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PAPER WITH PASSION

Perils of social justice

The ideology of social justice inevitably results in irrational demands and Manipur-like situations

The unexpected and massive flare-up in Manipur, necessitating a flag march by the Army in violence-hit areas, is yet another unpleasant consequence of identity politics laced with quota demands. The response of the authorities has been copy-book: curfew in eight Manipur districts, suspension of mobile internet in the State, calling in the Army and paramilitary forces. An anguished Mary Kom, the boxing legend, made a passionate appeal on social media for peace in her state. The conflagration may subside, but the incendiary material that led to it is unlikely to disappear magically. That material emanates from the dogmas of a dangerous ideology—that ideology of social justice. The Meiteis, who are in a majority in Manipur, have been demanding their inclusion in the Scheduled Tribes (ST) list for 10 years, a demand that has left the Manipur Government befuddled. This is very natural in a democracy where every group has a right to assert their views and make demands; but the problem is that such reservation for one community is always at the expense of some other community. A similar situation arose some time ago in Rajasthan, where Gujjars were asking for a quota; this was resisted by the Meenas who thought that the acceptance of the Gujar demand would hurt their prospects in getting jobs and admission to educational institutes. While the Manipur Government remained non-committal, a few weeks ago the Manipur High Court directed it to consider the request of the community's inclusion within four weeks and make a recommendation to the Union Government for its consideration.

Unsurprisingly, Adivasi students' unions are not happy with this development. They assert that granting the ST status to Meiteis would militate against the very spirit of reservation for tribals. The State Government and the Union Government face a tough dilemma: if they accept the demand for the Meiteis' ST status, the tribals get angry; if they don't, they lose the support of the majority community in the State. Meanwhile the issue has inflamed passions. There have been reports of communal clashes in different parts of Manipur. Trouble began on Tuesday after the All Tribal Students' Union Manipur (ATSUM) organised a big rally which became violent. "So far, 4,000 people were rescued by the forces from the violence-hit areas, and given shelter and more people are being shifted to safer places," an official told PTI. Union Home Minister Amit Shah has spoken to Chief Minister Singh to take stock of the situation. It is time political and community leaders in the State and others sat down and discussed the matter in a reasoned and calm manner, in the veritable democratic tradition of give-and-take. Making fiery speeches, coining new slogans, and making irrational demands will hurt everyone, for normalcy will be hurt. And normalcy is the necessary, though not sufficient, condition for development. Only development results in a win-win situation for all.

PICTALK



Vendors sell inflatable water pools on a roadside during a hot summer day, in Amritsar.

SC cracks whip on hate speech

India's diverse culture and demography make Indian society prone to differences, and hate speeches can exacerbate these differences

In a recent order, the Supreme Court directed all states and Union Territories to take suo moto action and register cases on their own against those making hate speeches even if no complaint is filed in that respect. The court further directed that "any hesitation to act in accordance with this direction will be viewed as contempt of court and appropriate action shall be taken against the erring officers". The court directed such an action irrespective of the religion of the maker of such speech, so that the secular character of India, as envisaged by the Preamble, is preserved and protected.

The court's order is indubitably appreciable and is made with indeed a pious aim to control hate speeches that have the inherent potential to destroy social harmony and may lead to strife and unrest in society. However, given the prevailing circumstances, it is highly likely that such an order may be misused by the political parties to settle scores with their political adversaries. Therefore, this order shall achieve its purpose truly only when the honourable apex court also simultaneously evolves certain foolproof safeguards for ensuring the prevention of misuse of an otherwise commendable and useful order.

India's diverse culture and demographic make-up make Indian society prone to differences, and hate speeches can exacerbate these differences, leading to social unrest and communal tensions. Events in the past have amply highlighted the fragile nature of India's social fabric which is easily susceptible to such hate-fraught statements and how the volatile semblance of unity gets instantaneously tarnished resulting in a huge toll on peace and order in society.

The past few years have witnessed a flurry of incidents involving hate statements and speeches springing from politicians, political commentators, religious leaders and even common people. Most of such statements were made in political rallies, on social media platforms as well as in live debates on television channels. Hate-monger-



ing campaigns are rampantly prevalent even on the social media platforms such as WhatsApp, Facebook and Twitter etc.

Moreover, a plethora of online channels is also becoming major sources of spreading hatred through such venomous speeches as they don't shy away in frequently inviting people with doubtful credentials to their panel discussions.

The motives for making statements potent with spreading hatred between communities vary as they may be a result of gaining political mileage through polarization, assuaging pent-up religious feelings, asserting superiority over the opponents, and even getting cheap publicity. Political campaigns often see politicians resorting to hate speech to gain votes from one particular community.

There is no doubt that such statements and speeches have an unhealthy influence on the common masses that carry such impressions in their psyche and form adverse opinions about other groups and communities. Given India is a constitutional democracy based upon the rule of law, hate speech must be strictly regulated irrespec-



SIDDHARTHA MISHRA



SHIVANI DEVAIDIYA



PAST INSTANCES OF HATE SPEECHES HAVE CAUSED VIOLENCE AND SOWED DEEP-ROOTED HATRED IN SOCIETY

of its source, as its untrammelled prevalence is highly potent with the danger of destabilising the national social order.

Past instances of hate speeches have caused violence and sowed deep-rooted hatred in society. For instance, the apparent rift between the Hindu-Muslim communities is based on religion and has caused significant disasters for society in the past.

Therefore, it is essential to have strict laws and regulations in place to curb hate speech and to ensure their indiscriminate enforcement without causing further harm to society, and the Supreme Court's recent decision on hate speech is a much-needed step in the right direction.

However, given the circumstances prevailing in India, especially in states, where the police frequently behave like in a police state, mostly at the instance of their political bosses, and do not refrain from implicating people under false cases, would not such an order be misused by them to serve personal interests.

In India, it is an open secret that people do not shy away even from filing false and fabricated cases to fulfil

their selfish interests, and given the loopholes in the system they sometimes become successful.

India proclaims the ideal of "non-violence" and "harmony", but these ideals will be compromised in case of the presence of hatred in the society. The question of how to effectively deal with instances of hate speech can be answered positively, but it requires the collective effort of communities and state police.

Although various provisions of the Indian Penal Code and the Representation of People Act, 1951 regulate hate speech, separate legislation on hate speech should be enacted to provide a detailed framework to deal with it along with the necessary safeguards to prevent the misuse of the law regulating hate speech. The recent directive from the Supreme Court is a welcome step in the right direction, as it is likely to curb cases of hate speech, but adequate safeguards are also required to prevent misuse of such an order.

(Sidhartha Mishra is a Senior Assistant Professor at the Faculty of Law, University of Delhi and Shivani Devadiya is a law student. Views expressed are personal)

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

VIRAT KOHLI IN A SPAT

Sir — It refers to "Kohli Gambhir spat rekindles 2013 deja vu". For an Indian batting legend like Virat Kohli and two world cup winners Gautam Gambhir that was not a sight to behold. Agree, passions run very high in such intensely fought games where there is a lot that is at stake for all franchises. But big players must know where to draw a line. Whatever has happened on the field should not have remained there and not allowed to carry on after the match was over. Penalising them by 100% of their match fees will not help the matter much as the penalty should be severe like a ban for a match or two. Because it is not the first time when we have seen Virat Kohli in a spat with an opposition player. These players are role models for our youngsters and must behave in a manner that can be emulated by their fans and not otherwise. At the end of the day, it was not a gully match but an IPL match played by international players and watched across the globe.

