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PM Johnson appoints 3 Indian-origin leaders to his ministerial team
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NEARBY



Drug menace: Haryana, H.P. mull MCOA-like law

CHEANDIGARH
Haryana and Himachal Pradesh have disclosed that they are considering a legislation on the lines of the Maharashtra Control of Organised Crime Act to tackle the drug menace in their States. Seven northern States and a Union Territory on Thursday decided to set up a joint working group to share experiences and best practices in their respective campaigns against drugs.

NORTH ▶ PAGE 5

NGT nod to Yamuna water conservation project

NEW DELHI
The National Green Tribunal on Thursday approved the Delhi government's proposal to create waterbodies and reservoirs on the Yamuna floodplains. The reservoirs will store water overflowing from the Yamuna during the monsoon and help recharge groundwater. The project is aimed at tackling the water crisis in the Capital.

CITY ▶ PAGE 2

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FRIDAY REVIEW ▶ 8 PAGES
(TABLOID)

Karnataka Speaker disqualifies three rebel Congress MLAs

They stand barred from participating during the term of the current Assembly

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
BENGALURU

Two days after the Janata Dal (Secular)-Congress coalition government lost the vote of confidence, Assembly Speaker K.R. Ramesh Kumar disqualified three MLAs

DISQUALIFIED CONGRESS MLAS



R. Shankar (Ranebennur) Ramesh Jarkiholi (Gokak) Mahesh Kumathalli (Athani)

The three disqualified MLAs will not be able to contest bypolls to re-enter the House in its present term

If MLAs change their mind according to their whims and fancies, shouldn't the voter who has elected them have a say? I am setting a precedent here

K.R. RAMESH KUMAR,
SPEAKER

Speaking at a press conference late on Thursday, Mr. Ramesh Kumar promised to take a decision on the resignation of the 13 other rebel legislators "in the next couple of days". He added, "I know this matter will go to court."

The Speaker disqualified Congress legislators Ramesh L. Jarkiholi and Mahesh Kumathalli, representing the Gokak and Athani constituencies in Belagavi district, and KPJP legislator R. Shankar, representing Ranebennur in Haveri district, under the Tenth Schedule of the Constitution.

Mr. Shankar had merged his party with the Congress just last month.

The disqualification of the three MLAs, which is open to judicial review, brings down the strength of the Assembly to 222, including the nominated member.

The Speaker's decision adds a new dimension to the already fluid situation.

plaint on July 7.

Over the last two days, after the collapse of the 14-month-old H.D. Kumaraswamy-led government, all eyes were on the Speaker's decision on the resignation of the rebel legislators and the disqualification proceedings initiated against them.

Mr. Ramesh Kumar said: "I will be taking a decision on the resignations of [the 13 other] rebel MLAs in a couple of days."

Though he acknowledged that the anti-defection law could not be used by parties to throttle internal democracy, Mr. Ramesh Kumar, however, cited the judgement of Vice-President M. Venkaiah Naidu in the case of former minister and JD(U) leader Sharad Yadav's disqualification from the Rajya Sabha, and the disqualification of 18 AIADMK legislators in Tamil Nadu after they

approached the Governor.

"Whatever Karnataka rebel legislators told the Supreme Court, they could have told the same thing to the government," he said, referring to the charges that the rebels made against the government in their affidavits filed in apex court.

"The party's decision is collective. If individuals have a problem, they have to raise the issue within the party. It is a settled law and there is clarity (on this issue)," Mr. Ramesh Kumar said. However, when his attention was drawn to several of the disqualified AIADMK MLAs contesting in by-elections to the State Assembly, he said that he was not aware of the circumstances in which this happened.

CONTINUED ON ▶ PAGE 12
'REBELS ON THEIR TOES TO BECOME MINISTERS' ▶ PAGE 8

OVERVIEW

While the Congress-JD(S) coalition has already been voted out, the BJP is yet to stake claim to form the next government.

"They have been disqualified with immediate effect and till the expiry of the legislative Assembly (2023 or otherwise, if dissolved early). They cannot enter the 15th legislative Assembly again," the Speaker said.

The disqualification was initiated against them under paragraphs of 2 (1) (a) of the Tenth Schedule, read with Article 19(2), he added.

On party's complaint

While the disqualification proceedings against Mr. Jarkiholi and Mr. Kumathalli have been initiated based on the Congress's petition against them on February 11, the proceedings against Mr. Shankar are based on the party's com-

July 5 granted her 30 days parole after she argued her case in person. Since her arrest in May 1991, Nalini has come out on parole only twice – both confined to under a day's visit – once to attend her brother's wedding and subsequently after her father died.

Twelve conditions

Prison authorities have imposed 12 conditions during her parole period.

Her advocate P. Pugalenchi said the conditions included, "No meetings with political leaders, no interviews to the media, no participation in public functions, signing of the register at the Sathuvachari police station and maintaining good conduct throughout the period."

He added that the arrangements for her daughter's wedding were being expedited. The daughter is expected to fly from London after the arrangements are finalised.

She reached Pulavar Nagar at Rangapuram, Vellore, where she will stay for the period of her leave in a house belonging to a functionary of the Dravida Iyakkai Tamizhar Peravai. The arrangements for her stay were finalised a fortnight ago.

Escorted by women police personnel, Nalini reached the house in Pulavar Nagar and was welcomed by her mother Padma with a traditional arati.

The Madras High Court on

+ Rajiv case convict released on parole for daughter's wedding

Prison authorities have set stringent conditions during Nalini's 30-day stay at Pulavar Nagar in Vellore



Nalini, a convict in the Rajiv Gandhi assassination case, leaving a prison in Vellore on Thursday.

■ C. VENKATACHALAPATHY

EC sets up teams to probe VVPAT mismatch in Lok Sabha election

Of 1.25 crore votes counted, 51 did not match, says panel

DAMINI NATH
NEW DELHI

After reports of mismatches between the Voter Verifiable Paper Audit Trail (VVPAT) slips and the Electronic Voting Machine (EVM) count in eight cases during the Lok Sabha election, the Election Commission has set up teams to probe seven of the cases.

Of the 1.25 crore VVPAT slips counted, 51 or 0.0004% of the total saw a mismatch, according to facts shared by the EC on July 21.

The EC on Wednesday ordered the Chief Electoral Officers to analyse the mismatches. For one of the cases pertaining to Manipur, the enquiry team was not set



The teams have been given 10 days to analyse the mismatches.

up as an election petition has been filed, an EC official said on Thursday.

