

WORLD 5
IRAN'S TOP LEADER STRIKES DEFIANT TONE AMID MONTH OF TURMOIL

OPINION 6
NEED TO OBJECTIFY HISTORY

MONEY 10
FOREIGN INVESTMENTS MUST ADHERE TO LAW OF THE LAND

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INDIA HUNT KANGAROOS IN RAJKOT 12 SPORT

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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 rapists-murderers being further delayed due to the legalities, her father hoped that the convicts will not escape the

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Party picks 11 SC candidates for Delhi polls

SAPNA SINGH ■ NEW DELHI

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

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

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

Former Delhi Minister Kapil Mishra has been fielded from Model Town. Karwal Nagar seat, from where Mishra had won on AAP ticket, has gone to old war horse and four-term MLA Mohan Singh Bisht. The BJP has not declared



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

candidate against Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal from New Delhi seat.

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

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

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CAPSULE

TRUMP'S IMPEACHMENT TRIAL BEGINS IN SENATE

Washington: The US Senate opened the impeachment trial of President Donald Trump with quiet ceremony on 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.

MISSING MUMBAI BLASTS CONVICT HELD IN KANPUR

Mumbai: A convict in the 1993 Mumbai serial bomb blasts case, Jalees Ansari, who went "missing" while on parole, was arrested on Friday from Kanpur in Uttar Pradesh, an official said.

BEEF DELICACY TWEET KICKS UP ROW

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.

TERROR MODULE BUSTED, SIX SDPI MEMBERS HELD

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

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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India to get S-400 by 2025 as Russia begins production

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

India will get all the five units of S-400 long-range surface-to-air missile systems from Russia by 2025 and its production has started, Russian envoy Roman Babushkin said here on Friday.

The deal inked in 2018 is worth over ₹40,000 crore and the weapon systems will significantly boost India's capabilities to defend its airspace.

His assertion comes against the backdrop of the US warning time and again India of sanctions if it goes ahead with the deal. Incidentally, India last year paid the first tranche of 800 million dollars to Russia for the weapon systems. China has already inducted more than six units of S-400 system called 'Triumph'.

Meanwhile, Babushkin, who is Deputy Chief of Mission here, also said a contract will shortly be finalised for joint production of Kamov light weight multi-role military helicopters for India.

At a joint Press conference



with Russian Ambassador Nikolai Kudashev, he also said India will receive the first batch of 5,000 Kalashnikov rifles this year which will be produced in India under a joint venture.

The Ordnance Factory located in Amethi, Uttar Pradesh (UP), will manufacture these AK-203 rifles for the Armed forces, Central paramilitary and State police organisations.

The total deal is worth over ₹7,000 crore and a Major General of the Indian Army is heading the factory.

Babushkin said Russia and India have "successfully found solutions" to the payment issues and the focus this year will be to implement mega deals in the defence sector.

Continued on Page 4

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

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Bodo insurgent group National Democratic Front 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 Saoraigwra will abjure violence and join in peace talks with the Government.

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

Top leaders, including Saoraigwra, 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.

Saoraigwra'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, Ladakh and so on, said lead author Kalpesh Vaghasiya 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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Nadda dares RaGa to speak 10 lines on CAA

Says he is misleading mass

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

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

to speak 10 sentences on the law. He should tell us in two sentences what is his problem with the CAA... He is leading such a big party and has to decide himself how he has to do it, but he should not mislead the country," the BJP working president said.

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

Likes of Mahatma Gandhi, Jawaharlal Nehru and Indira

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

DAVINDER ARREST

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

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

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

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

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

Calling the National Investigation Agency (NIA) 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 fulfil the commitments made to them," AICC in-charge for Jharkhand R P N Singh said.

HYD ENCOUNTER: SC DEFINES POWER, DUTIES

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

DECIDE REPRESENTATION TO SET UP KVS, SAYS SC

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

Panel formed to look into Swapan Dasgupta case

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

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

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

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

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

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

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

"How does it feel to have a mob attack a peaceful meeting on CAA and intimidation students? This is what is happening to a meeting I am addressing at 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 @JosepBorrellF of European Union. Productive discussions on global and regional issues, multilateralism, connectivity and counter terrorism. Underlined our climate change coop-

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

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

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

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

No doubts on India's Kashmir approach: Russia

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

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

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

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

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

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



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

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

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

Fund utilisation in development schemes improved, finds study

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

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

The consultation aims to

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

across its 508-km stretch from Ahmedabad to Mumbai.

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

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

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

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

A bench headed by Chief Justice

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

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

CORONAVIRUS SPREAD IN CHINA

India issues travel advisory

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

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

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

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



and refrain consuming "raw or undercooked meat".

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

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'.

Elected local representatives are 'brand-ambassadors', says Baghel

CM chairs felicitation programme of elected representatives of Urban local bodies 'Janmat Ka Samman'

STAFF REPORTER ■ RAIPUR

Termining elected local urban bodies' representatives 'brand ambassadors' of organization, Chief Minister Bhupesh Baghel on Friday called upon them to work actively for the sake of the party as well as the government.

Baghel was speaking at the felicitation function of the elected local urban bodies' representatives of the party, held here at local Balbeer Singh Juneja Indoor Stadium, Budha Para.

The felicitation programme 'Janmat Ka Samman' was organised by state Congress and Chhattisgarh in-charge of AICC P.L. Punia was especially present on this occasion.

Calling the elected representatives 'brand ambassadors' Baghel said "you are the one who transform into action the policies framed by the government".

Further congratulating on the clean sweep in the mayoral elections, Baghel proclaimed that echo of the victory will be echoed in entire nation. However, he further cautioned



the elected members to work actively in interest of organization and said "As we have won in all the 10 municipal corporations there is tremendous responsibility in our shoulder to live up to the expectations

of the people", Baghel said. Expressing gratitude towards the grass root level workers for an impressive victory in urban bodies' election, he further congratulated the elected members.

Senior Congress leader and Health Minister T.S. Singhdeo termed the elections of wards comparatively tougher than that of the MLAs and MPs. Home Minister

Tamradhwaj Sahu on the other hand warned the elected representatives to be careful of people surrounding them trying to be closer for their personal gain claiming to be their close relatives.

Ajit Jogi, son booked for abetment of suicide

STAFF REPORTER ■ RAIPUR

A case of abetment of suicide has been registered against former Chief Minister Ajit Jogi and his son Amit Jogi in Bilaspur, police said on Friday.

The case has been registered in connection with the suicide of their cook who had hanged himself in Marwahi Sadan Bilaspur on Wednesday.

"A case under Sections 306 (abetment of suicide) and 34 (Acts done by several persons in furtherance of common intention) of Indian Penal Code (IPC) has been registered against Ajit and Amit Jogi. The case has been registered based on complaint filed by brother of the deceased," Station House Officer (SHO) Kalim Khan said.



Meanwhile, Amit Jogi while expressing condolence to the bereaved family denied of any involvement of Jogi family in the case. While

termining the allegations as politically motivated, junior Jogi demanded a magisterial probe or a CBI inquiry into it. He also asserted that their legal options were wide open.

Notably, the deceased Santosh Kumar Kaushik alias

Manua who was a long time cook of Jogi family had reportedly hanged himself at 'Marwahi Sadan' on January 15.

A day later, his family members reached police station while alleging that Jogi family had pressurized Kaushik of implicating him in a theft case due to which Kaushik hanged himself in the parking shed of Marwahi Sadan.

Baghel claims rift between Modi and Shah over NRC



"On one hand Shah says that 'chronology' must be understood and they are going ahead for NPR and NRC, Modi in his speech speaks something different"

STAFF REPORTER ■ RAIPUR

Chief Minister Bhupesh Baghel on Friday claimed that there is a rift between Prime Minister Narendra Modi and his long time close associate and Union Home Minister Amit Shah over implementation of National Population Register (NPR) and National Register of Citizens (NRC).

Baghel said this at the function held at local Sardar

Balbeer Singh Juneja Indoor Stadium to felicitate elected members of local urban bodies.

"On one hand Shah says that 'chronology' must be understood and they are going ahead for NPR and NRC, Modi in his speech speaks something different", Baghel said.

Baghel further added "actually the BJP regime could be divided in two phases. First one was the five year tenure prior to 2019

general elections and second one is its present term". "Modi dominated in the first phase while it seems that Union Home Minister Shah has taken over in the second phase", he added.

He further also lamented the Modi-led union government failed in economic front and in generating employment for educated youth. The trivial issues of CAA, NPR and NRC are hence raked up to divert the attention, he charged.



Glimpses of cultural programme being held in the ongoing Tatapani festival at Balrampur-Ramanujanj district headquarters.

Two Naxals give up arms in Sukma

SUKMA: Dissatisfied with meaningless violence and Maoist ideology, two Naxals gave up arms in Maoist infested Sukma district, police said here on Friday.

They were identified as Ramesh Podiyam (24) and Suklu Kawasi (21) both residents of Bhimpara under Tongpal police station limits, Sukma.

"Podiyam was President of RPC (Revolutionary People's Committee) an outfit of banned CPI (M). He was also member of Maoist doctor's team under Katekalyan region. Kawai was a militia member. They were provided with relief as provisioned under the rehabilitation policy of Chhattisgarh government.