Bal Govind | Noida

UNIFORM CIVIL CODE

Sir — A day after the BJP promised the Uniform Civil Code and the National Register of Citizens in its manifesto, Congress promised to ban outfits like Bajrang Dal, the Popular Front of India (PFI) and repeal all 'unjust, anti-people laws' passed by the BJP government within one year, if elected to power. People wonder that within hours Prime Minister (PM) Narendra Modi hit out at the Congress for promising to ban Bajrang Dal in its election manifesto. He said that the grand old party wants to hold Lord Hanuman "captive" (people wonder when did 'Bajrang Dal' become 'Bajrang Bali'). I don't think Lord Hanuman used to roam on roads in groups like Bajrang Dal and do moral policing of couples, I don't think Lord Hanuman used to forcefully ask people to say 'Jai Shree ram', I don't think he used to kill innocent people. So don't use the name of Lord Hanuman for your terror like the Bajrang Dal organization. I'm a daily

Ukraine's terrorist attack?



Due to war, Russia has accused Ukraine of trying to assassinate Russian President Vladimir Putin in a drone attack at his residence in Moscow overnight as per the report. It is a 'terrorist act', the Kremlin said that there was a drone strike at Putin's residence in Kremlin. Russia considers these actions a premeditated terrorist attack and an assassination attempt targeting the President, the Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs wrote. The drones were 'disabled' by the Russian military and security forces before they could strike. Debris from the drones fell on the

grounds of the building which houses the Russian government but did not result in any damage. The official statement added that no casualties were reported.

A video surfaced on a local Moscow news Telegram channel that allegedly shows the drone attack. Shot from across the river from the Kremlin, it shows what appears to be smoke rising over the highly secure complex. The Kremlin drone attack comes as Russia gears up to observe its annual Victory Day on May 9, which will be attended by "foreign dignitaries". Russia's statement added that it retains the right to respond "when and where it sees fit". Putin wasn't in the Kremlin at the time of the attack, Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov told Russia's state news agency RIA Novosti. The Russian president was working out of the Novo-Ogaryovo residence at the time. Putin is safe and his schedule has not been changed, the Kremlin said.

Bhagwan Thadani | Mumbai

worshipper in the local Hanuman Mandir and strongly believe that Bajrang Bali does not stand for violence and self-appointed goons. Hanuman is humility not power on helpless individuals.

Congress spokesperson Pawan Khara said: "The Prime Minister is insulting our faith in Lord Hanuman. He should apologise to the country as he has hurt our religious sentiments as well as of crores of devotees of Bajrang Bali."

Bidyut Kumar Chatterjee | Faridabad

SHARAD PAWAR'S RESIGNATION

Sir — INationalist Congress Party (NCP) chief and veteran national leader, Sharad Pawar's out-of-the-blue announcement to step down as the party's president has left one and all in a stupor of astonishment, besides causing a ripple effect in the country's political waters even as his meeting with the Adani Group chairman Gautam Adani had made many hackles in the party rise, last week. On the other hand, the

ongoing efforts for the formation of a grand alliance comprising the non-BJP parties ahead of the next year's Lok Sabha polls might also take some beating following this abrupt decision.

Political pundits already trying to read between the lines of Sharad Pawar's departure from the united Opposition's demand for the JPC to look into the Adani Group issue would have got it sussed out by now. Burning no bridges with any political parties and their leaders, in power or in Opposition, has always been a hallmark of Mr Pawar's politics riding on which he saw a lot of heydays during his political career spanning over five decades. As a consolation, the outgoing party chief also promised to continue attending public meetings and events and remain available with his guidance. What's next!

Azhar A Khan | Rampur

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Nano fertilisers: The DAP in new avatar

Moving from Urea-in-a-bag to Nano DAP fertiliser in-a-bottle is a good idea and would be farmer friendly, but organic farming must be promoted

Recently IFFCO launched its Nano fertilizer which can be sprayed in the field and is an upgrade of urea in the bag. Launching the Nano fertilizer, Amit Shah, Minister of Home Affairs & Minister of Cooperation said, "Successful co-operative societies coming out of their framework for research and foraging into new fields have made it a source of inspiration for all co-operative societies today."

The Nano DAP is indeed a way forward and has many advantages associated with its use. Keeping in view the hazards of chemical fertilizers IFFCO has produced the world's first Nano DAP Liquid Fertiliser as the substitute for chemical solid fertilizers. It is cheaper than Conventional DAP. One bag of DAP is ₹1350 while one bottle of Nano DAP Liquid is just ₹600. It is biologically safe to use and aims to reduce soil, water and air pollution and it will lead to a significant reduction in dependence on DAP Imports.

Fertilizers have played a crucial role in the success of the Green Revolution and have been instrumental in



meeting the increasing demand for food. Since the Green Revolution in the 1960s, chemical fertilizers have been widely used to increase crop yields.

The Green Revolution saw a significant rise in food grain production. Urea was touted as the major ingredient for it. It was a success story keeping in mind that just 20 years back India had suffered from the world's worst recorded food crisis; the Bengal Famine, which led to the death of approximately 4 million people. Green Revolution made India self-reliant. The Green revolution refers to the turnaround in the yield of foodgrains, especially in Haryana and Punjab. Indian Agriculture was galvanized by the adoption of

modern methods and technology. Thus, India became self-sufficient in food grains and had sufficient stock in the central pool, even, at times, India was in a position to export food grains. The Green Revolution brought about large-scale farm mechanization which created a demand for different types of machines like tractors, harvesters, threshers, combines, diesel pumping sets, etc.

But it had a downside too which is becoming more and more prominent in recent years. It led to an exponential rise in demand for chemical fertilizers, pesticides, insecticides, weedicides, etc. It also promoted capitalist farming. Little or no efforts were made to educate farmers about the high risk associated with the intensive use of pesticides. Pesticides were sprayed on crops usually by untrained farm labourers without following instructions or precautions. The large-scale use of chemical fertilizers and pesticides resulted in several critical illnesses including cancer and renal failure.

The Nano DAP fertiliser can effectively bring about a second green revolution

which would be environmentally safe, economically viable and socially sustainable. Nano DAP Liquid is an efficient source of Nitrogen & Phosphorus and helps in overcoming Nitrogen & Phosphorus deficiencies in plants. The Nano Di-ammonium Phosphate (DAP) liquid fertiliser was developed by the Indian Farmers Fertiliser Cooperative IFFCO. It is claimed that it is biologically safe and Eco-friendly, fit for residue-free green farming.

But having said this, the excessive reliance on chemical fertilisers particularly nitrogenous fertilizers such as urea must be checked and discouraged and organic fertilizers must be promoted by the government on a much larger scale. Chemical fertilizers cannot be a substitute for organic manure. The main emphasis should be given to organic farming which many farmers are practicing successfully. Government must pay heed to organic farming which is the only solution for health, environment and soil.

(The writer is a business consultant and development writer. Views expressed are personal)



PRABHA GUPTA



FIRST COLUMN

INDIA IS THE CHAIR OF G20 AND SCO

But it will be a tightrope walk for India as it must deal with China on the way



KUMARDEEP BANERJEE

Chinese foreign minister Qin Gang was in India this week for the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation's (SCO) foreign minister's meeting. This is his second visit to India as foreign minister, the first being in March to attend the G20 foreign minister's meeting. As expected China insisted on normalcy in the bilateral ties with India even though the Indian side vociferously disagreed and made a sharp point on the border situation being anything closer to normal. It may be recalled that the Chinese defence minister Li Shangfu was in New Delhi last week to attend the SCO defence minister's meeting where he reiterated the normalcy in the border situation narrative. However, India's defence minister Rajnath Singh in a stern message, put the border situation, and unilateral violation of existing sovereign agreements by China, as the central piece of bilateral relations between the two nations. He went further and suggested disengagement of forces on both sides to be the key criteria for restoring any sort of normalcy, in the bilateral.