Another EC source said the teams were given 10 days to analyse the mismatch.

The orders cited a May 21 letter by the EC that said tho-

rough probes would be conducted in case of a mismatch between VVPAT slips and EVM count to ascertain the technological, procedural, systemic and human errors or lapses in compliance. These could include the possibility of returning officers not clearing the mock votes and manual errors while tallying the VVPAT slips.

The mismatches mark the first time there were any, since VVPAT recounts were implemented in the 2017 Assembly elections.

Under the electoral rules, if there is any discrepancy in the match, the VVPAT count prevails.

The orders cited a May 21 letter by the EC that said tho-

Subhash Garg seeks voluntary retirement

He was shunted out as Finance Secy.

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

A day after he was shunted out as Finance Secretary, senior IAS officer Subhash Chandra Garg on Thursday announced that he had sought voluntary retirement.

The government on Wednesday announced that Mr. Garg was being transferred from his position as Finance Secretary and Economic Affairs Secretary to take over as Power Secretary.

"Handed over charge of Economic Affairs today. Learnt so much in the Finance Ministry and Economic Affairs Dept. Will take charge in Power Ministry tomorrow. Have also applied for Voluntary Retirement.

CONTINUED ON ▶ PAGE 12



ment with effect from 31st October..." Mr. Garg tweeted.

Sources close to the development said Mr. Garg had become the "fall guy" after the government faced flak from RSS-affiliated groups over the proposed issue of overseas sovereign bonds.

Sources close to the development said Mr. Garg had become the "fall guy" after the government faced flak from RSS-affiliated groups over the proposed issue of overseas sovereign bonds.

'100 pending cases? Set up a POCSO court'

Supreme Court orders courts to be set up within 60 days

KRISHNADAS RAJAGOPAL
NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Thursday directed the setting up of special courts in districts that have over 100 cases of child abuse and sexual assault pending trial under the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act.

A Bench, led by the Chief Justice of India, ordered that the courts be set up within 60 days. They will be established under a Central government scheme.

This means that the

Centre will fund everything

Other measures

- Ministry of Women and Child Development shall "necessarily" screen a short clip in movie halls and TV channels to spread awareness about prevention of child abuse and prosecution of crimes against children
- A child helpline number shall be displayed in the clip and in other prominent places, including in schools and public places.

from the payment of the presiding officers, staff and support persons to the court's

child-friendly infrastructure.

Solicitor-General Tushar Mehta was asked to file a progress report in four weeks. The court said it would take up the matter again on September 26.

The order came on a *suo motu* PIL petition registered by the court after being concerned with the "alarming rise" in child abuse cases, and their long pendency. The CJI said there was no excuse for a long delay in justice for the victims.

'ENSURE FUNDS' ▶ PAGE 12

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A.N.D.E

IN BRIEF



Plea to restrict cash transactions at ₹10,000

NEW DELHI
A PIL was moved in the Delhi HC on Thursday seeking directions to the Centre and the AAP government to cap cash transactions at ₹10,000, saying such a step would help curb illegal activities like terrorism, corruption and use of black money. The petition, by BJP leader and lawyer Ashwini Kumar Upadhyay, claimed that "cash transaction in high denomination currency is used in illegal activities like terrorism, separatism, radicalism, smuggling, money laundering, kidnapping, extortion and bribery". PTI

Air quality of Delhi-NCR			
Delhi	78	Gurugram	47
Ghaziabad	89	Faridabad	43
Noida	67	Greater Noida	64
Good 0-50	51-100	Moderate 101-200	
Poor 201-300	Very poor 301-400	Severe 401->401	
AIR QUALITY INDEX AT 4 P.M. YESTERDAY (AVERAGE OF PAST 24 HOURS) SOURCE: CPCB			

DELHI TODAY

Talk: Dr. Upneet Lalli, Deputy Director, Institute of Correctional Administration, Chandigarh will give a lecture on "Restorative Justice in Prisons". The event will be chaired by P.S. Bawa, former Director General of Police at Conference Room - I, India International Centre (IIC), 6.30 p.m.

Dance: "Shringaram, a Bharatanatyam margam" a dance recital by Radhika Ramuanji at The Stein Auditorium, India Habitat Centre (IHC), 7 p.m.

Theatre: Ghalib Institute has organised a five-day long Urdu Drama Festival on the occasion of its Golden Jubilee celebrations. Today's event will feature the drama, "Chacha Chhakkan in Action" at Ghalib Auditorium, Awan-e-Ghalib Marg, 6.30 p.m.

Exhibition: A solo paintings show by Parul Golchha Ranika at Triveni Gallery, Triveni Kala Sangam, 205, Tansen Marg, 11 a.m.-8 p.m.

Exhibition: "Khwabeeda: A dreamer", a solo painting show by Nandita Richie at Open Palm Court Gallery, IHC, 11 a.m.-7 p.m. (Mail your listings for this column at cityeditor@thehindu.co.in)

Green panel approves creation of reservoirs on Yamuna floodplains

Conservation project to recharge groundwater; to help tackle water crisis in city

STAFF REPORTER
NEW DELHI



NGT BENCH

The National Green Tribunal (NGT) on Thursday approved a Delhi government's proposal to create water bodies and reservoirs on the Yamuna floodplains.

The reservoirs, which will be created between Palla and Wazirabad, will store water overflowing from the Yamuna during monsoons and help recharge the groundwater. This will help tackle water crisis in the Capital.

Imposes conditions
A Bench headed by NGT Chairperson Justice A.K. Goel said, "In view of the fact that the project is not expected to disturb the main direction of this tribunal for rejuvenation of river Yamuna and is to be executed subject to the conditions im-

posed by the committee, the same may proceed in accordance with law subject to any challenge thereto."

An NGT-appointed principal committee had imposed conditions to be taken into consideration during the execution of the project.

"The proposal is to be carried out as a pilot project at one location only to study the techno-economic viability and to identify the quantum of groundwater re-

Sufficient safeguards need to be built for implementation of the project to ensure that no misuse takes place through unauthorised activities

charged. Sufficient safeguards need to be built for implementation of the project to ensure that no misuse takes place through unauthorised activities such as extraction of sand and other natural resources," the Bench noted while referring to the panel's conditions.

Currently, the city faces a water shortage with a requirement of about 1,120 million gallons per day (MGD) and an average water

production of about 900 MGD, which peaks to 935 MGD on certain days. This is mainly due to the non-availability of raw water. The Delhi Jal Board gets a major share of its water from Haryana and Uttar Pradesh and about 80 MGD from borewells in the city.