215 cases against tribals withdrawn

STAFF REPORTER ■ RAIPUR

Expressing concern over the exploitation and victimization of tribal people and forest dwellers in Naxal-affected areas, especially in Bastar region, Chief Minister Bhupesh Baghel has taken the decision to review the police cases filed against these people.

In the same sequence, 215 cases registered in seven districts in Bastar division have been withdrawn.

Police officials informed that as per the instructions of Chief Minister, a seven-member review committee under the leadership of Rtd Judge of Supreme Court AK Patnayak was constituted on March 8, 2019.

In the first meeting of the committee, recommendation for withdrawal of 313 cases field against tribal people was made, out of which 215 cases in Bastar division have been withdrawn. 98 case in Rajnandgaon are under consideration.

For the second meeting of this committee, 197 cases have been recommended for withdrawal. Officials informed that IG Bastar

In the first meeting of the committee, recommendation for withdrawal of 313 cases field against tribal people was made, out of which 215 cases in Bastar division have been withdrawn. 98 case in Rajnandgaon are under consideration

and Durg has been directed to send list of cases against tribal people along with the recommendation for withdrawal to Police Headquarters.

CM is challenging Cong govt's decision: Kaushik

STAFF REPORTER ■ RAIPUR

Leader of Opposition LDharamlal Kaushik termed the petition filed against the NIA Act by the state government as illogical.

The BJP leader pointed out that the Act was brought by the Congress-led UPA government at the Centre. "Now what has happened that after coming to power in the state, the Congress after coming to the power in the state is protesting against the Act introduced by its own party-led government.

Kaushik alleged that it could be a conspiracy to give monetary benefits to the Congressmen lawyers, who will be filing such petitions and fighting the case, which has no validity.

The question arises, Kaushik says, one after



another the state government has lost cases and recently in the House it has been accepted in the name of paying legal fees, Congress leaders have been given crores of money. He termed the statement of the State Congress president Mohan

Markam as unacceptable and unnecessary.

BJP leader said in the name of terrorism, Congress had always adopted double standard. At the Centre under Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee, the POTL Law was brought but Congress after coming to power had annulled the law. There was increase in terrorist cases. In the name of terrorism, no politics should be done. It is a result of such policy that Mumbai attack happened after which the necessity for the NIA was felt.

Leader of the Opposition claimed that Central government led by Prime Minister Narendra Modi is continuing to act on Naxalism and terrorism in the country, bringing down the incidents. The intention of the state government is not clear.

Rurban mission: Training workshop held



STAFF REPORTER ■ RAIPUR

A workshop to impart training to officials on Public Financial Management System (PFMS) and local employment was held here at Thakur Pyarelal Panchayat and Gramin Vikas Sansthan (SIRD) on Thursday.

Zonal Project Manager of National Project Management Unit of Centre's Rural Development Ministry, Yogesh Singh, Regional

Project Manager, Vihag Guru and officials of rural development department of the state explained in detail the trainees about the PFMS, integration of Rurban Soft Portal and local employment.

In the workshop the State Project Director, Rurban Mission, Abhijeet Singh instructed the officials to complete the district level employment drive at the earliest. He also instructed for making active the PFMS in 16 of the Rurban districts of the state.

PM TO UNION MINISTERS Spread message of development in J&K

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Friday told the group of Union Ministers visiting Jammu & Kashmir to spread the message of development among the people not only in the urban areas but also in the villages of the Valley, sources said.



As part of a massive outreach programme, 36 central ministers will visit Jammu & Kashmir starting from Saturday.

At a meeting of the Council of Ministers here, the Prime Minister asked the Ministers to spread the message of development during their interaction with the locals, the sources said.

He said the Ministers should not restrict themselves to the urban areas but meet people in villages also to inform about the developmental work

It's prizes galore at Jallikattu, two spectators die in TN

Madurai: The sleepy town of Alanganallur, here popular for its 'world famous jallikattu', tag turned live again for this year's season as hundreds of tamers and bulls tried to get the better of each other on Friday while two spectators died.

Right from the start, there was no dearth of exciting moments as determined men chased evasive bulls keenly watched by thousands of men, women and children and several of them from roof-tops and from wherever they got a vantage view.

Eventually, when the day-long event concluded, Ranjith Kumar, a local youth, who dominated 16 bulls in a single round won the first prize and he was awarded a Hyundai Santro car.

Chief Minister K Palaniswami will hand over the



Women stand in a queue to cast vote during the panchayat elections at a polling station in Ajmer, Rajasthan on Friday

car in Chennai," Revenue Minister RB Udhayakumar said adding the owner of bull adjudged best will also get a car.

The second prize winner got a motorbike and the man at the third spot received Rs 10,000 cash prize.

According to administrators, reigning 16 bulls in a single round is an "achievement." The second and third prize winners got the better of 13 and 14 bulls respectively.

The Alanganallur jallikattu is hugely popular and known for its 'world famous tag', for reasons like the valour of bulls and men and the arrival of people from far and wide to witness it including foreigners.

Similar bull taming events were held in a number of other places today including one at Rachandar Thirumalai near Tiruchirappalli.

Will meet Goyal to get onion export ban revoked: Sharad Pawar

Nashik: NCP chief Sharad Pawar on Friday said he would meet Union Commerce Minister Piyush Goyal to get the ban on onion exports revoked.

Pawar also said loan waiver announced by the Uddhav Thackeray Government in the State would benefit '85 per cent of farmers' as their loans are less than ₹ 2 lakh.

"I will meet Union Commerce Minister Piyush Goyal in a couple of days with the demand to remove onion export ban. Restrictions on onion storage should also be relaxed," he told reporters. "Farmers in the state are affected due to unseasonal rain and the Centre should provide help. Around 85 per cent farmers have less than ₹ 2 lakh loan and the waiver given by the Maha Vikas Aghadi Government has given them relief. The remaining 15 per cent farmers will be given a thought in the next budget," he said.

He said discussions are underway to provide relief to sugarcane growers and also look into problems faced by sugar factories.

On being asked if people who left the NCP would be taken back, he said the decision would be made after local leaders are taken into confidence.

Centre trying to 'bail out' Davinder Singh: Digvijaya

Bhubaneswar: Senior Congress leader Digvijaya Singh on Friday alleged that the BJP-led Government at the Centre was trying to "bail out" DSP Davinder Singh who was arrested with three militants in Jammu & Kashmir.

"Davinder Singh has terrorist links but to get him released, the Government has handed over the investigation to NIA headed by YC Modi, who had bailed out Amit Shah in Gujarat," Digvijaya Singh said here.

"Davinder Singh has a mysterious role in the 2002 Parliament attack. Afzal Guru had also indicated in this regard. Singh is also suspected to have a role in the Pulwama attack. Therefore, Davinder Singh's terrorist links should be probed impartially and not by YC Modi," the senior

Congress leader said. He said the nationwide unrest is likely to continue till the Centre revokes the Citizenship Amendment Act and promises not to implement the National Register of Citizens (NRC) across the country.

"The Centre has brought the CAA just to divert the attention of the nation from the growing unrest over price rise, soaring inflation, growing unemployment and economic slump," he said.

Observing that there was no need to amend the Citizenship Act, Singh said earlier there was no problem in giving citizenship to anyone.

"By amending the Act, the government wanted to give a message that all people except Muslims are acceptable for getting citizenship,"

Saibaba birthplace row: Vikhe Patil warns of 'legal fight'

Aurangabad: The row over the Maharashtra Government's decision to develop Pathri as a pilgrimage centre flared up on Friday, with BJP MP Sujay Vikhe-Patil asking why the claims that it was Saibaba's birthplace surfaced only after the new Government took over.

He also said the people of Shirdi, which houses a famous Saibaba temple, might launch a 'legal fight' over the issue.

Former Chief Minister Ashok Chavan, on the other hand, said creation of facilities for devotees at Pathri should not be opposed over the controversy over birthplace.

Shirdi in Ahmednagar district where Saibaba, a 19th century spiritual leader, lived, attracts lakhs of devotees every

year. The controversy began after Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray's announcement of a grant of ₹ 100 crore for development of Pathri in Parbhani district, believed to be Saibaba's birthplace by a section of devotees.

NCP leader Durrani Abdullah Khan claimed on Thursday that there was enough evidence to prove that Saibaba was born at Pathri.

"While Shirdi is Saibaba's 'karmabhoomi' (place of work) Pathri is janmabhoomi' (birthplace) and both places have their own importance," he said.

Tourists from across the country and world visit Pathri but it lacks good infrastructure, he said. "People of Shirdi don't have issue with the funds, they

just don't want Pathri to be called Saibaba's birthplace," he claimed.

Shirdi residents fear that if Pathri became famous, the flow of devotees to their town will dwindle, he alleged.

On Friday, BJP MP from Ahmednagar, Sujay Vikhe-Patil wondered why the issue of Saibaba's birthplace came to the fore suddenly after the Shiv Sena - NCP - Congress Government replaced the BJP-led regime in the State.

"There was no dispute over Saibaba's birthplace. How it became an issue and new evidence (about Pathri being the birthplace) came up after the government changed? No political leader can determine what was Saibaba's birthplace," he said.

