engaged in law or crime control related duties and the cops will be equipped with a CUG mobile phone having internet data, small arm, wireless set and a official two-wheeler. The deployment will be made in consultation with the local lekhpals to avoid jurisdictional dispute.

# Legislators judged on basis of their works: Patel

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

The two-day seventh conference of Commonwealth Parliamentary Association's India Region on 'Role of Legislators' concluded here on Friday. Thirty-five delegates from various branches of CPA India Region and also from Australia and South East Asia Region participated in the event. Besides several ministers, as many as 270 members of UP Vidhan Sabha and Vidhan Parishad attended the two-day conference.

Addressing the valedictory function, UP Governor Anandiben Patel said that the nature of the legislatures had changed over the years.

"The legislature is not only doing the work of law-making but is also at the forefront of the economic and social change. The role of people's representatives as members of the legislative bodies has also undergone sea

change," Patel said. "Legislators are judged on the basis of their works and actions in and outside the House. They are thus expected to understand social problems and play a leading role in their redressal through legislatures and Parliament. As the people's representatives, it is necessary that they use parliamentary traditions, rules and procedures in such a way that the development work and the welfare of the public is ensured," she added.

Thanking the delegates for their lively and meaningful participation in the deliberations of the conference, Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla, in his valedictory address, said that such exchange of ideas and experiences helped in consolidating and strengthening democracy by overcoming challenges faced by legislators.

Birla underlined that legislative institutions were credible

platforms for highlighting the concerns, hopes and aspirations of the common people, which should be effectively voiced by their representatives on the floor of the House.

Referring to the first plenary of the conference viz. 'capacity building of legislators for scrutinising budgetary proposals', Birla said that the legislators should act as a watchdog on the financial accountability of the executive.

"For this, it is necessary that they have a better understanding of financial terminology and budgetary processes," he added.

On the second plenary on 'enhancing focus of legislators on legislative business', Birla said that legislators should use all available procedural devices effectively. He suggested that state legislatures should also consider conducting briefing sessions on legislative business during the sessions on the pat-

tern introduced by the Lok Sabha.

Thanking the delegates, UP Assembly Speaker Hriday Narayan Dikshit said that the mandate of legislators had increased with the changing times. He said that legislators should understand that knowledge and experience were important for performing their work.

Dikshit, however, cautioned the legislators that mere reading of the Constitution or the rules of the business of the proceedings of the assembly was not enough.

"It is important that legislators participate in the proceedings of the House regularly and articulate their views in a dignified manner," he said, adding that legislators should look at the House with a sense of respect and dedication.

Earlier on Friday, the conference took up discussion on enhancing focus of legislators on legislative business. Delivering the

keynote address, Union Minority Affairs Minister Mukhtar Abbas Naqvi said that legislators were primarily required to engage in law-making and therefore they must be able to identify a policy issue, potential legislative options to address that issue and consult relevant stakeholders. Ensuring the accountability of the executive is also one of the core functions of the legislature. To perform these legislative responsibilities, it is imperative that legislators have access to sector-specific research support, he said.

The CPA India Region, which was earlier a part of CPA Asia Region, became an independent region from September 7, 2004. The India Region of CPA consists of the India Union Branch (Parliament of India) and 36 states/Union Territories branches. Such conferences of the CPA India Region are held once in two years and the sixth conference was held in 2018 in Patna.

# More farmers committing suicide in NDA rule: UPCC

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

Uttar Pradesh Congress president, Ajay Kumar 'Lallu' on Friday targeted the Bharatiya Janata Party's government in Centre and in Uttar Pradesh, saying there was 45 per cent increase in suicides by farmers since the coming of National Democratic Alliance (NDA) government in 2014.

Interestingly the UPCC president made the attack minutes after Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath said due to the "apathy" of previous governments in the state, farmers were forced to commit suicide but the situation had changed for the better under the BJP rule.

Yogi Adityanath made this claim while addressing a meet of progressive farmers here on Friday.

"There was everything in the state earlier but due to the apathy of the previous governments, the farmers were in a pitiable condition. They were committing suicide and were thinking of whether to continue with farming or not. In two years, we were able to bring a lot of change," Yogi said.

Contradicting the chief minister's claims, the UPCC president Lallu said that the government's official figure confirmed that 35 farmers were committing suicide daily in the country and that an increase of 45 per cent in



suicide by farmers had been reported since coming of BJP government in 2014.

The UPCC chief said that the agriculture development rate, which was 3.6 per cent during the United Progressive Alliance regime, had dipped to 1.9 per cent in the NDA's tenure, which was the lowest since Independence.

Similarly, he said, rural income was 17.6 per cent in UPA's regime and it had come down to 6.6 per cent in NDA's tenure.

The UPCC chief raised the issues of non-payment of cane dues by the Yogi Adityanath government and accused it of cheating the farmers by making false elec-

tion promise of doubling their agriculture income.

He said that BJP was just facilitating its industrialist friends by waiving their over 1.75 lakh crore loans whereas during UPA's regime, they waived Rs 1.25 lakh crore agriculture loans of farmers so that they could get some relief.

Lallu appealed to Yogi Adityanath to stop cheating the farmers and take some concrete steps to increase their incomes, minimise the prices of fertiliser, pesticides etc, clear their pending arrears and take measures to waive farmers' loans so that they could freely work and contribute in agricultural production of the country.

# UPPCL JE shot dead in Mathura

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

In a sensational killing, a junior engineer of Uttar Pradesh Power Corporation Limited was killed in Mathura while in another incident, a temple priest was shot dead in Chitrakoot.

The sensational killing of the UPPCL junior engineer took place near Chandrawali cold storage under Yamunapur police station late Thursday night, police said on Friday.

Deputy Inspector General of Police Shalabh Mathur said that unidentified assailants shot dead Pradeep Kumar (35), a junior engineer of UPPCL. The JE was returning to his residence from Panigaon power sub-station after his duty on his motorcycle when the assailants stopped him near Chandrawali cold storage and shot him dead.

The DIG said it was unlikely to be a case of loot as Pradeep's belongings, including his motorcycle, laptop and

purse, were found at the crime scene. The deceased was transferred from Agra to Mathura, just six months back.

The DIG said that investigation was underway and several police teams had been formed to nab the assailants. However, due to the murder, the power employees in the district are annoyed and they could soon announce an agitation demanding security.

The junior engineer was transferred from his home town Agra to Mathura around five months ago, a power department official said. Pradeep is survived by his wife and two children.

In another incident in Chitrakoot, a temple priest was allegedly shot dead by motorcycle-borne assailants while his driver sustained injuries, police said on Friday.

According to Chitrakoot Superintendent of Police Ankit Mittal, the priest of Balaji temple in town, Mahant Arjundas (46), and his driver Ashish

Tiwari were shot by unidentified motorcycle-borne assailants on Thursday night.

The SP said, "Around 9 pm on Thursday, Arjundas and his driver Ashish Tiwari were shot at by two unidentified motorcycle-borne assailants in Ramghat. They were returning from a meeting with the Mahant of Nirmohi Akhara on a motorcycle."

He added that two bullets hit Arjundas on his head, while the driver sustained a bullet injury on his hand. Both were admitted to a government hospital where the priest was pronounced brought dead, Mittal said. He said that two persons, had been detained in the case, and were being interrogated while a search was on for the assailants.

There was a dispute in a local court between the slain priest and Mangaldas, another priest in the temple, over priesthood duties, the SP said, adding that the matter was being investigated.

Meanwhile in Ballia, the police have registered a case against three persons, including the priest of a temple, for allegedly beating a Dalit man, officials said on Friday.

"On the basis of a complaint filed by the wife of the Dalit man, Dharmendra (30), a case was registered on Friday against three persons including the priest of a temple. The man was beaten up on January 10, and the matter is being investigated," SHO Phephna Shashimauli Pandey said. The case has been registered under SC and ST (Prevention of Atrocities) Act and various sections of the IPC. According to Dharmendra, he was beaten up by the temple priest and two others at Maldepur village. The priest had allegedly told Dharmendra that he could not sit in the temple, Dharmendra told reporters here on Friday. He also claimed that he sustained injuries on his legs and was admitted to the district hospital.

**CLASSIFIEDS**

**सूचना**  
अशोक कुमार/अशोक कुमार नवानी पुत्र सचर श्री अमर देव नवानी, निवास-3/279, विस्वास खण्ड, गोमती नगर, लखनऊ से ही नाम है। मरियम में मुझे अशोक कुमार नवानी नाम से ही पहचाना एवं पुकारा जायेगा। मैं अपने नियोजित उद्योग पुलिस आवस निगम के अधिकारियों में अपना नाम अशोक कुमार नवानी अंकित करवाना चाहता हूँ।

**NOTICE**  
I No. 419970-8N LNK Bhuwan Chandra Khanduri Unit 15 Kumaon C/o 56 APO hereby declare that in Service Record my Wife's name wrongly mentioned as Devki Khanduri, while her correct name is Devaki Khanduri.

**NOTICE**  
I No. 4195111-N Naik Arjun Singh Unit 15 Kumaon C/o 56 APO hereby declare that in Service Record my Wife's name and DOB mistakenly mentioned as Devki Khloyia and 05.04.1984, while her correct name and DOB is Devaki Khloyia 03.06.1983.

**NOTICE**  
Let it be known that spelling of my name has wrongly been written as Saif Rehman in High School marksheet & certificate while correct spelling is Saif Rahman S/o Dr. Obaidur Rahman, R/o S-37, B 25/206, Amber Vinar Colony, Faizullaganj, Lucknow.

**PUBLIC NOTICE**  
It is reported to the general that the original copy of the Anita Srivastava, W/o Shiv Kumar Srivastava, Resident H.No. 2311 Vikalp Khad Gomti Nagar Lucknow Allotment Letter issued January 15, 2020 Somewhere near Gomti Nagar has fallen on the way. If any gentleman receive the same, then inform the following address. Use of the said allocation letter will be considered invalid.  
Anita Srivastava  
W/o Shiv Kumar Srivastav  
2311, Vikalp Khad, Gomti Nagar, Lucknow  
Mob.: 795995100

Form No. 5  
**DEBTS RECOVERY TRIBUNAL LUCKNOW**  
600/1 University Road, Near Hanuman Setu Mandir, Lucknow-226007  
(Area of Jurisdiction - Part of Uttar Pradesh)  
SUMMONS FOR FILING REPLY & APPEARANCE BY PUBLICATION  
O.A. No. 1291/2018 Date: /2019  
(Summons to Defendant Under Section 19(3), of the Recovery of Debts Due to Bank and Financial Institutions Act, 1993 read with Rules 12 and 13 of the Debts Recovery Tribunal (Procedure Rules, 1993)  
Original Application No. 1291 Of 2018  
UCO Bank .....Applicant Bank  
Ashok Marg (1420) Hazratganj Lucknow - 226001.  
Versus  
Rashi Arora & ORS. ....Defendants To.  
1. Rashi Arora W/o Mr. Rishi Arora  
R/o 4, B.N. Road, Lalbagh, Lucknow - 226001.  
Also At: Flat No. B01/01, First Floor, Sri Ram Apartment, 23 New Berry Road, Ward Raj Mohan Roy, Hazratganj, Lucknow - 226001.  
2. Rishi Arora S/o Mr. Love Kumar Arora  
R/o 4, B.N. Road, Lalbagh, Lucknow - 226001.  
Also At: Flat No. B01/01, First Floor, Sri Ram Apartment, 23 New Berry Road, Ward Raj Mohan Roy, Hazratganj, Lucknow - 226001.  
3. Shri Colorizers & Developers Pvt. Ltd.  
Having its Registered Office : S - 14, Second Floor, Jai Hind Commercial Centre, B.N. Road, Lucknow - 226001.  
Through its Director.  
In the above noted Application, you are required to file reply in Paper Book form in Two sets alongwith documents and affidavits (if any), personally or through your duly authorized agent or legal practitioner in this Tribunal, after serving copy of the same on the Applicant or his counsel/duly authorized agent after publication of the summons, and thereafter to appear before the Tribunal on 05/03/2020 at 10:30 A.M. failing which the application shall be heard and decided in your absence.  
Registrar  
Debts Recovery Tribunal  
Lucknow

**NORTH CENTRAL RAILWAY, ALLAHABAD**  
Corrigendum No. 50195126 Date: 16.01.2020  
Second Corrigendum  
On behalf of the President of India, Principal Chief Materials Manager, North Central Railway, Allahabad is issued a following corrigendum for change of tender opening date in EPS-Advt. Tender No. 50195126 due on 16.01.2020 published against EPS Tender Notice No. 19/33 dated 20.12.2019 and RO No. 1846/19(K).  
Tender No. Sr. No. Particulars From To  
50195126 01 Tender Opening Date 16.01.2020 24.01.2020  
Other Terms & Conditions of Tender remain unchanged. 1846/19(K)  
North central railway @ CPONCR

**लखनऊ नगर निगम**  
निजीकरण विभाग, लालबाग, लखनऊ फोन: 2202570 फैक्स नं: 0522-2622440 ई-मेल: nmlko@up.nic.in  
दिनांक: 17.01.2020  
ई-निविदा सूचना: 171/मु.अ/2019-20  
ई-निविदा प्रणाली के अन्तर्गत निविदा सूचना  
ई-निविदा प्रणाली के अन्तर्गत दिनांक 24.01.2020 को कुल 01 कार्य हेतु ई-निविदाये, ई-निविदा पोर्टल <https://etender.up.nic.in> पर निविदा आमंत्रित की जाती है, पोर्टल <https://etender.up.nic.in> पर निविदा के साथ जमानत धनराशि एफडीआर/एनएआरसी/टीडीआर एवं निविदा प्राप्त मूल्य के धनराशि आरडीसीएस/एनएईएफटीडी द्वारा नगर निगम के ई-निविदा के एक्सिस बैंक इंदिरा नगर लखनऊ के खाता संख्या 91302000308994 आईडीएफएससी को UTIB0000365 की प्रतिलिपि अपलोड की जानी है जाली गयी निविदा का पोर्टल से प्रिन्ट करा कर मूल एफडीआर/एनएआरसी/टीडीआर प्रिन्टआउट के साथ संलग्न कर दिनांक 24.01.2020 तक जमा की जा सकेगी तथा ई-निविदा दिनांक 24.01.2020 को अपराह्न 3.00 बजे तक ई-निविदा पोर्टल पर प्राप्त की जायेगी जिन्हे उसी दिन अपराह्न 16.00 बजे निविदा समिति के समक्ष खोला जायेगा। किसी भी ई-निविदा को स्वीकार एवं अस्वीकार करने का अधिकार समक्ष अधिकारी में निहित होगा। अन्य समस्त नियम/शर्तें यथा कार्य का नाम, आगमन धनराशि, निविदा प्रपत्र की धनराशि एवं जमानत धनराशि तथा निविदा प्रपत्र पोर्टल <https://etender.up.nic.in> पर उपलब्ध हैं। मुख्य अधिकारी लखनऊ नगर निगम  
नगर निगम से सम्बन्धित शिकायतों हेतु [www.lnpnps.in](http://www.lnpnps.in) अधिका कृपया संख्या - 0522-2307770, 2307782, 2307783 पर सम्पर्क करें।

**NORTH CENTRAL RAILWAY, ALLAHABAD**  
E-Procurement Tender Notice No.: 20/02 E-Tender Notice Date: 14.01.2020  
On behalf of the President of India, The Principal Chief Materials Manager, North Central Railway, Allahabad (An ISO 9001:2015 certified unit) invites the following E-Procurement Tenders.  
S.N. Tender No. & Description Qty. Tender Opening Date  
1 20193489 C: Set of Labyrinth and bearing Cap 100 Set 03.02.2020  
2 40193045C: On line UPS 01 kva with isolation transformer. 52 Nos. 03.02.2020  
Note: 1. The complete information of above E-Procurement Tenders are available on IREPS website i.e. <http://www.ireps.gov.in>. 2. Bids other than in the form of E-Bids shall not be accepted against above Tenders. For this purpose, vendors are required to get themselves registered with IREPS website along with class III. digital signature certificates issued by CCA under IT Act-2000. 3. Rates entered into Financial Rate page and duly signed digitally shall only be considered. Rates and any other financial entity in any other form/folder/letter head if attached by vendor shall be straight way ignored and shall not be considered. 7820(R)  
North central railways [www.ncr.indianrailways.gov.in](http://www.ncr.indianrailways.gov.in) @ CPONCR

# CM: FPOs to be opened in all UP gram panchayats

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ LUCKNOW

With the aim of doubling the income of farmers in the next three years, Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath said the goal of his government was to open Farmer Producer Organisations (FPOs) in all gram panchayats so that farmers could get an easy market at their doorsteps.

"The FPOs will be opened in all blocks of the state in the first phase, nyay panchayats in the second phase and in all village panchayats in the third phase. So far 336 FPOs have been opened. Through them, there will be a big change in the agriculture sector," Yogi said while addressing a conference of progressive farmers in the Lok Bhawan auditorium here on Friday. The chief minister said that Uttar Pradesh had all the resources but due to the apathy of the previous governments, the farmers were in a pitiable condition.

"The farmers were committing suicide and were not ready to continue with farming. In two years, we have been able to bring in a lot of change," he said. "We waived crop loans of up to Rs 1 lakh of small and marginal farmers during the first cabinet meeting and gave relief to potato farmers through market intervention scheme. Paddy and wheat were procured in record quantity at minimum support price (MSP) and the money was transferred to farmers' accounts within 72 hours. So far, Rs 11,594.18 crore has been sent to the accounts of about 1.83 crore farmers under the Kisan Mandhan Yojana," he said.

The chief minister said that during the previous governments, the payment of sugarcane farmers was stopped. "The mills were getting closed and being sold. We paid a record Rs 82,000 crore and opened new mills. Today 121 sugar mills are running instead of 116 in the state. Old sugar mills are being modernised and their capacity expanded. There is clear instruction to the mill owners that as long as



Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath and Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla at the conference of progressive farmers in the Lok Bhawan auditorium on Friday

there is sugarcane in the farmer's field, the mills should function. This is the reason why the mills kept running till mid-June in the last crushing season," he said.

The chief minister said that to increase the income of farmers, the emphasis is on maximum production at minimum cost. "That is why the efficient modes of irrigation, drip and sprinkler, are being made mandatory with boring schemes given on grant. Agricultural investment is being provided on time. Through the Krishi Vigyan Kendras and agricultural universities, farmers are being informed about the latest methods of farming. The results of all this is in front of us, he said.

Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla, who was the chief guest, called for a change in the system so that farm production in the country could get international branding. "The Centre as well as the UP government have taken several steps to

double the income of the farmers but if the farmers get international branding of their produce, they will be more benefited," he said.

Birla said that while the UP government had taken several steps to benefit the farmers, the Centre had already made 2022 as the year to hit the target of doubling the farmers income. "But as everyone knows that agriculture requires hard labour, technology is needed for minimising this labour and also to increase the yield as well as the farmers' income," he said.

Talking about water scarcity in Bundelkhand region, which has been raised by Lok Sabha members frequently, Birla said the Yogi Adityanath government was trying to solve the decade-old issue and several schemes had been launched there.

"The government has launched innovative schemes to address the farmers' woes and in coming days we are

expected to get good results," he added.

Welcoming the guests, UP's Agriculture Minister Surya Pratap Shahi lauded the chief minister's commitment towards the interest of farmers.

Shahi said that it was a result of Yogi's commitment that record procurement of paddy and wheat was made at minimum support prices (MSP) and record cane payment was also made. "For the two consecutive years, UP has remained at number one position in the entire country in terms of food production. The state's agricultural growth rate is at a record rate of 11.5 per cent," he added.

On the occasion, the Lok Sabha speaker and the chief minister laid the foundation stone of Krishi Vigyan Kendra of Amroha and five Kisan Kalyan Kendras of HarDOI and Barabanki. On the occasion, acceptance letter of FPO was given to many progressive farmers.

## Thieves make off with valuables, cash from house

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ LUCKNOW

The house of Pradeep Mishra, a resident of Vikas Nagar was burgled some time between January 5 and 16. He lodged a complaint at the Vikas Nagar police station on Friday morning stating thieves barged into his house by cutting open the grill of windows and took away cash and valuables.

He said in the complaint that the theft was committed probably between January 5 and 16 as he had gone out of the city on official assignment.

He came to know about the theft when he came back at 10.30 pm on Thursday. He noticed that the lock of the main gate was broken and grill of the front windows were cut open. The rooms were in a messed-up condition and locks of the almirahs were broken. Cash and valuables worth lakhs were missing. Mishra, who works as a clerk in the State Bank of India, failed to state the amount of money stolen.

## Teen's body found in well, father alleges murder

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ LUCKNOW

A teenager was found dead and his body was recovered from the community well of Narsingh Deen village on Friday morning. He was identified as Rohit (18), who was a resident of Raipur village under Gosainganj police station. There was no external injury marks and he was suspected to be strangled to death. Police said the post-mortem report was awaited.

Rohit had mysteriously gone missing from his house on Thursday afternoon. His father Sone Lal became worried when Rohit did not return home till late evening. He, along with neighbours and relatives, started searching him, but in vain. Later, he lodged a police complaint stating his son had gone missing.

Investigating officer BP Singh, accompanied by Rohit's father and locals, went out to search for him. A farmer, who reached the community well in Narsingh Deen village to fetch



POLICE SAID THERE WAS NO EXTERNAL INJURY MARKS AND THE TEENAGER WAS SUSPECTED TO HAVE BEEN STRANGLED TO DEATH

water, spotted a body and raised an alarm. Police reached the spot and fished out the body. The bereaved father lodged another complaint alleging that Rohit was killed elsewhere and the body thrown into the community well. However, he failed to name any suspect or motive for murder. The police registered a case against unidentified accused. They claimed that investigation

was on and the case would be worked out soon.

### YOUTH ENDS LIFE

A youth identified as Jitendra Kumar Rawat (25), who was a resident of Takrohi village under Indira Nagar police station, committed suicide by hanging himself from the ceiling of the room. No suicide note was found from his room. He was living with his elder brother Babu Rawat. He was home alone when he took the extreme step.