"No construction or use of cement will be involved and regular flow of Yamuna will not be touched," Mr. Kejriwal had earlier said about the project.

"The massive project, which could change the water scenario of Delhi, got all the clearances in a short span of 45-days. It has become possible only because of the constant monitoring and pursuance of the CM that several important clearances were received at such a fast pace," a government statement said.

BJP leaders call on CVC, file complaint against AAP govt.

Claim corruption by party in construction of classrooms

STAFF REPORTER
NEW DELHI



BJP leaders submit a memorandum to the CVC over alleged corruption by the AAP government.

■ SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

these two documents," Mr. Gupta alleged.

Thorough probe

The BJP leader demanded that the CVC, Sharad Kumar,

get the alleged irregularities, violation of rules and deliberate frauds thoroughly investigated in "all aspects" as deemed fit by the vigilance body. He also stressed "in-depth examination" by the Chief Technical Examiner of

"The CVC, Sharad Kumar carefully heard the plea...He assured that he would get the matter in thoroughly investigated and take further appropriate action," Mr. Gupta claimed.

Pollution control board seals 24 unauthorised plastic processing units

STAFF REPORTER
NEW DELHI

The Delhi Pollution Control Committee (DPCC) on Thursday sealed at least 24 illegal units which segregate and process plastic in villages in outer Delhi.

The Hindu had reported on Sunday that illegal plastic segregation and melting units were operating on residential and agricultural land in the same villages in outer Delhi and also in Haryana.

On Monday, the National Green Tribunal (NGT) came down heavily on the Delhi government on the issue.

"Even though an action-taken report has been filed, the action hardly meets the

magnitude of violation. There is no serious exercise of assessing the cost of damage to the environment and the cost of restoration. It is also not clear whether the polluting activities have been stopped," the Bench had observed.

On Thursday, a team of officials of DPCC, municipal corporation, Delhi Police, Revenue Department and BSES visited about 10 villages including, Mundka, Tikri Kalan, and Nangloi, where the units were operating, said a DPCC official.

"The units operating mainly in plots with boundary walls. Twenty-four units were sealed and their

electricity connection has been disconnected. Action would continue tomorrow also," the official added.

Imposed penalty

In December 2018, the National Green Tribunal had imposed a ₹25-crore fine on the Delhi government for failing to crack down on illegal plastic markets in Tikri Kalan in Delhi and nearby villages.

On Monday, the NGT gave the State government a "last opportunity" to deposit the compensation of ₹25 crore and directed authorities to file an affidavit with monthly details of the action taken.

Govt. rejects Scindia's Lutyens' bungalow plea

After Cong. leader loses Lok Sabha poll

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NEW DELHI

rao Scindia.

The Centre has rejected a request of senior Congress leader Jyotiraditya Scindia to retain his official bungalow in the posh Lutyens' Delhi, sources said.

Mr. Scindia, who lost the Lok Sabha election from Guna in Madhya Pradesh, had been staying at the 27, Safdarjung Road bungalow for several years.

He was an MP from Guna between 2002 and 2019, and the bungalow had been allotted to him after he succeeded his father Madhav-

Former MPs have to vacate their respective bungalows within one month of dissolution of the previous Lok Sabha, as per rules, and the 16th Lok Sabha was dissolved on May 25.

"The government has rejected Jyotiraditya Scindia's request for the retention of the 27, Safdarjung Road bungalow," a source said.

Last month, the bungalow was allotted to HRD Minister Ramesh Pokhrayal 'Nishank' subject to the vacating of bungalows by their existing holders.

BJP hasn't laid a single brick in any illegal colony: AAP

Party leader hits out at Congress too

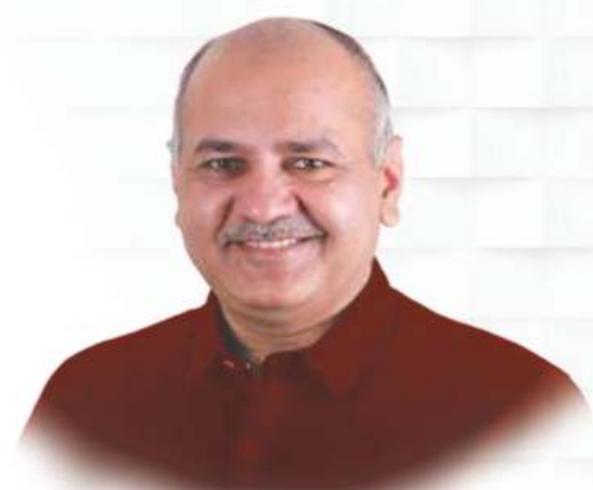
STAFF REPORTER
NEW DELHI

ised colony during its tenure. I challenge the BJP to present evidence of a single development work undertaken by it in unauthorised colonies," Mr. Rai said.

'Rightful citizens'

"The BJP government's record on the issue is known to all. It has never considered the people who live in unauthorised colonies as rightful citizens of Delhi. This is why the people of Delhi elected the Aam Aadmi Party. Even the Congress had only given promises, without doing any work on the ground," he said.

One Year of Happiness Class in Delhi Government Schools Transforming lives of 8 lakh children



Manish Sisodia

Dy. Chief Minister & Education Minister, Delhi

I stand-up for my beliefs

I am seriously concerned about the pollution caused to the environment. I used to feel outraged by peoples' carelessness but what could I do! I wanted to call them out but never had the courage to do so. But after the Happiness Class, I am no longer scared to do the right thing. Recently, I saw an Uncle who refused to turn off the engine of his car while he was cleaning it. I gathered the courage to question him. Though he made some excuses initially, eventually he not only agreed with me and but treated me to an ice-cream for being a good citizen and for my commitment to fight pollution.

Chandni, Class VII

Delhi government is celebrating Happiness Utsav from 16 to 30 July | Join us at a government school near you and be part of the Happiness Utsav

Directorate of Education, Government of NCT of Delhi

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IN BRIEF

Woman's body found in Munak canal, probe on

NEW DELHI

A 32-year-old woman, who worked in a spa in Ashok Vihar, was found murdered in Munak canal in outer Delhi's Samaypur Badli on Thursday morning. The woman, a resident of Shalimar village, had deep injury marks on the throat, they said. The police said that a case has been registered and an investigation into the matter is under way.