India to get S-400 by 2025 as Russia begins...

From Page 1

As regards the S-400 deal, he said, "The supply of five S-400 air defence systems will be completed by 2025. Their production has already started." India had inked a deal with Russia in 2018 notwithstanding warning from the US about sanctions.

Asserting that the S-400 air defence missile systems are among best in the world, he said they will significantly bolster India's air defence mechanism.

The "Triumph" interceptor-based missile system can destroy incoming hostile aircraft, missiles and even drones at ranges of up to 400 km. S-400 is known as Russia's most advanced long-range surface-to-air missile defence system.

The US had imposed sanctions on Russia under the stringent Countering America's Adversaries Through Sanctions Act (CAATSA). The law also provides for punitive action against countries purchasing defence hardware from Russia.

On the long-pending joint-venture for production of Kamov military helicopters, he said a deal on it will be inked shortly. In October 2016, India

and Russia finalised a broad agreement for the joint venture between Hindustan Aeronautics Ltd (HAL) and two Russian defence majors for production of Kamov helicopters.

India is procuring 200 Kamov Ka-226T helicopters to replace its ageing Cheetah and Chetak helicopters light utility helicopters. While 60 helicopters will be bought off the shelf from Russia, the remaining helicopters will be manufactured by the HAL.

Russia is a time-tested and long-standing strategic partner of India and Babushkin said "this year, we will put special focus on implementation of decisions taken at Vladivostok."

Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Russian President Vladimir Putin last September held annual summit talks there during which they decided to further ramp up defence and strategic cooperation besides resolving to expedite pending projects. The senior diplomat said India and Russia were also looking forward to an early implementation of the intergovernmental agreement for joint production of military hardware.

Opp-ruled States...

From Page 1

During the meeting, presentations were given on the objectives of the census and the NPR exercises and their benefits. Also, presentation was given on the use of mobile app, which will be used in the census for the first time in its history. The conference was inaugurated by Union Minister of State for Home Nityanand Rai and attended by Union Home Secretary Ajay Bhalla, chief secretaries and census directors of many States.

In his inaugural address, Rai put the emphasis on the need for conducting Census 2021 and the role of the States in doing the same. He said the data collected in the census will help the country in framing policies for the welfare of the people.

The Union Home Secretary remarked on the vastness of this exercise and involvement of the State functionaries. He said the objective of NPR is to create a comprehensive identity database of every usual resident in the country. The database would contain demographic as well as biometric particulars.

The NPR is a register of usual residents of the country. It is being prepared at the local (village/sub-town), sub-district, district, State and national levels under provisions of the Citizenship Act, 1955 and the Citizenship (Registration of Citizens and Issue of National Identity Cards) Rules, 2003. The rules have a provision for 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

NDFB lays down its arms... Imported onions tear Govt up

From Page 1

They had formed a joint platform namely United National Liberation Front of Western South East Asia along with NSCN-IM and ULFA faction headed by Paresh Baruah.

The demand for a separate state for the Bodos has been in going on in Assam for about five decades with several Bodo 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.

Naqvi: People's representatives should take their duties towards nation seriously

Lucknow: Union Minority Affairs Minister Mukhtar Abbas Naqvi on Friday stressed on the importance of connecting fundamental rights with fundamental duties as per the Indian Constitution.

Speaking on 'Enhancing Focus of Legislators on Legislative Business' at the 7th

Commonwealth Parliamentary Association India Region Conference at Vidhan Bhawan here, the minister said, "The way we keep ourselves aware of our fundamental rights, we should also understand our fundamental duties. Both the fundamental rights and the fundamental duties are connected." PTI

This desi gel can take a bite out of...

From Page 1

Frostbite causes fluids in the skin and underlying tissues to freeze and crystallize, resulting in inflammation, decreased blood flow, and cell death. Extremities are the most affected areas because they are farther away from the body's core and already have reduced blood flow, said the researchers.

Conventional treatments include immersing the body part in warm water, applying topical antibiotic creams or administering vasodilators, and anti-inflammatory drugs, but many of

these are unavailable in isolated snowy areas, like mountaintops. Others, such as topical medications, could end up freezing themselves. The new gel can be of great help under such conditions, as per the researchers.

The other scientists involved in the innovation included Rahul Verma, Ankur Sharma, Eupa Ray, Suneera Adlakha from INST, Kushal Kumar and Sunil Kumar Hota from DIAR and Om Prakash Katara from University Institute of Pharmaceutical Sciences, Panjab University, Chandigarh.

BJP's 1st...

From Page 1

Names of member of Parliament (MP) from New

Delhi Lok Sabha seat Meenakshi Lekhi and former AAP leader Kumar Vishwas are doing rounds, a BJP insider said.

"New Delhi has different demography. People residing in New Delhi are the tax payers,

many are business oriented people and some are serving in Central Government, Kejriwal's policies on free water electricity will not work for New Delhi voters," said a BJP insider pitching name of Lekhi and Vishwas against Kejriwal.

After Kerala, Punjab adopts resolution...

From Page 1

"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.

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. Notably, the Kerala Government has, on January 14, moved the Supreme Court challenging the contentious CAA under Article 131 of the Constitution which empowers the Apex Court to hear disputes between the Government of India and one or more States. The petition stated that the CAA violates Right to Equality under Article 14 of the Constitution of India, Right to Life under Article 21 and Freedom to Practice Religion under Article 25. It argued that CAA is discriminatory

because it covers only a class

of minorities from a class of countries sharing borders with India and to which and from there have been trans-border migration.

The CAA, which has evoked country-wide protests, seeks to provide citizenship to illegal migrants from Buddhist.

SBI State Bank of India
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DEMAND NOTICE

A notice is hereby given that the following Borrower(s) (Borrower) and (Co-borrower) have defaulted in repayment of principal and interest of the loans facility obtained by them from the Bank and the loans have been classified as Non Performing Assets (NPA). The notices were issued to them under Section 13(2) of Securitization and Re-construction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act 2002 on their last known address, but they have been returned unopened and as such they are hereby informed by way of this public notice.

Name of the Borrower/Guarantor & Address	Details of Properties / Address of Secured Assets to be Enforced	Date of Notice	Date of NPA	Amount Outstanding (As on the date of notice)
1. MR MOHD ATAHULLAH KHAN S/O MR MOHD FASHULLAH (BORROWER) ADD - H. NO. -LIG-1130, SEJBAHAR, DATRENGA, AREA- 39.39 SQM, RIC-RAIPUR, TAH AND DISTT- RAIPUR. BOUNDRIES: NORTH -LIG-1129, SOUTH- LIG-1131 EAST-LIG-1137, WEST-ROAD	H NO-LIG-1130, SEJBAHAR, DATRENGA, AREA-39.39 SQM, RIC-RAIPUR, TAH AND DISTT- RAIPUR. BOUNDRIES: NORTH -LIG-1129, SOUTH- LIG-1131 EAST-LIG-1137, WEST-ROAD	17.01.2020	01.10.2019	Rs. 4,37,707.00 + Int. + other charges as on 17.01.2020
2. MRS SALIMA BANO W/O MD ATAHULLAH KHAN (GUARANTTOR)				

The steps are being taken for substituted service of notice. The above Borrower(s) and/or their Guarantor(s) (whenever applicable) are hereby called upon to make payment of outstanding amount within 60 days from the date of publication of this notice, failing which further steps will be taken after expiry of 60 days from the date of this notice under sub-section (4) of section 13 of Securitization and Re-construction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act 2002.

Date: 17.01.2020, Place: Raipur
Authorized Officer, State Bank of India

POSSESSION NOTICE (for immovable property) Rule 8-(1)

Whereas, the undersigned being the Authorized Officer of IIFL Home Finance Limited (Formerly known as India Infonline Housing Finance Ltd. (IIFHL) 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, a Demand Notice was issued by the Authorized Officer of the company to the borrowers / co-borrowers mentioned herein below to repay the amount mentioned in the notice within 60 days from the date of receipt of the said notice. The borrower having failed to repay the amount, notice is hereby given to the borrower and the public in general that the undersigned has taken possession of the property described herein below in exercise of powers conferred on him under Section 13(4) of the said Act read with Rule 8 of the said rules. The borrower in particular and the public in general are hereby cautioned not to deal with the property and any dealings with the property will be subject to the charge of IIFHL for an amount as mentioned herein under with interest thereon. The borrower's attention is invited to provisions of sub-section (8) of section 13 of the Act, if the borrower clears the dues of the "IIFHL" together with all costs, charges and expenses incurred, at any time before the date fixed for sale or transfer, the secured assets shall not be sold or transferred by "IIFHL" and no further step shall be taken by "IIFHL" for transfer or sale of the secured assets.