His Chinese counterpart downplayed the situation suggesting India take a "long-term" view and put the "border issue at an appropriate place in the overall bilateral". The message was clear, India and China have moved miles apart in their bilateral journeys. The Chinese state-owned media reported Li Shangfu's statement to mean a "stable border situation". To an Indian audience and perhaps to the rest of the globe, nothing could be further from the truth. The top military leadership of India and China met for the eighteenth time in the run of the SCO defence minister's meeting, with no significant outcomes. A Ministry of External Affairs short press statement released, post the 18th round of the corps commanders meeting stated "The two sides



had a frank and in-depth discussion on the resolution of the relevant issues along the LAC in the Western Sector so as to restore peace and tranquillity in the border areas, which will enable progress in bilateral relations". Later external affairs minister, S Jaishankar mentioned India China relations as "abnormal" and suggested that it goes against the grain of India's current foreign policy fabric, which is more towards building warmer relationships with all countries, an oblique reference to the Chinese way of approaching diplomacy.

The China rhetoric on normalcy at the border is a copybook agenda-pushing doctrine, it has been practised with several nations while trying to unilaterally and forcefully alter their sovereignty. It takes the form of economic coercion, starting with opaque, binding financial loans for critical infrastructure projects, leading to a debt trap for smaller economies, resulting in the complete takeover of critical strategic assets by Chinese state-controlled firms. Chinese state-owned China Merchants group has recently announced building the largest logistics hub in Sri Lanka's Colombo port with an investment of \$391 million. It may be recalled that China already owns Sri Lanka's Hambantota port, whose close proximity to Indian critical nuclear sites is a major concern. The playbook dictates China, and makes incremental advances by usurping the sovereign's economic, and geographical spaces, changing reference points and then negotiating with the nations from the altered "Chinese vantage point." The recent narrative from China, on stability on border issues with India, fits into the same playbook.

However, India which holds the SCO and G20 presidency for the year is moving cautiously to strike the right balance. It knows it has US support for now, on most disputes related to China, however, it continues to maintain warm relations with Russia, which is now increasingly being seen as China's shadow in international circles. Further Chinese premiere is expected to be in India in July to attend the SCO leaders meeting and may even come back for the G20 leaders summit in September. These are tough tightropes for India to walk.

(The writer is a policy analyst)

Tagore's education is for joy and happiness

The education philosophy of Tagore has received acceptance from the modern-day education policymakers



JS RAJPUT

Gurudev Rabindranath Tagore remains a highly respected intellectual stalwart to most of the Indians who know him as the author of the National Anthem and the recipient of the Nobel Prize for literature in the year 1913 for his renowned collection of poems Geetanjali. The inherent sense of respect stands enhanced when one is informed that he is also the author of the National anthem of Bangladesh. Not only this, the National anthem of Sri Lanka was authored by Ananda Samarakoon while he was a disciple of the Shanti Niketan.

There are clear indications of Tagore's influence on its words, music and thought. Tagore got his Nobel Prize for literature, but his contributions to music, painting, education, social reforms, and freedom struggle, are also of the highest level. He was the visionary who knew at the very beginning of the 20th century that man's relationship with nature is going to get seriously imbalanced with the growth of industrialization. Modernization would lead to militarism, and that would push humankind into wars and violence. Violence would be all around, and heartless conflicts would spread across national boundaries. Indications of such a situation developing were already available from the years of WWI. All this attracted the serious attention of humankind only after WWII, but it is evident to everyone that it has been inadequate and disproportionate.

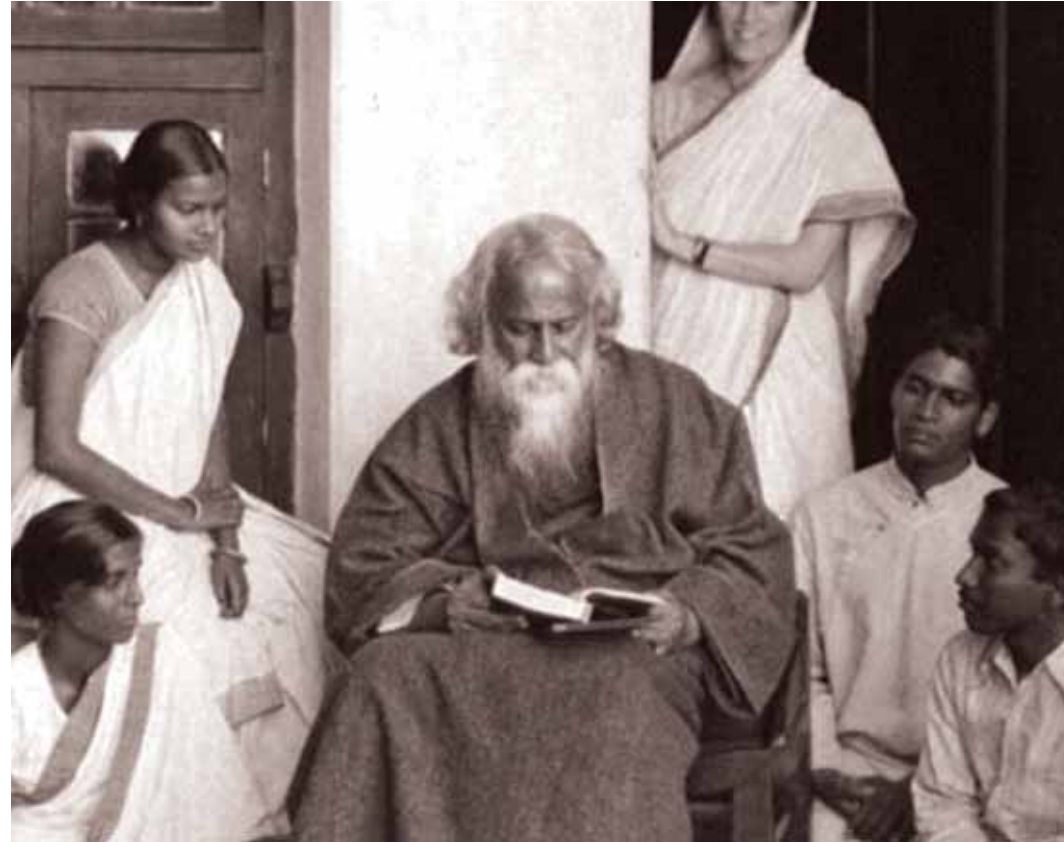
The more one dwells on ideas, vision and philosophy of Tagore, the more one gets convinced of how deeply he had pondered over the elements of outer life and inner life; the spiritual aspects. These get manifested in his writings on education, poems and songs, paintings, and in that great institutional creation, the Shanti Niketan. He was really worried and anxious about the growing materialism in the West, which he found leaning towards the path of destruction. It's now very well realized that he was prophetic in this context, as humanity today is struggling with issues of pollution, potable water crises, melting glaciers, deforestation, dying rivers, and much more. Tagore was convinced that only thinking minds; free minds, and creative minds could recreate the symphony between man and nature, the only Mantra for the survival of humanity on the planet Earth. Devi Prasad, a former student of Shanti Niketan, writes:

The aim of the educational philosophy of Rabindranath was to maintain harmony with a social and natural atmosphere so that everybody would be able to develop all creative capabilities from the very beginning of his or her life. His plan was to make education a means by which the child's mind and body should be able to keep in harmony with the rhythm of nature." He illustrated to anyone interested the difference between the growth and development of children sitting in a room confined to their chair and desk for hours together, to those in the open air environment, running around the trees, plants, bushes, birds and friendly animals! Here they experience the joy of childhood, the happiness of existence, when all this they learn on their own. Keeping them away from nature snatches away the vital of learning from nature and developing an empathetic cord of empathy with nature. It eventually contributes to an increase of distrust, greed, avoidable and un-



THE MORE ONE DWELLS ON IDEAS, VISION AND PHILOSOPHY OF TAGORE, THE MORE ONE GETS CONVINCED OF HOW DEEPLY HE HAD PONDERED OVER THE ELEMENTS OF OUTER LIFE AND INNER LIFE; THE SPIRITUAL ASPECTS

(Professor Rajput works in education, social cohesion and religious amity.)



ecessary accumulation and non-comprehension of man's responsibility toward nature.