The police said that other family members had left the house on Thursday evening to attend a function but Babu did not accompany them and stayed back with Jitendra. Next morning, he also left for his work at 9 am, leaving his brother alone. When he came back to the house for lunch, he was surprised to see Jitendra hanging from the ceiling of the room. He told the police that his brother was cheerful and also helped him in preparing lunch in the morning.

## Work for greater good of LU: VC to teachers

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ LUCKNOW

Lucknow University Vice-Chancellor Alok Kumar Rai called upon teachers for active contribution to the greater good of the institution. He said every department should start a YouTube channel documenting the lectures delivered by invited dignitaries on several topics and help in creating a brand name for the university.

Lucknow University Teachers' Association on Friday organised a programme to welcome newly-appointed Vice-Chancellor of Lucknow University Alok Kumar Rai at Malviya Hall.

While addressing the teachers, the Vice-Chancellor said he has plans to implement accuracy, speed and trans-



parency in each and every function of the university administration via digitisation. He appealed to all the faculty members to enrol on UDRC, which is LU's digital connection portal, as a part of this drive.

Rai said that his only goal is to ensure the greater good of the institution through the every department and it could be achieved through quality

education, teaching and research.

"I feel privilege to have been appointed the Vice-Chancellor of Lucknow University and he is falling in love with it," he said.

"Every institute must have a student-centric structured framework and the first step to achieve that is choice-based credit system (CBCS) that is

ferently being worked on by the authorities," he added.

Rai said this is among the many such steps to be taken, keeping in mind the welfare of students. About LU's excellent academic record, he stressed on how despite running primarily traditional and conventional courses, the SCOPUS and Web of Science citation index of the university is higher than several notable central universities. He also stressed on maintaining a positive environment in the university and ensuring quick and efficient resolution of conflicts. He appealed to teachers to start having office hours dedicated to all students willing to seek help. He said 2,600 saplings will be planted on the university campus on the occasion of Republic Day.

## LU researcher works for revival of two wetlands

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ LUCKNOW

A Lucknow University researcher and programme officer of the Institute of Wildlife Sciences has worked towards reviving two wetlands of Lucknow. Adesh Kumar said the work is being done through community participation for the last three years. Kumar said he had to take permission from the departments concerned for the task and it was challenging for him to carry out the work. "I am carrying out the task so that we can meet the officials and tell them what more can be done in this regard. It has been a very challenging task and I spent one year simply in convincing the gram panchayat people that this needs to be done to help people in future," he said.

He said that community-based conservation (CBC) and management encompasses several core principles, including involving communities in decision-making, devolving control over resource management, developing community institutions for management, incorporating traditional or local knowledge, legitimising community property rights, linking environment and development objectives and providing incentives for conservation. He said that the work was carried out under the supervision of coordinator, Institute of Wildlife Sciences (LU), Amita Kanaujia. He said the condition of the wetlands was very bad when he took up the revival work. Behda pond at Itanuja carried threats such as fish cultivation and excessive harvesting, soil-digging, overgrazing near wetland area, use of pesticides and non-biological fertilisers, excessive draining for irrigation and converting it to agricultural land, cultivation along the marginal areas of wetland causing encroachment and reduc-



tion in water spread to the wetland. Sakrain Jheel in Bichia Block (Unnao) was witnessing fish cultivation and excessive harvesting, use of pesticides and non-biological fertilisers, hunting of birds, developmental and anthropogenic activities, bird hunting, natural weed eradication through fire, excessive cultivation of water chestnut, cultivation along the marginal areas of wetland causing encroachment and reduction in water spread to the wetland area.

He said these wetlands also witnessed the poaching of birds which came in large numbers. Experts said that to prevent over exploitation, the need was to promote sustainable use of wetlands for fish and water chestnut cultivation and irrigation purposes, and prevent soil digging from wetlands. "There are many dead fishes, birds and reptiles found in wetlands so it should be necessary to test water quality of all wetlands, regular water quality assessment, total ban on use of wetlands as a dustbin for dumping of polluted water and garbage of city, regular monitoring for soil erosion or filling of wetlands. Fish seeds should be applied in the wetlands with prior consultation of Fisheries department," the experts said.



Commuters wading through the heavily-waterlogged underpass near Ekana stadium at Shaheed Path following overnight rainfall

**पावरग्रिड POWERGRID**

1. The applicant above-named has made an application before the Central Electricity Regulatory Commission, New Delhi for Petition 1: Determination of Transmission Tariff from DCCO to 31-03-2024 for Asset-1: 1\*100MVA, 220/132kV ICT-III at Sitarganj S/s (100 MVA ICT shifted from Raebareilly) under "Augmentation of Transformation Capacity at Raebareilly & Sitarganj 220/132kV Substations".

2. The beneficiaries for Combined Assets of the above mentioned Transmission system are: (1) Rajasthan Rajya Vidyut Prasaran Nigam Limited, (2) Ajmer Vidyut Vitran Nigam Ltd. (3) Jaipur Vidyut Vitran Nigam Ltd. (4) Jodhpur Vidyut Vitran Nigam Ltd. (5) Punjab State Electricity Board. (6) Haryana Power Purchase Centre (7) Power Development Deptt, Govt. of Jammu & Kashmir. (8) Uttar Pradesh Power Corporation Ltd. (9) Delhi Transco Ltd. (10) BSES Yamuna Power Ltd. (11) BSES Rajdhani Power Ltd. (12) North Delhi Power Ltd. (13) Chandigarh Administration. (14) Uttaranchal Power Corporation Ltd. (15) North Central Railway (16) New Delhi Municipal Council. (17) Himachal Pradesh State Electricity Board.

S. No	Subject	Petition 1
1	Approved capital cost of the project (Rs. in Cr)	29.17
2	Authority which has approved the Capital Cost	Board Of Directors
3	Scheduled date of commercial operation	20.03.2019
4	Date of commercial operation	29.06.2019
5	Capital cost on DCCO (Rs. in Cr)	1.73

3. Details of tariff: 2019-24 (Rs. in Lakhs)

Petition	Asset	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
Petition -1	ASSET-(a)	62.51	104.26	117.29	122.05	121.45
	ASSET-(b)	56.61	64.31	64.31	64.31	64.43

4. A copy of the application made for determination of tariff is posted on the website of the applicant at [www.powergridindia.com](http://www.powergridindia.com)

5. The suggestions and objections, if any, on the proposals for determination of tariff contained in the application be filed by any person, including the beneficiary before the Secretary, Central Electricity Regulatory Commission, 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> floor, Chandraklok Bhawan, 36, Janpath, New Delhi - 110 001 (or other address where the office of the Commission is situated), with a copy to the applicant at the address of its corporate office within 30 days of publication of this notice.

Date: Gurugram  
Place: 17.01.2020

Sd/-  
Sr. General Manager (Commercial)

**POWER GRID CORPORATION OF INDIA LIMITED**  
(A Government of India Enterprise)  
Corp. Office: "Saudamin", Plot No. 2, Sector-29, Gurugram-122001, (Haryana) Tel.: 0124-2571700-719  
Reg. Office: B-9, Outer Institutional Area, Katwaria Sarai, New Delhi-110016, Tel.: 011-26560112, 26560121  
www.powergridindia.com. CIN: L40101DL1989GO038121

A Maharashtra PSU

## Two new enclosures to come up at zoo

Lucknow (PNS): Lucknow zoo will soon inaugurate two new enclosures for tigers and the leopards. Zoo director RK Singh said the new enclosures have been made as per international standards and norms of Central Zoo Authority. "The enclosures are required because we are breeding the animals and it is important that there should be some space where these animals can be kept," he said. The zoo director said they have over 40 tigers, leopards and lions. He said the enclosures have been made of good quality and they have tried to make the same more habitat-friendly. "The leopards' enclosure is open

Meanwhile, the Postal department has adopted endangered wildlife to promote conservation of fauna and popularise services of the department of Posts. Chief post master general, UP Circle, Kaushalendra Kumar Sinha, along with director of Postal Services, Lucknow HQ Region, Krishna Kumar Yadav, adopted a leopard and crocodile at Lucknow zoo.

Sinha said that for the first time in Uttar Pradesh, the department of Posts has adopted endangered wildlife in the zoo. "This initiative will give wide publicity of postal services to the zoo visitors," he added.

"The leopard has been adopted for six months and crocodile for one year," he said.



Postal department on Friday adopted endangered wildlife to promote conservation of fauna and popularise services of the department of Posts

## NBRI's Annual Rose and Gladiolus Show begins today

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ LUCKNOW

NBRI's Annual Rose and Gladiolus Show-2020 will be held on January 18 and 19 at the Central Lawn, Botanic Garden. Director-general of CSIR (New Delhi) and DSIR secretary Shekhar C. Mande will be the chief guest at the prize distribution ceremony on January 19. The show will be open for public on January 18 from 2 pm to 6 pm and on January 19 from 10 am to 6 pm.

**बैंक ऑफ इंडिया Bank of India BOI**

**POSSESSION NOTICE**

Whereas, The undersigned being the Authorised Officer of the Bank of India under the Securitization and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest, Act 2002 and in exercise of powers conferred under section 13 (12) read with Rule 3 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules 2002, calling them to repay the amount within 60 days from the date of receipt of the said notice. The borrower having failed to repay the amount, notice is hereby given to the borrower and the public in general that the undersigned has taken possession of the property/ies described herein below in exercise of powers conferred on him under sub-section 13 (4) of the Act read with rule 8 of the Security Interest Enforcement Rules, 2002 on the dates mentioned hereunder. The borrower in particular and the public in general is hereby cautioned not to deal with the property/ies and any dealings with the property/ies will be subject to the charge of the Bank of India for an amount and interest thereon. **The borrower's attention is invited to provisions of sub-section (8) of section 13 of the Act, in respect of time available, to redeem the secured assets.**

S. No.	Name & Address of the Borrowers & Guarantors	Description of Immovable property mortgaged / Owner of the property	Amount o/s (as mentioned in the Notice u/s 13(4) Date of Demand & Possession Notice
<b>BRANCH: Sarvodaya Nagar Branch, Lucknow</b>			
1	<b>Borrower: M/s VV IT Solutions (Prop. Vishal Verma) Shop No. 1 Hanuman Market, Indira Nagar, Lucknow-226016.</b> <b>Mr. Vishal Verma S/o Mr. Ashok Kumar Verma 22/439, Indira Nagar, Lucknow-226016.</b> <b>Guarantor: Mrs. Vijay Laxmi Verma W/o Mr. Ashok Kumar Verma, 22/439, Indira Nagar, Lucknow-226016.</b>	All that part & parcel of the property consisting of Shop No. S-10/18, Sector-10, Indira Nagar, Lucknow. Area: 6.45 Sq.Mtrs., Owner: Mrs. Vijay Laxmi Verma. Boundaries: East: Shop No. S-10/17, West: Shop No. S-10/19, North: Shop No. S-10/3, South: Path	₹ 1,83,264.71 + Interest & other charges <b>19.06.2018</b> <b>16.01.2020</b>

Date: 17.01.2020, Place : Lucknow Authorised officer, Bank of India

# Unnao rape case: HC refuses to suspend Sengar's jail term

New Delhi: Expelled BJP MLA Kuldeep Singh Sengar, sentenced to life imprisonment for raping a minor girl in Unnao in 2017, failed to get any interim relief on Friday from the

Delhi High Court which refused to suspend his sentence and sought CBI's response on his appeal challenging the conviction. The court also sought the victim's reply on Sengar's appeal challenging his conviction and imprisonment till remainder of his natural life.

A bench of justices Manmohan and Sangeeta Dhingra Sehgal allowed Sengar to deposit in 60 days the fine amount of Rs 25 lakh, out of which Rs 10 lakh will be released to the rape survivor without any condition. During the hearing, the court said it was not inclined to suspend the sentence or fine amount of Sengar as he is an undertrial in other cases also, after which his counsel withdrew the application for suspension of the sentence.

"Too much tragedy happened with the victim in this case. In the facts of the case, we are not inclined to suspend the sentence. You have to pay Rs 10 lakh to the victim. There can be no condition to it," the bench said. "You cannot be released because you are an undertrial in other cases also in which trial is going on. You have a judgement of trial court against you, you are a convict today, you

have to be in custody. The presumption of innocence does not lie to you today. You have been in jail only for one and a half years. We are not suspending the sentence," it said. Sengar's advocate claimed he does not have money to deposit the fine amount as he was the sole earning member in the family, has two daughters of marriageable age.

He said he was facing difficulty in arranging Rs 25 lakh and the trial court had only given him time till January 20 to deposit the amount and urged the court that the time be extended. The counsel for CBI said Sengar's wife was also a public servant and he should first pay Rs 10 lakh as directed by the trial court to the rape survivor and rest Rs 15 lakh is to be deposited with the court. The bench has now posted the appeal for May 4 in the category of 'regular matters'.

Sengar has sought quashing of the December 16, 2019 judgement of the trial court which convicted him. He has also sought setting aside of the December 20 order sentencing him to imprisonment till remainder of his life. The trial court had convicted the 54-year-old Sengar under various provisions.

## CITY BRIEFS



V Adimurthy (left) being welcomed at the inaugural of Space Exhibition

### SPACE EXHIBITION

India is going to play a vital role in many interplanetary and deep space missions in future, said V Adimurthy from Vikram Sarabhai Space Centre, Thiruvananthapuram (Kerala), at the inaugural of a special 'Space Exhibition', displayed by ISRO at Regional Science City on Friday. ISRO Telemetry, Tracking and Command Network and Indian Institute of Remote Sensing, are organising 'Vikram A Sarabhai Centenary Celebration-2020' in collaboration with Regional Science City from January 17 to 22. Director of Indian Institute of Remote Sensing (Dehradun) Prakash Chauhan was the guest of honour on the occasion. Adimurthy joined Vikram Sarabhai Space Centre in 1973 and he has been a witness to various space missions in the past. He presented a glimpse of the Chandrayaan-2 mission and shared interesting information with the audience. Vikram Sarabhai was born on August 12, 1919, in Ahmedabad. He is considered the Father of the Indian Space Programme as he was instrumental in establishing the Physical Research Laboratory (PRL) and Indian Institute of Management (Ahmedabad). He created institutions like ATIRA, ECL, DARPAN academy among others.



### AGRA VISIT

A five-member delegation, led by Major General Andrei Kozlov, Chief of the Directorate of the Military Railway Service of the Eastern Military District, visiting New Delhi on January 15. During their visit in New Delhi, they interacted with Director-General of Ordnance Services and Director-General of Services Transport. The delegation visited prominent military logistics installations — Army Base Workshop and Central Ordnance Depot in Agra — on January 16 and 17. The delegation was briefed about the modernised logistics installations which provide important electrical and technical equipment to Indian Army. Before departing to Delhi, the delegation also visited the places of historical significance like Taj Mahal. They were awestruck to witness the beauty of the monument.

### AUTO EXPO

'Auto Expo - The Motor Show', the biggest biannual extravaganza of India's automotive industry, is scheduled for February 7-12 at India Expo Mart in Greater Noida. The inauguration ceremony will be held on February 6. It has been a launch pad for some of the key brands marking their entry in Indian market and unveiling of exciting new products by the existing brands. The theme of this edition is 'Explore the World of Mobility', which resonates with the industry's vision and message of technology, capability—for a safer, cleaner, connected, bespoke and shared mobility for tomorrow. For the visitors, it will be an experience of the mobility eco-system that is evolving and unfolding every day, offering newer and enhanced solutions that are future-ready.

**उपरो पावर ट्रान्सासिशन कोर्पोरेशन लिमिटेड, ई-निविदा संख्या 09/विपाएएम(एल)/2019-20** अयोध्यासहकारी द्वारा अनुमोदी केन्दरारी / फर्मों से निम्नलिखित कार्य हेतु अलग-अलग सीलबन्ध ई-निविदाये दो भागों में ई-टेंडरिंग वेब साईट [www.etender.up.nic.in](http://www.etender.up.nic.in) पर निविदा आमंत्रित की जाती है। ई-निविदा के प्रथम भाग में धरोहर धनराशि व कैसाता, तकनीकी एवं अनुभव सम्बन्धित प्रश्न, व्यावसायिक व अन्य शर्तें आदि एवं दूसरे भाग में कर व वाणिज्यिक निगम एवं शर्तें प्रदान करनी होंगी। निविदा प्रश्न मूल्य, धरोहर धनराशि आवेदन पत्र के साथ संलग्न करते हुए डाकूकी Scanned copy upload करना अनिवार्य है। धरोहर धनराशि, एनओएफपीडी / आरओटीओएसडीओ के रूप (A/C Name: EE, ETD-III, Lucknow, A/C No: 6193005500000067, I.F.S. Code - PUNB0619300) में प्रस्तुत की जायेगी जो अधिशासी अभियन्ता, विद्युत पारेषण खण्ड—तृतीय, लखनऊ के पक्ष में देय होगी। प्रथम भाग में बांछित धरोहर धनराशि एवं अन्य प्रश्न अपूर्ण तथा उचित / स्वीकार्य योग्य होने पर द्वितीय भाग को नहीं खोला जायेगा। ई-निविदा का विवरण - निविदा सं. कार्य का नाम, धरोहर धनराशि, खुलने की तिथि व समय क्रमशः निम्नानुसार है - (1) ई-निविदा संख्या 09-वि.पा.ख (एल) / 2019-20, विद्युत पारेषण खण्ड - तृतीय, लखनऊ के अन्तर्गत 132 केओवी उपकेंद्र रामसनेही घाट पर लाइटिंग पोल, फायर स्टैण्ड, फायर बकट, अर्थिंग रिट्ट, चैनलिंग फोर्निंग आदि की स्के/ब्रश पेइंटिंग का कार्य। धरोहर धनराशि ₹ 2,00,00,00, निविदा दिनांक 30.01.2020 को 12.00 बजे तक ई-टेंडरिंग वेब साईट [www.etender.up.nic.in](http://www.etender.up.nic.in) पर अपलोड की जा सकती है। निविदा भाग-1 खुलने की तिथि 30.01.2020, समय 14.30 बजे, भाग-2 (ग्राइस पार्स) खुलने की तिथि तदनुसार ई-वेबसाईट पर सूचित की जायेगी। निविदा प्रश्न मूल्य ₹ 238/- मात्र (₹ 200.00+जी.एस.टी. @ 18% अतिरिक्त), ई-निविदा खुलने की तिथि को अवकाश की स्थिति में निविदा अगले कार्य दिवस पर खोली जायेगी। विस्तृत जानकारी एवं अन्य संशोधनों आदि के सम्बन्ध में सूचना एवं निविदा प्रश्न डाउनलोड करने हेतु ई-टेंडरिंग वेबसाईट [www.etender.up.nic.in](http://www.etender.up.nic.in) देखी जा सकती है। सभी निविदा प्रश्न अधिशासी अभियन्ता, विद्युत पारेषण खण्ड - तृतीय, लखनऊ के पक्ष में एनओएफपीडी / आरओटीओएसडीओ द्वारा मुगतात कर प्रश्न डाउनलोड किया जा सकता है। कृपया विस्तृत जानकारी, डाउनलोड, अन्य संशोधनों एवं ई-निविदा प्रस्तुत करने के दिनांक तक विस्तार आदि के सम्बन्ध में ई-टेंडरिंग वेबसाईट [www.etender.up.nic.in](http://www.etender.up.nic.in) देखी जा सकती है। अयोध्यासहकारी को बिना कारण बताये ई-निविदा को अस्वीकार करने का अधिकार सुरक्षित है। अधिशासी अभियन्ता, विद्युत पारेषण खण्ड - तृतीय, लखनऊ कक्ष संख्या-217-222, "पारेषण भवन", एस्.एल.डी.डी.सी. परिसर, विभूति खण्ड, गोमती नगर, लखनऊ-226010, फ़ोन - 55, दिनांक - 15.01.2020, "राष्ट्रहित में बिजली बचाव"

## SCHOOLSCAN



**OPEN DAY**  
Open Day celebrations of the 27th International Children's Camp, hosted by City Montessori School, were held at Kanpur Road auditorium on Friday. CMS director of strategy Roshan Gandhi inaugurated the function by lighting the lamp of learning.

At this grand function of dance and music, young delegates of 13 countries made cultural presentations of their respective countries that kept the audience glued to their seats. Earlier, director of the camp Sudipta Singh welcomed the children and other dignitaries.

### TEAM CASHLESS INDIA CAMPAIGN

Mastercard on Friday brought the Team Cashless India campaign to Uttar Pradesh. The campaign aims to engage with merchants and consumers across the state to create awareness about the benefits of digital payments and grow the acceptance infrastructure. It is an important step towards Mastercard's stated commitment to equip 10 million merchants in India with digital payments acceptance capabilities by 2020. Under Team Cashless India, Mastercard, in partnership with cricketer Mahendra Singh Dhoni, encourages everyone in Uttar Pradesh to nominate one or more merchants who currently do not accept digital pay-

ments. Mastercard will work together with Confederation of All India Traders (CAIT), acquirer banks and fintech companies to support nominated merchants to deploy digital payments acceptance infrastructure. People can make their nominations via multiple channels such as Microsite, or a missed call, as per their convenience. The ripple effect of nominations is expected to create a pan India movement to adopt digital payments. As a part of the initiative, Mastercard's team will visit popular markets in Lucknow like Gombi Nagar, Kapoorthala, Hazratganj and Alambagh to interact with merchants and share the importance, convenience, safety and security of digital payments.