Name of the Borrower(s) Raipur Branch	Description of Secured Asset (Immovable Property)	Total Outstanding Dues (Rs.)	Date of Demand Notice	Date of Possession
1. Rajendra Kumar Mahilange, 2. Savita Mahilange (Prospect No. 707829)	All that piece and parcel of Part of Kh. No- 174/32, 175/32, Mowa, Dr. Bhim Rao Ambedkar Ward No-27, P.C. No-109, R.I. C. Raipur -1, Raipur, Tehsil & Distt -Raipur (C. G.).	44,34,681/-	18/09/2019	13/01/2020
1. Manna Lal Vishwakarma, 2. Madhubala Vishwakarma (Prospect No. 4307)	All that piece and parcel of PART OF KHASRA NO. 396/1, HOUSE NO. 5/23/1, SHIV NAGAR, RAM SAGAR PARA WARD NO.5 RAIPUR, CHATTISGARH	Rs. 8,65,119/-	09/09/2019	13/01/2020
1. Varun Soni, 2. Bhoopendra Kumar Soni (Prospect No. 745425)	All that piece and parcel of Plot No. 7, Block No. 83, Village Aamdi, Motilal Nehru, Nagar East Behind Icdi Bank Ltd., Bhillai, Chhattisgarh	Rs. 56,35,939/-	15/10/2019	13/01/2020

For further details please contact to Authorized Officer at Branch Office: First Floor, Lal Ganga City Mart, Shop No 106 - 107, Opposite hotel Amit Regency, Moti Bag Chowk, Raipur, CG - 492001 / or Corporate Office : Plot No. 98, Phase-IV, Udyog Vihar, Gurgaon, Haryana.
Place : Raipur & Bhillai Date: 18-01-2020 Sd/- Authorized Officer For IIFL Home Finance Limited (IIFL HFL)

US PRESIDENT impeachment

Trump's trial begins at start of election yr

GLOBE TROTTER PUTIN TO ATTEND LIBYA PEACE CONFERENCE

AP ■ WASHINGTON

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

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

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



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

street from the Supreme Court to the Capitol.

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

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

Trump faces two charges after the House voted to

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

RUSSIA'S FM SLAMS 'AGGRESSIVE' US POLICIES

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

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

Ukraine PM offers to resign after leaked recording

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

AFP ■ KIEV

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

AP ■ TEHRAN

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

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

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

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



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

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

In response to Soleimani's killing, Iran launched a barrage of ballistic missiles targeting US troops in Iraq, without causing serious injuries. Khamenei said the strike had dealt a “blow to America's image” as a superpower.

In the part of his sermon delivered in Arabic, he said the “real punishment” would be in forcing the US to withdraw from the Middle

East.

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

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

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

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

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

AFP ■ TEHRAN

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

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

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

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

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

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

AFP

US WARSHIP SAILS THROUGH TAIWAN STRAIT

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

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

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

CHINA BIRTH RATE HITS LOWEST LEVEL SINCE 1949

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

SR. No.	NAME OF BOARD CORP./AUTH	OLD REFERENCE/INIT NO.	NATURE OF CORRIGENDUM	WEBSITE OF THE BOARD CORP./AUTH	NODAL OFFICER/CONTACT DETAILS/EMAIL
1	CAD DIVISION, FATEHABAD.	1466/10-A DATED: 31/12/2019	Postpond on Technical Ground and further Opening of tender on dated 27.01.2020	www.etenders.hry.nic.in	xenfathehabad@gmail.com
2	HPGCL, PANCHKULA.	11/CE/PLG/WYC/SPP-273/VOL-II DATED 29.10.2019	The due date of Bid submission is extended up to 29.01.2020 till 13.00 hrs and opening of Part-I (Technical Bid) shall be on 31.01.2020 at 15.00 hrs. (Please check department website for further details).	www.hpgcl.org.in https://etenders.hry.nic.in	0172-5022439 rajesh.verma@hpgcl.org.in cep@hpgcl.org.in
3	HVPHL PANCHKULA	10/CCO-274 DATED 20.12.2019	The last date of online bid submission is extended up to 24.01.2020	https://haryanaeprocurement.gov.in https://www.hvphn.org.in	0172-2583789 pr@hvphn.org.in
4	HPGCL, PANCHKULA.	TENDER REFERENCE NO. 9/CE/PLG/NTPC/PTPS/FGD-249/CORRIGENDUM - 1 DATED 13.12.2019, CORRIGENDUM - 2 DATED 20.12.2019 & CORRIGENDUM - 3 DATED 30.12.2019 & CORRIGENDUM - 4 DATED 04.01.2020 TENDER ID : 2019_HBC_110592_1	Clarifications regarding bidding documents. (Please check department website for further details).	www.hpgcl.org.in https://etenders.hry.nic.in	0172-5022439 cep@hpgcl.org.in himanshu.gupta@hpgcl.org.in
5	HPGCL, PANCHKULA.	TENDER REFERENCE NO. 9/CE/PLG/NTPC/PTPS/FGD-249/CORRIGENDUM - 1 DATED 13.12.2019, CORRIGENDUM - 2 DATED 20.12.2019 & CORRIGENDUM - 3 DATED 30.12.2019	Clarifications regarding bidding documents. (Please check department website for further details).	www.hpgcl.org.in https://etenders.hry.nic.in	0172-5022439 cep@hpgcl.org.in himanshu.gupta@hpgcl.org.in
6	CAD DIVISION, HISAR	NO. 13-45/10-A DATED 01/01/2020	Postpond on Technical Ground and further Opening of tender on dated 29/01/2020	www.etenders.hry.nic.in	xenhisarcad@gmail.com

BEFORE DEBT'S RECOVERY TRIBUNAL-II, DELHI

4th FLOOR JEEVAN TARA BUILDING PARLIAMENT STREET NEW DELHI - 110001

OA No. 587/18 Date: 06.01.2020

UCO BANK Versus APPLICANT

MS. AARTI MALHOTRA & ORS. Versus RESPONDENT

3. MISNIVAS PROMOTERS PVT. LTD.

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

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

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

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

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

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

E-Tender Notice No. 56 Year 2019-20

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

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

Brief particulars of the projects are as follows:-

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

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

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

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

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

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

DGRPR/2019/2020/4529

CHITTARANJAN LOCOMOTIVE WORKS

E-TENDER NOTICE

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

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

PTI ■ NAY PYI TAW

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

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

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

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

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

Once-submerged island ready for Rohingya: B'desh

AP ■ DHAKA

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

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

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

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

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

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

RELAXO FOOTWEARS LIMITED
(Regd. Office: Aggarwal City Square, Plot No. 10, Mangalam Place, District Centre, Rohini Sector - 3, Delhi-110085)

This is to inform to the general public that Original Share Certificates for 4000 shares in Folo No. RNE0001767 bearing Certificate Nos. 100187 and 103347 and Distinctive Nos. 192666 to 194665 and 60142906 to 60144905 respectively issued by Relaxo Footwears Limited in the name of Late Kamia Devi have been lost/misplaced and an application has been made by the successor Mr. Ram Lal Arora for the issuance of duplicate Share Certificates in respect of thereof.

Any person who has a claim in respect of the said shares or objection to the issuance of duplicate Share Certificate shall lodge such claim or objection with the Company at its Registered office within 7 (Seven) days from the publication of this notice or else the Company will proceed to issue duplicate share Certificates in favour of the successor without any further delay.

Place: Delhi
Date: 17.01.2020
By: Ram Lal Arora

WESTERN RAILWAY
CONSTRUCTION RELATED WORKS AT VADDORA DIVISION

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

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

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

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 accordingly.

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 beligerent brother never existed. Ample reasons are being furnished for this new, posthumous *khitab*. The Mughal prince was a deeply syncretic thinker, accomplished scholar, poet and a theologian of unusual merit; a calligraphist and connoisseur of the fine arts as well as a dutiful son and warm-hearted family man.

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

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



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

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

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

But is that who he was, in reality? A recent biography, sourcing the treatises, letters and speeches of this polemic leader in the original Marathi, reveals a very different picture. Savarkar's conception of Hindutva, the book informs us, was essentially political, a move to galvanise the eternally splintered Hindu communities into a homogenous whole — and not an ultra-reli-



gious manifesto. In Savarkar's credo, the key to achieving this was the uniting and unionising of the Hindu polity, across caste lines. Far from being a traditionalist, this high-caste Chitpavan Brahmin established a Patit Pavan temple open to all castes, organised inter-caste dinners and marriages and did not personally care for rituals, including that of cow worship. In this more objective narrative, Savarkar emerges not as a fanatic but an astute rationalist, who rejected the Gandhian project, and wholeheartedly espoused industrialisation as the vehicle of progress in the future.

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

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

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

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

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

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

SOUNDBITE

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

BJP working president —JP Nadda



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

Actor —Kalki Koechlin



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

Pakistan's Foreign Minister —Shah M Qureshi



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

AIMIM chief —Asaduddin Owaisi



LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Act responsibly

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

Ravi Via email

Experiment first

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

Government must rise above politics

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

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



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

R Narayanan Navi Mumbai

Healthy lifestyle

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

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

M Pradyu Kannur

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

Send your feedback to: letterstopioneer@gmail.com

FIRST COLUMN

Tectonic shift in US' attitude

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



DEEPAK SINHA

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

—UNION MINISTER SMRITI IRANI

POINT COUNTERPOINT



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

—DELHI CHIEF MINISTER ARVIND KEJRIWAL

Change or perish

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



BKP SINHA

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

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

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

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

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

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



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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

(The writer is a Chartered Accountant)



FOREIGN EYE



TRUMP'S TRIAL A DEFINING MOMENT

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

(The Guardian editorial)

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.