Constable injured as man accidentally opens fire

NEW DELHI

A Delhi Police constable sustained injuries after a gunman of a private cash van accidentally opened fire in north Delhi's Roop Nagar on Thursday morning, the police said. Accused Jagmohan has been arrested and his gun was seized, they said. The victim Sachin is currently out of danger.

Fake call centre in Noida raided, 33 arrested

NOIDA

Thirty three people, including 16 women, were arrested from a fake call centre here for allegedly duping scores of people on the pretext of providing them loans at low interest rates, the police said on Thursday. PTI

LPG leakage leads to fire, 11 injured

STAFF REPORTER

NEW DELHI

Eleven people sustained burns after a fire broke out at a house in outer Delhi's Nangloi on Thursday, Delhi Fire Service officials said.

The fire department received a call at 12.46 p.m. and three fire tenders were rushed to the spot, they said.

The fire broke out in a room due to LPG leakage, Chief Fire Officer Atul Garg said, adding that 11 people, including nine women and two men, sustained injuries.

The injured persons were admitted to a hospital, he said, adding that the blaze was brought under control by 2.30 p.m.

Woman, aide held for series of snatching

Six cases solved with the arrests; other members of the gang identified

STAFF REPORTER

NEW DELHI

A 22-year-old woman and her accomplice have been arrested for allegedly committing a series of snatching in north Delhi, the police said on Thursday.

Chandni, a resident of DDA Flats in Sarai Rohilla area in north Delhi, and her accomplice Mona was arrested in Sarai Rohilla, the police said.

Nupur Prasad, DCP (North), said that to keep a check on incidents of snatching and robbery, vehicles were being checked in Sarai Rohilla when the policemen on duty at a barricade noticed a man on a motorcycle with a woman riding pillion. The rider was signalled to stop but he took a sharp U-

Loan of ₹8 lakh costs man his life

Jumps off from third floor with family; wife and four-year-old daughter survive

STAFF REPORTER

NEW DELHI

Unable to repay a loan ₹8 lakh, a 35-year-old man allegedly jumped off from the third floor of their house with his wife and four-year-old daughter in Shahdara's Jagatpuri, the police said on Thursday.

The incident happened on Monday around 3 a.m. The man, who lived with his family on the ground floor of the building, went to the terrace on the third floor with his wife and minor daughter. He held his daughter's hand and jumped, while his wife followed them, the police said.

While the man died, his wife and daughter sustained injuries in the incident, the

He [deceased] was under stress as the bank officials kept calling and messaging him everyday asking him to repay the loan amount

DECEASED'S WIFE

police said.

In her statement to the police, the woman said that her husband had several credit cards of different banks and had taken a loan of ₹8 lakh which he had to repay, they said. He was under stress as the bank officials kept calling and messaging him everyday asking him to repay the loan amount, the woman told the police.

The police was informed about the incident by some neighbours who spotted the three lying on the road. They were rushed to GTB Hospital where the man was declared brought dead. The four-year-old had suffered fractures on both her legs, the police said. However, after the woman jumped from the terrace, she hit an electric wire which broke her momentum due to which she received only minor injuries, a senior police officer said.

The doctors have said that the woman and her daughter are out of danger and stable.

The man's body was handed over to his family after a post-mortem, the police said. He used to work in a

private company in Gurugram and had recently left the job, they said.

The building where the family stayed belongs to the deceased's father-in-law, who lives in Punjab, they said. The deceased's brother-in-law also lives in the same building.

Case filed

Based on a complaint from a family member of the woman, a case under IPC Section 307 (attempt to murder) has been registered against the deceased, the police said.

Suicide prevention helpline: Sanjivini, Society for Mental Health, 011-4076 9002, Monday-Saturday (10 a.m.-7.30 p.m.)

11-year imprisonment to couple for acid attack on 20-year-old

Victim refused to marry man; convicts fined ₹1 lakh each

NIRNIMESH KUMAR

NEW DELHI

A Delhi court has sentenced a couple to 11 years in jail each for throwing acid at a 20-year-old woman after she refused to marry the man.

The victim had said that the couple was allegedly involved in flesh trade and wanted to drag her into it.

The victim had become friends with the man, identified as Radhey, after she met him while returning from Haridwar Kanwar Yatra in 2016. The accused took the victim's mobile number from her father. They started talking to each other on reaching home.

The accused had visited her house after returning from the yatra and also visited a nearby temple.

'Flesh trade'
The accused later proposed her for marriage "with the consent of his wife". However, when the victim came to know that the couple was involved in the business of prostitution and wanted to drag her into it, she rejected



the proposal.

The accused did not give up on her and instead started putting pressure on her for marriage. Radhey and his wife Anita then called her to a metro station one day and tried to convince her. When the victim refused, the man held her hands and his wife threw acid at her that damaged her face and arms.

The prosecution said that the accused had stolen the acid from a factory at Bulandshahr in Uttar Pradesh where he was employed. When the factory owner caught him red-handed, he told him that he would use it for cleaning toilet.

Though a number of objections to the material evidence were raised, the court rejected those.

"The court is of the view that the prosecution has fully proved its case against both these accused persons for the offence punishable under Sections 326A [voluntarily causing grievous hurt by dangerous weapons or means]/34 [common intention] IPC for causing acid injuries to the girl by throwing acid and as such, accused persons are held guilty of the offence under Section 326A/34 IPC and are convicted accordingly," Additional Sessions Judge Satinder Kumar Gautam said in his order.

Both convicts are sentenced to simple imprisonment of 11 years each with fine of ₹1,00,000 each. It is made clear that the fine amount, if realised from the convicts, shall be paid to the victim in addition to the monetary relief from any other agency, including DLSA, etc.," the Judge also said.

mind of the gang and used to ride pillion on a two-wheeler which one of her accomplices would ride. She used to commit snatching while the male members of the gang were assigned the task to steal vehicles for the job.

"Chandni, a school drop out, had come in contact with a group of snatchers in her locality. She was good at her job and soon turned out useful for the gang," said Ms. Prasad.

Ms. Prasad added that with the arrests, they have worked out three cases of snatching and three cases of vehicle theft reported in the city.

The other members of the gang have been identified and will be arrested soon.

turn and unable to maintain the balance, fell on the ground. They were caught and brought to the police station for questioning.