# 183 UP students to take part in 'Pariksha par charcha'

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ LUCKNOW

Ahead of the 'Pariksha par charcha' programme to be held in New Delhi's Talkatora Stadium on Jan 20 before the board exams, the Uttar Pradesh government has identified 183 meritorious students who will have a meeting with Prime Minister Narendra Modi. The government spokesman said that 183 meritorious students had been selected from the state through an online competition to take

part in the 'Pariksha par charcha' programme. Among these students are Raunak Srivastava, son of Erickshaw driver Ravindra Srivastava of Katghar mohalla of Jaunpur district. "I am an admirer of Prime Minister Narendra Modi. Even in my dreams I had not thought of getting an opportunity to meet and talk to him," he told reporters here. Adarsh Mishra, a student of Anju Gill Academy and son of Arun Kumar Mishra of

Baksha Vikas Khand in Sultanpur, said, "It had never occurred to me while appearing in the online essay competition on December 22, that I will emerge victorious and get an opportunity to meet Prime Minister Narendra Modi." "I had written an essay on the subject 'Gratitude is a great quality' in English in which I talked about taking meaningful steps to strengthen the economy and other things."

Two meritorious female students of Saraswati Vidya Mandir in Sultanpur will also take part in the programme. Senior 'acharya' of the school, Mahendra Kumar Tiwari, said that in the English essay competition, Niharika Srivastava of Class 11 had written on the subject, 'Examining Exam,' while Class 10 student Shreya Mishra had written on the subject, 'Gratitude is Great.' Niharika's father Ajay Srivastava is a headmaster in a primary school while her

mother Reena is a housewife. Mayank Tiwari of RLB School in Lucknow said that he always wanted to meet the prime minister and this essay competition has given him that opportunity. Meenakshi Rani, whose father is class IV employee in Health department, said that being in a group that will meet the prime minister is a big achievement for her. These students will leave for New Delhi by train on Friday night.

# CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

### AFTER KERALA...

"We have sent a draft to the Centre to make necessary changes in the CAA to make it acceptable to everyone. Census is being carried out now... It will be done like earlier. Every citizen will be counted whether he is Muslim, Hindu, Sikh, Christian or anybody," said the Chief Minister. Capt Amarinder, in response to a question, made it clear that the Census in Punjab would be conducted on the old parameters and the new factors added by the Centre for the purpose of the NPR would not be included. Only a day before The Pioneer had reported, in these columns, that the Congress-led Punjab Government is considering to move the Supreme Court, on the lines of the Kerala Government, to challenge the validity of the controversial Act. Notably, the Chief Minister has already issued directions to the office of the Advocate-General to see how the State can challenge the Act in the apex court. Available information suggests that the State is considering to move the Supreme Court against the CAA and NRC on the similar grounds as Kerala under Article 131 of the Constitution.

extensive three-hour long discussion before being put to vote by Speaker Rana KP Singh. Terming the divisive Act as a tragedy that he was unfortunate to witness in his lifetime, the Chief Minister lamented that "what happened in Germany under Hitler in 1930 is happening in India now." "Germans did not speak then, and they regretted it, but we have to speak now, so that we don't regret later," he asserted, urging the Opposition, particularly the Akalis, to read Adolf Hitler's 'Mein Kampf' to understand the dangers of CAA. He said he would get the book translated in Punjabi and distributed so that all could read and grasp the historical mistakes that Hitler made. "What is happening in India is not good for the country," said Capt Amarinder, adding that people could see and understand, and were protesting spontaneously, without any instigation."

fine of up to Rs 1,000 on those violating it. The data for NPR was last collected in 2010 along with the house listing phase of the Census 2011. Updating of this data was done during 2015 by conducting door to door survey. While updating the register in 2015, the Government has asked details like Aadhaar and their mobile number. This time, the information related to their driving licence and voter ID card may also be gathered, the officials said, adding that PAN card details will not be collected as part of this exercise. For the purposes of the NPR, a usual resident is defined as a person who has resided in a local area for the past six months or more, or a person who intends to reside in that area for the next six months. Registrar General and Census Commissioner of India Vivek Joshi made a brief presentation on the Strategy for Census 2021.

overground and militant groups raising it, leading agitations, protests and violence that resulted in many deaths. Agreements were signed in 1993 and 2003 to resolve the vexed issue. A Bodo Territorial Council under Sixth Schedule of the Constitution was created in 2003 to meet political, developmental and identity-related aspirations of the Bodos. However, the demand for Bodoland state continued despite opposition by non-Bodo groups in the state. Another official said if a final settlement to the Bodo issue is found while keeping intact the territorial integrity of Assam, it will go a long way in improving the law-and-order situation and bring prosperity and progress to the state. The MHA officials said if a final settlement to the Bodo issue is found while keeping intact the territorial integrity of Assam, it will go a long way in improving the law and order situation and bring prosperity and progress to the State.

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ LUCKNOW

# IGNOU launches DMOP

IGNOU has launched Diploma in Modern Office Practice (DMOP). The programme has combined conventional practices of secretaries and office assistants' job with computer-aided management techniques. Secretaries and office assistants play an important role in modern office environment. "They are expected to have thorough knowledge of office management and procedures along with excellent communication and organisational skills. The current business environment is demanding multi-talented secretaries and office assistants. The programme will generate competent and skilled personnel at the entry level in any sector of employment," an IGNOU official said.

Regional director Manorama Singh said the main objective of the programme is to develop competency in communication skills, proficiency in stenographic skills, competency in handling office machines, operate computers on Windows and to understand how to manage office records, filing and indexing, office management methods and practices and inventory control. Singh added that DMOP will train the workforce for the positions of personal assistants, private secretaries, stenographers, office managers, office executives, executive assistants, front-end executives, data entry operators and computer operators. The learners should be 10+2 or its equivalent. The duration of the programme is one year and it can be completed in three years. Initially, the programme is on offer in English medium.

**कार्यालय अधीक्षण अभियन्ता, विद्युत पारेषण मण्डल-द्वितीय उपरो पावर ट्रान्सासिशन कोर्पोरेशन लिमिटेड, ई-निविदा संख्या 09/विपाएएम(एल)/2019-20** अयोध्यासहकारी द्वारा अनुमोदी केन्दरारी / फर्मों से निम्नलिखित कार्य हेतु अलग-अलग सीलबन्ध ई-निविदाये दो भागों में ई-टेंडरिंग वेब साईट [www.etender.up.nic.in](http://www.etender.up.nic.in) पर निविदा आमंत्रित की जाती है। ई-निविदा के प्रथम भाग में धरोहर धनराशि व कैसाता, तकनीकी एवं अनुभव सम्बन्धित प्रश्न, व्यावसायिक व अन्य शर्तें आदि एवं दूसरे भाग में कर व वाणिज्यिक निगम एवं शर्तें प्रदान करनी होंगी। निविदा प्रश्न मूल्य, धरोहर धनराशि आवेदन पत्र के साथ संलग्न करते हुए डाकूकी Scanned copy upload करना अनिवार्य है। धरोहर धनराशि, एनओएफपीडी / आरओटीओएसडीओ के रूप (A/C Name: EE, ETD-III, Lucknow, A/C No: 6193005500000067, I.F.S. Code - PUNB0619300) में प्रस्तुत की जायेगी जो अधिशासी अभियन्ता, विद्युत पारेषण खण्ड—तृतीय, लखनऊ के पक्ष में देय होगी। प्रथम भाग में बांछित धरोहर धनराशि एवं अन्य प्रश्न अपूर्ण तथा उचित / स्वीकार्य योग्य होने पर द्वितीय भाग को नहीं खोला जायेगा। ई-निविदा का विवरण - निविदा सं. कार्य का नाम, धरोहर धनराशि, खुलने की तिथि व समय क्रमशः निम्नानुसार है - (1) ई-निविदा संख्या 09-वि.पा.ख (एल) / 2019-20, विद्युत पारेषण खण्ड - तृतीय, लखनऊ के अन्तर्गत 132 केओवी उपकेंद्र रामसनेही घाट पर लाइटिंग पोल, फायर स्टैण्ड, फायर बकट, अर्थिंग रिट्ट, चैनलिंग फोर्निंग आदि की स्के/ब्रश पेइंटिंग का कार्य। धरोहर धनराशि ₹ 2,00,00,00, निविदा दिनांक 30.01.2020 को 12.00 बजे तक ई-टेंडरिंग वेब साईट [www.etender.up.nic.in](http://www.etender.up.nic.in) पर अपलोड की जा सकती है। निविदा भाग-1 खुलने की तिथि 30.01.2020, समय 14.30 बजे, भाग-2 (ग्राइस पार्स) खुलने की तिथि तदनुसार ई-वेबसाईट पर सूचित की जायेगी। निविदा प्रश्न मूल्य ₹ 238/- मात्र (₹ 200.00+जी.एस.टी. @ 18% अतिरिक्त), ई-निविदा खुलने की तिथि को अवकाश की स्थिति में निविदा अगले कार्य दिवस पर खोली जायेगी। विस्तृत जानकारी एवं अन्य संशोधनों आदि के सम्बन्ध में सूचना एवं निविदा प्रश्न डाउनलोड करने हेतु ई-टेंडरिंग वेबसाईट [www.etender.up.nic.in](http://www.etender.up.nic.in) देखी जा सकती है। सभी निविदा प्रश्न अधिशासी अभियन्ता, विद्युत पारेषण खण्ड - तृतीय, लखनऊ के पक्ष में एनओएफपीडी / आरओटीओएसडीओ द्वारा मुगतात कर प्रश्न डाउनलोड किया जा सकता है। कृपया विस्तृत जानकारी, डाउनलोड, अन्य संशोधनों एवं ई-निविदा प्रस्तुत करने के दिनांक तक विस्तार आदि के सम्बन्ध में ई-टेंडरिंग वेबसाईट [www.etender.up.nic.in](http://www.etender.up.nic.in) देखी जा सकती है। अयोध्यासहकारी को बिना कारण बताये ई-निविदा को अस्वीकार करने का अधिकार सुरक्षित है। अधिशासी अभियन्ता, विद्युत पारेषण खण्ड - तृतीय, लखनऊ कक्ष संख्या-217-222, "पारेषण भवन", एस्.एल.डी.डी.सी. परिसर, विभूति खण्ड, गोमती नगर, लखनऊ-226010, फ़ोन - 55, दिनांक - 15.01.2020, "राष्ट्रहित में बिजली बचाव"

# Nadda dares RaGa to speak 10 lines on CAA

Says he is misleading masses

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

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

He should tell us in two sentences what is his problem with the CAA... He is leading such a big party and has to decide himself how he has to do it, but he should not mislead the country," the BJP working president said.

The amendments in the citizenship law are meant to give citizenship to members of minority communities - Hindus, Christians, Sikhs, Parsis, Buddhists, Jains- who fled Pakistan, Bangladesh and Afghanistan due to religious persecution and took refuge in India, he said.

Likes of Mahatma Gandhi, Jawaharlal Nehru and Indira

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



Gandhi had advocated giving citizenship to these persecuted minorities but the Congress does not have any leader now who could understand the issue, Nadda said.

Since coming to power for a second term, the Modi government has in six months resolved issues which had been pending for 70 years, he asserted, adding that opposition parties were left without any issue and had seized on the CAA to mislead the country.

"For the Congress and the Left, their vote bank comes before the country. For Prime Minister Narendra Modi, the country comes first and votes later," he said.

Critics are claiming that crores of people will arrive and settle in India due to this law,

but the fact is that it is for those who arrived here by December 31, 2014, he added.

Opposition parties believe in keeping problems unresolved so that they could do politics over it while the Modi government has addressed issues like Article 370, he said.

He claimed minorities were persecuted in Pakistan and Bangladesh and their population, he claimed, fell to three and seven per cent respectively there from 23 per cent in 1947.

According to a section of Pakistani media quoting census report, the total percentage of minorities in Pakistan including the erstwhile East Pakistan (now Bangladesh) was only about 14.50 per cent following the partition.

## DAVINDER ARREST

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

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI



The Congress on Friday demanded a fair probe within six months into the case involving Jammu & Kashmir DSP Davinder Singh, arrested with Hizbul terrorists in south Kashmir, as Rahul Gandhi alleged the case was handed over to the NIA to "silence" Singh. The party also sought a re-investigation into the February 2019 Pulwama terrorist attack and Singh's role in it as he had been posted in the district as DSP at the time.

Questioning the Government's "conspicuous silence", it demanded the Prime Minister and the Home Minister to answer questions raised by people after Singh's arrest last week. The grand old party alleged NIA's role has been questionable in the probes against Swami Asemananda and Pragna Thakur. Congress demanded a fast track court to look into the entire activities and the DSP's role.

The best way to "silence" Singh was to hand the investigation against him to NIA chief Y C Modi, under whose care the case will be "as good as dead", Rahul alleged.

Calling the National Investigation Agency (NIA) chief "another Modi", the Congress leader said he had investigated the 2002 Gujarat riots and the killing of former Gujarat home minister Haren Pandya in 2003.

"The best way to silence Terrorist DSP Davinder, is to hand the case to the NIA,"

Rahul said on Twitter, adding, "In YK's care, the case is as good as dead." The former Congress chief put out the Twitter post using the hashtag "WhoWantsTerroristDavinderSilenced" and asked "why".

Congress spokesperson Supriya Srinate said serious questions are being raised on national security. She said Singh was not "just any other officer" as three days before his arrest, he was entrusted with the security of foreign diplomats visiting Jammu and Kashmir and prior to that, he was DSP in Pulwama when the terror attack happened. She said Singh also faced three FIRs for extortion.

When Singh was arrested in Kulgam, he was accompanied by Hizbul Mujahideen terrorists Naveed Baba and Altaf and a lawyer operating as an overground worker for terrorist groups. "Why is the government conspicuously silent. The conspicuous silence of the government raises so many questions. It is government's moral responsibility to conduct a fair probe so that there are no doubts," the Congress spokesperson said.

## INSHORT

### JP NADDA SET TO BE BJP PRESIDENT ON JAN 20

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

### SONIA, RAHUL MEET CONG MLAS FROM JHARKHAND

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

### HYD ENCOUNTER: SC DEFINES POWER, DUTIES

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

### DECIDE REPRESENTATION TO SET UP KVS, SAYS SC

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

# Panel formed to look into Swapan Dasgupta case

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

The Visva Bharati University has informed the HRD Ministry that they have set up a three-member committee to look into the incident of BJP MP Swapan Dasgupta confined in a room for several hours when he visited the campus on January 8 to deliver a lecture on the new citizenship law.

Dasgupta, Vice Chancellor Bidyut Chakraborty and others were confined for six hours in a university building as hundreds of Left-leaning students staged a sit-in outside accusing the politician of promoting hatred among communities.

"The university has formed a three-member committee to look into the matter where BJP leader Swapan Dasgupta had said that he was locked in a room with a mob outside, at the university, where he was addressing a meeting on Citizenship Amendment Act on January 8," said a senior

HRD Ministry official. Dasgupta had taken to Twitter to inform about the incident.

The panel will also look into alleged clash between two groups of students of the university on January 15. According to police officials, armed with rods and sticks, a group of men attacked the students of a boys' hostel inside the Visva Bharati campus on Wednesday night leaving several of them injured.

At the backdrop of the controversy and unrest in premier universities like JNU, Jamia Milia Islamia, AMU, the Visva Bharati university officials informed the HRD Ministry about the incident and that they would enquire into the incident and submit the report at earliest.

"How does it feel to have a mob attack a peaceful meeting on CAA and intimidation students? This is what is happening to a meeting I am addressing at Vishva Bharati now. Locked into the room now with mob outside," Swapan had tweeted.

# Jaishankar holds talks with EU high representative, S African FM

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

India discussed an entire range of issues with European Union and South Africa here on Friday during two separate meetings between External Affairs S Jaishankar and the two nations. While bilateral talks were held with European Union High Representative for Foreign Affairs Josep Borrell, South African foreign minister Naledi Pandor held parleys with his Indian counterpart.

In his meeting with Borrell, Jaishankar discussed global and regional issues, multilateralism, connectivity and counter terrorism.

"A great meeting with HRVP [Josep Borrell] of European Union. Productive discussions on global and regional issues, multilateralism, connectivity and counter terrorism. Underlined our climate change coop-

eration. Agreed to keep in close touch," Jaishankar said in a tweet.

The Ministry of External Affairs (MEA), in a statement, said Jaishankar and Borrell took stock of the India-EU relations and the way forward, ahead of the planned summit in March 2020 and discussed the possible deliverables.

"Both agreed to further enlarge the existing bilateral political, security, economic and trade cooperation and identify new areas for cooperation in connectivity, Indo-Pacific Region, data adequacy etc," the MEA said.

After his meeting with Pandor, Jaishankar said in a tweet, "Co-chaired a fruitful Joint Ministerial Commission with FM Naledi Pandor of South Africa. Our traditional friendship and cooperation stands re-energised. Deeply appreciate her #Raisina participation."

# No doubts on India's Kashmir approach: Russia

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Two days after Pakistan's efforts to raise the Kashmir issue through China in the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) failed, Russia on Friday said it has "no doubts" about India's approach on Kashmir, which is a strictly bilateral matter between India and Pakistan.

Making this clear, Russian ambassador to New Delhi Nikolay Kudashev said "those having doubts over India's approach on Kashmir can go there, we don't have any doubt," he said on not being invited to visit Jammu & Kashmir.

His assertion comes ahead of External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar's visit to Russia on March 22 and March 23 to

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

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



attend a meeting of the Russia-Indian-China trilateral, Kudashev said.

On China's attempt to raise the issue of Kashmir at the Security Council, Kudashev said, "It's a strictly bilateral matter to discuss between India and Pakistan based on Shimla Agreement and Lahore Declaration.

Russia is a long-standing ally for India on the abrogation of Article 370 giving special status to Jammu and Kashmir. A after the government abrogated Article 370 in August last year, Russia had become the first UNSC permanent member to come out in support of India as it stated that the move was carried out "within the framework of the Constitution of the Republic of India".

# Fund utilisation in development schemes improved, finds study

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

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

The consultation aims to

develop a roadmap for fiscal governance reforms that are needed to ensure significant improvement in resource absorption in development schemes, leading to better development outcomes.

This is a first of its kind study that analyses bottlenecks in fund utilisation, at the district level, by placing a District Budget Analyst (DBA) in each of the selected district headquarters.

Prof Abhijit Sen, former Member 14th Finance Commission and Planning Commission, remarked in his keynote address that such discussions need to note there is a general scare of increasing

regular public employment. Dr. Poornima Dore, Head of Data Driven Governance at the Tata Trusts was also present.

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

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

New Delhi: The Supreme Court on Friday agreed to examine a batch of pleas filed by farmers against the Gujarat High Court verdict which had dismissed their petitions challenging the process of land acquisition for the ambitious Ahmedabad-Mumbai bullet train project.

The bullet train project was launched by Prime Minister Narendra Modi and his Japanese counterpart Shinzo Abe in September 2017.

The train will run at a speed of 320-350 kmph, and will have 12 stations

across its 508-km stretch from Ahmedabad to Mumbai.

A bench of Justices Deepak Gupta and Aniruddha Bose issued notices to the Centre, Gujarat government and others on a batch of appeals challenging September 19 last year verdict of the high court.

As an interim relief, the plea has sought to restrain the Gujarat Government from proceeding ahead with the process of land acquisition for the purpose of the bullet train project.



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

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

S A Bobde decided to make the Ministry of Surface Transport and Highways and the minister concerned parties to the petition and listed it for hearing after four weeks.

The PIL alleged that the citizens' rights to health and clean environment under the Constitution are being "violated due to governmental apathy" in mitigating the impact of climate change and air pollution "partly attributable to emissions from vehicles that burn fossil fuels".

## CORONAVIRUS SPREAD IN CHINA

# India issues travel advisory

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

In the wake of the outbreak of deadly Coronavirus in China which is causing respiratory problems, India on Friday issued a travel advisory asking citizens to follow certain precautionary measures such as avoiding travel to farms, live animal markets or where animals are slaughtered, and refrain consuming "raw or undercooked meat" while visiting the neighbouring country.

Coronaviruses are a large family of viruses, which cause illnesses to people and also circulate in animals including camels, cats and bats. Rarely, animal coronaviruses can also evolve and infect people.

The advisory issued by the Union Health Ministry stated that even though the mode of transmission of the Coronavirus is unclear as of now, those visiting China are advised to avoid travel to farms, live animal markets or where animals are slaughtered,



and refrain consuming "raw or undercooked meat".

It suggested avoiding close contact with people who are unwell or showing symptoms of illness, such as cough, runny nose among others. The advisory asks travellers to China to follow some "public health measures at all times" like observing good per-

sonal hygiene, practice frequent hand-washing with soap and follow etiquettes like covering mouth when coughing or sneezing.

It also stated that as on January 11, 2020 as many as 41 confirmed cases of infection with the novel coronavirus have been reported so far, of which one person has died.

"Only travel-related cases have been reported (one each) in Thailand and Japan. The clinical signs and symptoms are mainly fever with a few patients having difficulty in breathing. The mode of transmission is unclear as of now. However, so far there is little evidence of significant human-to-human transmission. Although as per the World Health Organisation's risk assessment, the risk for global spread has been stated as low," the advisory read.

All travellers to China, in particular to Wuhan city, have been advised to monitor their health closely.

As a precaution, the Ministry has instructed screening of international travellers from China at designated airports namely, Delhi, Mumbai and Kolkata through thermal scanners.

"If you feel sick within a span of one month after return from China, report the illness to the nearest health facility and also inform the treating doctor regarding your travel history," the advisory states.



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

PTI

# Youth Parliament programme set to go online

New Delhi: The annual Youth Parliament Programme run by the Ministry of Parliamentary Affairs every year is set to go online as the country celebrates 70th anniversary of adoption of the Indian constitution.

The Ministry of Parliament Affairs has partnered with the Human Resource Development Ministry for making the programme online through the web portal of the National Youth Parliament Scheme.

The off-line Youth Parliament programme is being implemented since 1966 in schools under the

Delhi's Directorate of Education, NDMC schools, Kendriya Vidyalayas, Jawahar Navodaya Vidyalayas and universities and colleges.

"Around 18,000 students of 300 educational institutions participate through off-line Youth Parliament programme every year. So far, the programme was organised in competition format which was limiting the participation of the institutions and thus not fulfilling the core purpose of the scheme in the desired manner.

"For overcoming this limitation, which is impeding the

expansion of the scheme, the ministry has developed a web portal of the National Youth Parliament Scheme to increase the coverage of the programme manifold to hitherto untouched sections and corners of the country," a senior HRD Ministry official said.