Man Singh are still absconding.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

PTI ■ BENGALURU

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

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

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

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



and @ISRO #VA251 #MissiontoSuccess."

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

be put in its final orbital configuration.

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

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

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

PM congratulates ISRO

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

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



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

J&K Congress passes resolution seeking restoration of Statehood

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

The executive committee meeting followed detailed deliberations,

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

During the meeting, large number of participants from Kashmir Valley and Jammu region representing different districts and sections of society and wings of the party 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 Yong Mizo Association (YMA) and student bodies expressed happiness over the pact.

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

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

the state's voter list, the YMA said.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Nagas very close to settlement of vexed political issue: Guv

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

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

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

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

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

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

The governor thanked

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

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

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

Yogi: Apathy of previous Govts forced farmers to commit suicide

PTI ■ LUCKNOW

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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



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

'93 Mumbai blasts: Missing Dr Bomb nabbed in Kanpur

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Beef delicacy tweet kicks up row

No aim to hurt anyone's religious beliefs: Kerala

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

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

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

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

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

and culture... On one hand we have Gangireddula 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 Avesh, Vinay and Kuldeep Jani — have been helping the accused mistress luring in young and attractive girls to the alleged sex racket. They have been named as absconding accused in the case.

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

Bengal BJP warns against not filling CAA papers

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

SAUGAR SENGUPTA ■ KOLKATA

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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



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

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

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

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

Students, activists hold protest outside IIMA against CAA, NRC

PTI ■ AHMEDABAD

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

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

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

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

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

BEFORE DEBTS RECOVERY TRIBUNAL-II, DELHI
 4th Floor, Jeevan Tara Building, Parliament Street, New Delhi - 110001
 OA No. 226/19 DATE: 10.01.2020
KOTAK MAHINDRA BANK LTD. APPLICANT
 VERSUS
SH. MANOJ KUMAR VIJAY & ORS. RESPONDENT
 To, DEFENDANT
1. MR. MANOJ KUMAR VIJAY E-69, SECT-55, NOIDA DISTT. GAUTAM BUDDH NAGAR
2. SH. KAILASH CHAND GUPTA E-69, SECT-55, NOIDA DISTT. GAUTAM BUDDH NAGAR
ALSO AT: 103-A. HEEMAT NAGAR GOPAL ROAD MODE TANK ROAD JAIPUR
3. AMARPALI GRAND C-56/40, SECT.-62, NOIDA DISTT. GAUTAMBUDDH NAGAR, UP
 Whereas the above named applicant (s) has / have instituted a case for recovery of Rs. 65,73,683/- (RUPEES SIXTY FIVE LAKH SEVENTY THREE THOUSAND SIX HUNDRED AND EIGHTY THREE ONLY) against you and where as it has been shown to the satisfaction of the Tribunal and it is not possible to serve you in the ordinary way therefore, this notice is given by advertisement directing you to make appearance in the Tribunal on 18.03.2020 At 10.30 AM.
 Take notice that in default of your appearance on the day before the mentioned, the case will be heard and determined in your absence.
 BY ORDER OF THE TRIBUNAL SECTION OFFICER, DRT-II, DELHI

Mumbai to be 24x7 city from Jan 26

TN RAGHUNATHA ■ MUMBAI

Maximum city' proposal.

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

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

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

Known for pursuing his pet projects, Aditya had pushed the

VIBRANT MUMBAI NIGHTLIFE

The 1.30 am closure deadline for bars and restaurants has been in force since 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

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."

SEARCH FOR MISSING/KIDNAPED

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

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

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

SHO
P.S. Neb Sarai, New Delhi
Ph. : 011-29551597
DP/5906/SD/20
8750870835

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

RO NO. 79954N Dt. 17-01-2020

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

Executive Engineer, Panchayati Raj, Sonapat

RO NO. 79952N Dt. 17-01-2020

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

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

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

UJVN Limited
 H.O.: "UJVNL", Maharani Bagh, GMS Road, Dehradun-248006
 Telephone: 0135-2763808 & Fax: 0135- 2763508
 CIN No. U40101UR2001SGC025866

TENDER NOTICE

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

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

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

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

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

Executive Engineer (Civil-SHP), Munyari

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

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

PTI ■ AHMEDABAD/NEW DELHI

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

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

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

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

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

While Goyal had on Thursday raised questions



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

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

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

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

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

Jet Airways to sell Netherlands business to KLM

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

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

The insolvency resolution professional managing the affairs of Jet Airways said various options are being explored for the "company's resolution and maximising the value for its stakeholders", as per the filing on Friday.

Providing an update, the company said there is a separate liquidation proceeding ongoing in the Netherlands and that the resolution professional has agreed a co-operation protocol with the Dutch trustee appointed by the local court.

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

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

More than 300 items may see customs duty hike in Budget

FIANS ■ NEW DELHI

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

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

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

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



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

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

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

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

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

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

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

FIANS ■ NEW DELHI

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

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

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

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

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

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

PTI ■ MUMBAI/NEW DELHI

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

However, consolidated revenue fell 1.4 per cent to ₹1,68,858 crore in the third quarter of 2019-20.

While oil refining margins rose after six straight quarters of decline, the company opened 45 more retail stores and added 37.1 million subscribers to its Jio mobile phone service that helped increase the profitability of the venture. But the weakness in its traditional petrochemical businesses continued.

The operator of the world's largest oil refining complex saw pre-tax earnings from the

BUSINESS CORNER

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

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



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

PFC ISSUES SENIOR UNSECURED USD BONDS

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

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

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

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

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

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

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

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



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

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

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

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

PTI ■ BEIJING

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

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

Global equities burst higher on trade deal

AFP ■ LONDON

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

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

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

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

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

IRDAI chief cautions insurers against predatory pricing

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India (IRDAI) chairman SC Khuntia on Friday cautioned insurers against indulging in predatory pricing, saying it is not a sustainable model while citing examples of airline and telecom sectors.

Highlighting that the insurance industry is different from other business, he said if an insurer fails, it has bearing on customers as well.

"I would like to give a word of caution here. Though your (insurance brokers) share is very high in group health insurance, the loss ratio in group health insurance is also very high. Probably, it is not very sustainable at present," he

SEARCH FOR MISSING/KIDNAPPED

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

Name: Gangan Deep Singh, **Gender:** Male, **Age:** 21 years, **Height:** 5'7", **Complexion:** Shallow, **Face:** Round, **Built:** Medium, **Hair:** Black, **Wearing:** Charee colour jacket, black colour shirt, blue colour jeans and blue colour shoes in his feet.

If anyone has any information regarding this missing/kidnapped man, kindly inform SHO/Mahender Park, Delhi.

E-mail : cic@cbi.gov.in
Ph. : 011-24368638, 24368641
Fax : 011-24368639
SHO P.S. Mahender Park, Delhi
Ph. No.: 011-27632501, 27632023
DP/9681/NW/2020

SEARCH FOR MISSING/KIDNAPPED MALE

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

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

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

APPEAL FOR IDENTIFICATION

General public is hereby informed that this person **Name:** Unknown, **S/o:** Unknown, **R/o:** Unknown, **Age:** 50-55 Years, **Sex:** Male, **Height:** 5'5", **Face:** Long, **Built:** Thin, **Complexion:** Shallow, **Wearing:** Green Checkdar Shirt and blue pant bare footed, Near Power House Pusta Road behind Faridabad Bus stand Yamuna Bazar Kashmere Gate, Delhi in this regard a **DD No.06-A, dated 11.01.2020** has been registered at P.S. Kashmere Gate, New Delhi.

Sincere efforts have been made by local police to trace out information about this person but no clue has come to light so far. Any person having any information or clue about this person may kindly inform to the following.

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

PROCLAMATION REQUIRING THE APPEARANCE OF A PERSON ACCUSED

SEE SECTION U/S 82 Cr. P.C.

Whereas complaint has been made before me that accused **Sachin, S/o Singhshen, R/o Jhuggi No. 230, Near Balmiki Mandir, Shahbad Dairy, Delhi** is involved in case **FIR No. 433/18 & 437/18, u/s 457/411 IPC & 25 Arms Act, at P.S. Shahbad Dairy, Delhi** and it has been returned to a warrant of arrest thereupon issued that the said accused **Sachin**, cannot be found and whereas it has been shown to my satisfaction that the said accused **Sachin**, has absconded (or is concealing himself to avoid the service of the said warrant) Proclamation is hereby made that the said accused **Sachin**, in case **FIR No. 433/18 & 437/18, u/s 457/411 IPC & 25 Arms Act, at P.S. Shahbad Dairy, Delhi** is required to appear on this Court to answer the said complaint on or before **18.02.2020**.