The solution lies in the growth and development of every child in natural conditions without imposing unnecessary restrictions. Children are happiest when they are permitted to be free from nature. In short, individuality has to be given due consideration and respect. If the traditional relationship with nature had been preserved, man would not be facing problems with the environment and nature that presently appear insurmountable. It is well-known that Tagore considered modern-day schools like a cage; or even a prison-house, and the confinement of children there as organized torture! To Tagore, the obligation of the parental generation was to give them happiness. According to him freedom and joy were the sine qua non of education, and these were also the motto of his school.

Swami Vivekananda taught us that "education is a manifestation of perfection already in man." And we all know who the 'Perfect One' is! There is no bar on human beings making comprehensive efforts to reach that stage! In the Asramers sika, Tagore mentions: "As God himself finds his own freedom in his own creation and then his nature is fulfilled, human beings, have to create their own world and then they can have their freedom." Thus, curiosity, imagination, ideas and creativity are indeed blessings of the divine that every human being born on earth receives in abundance without any discrimination of any sort. These must be scrupulously and dexterously encouraged to flourish, without impediments.

The modern education system does just the opposite! The unob-

structed expression could be the first essentially towards the flowering of the creative spirit. It could revolutionise intellectual effort and constructive activities, as well as arts, aesthetics and literature. If one recalls the ancient Gurukul system, it would clearly emerge that the man-nature relationship was given its due. An over-alert and happily living community is invariably acknowledged for its original products of intellect and also its outputs in creative sectors of human activity.

At this point, one could recall what Einstein had said: "A hundred times every day I remind myself that my inner and outer life is based on the labours of other men, living and dead and that I must exert myself in order to give in the same measure as I have received and am still receiving." And we all are aware that our very existence on this planet hinges on the sensitive cord that eternally binds humankind to nature, and our own tradition and practice of knowledge quest, both in the outer world and inner self. Education systems the world over must remember, both at the policy formulation stage as also during the implementation, that "education divorced from nature has brought untold harm to young children." It has, consequently, brought/harm to humanity.

Acceptance of the education philosophy of Tagore has received acceptance from modern-day education policymakers. One could particularly point out Tagore's passionate support for the mother tongue as a medium of instruction in education. He was vehemently opposed to the then-prevalent system of education that made learning English com-

pulsory from day one of schooling and the medium of instruction from high school to university education. It separated a vast majority of people from the privileged elite that could afford to get an education in English and English mediums in India or from abroad. Learning English has been the prime factor of high dropout rate in schools and is uniformly responsible for creating considerable demoralization amongst those considered weak in English, even at the present stage. Learning English or through the English medium made the school environment completely alien to a great majority of children. If quality has become a major concern in the Indian education system today, one must seriously examine the contribution of the increasing fascination amongst parents who could afford admissions of their wards in high-fee charging private schools; euphemistically called public schools. In Tagore's approach harmony between the home environment and the learning environment gets high priority. He pleads for freedom, but not at the cost of discipline and formation of character and inculcation of values. That unfortunately is becoming more and more elusive in the ever-expanding phenomenon of urbanization.

There is so much that those entrusted with the implementation of the new education policy could learn from the philosophy of Gurudev. One would be cautious in mentioning that the Vishwa Bharati stands as evidence of his ideas, imagination and vision transformed into a living reality. Let us hope it regains its credibility once again, and that would please everyone who respects Gurudev.

Managers with liberal arts backgrounds make better leaders

Management is transforming from the art of managing science to the science of managing art

Since the inception of the Industrial Revolution, the human race's progress has been fuelled by competition. The adoption of capitalism prevailed over other economic systems primarily due to its reliance on meritocracy and an easy measure of success, wealth.

The competitive fuel proved to be efficient in driving the economics and harmful by depleting the natural resources at a rapid rate. The quality of life in terms of material comforts and living became better with the passage of time. However, appetite and the lust for more comforts, fuelled by competition developed a vicious loop that consumed humans in a rat race. The end goal of the rate race was happiness



SANJAY PADODE

but the means to achieve the end converged to wealth. Due to the depletion of natural resources and increasing competition, the last two centuries witnessed friction resulting in huge wars and growing disparity between the haves and have-nots. Arts and philosophy which were once upon a time considered to be the fuel for thought and progress lost ground to science and economics.

During the early years of capitalistic growth, the growing appetite for the wealth of the rich and powerful generated a demand for human resources who would follow instructions and lend their abilities in lieu of a regular income. This model catered to the needs of the larger mass who were willing to trade risk

with a moderate but continuous and secure income. The education systems evolved to cater to this demand and succumbed to disciplines driven by science and economics. Students of liberal arts began to be identified with social activism since their actions were divergent from those who voluntarily consumed themselves in the rat race. Liberal arts played an important role in preserving the development of essential skills- Communication, critical thinking, and creativity.

Competition fuelled the transition from the industrial age to the digital age. However, the digital age systematically flattened the world by democratising access to information, knowledge and commerce. This

transition created a level playing field for those who could innovate, take risks, think critically, communicate effectively and have the ability to influence others through their inherent ability to empathise and communicate. The pervasive nature of digital technology started to impact cultures, values and established ways of life by providing a means for asking questions and sharing opinions, experiences, achievements and failures with anyone and everyone. This repository of human experiences, opinions and emotions became a breeding ground for those who were willing to listen and seek out opportunities from the human sentiments that lay embedded in this vast repository. This data repository

revived the appetite for crunching numbers using mathematical and statistical models to decipher hidden sentiments, desires and aspirations of humans resulting in the discovery of new business opportunities. Algorithmic decision-making based on structured and unstructured data began replacing intuitive and experiential decision-making. Empathy resumed prominence as the function of listening grew beyond the visual and auditory senses.

The easy access to opportunities for active listeners in this new digital world coupled with the ability to imagine, ideate and create soon brought the students of liberal arts to the forefront. The new age companies started to be driven by design, user

interaction and user experiences contrary to the past wherein businesses thrived on economic value addition. The question is whether managers with liberal arts backgrounds make better leaders. Is being debated and discussed in many popular forums. The jury is still out and there is very limited evidence to prove since we are transitioning between the old normal and the new. The demand for soft skills such as empathy, communication ability, imagination, ideation, creativity, critical thinking and problem-solving is trending north and this is quite evident in the future skills report published by the World Economic Forum. Policymakers, educators and influencers are challenging

the paradigm of education driven by science and economics. The new jobs demand the use of imagination and ideation for innovation. Management is transforming from the art of managing science to the science of managing art. The days of command and control are getting outnumbered. Participative and transformational leadership style is fast replacing transactional and authoritative styles.