"The description of the woman matched with that of a woman who was suspected to be involved in several

Chandni was the master-

Dark cloud on the horizon



Clouds loom over the Red Fort in Old Delhi on Thursday. ■ SUSHIL KUMAR VERMA

Constable flees after raping minor house help

STAFF REPORTER

NEW DELHI

A Delhi Police head constable is on the run after allegedly raping his 14-year-old domestic help in outer Delhi's Mundka, officials said on Thursday.

The incident took place on Tuesday morning when the accused and the minor girl were in the house, while the policeman's family was away, they said. The victim approached an NGO on Wednesday, which helped her report the matter to the police.

A senior police officer said that a case under the POCSO Act and relevant IPC Sections has been registered.

The police have formed teams to nab the accused, who is in his late 40s. They are trying to find out if the accused had assaulted the minor earlier as well.

Gym owner shot at by unidentified man

Personal enmity likely reason behind attack, say police

STAFF REPORTER

NEW DELHI

A 45-year-old gym owner was allegedly shot at by an unidentified man in north Delhi's Civil Lines on Thursday, the police said.

a.m., the police said.

They said that Mr. Gupta was entering the gym after parking his car outside, when a man shot at him from a distance and fled. The accused was wearing helmet.

The victim, Rahul Gupta, a resident of Naveen Shahdara, runs a gym in partnership with his brother-in-law. He is also a distributor of a washing powder, they said.

The incident was reported to the police around 9.30 a.m.

A case has been registered and efforts are being made to nab the suspect, Deputy Commissioner of Police (North) Nupur Prasad said.

The police suspect personal enmity to be the motive behind the murder attempt, the officer said.

Footage of CCTV cameras installed in the area are being scanned to identify the accused and find out the route taken by him while escaping, the police said.

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Coal case: charges framed against Naveen Jindal

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

NEW DELHI

A court here on Thursday framed charges against industrialist Naveen Jindal, his company Jindal Steel and Power Limited and four others in a coal block allocation scam case.

The others against whom Special Judge Bharat Parashar framed the charges under IPC Sections 120-B (criminal conspiracy) and 420 (cheating) are D.N. Abrol, Vikrant Gujral, Anand Goel and Sushil Maroo. The case pertains to allocation of Urtan North coal block in M.P. jointly to JSPL and Monet Ispat and Energy Ltd. The CBI alleged that the accused had acquired the block by misre-

presenting the facts to the Screening Committee regarding the end use of the coal. Counsel for the probe agency submitted that on the date of making presentation before the Screening Committee, JSPL had admittedly not acquired 964 acres of land for its Jharkhand project and placed orders for procuring equipment for a sum of ₹4,340 crore for its Odisha project.

It was a clear-cut case of dishonest misrepresentation by the accused before the Screening Committee and by dishonestly claiming a higher status/stage of preparation, the accused deceived Ministry of Coal, it also submitted.

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RISE 05:40 SET 19:16
RISE 01:03 SET 14:40
SUNDAY, JULY 28
RISE 05:40 SET 19:15
RISE 01:45 SET 15:41

Delhi Weather	max	min
Delhi City	30	25
Safdarjung	30	25
Palam	30	26

Delhi Palam Today
32°C Spells of moderate rains and thundershowers are likely. Gusty strong winds are likely to blow over the area.

Delhi Palam Tomorrow
31°C Light to moderate rains are likely. Gusty winds will blow over the city.

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IN BRIEF

Nitish reaches Bihar Assembly in electric car

Seeking to send out a message of environment preservation, Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar on Thursday arrived at the State Assembly in an electric car.

Drug menace: Haryana, H.P. mull law on lines of MCOCA

Chief Ministers of five northern States attend conference in Chandigarh

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

CHANDIGARH

Expressing concern over the inflow of drugs from Pakistan, Afghanistan, Nigeria and other countries, seven northern States and a Union Territory on Thursday decided to set up a joint working group, involving officials of the health and social justice departments, to share experiences and best practices in their respective campaigns against drugs.

Two of the BJP-ruled States – Haryana and Himachal Pradesh – disclosed that they were considering a legislation on the lines of the Maharashtra Control of Organised Crime Act (MCOCA) to tackle the drug menace in their States.

Chief Ministers of the northern States, including those of Punjab, Rajasthan, Haryana, Himachal Pradesh and Uttarakhand, joined by top officials from Delhi, Jammu & Kashmir and Chandigarh, agreed on a series of measures to eradicate the drugs scourge from the region, they said in a statement after their second joint conference.



CMs of Himachal Pradesh, Haryana, Punjab and Rajasthan take part in a conference to deal with drugs menace, in Chandigarh on Thursday. ■ SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

garh, agreed on a series of measures to eradicate the drugs scourge from the region, they said in a statement after their second joint conference.

Joint operations'
These included joint operations at the inter-State borders, information sharing and implementation of the best practices of the participating States," the officials said in the statement. "There was consensus among the States on the importance of strengthening the information sharing mechanism on drugs and drug dealers-smugglers, for a more effective crackdown against them," they added.

It was also agreed that all the States would initiate major awareness programmes

and strive to make eradication of drugs a peoples' movement.

The conference recognised drugs as a national problem, requiring the collective effort of all the States for its successful eradication. It proposed, therefore, to jointly press the Centre to come out with a national drugs policy in order to effectively tackle the growing menace.

"We believe that these efforts will go a long way in eradicating this scourge from the region, thus protecting our youth and our future generations, and ensuring a safe, secure and healthy society," they said in the joint statement.

The States also reiterated their commitment to "continuing and strengthening the process of consultation and cooperation, to collaborate even more closely and actively for making the region 'Nasha Mukti'.

Heavy rain wreaks havoc in Kashmir Valley

Boy drowns, standing crops destroyed and highways blocked due to landslides

PEERZADA ASHIQ
SRINAGAR

Torrential rain resulted in the death of a boy, destruction of standing crops and disruption of traffic on highways in the Kashmir Valley on Thursday.

Locals said Burhan Ahmad Malla, 6, a resident of Kupwara's Khurhama area, slipped into a nullah and drowned due to heavy rain, which started early in the morning.

"Rain also damaged standing crops in several parts of the Valley," an official said.



A flooded road in the centre of Srinagar after heavy rain on Thursday. ■ NISSAR AHMAD

undated due to rain, disrupting movement of traffic.

Meanwhile, large-scale landslides on Srinagar-Ladakh and Shopian-Poonch highways forced closure of traffic on Thursday, an official said.

Scores of vehicles, including those carrying essentials and tourists to Ladakh region, were stranded on both sides of the highways.