By Order
Sh. Vaibhav Mehta
Metropolitan Magistrate - 05 (North),
Court Room No. 114, 1st Floor
Rohini Courts, Delhi
DP/934/ON/2020-(Court Matter)

PROCLAMATION REQUIRING THE APPEARANCE OF ACCUSED PERSONS

(See Section 82 Cr.PC)

Whereas complaint has been made before me that **Anuradha W/o Sh. Arjun and Sh. Arjun Mehlatat S/o Sh. Attar Singh R/o Flat No. 10/289, Sai Apartment, Maidan Garhi, New Delhi** have committed (or are suspected to have committed) the offence in case **FIR No. 2548/15, U/s 354/509/506/323/34 IPC & 2 POCSO Act at P.S. Mehrauli, New Delhi** and it has been returned to a warrant of arrest thereupon issued that the said accused **Anuradha and Arjun Mehlatat** cannot be found and whereas it has been shown to my satisfaction that the said accused **Anuradha and Arjun Mehlatat** have absconded (or are concealing themselves to avoid the service of the said warrant).

Proclamation is hereby made that the said accused **Anuradha and Arjun Mehlatat** of **FIR No. 2548/15, U/s 354/509/506/323/34 IPC & 2 POCSO Act at P.S. Mehrauli, New Delhi** are required to appear before this Court to answer the said complaint on or before **24.02.2020**.

By Order
Ms. Jyoti Kler,
Additional Session Judge-05,
Room No. 605, Saket Court
Complex, New Delhi
DP/5918/SD/2020

PROCLAMATION REQUIRING THE APPEARANCE OF ACCUSED PERSON

See Section 82 Cr. P.C.

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

By Order
Sh. Anuj Kumar Singh
Metropolitan Magistrate
Saket Court, New Delhi
DP/5905/SD/2020-(Court Matter)

said at an event organised by Insurance Brokers Association of India here.

"So the insurance companies, intermediaries and policyholders need to unite to create a sustainable atmosphere. In other industries if there is unfair competition, the industry suffers but the clientele don't suffer. While this has happened in airlines and telecom industries but we cannot afford that kind of a situation in the insurance industry because insurance is an industry for protection," he said.

"So if the industry suffers, then clientele also suffers. And as a regulator we would not like that to happen. One should not overcharge and also not undercharge," he said.

India launch Olympic bid with pro opener

Manpreet led side host the Netherlands in FIH pro league game today

PTI ■ BHUBANESWAR

The Olympics-bound Indian men's hockey team will kick-start its preparations for the quadrennial showpiece when it debuts in the FIH Pro League against world No.3 the Netherlands here on Saturday.

After having missed the first edition of the event, India will take on the 2019 Pro League and European Bronze medal winners, the Netherlands, in two matches in their opening tie at the Kalinga Stadium here. The second match will be played on Sunday.

With all the top teams of the world in fray, the home-and-away Pro League will be ideal preparation for world No 5 India ahead of the Summer Games later this year.

After the Dutch side, India will host world champions Belgium on February 8 and 9 followed by two more home fixtures against Australia on February 22 and 23.

The Indian team will then leave for the away games in Germany (April 25 and 26) and Great Britain (May 2 and 3).

India will return to play on home soil on May 23 and 24 against New Zealand before travelling to Argentina to play on June 5 and 6.

The Manpreet Singh-led side will play the last leg of the Pro League round-robin matches in Spain on June 13 and 14.

India's head coach Graham Reid will be aware of the challenges that await his team in the Pro League opener.

Having served as a former assistant coach to the Dutch, Reid knows exactly what to expect from Netherlands in the double header.

The matches will also provide India a chance to avenge their heart-breaking 1-2 loss in the quarterfinal of the 2018 World Cup.

A look at the previous 10 meetings between the two teams reveals



Manpreet Singh in a file picture

Manpreet Singh/Twitter

that there is little to choose between them.

The Netherlands have won five of those meetings, with India victorious on four occasions and one match ending in a draw.

Reid too insisted that they are looking at the Pro League outings as a platform for Olympic preparation.

"It will be important to start strong and sharp in the Pro League with our first three encounters against the top three teams in the world," Reid has said.

"We will be focussing on getting our structures right and honing our set plays as preparation for our Olympic campaign."

The Indians would also benefit from their familiarity with the Kalinga Stadium turf, having trained and played numerous matches here.

It is the same venue where the eight-time Olympic champions qualified for the 2020 Games after thrashing Russia 11-3 on aggregate in the two-leg FIH Qualifiers in November last year.

"The matches against India are a very important opener. Playing against India at their home ground is challenging no doubt but it is also very exciting because we love playing in Bhubaneswar," Netherlands coach Max Caldas said.

Caldas too is looking at the Pro League as preparation for Olympics.

"The players and combinations we wanted to test were experimented during the previous edition of Pro League. This edition we will have our most competitive team as this will be the stepping-stone for us to be the best at Tokyo," he said.

India will field a full-strength team which will witness the return of midfielders Chinglensana Singh and Sumit, who were out with injuries.

Chinglensana was on the sidelines with an ankle fracture since the National Championship last year, while Sumit suffered a wrist injury in June during the FIH Men's Series Final.



Sania Mirza in action during Hobart International Hobart International/Twitter

Sania storms into Hobart final

PTI ■ HOBART

Indian tennis ace Sania Mirza cruised into the women's doubles final of the Hobart International with her Ukrainian partner Nadiia Kichenok here on Friday.

Sania and Kichenok sailed past the Slovenian-Czech pair of Tamara Zidansek and Marie Bouzkova 7-6 (3) 6-2 in the semifinal contest that lasted one hour and 24 minutes.

The fifth-seeded Indo-Ukrainian combination will lock horns with second seeds Shuai Peng and Shuai Zhang of China. The Chinese pair got a walkover after Belgium's Kirsten Flipkens and Alison Van Uytvanck conceded the other semifinal match because of injury.

While Sania and Kichenok had to fight hard in the opening set, the second set was a cakewalk for the combination.

The first set was a tough contest between the two pairs, bringing the tie-breaker into the equation after it was level at 6-6.

In the tie-breaker, Sania and Kichenok upped their game by a few notches to out-

smart their opponents and take the lead.

The second set was a no contest as Sania and Kichenok broke their opponents thrice - in the second, sixth and eighth game - to easily pocket the set and a place in the summit clash.

Sania and Kichenok got 11 break chances out of which they converted four, while their opponents utilised two out of the five break chances that came their way.

The 33-year-old Sania is returning to WTA circuit after two years. During her time away from the game, she battled injury breakdowns before taking a formal break in April 2018 to give birth to her son 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



Mohamed Salah celebrates with Sadio Mane after scoring

Liverpool/Twitter

AFP ■ LIVERPOOL

Mohamed Salah says Liverpool's focus is solely on ending a 30-year wait to win the Premier League title, rather than doing so by going the whole season unbeaten.

Jürgen Klopp's men have dropped just two points in 21 games to set a new record for Europe's top five leagues of 61 points from a possible 63 to start the campaign.

That has propelled the European champions into a

14-point lead over title holders Manchester City with a game in hand, but Salah insists the Reds are still taking their title challenge one game at a time ahead of Manchester United's visit to Anfield on Sunday.

"We don't think about being unbeaten until the end of the season. If we do that, it would be great, but at the end of the day we just want to win the Premier League. That's the most important thing," Salah told Premier League

Productions. "Unbeaten or not, it's not necessary - we want to win the Premier League."

Liverpool could move a massive 30 points clear of United with victory on Sunday, but the Red Devils are the only side to take points off them this season after a 1-1 draw at Old Trafford in October.

Salah missed that match through injury and is keen to make up for lost time in the clash between English football's two most successful sides.

Harry replaces Young as captain

AFP ■ MANCHESTER

Ole Gunnar Solskjaer has confirmed Harry Maguire as Manchester United's new captain less than six months after his £80 million (\$104 million) move from Leicester.

Maguire will take over as skipper from Ashley Young, who is expected to complete his move to Inter Milan on Friday.

The England international, 26, has led the side in games when Young has been absent and was an obvious choice for the role having played in every Premier League match this season.

"Harry has been wearing the captain's armband and he will keep wearing it," said Solskjaer, whose side take on runaway leaders Liverpool at Anfield on Sunday. "He's come in and been a leader in the group. I have not been surprised

but I've been impressed by his leadership skills."

"He is part of a group that we've had that have been leading this young group," added Solskjaer.

"Ashley has been of course, Marcus (Rashford) is a young lad but he has been involved, David (de Gea) and Harry, so Harry will keep on wearing the armband now."

Young, who moved to Old Trafford in 2011, will link up at the San Siro with former United teammates Romelu Lukaku and Alexis Sanchez.

"Ashley has been a good servant for the club, he's been captain, he's won trophies, the league, various cups," said Solskjaer.

"But we've got players coming through and when Ashley's head and mindset was, I want to try this, why not do it now?"

"We need to win, we need to carry on in our way - the way we've been doing since the beginning of the season and since last year," added the Egyptian.

"Of course we know it's big for the fans, for the city and for us. But at the end of the day, we play the game to win."

Yastremska downs Sabalenka for finals place

AFP ■ ADELAIDE

Ukraine's Dayana Yastremska defeated her third top 20 opponent in a row to make the Adelaide International finals with a 6-4, 7-6 (7/4) win over Aryna Sabalenka on Friday.

The 19-year-old's blitzed world number 20 Donna Vekic

in the quarter-finals of the Memorial Drive tournament a day after 18th-ranked Angelique Kerber retired from their match with back pain from a set down.