The new age roles and the new jobs require a good understanding of the social context coupled with a sound foundation of logic and reasoning, skill and the will to learn. Liberal arts education has demonstrated the delivery of these outcomes for many years.

(The writer is the president of Vijaybhoomi University)

Haaland puts Man City back on top

AP ■ MANCHESTER
Erling Haaland set a new record of 35 goals in a Premier League season as Manchester City overcame West Ham 3-0 to move back to the top of the table on Wednesday, while Liverpool edged out Fulham 1-0.
City were made to work by an under-manned Hammers to edge one point clear of Arsenal in the title race, with a game in hand still to come.
But they cut loose after half-time as Haaland wrote himself into the record books with his 51st goal in all competitions of his debut season at City.
"I do not think of all these records, I would go crazy in my head," said Haaland. "I go home now, play some video games, eat something and then sleep."
The Norwegian was given a guard of honour by his teammates as he left the pitch after full-time.
"In football when there is a special occasion we have to show how special it is," said City boss Pep Guardiola.
"We are very pleased for him because he is a joy to work with, to be with, and everyone is happy to have him with us. The record will be broken in the future, maybe by him."
The visitors were missing England international Declan Rice, Tomas Soucek and Nayef Aguerd through illness, while injuries meant David Moyes could only name five outfield substitutes.
But Moyes' men held out for 50 minutes before succumbing at the Etihad to remain rooted in a relegation battle.
Nathan Ake was the unlikely figure to break the deadlock as the Dutch defender rose highest to power home Riyad Mahrez's free-kick.
But there was no surprise over the scorer of City's second as Haaland raced onto Jack Grealish's pass and deftly dinked the ball over the advancing Lukasz Fabianski.

SALAH ON SPOT
The 22-year-old moved past Alan Shearer and Andy Cole's mark of 34 set for Blackburn and Newcastle respectively in the 1990s.
However, he will still fall somewhat short of the all-time scoring record for a season in the English top flight of 60 set by Everton's Dixie Dean in 1927/28.
Phil Foden came off the bench to add the final flourish as his sweetly-struck volley deflected off Emerson Palmieri to leave Fabianski wrong-footed five minutes from time.



City's 13th consecutive home win in 2023 edges Guardiola's men ever closer to a fifth Premier League title in six seasons.
The champions need just four wins from their remaining five games to ensure Arsenal are denied their first title in 19 years.
Defeat leaves West Ham still four points above the relegation zone with four games to play.
At Anfield, Liverpool refused to give up the fight for a top-four finish by keeping the pressure on Newcastle and Manchester United for the final two places in next season's Champions League behind City and Arsenal.
Jurgen Klopp's men have now won five league consecutive league games for the first time this season.
"Five games in a row is good. I liked it a lot. We have to try to do something we can use, something we can build on in the next season," said Klopp.
Mohamed Salah's 29th goal of the season was the difference between the sides as the Egyptian shrugged off his recent struggles from the penalty spot to convert after Darwin Nunez had been fouled by Issa Diop six minutes before half-time.
Liverpool close to within four points of fourth-placed Manchester United, who have two games in hand.



Lazio extend Napoli's wait for title party

AP ■ ROME
Napoli will have to wait at least one more day to be crowned Italian champions after Lazio beat Sassuolo 2-0 on Wednesday to reclaim second place in Serie A.
Lazio needed to win at the Stadio Olimpico to remain in mathematical contention with five matches to go in their season but more importantly for their own fight to qualify for the Champions League.
Runaway league leaders Napoli are 15 points in front of Lazio ahead of their match at Udinese on Thursday night, when a draw will be enough for Luciano Spalletti's side to seal the Scudetto with a month of the season remaining.
As such Wednesday's clash at the Stadio Olimpico was never about the destination of the league title but rather gaining an advantage in the crowded scrum for the three places left for a spot in Europe's top club competition.
And Lazio are six points ahead of fifth-placed Atalanta thanks to Felipe Anderson's ninth goal of the season, which came in the 14th minute of a tight game after a beautiful chipped pass from Marco Antonio, and a late strike from Toma Basic.
Lazio's bid for the top four was helped by Davide Frattesi's powerful effort in first half stoppage time hitting the

bar and AC Milan only drawing 1-1 with Cremonese thanks to Junior's Messias' fortunate leveller in the final seconds.
Sixth-placed Milan host Lazio on Saturday before then taking on local rivals Inter Milan in the first leg of a blockbuster Champions League semi-final, and Stefano Pioli's second-string again failed to deliver when called upon.
Cremonese meanwhile are six points behind Spezia and Verona, who sit either side of the relegation zone and suffered respective defeats to Atalanta and Inter.
Simone Inzaghi's Inter are fourth following their thumping 6-0 win at Verona, which moved them up to fourth ahead of their trip to injury-ravaged Roma, who dropped down to seventh following a 1-1 draw at Monza.
Juventus are a point behind Lazio in third after Dusan Vlahovic's first league goal in nearly three months which earned his team a 2-1 win over struggling Lecce.
Boulaye Dia's hat-trick was not enough for Salernitana as Fiorentina levelled each one of the Senegal forward's strikes to claim an exciting 3-3 draw.
Meanwhile rock-bottom Sampdoria, who have serious financial problems, slipped closer to Serie B after a 2-0 home defeat to Torino which left them 11 points from safety with five games to play.

PSG fans protest over Messi saga, disappointing form

AP ■ PARIS
Hundreds of fans gathered at PSG on Wednesday to protest over the club's current form and the Messi saga, as the Argentinian superstar's future at PSG was plunged into doubt following his suspension, after he travelled to Saudi Arabia without the club's permission.
When Lionel Messi arrived from his beloved Barcelona in 2021, PSG fans hoped he would transform the club into a Champions League powerhouse. But Messi has struggled to reproduce his best form at Qatar-backed Paris — even though he has scored 31 goals in 71 appearances in all competitions.
"We're fed up with mercenaries! We must sack Messi! We must sack Nasser Al-Khelaifi (the club's Qatari president)," supporters chanted.
"We are sincerely worried about the future and the sustainability of our club," the team's 'ultras' supporters said in a statement, adding "is there still a pilot on the plane?"
Meanwhile, several videos posted on



Twitter appeared to show a group of supporters, dressed in black gathered in front of the home of Neymar, shouting abuse at their injured Brazilian superstar.
This came after Messi was jeered by a section of the PSG support, who see him as a symbol of all the club have done wrong in focusing on superstar signings while failing to build a genuinely competitive team.
Messi's form since leading Argentina to World Cup glory in Qatar has declined along with that of most of the PSG team.
Their insipid performance against Lorient was a sixth defeat in 17 Ligue 1 matches in 2023.
They remain five points clear of Marseille at the top of the table with five games left, and are therefore still on course for a record 11th French title.
However, they were knocked out of the Champions League in the last 16 by Bayern Munich and also went out of the French Cup at the same stage to Marseille.