President Ram Nath Kovind had launched the web portal in November last year on the occasion to commemorate the 70th anniversary of the Constitution being celebrated as 'Samvidhan Diwas'.

PTI

1981 BEHMAI MASSACRE CASE

# Special court likely to give verdict today

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

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

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

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

While Poshha is still in jail, Bhikha, Vishwanath and Shyambabu are out on bail. Three other dacoits includ-



ing Man Singh are still absconding.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

PTI

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

PTI ■ BENGALURU

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

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

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

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



and @ISRO #VA251 #MissiontoSuccess."

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

be put in its final orbital configuration.

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

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

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

## PM congratulates ISRO

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

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

PTI



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

PTI

# J&K Congress passes resolution seeking restoration of Statehood

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

The executive committee meeting followed detailed deliberations,

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

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

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

## GUJ TEJAS EXPRESS FLAGGED OFF

### Railway unions protest, 30 detained

PTI ■ AHMEDABAD

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

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

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

# Mizoram parties, civil society bodies hail Bru agreement

**Aizawl:** Political parties and civil society organisations of Mizoram on Friday welcomed the agreement that puts an end to the over two-decade-old Bru refugee crisis.

Thousands of Bru community people have been living in relief camps in Tripura since 1997. They had fled their homeland Mizoram to reach the neighbouring State because of ethnic clashes. By now, the number of these internally displaced people has risen to over 30,000.

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

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

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

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

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

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

the state's voter list, the YMA said.

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

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

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

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

PTI

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

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

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

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

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

PTI

# Nagas very close to settlement of vexed political issue: Guv

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

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

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

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

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

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

The governor thanked

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

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

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

PTI

# More than 300 items may see customs duty hike in Budget

PIANS ■ NEW DELHI

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

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

The Commerce and Industry Ministry in its budget recommendations has pro-



posed rationalisation of basic customs on over 300 items across sectors including furniture, chemicals, rubber, coated paper and paper boards.

On footwear and related products, the Ministry has suggested increase in duty to 35

per cent from the current 25 per cent while for new pneumatic tyres of rubber, it has proposed to hike customs duty to 40 per cent from the current 10-15 per cent.

The import duty hike on footwear is a move to thwart the increase in imports of undervalued and cheap footwear. While the majority of imports are coming from ASEAN countries, with which India has a free trade agreement, it is suspected that China is re-routing large quantities of footwear through these countries.

The ministry has proposed to increase import duty on wooden furniture to 30 per cent from the current 20

per cent. For coated paper, paper boards and hand made papers, it has suggested doubling the duty to 20 per cent.

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

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

PTI ■ AHMEDABAD/NEW DELHI

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

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

"I was only saying that investment should come as

per the rules and regulation," he told reporters in Ahmedabad.

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

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

While Goyal had on Thursday raised questions about Amazon's business practices saying the company had done no big favours to India by announcing a new USD 1 billion investment, his party's foreign cell head Vijay

Chauthaiwale tweeted barely veiled criticism of Bezos-owned the Washington Post, which has been criticized by the BJP for its coverage of the Modi government's increasingly right-wing policies.

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

With an association of small traders aligned with the BJP holding demonstrations against his visit and India plans, the world's richest person visited a neighbourhood

store in Mumbai, met Bollywood stars and captains of industry.

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

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

# Minister welcomes SC 'verdict' though order still reserved

PTI ■ PANAJI

Union minister Shripad Naik issued a statement on his official letter head, welcoming a Supreme Court "judgement" that was never delivered, but withdrew it on realising the gaffe.

The BJP leader issued the statement on Thursday, hours after the apex court reserved its order on a plea by a mining company seeking its nod to commercially use and transport the already extracted iron ore lying unused in its mines in Goa.

However, Naik, the Member of Parliament from North Goa, issued a statement welcoming the Supreme Court "judgement" on iron ore mines in his home state.

"Welcome judgement by Hon'ble Supreme Court of India (SC) for passing judgement on allowing ore mined till 15th March 2018 as legal and authorized for transportation," Naik said in the statement issued on his letter head.

When contacted, Naik said he

issued the statement after a couple of television news channels carried a report that the SC has given its "verdict" in favour of Goa. When I realised that the order has been reserved, the statement was withdrawn, he said.

The Union minister said Goans are waiting eagerly for resumption of mining activity whose closure has affected livelihood of several thousand people. We are expecting the SC to give relief to the mining-dependent people, the Minister of State for Defence said. Immediately after Naik's first statement, Goa Chief Minister Pramod Sawant issued a separate press release, saying the SC has reserved its judgement on transportation of the ore extracted prior to the mining ban.

Iron ore mining in Goa has come to a standstill since February 2018, when the apex court quashed 88 mining leases. The state government subsequently moved the apex court with a review petition against its order.

# Beef delicacy tweet kicks up row No aim to hurt anyone's religious beliefs: Kerala

**Thiruvananthapuram:** After a storm erupted over a "beef fry" tweet by Kerala Tourism on Makarasankranti day, the CPI(M)-led LDF Government on Friday clarified its aim was not to hurt anyone's religious beliefs.

Slamming the State, BJP MP Shobha Karandlaje tweeted the "Kerala communist Govt have declared a war against Hindus of the state!"

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

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

Some Twitter users had

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

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

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

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

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

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

However, it was not only brickbats alone for Kerala Tourism, as many came out in support for the "beef fry tweet". "One Porotta and beef fry - a match made in heaven" was the response of a Kerala twitter user who had also shared a picture of the dish.

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

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

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

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

# Bengaluru: Terror module busted, 6 SDPI members held

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

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

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

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

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

ier to eliminate their targets, the commissioner said.

However, the stones missed the target.

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

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

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

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

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

# Police bust sex racket, rescues 3 actresses: Mumbai

TN RAGHUNATHA ■ MUMBAI

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

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

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

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



Holidays.

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

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

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

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

# Bengal BJP warns against not filling CAA papers

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

SAUGAR SENGUPTA ■ KOLKATA

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

# Students, activists hold protest outside IIMA against CAA, NRC

PTI ■ AHMEDABAD

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

The protesters also

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

This is the third such protest held outside the IIMA campus by activists and students, mostly from prominent education institutions like

CEPT University, Gujarat Vidyapith and Ahmedabad University, activist-lawyer Shamsad Pathan said. The protesters expressed their dissent by holding posters with slogans — 'You can't shut our voices', 'No CAA- No NRC', 'Stop violence', 'Ahmedabad supports JNU', 'Kagaz nahi dikhaenge' (Won't show documents).

# Students to go to Pak if unwilling to accept CAA

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

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

According to the education department, Kaleshan, who was suspended pending inquiry, had entered a class and addressed the students on the CAA and told them that if they were not willing to accept the new law, they should move to Pakistan. Several students had also complained to the headmaster of the Kodungallur girls higher secondary school against the teacher, who also allegedly used to speak in a sexually coloured manner to the students, officials said. **PTI**

# Mumbai to be 24x7 city from January 26

TN RAGHUNATHA ■ MUMBAI

Come January 26, Mumbai will literally live up to its reputation of being 'a city that never sleeps', when the Maharashtra Government begins to implement on an experimental basis its much-discussed proposal of keeping all restaurants, malls, multiplexes and shopping plazas open for 24 hours.

Five years after he mooted for the first time his "Vibrant Mumbai Nightlife" proposal, then Yuv Sena leader and now Maharashtra's Tourism and Environment Aditya Thackeray — at meeting of top Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation (BMC) and police held that he presided over on Thursday night — has given a go-ahead for the '24x7 Maximum city' proposal. As per the decision taken by the

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

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

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

## VIBRANT NIGHTLIFE

1992-93.

It may be recalled on February 17, 2015, Aditya had met chief minister Devendra Fadnavis and submitted a formal letter requesting the latter to put in place the laws that make Mumbai a "live 24/7" city. His meeting with Fadnavis had come after the Sena-ruled Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation (BMC) adopted a resolution seeking "Vibrant Nightlife" for Mumbai and sent off a proposal to the Maharashtra government suggesting necessary amendments to relevant laws.

Known for pursuing his pet projects, Aditya had pushed the proposed once again in the run-up days to January 1, 2019. In a letter written on December

27, 2018, Aditya had reminded then chief minister Devendra Fadnavis about a request he had made three years earlier to put in place the laws which make Mumbai a "live 24/7" city.

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

"I take this opportunity to drop a small reminder of the proposal of the BMC, first passed in 2013, then approved by the Commissioner and now legislated on by the state in 2017, to let non-residential areas in Mumbai and other cities to remain open 24/7. The proposal for Mumbai is awaiting your approval from the Home department for

a few months now and is fool-proof".

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

Now that he himself is calling the shots as a State tourism minister and influential politician in the Maha Vikas Aghadi (MVA) government, Aditya has finally given a go-ahead for his ambitious "24x7 Mumbai" proposal.

# SC allows Karti Chidambaram to withdraw ₹20 Cr deposited for travelling abroad

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Friday allowed Congress MP Karti Chidambaram to withdraw the Rs 20 crore which was deposited with the apex court registry as a condition for allowing him to travel abroad.

The apex court in January and May 2019 had granted Karti Chidambaram permission to travel to foreign countries after depositing Rs 10 crore each respectively with the registry. When the matter came up for hearing before a bench headed by Chief Justice SA Bobde, Solicitor General Tushar Mehta said there was no objection from the Enforcement Directorate to the plea seeking withdrawal of the amount since

he has returned.

Taking note of the submission, the bench also comprising justices B R Gavai and Surya Kant said Karti can withdraw the said amount since he has already returned. The condition was imposed by the apex court after the ED had opposed his plea for travel abroad. Karti has been facing ED cases in INX media and Aircel-Maxis matters.

On May 7 last year, the top court had allowed Karti to travel to the United Kingdom, the US, France, Germany and Spain. The court, on the ED's request, had earlier asked Karti to file an undertaking that he would return to India and cooperate with the investigation, and warned that if he did not do so it would "come down heavily"

on him.

The probe agency had earlier opposed Karti's plea seeking permission to travel abroad and alleged that he has been evasive, non-cooperative and caused delay in completing the investigations. The ED had earlier claimed that Karti has been "blatantly misusing" the liberty granted by the court in allowing him to travel abroad and has been using the same to protract the investigation in the case. Karti is facing several criminal cases being investigated by the ED and CBI including one which relates to the Foreign Investment Promotion Board clearance to INX Media for receiving foreign funds of Rs 305 crore when his father was the finance minister.

### केनरा बैंक Canara Bank

Regional Office: 3rd Floor, Circle Office Premises Vipin Khand, Gomti Nagar, Lucknow-226101

**POSSESSION NOTICE**

Whereas, the undersigned being the Authorized Officer of the CANARA BANK under the Securitization and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 (Act No. 54 of 2002) hereinafter referred to as "the Act" and in exercise of powers conferred under section 13(12) read with the Rule 3 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002 issued a Demand Notice on the dates mentioned against each account (details of which have been mentioned hereunder) calling upon the Borrowers to repay the amount mentioned in the notices within 60 days from the date of receipt of the said notice.

The borrowers having failed to repay the amount, notice is hereby given to the Borrower and the public in general that the Authorized Officer has taken possession of the Property described herein below in exercise of powers conferred on him/her under section 13(4) of the said Act, read with Rule 8 & 9 of the said rule. The borrower's attention is invited to provisions of sub-section (8) of section 13 of the Act, in respect of time available to redeem the secured assets. The borrower in particular and the public in general are hereby cautioned not to deal with the property and any dealings with the properties will be subject to the charge of CANARA BANK, Branches, mentioned below for an amount and interest thereon.

S. No.	Name & Address of Borrowers / Guarantor / A/C No.	Description of the Immovable Property	Outstanding Amount	Date of Demand Notice	
				Amount	Date of Possession Notice
<b>BRANCH: NIRALA NAGAR, LUCKNOW</b>					
1	Borrowers: M/S Agarwal Enterprises Proprietor-Smt. Manju Agarwal.	All that part and parcel of the property consisting of, Khata No 674, Plot No - 25, 26 and 27 Situated at Village - Mishripur, Pargana- Mahona, Tehsil- B.K.T. Lucknow within the registration district Lucknow. Area: 278.81 Sq Ft., Boundaries: East: Plot of 16, 17, 18, West: 20 ft wide road, North: Plot No 24, South: Khet of other.	Rs. 15,37,184.40 + Interest & other charges	01.08.2019	14.01.2020
2	Borrowers: M/S Omraj Polyplast Prop. Sri Sudhir Sharma	All that part and parcel of the property consisting of, Khata No 856 Situated at All Nagar, Sunehra, Lucknow. Area: 1520 Sq Ft. Boundaries: East: House of Ram Singh, West: House of Sahni, North: House of Sunita Mishra, South: 10 Ft Wide Road.	Rs. 24,51,552.19 + Interest & other charges	31.08.2019	13.01.2020
<b>BRANCH: MAHANAGAR, LUCKNOW</b>					
3	Borrowers: Sri Dinesh Kumar Shukla S/o Late Jagdish Prasad Shukla	All that part and parcel of the property consisting of, Plot No 05, Khata No 595 Vill Amrai Gaon, Pargana, Tehsil and District Lucknow. Area: 3000 Sq Ft., Boundaries: East: Plot No 01, West: 20 feet wide road, North: Plot No 04, South: Land of Others.	Rs. 1,39,980.00 + Interest & other charges	24.09.2019	14.01.2020
<b>BRANCH: FAIZABAD MAIN BRANCH</b>					
4	Borrowers: M/S Shiv Shakti Enterprises	<b>SECURITY (1)</b> All that part and parcel of the property consisting 7.12 acres of Land with 4 Godowns constructed on it, Khata No 00034, Khata No 47, Village - Rasahara, Pargana Magahar Purab, Tehsil Khallabhad, District- Sant Kabir Nagar, UP-227175 Area: 28840 Sq Mtr., Boundaries: East: Land of Ashraf Ali, West: Land of Leelawati Devi, North: Baag and Kacha Rasta, South: Kacha Rasta. <b>SECURITY (2)</b> All that part and parcel of the property consisting of Residential House on Khata No 221, Khata No 00043, Mijumla, Vill- Madhya, Magahar Purab, Khallabhad, District- Sant Kabir Nagar, Area: 63.19 Sq Mtr., Boundaries: East: Pakki Road (18 Ft), West: House of Sri Surendra Nath Pandey, North: House of Smt. Usha Singh, South: Land of Ram Dular and Others. <b>SECURITY (3)</b> All that part and parcel of the property consisting of Khata No 00244, Khata No 291 Mijumla, Situated at Village Budhakala, Pargana Magahar Purab, Tehsil Khallabhad, District Sant Kabir Nagar, UP 227175, Area: 3790 Sq Mtr. Boundaries: East: Land of Smt Khairu Nisha, West: Land of Sri Sagir Ahmad, North: Chaknali, South: Land of Sri Ram Karan.	Rs. 5,22,97,032.00 + Interest & other charges	14.10.2019	15.01.2020

Date: 18.01.2020, Place: Lucknow

Authorized Officer, Canara Bank

## Talks with Pakistan?

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



Pakistan may have nudged its all-weather friend China into raising the Kashmir dispute at the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) yet again — perhaps going by Western concerns about the continued lockdowns in the erstwhile State that is now a Union Territory — but failed with a big thud. This is the second time that such an attempt, either in the nature of informal consultations or closed door meetings of the Council's permanent members, has been thwarted convincingly. The message is quite clear. The remaining Big Four

(US, Russia, France, UK) are still committed to their position that Kashmir is a bilateral issue between India and Pakistan to be settled within the paradigm of dialogue set by existing agreements among the neighbours. It also means that the UK and the US, while responding to criticism on shutdown in the Valley, have delinked it from the larger Kashmir question and would much rather address it one-to-one. At the same time, certain facts cannot be ignored like China being allowed to raise the issue despite no significant change in collective viewpoints. Or that Pakistan's lobbying is high-pitch, with its Foreign Minister Shah Mehmood Qureshi believed to be in New York while China moved the motion. He even met the UN Secretary-General. Clearly, given the emphasis on bilaterals, at some point both India and Pakistan have to sit across the table and look to engage with each other. Perhaps, India's invitation to Pakistan for a meeting of the regional alliance called Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) is an opportunity to thaw relations and set up some sort of interaction on the sidelines. Besides, China is scheduled to take over the rotational presidency at UNSC in March and without some movement from India, it will have no point to neutralise Pakistan with, much as it would want to keep its working relationship with India going. Besides, it has to show something for giving assent to the declaration of Jaish chief Masood Azhar as a UN-designated global terrorist. China and Pakistan back each other up on the world stage, representing each other in official groups of nations where the other is not present. For instance, Pakistan stands up for China in the Non-Aligned Movement and in return, it gets China's veto power in the UNSC.

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

## Bezos' bumper trip

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



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

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

# Need to objectify history

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



AVIK CHANDA

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

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

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

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



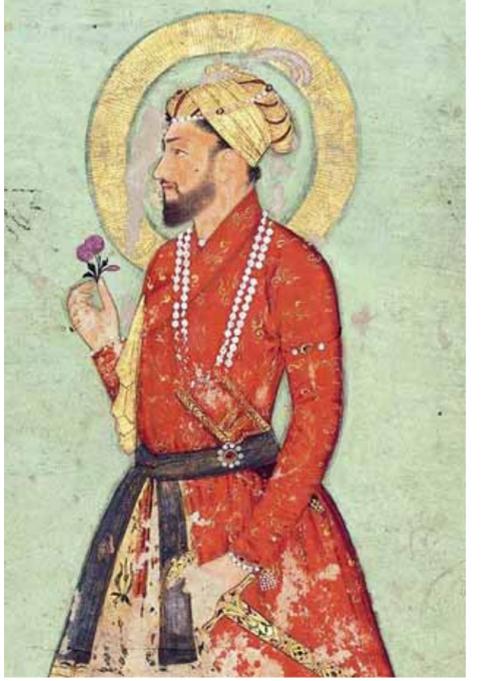
commander and an alarmingly poor judge of human character. One can well wonder whether, even assuming he had managed to ascend the throne, his eclectic nature but indifference towards administrative and military matters would have enabled him to hold the empire together. In the years between 1654 and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

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

through the prime of his life by the draconian prisons of the British Raj and then after Independence, even posthumously, by a succession of Congress-led Governments, only in recent years has his release from oblivion taken place. The image of the controversial political leader has been resurrected by the present administration to larger-than-life proportions and with it, his ethos of Hindutva.

This very term has come to denote a number of aspects in our common perception, the re-establishment of rituals and religious practices (including the cult of cow worship) in the heart of societal life, the retention — and at times, deepening — of the fault-lines of caste and a steadfast advocacy of vegetarianism, among other things. Consequently, the image of Savarkar looms before us as an austere, conservative traditionalist, steeped in the rituals of his faith, a sort of archetypal Hindu counterpoint to the ulema. And politically, a Hindu Jinnah.

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



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

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

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

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

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

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

## SOUNDBITE

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



BJP working president —JP Nadha

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



Actor —Kalki Koechlin

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



Pakistan's Foreign Minister —Shah M Qureshi

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



AIMIM chief —Asaduddin Owaisi

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

### Act responsibly

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

Ravi  
Via email

### Experiment first

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

### Government must rise above politics

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

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



R Narayanan  
Navi Mumbai

### Space dreams

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

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

Yugal Kishore Sharma  
Faridabad

### Healthy lifestyle

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

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

M Pradyu  
Kannur

Send your feedback to:  
letterstopioneer@gmail.com

**FIRST COLUMN**

## Tectonic shift in US' attitude

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



DEEPAK SINHA

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

—UNION MINISTER  
**SMRITI IRANI**

**POINTCOUNTERPOINT**



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

—DELHI CHIEF MINISTER  
**ARVIND KEJRIWAL**

# Change or perish

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



BKP SINHA

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

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

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

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

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

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



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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

# States also responsible for economic growth

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



SHSHANK SAURAV

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

*(The writer is a Chartered Accountant)*



## TRUMP'S TRIAL A DEFINING MOMENT

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

*(The Guardian editorial)*

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

PTI ■ MUMBAI

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

## RUPEE DROPS 15 PAISE

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

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

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

During the week the rupee has depreciated by 14 paise.