Personnel of the Border Roads Organisation were working hard to open the highways, a police officer said.

highways, a police officer said.

The rain, however,

dropped the day temperature by several notches.

According to the Met office, Kashmir will see more rain in the next couple of days.

Man lynched in Bihar after he opens fire

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

JAMUI

A man was beaten to death in Jamui district after he allegedly shot at and wounded a person following a scuffle, police said on Thursday. It is the third such instance of mob frenzy in Bihar in a week.

The incident occurred at Aliganj Bazar on Wednesday after a mob got infuriated when Amar Singh whipped out a gun during a quarrel and fired at Bablu Yadav, district Superintendent of Police Jagunath Jaloreddy said.

Singh had picked up a quarrel with an auto driver and Yadav sought to intervene. He shot at Yadav on his foot, leaving the teacher severely injured, Mr. Jaloreddy said.

Singh was beaten to death by the mob, the SP said.



Deputy Chief Minister Sachin Pilot.

Replying to the demands of grants for his department in the Assembly during the ongoing budget session, Mr. Pilot said that 8.73 lakh works, among the 10.66 lakh NREGA works sanctioned in 2018-19, would benefit small and marginal farmers, families living below the poverty line and members of the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes. Of these pro-

jects, 4.06 lakh were completed, against just 5,000 in 2017-18 during the previous BJP regime.

The demands were passed by voice vote after the Minister's reply. Mr. Pilot said nine lakh people were engaged in NREGA works in December last year and 32 lakh people were given work till March 2019 under a special campaign, "Kaam Mango Abhiyan" (Demand the Work), launched by the Congress government.

Audit will check graft'
Mr. Pilot, who is also president of the Pradesh Congress Committee, said social audit of NREGA works would bring transparency in the functioning of panchayat officials and help eradicate corruption.

M.P. govt. misleading SC, allege gas tragedy survivors

Over additional compensation by downplaying damage caused by the disaster

STAFF REPORTER

BHOPAL

Hundreds of survivors of the Bhopal gas tragedy in 1984 staged a sit-in here on Thursday demanding that the State government stop misleading the Supreme Court in the matter of additional compensation by downplaying the damage caused by the disaster.

Led by organisations working for the survivors,

the protesters gathered at Neelam Park to call upon the government to state correct figures of deaths and the extent of damage to the health of survivors in a curative petition expected to be heard by the court soon.

Misleading figure'
Speaking at the gathering, Rashida Bee, president of the Bhopal Gas Peedit Mahila Stationery Karmchari Sangh,

said: "In March 2011, the government told the Supreme Court that 15,248 people had died as a result of the disaster. Yet, it has not corrected the misleading figure of 5,295 it has presented in the petition for additional compensation."

Claiming that while over 80% of the survivors continue to suffer health problems, according to the records of government

hospitals, Rachna Dhingra of the Bhopal Group for Information and Action said the government maintained in the petition that 93% of the survivors were discharged after a day's hospitalisation.

"This is despite enough scientific literature, including Union Carbide's, which says methyl isocyanate causes residual injuries that persist even after treatment," she said.

U.P. Assembly passes Bill on private universities

Oppn. protests 'anti-national' clause

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

LUCKNOW

haral Nehru University row over slogan shouting by some student protesters.

The SP leader alleged attempts to defame the university over the issue.

The Bill, tabled in the House on Tuesday, demands an undertaking from the sponsors of private universities that their institutions will not be involved in or permit anyone to promote anti-national activities.

The Bill aims to bring 27 private universities in the State under an umbrella law, and also enforce transparency on fees and the admission process.

The Bill was passed by voice vote even as the Samajwadi Party objected to some of its sections and demanded that it should be referred to a select committee.

SP legislator Ujjawal Ranjan Singh said the section on anti-national activities had created a suspicion that the Bill was aimed against a particular university.

There were some heated exchanges when Mr. Singh referred to the 2016 Jawaharlal Nehru University row over slogan shouting by some student protesters.

He assured the Opposition that the government had no wrong intention in bringing the Bill.

Man held for Facebook posts against Modi

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

GHAZIABAD

Meerut police arrested a man on Thursday for allegedly posting inflammatory content on social media against Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

According to the police, Fayyaz Ahmed, who hails from Incholi village, was booked under the Information Technology Act, 2000 and Section 124A (sedition) of Indian Penal Code.

"Fayyaz has a criminal history. Despite a lot of counselling, he indulged in a number of nefarious activities which could be detrimental to law and order. When many local organisations objected to his Facebook posts against the Prime Minister, we registered a case," Avinash Pandey, SP (Rural) Meerut, told *The Hindu* over phone.

"As we can take action under 124A only after approval of the government, we have sent a report to the concerned authorities," he added.

ED questions Hooda in land case

Former Chief Minister's statement recorded under PMLA

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

CHANDIGARH

Facing charges of criminal conspiracy and cheating in the Manesar land case, former Chief Minister Bhupinder Singh Hooda was on Thursday questioned by the Enforcement Directorate (ED) here.

An official, requesting anonymity, said that Mr. Hooda's statement was recorded under the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA) in the case.

The CBI had registered the case in 2015 following allegations that private builders, in conspiracy with some State government officials, had bought about 400 acres in and around Manesar at throwaway prices, causing a loss of about ₹1,500 crore to the owners.

Chargesheet filed

The CBI had filed a chargesheet under sections of the IPC related to criminal conspiracy and cheating, and relevant provisions of the Prevention of Corruption Act against Mr. Hooda and other accused.

BRUHAT BENGALURU MAHANAGARA PALIKE

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Calendar of Events : (1) Tender documents may be downloaded from GoK-e-Procurement portal <https://eproc.karnataka.gov.in> from 26.07.2019. (2) Last date for submission of Tender through e-procurement: on or before 26.08.2019 upto 4.00 PM. (3) Date of Pre-bid meeting: 06.08.2019 at 4.00 PM in the office of the Chief Engineer, RI, 4th Floor, Annex Building-3, BBMP Offices, Bengaluru-02. (4) Date of opening of Technical Bids: 28.08.2019 after 11.00 AM. Further details may be obtained from the above office during office hours on working days or from website <https://eproc.karnataka.gov.in>. Sd/- Executive Engineer, RI-East Division

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Pre-Bid Conference : 06.08.2019

Last Date of Download of Tender/Sale of Tender: 11.09.2019

Last Date of Submission of Tender Documents : 12.09.2019 1500 Hours

Three murders in 24 hours in Cuttack

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
CUTTACK

Three suspected murders over the past 24 hours in the city have sent residents into a tizzy. The police have been unable to identify the victims or ascertain the motives behind the killings.