Frankfurt reach German Cup final

AP ■ FRANKFURT
Eintracht Frankfurt came from a goal down to book a date with RB Leipzig in the German Cup final with a 3-2 win over Stuttgart on Wednesday. Trailing after a Tiago Tomas goal, the Europa League champions scored two goals in five second-half minutes through Evan Ndicka and Daichi Kamada to turn the game.
France striker Randal Kolo Muani was brought down in the box with 15 minutes remaining and converted the penalty.
Stuttgart's Enzo Millot pulled one back but the home side were reduced to 10 men shortly after when Borna Sosa picked up a second yellow.
Frankfurt survived a VAR review for a handball in the penalty area in the seventh

minute of injury time to remain on track for a sixth German Cup title.
Frankfurt manager Oliver Glasner admitted his team "were lucky today", telling Germany's ARD network "I'm crazily happy and proud of the boys."
"We're very happy to be going to Berlin."
Stuttgart goalkeeper Fabian Bredlow said his side's "disappointment is huge", complaining "the ball clearly hit the arm" of a Frankfurt player in the final seconds.
"With a little bit of luck we'd get the penalty, we'd shoot 3-3 and it'd go into extra time."
Frankfurt, who last won the title in 2018 with a 3-1 win over Bayern Munich, will meet Leipzig, who dispatched Freiburg 5-1 on Tuesday, on June 3 in the German capital.

Atletico overtake Real with Cadiz rout



AP ■ MADRID
Antoine Griezmann shone as Atletico Madrid thrashed Cadiz 5-1 on Wednesday to climb above rivals Real Madrid into second in La Liga.
Diego Simeone's side are a point above the champions but 13 behind leaders Barcelona, who just need two more points to clinch the title. Struggling Valencia earned a 1-1 draw with fifth-placed Villarreal but remain in 17th place, level on points with Getafe, 18th, who beat Celta Vigo 1-0.
Griezmann broke the deadlock in the second minute and added a second to give Atletico a comfortable lead against Cadiz and continue his own superb form. The French forward has 13 goals and 13 assists this season in La Liga.
With Griezmann pulling the strings, the Rojiblancos have been the division's best side in 2023. While it is too late for them to earn any silverware, overtaking Real does offer some small reward.
Alvaro Morata netted the third in the 49th minute and Yannick Carrasco converted a penalty for the fourth.
Chucky Lozano smashed in a brilliant consolation for Cadiz, 15th and only a point above the drop zone, but Nahuel Molina tucked home Atletico's fifth immediately after.
Samuel Lino struck for Valencia to cancel out Villarreal forward Nicolas Jackson's opener at Mestalla, saving the hosts from a fourth defeat in six games and keeping them just outside the drop zone.
Getafe stayed on their tail with their narrow victory thanks to Enes Unal's early penalty, putting pressure on Espanyol, 19th, who are three points behind and visit Sevilla on Thursday.
Jose Bordalas' side undid some of the damage from their 1-0 defeat by Espanyol on Sunday.
The draw dents Villarreal's chances of Champions League qualification, leaving them seven points behind Real Sociedad in fourth, who beat champions Real Madrid on Tuesday.

Real Madrid close in on Bellingham deal — Reports



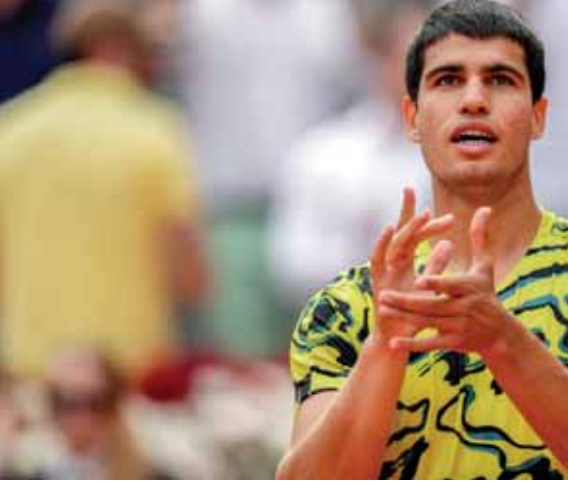
AP ■ MADRID
Real Madrid are closing in on Borussia Dortmund midfielder Jude Bellingham, with Spanish reports on Wednesday saying a deal will soon be reached.
The England international, 19, is one of the brightest prospects in world football and is poised to move for over 100 million euros (\$110 million), with Dortmund said to want considerably more.
Bellingham excelled at the World Cup with England in 2022 and has also drawn interest from Madrid's Champions League semi-final opponents Manchester City.
The midfielder signed for Dortmund at 17 from Championship team Birmingham City for 29 million euros (\$32 million) and has become a key player for the German side.
Spanish newspaper Marca say any deal between Madrid and Dortmund will not be announced until the end of the Bundesliga season, with Bellingham's side a point behind leaders Bayern Munich in the title race.
Madrid are looking to find long-term replacements for their veteran players, including midfielders Luka Modric, 37, and Toni Kroos, 33.
Los Blancos brought in young French duo Eduardo Camavinga and Aurelien Tchouameni over the past two summer transfer windows and sold holding midfielder Casemiro to Manchester United.
Bellingham has scored 21 goals for Dortmund in 130 appearances across all competitions since arriving in 2020.

Neeraj competes for first time as Diamond League champion

PIT ■ DOHA
Competing for the first time as a Diamond League champion, star javelin thrower Neeraj Chopra will be up against his familiar nemesis in the first of the prestigious meetings series on Friday, as he aims to begin a 'long' season, studded with with top international events, with a strong performance.
The 25-year-old Chopra, also a 2022 World Championships silver winner, faces the likes of reigning world champion Anderson Peters of Grenada and Tokyo Olympics silver medalist Jakub Vadlejch of Czech Republic in a star-studded field at the Qatar Sports Club.
Chopra, who has a personal best and national record of 89.94m, had finished fourth with 87.43m in 2018 in the only other participation in the Doha Diamond League. He could not take part here last year due to lack of "overall fitness and strength". Despite missing the Doha leg, Chopra went on to script history one after the other last year. He became the first Indian Diamond League champion after winning the 2022 grand finale in Zurich. A month before that, he became the first Indian to win a Diamond League Meeting in Lausanne.

'I want to be best' says Alcaraz — even at marbles

AP ■ MADRID
Carlos Alcaraz on Wednesday said that his competitive fires burn so intensely that he not only wants to become the world's greatest tennis player, he also plans to reign supreme at marbles.
World number two and US Open champion Alcaraz made the Madrid Open semi-finals by beating Karen Khachanov 6-4, 7-5 for his 27th win in 29 matches in 2023.
"I want to be one of the best tennis players in history," said Alcaraz who turns 20 on Friday when the semi-finals in the Spanish capital take place.
"I'm ambitious. I don't want to lose -- even at marbles. I'm not going to get tired of winning. I live from day to day, I love playing tennis so I'm not afraid that I'll get tired of winning because that's not going to happen."
Alcaraz has already played 150 ATP Tour matches, winning 117 times.
That run has included nine career titles while his 2022 US Open triumph saw him become the sport's youngest ever world number one.
"I am proud that in such a short time I have established myself on the circuit with incredible moments, which have made me learn and grow very quickly," said Alcaraz.
"My dream in tennis right now is to become one of the best players in history. I know it's a big dream -- probably too big. But you have to dream and think big."
On Wednesday, the top seed fought his way back from 4-1 and 5-2 down in the second set to triumph in one hour 52 minutes over 12th-ranked Khachanov.
Alcaraz blew away Alexander Zverev on Tuesday in a repeat of last year's final in the Spanish capital, but Khachanov put up stiffer opposition.
"Winning this match will give me a lot of confidence, Karen was at a great level and took me to the limit," said Alcaraz who unleashed 31 winners.