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

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

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

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

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

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

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

## MOODY'S PLACES YES BANK'S RATINGS UNDER REVIEW

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

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

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

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

# TCS Q3 net profit marginally up

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

## NIFTY 50

SCRIP	OPEN	High	LOW	LTP	CHANGE
NIFTY 50	12328.40	12385.45	12321.40	12352.35	-3.15
BHARTIARTL	475.10	503.80	475.10	499.80	25.90
DREDDY2	2944.40	3049.00	2940.00	3026.80	89.35
RELIANCE	1553.50	1584.95	1553.20	1581.00	43.10
GRASIM	715.00	772.00	711.00	767.90	11.85
SUNPHARMA	448.20	456.25	446.00	454.75	5.70
HCLTECH	585.00	602.00	585.00	600.50	7.25
MARUTI	7469.00	7569.90	7432.55	7550.85	88.20
BAIJAFINSV	9614.00	9740.30	9601.00	9725.00	102.85
ONGC	124.55	125.55	124.00	125.40	0.90
HINDUNILVR	2055.00	2063.90	2040.05	2061.95	12.70
ULTRACEMCO	4440.00	4522.40	4411.30	4495.20	22.60
NESTLEIND	15399.00	15600.00	15358.65	15428.20	73.35
HEROMOTOCO	2445.00	2474.90	2421.60	2445.00	10.50
POWERGRID	195.95	197.85	193.65	197.30	0.85
HINDALCO	209.50	212.00	208.15	210.10	0.45
M&M	566.80	574.20	565.15	568.50	1.00
WIPRO	252.00	253.90	249.65	250.85	0.40
BAIFINANCE	4217.00	4242.00	4202.00	4224.15	3.90
INFY	770.70	772.90	762.25	767.45	0.45
AXISBANK	734.85	742.45	730.85	737.00	0.40
ASIANPAINT	1833.60	1838.90	1815.00	1836.00	0.85
TATASTEEL	495.30	498.90	491.90	494.00	0.85
ZEE	279.65	284.45	277.40	279.55	-0.05
BAIJ-AUTO	311.00	313.80	309.80	310.00	-1.60
CIPLA	480.00	482.95	476.55	479.50	-0.30
UPL	589.95	597.35	585.90	587.50	-0.60
KOTAKBANK	1703.90	1705.85	1690.10	1699.00	-2.55
NTPC	121.45	121.70	120.60	121.10	-0.35
ITC	240.75	242.10	239.40	239.95	-0.80
TATAMOTORS	197.25	199.45	195.70	196.70	-0.85
TITAN	1194.80	1196.85	1184.00	1186.20	-6.70
TECHM	783.50	786.75	775.90	780.85	-4.80
HDFCBANK	1281.75	1284.90	1271.90	1277.40	-10.25
TCS	2145.70	2253.55	2133.00	2220.00	-18.80
BRITANNIA	320.50	316.00	314.35	312.00	-30.25
COALINDIA	210.00	210.55	206.10	208.10	-2.15
EICHERMOT	21509.05	21770.00	21103.55	21292.25	-244.00
IT	1320.60	1325.95	1302.00	1304.00	-15.30
HDFC	2467.75	2479.00	2448.25	2452.70	-29.40
ICICIBANK	534.50	538.00	530.60	530.65	-6.50
IOC	124.15	124.25	122.30	122.65	-1.50
ADANIPOWER	390.90	392.40	386.00	386.00	-4.95
JSWSTEEL	276.80	279.55	272.85	273.70	-3.75
YESBANK	37.60	39.55	37.00	39.30	-0.65
SBI	313.00	323.50	310.10	318.00	-5.30
BPCL	462.00	465.25	452.00	453.80	-8.00
VEDL	162.70	162.70	159.00	159.35	-2.90
GAIL	126.90	127.40	127.75	126.00	-2.75
INDUSINDBK	1350.00	1377.00	1317.05	1350.50	-35.95
INFRAEL	218.75	228.60	210.25	216.00	-27.05

## NIFTY NEXT 50

SCRIP	OPEN	High	LOW	LTP	CHANGE
NIFTY NEXT 50	28957.30	29083.95	28929.25	29034.85	56.25
PEL	1551.00	1655.00	1550.50	1632.10	85.30
BOSCHLTD	1491.50	1549.95	1488.70	1540.00	57.75
SIEMENS	1537.00	1597.70	1537.00	1586.00	50.55
BERGEPAINT	548.00	566.00	546.05	563.10	15.55
DMART	1948.00	2000.00	1932.40	1997.15	51.10
AUROPHARMA	477.40	489.95	475.95	486.25	10.40
LUPIN	753.00	767.00	751.45	765.35	12.40
PAGEIND	2540.00	2597.00	2524.05	2582.50	351.50
OFSS	286.05	296.45	289.40	291.70	36.10
INDIGO	1458.00	1480.00	1448.55	1472.10	14.65
BANDHANBANK	477.00	484.90	475.15	480.55	4.70
DLF	257.00	262.00	256.90	260.05	1.90
BHARATF	288.50	291.95	286.00	289.60	1.80
ASHOKLEY	83.35	84.75	83.10	84.05	0.50
PGHIL	11194.90	11399.95	11194.90	11260.00	65.10
HDFCAMC	3257.90	3270.40	3241.05	3260.80	16.00
WISLALAB	1899.45	1913.85	1892.05	1908.90	9.00
L&T	126.80	129.15	126.30	126.50	0.50
HINDZINC	217.00	219.60	216.35	216.60	0.85
UBL	1293.50	1314.60	1288.90	1300.15	4.55
AMBUJACEM	209.65	212.40	208.60	210.45	0.70
ACC	1504.50	1522.60	1494.05	1509.40	4.20
DABUR	488.00	495.45	484.75	488.25	0.65
COLPAL	1511.95	1535.00	1506.90	1511.00	1.65
SHREECEM	2335.00	2346.40	2325.00	2326.00	-4.85
HINDPETRO	248.00	252.75	246.85	250.05	-0.15
MARICO	349.00	353.90	348.10	348.85	-0.30
HAVELLS	639.50	651.60	637.70	638.70	-0.80
PNB	62.90	63.00	61.30	62.25	-0.10
HDFCLIFE	607.50	611.55	601.70	606.35	-1.15
BANKBARODA	96.00	98.25	95.10	97.30	-0.35
PIDILITIND	1453.50	1455.20	1434.20	1447.10	-5.55
GODREJCP	746.00	751.00	740.90	743.75	-3.00
CADILAC	271.90	272.80	267.70	269.10	-1.10
ICICIGI	1415.00	1415.15	1396.00	1409.95	-6.65
SBLIFE	999.80	1009.80	985.25	993.10	-6.80
CONCOR	557.90	560.55	552.35	554.40	-4.05
NMDC	130.10	131.35	129.15	129.55	-1.05
MCDOWELL-N	585.50	585.90	579.55	580.20	-4.85
PETRONET	274.95	276.25	270.40	272.30	-2.65
FTC	123.00	123.40	121.60	121.10	-1.25
SRTRANSFIN	1099.50	1111.95	1084.65	1087.10	-12.05
IBULHSGFIN	306.40	311.00	303.15	303.80	-0.70
NHPC	24.50	24.60	24.20	24.30	-0.30
GICRE	260.40	264.15	256.20	257.30	-3.80
ICICIPRULI	490.10	492.70	480.60	481.95	-10.25
MOTHERSUMI	143.20	143.20	139.25	140.95	-3.20
IDEA	5.40	5.40	3.65	4.45	-1.55

## BSE 500

SCRIP	Open	High	Low	LTP	Change
DREDDY2	2943.00	3049.05	2942.00	3033.65	50.65
ICICIBANK	537.00	537.90	530.30	530.90	-6.00
RELIANCE	1551.15	1584.80	1551.15	1580.65	18.00
BHARTIARTL	470.10	503.60	470.10	500.00	30.00
IDEA	5.43	5.43	3.66	4.51	-1.82
SBI	314.30	323.50	310.65	318.00	-6.30
INDUSINDBK	1356.00	1376.50	1317.40	1352.55	-15.55
YESBANK	37.30	39.55	37.20	39.25	1.95
DELWEISS	104.00	107.20	102.75	105.80	1.80
HDFCBANK	1285.00	1285.00	1271.95	1277.85	-7.15
PEL	1553.05	1655.00	1551.55	1627.05	73.95
INFRAEL	225.00	228.60	210.85	218.30	-16.70
IT	1325.00	1325.75	1302.00	1304.55	-20.45
IBULHSGFIN	307.90	311.00	303.20	304.65	-3.25
GLAXO	1636.50	1645.00	1621.10	1627.15	-6.35
CYIENT	463.10	463.40	443.45	454.30	-8.80

# Not ready for peace with India without resolving K-issue: Pak FM

PTI ■ WASHINGTON

Pakistan is not prepared to pay any price for peace with India and certainly not without resolving the Kashmir issue in a just manner, Foreign Minister Shah Mahmood Qureshi has said.

Addressing the Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS) think-tank here on Thursday, Qureshi reiterated Pakistan's demand that US President Donald Trump should mediate to resolve the Kashmir issue.

Ties between India and Pakistan came under severe strain after New Delhi revoked Jammu and Kashmir's special

status and bifurcated it into two Union Territories on August 5, evoking strong reactions from Islamabad.

Pakistan has been trying to rally international support against India on the issue.

"Our government wants peace in the neighbourhood. We want, we need peace in order to focus on achieving our domestic agenda for economic reform and development. But we are not prepared to pay any price for peace with India, certainly not our dignity and certainly not without resolving the Kashmir dispute in a just manner," Qureshi said.

He alleged that instead of fighting poverty and hunger

together, the "RSS-inspired BJP government has embarked upon the project of turning India into a Hindu Rashtra".

"The adherence of Hindutva and an Akhand Bharat have established this ascendancy with disastrous consequences for all in India and the world to see," he alleged.

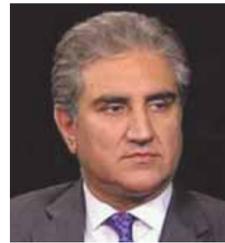
Qureshi said on August 5 India tried to change the "disputed status" of Jammu and Kashmir and "alter" its demographic structure, breaking all relevant international laws and "violating" several UN Security Council resolutions in the process.

India has been seeking to

break the will of the Kashmiri people by imprisoning them in their homes and imposing a communications blockade that continues to this day, he said.

"Indian narrative that Kashmir is India's internal part is firmly refuted by its being on the Security Council agenda. If this were not the case, why would the French President raise it with the Indian Prime Minister?" he asked.

"We know that President Trump is profoundly worried by the Kashmir situation and we welcome his repeated offers of mediation in resolving the Kashmir dispute. The United States alone commands the moral authority and respect in



South Asia to resolve the longest pending dispute on the UN agenda," he said.

"We hope president Trump is successful in realising his goal and can make a lasting contribution to substantial peace in South Asia. That could be his

enduring legacy," Qureshi said.

Although President Trump has offered to mediate on the Kashmir issue in the past, New Delhi has told Washington that it is a bilateral matter between India and Pakistan and there is no scope for any third-party mediation.

On the sidelines of the G7 summit in the French town of Biarritz in August last year, Prime Minister Narendra Modi, while interacting with the media alongside President Trump, categorically rejected any scope for third party mediation between India and Pakistan on Kashmir, saying the two countries can discuss and resolve all issues bilateral-

ly and "we don't want to trouble any third country".

On a two-day visit to Washington DC, Qureshi is scheduled to meet Secretary of State Mike Pompeo and US National Security Advisor Robert O'Brien on Friday. On Thursday, he met lawmakers at the US Capitol.

In his speech, Qureshi referred to the recent arrest of an Indian police officer and joined the conspiracy theory about terrorist attacks in India.

"Meanwhile, we all followed reports of capture of Indian police officer, Davinder Singh, whose footprint is now being seen in some major terrorist attack, which India itself

orchestrated and blamed on Pakistan," said Qureshi.

"We have been consistently warning the world community about another false flag operation against Pakistan that Davinder Singh was accompanied by two militants on his way to Delhi in close proximity to Republic Day celebrations should not be lost on anyone," the minister said.

Qureshi said that the passage of the Citizenship Amendment Act and the National Register of Citizens were raising fundamental questions about the ideals like democracy and secularism that India's founding father passionately advocated.

# Trump's trial begins at the start of an election year

AP ■ WASHINGTON

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

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

"Hear ye, hear ye, hear ye!" intoned the Senate's sergeant at arms, calling the proceedings to order just past noon.

Senators filled the chamber, an unusual sight in itself, sitting silently under strict rules that prohibit talking or cellphones, for a trial that will test not only Trump's presidency but also the nation's three branches of power and its system of checks and balances.

The Constitution mandates the chief justice serve as the presiding officer, and Roberts made the short trip across the street from the Supreme Court to the Capitol.

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

"Will all senators now stand, and remain standing, and raise their right hand," Roberts said.

"Do you solemnly swear that in all things appertaining to the trial of the impeachment of Donald John Trump, presi-



This undated image released by the House Judiciary Committee from documents provided by Lev Parnas to the committee in the impeachment probe against President Donald Trump, shows a photo of Lev Parnas with Trump in Florida. Parnas, a close associate of Trump's personal lawyer Rudy Giuliani is claiming Trump was directly involved in the effort to pressure Ukraine to investigate Democratic rival Joe Biden. Trump on Thursday, repeated denials that he is acquainted with Parnas, despite numerous photos that have emerged of the two men together.

dent of the United States, now pending, you will do impartial justice according to the Constitution and laws, so help you God?" The senators responded they would, and then they lined up to sign an oath book.

Trump faces two charges after the House voted to impeach him last month.

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

The president insists he did nothing wrong, and he dismissed the trial anew on

Thursday at the White House: "It's totally partisan. It's a hoax."

Eventual acquittal is expected in the Republican-controlled Senate. However, new revelations are mounting about Trump's actions toward Ukraine.

The Government Accountability Office said Thursday that the White House violated federal law in withholding the security assistance to Ukraine, which shares a border with hostile Russia.

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

run by Giuliani.

The developments applied fresh pressure to senators to call more witnesses for the trial, a main source of contention that is still to be resolved. The White House has instructed officials not to comply with subpoenas from Congress requesting witnesses or other information.

"What is the president hiding? What is he afraid of?" asked Senate Democratic leader Chuck Schumer.

"The gravity of these charges is self-evident," he said.

"The House of Representatives has accused the president of trying to shake down a foreign leader for personal gain."

House Speaker Nancy Pelosi said the new information from Parnas demands an investigation, which she doesn't expect from Trump's attorney general.

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

Before the swearing-in, House Democrats prosecuting the case stood before the Senate and Rep. Adam Schiff of the Intelligence Committee formally read the articles of impeachment. Seven lawmakers, led by Schiff and Rep. Jerrold Nadler of the Judiciary Committee, made the solemn walk across the Capitol for a second day.

All eyes were on Schiff as he stood at a lectern in the well of the chamber, a space usually reserved for senators.

"House Resolution 755 Impeaching Donald John Trump, president of the United States, for high crimes and misdemeanors," he began, reading the nine pages.

# Ukraine PM offers resignation after leaked recording

AFP ■ KIEV

Ukraine's prime minister offered his resignation on Friday after audio was leaked of him reportedly criticising President Volodymyr Zelensky's understanding of the economy.

"To remove any doubts about our respect for and trust in the president, I have written a resignation letter and handed it over to the president," Oleksiy Goncharuk wrote on his official Facebook page.

He said the audio "artificially created an impression that my team and I do not respect the president".

"This is not true," he said. "I came to this post to carry out the president's programme." Zelensky's office said it had received the letter of resignation and would consider it.

The alleged recordings, which emerged this week, came from an informal December meeting between ministers and senior officials from the National Bank.

According to local media reports, the participants dis-



resigned but his office denied this.

Goncharuk became Ukraine's youngest-ever prime minister after Zelensky nominated him for the post in August amid a stalling economy and war with separatists in the east.

Goncharuk's candidacy was quickly approved by MPs as Zelensky's "servant of the People" party holds a majority in parliament.

His appointment was in line with Zelensky's vow to

bring in fresh faces and shake up Ukraine's stagnant politics.

He replaced Volodymyr Groysman, 41, who offered his resignation after Zelensky was inaugurated in May.

A young lawyer with virtually no experience in government, Goncharuk was little known to the public.

Goncharuk, who studied law and public administration before co-founding a law firm at the age of 24, is considered a supporter of liberal economic reforms.

Before becoming deputy head of the president's office when Zelensky came to power, he managed for several years an EU-funded NGO that works to improve the business environment in Ukraine.

# US girds for cyber threats from Iran as military clash fears ebb

AFP ■ WASHINGTON

Iran is widely expected to ramp up cyberattacks against the US without directly challenging the American military. James Lewis of the Center for Strategic and International Studies said Iran appears to have "picked up the pace of reconnaissance" to prepare for a cyber intrusion.

"They may want to do something dramatic and symbolic," he said. "They are relatively cautious, they plan ahead. They have been developing cyber attack capabilities for at least five years, so it's now a political question."

John Dickson, a former air force intelligence officer and now an executive with the Denim Group consultancy, said the security community should not let its guard down because some time has elapsed since the drone attack.

"I think the threat is more pronounced now," Dickson said. "They've had time to prepare and dust off their plans,

on infrastructure such as electric or water utilities, ransomware which can be used to destroy or delete data from a company or government entity, or disinformation on social media aimed at sowing discord ahead of the US election, Bateman said.

Analysts say cyberattacks offer Iran a way to act against the US without directly challenging the American military. James Lewis of the Center for Strategic and International Studies said Iran appears to have "picked up the pace of reconnaissance" to prepare for a cyber intrusion.

"They may want to do something dramatic and symbolic," he said. "They are relatively cautious, they plan ahead. They have been developing cyber attack capabilities for at least five years, so it's now a political question."

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"I think the threat is more pronounced now," Dickson said. "They've had time to prepare and dust off their plans,

that is more in line with how the Iranians operate." Dickson said ransomware is a likely option because "as they get squeezed economically by sanctions, ransomware is a way to get access to cash."

The Department of Homeland Security issued a bulletin last week warning of the potential cyber threat, citing "Iran's historic use of cyber offensive activities to retaliate against perceived harm." "Iranian cyber threat actors have continuously improved their offensive cyber capabilities," the DHS bulletin said.

"They continue to engage in more 'conventional' activities ranging from website defacement, distributed denial of service (DDoS) attacks, and theft of personally identifiable information, but they have also demonstrated a willingness to push the boundaries of their activities, which include destructive wiper malware and potential, cyber-enabled kinetic attacks."

One potential attack vector for Iran would be social media, and both Facebook and Twitter have already acted against what the social networks called state-supported disinformation efforts by Tehran.

"Iran has developed a sophisticated apparatus to conduct information operations as

an extension of its foreign policy," said a report by the Atlantic Council's Digital Forensic Research Lab.

The researchers said that in response to Soleimani's death, the hashtag #HardRevenge started to trend in early January.

"This could preface a set of more intensive information operations from Iran," the report said.

Bateman noted that digital tools are now considered part of the military arsenal, and that both Iran and the US could mix cyber and conventional or "kinetic" methods.

Iran knows the US may respond either with cyber or conventional methods, according to Bateman, and are cognizant of the Stuxnet malware which is believed to have been a US operation to damage Iran's nuclear capabilities.

"I wouldn't assume that a US response to an Iranian cyberattack would be a reciprocal cyberattack," he said.

"It could be sanctions or criminal indictments or military action." Still, he said Iran appears motivated to do something to show its discontent over the Soleimani attack.

"The Soleimani killing was so much more provocative than anything the US has done in some time," he said.

# Khamenei says Trump will betray Iranians

AP ■ TEHRAN

Iran's supreme leader said President Donald Trump is a "clown" who only pretends to support the Iranian people, as he addressed Friday prayers in Tehran for the first time since 2012.

Ayatollah Ali Khamenei says Trump will "push a poisonous dagger" into the nation's back.

He said the outpouring of grief at the funeral for Iran's top general, who was killed in a US airstrike earlier this month, shows that Iranians support the Islamic Republic.

Khamenei said America had "cowardly" killed the most effective commander in the fight against the Islamic State group when it killed General Qassem Soleimani in a US airstrike in Baghdad.

In response to Soleimani's killing, Iran launched a barrage of ballistic missiles targeting US troops in Iraq, without causing serious injuries.

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

Khamenei called the shooting down of the plane a "bitter accident" that saddened Iran as much as it made its enemies happy. He said Iran's enemies had seized on the crash to question the Islamic Republic, the Revolutionary Guard and the armed forces.

He said Western countries are too weak to "bring Iranians to their knees". Khamenei said Iran was willing to negotiate, but not with the US.

Khamenei has held the country's top office since 1989 and has the final say on all major decisions. The 80-year-old leader openly wept at the funeral of

# 11 US troops injured in last week's attack on Iraq base

AFP ■ WASHINGTON

At least 11 American troops were injured in an Iranian attack on an Iraqi base where American soldiers were deployed, US Central Command said Thursday, although the US military had previously maintained there were no casualties.

"While no US service members were killed in the Jan. 8 Iranian attack on al-Asad Air base, several were treated for concussion symptoms from the blast and are still being assessed," US Central Command spokesman Captain Bill Urban said in a statement. At the time of the attack, most of the 1,500 US soldiers at the base had been tucked away in bunkers, after advance warning from superiors.

The strike caused significant material damage but no casualties, according to previous reports from the US military.

US President Donald Trump also said on the morning following the volley that "no American were harmed in last night's attack." However, Urban said that "in the days following the attack, out of an abundance of caution, some service members were transported from al-Asad Air Base." "At this time, eight individuals have been transported to Landstuhl, and three have been transported to Camp Arifjan," he said, referring to Landstuhl Regional Medical Center in Germany and Camp Arifjan in Kuwait.

In addition to the sprawling Ain al-Asad air base in western Iraq, Iran's missiles also targeted a base in Arbil, housing both American and other foreign troops deployed in a US-led coalition fighting the remnants of the Islamic State jihadist group.

"When deemed fit for duty, the service members are expected to return to Iraq following screening," Urban said.

# US warship sails through Taiwan Strait

AFP ■ TAIPEI

A US warship has sailed through the Taiwan Strait, mainland and Taipei officials said Friday, the first such passage since the island resoundingly re-elected its independence-leaning president.

The warship was on a "routine mission" on Thursday, Taiwan's defence ministry said, as it traversed the stretch of water that divides the self-ruling island from the authoritarian Chinese mainland.

The waterway bristles with hardware on both sides and China views any sail-by as a breach of its sovereignty.

The US and many other nations say the strait is international waters and Washington regularly carries out so-called "Freedom of Navigation" operations to press the point.

The sail-by comes after Tsai Ing-wen won a second term as president in weekend elections with an increased majority.

The outcome was seen as a forceful rebuke of Beijing's ongoing campaign to isolate the island.

China's leadership had made no secret of its desire to see Tsai turfed out because she and her party refuse to acknowledge their view that

Taiwan is part of a "one China". Beijing regards the island as its territory and has vowed to one day seize it, by force if necessary — especially if it declares independence.

In Beijing, foreign ministry spokesman Geng Shuang said China "closely followed" the ship throughout its entire journey.

"The Taiwan issue concerns China's sovereignty and territorial integrity, and is the most important, most sensitive issue in China-US relations," Geng said at a regular press briefing.

He said the US must "abide by the One-China principle" in order to "avoid hurting China-

US relations and the peace and stability of the Taiwan Strait." After Tsai's re-election, China warned against any move to push the island closer towards formal independence.

Beijing has stepped up military and diplomatic pressure on Taiwan since Tsai came to power in 2016.

The newly commissioned Shandong, China's first domestically built aircraft carrier, sailed through the Taiwan Strait in December just weeks before the election.