The first body was recovered from Ranijhat Bridge on Tuesday. Two bodies, one from near SCB Medical College and another from OMP Market, were recovered on Wednesday.

All the victims have deep cuts in their necks.

Lack of information regarding the killings has sparked rumours of a serial killer on the loose.

The police have stepped up night patrolling and the homeless are being told to sleep at shelter homes.

Search on for 3 workers trapped in coal mine

NDRF sweeping Talcher Coalfields

STAFF REPORTER
BHUBANESWAR

ers. While nine persons were rescued, one body was recovered.

The public sector firm had said that labourers working on the night shift at Bharatpur opencast mine in Talcher Coalfields had come under a dump slide due to a strata failure.

A 30-member National Disaster Response Force team is trying to trace the workers under massive heaps of coal and debris.

Rescue operations have been affected due to intermittent rain.

Mound collapse

The accident had taken place around 11 p.m. on Tuesday when a portion of an earthen mound caved in and trapped several work-

The incident was also raised in the State Assembly with Senior Congress leader Narasingha Mishra saying that the MCL authorities should be taken to task for their laxity, apart from giving adequate compensation to the kin of the victims.

Tripura panchayat elections tomorrow

Contest in only 14% seats after BJP swept the rest unopposed

SYED SAJJAD ALI
AGARTALA

Only 14% seats will witness a contest in the three-tier panchayat elections in Tripura to be held on July 27. The BJP has already won nearly 86% seats unopposed.

The opposition Congress and the CPI(M) are mainly contesting in areas where they succeeded in securing a decent vote share in last Lok Sabha election.

The opposition parties squarely blamed the BJP for allegedly resorting to "terror tactics" to prevent them from putting up candidates, but the ruling party refuted the charge and attributed the failure to the "non-exis-



Opposition parties have blamed the BJP for resorting to "terror tactics". ■ FILE PHOTO

to poll next year.

The BJP's share of seats already won is reminiscent of the years of CPI(M) rule when successive governments used to dominate all local elections. However, the number of seats won without contest this time is unprecedented.

Counting on July 31

Of 6,111 seats in gram panchayats, the BJP has won 5,728 seats unopposed, besides 337 of the 419 seats in 35 panchayat samitis and 37 of the 116 seats in zilla parishads. Paper ballots will be used in the panchayat election. Counting will take place on July 31.

Professor assaulted by student wing of TMC

Party leadership tenders apology

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
KOLKATA

A professor at Nabagram Hirala Pal College in West Bengal's Hooghly district was beaten up at the campus gate by members of the Trinamool Chhatra Parishad, the student wing of the Trinamool Congress (TMC).

Two youth have been arrested in connection with the case.

Videos of the incident showing the professor getting repeatedly punched in the face and falling to the ground went viral and sent shockwaves across the city, prompting the TMC to tender an apology. On Thursday, local TMC MLA Prabir Ghosal and party district president Dilip Yadav visited the college where they

met the professor and apologised. Mr. Ghosal said that "outsiders" who had assaulted the professor would not be spared.

The incident occurred when TMCP members allegedly tried to force female students to say "Mamata Banerjee Zindabad" and "Trinamool Zindabad".

The professor had tried to intervene and was thrashed by the youth.

Subrata Chattopadhyay, a teacher at the college, lamented about the condition in which they have to work but said that he felt reassured after receiving a call from Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee soon after the incident. He added that the CM assured him of "stern action against the miscreants".

Part of hostel collapses in Berhampur University

All 104 boarders were attending classes; structure declared unsafe

STAFF REPORTER
BERHAMPUR

A portion of the three-storey Saberi women's hostel on Berhampur University campus collapsed on Thursday afternoon. All 104 boarders had a lucky escape as they were attending classes when the mishap occurred around

12.30 p.m. The part of the building that collapsed mainly comprised of toilets and balconies.

University registrar Ranjan Biswal said the building was declared unsafe after the incident.

The boarders are being shifted to Chilika hostel. Stu-

dents said that many could have been "injured in the mishap had it happened a few hours earlier".

Dilapidated condition
The Saberi hostel was inaugurated in 1989. Its boarders had been complaining about its dilapidated condition for

the past many months. Concrete pieces were falling from the roofs of several rooms and water was seeping from the toilets on each of the three floors.

On July 15, the boarders had demanded that the university repair the hostel as early as possible.

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NCP's Mumbai chief Sachin Ahir joins Sena

Cites Aaditya's vision of development for his switching sides; says he will contest Assembly elections from Byculla

ALOK DESHPANDE
MUMBAI

In a major setback to the Nationalist Congress party (NCP), its Mumbai unit chief Sachin Ahir on Thursday joined the Shiv Sena, in the presence of party chief Uddhav Thackeray and Yuva Sena chief Aaditya Thackeray.

Later in the day, Mr. Ahir announced that he will contest the Assembly polls from Byculla, at present held by All India Majlis-Ittehadul Muslimeen MLA Warris Pathan. His new party Sena is yet to make an official announcement in this regard.

"I have been in touch with Sachinji, and our vision towards development of cities was matched to the extent that I asked him to do good for the State by joining the Sena. I arranged a meeting between him and Uddhavji after which his decision to join the Sena was finalised," said Aaditya.

Mr. Ahir, former Minister of State for Housing, said inspired by Aaditya's spirit to do good for



Shift in loyalty: Sachin Ahir (centre) with Uddhav and Aaditya Thackeray (left) at his joining of the Shiv Sena in Mumbai on Thursday. ■ VIVEK BENDRE

the city and orientation towards development of the State, he joined the Sena. "I have joined the Sena but I am not here to break the NCP. I will work to ensure growth of the Sena," he said, adding several party work-

ers and leaders have been in touch with him since his decision to quit the NCP.

The NCP reacted sharply, saying the party is pained by the backstabbing. "The party survives on workers and not lead-

ers. We will not back down by such techniques and will continue to work to grow the party," party spokesperson Nawab Malik said.

Throughout the day, names of several NCP leaders were

making rounds over the possibility of quitting the party. Senior leader Chhagan Bhujbal was rumoured to join the Sena on July 27. "I have no intention to join the Sena. I am with the NCP and will continue to be so. I had no knowledge of Mr. Ahir quitting the party," he clarified.