"It was decided by small details and I am very, very happy to be able to get through this round."
The Russian, who knocked out compatriot Andrey Rublev this week and also reached the Australian Open semi-finals, showed no fear in the first set despite his opponent's form.
Eventually Alcaraz found a decisive break to take a 4-3 lead with a strong forehand which Khachanov could not return successfully.
The Spaniard consolidated and served it out.
In the second set Khachanov broke for a 3-1 lead when Alcaraz went long after saving a first break point.
The world number 12 forced two more in the sixth game but could not convert either as Alcaraz fought hard to hold.
Alcaraz's perseverance paid off as he broke with a volley to get back on serve at 4-5.
The US Open champion consolidated his break and then earned another when Khachanov hit the net with an attempted forehand winner.
Aiming for his 10th tour level title the crowd-pleasing home favourite sealed his progress with a powerful forehand drive.
Alcaraz will face Daniel Altmaier or Borna Coric in Friday's semi-finals.

KKR KEEP THEMSELVES IN THE HUNT AS SRH'S FORTUNES DIP

PTI ■ HYDERABAD

The self-destructing batters let Sunrisers Hyderabad down again to hand a Kolkata Knight Riders a much needed five-run win in the IPL here on Thursday, keeping the Nitish Rana-led side alive in the tournament.

Rana and Rinku Singh came up with a fruitful 61-run partnership to help KKR post 171 for nine and then their bowlers, especially Shardul Thakur (2/23) and Vaibhav Arora (2/32), helped the two-time IPL champions limit Sunrisers Hyderabad to 166 for eight in 20 overs.

Varun Chakaravathy bowled a brilliant 20th over to eke out a welcome win for his team. KKR earned their fourth victory of the season and are now on eight points, while SRH, who remained stranded on six points, suffered a huge body blow to their chances of making the playoffs.

The victory was hard-fought for KKR, given that SRH's South African pair of skipper Aiden Markram (41 off 40 balls) and Heinrich Klaasen (36 off 20 balls) had at one point in time looked to take the match away with their 70-run partnership.

Markram and Klaasen produced innings of character but their dismissal in quick succession spelt doom for the home side as the later-order batters

couldn't get going. The KKR pair of Rana and Rinku came together at the crease at a time when the team was struggling at 49 for three at the end of powerplay.

But by the time Rana departed in the 12th over, his 31-ball 42 studded with three fours and an equal number of maximums had put the team on course to a fighting total.

While wickets continued to fall at the other end, with West Indians Andre Russell and Sunil Narine hardly making an impact, Rinku (46 off 35 balls) curbed his natural instinct and played patiently to give the side a decent total to defend.

It was another forgettable start for KKR with opener Rahmanullah Gurbaz unable to recreate the magic of the previous game against Gujarat Titans. The 21-year-old Afghanistan opener fell to a length ball from South African quick Marco Jansen off the first delivery of the second over as he tried flick it over mid-wicket but was a tad late and the top edge flew to Harry Brook at mid-on.

Venkatesh Iyer departed five balls later, becoming Jansen's second victim as the tall pacer sent down the short stuff that the KKR batter uncomfortably tried to hook, only to pop it high up in the air for wicketkeeper Heinrich Klaasen to take an easy catch.

India seamer Bhuvneshwar



Kumar kept it tight at the other end, conceding just 12 runs in his first two overs as the home team endured yet another poor start.

After bowling two wides and a no-ball, the Uttar Pradesh cricketer got the big wicket of England opener Jason Roy.

Roy's premeditated cross-bat heave took a big edge and flew to short third man as Mayank Agarwal took a simple catch.

SRH too were off to a poor start in their chase, with KKR pace bowler Harshit Rana once again exposed SRH opener Mayank Agarwal's frailty while facing the short-pitched deliveries. While the opener was comfortable playing his strokes on both sides of the wicket, Rana tested him with a delivery touching 140kmph and angled into the body on middle and leg stump.

Mayank played a defensive hook while trying to get his head out of harm's way and lobbed the ball for the keeper to take an easy catch.

Mayank's soft dismissals put the pressure back on the fragile SRH top-order and eight runs later, SRH were reduced to 37 for 2 in the fourth over after Abhishek Sharma too headed back to the dugout with Russell lunging forward to take a catch at deep backward square off a Shardul delivery.



Bangar asked if I was training? Jadhav after his return to RCB

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Kedar Jadhav had kept himself in shape while commenting on the ongoing IPL before he got a surprise call from Sanjay Bangar to play for Royal Challengers Bangalore in the remainder of the season.

The 38-year-old had scored tons of runs in Ranji Trophy after missing out on the premier domestic T20 event last year.

The former India batter recalled his chat with Bangar which led to his unexpected

inclusion in the RCB squad midway into the season.

"Absolutely surprised, but a pleasant one. I was doing commentary and Sanjay Bhai called me asking what I was doing. I told him I was commenting. He inquired whether I was still practising and I replied in the affirmative - twice a week," he said in a team statement.

"Bangar then asked me about my fitness to which I said I was regular at the gym and even using it in my hotel. In short, I told him I was in good



shape. He asked a time and said he'll call me back. It was that moment I realized that he would call me and tell me to play for RCB."

Jadhav represented RCB previously in 2016 and 2017, playing 17 matches and scoring 311 runs at an average of 23.92 and a strike rate of 142.66.

The batter was in terrific form in the recently-concluded Ranji Trophy in which he scored a 283 for Maharashtra.

"I took a break for a year but then I realised that I was miss-

ing my passion and when I returned to first-class cricket, I found it very easy. To be honest it was because of the experience I have.

"It was the same hunger I had in the early '20s, the hunger to score big runs and that's when I felt I can now come back and play again at all the levels and I was prepared for it, I've always performed well," he added.

RCB will play their next match against Delhi Capitals on Saturday.

RR to challenge GT for top spot

PTI ■ JAIPUR

Gujarat Titans will be eager to move on from their underwhelming batting display when they take on an inconsistent Rajasthan Royals, which will challenge the Hardik Pandya-led side for the top spot, in the Indian Premier League here on Friday.

Both teams are coming off losses and will look to get back to winning ways.

Gujarat Titans are perched atop the points table with 12 points despite their five-run loss to wooden spooners Delhi Capitals, while the Royals are on the fourth spot and have 10 points.

The Sanju Samson-led side has ample talent but has been unable to hold on to a winning run recently. Rajasthan have lost three games and won as many in their last six fixtures.

In their last match against Mumbai Indians, the much-feared bowling department failed to defend 212.

Pace spearhead Trent Boult, all-rounder Jason Holder, spinner Yuzvendra Chahal and Kuldeep Sen all leaked runs. They would hope for a better show at home on Friday.

The Royals can take a bit of solace from the fact that they emerged victorious earlier in the season against GT.

Rajasthan have the firepower in their batting line-up to pile on runs. Young Yashasvi Jaiswal is enjoying a fine run but the team needs the trio of Jos Buttler, Sanju Samson and Shimron Hetmyer to fire.

They will have their task cut out when they are up against the potent GT bowling attack, led by Mohammed Shami and the wily Rashid Khan.

A win for Rajasthan, who have a Net Run Rate of +0.800, at the Sawai Man Singh Stadium will catapult them to the top of the table.

The Titans, on the other hand, have to get over their lacklustre batting display against the Capitals where they failed to chase down 130.

It was a day when the likes of in-form Shubman Gill and David Miller failed and skipper Pandya, who anchored the innings, took the onus of the loss on himself as he failed to accelerate towards the end.

The bowling, however, was on point against the Capitals. Veteran Shami continues to make it look so easy with subtle movement of his fingers around the seam at the delivery. He sizzled with the new ball and will look for an encore.

The spin department is led by the ever-reliable Rashid, who has another Afghani Noor Ahmad to complement him.

We need to find option restrict teams under 200: Rohit Sharma



PTI ■ MOHALI

Mumbai Indians skipper Rohit Sharma is a happy man that his team successfully chased down totals in excess of 200 in back-to-back games but he said they need to improve as a bowling unit.