Beijing's only other carrier — the Liaoning — has passed through the Taiwan Strait several times in recent years, most recently in June.

# China's Xi arrives in Myanmar on billion-dollar charm offensive

AFP ■ NAYPYIDAW

Chinese President Xi Jinping touched down in Myanmar's capital Friday on a state visit aimed at buttressing the embattled government of Aung San Suu Kyi and driving through multi-billion-dollar infrastructure deals.

The wide highways and manicured lawns of Naypyidaw, purpose-built by generals under Myanmar's junta, were dotted with red banners bearing Xi's face and greetings in Burmese and Mandarin. Xi will sign a series of mammoth infrastructure deals as part of China's Belt and Road Initiative — a global trade plan that promises to change the face of Myanmar.

The centrepiece of the so-called China-Myanmar Economic Corridor (CMEC) is a USD 1.3 billion deep-sea port at Kyaukphyu in central Rakhine state, giving Beijing a gateway to the Indian Ocean.

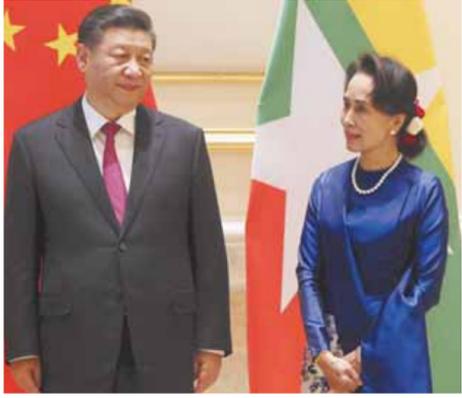
A high-speed rail link is on the cards to connect the port and nearby planned industrial zone with the country's shared border. China is an economic lifeline for Myanmar, a country where wariness lingers over the increasing influence of its giant neighbour.

Bilateral trade was worth USD 16.8 billion last year and Beijing holds the largest share — around USD 4 billion or 40 per cent — of Myanmar's foreign debt. Billions of cubic metres of gas and millions of barrels of oil from offshore rigs are pumped each year across the country into China.

"The next one, two, three decades will be defined by Myanmar's relationship with China," said Yangon-based analyst Richard Horsey.

After a welcome ceremony and dinner Friday, Xi will sit down with Suu Kyi and army chief Min Aung Hlaing in separate meetings Saturday.

Suu Kyi made a rare visit to Kachin state on the border with China ahead of Xi's visit. Kachin is the site of a



Myanmar's leader Aung San Suu Kyi (right) and Chinese President Xi Jinping pose for the media during their meeting at the Presidential Palace in Naypyitaw, Myanmar on Friday

planned Chinese-backed USD 3.6 billion, 6,000 megawatt dam that was mothballed in 2011 in the face of vociferous criticism across the country.

This is thought to have been a personal slight to Xi, who signed off on the Myitsone dam with Myanmar's then-military junta as vice-president in 2009. Activists are expected to protest in the commercial hub Yangon on Saturday against any reinstatement of the project.

Economic interests aside, Myanmar's relationship with the superpower has other benefits. In an op-ed in Myanmar's

state-run media this week, Xi said China supports Myanmar in "safeguarding its legitimate rights and interests and national dignity".

China shields Myanmar at the United Nations, where pressure is mounting for accountability over the Rohingya crisis.

Suu Kyi personally defended her nation against accusations of genocide at the UN's top court last month after a 2017 military crackdown forced 740,000 people over the border into Bangladesh. The alleged atrocities took place in Rakhine state — an area that has since descended into a civil war between the military and an ethnic Rakhine rebel group.

Myanmar has nonetheless declared the state open for business. While many Western investors are staying clear, China — competing against other regional giants — has few such qualms. Suu Kyi needs economic wins as well as diplomatic support as she heads towards elections due at the end of this year.

Rakhine locals, meanwhile, fear they will again be overlooked after previous Beijing-backed infrastructure projects left many without land or livelihoods. "They didn't bring any benefits for us, not even any jobs," Moe Aye Moe from Kyaukphyu SEZ Watch Group told AFP.

# EU warns of WTO challenge if China-US deal creates 'distortions'

AFP ■ BEIJING

The European Union will challenge the China-US trade agreement at the World Trade Organisation if it creates "distortions" in the market that harm EU companies, the bloc's envoy to Beijing said on Friday.

Ambassador Nicolas Chapuis told reporters the 28-nation EU "will monitor the implementation" of the "phase one" deal that was signed on Wednesday by President Donald Trump and Chinese Vice Premier Liu He.

"In our opinion, quantitative targets are not WTO-compatible if they lead to trade distortions," Chapuis said. "If it were to be the case, we will go to the WTO to settle this matter."

He said that during a meeting at the Chinese foreign ministry, he was given "formal assurances that in absolutely no way would European businesses be affected by the US-China deal".

The WTO's principle of most-favoured-nation treatment says countries cannot discriminate between trading partners.

Under the deal, China agreed to import an additional USD 200 billion in US products over two years, above the levels purchased in 2017, including an additional USD 32 billion in agricultural goods.

Beijing also pledged to improve protections of US intellectual property.

The US has pledged to slash in half tariffs of 15 percent

that were imposed on about USD 120 billion worth of Chinese consumer goods such as clothing in September.

But punitive border taxes will remain on two-thirds of more than USD 500 billion in imports from China.

Paul Tan of Rajah & Tann law firm in Singapore, who specialises in international dispute resolution, told AFP the deal "may not violate WTO rules because the type of goods being bought from the US could be different from other countries, or even unavailable".

"I don't think the trade deal reversed the increase in tariffs on US goods after the trade war broke out, for example, so I doubt this could be read as more preferential treatment," he

said. China's agreement to buy more from the US in effect cushions some of the impact from increased tariffs over the past two years, he added.

He noted, however, that such bilateral trade deals seem to be the US administration's preferred method of developing economic relations with its major trading partners, rather than through the WTO — meaning further trade disputes with the US will have to be resolved outside the global trading system.

Kerstin Braun, president of Stenn Group, said on Thursday: "With a weakened WTO and the general trend away from multilateral trade agreements, we're only going to see more trade squabbles."

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

PTI ■ BEIJING

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

The new data released by the National Bureau of Statistics (NBS) comes a day after China and the US signed a long-awaited phase one deal, marking a ceasefire in the 18-month-long trade war which saw the world's two largest economies slap 25 per cent tariffs on about half a trillion-dollar worth of each other's exports.

The world's second-largest economy grew by 6.1 per cent last year, its worst performance since 1990, but it remained above the psychologically important six per cent mark. The GDP growth remained well within the 6 to 6.5 target set by the government, the NBS said.

However, significant from the Chinese government's per-

spective, the GDP expanded to USD 14.38 trillion from last year's USD 13.1 trillion.

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

There is a sense of relief among the officials here as the official growth rate remained above the psychologically important 6 per cent as mandated by Chinese President Xi Jinping who in the past directed that GDP should not go down below six per cent, which could cause serious disruption to the world's second largest economy.

Chinese economy was hit hard by the US tariffs as a result of the trade war between the two countries.

After signing the phase one deal on Wednesday, US President Donald Trump said 25 per cent tariff hike on USD 360 billion worth of Chinese products would continue until

the phase-2 deal is worked out.

"The phase one deal is only an interim agreement between China and the US. In fact, to push for negotiation in the next stage, the US will keep existing tariffs on imports from China unless the two countries manage to reach a phase two deal," said Alicia Garcia Herrero, chief Asia Pacific economist at Natixis.

"In the bilateral evaluation and dispute resolution chapter, the agreement also makes it clear that, if the concerns cannot be resolved, the two parties hold the right to suspend an obligation, adopt a remedial measure, or in the worst case, withdraw from the agreement," he told the South China Morning Post.

Despite falling to a new low since 1990, when political turmoil drove economic growth down to 3.9 per cent, the 6.1 per cent rate met the target range of between 6.0 per cent and 6.5 per cent set by the central government at the beginning of last year, but was below the market expectation of 6.2

per cent. The headline figure was in line with forecasts of the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank for China's economic growth this year, the Post report said.

Chinese officials say the consumer spending has increased showing success of China's efforts to re-ignite its economy from one based on exports to more reliant on consumer spending.

According to the NBS data, China's per capita disposable income stood at 30,733 yuan (USD 4,461.95) in 2019, up 5.8 per cent year on year in real terms. Chinese per capita consumer spending increased by 5.5 per cent year on year in real terms to reach 21,559 yuan in 2019, the data said.

By 2020, China aims to double the per capita income of its urban and rural residents from 2010 levels.

China's value-added industrial output, an important economic indicator, expanded 5.7 per cent year on year in 2019, slowing from 6.2 per cent growth in 2018.

# Ghosh lawyers rebut new Nissan claims

AP ■ TOKYO

The legal team of Nissan's former chairman Carlos Ghosn issued a statement Friday refuting the latest allegations by the Japanese automaker against the fugitive businessman.

Nissan Motor Co. on Thursday filed a new set of allegations to the Tokyo Stock Exchange against Ghosn, who skipped bail and fled to Lebanon earlier this month, saying he could not get a fair trial in Japan.

The lawyers said that Nissan's complaints were biased

and that it never questioned Ghosn about them.

They also said Nissan never tried to interview Ghosn or Greg Kelly, another former executive facing charges of financial misconduct, or "bothered to solicit their knowledge of the facts".

His lawyers also complained that Latham & Watkins, which conducted the investigation, had long been Nissan's outside counsel.

Nissan confirmed both were true, but denied there was any conflict of interest.

Ghosn's legal team also complained that Nissan waited

for months to investigate Ghosn's successor, former Nissan Chief Executive Hiroto Saikawa, and only after Kelly publicly raised concerns.

Saikawa resigned last year over allegations about dubious income. He has not been charged.

"This report confirms that Nissan's investigation was biased, lacked integrity and independence, and was designed and executed for the predetermined purpose of taking out Carlos Ghosn," Frank Pasquier and the other lawyers said in a statement.

Both Ghosn and Kelly say

they are innocent.

Ghosn was charged with under-reporting his future compensation and breach of trust in diverting Nissan money for personal gain. He says the compensation was never decided on or paid, and the payments were for legitimate business.

Kelly is accused of helping Ghosn underreport his income.

Yokohama-based Nissan says Ghosn "single-handedly" decided on his compensation. It has promised to beef up corporate governance since the arrest of Ghosn in November 2018.

# Indian-origin woman missing found dead in her car trunk

PTI ■ NEW YORK

A 34-year-old Indian-origin woman who was reported missing two weeks ago has been found dead under mysterious circumstances in the trunk of her car in the US state of Illinois, according to media reports.

Sureel Dabawala was reported missing by her family on January 1 after she failed to return to her home in Schaumburg, Illinois on December 30, Schaumburg Police Department said in a statement.

She had gone to work out at a gym and was last seen driving her car. She never came home after that, her family was quoted as saying by the Chicago Tribune.

On Monday, the Chicago Police Department contacted Schaumburg Police to report that a deceased person had been recovered from the inside of the vehicle owned by missing endangered, Dabawala from Schaumburg, the statement said.

The Chicago Police

**She had gone to work out at a gym and was last seen driving her car. She never came home after that, her family was quoted as saying**

Department is handling this as a death investigation, it said.

After private investigators hired by Dabawala's family located her white sedan parked in Chicago's West Garfield Park neighbourhood, Chicago police officers were called there, Chicago police spokeswoman Kellie Bartoli was quoted by the Chicago Tribune.

The trunk of the car was opened, after her father arrived with the keys of the car.

Dabawala was found wrapped in a blanket and

authorities later pronounced her dead, it said.

The medical examiner's office released her identification on Tuesday. However, results from an autopsy could not be completed on Tuesday, a spokeswoman for the office said.

Toxicology results take at least a month to arrive. In autopsy cases in which they're required, no details of the investigation are released until those results are available, Natalia Derevyanny, director of communications for the Cook County Bureau of Administration, was quoted as saying by dailyheard.com.

Dabawala's sister said her family was not yet sure what happened to her sister, and they were awaiting updates from the police and information from the autopsy before speculating about her final moments, the report said.

Dabawala had completed her MBA from University Chicago and was working at a medical center managed by her father, who is a doctor, abc7Chicago.com reported.

# Japan court halts N-reactor restart citing quake risks

AFP ■ TOKYO

A Japanese nuclear reactor near a fault line must remain shut because of the risk of its being struck by earthquakes and volcanic eruptions, a high court ordered on Friday.

All nuclear power stations were shut down after the 2011 Fukushima nuclear accident following a catastrophic tsunami, and many remain closed. The Japanese public has turned against atomic power, despite Prime Minister Shinzo Abe insisting the nation needs nuclear plants to power the world's third-largest economy, and the court decision was a boost for the country's anti-nuclear movement.

The move by the Hiroshima High Court reversed a lower court decision in March that would have allowed the reactor at the Ikata nuclear plant in western Japan to resume operations.

The plant's operator,

Shikoku Electric Power, wanted to resume work at the reactor, which had been halted for routine inspections, and said it will appeal the high court's ruling.

The case was originally lodged by residents of a neighbouring region who complained the utility failed to properly evaluate the risks posed by a local volcano and seismic faultlines.

High court presiding judge Kazutake Mori revoked the lower court ruling that paved the way for the reactor to come online.

Mori said there was an active fault line near the plant and safety assessments had been insufficient, national broadcaster NHK said.

He also argued it was not logical to assume that volcanic eruptions can be predicted far in advance, as assumed under the national standards for operating nuclear reactors, according to NHK.

# Lanka ex-minister held over phone recording scandal

AFP ■ COLOMBO

Three Lankan authorities have arrested a former minister who allegedly recorded 100,000 phone calls, the sometimes lewd and compromising contents of which were leaked on social media.

In what has become a major scandal, Ranjan Ramanayake is heard discussing court cases with judges, police, politicians and local celebrities in some of the recordings.

Police, who seized hard drives from Ramanayake's home, said they were investigating whether the recordings had been used for blackmail or other criminal activity.

The opposition lawmaker, 56, who was remanded in custody earlier this week, has said he is being targeted for speaking out against corruption.

In some of the leaked audio tapes, Ramanayake is heard slating the leadership of his own opposition United National Party, which has since suspended his membership.

**Parliamentary speaker Karu Jayasuriya said the scandal demonstrated the moral degradation of the otherwise conservative Buddhist-majority nation of 21 million people.**

Parliamentary speaker Karu Jayasuriya said the scandal demonstrated the moral degradation of the otherwise conservative Buddhist-majority nation of 21 million people.

"Recording private conversations as well as broadcasting them (illegally) shows the moral decay in our country," Jayasuriya said in a statement urging the clergy to encourage higher ethical standards in society.

The leaks have already led

to the suspension of a magistrate and disciplinary action against a high court judge, officials said. Both had reportedly discussed ongoing cases with Ramanayake.

A senior police detective who had also had discussions with the politician has been suspended pending an internal inquiry.

Much of the leaked conversations suggested political interference in cases against senior members of former president Mahinda Rajapaksa's administration between 2005 and 2015. His brother Gotabaya won the November presidential election.

Official sources said the leaks could lead to a judicial review of some of the ongoing cases as well as those that have concluded unfavourably for Rajapaksa loyalists.

The Attorney General's office said Ramanayake was in custody for offences committed under the constitution for "interference with the functions of Judges." He could face up to a year in jail.

# UK monarchy will look smaller when dust settles

AP ■ LONDON

Prince Charles, the future king, has long been seen as a potential modernizer who wants a more modest monarchy in line with other European royal households — and the streamlining process has already begun with the astounding developments of recent months.

But the changes have come at a terrible cost for Charles, who has seen his brother Prince Andrew disgraced and his once close sons, Prince William and Prince Harry, become estranged.

The trials and tribulations of Andrew and Harry — one

tainted for a close friendship with a convicted sex offender, the other unwilling to continue his high-profile role — will take both out of their royal duties, leaving a smaller, more modest royal apparatus.

"Charles has been saying for years and years, 'Let's make it smaller,'" said Majesty magazine editor-in-chief Ingrid Seward. "He feels quite strongly that with such a big House of Windsor, there are too many opportunities for things to go wrong. And it's too expensive. And they need too many houses, too much public expenditure."

She does not expect Charles to take any joy in

recent events, though, particularly because of the breakdown between William and Harry. "He's very saddened, as any parent would be if their children have fallen out. But I think he probably feels that in the fullness of time, hopefully, it will get back on track," she said.

The royal focus going forward was neatly summed up by a rare formal portrait released two weeks ago by Buckingham Palace to mark the dawn of a new decade: Queen Elizabeth II with her three direct heirs: Charles, 71, William, 37, and 6-year-old Prince George.

It is a serene image of a 93-year-old monarch sur-

rounded by the three people expected to follow her to the throne, and it masks the behind-the-scenes turmoil and disappointments surrounding Andrew and Harry.

Andrew's fall is a full-blown scandal. His conduct has raised ethical issues in the past, but he had managed to retain his royal role until he completely miscalculated the impact of using an extended TV interview in November to defend his friendship with convicted sex offender Jeffrey Epstein, a wealthy financier.

The queen's second son seemed to have a moral blind spot, defending his relationship with Epstein — who

died in a New York prison in August in what was ruled a suicide — as honorable. He did not express a word of sympathy for the girls and young women victimized by Epstein.

Andrew still faces possible questioning from law enforcement in the US and Britain over allegations that he had sex with a teen trafficked by Epstein, which Andrew denies, as well as questioning from lawyers representing women who have filed civil suits against Epstein's estate.

When the tempest of bad publicity became unbearable, Andrew announced a deci-

sion to step down from royal duties. There was no public comment from the queen or from Charles, who was said by the British press to have advised the queen that Andrew could not continue.

There is no scandal surrounding Harry, but it seems painful for all concerned. Even the stoic queen, who seems to refer to private matters roughly once per decade, has spoken of her disappointment.

With his charming smile and ginger hair, Harry has long been one of the most popular royals, and with his brother, William, was seen as a key part of making the

creaky monarchy vital to younger Britons. Much of the world watched enthralled in 2018 when he married Meghan Markle, a successful American actress, at a storybook event at Windsor Castle. The fairy tale has since fractured. Harry and Meghan, feeling trapped by their duties and warring with the British press, have announced plans to drastically reduce their royal roles and spend much of the year in Canada.

In a major breach of family etiquette, they announced their plans without prior approval from his grandmother, the queen, earning a

CONVERSATION 45 MINUTES

# LIGHTS, CAMERA, TRAVEL

ZAREEN KHAN's TV debut show, *Jeep Bollywood Trails*, is your chance at reliving Bollywood blockbusters through the locales they were shot at. By CHAHAK MITTAL

Did you feel like going on a trekking trip to Manali after watching *Yeh Jawaani Hai Diwani*? Or going on a family vacation to Kolkata after watching *Piku*? Or perhaps taking a trip to Leh Ladakh and visit the famous Pangong Lake after watching *3 Idiots*? Bollywood films have also been about their exotic shooting locations as much as they have been about their actors and dreamy plots. Remember the Swarovski Kristallwelten in Wattens, Austria, in *Chal Mere Bhai* where Salman Khan and Karishma Kapoor take a short detour? Also, Indian tourists flocking to Switzerland after watching the 1995 blockbuster *DDLJ (Dilwale Dulhania Le Jayenge)* is yet another example of how people have associated their aspirations with film locales. However, ever heard of the background stories of what went into the making of the film at such spots?

Actor Zareen Khan, who is set to make her small screen debut, will bring all such locations under one roof and meet the Bollywood directors of the films that have been shot there in AXN's *Jeep Bollywood Trails*. Hosting the show, she will travel across the length and breadth of India in a Jeep revisiting the exact locations where films like *3 Idiots*, *Jab We Met*, *Dhadak* and more were shot.

"I am so excited for the show to go on air since it's my TV debut and I have been a passionate traveller. I am going to relive the iconic locations featured in blockbuster films. It would be a delight for the audience to see

'WE ARE SHOWCASING HOW BOLLYWOOD DIRECTORS HAVE TAKEN INSPIRATION FROM THE RICH HISTORY, CULTURE, PEOPLE AND NATURAL LANDSCAPES TO MAKE INDIAN DESTINATIONS WORTH A VISIT. THE FILMS HAVE IN A WAY GIVEN A SPECIAL IDENTITY TO THESE PLACES AS WELL'

how film directors think of a certain location and make them part of their stories. It's exciting for me to weave together these stories for the audience. What more could I have asked for?" she says and laughs.

Discussing more about the show has to offer, she tells us that the series begins with her driving to Ladakh to revisit the Chail Palace, the Druk School and Pangong Lake, where *3 Idiots* was extensively shot. It features a discussion between her and director Rajkumar Hirani who talks about his early life and his love for mountains which inspired him to pick Ladakh as one of the locations for the film.

She adds, "From eating their favourite to going to their favourite spots in that city, the directors explore a lot more than just the film background in the show. And we are doing it all on wheels, while driving. I drive all over the country and when you are doing that, you get an even better experience of the location you're in."

The other locations and directors covered in the series are Manali for *Jab We Met* featuring Imtiaz Ali, Shimla for *Bang Bang* featuring Siddharth Anand, Varanasi for *Raajhanna* featuring Anand L Rai and Udaipur for *Dhadak* featuring Shashank Khaitan.

In a way, the show also aims at reviving the essence of a particular film through the location it was shot at. However, since old time classics have been a huge mirror to tourists making their way to such locations, shouldn't they have been included too? These are all recent contemporary films. Zareen agrees. She says, "Of course, but this is what the makers of the show decided as of now. But I am also sure that once it clicks with the audience, they are going to look into the past. Maybe when we get into the second season of the show, then they might choose some classics. Currently, we

showcasing how these Bollywood directors have taken inspiration from the rich history, culture, people and natural landscapes to make all these destinations worth a visit. These films have in a way given a special identity to these places as well."