Yastremska, ranked 24th, will play for the fourth title of her career on Saturday against either Australian world number one Ashleigh Barty or American Danielle Collins.

"I'm pretty happy, this new season is off to a good start," Yastremska said after defeating Sabalenka of Belarus for their third match in as many meetings.

"I'm just doing my job on court, playing my game. I do what I can on court."

"I feel confidence heading to the Australian Open." Yastremska broke once per set while losing her own service once in the 106-minute showdown.

She finished on a third match point in the tiebreaker as Sabalenka hit the net on a return.

Yastremska claimed two WTA trophies last season at Strasbourg and Hua Hin, Thailand.

Prajnesh out of Australian Open



Prajnesh Gunneswaran plays a return shot AFP

PTI ■ MELBOURNE

India's top-ranked player Prajnesh Gunneswaran failed to make the main draw of the Australian Open men's singles event after going down in straight sets to Ernests Gulbis of Latvia in the final round of the qualifiers here on Friday.

Prajnesh, ranked 122nd in the world and seeded 17th in the qualifiers, lost 6-7 (2) 2-6 to Gulbis in his final round qualifying match.

Prajnesh had earlier defeated local wildcard Harry Bourchier and Germany's Yannick Hanfmann.

It was a close first set which went into tie-break, where Prajnesh faltered to hand early advantage to his opponent.

In the second set, Gulbis broke Prajnesh in the first and third games to race to a 3-0 lead.

From there on, the Indian found it tough as Gulbis held his serve to close out the contest that lasted for one hour and 20 minutes.

With Prajnesh's ouster, India's campaign in the singles ended in the qualifiers.

Earlier, Sumit Nagal suffered a straight-set loss to Mohamed Safwat of Egypt to crash out in the first round of the qualifiers on Thursday.

AFP ■ BERLIN

Klinsmann back to hurt Bayern

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.



Hertha BSC Berlin head coach Juergen Klinsmann attends a news conference AP

"No one has ever approached me about a licence in 20 years - whether as coach of Germany, the USA or Bayern. Now they have looked

into it and it's expired." The matter remains unresolved but Klinsmann insists he has sent the necessary paperwork to the German FA and that there is

no problem at all".

He has a point to prove against Bayern, who sacked him in 2009 after just nine months and 43 games in charge.

Bayern striker Robert Lewandowski has recovered from recent groin surgery and will look to pick up where he left off after scoring 19 goals in the first 17 games.

The defending champions trail leaders RB Leipzig by four points and are without wingers Kingsley Coman (knee) and Serge Gnabry, who injured his Achilles tendon during a training camp in Qatar.

Bayern suffered a shock 2-0 defeat when they last travelled to Hertha in September 2018 and Klinsmann said a repeat result would spark a party in the capital.

"We have nothing to lose," he said. "Let's take a point - brilliant! Let's take three, then we'll have a party."

"We'll go in there with the

confidence of four games without defeat." One to watch: Erling Braut Haaland

Borussia Dortmund made the league's standout signing during the winter break when they paid Red Bull Salzburg 20 million euros (\$22m) for the 19-year-old Norway striker.

Haaland attracted attention last September when, aged 19 years and 58 days, he became the third youngest player to score a Champions League hat-trick in a 6-2 victory over Genk, finishing with eight goals in six group games.

"I don't think we've had that kind of striker since Robert Lewandowski," Dortmund captain Marco Reus told Sky.

Head coach Lucien Favre has not said when Haaland will make his debut. Fourth-placed Dortmund hope a deluge of goals by their latest signing will help close the seven-point deficit to RB Leipzig, starting with a win at Augsburg on Saturday.

Quique era starts in Barca

AFP ■ MADRID

Barcelona's appointment of Quique Setien, a fervent disciple of Johan Cruyff, came the day after Zinedine Zidane won his ninth final out of nine as coach of Real Madrid.

With both teams level on points at the top of La Liga, Spain's closest title race in years will be as much a contest of identity and beliefs as points won and lost.

Real Madrid, the club that defines itself by winning, against Barcelona, where winning is seen as the result of something more profound, a style heralded by Cruyff that has become their footballing philosophy.

Atletico Madrid and Sevilla, both five points behind, are still in touch but playing catch-up.

Setien once said he would have given his little finger to play under Cruyff. Now, 34 years later, he has the chance to resuscitate those ideals after



two years under Ernesto Valverde when pragmatism took a greater hold.

Barca's new coach is not well-known outside of Spain and, at 61, he may be in the twilight years of his career.

"For me this is the pinnacle," he said at his unveiling on Tuesday.

His previous clubs are not illustrious. They include Lugo, Logrones, Las Palmas, Poli Ejido, Racing Santander, Real

Betis and one game in charge of Equatorial Guinea. His list of trophies begins and ends with one Spanish Super Cup in 1985 with Atletico Madrid.

But his work and words up to this point could leave the impression of someone that has been preparing to coach Barcelona his entire life.

"When I was a player, coaches tried to set guidelines for me," Setien, a former Spanish international, told Marca in 2018.

It remains to be seen how Setien's appointment will affect La Liga's title race. Will Real Madrid's players feel their chances are boosted or harmed by Valverde's removal? They are now up against a team with a coach that has never won, or even competed for, a top-flight trophy. But they might feel wary too, of the possibility Barcelona could be released by Setien's attacking beliefs and accelerate.

INDIA HUNT KANGAROOOS IN RAJKOT

Top order's show complimented by bowlers help Men in Blue level series

PTI ■ RAJKOT

Kuldeep Yadav bowled a game-changing 38th over to complement a KL Rahul blinder as India levelled the series with a comfortable 36-run victory over Australia in second ODI here on Friday.

Put into bat, India put up a much-improved batting performance with Rahul's blistering 52-ball-80 taking India to 340 for six after Shikhar Dhawan (96 off 90 balls) and skipper Virat Kohli (78 off 76 balls) laid the foundation.

Australia were in the game till Steven Smith (98) carried the battle back to the enemy camp but Kuldeep's ninth over turned out to be a game-changer as he first dismissed wicketkeeper Alex Carey and then had a delivery that bounced extra to have Smith played on. The visitors were all-out for 304 in 49.1 overs.



Indian players celebrate the dismissal of Australia's Steve Smith in Rajkot



Kuldeep's final figures of 2 for 65 may not be mind-blowing but did just enough damage to see that the third ODI in Bengaluru doesn't lose context.

in 10 overs) and Navdeep Saini (2/62 in 10 overs) then bowled some exquisite toe-crushers to put an end to the contest. Jasprit Bumrah (1/32 in 9.1 overs) was economical as ever and his contribution cannot be overlooked.

However on a placid track, Smith, a proverbial thorn in India's flesh was again proving to be dangerous along with Marnus Labuschagne (44) as they added 96 in quick time.

Ravindra Jadeja (2/58 in 10 overs) steady spell and got rid of Labuschagne in nick of time to upset Smith's rhythm after he had hit nine fours and a six off 102 balls.

However this match also brings to fore Rahul's emergence as proper keeper-batsman option for white-ball cricket as his extra runs coming in at No 5, proving to be valuable in the end.

Not to forget his reasonably decent keeping effecting

K S Bharat named cover for Pant

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Andhra Pradesh wicket-keeper-batsman K S Bharat was on Friday called in as back-up for Rishabh Pant, who was ruled out of India's second ODI against Australia due to a concussion.

The 26-year-old Bharat is uncapped and has an experience of 74 first-class matches with 4143 runs. He has a strike rate of over 100 in T20s.

"The All-India Senior Selection Committee has named K S Bharat as the back-up wicket-keeper for the 2nd ODI in Rajkot against Australia," BCCI Secretary Jay Shah said in a statement.

"With Sanju Samson and Ishan Kishan being a part of the India A side in New Zealand, the selection committee decided to name K S Bharat as back-up wicket-keeper," he added.

The call was taken after Pant flew to Bengaluru to undergo his rehabilitation in the National Cricket Academy.

The wicket-keeper batsman was hit on the helmet while batting in the first ODI in Mumbai and was ruled out of the game in Rajkot on Friday.

"His recovery is being monitored and a call on his availability for the final ODI in Bengaluru will be taken accordingly," the BCCI said.

a stumping and also took two catches. More importantly, his keeping down the leg-side was far better than Rishabh Pant, who is currently recovering from concussion.

Earlier, it was Dhawan, who missed a well-deserved ton by a whisker but laid a solid platform for the aggressive duo of skipper Kohli and Rahul to ensure a commanding total.

Ruturaj, Shubman, Surya shine for Ind A

PTI ■ LINCOLN (NEW ZEALAND)

India A top-order warmed-up nicely for their upcoming one-day series with a 92-run win against New Zealand XI in the first of the two practise games here on Friday.

Batting first, India A scored 279 for 8 in 50 overs and then dismissed New Zealand XI for 187 in 41.1 overs with let-arm pacer Khaleel Ahmed getting four wickets.

Batting first, skipper Gill (50 off 66 balls) hit a half-century adding 89 runs for the second wicket with another specialist opener Ruturaj Gaikwad (93 off 103 balls), who came in at one drop to accommodate senior team player Mayank Agarwal (8).