Mumbai Indians have conceded 200 plus scores their last four games and the inexperience of the pace attack and rustiness of Jofra Archer is affecting them.

"It is something that we need to look at, certain options we need to take in the middle of the overs, how to shut off overs,"

Rohit said at the post-match presentation ceremony.

"It's been three or four games where we have conceded 200, so we need to find those options in the middle."

But he did accept that par scores have changed a lot in the last 16 years of IPL.

"When we started T20 format, 140-150 was a winning score. But look at this one. Plus one extra batter makes a huge difference as well. Not just to us but across the IPL. I just checked that the average score this IPL is 180," the MI skipper said.

As it has been with

Suryakumar Yadav, his 66 off 31 balls had some breathtaking shots behind the square and his skipper wasn't at all surprised.

"Look, he has been doing that for the last couple of years. To play behind the wicket, that's his strength and he utilised it really well. Surya and Kishan batted brilliantly and good finish by Tim and Tilak."

"Before the start of the season we spoke about how we want to play our cricket. With the bat, we just wanted to go out there and play fearlessly and not worry about the results. Often when you think about the results

KKR named Charles as Litton's replacement

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Kolkata Knight Riders on Thursday named Johnson Charles as a replacement for Litton Das for the remainder of the Indian Premier League.

Das returned to Bangladesh due to a family medical emergency last week.

The 28-year-old, who was bought by KKR at his base price of Rs 50 lakh at last year's auction, was dropped after playing just one match against Delhi Capitals. Charles - a wicketkeeper-batter - has represented West Indies in 41 T20Is, scoring 971 runs and was a part of West Indies' 2012 and 2016 ICC World Twenty20-winning squads.

Additionally, he has played 224 T20s and has over 5600 runs against his name.

you move away from your plans. But we talked right at the start that we want to be fearless."

Rohit was all praise for Ishan Kishan's brute power in his 75 off 41 balls.

"(Kishan) is a little man but he has got a lot of power. He practices those shots that we saw today. So what matters is what he does off the field and it comes off on the field," Rohit stated.

Mirabai, Indian lifters aim at improving Olympic qualification ranking at Asian C'ships

PTI ■ JINJU

Tokyo Olympics silver medalist weightlifter Mirabai Chanu will once again spearhead the Indian challenge at the Asian Championships but she is unlikely to attempt the much-awaited 90kg snatch lift here on Friday.

The two-time Commonwealth Games champion had won silver in her last outing at the World Championship in December with an overall effort of 200kg (87kg + 113kg).

It was far from her personal best of 207kg (88kg + 119kg) and this time too, the former world champion 49kg lifter is not expected to test her limits.

"Mira only has to participate here. We will take it easy," head coach Vijay Sharma told PTI.

"She will just participate and lift 85kg (snatch)...110kg (clean and jerk), totals that she can easily get," Sharma added.

This means the wait for the coveted 90kg snatch lift could be longer. Chanu, who struggles with a back issue that affects her snatch, has been trying to breach the 90kg-mark since 2020.

But with the Olympics still a year to go and the Asian Games scheduled in September, the Manipuri wants to peak at the right time.

The last time Chanu competed at the event in 2021, she made history by creating a new world record in the clean and jerk category, which still stands.

"We will create world records in the Olympic year. She was at her peak the last time she was here because Olympics were just around the corner. The Paris Olympics is next year. There is no point peaking now."

"We have to take keep in mind her age also, she is not a kid anymore, her body needs to be taken care of more now," Sharma said of the 28-year-old.

The Indian will renew her rivalry with the Chinese duo of Jiang Huihua and Hou Zhihui, who have the highest entry weights of 205kg each. Zhihui is the reigning Olympic champion.

Chanu, on the other hand, has the second highest entry weight, along with two other lifters. In the latest Olympic Qualification Ranking (OQR), Chanu is in the second spot

behind Huihua.

It will also be the first time Jeremy Lalrinnunga (67kg) and Achinta Sheuli (73kg) compete in an event since winning the gold at the Commonwealth Games last August.

While Jeremy had been nursing a high injury, Achinta had to withdraw from the World Championships in December at the last minute after he pulled his hamstring during the warm ups.

The duo will aim to collect the required ranking points to qualify for the Paris Olympics.

Jeremy will continue to compete in non-Olympic 67kg weight class. The Aizawl lifter was supposed to bulk up to the 73kg Olympic weight class but has decided to wait till after the Asian Games in September.

"Till the Asian Games, he will remain in this (67kg) category, after that we will change it," Sharma said. Commonwealth Games silver medalist Bindyarani Devi has also moved back from 59kg to 55kg.

The 24-year-old had finished 25th at the Worlds in the 59kg Olympic weight class. However, an injury before the selection trials has forced her to move back to her original weight division.

Reigning national champions Shubham Todkar (61kg) and Narayana Ajith will be making their international debuts. The Asian Championship is the qualifying event for the 2024 Paris Olympics, where weightlifting events will be cut from 14 at Tokyo Games to 10.

However, it is an additional event and not a compulsory one. Under the 2024 Olympic qualification rule, a lifter has to compulsorily compete in the 2023 World Championships and the 2024 World Cup.

Apart from the two, the lifter also has to participate in three of the events from among the 2022 World Championships, 2023 Continental Championships, 2023 Grand Prix I and 2023 Grand Prix II and 2024 Continental Championships.

Indian Squad: Mirabai Chanu (49kg), Bindyarani Devi (55kg), Shubham Todkar (61kg), Jeremy Lalrinnunga (67kg), Achinta Sheuli (73kg), Narayana Ajith (73kg).

Pak register first ODI series win over NZ in 12 years

AP ■ KARACHI

Pakistan registered their first ODI series win over New Zealand in 12 years with a hard-fought 26-run victory in the third match in Karachi on Wednesday.

Imam-ul-Haq scored a 107-ball 90 while Babar Azam made a 62-ball 54 for his 26th ODI half-century to guide Pakistan to 287-6 in their 50 overs.

Opener Tom Blundell hit 65 for New Zealand while debutant Cole McConchie struck an undefeated 45-ball 64 but the visitors were bowled out for 261 in 49.1 overs.

Pakistan's last ODI series

Pakistan, who won the first two matches by five and seven wickets respectively in Rawalpindi, took an unassailable 3-0 lead in the five-match series.

"It's always a relief when you win a series and it was a good team effort," said Azam. "We put (on) a good total and then (the) bowlers were outstanding."

"The focus is now to not relax and come out strongly for the next two matches and hopefully we can continue to give one hundred percent."

The last two matches are on Friday and Sunday, also in Karachi.



win over New Zealand was in 2011 and since then they had lost six of the seven series, with one drawn.

New Zealand threatened to run away with a win as Blundell and Will Young (33 off 41 balls) gave them a confident opening stand of 83 in 15.3 overs.

Pakistan finally broke through with Young's run out off a direct throw from short third-man, before Mohammad Wasim dismissed Daryl Mitchell for 21 - the man who had hit successive hundreds in the last two matches.

Fifteen runs later, Blundell

was also run out after failing to reach his crease in an attempt to complete a second run. He hit seven boundaries in his knock.

Tom Latham, who made 45, and Mark Chapman (13) added 40 for the fourth wicket but pacer Naseem Shah bowled Chapman with a beautiful delivery before Latham was cleaned up by Wasim.

McConchie tied valiantly to snatch a victory for New Zealand, smashing two sixes and six fours but ran out of partners.

Naseem, Wasim and Shaheen Shah Afridi all took two wickets for Pakistan.