Travelling with a crew comes with its own challenges. On one hand, where Ladakh is about adventure and thrill, Udaipur, on the other, is more about history, heritage and culture. So how challenging it was to get accustomed to different places, varying in temperatures as well as ethnicity? Zareen says, "I think challenges double up for people when they are not frequent travellers. And if somebody who hasn't explored much was made a part of this show, s/he would have faced a lot of difficulty. But I have been an avid traveller and I am very well aware how different places have different joys to offer. And I just cherish that rather than looking it as a challenge."

However, there was one time when it all seemed too difficult for Zareen. She shares an anecdote, "When you are travelling to different places, there are so many things happening on the go. I remember that in Ladakh, it was a very challenging drive. We hadn't realised that while driving up the hill pass, we'll have to be really prepared for it. None of us were, neither with clothes nor with the vehicles. Of course, Jeep was head on but other cars weren't. The more they started slipping back since the roads were on a slope and there was snow. Even though you have known that it's a difficult terrain, driving and experiencing it yourself makes you believe it. It was very difficult. We were freezing and almost exhausted while driving up the slopes for three hours. But then, finally, the moment we reached the Pangong Lake, we forgot all about it. It was worth all the hassle! And I think that's the beauty of travelling."

(The show will air every Saturday at 8 pm from January 25 on AXN.)

are aiming at

CELEB TALK 30 MINUTES

## The strangers' secrets

Actor CHRIS HEMSWORTH says that through his role in *Bad Times at the El Royale*, he wanted to highlight toxic masculinity in the world. Hence, there was something sexist about the character addicted to power and control. By TEAM VIVA

Set in the year 1969, *Bad Times at the El Royale*, revolves around the seven strangers and their seven secrets in search of their own identity or either running away from something. Each living in their own universe ends up to El Royale hotel near the California-Nevada border that carries a dark past. A series of events unfold at the hotel, the strangers become acquaintances by sharing their shady secrets. What happens next is robbery, surveillance, death, revenge, defiance, and survival.

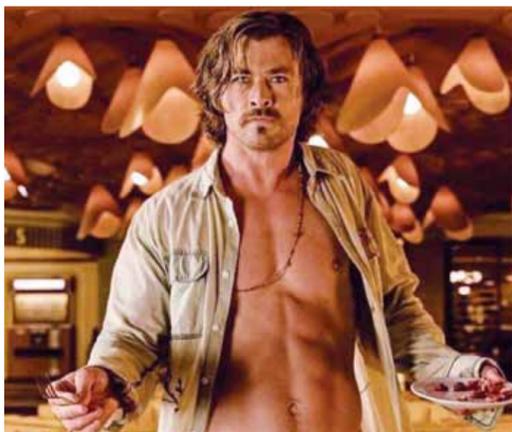
Chris Hemsworth views on his experience of working in this neo-noir thriller:

◆ How did you land up with this role?

I have known Drew Goddard from *The Cabin in the Woods*. We worked together years ago. One day when I contacted him, this film was in process. As I got to know about it, I immediately rang him and said, 'why you haven't offered this film to me?' I then read the script and right away said yes, lets go and never looked back. This was an opportunity for me to work with him again.

◆ How was your experience working in the *Bad Times at the El Royale*?

Before signing up for this film, I had a detailed look at the script. The idea of a neo-noir thriller film with such a storyline made me readily agree for a role. The whole shooting sequence went like bliss and was enjoyable due to the immense hard work put in by the entire team. The script is one of the best things I have ever read, the cast was incredible. I heard great things about the script and saw amazing work by the



cast. Everybody was in an integral place in this puzzle. Even if one person did not drop the ball or did not show up, it seemed as if there was something missing on the sets. I am very happy that everyone just put in so much for their roles. It is one of the most collaborated and enjoyable film set I have ever been on.

◆ Tell us about your character and its challenges.

I felt everything very different from what I have done before. Surprisingly, the role was easy may be due to such an amazing script. It signalled that you can't go anywhere else but on this terrain you got to roll the dice and take that kind of risk. Yes, it was very satisfying. Billy Lee, my character is a coke leader who is manipulative, and charismatic, which is kind of essential for the script. There had to be a sense of humour but also true set of manip-

◆ What time is the film set in?

The film is set in a hotel, where seven strangers have seven secrets, all searching for something, maybe an answer or object, trying to find who they are and what is their place in the world. But at the same time, they all collide which pretty much ends as a chaotic situation at the El Royale. The film is a beautiful shot with amazing soundtrack.

(The film is set to be previewed on Sunday, January 19 on Star Movies.)

American singer Gloria Gaynor sees the hand of god in every aspect of her life, particularly when it comes to the tune that may be the most famous disco song every created.

She recalls when she first was presented with *I Will Survive*, it was intended to be the B-side of another song, meaning it wasn't the one that was promoted to be a hit. She clearly remembers calling it a stupid decision, and lobbied for *I Will Survive* to get top billing, which won over the songwriters of the now classic song. "I've always believed that god told them, 'Look, sit down, write a song, hold onto it, I'm going to send you somebody,'" she said. "Another divine appointment... it was meant to be the core of my purpose," she added.

Gaynor won her first and only Grammy for *I Will Survive* in 1980. Now, 40 years later, she has a chance to add two more trophies to her collection, thanks to her first gospel album *Testimony*, which is nominated for best roots gospel album, and *Talking About Jesus*, which is up for best gospel performance. She's giddy to get back in the Grammy mix.

"I'm waiting to see the fashions, of course, everybody all dressed and looking wonderful and feeling good and happy and all of that," she said of the January 26 ceremony, "and hoping, of course, that I win at least one Grammy. It will be awesome if I could win them both."

Gaynor shared recently about her nominations, persevering in the music industry despite health challenges and her divine connection to her most famous song.

◆ What made you want to do a gospel album?

I just wanted to share the love and the knowledge of Christ through my music. I felt that that was what I was called to do.

◆ This album comprises of new material, some which you co-wrote; even the song *Amazing Grace* is a new tune. What made you decide to go that route?

Well, I feel I've always been a bit innovative. I mean, if somebody writes a song that I want to sing and

## 'Well with my soul'

Singer GLORIA GAYNOR says that she always leaves the stage hoping that the audience has had as good a time as she did



they've put something in it with bad grammar, I can't sing it. I just have to fix it. I just do it. And I wasn't trying to fix *Amazing Grace* except that I was trying to make it fit into my life. And the more it is about my story than the original, the better it is. That's why we went that way with it.

◆ What has it been like to not only have the Grammy nominations but also have this type of success?

Well, I did an album some time ago and felt that I kind of ran out ahead of god. And, when you do that, you find yourself out there by yourself. So it didn't do well at all. And then when this album happened, it was successful and was quickly received by people. They were writing to me that they not only

enjoyed the music, but that the songs were ministering to them... this was my purpose to do through the music. So I felt like I was right this time. This is God's timing and I'm on point.

◆ What has *I Will Survive* meant to you over the years?

At first it was something that I was singing for other people. And then as time went on, different things happened to me and it became my mantra as well. And through the death of my mother, my siblings, through my divorce, I mean, when I did my divorce, I did a marathon version.... So the song has really meant a lot to me as well as to other people. I fully understand because I've experienced what the song can do for you.

◆ This song has endured for so long, but have you ever been frustrated that this was your biggest song?

At first I thought that this is a double-edged sword. People think I'm not able to sing anything else except *I Will Survive*. They don't want to hear anything else... I'm not sick of the song, but I wish they would recognise that I could do something else, that I've recorded so many other great songs. And then when I came to the understanding that it was the core of my purpose, I kind of settled in and was okay with it. As the song says, *It is well with my soul*.

◆ You've faced a lot physically, with several back surgeries. How are you doing today?

I've had five back surgeries and each one has stopped me for a minute.... The last one threatened to stop me for good.... With a lot of prayer and faith, we found a doctor in California who did this wonderful surgery, two surgeries on me, two totaling 18 hours and put 12 rods in my back. And now I'm pain free.... I'm still performing. I do better on stage and in everyday life. That is why I give credit to god and the audience because the love that comes from them really sustains me during that period of time when I'm on stage. And it's just a wonderful time for me. I always leave the stage hoping that the audience has had as good a time as I did.

◆ Could you see yourself making more dance music?

Well, the only dance music I'm planning is music on which you can dance like David danced, dance unto the Lord.

SHORT CIRCUITS



MALLIKA SHERAWAT

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



JUHI CHAWLA

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



RASIKA DUGAL

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



IMTIAZ ALI

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

EMMA WATSON

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



ENCOUNTER 30 MINUTES

RHYTHM IS A DANCER

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

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

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

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

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

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

I took these classes when I was already 24. When you are young, your body is supple. I imbibed only those things which my body could accept. So I cannot claim perfection in them. All that experience of how these school's practitioners worked with their bodies and their breath control influenced me deeply. This was a whole new teaching process. I studied a lot of dance forms and ended up using a lot of Balinese movements in my work. Then there is the Japanese *butoh*. All this experience has enriched me as an individual. When I start creating, I figure out which of my inspirations work or not.

◆ Mukhabhinay is an important part of your dance technique...

*Mukhabhinay* is something that is ingrained in me as I learnt it for 16 years. It comes naturally. *Abhinay* is used a lot but not all the time.

◆ You hitchhiked to the US. What made you do that? How have your travels contributed to your art?

I left the country in 1969 on a cargo ship with goats, sheep and other workers who would get off at Dubai or Bahrain. Eventually the voyage ended at Khorramshah in Iran. Till then I had had studied Indian classical dance, beginning with kathak. And then my father put the brakes. After all, he had at least let a Parsi person take dancing lessons in the first place. I then took up economics at Bombay University. Destiny called again as it was at this point of time that I watched an American dance company perform in the city. A new dimension of dancers as a collective using a defined space opened up before me. Nothing like that existed in India and my father didn't have the means to invest in my passion. The spirit of adventure was there and I just set off.

I hadn't considered hitch-hiking as rare because it was a part of the youth culture then. Nobody thought anything about travelling with strangers. But then there were robberies and murders, too. My magic trail took me from Iran, through Turkey, Greece, Italy, Austria, Belgium, Germany... till I took the ferry across to Dover. And then hitchhiked to London.

There was so much of living colour and monuments that I could have written a journal like the famous travellers have documented in history. A friend's daughter said she was so much in awe of my experience. But now many young people are doing it. But in a much different form. It is more hiking rather than hitchhiking.

I also wanted to study the piano but my father refused, saying if at all I wanted to master music, I could only play Indian classical instruments. Those days, it was hard and frustrating to be



accepted as a liberal artiste but I had the support and blessings of my parents. I could come back to a happy home and that was a big blessing. Even today, many boys find it hard to rationalise their choice as performers. My father, on the other hand, said, "I am sorry we do not have enough connections to help you out" Had it been an unhappy home, I would not have been able to handle the rejections which I faced constantly.

My original plan was to go to the US but my papers were not in order. I travelled the world and explored different cultures for seven and a half years instead. I travelled to Canada and hitchhiked from Montreal to Vancouver. Then went east, crossed the ocean, went to Japan and stayed there for a year. I just hitchhiked, studied, absorbed and learnt. I went to Australia and New Zealand on a cheap budget. I looked at each day as a gift of meeting people. I stayed in a youth hostel picking up tips to survive.

◆ Is that why you connect to young people from varied backgrounds? You've also worked with hearing-impaired children and those from the Salaam Baalak Trust...

I worked with children of Salaam Baalak Trust and the drummers of Manipur. They wait for me to take them out, they are survivors and they have the instinct to explore.

I have worked with the deaf after I came across a friend who was working with a deaf theatre company in Kolkata. I was frustrated that I couldn't get enough dancers to do a workshop and then I thought why not try something new?

I was not trained to work with them but learnt on the job. After a three-week workshop, it was possible to create an entire experience with them able to express themselves. I learnt so much from them like lip-reading and sign language. I use myself as a catalyst and then mentor and nurture them. They get confidence and become role models. All these kids were excited because they got a sense of achievement as they saw their photos. There was a sense of pride. I am not doing it for my glorification, am doing it so that I can demonstrate what can be done with hard work and perseverance.

◆ What keeps you young? While dancers half your age follow the set patterns, you keep extending your boundaries. Add to it Kathak and Kathakali.

I keep pushing myself physically and also picking up projects through which I can create awareness. I have been working for 14 years in Manipur. And Kathakali was always a group performance. Earlier, it was the martial arts and now it is the drummers. They just did their own demonstration. It wasn't really a full performance but it was all very fragmented. However, I brought them into my work while keeping their tradition intact. I still feel tradition is very important and it gives you grounding.

When something has a strong foundation, only then it can grow. One should be open to absorbing and looking at things with an open eye. In my new routine, two new boys who haven't worked with me before have been trained in *chhau*. It was a whole new process and experience for them since they had to sustain that position. But they have been open to it, because then you feel like you are wasting your time and also that of the person who wants you to be a part of the project.

◆ Your choice of venues have been eclectic to say the least, for instance, The Great Wall of China, amid artefacts in a museum and more...

People are used to watching a performance in a theatre. But when I select a space, it has to speak to me, for example, at Triveni I will have people sitting around me in an open air amphitheatre and I will perform within them. Some performances work better in an enclosed environment.

◆ What is your credo?

My movements must hypnotise you. I must be able to push my body and not do just what people do. I am doing a lot of work with my back. A lot of movement that involves just holding back and not falling. That becomes a new form of movement.

Photo: Pankaj Kumar

'I hadn't considered hitch-hiking as rare because it was a part of the youth culture initially. Nobody thought anything about travelling with strangers. And then there were robberies and murders, too. But my magic trail took me from Iran, through Turkey, Greece, Italy, Austria, Belgium, Germany and finally to Dover'

STUDIO CHAT 15 MINUTES



It's a wild wild world

Wildlife photographer VIKRAM POTDAR says that the places with civilisations look more or less similar but nature is always different in different parts of the world. By TEAM VIVA

□ Share with us your insights on witnessing the wildlife across seven continents.

My insight in witnessing the world across seven continents is that if you visit any European city, you will find that the interiors of the city is similar to Helsinki or Berlin or Frankfurt, even Vienna, the inner city has cobblestone streets, Roman Gothic architecture and town halls. And if you go to the newly developed cities, you see glass facade, aluminum composite panel and contemporary styled buildings. But if you visit the flora and fauna, the forest and the countryside, those are unique. So I have found that the places with civilisations look more or less similar. But nature is always different in different parts of the world.

□ What has been your biggest takeaway from your journey around the world?

I have witnessed and observed habitat loss and melting of ice in polar regions. So the best way to preserve this natural wealth is to leave it alone. If we leave the nature as it is, it will certainly take its own course. That is the best way to preserve the wildlife.

□ How relevant do you find Sony BBC Earth's show *Seven Worlds, One Planet*?

I have earlier highlighted the similarity in urban areas and uniqueness in forests and jungles. So the variety of nature is a binding thread in all the seven worlds, or rather, I would say, wildlife binds all the continents together. This show on Sony BBC Earth aptly named as *Seven Worlds, One Planet* does justice to the natural wealth, surroundings, flora and fauna around us.

□ How has climate change affected the natural world around each of the continent?

The climate change has affected natural world quite a lot over the last 40 years, almost 30 to 40 per cent of bird and mammal population is wiped out. It is further going down due to the constant pressure on the habitats and natural resources. So the climate change effects are at an alarming rate.

□ What drove you to the world of wildlife? Tell us about your very first experience as a wildlife photographer?

Since childhood, I was very much fond of nature. But I seldom took time to pursue my hobby as I was busy with nature of living, jobs, marriage and settlement. So I never really cared about my passion and what I really wanted to do. I was engrossed in daily chores of life. It was in 2006 when I visited Nagarhole National Park in South India, where I witnessed wild animals



— deers, elephants, Indian gaurs for the first time. That's when I realised that this is my destiny. This is what I wanted to do. And thereby wildlife photography started actually.

□ Have you watched any shows on Sony BBC Earth? If given an opportunity, would you be interested in being a part of any locally produced show?

I don't watch television much, but yes if opportunity is given, I would like to be a part of the show.

□ Can you share any memorable stories from any of the continents? Some anecdotes or incident you remember.

I went to Churchill in Northern Canada, Manitoba province to photograph polar bear mother and cub in the Dane. The temperature was minus 40 degree celsius. As I come from the tropical climate area, it was really difficult for me to stay in such a cold weather. But somehow, I managed by wearing six layers of heavy clothing and two layers of hand gloves. Even photography was quite a challenge there.

□ What do you think makes for a perfect wildlife shot?

Well, the taste of each photographer varies, but according to me, the best wildlife shot is the one which depicts the habitat. Over the years my signature style of photography has transformed into habitat sort, it means that the animal will be small in the frame. Suppose I'm shooting a tiger in the forest of Tadoba, then maybe 90 per cent of the frame will be the forest and 10 per cent will be tiger. So it will show the habitat of the Tiger. I don't like shooting tight frames, and portraits of animals which shows nothing but the animal. I like to show the habitat, the animal and the trees of the surrounding. So the best ever wildlife photography image is one depicts habitat and has some story in it.

(*Seven Worlds, One Planet* premieres on January 20, 9 pm on Sony BBC Earth.)

# India launch Olympic bid with pro opener

## Manpreet led side host the Netherlands in FIH pro league game today

PTI ■ BHUBANESWAR

The Olympics-bound Indian men's hockey team will kick-start its preparations for the quadrennial showpiece when it debuts in the FIH Pro League against world No.3 the Netherlands here on Saturday.

After having missed the first edition of the event, India will take on the 2019 Pro League and European Bronze medal winners, the Netherlands, in two matches in their opening tie at the Kalinga Stadium here. The second match will be played on Sunday.

With all the top teams of the world in fray, the home-and-away Pro League will be ideal preparation for world No 5 India ahead of the Summer Games later this year.

After the Dutch side, India will host world champions Belgium on February 8 and 9 followed by two more home fixtures against Australia on February 22 and 23.

The Indian team will then leave for the away games in Germany (April 25 and 26) and Great Britain (May 2 and 3).

India will return to play on home soil on May 23 and 24 against New Zealand before travelling to Argentina to play on June 5 and 6.

The Manpreet Singh-led side will play the last leg of the Pro League round-robin matches in Spain on June 13 and 14.

India's head coach Graham Reid will be aware of the challenges that await his team in the Pro League opener.

Having served as a former assistant coach to the Dutch, Reid knows exactly what to expect from Netherlands in the double header.

The matches will also provide India a chance to avenge their heart-breaking 1-2 loss in the quarterfinal of the 2018 World Cup.

A look at the previous 10 meetings between the two teams reveals



Manpreet Singh in a file picture

Manpreet Singh/Twitter

that there is little to choose between them.

The Netherlands have won five of those meetings, with India victorious on four occasions and one match ending in a draw.

Reid too insisted that they are looking at the Pro League outings as a platform for Olympic preparation.

"It will be important to start strong and sharp in the Pro League with our first three encounters against the top three teams in the world," Reid has said.

"We will be focussing on getting our structures right and honing our set plays as preparation for our Olympic campaign."

The Indians would also benefit by their familiarity with the Kalinga Stadium turf, having trained and played numerous matches here.

It is the same venue where the eight-time Olympic champions qualified for the 2020 Games after thrashing Russia 11-3 on aggregate in the two-leg FIH Qualifiers in November last year.

"The matches against India are a very important opener. Playing against India at their home ground is challenging no doubt but it is also very exciting because we love playing in Bhubaneswar," Netherlands coach Max Caldas said.

Caldas too is looking at the Pro League as preparation for Olympics.

"The players and combinations we wanted to test were experimented during the previous edition of Pro League. This edition we will have our most competitive team as this will be the stepping-stone for us to be the best at Tokyo," he said.

India will field a full-strength team which will witness the return of midfielders Chinglensana Singh and Sumit, who were out with injuries.

Chinglensana was on the sidelines with an ankle fracture since the National Championship last year, while Sumit suffered a wrist injury in June during the FIH Men's Series Final.



Sania Mirza in action during Hobart International Hobart International/Twitter

# Sania storms into Hobart final

PTI ■ HOBART

Indian tennis ace Sania Mirza cruised into the women's doubles final of the Hobart International with her Ukrainian partner Nadiia Kichenok here on Friday.

Sania and Kichenok sailed past the Slovenian-Czech pair of Tamara Zidansek and Marie Bouzkova 7-6 (3) 6-2 in the semifinal contest that lasted one hour and 24 minutes.

The fifth-seeded Indo-Ukrainian combination will lock horns with second seeds Shuai Peng and Shuai Zhang of China. The Chinese pair got a walkover after Belgium's Kirsten Flipkens and Alison Van Uytvanck conceded the other semifinal match because of injury.

While Sania and Kichenok had to fight hard in the opening set, the second set was a cakewalk for the combination.

The first set was a tough contest between the two pairs, bringing the tie-breaker into the equation after it was level at 6-6.

In the tie-breaker, Sania and Kichenok upped their game by a few notches to out-

smart their opponents and take the lead.

The second set was a no contest as Saina and Kichenok broke their opponents thrice - in the second, sixth and eighth game - to easily pocket the set and a place in the summit clash.

Saina and Kichenok got 11 break chances out of which they converted four, while their opponents utilised two out of the five break chances that came their way.

The 33-year-old Sania is returning to WTA circuit after two years. During her time away from the game, she battled injury breakdowns before taking a formal break in April 2018 to give birth to her son Izzaan. She is married to Pakistani cricketer Shoaib Malik.

Before the ongoing event, Sania last played at China Open in October 2017.

A trailblazer in Indian tennis, Sania is a former world No.1 in doubles and has six Grand Slam titles to her credit.

She retired from the singles competition in 2013 after becoming the most successful Indian woman tennis player.

# Title most imp goal for Salah



Mo Salah celebrates with Sadio Mane after scoring Liverpool/Twitter

AFF ■ LIVERPOOL

Mohamed Salah says Liverpool's focus is solely on ending a 30-year wait to win the Premier League title, rather than doing so by going the whole season unbeaten.

Jürgen Klopp's men have dropped just two points in 21 games to set a new record for Europe's top five leagues of 61 points from a possible 63 to start the campaign.

That has propelled the European champions into a

14-point lead over title holders Manchester City with a game in hand, but Salah insists the Reds are still taking their title challenge one game at a time ahead of Manchester United's visit to Anfield on Sunday.