Once Gill was out hitting seven fours, Gaikwad was joined by Suryakumar Yadav, who hit a 48-ball-50 with four fours and two sixes as the duo added 89 runs. As Surya attacked, Gaikwad held anchor at one end.

During the back-end, Krunal Pandya scored a 31-ball 41 while Sanju Samson (4) and Vijay Shankar (13) failed to make an impact.

New Zealand A started off with an 82-run opening stand between Jakob Bhula (50) and Jack Boyle (42) but Khaleel (4/43 in 9.1 overs) and Mohammed Siraj (2/33 in 8 overs) caused the bulk of the damage.

Brief Scores: India A 279/8 in 50 overs (Ruturaj Gaikwad 93 off 103 balls, Suryakumar Yadav 50 off 48 balls, Shubman Gill 50 off 66 balls).

New Zealand XI 187 in 41.1 overs (Jakob Bhula 50, Khaleel Ahmed 4/43 in 9.1 overs). India A won by 92 runs.

AFP ■ PORT ELIZABETH

Stokes, Pope punish SA

Ben Stokes and Ollie Pope hit centuries as England built a strong position on the second day of the third Test against South Africa and England at St George's Park on Friday.

England were 426 for eight at tea. The four-match series is tied at 1-1.

World player of the year Stokes hit 120, his ninth Test century, while Pope was unbeaten on 106, his maiden Test hundred.

Stokes and Pope put on 203 for the fifth wicket after coming together on the first day when their side were struggling at 148 for four.

In contrast to an attritional first day, when England could only score 224 for four in 90 overs, England scored freely for most of the day, although Pope made hard work of moving from his score of 75 at lunch to his century, needing most of the afternoon before he punched Anrich Nortje through mid-wicket for his 14th boundary after facing 190 balls.

While Pope moved cautiously to join Dom Sibley in scoring a maiden Test hundred during the series, Sam Curran provided the impetus for England as he hit an aggressive 44 off 50 balls, with six fours and a six. He and Pope put on 59 for the seventh wicket, with Pope contributing 13.

Hit by the news that strike bowler Kagiso Rabada would miss the fourth and final Test after incurring a fourth disciplinary demerit point within 24 months, South Africa's bowlers neither posed a significant threat nor were able to exert the control they did on the first day as Stokes and Pope dominated the morning with-



England's Ben Stokes celebrates reaching his century with Ollie Pope

Rabada banned for final test over Root celeb

AP ■ PORT ELIZABETH

South Africa fast bowler Kagiso Rabada has been banned from the series-deciding final cricket Test against England.

Rabada was given a one-Test ban after breaching the International Cricket Council code of conduct for his celebration after getting England captain Joe Root out on the first day of the ongoing third test in Port Elizabeth.

Rabada ran through and celebrated - fists pumping and screaming - close to Root after bowling him.

He was found guilty of "using language, actions or gestures" which could pro-

voke an aggressive response from the batsman. The 24-year-old Rabada was given one demerit point for the offense but it's his fourth demerit in the last two years, which results in a one-match ban.

Rabada was charged with the offense in Port Elizabeth by match referee Andy Pycroft. He pleaded guilty and accepted the punishment.

It's a major boost for England's hopes of winning the four-test series and a major blow for South Africa's. Rabada is the No. 4-ranked bowler in the world and South Africa's spearhead.

STOKES AND POPE PUT ON 203 FOR THE FIFTH WICKET AFTER COMING TOGETHER ON THE FIRST DAY WHEN THEIR SIDE WERE STRUGGLING AT 148 FOR FOUR

out being parted. Stokes eventually sliced a catch to backward point off debutant Dane Paterson after making 120 off 214 balls with 12 fours and two sixes.

South Africa had a better afternoon, picking up four wickets, with three of them taken by left-arm spinner Keshav Maharaj, who had figures of four for 135. Having conceded only 55 runs in 32 overs on Thursday, Maharaj gave up another 80 runs in 21.2 overs on Friday.

Maharaj was attacked by Stokes, who hit sixes in both of the spin bowler's first two overs, one of which sailed out of the ground beyond mid-wicket



MS Dhoni chats with Rishabh Pant

'No rustiness as Dhoni looks in complete control'

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 IANS, Kumar said that he was expecting a little rustiness from the batsman, but the balls seemed to be hitting the middle of the bat. The coach went on to add that the Chennai Super Kings skipper's preparations have begun for the 2020 edition of the Indian Premier League.

"I will be honest... I thought there will be a bit of rustiness as Dhoni has not trained for quite some time. The last time we had spoken, he had said that he would start in January and here you go. He is a man of his words and it came as no surprise that he was out there training with the guys just like any other regular Jharkhand player. But what surprised me most was how

he muddled almost every ball, be it in the pacer's net or the spinner's net. He even took throwdowns just like a player going through the batting drills does.

"I haven't had any talks with him with regards to the national team and him donning the India jersey again. But, his preparations for the next edition of the IPL has begun and while the senior team will be busy playing the Ranji Trophy game from Sunday, Dhoni will continue training till the time he is in Ranchi," the coach pointed out.

Asked if Dhoni did anything specific in the two days that he has trained so far, Kumar said the former skipper spent a lot of time talking to the bowlers.

"He is such a professional and has been going on spending time with the youngsters, especially the bowlers. He is discussing the line and length that they should target and the ways to fox the opposition batsmen. He has been as vocal as can be expected from a senior player like Dhoni," Kumar said.



De Villiers flags desire to play ODI cricket

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 1 was definitely thinking it would be really nice to be

out there, but things have changed in my life... I don't want to play 11 months of the year any more, it's too much.

"ODIs I wouldn't take completely out of the equation, but for Test matches it's pretty much done," said the 114-Tests veteran.

de Villiers had tried to come out of retirement ahead of the 2019 World Cup, making himself available for selection. However, CSA selectors felt it was too late.

Hafeez to retire after Twenty20 WC

AFP ■ LAHORE

Recalled Pakistan allrounder Mohammad Hafeez Friday said he will retire from international cricket after the Twenty20 World Cup later this year, vowing to end his career on a positive note.

The 38-year-old was Thursday recalled to Pakistan's Twenty20 series against Bangladesh starting in Lahore from January 24.

Hafeez has been one of Pakistan's key players — in all three formats, as a top order batsman and a handy off-spinner — since making his debut during an England tour in 2003.

But his career was dogged by questions over the legality of his bowling action, reported on three occasions during international matches. He was also



Mohammad Hafeez in a file picture

Hafeez retired from Tests in December 2018 after playing 55 Tests. He was more successful in limited over formats, scoring 6,614 runs and took 139 wickets in 218 one-day internationals.

His last ODI was during the World Cup (50 overs) in England last year, and he has not been selected for that format since then.

His tally in 89 Twenty20 internationals stands at 54 wickets and 1,908 runs.

"I have played 17 years for Pakistan and tried my level best. At times I missed my bowling," said Hafeez, who also captained Pakistan in 29 Twenty20 internationals, winning 17 and losing 11 with one ending in a tie.

The Twenty20 World Cup will be held in Australia in October-November this year.

PTI ■ ROME

Dominant Vinesh Phogat downed two tough Chinese rivals on her way to the 53kg final of the Rome Ranking Series event after teen sensation Anshu Malik settled for a Silver medal in 57kg competition, here on Friday.

Vinesh won by technical superiority against Khrystyna Bereza (10-0) and Lannuan Luo (15-5) before getting the better of Qianyu Pang (4-2).

If the win against Ukrainian Bereza was about spectacular double leg attacks, the quarter-final win over the Luo was much tougher than the what the scoreline suggested.

Luo was a strong opponent, who led 5-2 at the end of first period but Vinesh turned it around with smart point-scoring moves from nowhere in the



second period. Twice she threw Luo with moves from between the legs when the Chinese was holding her from the back. With two wrestlers, having

immense upper-body strength, jostling for upper hand from standing position was a sight to watch. Fighting a measured bout against Pang, Vinesh was in

control in the semi-final. With two take downs in each period she led 4-0 and conceded points only towards the end of the fight.

Vinesh will now fight for her first gold of the season with Ecuador's Luisa Elizabeth Valverde Melemdres.

The 18-year-old Anshu carried her sparkling form from the trials at her maiden international tournament at the senior level but could not replicate it in the gold medal bout, losing to Nigeria's Oduwayo Adekuoroye.

The 18-year-old was very dominant till the final, beating American Jenna Rose Burkert, Grace Bullen of Norway, 2019 world champion from Canada Linda Morais en route the final.

Anshu had upset world champion Bronze medalist Pooja Dhanda during the trials. But Divya Kakran returned

empty-handed after losing the 68kg Bronze medal play-off bout to Danielle Suzanne Lappage of Canada.

Also in medal contention is Nirmala Devi, who will fight for 50kg Bronze after losing her semi-final to Sarah Ann Hildebrandt.

Nirmala was aggressive throughout, going for leg attacks, but the American stayed solid in her defence, reminding the tactics that Vinesh had employed against her at the 2019 World Championship in Nur Sultan.

Nirmala has another American in her way as she will lock horns with Victoria Lacey Anthony.

In the men's freestyle competition, Satyawart Kadiyan (97kg) and Sumit Maik (125kg) exited following their quarter-final defeats.