"We don't think about being unbeaten until the end of the season. If we do that, it would be great, but at the end of the day we just want to win the Premier League. That's the most important thing," Salah told Premier League

Productions. "Unbeaten or not, it's not necessary - we want to win the Premier League."

Liverpool could move a massive 30 points clear of United with victory on Sunday, but the Red Devils are the only side to take points off them this season after a 1-1 draw at Old Trafford in October.

Salah missed that match through injury and is keen to make up for lost time in the clash between English football's two most successful sides.

# Harry replaces Young as captain

AFF ■ MANCHESTER

Ole Gunnar Solskjaer has confirmed Harry Maguire as Manchester United's new captain less than six months after his £80 million (\$104 million) move from Leicester.

Maguire will take over as skipper from Ashley Young, who is expected to complete his move to Inter Milan on Friday.

The England international, 26, has led the side in games when Young has been absent and was an obvious choice for the role having played in every Premier League match this season. "Harry has been wearing the captain's armband and he will keep wearing it," said Solskjaer, whose side take on runaway leaders Liverpool at Anfield on Sunday. "He's come in and been a leader in the group. I have not been surprised

but I've been impressed by his leadership skills."

"He is part of a group that we've had that have been leading this young group," added Solskjaer.

"Ashley has been of course, Marcus (Rashford) is a young lad but he has been involved, David (de Gea) and Harry, so Harry will keep on wearing the armband now."

Young, who moved to Old Trafford in 2011, will link up at the San Siro with former United teammates Romelu Lukaku and Alexis Sanchez.

"Ashley has been a good servant for the club, he's been captain, he's won trophies, the league, various cups," said Solskjaer.

"But we've got players coming through and when Ashley's head and mindset was, I want to try this, why not do it now?"

"We need to win, we need to carry on in our way - the way we've been doing since the beginning of the season and since last year," added the Egyptian.

"Of course we know it's big for the fans, for the city and for us. But at the end of the day, we play the game to win."

# Yastremska downs Sabalenka for finals place

AFF ■ ADELAIDE

Ukraine's Dayana Yastremska defeated her third top 20 opponent in a row to make the Adelaide International finals with a 6-4, 7-6 (7/4) win over Aryna Sabalenka on Friday.

The 19-year-old's blitzed world number 20 Donna Vekic

in the quarter-finals of the Memorial Drive tournament a day after 18th-ranked Angelique Kerber retired from their match with back pain from a set down.

Yastremska, ranked 24th, will play for the fourth title of her career on Saturday against either Australian world number one Ashleigh Barty or American Danielle Collins.

"I'm pretty happy, this new season is off to a good start," Yastremska said after defeating Sabalenka of Belarus for their third match in as many meetings.

"I'm just doing my job on court, playing my game. I do what I can on court."

"I feel confidence heading to the Australian Open." Yastremska broke once per set while losing her own service once in the 106-minute showdown.

She finished on a third match point in the tiebreaker as Sabalenka hit the net on a return.

Yastremska claimed two WTA trophies last season at Strasbourg and Hua Hin, Thailand.

# Prajesh out of Australian Open



Prajesh Gunneswaran plays a return shot AFP

PTI ■ MELBOURNE

India's top-ranked player Prajesh Gunneswaran failed to make the main draw of the Australian Open men's singles event after going down in straight sets to Ernests Gulbis of Latvia in the final round of the qualifiers here on Friday.

Prajesh, ranked 122nd in the world and seeded 17th in the qualifiers, lost 6-7 (2) 2-6 to Gulbis in his final round qualifying match. Prajesh had earlier defeated local wildcard Harry Bourchier and Germany's Yannick Hanfmann.

It was a close first set which went into tie-break, where Prajesh faltered to hand early advantage to his opponent.

In the second set, Gulbis broke Prajesh in the first and third games to race to a 3-0 lead.

From there on, the Indian found it tough as Gulbis held his serve to close out the contest that lasted for one hour and 20 minutes.

With Prajesh's ouster, India's campaign in the singles ended in the qualifiers.

Earlier, Sumit Nagal suffered a straight-set loss to Mohamed Safwat of Egypt to crash out in the first round of the qualifiers on Thursday.

AFF ■ BERLIN

Jürgen Klinsmann is planning a party if Hertha Berlin beat his former employers Bayern Munich on Sunday despite doubts about the validity of his coaching licence, as the Bundesliga resumes this weekend after a four-week break.

Since taking charge in November, the 55-year-old former Germany and US national team coach has pulled Hertha up from the relegation places to mid-table with 10 points from a possible 12 going into their clash with third-placed Bayern at Berlin's Olympic Stadium.

However Klinsmann, who led both the US and Germany at World Cup finals, has been left red-faced after it emerged his coaching licence, held since 2000, may no longer be valid and the relevant paperwork is at the family home in California.

"It's just been a bit of a chance for the media to let off a bit of steam," Klinsmann told Sky as questions over his licence became a hot topic in the German media.

# Klinsmann back to hurt Bayern



Hertha BSC Berlin head coach Juergen Klinsmann attends a news conference AP

no problem at all". He has a point to prove against Bayern, who sacked him in 2009 after just nine months and 43 games in charge.

Bayern striker Robert Lewandowski has recovered from recent groin surgery and will look to pick up where he left off after scoring 19 goals in the first 17 games.

The defending champions trail leaders RB Leipzig by four points and are without wingers Kingsley Coman (knee) and Serge Gnabry, who injured his Achilles tendon during a training camp in Qatar.

Bayern suffered a shock 2-0 defeat when they last travelled to Hertha in September 2018 and Klinsmann said a repeat result would spark a party in the capital.

"We have nothing to lose," he said. "Let's take a point — brilliant! Let's take three, then we'll have a party. "We'll go in there with the

confidence of four games without defeat." One to watch: Erling Braut Haaland

Borussia Dortmund made the league's standout signing during the winter break when they paid Red Bull Salzburg 20 million euros (\$22m) for the 19-year-old Norway striker.

Haaland attracted attention last September when, aged 19 years and 58 days, he became the third youngest player to score a Champions League hat-trick in a 6-2 victory over Genk, finishing with eight goals in six group games.

"I don't think we've had that kind of striker since Robert Lewandowski," Dortmund captain Marco Reus told Sky. Head coach Lucien Favre has not said when Haaland will make his debut. Fourth-placed Dortmund hope a deluge of goals by their latest signing will help close the seven-point deficit to RB Leipzig, starting with a win at Augsburg on Saturday.

# Quique era starts in Barca

AFF ■ MADRID

Barcelona's appointment of Quique Setien, a fervent disciple of Johan Cruyff, came the day after Zinedine Zidane won his ninth final out of nine as coach of Real Madrid.

With both teams level on points at the top of La Liga, Spain's closest title race in years will be as much a contest of identity and beliefs as points won and lost.

Real Madrid, the club that defines itself by winning, against Barcelona, where winning is seen as the result of something more profound, a style heralded by Cruyff that has become their footballing philosophy.

Atletico Madrid and Sevilla, both five points behind, are still in touch but playing catch-up. Setien once said he would have given his little finger to play under Cruyff. Now, 34 years later, he has the chance to resuscitate those ideals after



two years under Ernesto Valverde when pragmatism took a greater hold.

Barca's new coach is not well-known outside of Spain and, at 61, he may be in the twilight years of his career.

"For me this is the pinnacle," he said at his unveiling on Tuesday.

His previous clubs are not illustrious. They include Lugo, Logrones, Las Palmas, Poli Ejido, Racing Santander, Real

Betis and one game in charge of Equatorial Guinea. His list of trophies begins and ends with one Spanish Super Cup in 1985 with Atletico Madrid.

But his work and words up to this point could leave the impression of someone that has been preparing to coach Barcelona his entire life.

"When I was a player, coaches tried to set guidelines for me," Setien, a former Spanish international, told Marca in 2018.

It remains to be seen how Setien's appointment will affect La Liga's title race. Will Real Madrid's players feel their chances are boosted or harmed by Valverde's removal? They are now up against a team with a coach that has never won, or even competed for, a top-flight trophy. But they might feel wary too, of the possibility Barcelona could be released by Setien's attacking beliefs and accelerate.

# INDIA HUNT KANGAROOS IN RAJKOT

## Top order's show complimented by bowlers help Men in Blue level series

PTI ■ RAJKOT

Kuldeep Yadav bowled a game-changing 38th over to complement a KL Rahul blinder as India levelled the series with a comfortable 36-run victory over Australia in second ODI here on Friday.

Put into bat, India put up a much-improved batting performance with Rahul's blistering 52-ball-80 taking India to 340 for six after Shikhar Dhawan (96 off 90 balls) and skipper Virat Kohli (78 off 76 balls) laid the foundation.

Australia were in the game till Steven Smith (98) carried the battle back to the enemy camp but Kuldeep's ninth over turned out to be a game-changer as he first dismissed wicketkeeper Alex Carey and then had a delivery that bounced extra to have Smith played out. The visitors were all-out for 304 in 49.1 overs.



Indian players celebrate the dismissal of Australia's Steve Smith in Rajkot



Kuldeep's final figures of 2 for 65 may not be mind-blowing but did just enough damage to see that the third ODI in Bengaluru doesn't lose context. Mohammed Shami (3/77)

in 10 overs) and Navdeep Saini (2/62 in 10 overs) then bowled some exquisite toe-crushers to put an end to the contest. Jasprit Bumrah (1/32 in 9.1 overs) was economical as ever and his contribution cannot be overlooked.

However on a placid track, Smith, a proverbial thorn in India's flesh was again proving to be dangerous along with Marnus Labuschagne (44) as they added 96 in quick time.

Ravindra Jadeja (2/58 in 10 overs) steady spell and got rid of Labuschagne in nick of time to upset Smith's rhythm after he had hit nine fours and a six off 102 balls.

However this match also brings to fore Rahul's emergence as proper keeper-batsman option for white-ball cricket as his extra runs coming in at No 5, proving to be valuable in the end.

Not to forget his reasonably decent keeping effecting

## K S Bharat named cover for Pant

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Andhra Pradesh wicket-keeper-batsman K S Bharat was on Friday called in as back-up for Rishabh Pant, who was ruled out of India's second ODI against Australia due to a concussion.

The 26-year-old Bharat is uncapped and has an experience of 74 first-class matches with 4143 runs. He has a strike rate of over 100 in T20s.

"The All-India Senior Selection Committee has named K S Bharat as the back-up wicket-keeper for the 2nd ODI in Rajkot against Australia" BCCI Secretary Jay Shah said in a statement.

"With Sanju Samson and Ishan Kishan being a part of the India A side in New Zealand, the selection committee decided to name K S Bharat as back-up wicket-keeper," he added.

The call was taken after Pant flew to Bengaluru to undergo his rehabilitation in the National Cricket Academy.

The wicket-keeper batsman was hit on the helmet while batting in the first ODI in Mumbai and was ruled out of the game in Rajkot on Friday.

"His recovery is being monitored and a call on his availability for the final ODI in Bengaluru will be taken accordingly," the BCCI said.

a stumping and also took two catches. More importantly, his keeping down the leg-side was far better than Rishabh Pant, who is currently recovering from concussion.

Earlier, it was Dhawan, who missed a well-deserved ton by a whisker but laid a solid platform for the aggressive duo of skipper Kohli and Rahul to ensure a commanding total.

## Ruturaj, Shubman, Surya shine for Ind A

PTI ■ LINCOLN (NEW ZEALAND)

India A top-order warmed-up nicely for their upcoming one-day series with a 92-run win against New Zealand XI in the first of the two practise games here on Friday.

Batting first, India A scored 279 for 8 in 50 overs and then dismissed New Zealand XI for 187 in 41.1 overs with left-arm pacer Khaleel Ahmed getting four wickets.

Batting first, skipper Gill (50 off 66 balls) hit a half-century adding 89 runs for the second wicket with another specialist opener Ruturaj Gaikwad (93 off 103 balls), who came in at one drop to accommodate senior team player Mayank Agarwal (8).

Once Gill was out hitting seven fours, Gaikwad was joined by Suryakumar Yadav, who hit a 48-ball-50 with four fours and two sixes as the duo added 89 runs. As Surya attacked, Gaikwad held anchor at one end.

During the back-end, Krunal Pandya scored a 31-ball 41 while Sanju Samson (4) and Vijay Shankar (13) failed to make an impact.

New Zealand A started off with an 82-run opening stand between Jakob Bhula (50) and Jack Boyle (42) but Khaleel (4/43 in 9.1 overs) and Mohammed Siraj (2/33 in 8 overs) caused the bulk of the damage.

Brief Scores: India A 279/8 in 50 overs (Ruturaj Gaikwad 93 off 103 balls, Suryakumar Yadav 50 off 48 balls, Shubman Gill 50 off 66 balls).

New Zealand XI 187 in 41.1 overs (Jakob Bhula 50, Khaleel Ahmed 4/43 in 9.1 overs). India A won by 92 runs.

AFP ■ PORT ELIZABETH

# Stokes, Pope punish SA

Ben Stokes and Ollie Pope hit centuries as England built a strong position on the second day of the third Test against South Africa and England at St George's Park on Friday.

England were 426 for eight at tea. The four-match series is tied at 1-1.

World player of the year Stokes hit 120, his ninth Test century, while Pope was unbeaten on 106, his maiden Test hundred.

Stokes and Pope put on 203 for the fifth wicket after coming together on the first day when their side were struggling at 148 for four.

In contrast to an attritional first day, when England could only score 224 for four in 90 overs, England scored freely for most of the day, although Pope made hard work of moving from his score of 75 at lunch to his century, needing most of the afternoon before he punched Anrich Nortje through mid-wicket for his 14th boundary after facing 190 balls.

While Pope moved cautiously to join Dom Sibley in scoring a maiden Test hundred during the series, Sam Curran provided the impetus for England as he hit an aggressive 44 off 50 balls, with six fours and a six. He and Pope put on 59 for the seventh wicket, with Pope contributing 13.

Hit by the news that strike bowler Kagiso Rabada would miss the fourth and final Test after incurring a fourth disciplinary demerit point within 24 months, South Africa's bowlers neither posed a significant threat nor were able to exert the control they did on the first day as Stokes and Pope dominated the morning with-



England's Ben Stokes celebrates reaching his century with Ollie Pope

## Rabada banned for final test over Root celeb

AP ■ PORT ELIZABETH

South Africa fast bowler Kagiso Rabada has been banned from the series-deciding final cricket Test against England.

Rabada was given a one-Test ban after breaching the International Cricket Council code of conduct for his celebration after getting England captain Joe Root out on the first day of the ongoing third test in Port Elizabeth.

Rabada ran through and celebrated - fists pumping and screaming - close to Root after bowling him.

He was found guilty of "using language, actions or gestures" which could pro-

voke an aggressive response from the batsman. The 24-year-old Rabada was given one demerit point for the offense but it's his fourth demerit in the last two years, which results in a one-match ban.

Rabada was charged with the offense in Port Elizabeth by match referee Andy Pycroft. He pleaded guilty and accepted the punishment.

It's a major boost for England's hopes of winning the four-test series and a major blow for South Africa's. Rabada is the No. 4-ranked bowler in the world and South Africa's spearhead.

**STOKES AND POPE PUT ON 203 FOR THE FIFTH WICKET AFTER COMING TOGETHER ON THE FIRST DAY WHEN THEIR SIDE WERE STRUGGLING AT 148 FOR FOUR**

out being parted.

Stokes eventually sliced a catch to backward point off debutant Dane Paterson after making 120 off 214 balls with 12 fours and two sixes.

South Africa had a better afternoon, picking up four wickets, with three of them taken by left-arm spinner Keshav Maharaj, who had figures of four for 135. Having conceded only 55 runs in 32 overs on Thursday, Maharaj gave up another 80 runs in 21.2 overs on Friday.

Maharaj was attacked by Stokes, who hit sixes in both of the spin bowler's first two overs, one of which sailed out of the ground beyond mid-wicket



MS Dhoni chats with Rishabh Pant

PTI

## 'No rustiness as Dhoni looks in complete control'

FIANS ■ NEW DELHI

Former India skipper Mahendra Singh Dhoni has stunned Jharkhand coach Rajiv Kumar with his fluent batting even as the stumper started training for the first time since India's loss in the semifinal of the 2019 World Cup against New Zealand in July last year.

Speaking to FIANS, Kumar said that he was expecting a little rustiness from the batsman, but the balls seemed to be hitting the middle of the bat. The coach went on to add that the Chennai Super Kings skipper's preparations have begun for the 2020 edition of the Indian Premier League.

"I will be honest... I thought there will be a bit of rustiness as Dhoni has not trained for quite some time. The last time we had spoken, he had said that he would start in January and here you go. He is a man of his words and it came as no surprise that he was out there training with the guys just like any other regular Jharkhand player. But what surprised me most was how

he muddled almost every ball, be it in the pacer's net or the spinner's net. He even took throwdowns just like a player going through the batting drills does.

"I haven't had any talks with him with regards to the national team and him donning the India jersey again. But, his preparations for the next edition of the IPL has begun and while the senior team will be busy playing the Ranji Trophy game from Sunday, Dhoni will continue training till the time he is in Ranchi," the coach pointed.

Asked if Dhoni did anything specific in the two days that he has trained so far, Kumar said the former skipper spent a lot of time talking to the bowlers.

"He is such a professional and has been going on spending time with the youngsters, especially the bowlers. He is discussing the line and length that they should target and the ways to fox the opposition batsmen. He has been as vocal as can be expected from a senior player like Dhoni," Kumar said.



## De Villiers flags desire to play ODI cricket

FIANS ■ MELBOURNE

Days after expressing his desire to play for South Africa in the T20 World Cup, former Proteas batsman AB de Villiers has now revealed his wish to represent the country in ODI cricket.

de Villiers reaffirmed his desire to return to 50-overs cricket while speaking to commentator Adam Gilchrist during Melbourne Heat's loss to the Adelaide Strikers in the ongoing edition

of the Big Bash League (BBL).

"I would love to play, that was never the problem," de Villiers, who had hung up his Proteas shirt in May 2018, was quoted as saying by Fox Sports.

"I always wanted to play for South Africa, it's a great honour to play international cricket," he added.

The 35-year-old believes the appointment of Graeme Smith and Mark Boucher to key roles in Cricket South Africa will help him return to the

two shorter formats for his country.

"I've been chatting with Mark Boucher, Smithy and some of the guys involved so hopefully it all works out," he said.

"We've had a few good discussions about the possible way forward. I'm going to have to score some runs obviously."

"Watching some of the Test matches over December I was definitely thinking it would be really nice to be

## Hafeez to retire after Twenty20 WC

AFP ■ LAHORE

Recalled Pakistan allrounder Mohammad Hafeez Friday said he will retire from international cricket after the Twenty20 World Cup later this year, vowing to end his career on a positive note.

The 38-year-old was Thursday recalled to Pakistan's Twenty20 series against Bangladesh starting in Lahore from January 24.

Hafeez has been one of Pakistan's key players — in all three formats, as a top order batsman and a handy off-spinner — since making his debut during an England tour in 2003.

But his career was dogged by questions over the legality of his bowling action, reported on three occasions during international matches. He was also



Mohammad Hafeez in a file picture

Hafeez retired from Tests in December 2018 after playing 55 Tests. He was more successful in limited over formats, scoring 6,614 runs and took 139 wickets in 218 one-day internationals.

His last ODI was during the World Cup (50 overs) in England last year, and he has not been selected for that format since then.

His tally in 89 Twenty20 internationals stands at 54 wickets and 1,908 runs.

"I have played 17 years for Pakistan and tried my level best. At times I missed my bowling," said Hafeez, who also captained Pakistan in 29 Twenty20 internationals, winning 17 and losing 11 with one ending in a tie.

The Twenty20 World Cup will be held in Australia in October-November this year.

## Vinesh to fight for Gold, Anshu settles for Silver

PTI ■ ROME

A dominant Vinesh Phogat downed two tough Chinese rivals on her way to the 53kg final of the Rome Ranking Series event after teen sensation Anshu Malik settled for a Silver medal in 57kg competition, here on Friday.

Vinesh won by technical superiority against Khrystyna Bereza (10-0) and Lannuan Luo (15-5) before getting the better of Qianyu Pang (4-2).

If the win against Ukrainian Bereza was about spectacular double leg attacks, the quarter-final win over the Luo was much tougher than the what the score-line suggested.

Luo was a strong opponent, who led 5-2 at the end of first period but Vinesh turned it around with smart point-scoring moves from nowhere in the



second period.

Twice she threw Luo with moves from between the legs when the Chinese was holding her from the back.

With two wrestlers, having

immense upper-body strength, jostling for upper hand from standing position was a sight to watch.

Fighting a measured bout against Pang, Vinesh was in

control in the semi-final. With two take downs in each period she led 4-0 and conceded points only towards the end of the fight.

Vinesh will now fight for her first gold of the season with Ecuador's Luisa Elizabeth Valverde Melemdres.

The 18-year-old Anshu carried her sparkling form from the trials at her maiden international tournament at the senior level but could not replicate it in the gold medal bout, losing to Nigeria's Odunayo Adekunle.

The 18-year-old was very dominant till the final, beating American Jenna Rose Burkert, Grace Bullen of Norway, 2019 world champion from Canada Linda Morais en route the final.

Anshu had upset world championship Bronze medalist Pooja Dhanda during the trials. But Divya Kakran returned

empty-handed after losing the 68kg Bronze medal play-off bout to Danielle Suzanne Lappage of Canada.

Also in medal contention is Nirmala Devi, who will fight for 50kg Bronze after losing her semi-final to Sarah Ann Hildebrandt.

Nirmala was aggressive throughout, going for leg attacks, but the American stayed solid in her defence, reminding the tactics that Vinesh had employed against her at the 2019 World Championship in Nur Sultan.

Nirmala has another American in her way as she will lock horns with Victoria Lacey Anthony.

In the men's freestyle competition, Satyawart Kadiyan (97kg) and Sumit Maikil (125kg) exited following their quarter-final defeats.