Another NCP MLA from Akole, Vaibhav Pichad, also held a meeting with Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis a day ago and is likely to join the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP).

Two weeks ago, Pandurang Varora, NCP MLA from Shahapur, resigned from the post and joined the Sena.

The Sena chief said his party wins people over trust and not by any other means. "Our strength is growing and that means the strength of Marathi and Hindu population is also growing." Mr. Thackeray, when asked whether more NCP leaders are to join the party, said he will not disclose anything as of now. "There will be more who will join."

Party will not crumble: Ajit Pawar

SHOUMOJIT BANERJEE
PUNE

The defection of the Nationalist Congress Party's (NCP) Mumbai unit chief, Sachin Ahir, is no setback, and the party will not crumble because of the exit of such leaders, NCP leader Ajit Pawar said on Thursday.

"We are not unduly bothered about such leaders [Mr. Ahir] quitting the party. Party-hopping is a normal thing before elections. Those leaders who feel insecure and think they may not get a ticket to contest are the ones to leave," Mr. Pawar said. He was speaking in Satara district where he

met aspirants for tickets ahead of the Assembly polls.

He further downplayed Mr. Ahir's exit by saying the party is getting a robust response from a number of young leaders.

The meet with aspirants was marked by the conspicuous absence of Shivendra Raje Bhosale, the sitting NCP MLA from Satara, sparking speculation that the legislator is disaffected with the NCP and is thinking of switching sides.

However, Mr. Pawar denied reports of Mr. Bhosale being disgruntled with the NCP.

I-T officials raid residence, sugar mill of NCP leader Hasan Mushrif in Kolhapur

Speculation rife that his alleged refusal to join BJP invites I-T department action

SHOUMOJIT BANERJEE
PUNE

A team of Income Tax (I-T) officials on Thursday raided the residence and factory of Nationalist Congress Party (NCP) leader and Kagal MLA Hasan Mushrif in Kolhapur district.

Mr. Mushrif, a former minister who held the Labour portfolio in the erstwhile Congress-NCP government, is considered to be a tall leader of his party in the State's sugar belt.

According to sources, the I-T team swooped down on Mr. Mushrif's bungalow in Kagal around 5.30 a.m., while simultaneous raids took place at his son's residence in Pune and his relative's home at Takala in Kolhapur.

Searches were also conducted at Sar Senapati Santaji Ghorpade Sugar Factory in Kagal, which is said to be controlled by Mr. Mushrif, among other places.

The raids coincide with the exit of NCP leader Sachin



Legal matter: A policeman stands guard outside NCP leader Hasan Mushrif's son's residence in Pune, where I-T officials conducted searches on Thursday. ■ MANDAR TANNU

clined to elaborate on the reason for the raids.

A number of the NCP leader's loyalists gathered outside his house to express solidarity as news of the raids broke in Kagal. A security shield was in place as the I-T officials conducted their searches and scrutinised documents at Mr. Mushrif's home and sugar factory.

The raids coincide with the exit of NCP leader Sachin

Ahir, who jettisoned his position as his party's Mumbai unit chief to enter the Shiv Sena, allegedly impressed with Aaditya Thackeray's leadership.

The timing of the raid on Mr. Mushrif's home has triggered speculation that the NCP leader's alleged refusal to join the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) prompted the BJP to unleash the I-T department on him.

NCP workers celebrate, Sena loyalists stunned

ALOK DESHPANDE
MUMBAI

As the Nationalist Congress Party's (NCP) Mumbai president Sachin Ahir quit the party on Thursday to join the Shiv Sena, NCP workers celebrated by bursting crackers outside the party headquarters claiming the burden of a non-performing asset has finally been removed.

'Failed to deliver'

"He was given the responsibility by NCP chief Sharad Pawar at a very young age to steer the party in Mumbai. He could not deliver. He personally grew but the party did not. We may have worked under him, but we are loyal to the NCP and will remain working for the party even after his departure," Ravi Mayekar, an NCP leader from Worli, said.

The NCP held a meeting of all workers from Worli at the party headquarters, which was addressed by senior leaders. "The party grows based on workers. Those who remain loyal to the Mumbai unit of the party will be with us, and they will take the party to victory," NCP MLA Jitendra Awhad said.

On the other hand, even though Sena leaders from Worli and Byculla were present at the time of Mr. Ahir joining the party,

The party grows based on workers. Those who remain loyal to the Mumbai unit of the party will be with us

JITENDRA AWADH
NCP MLA

workers from the area said they were stunned to hear the news. According to sources, Yuva Sena chief Aaditya Thackeray is mulling contesting the polls from the Worli Assembly constituency, and Mr. Ahir's decision to join the party was sanctioned in a bid to ensure no competition to him.

Electoral debut
In the morning, Sena MLA from Worli Sunil Shinde, when asked whether Mr. Ahir would be the party's choice, said it would only be himself. By evening, Mr. Ahir announced he will contest from Byculla Assembly seat, giving rise to speculation that Mr. Thackeray might choose Worli to make his electoral debut.

"We had won the 2014 Assembly election against Mr. Ahir. Why does the party need him, even if Mr. Thackeray is going to contest from here? We built our base by fighting against him and now he will direct us on what to do next," a Sena worker from Worli said.

DIRECTORATE TREASURIES, PENSION & ENTITLEMENTS, UTTARAKHAND 23, LAXMI ROAD, DALANWALA, DEHRADUN-248001

Letter No. 1743Oracle/DTPE/2019 Dated 23 July, 2019

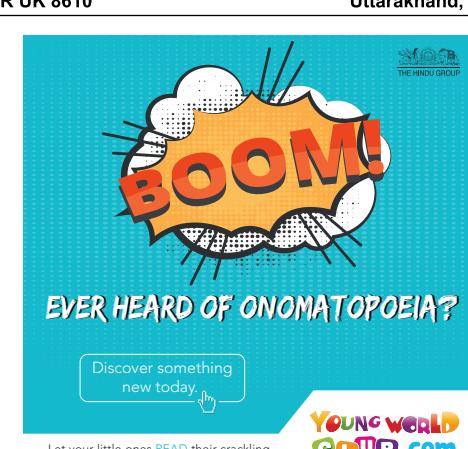
(E-TENDER NOTICE)

Director Treasuries, Pension & Entitlements, Uttarakhand invites online e-tender for providing Technical Man Power to the Finance Data Centre, Help desk (24x7), e-Procurement Cell, NPS Cell etc. for a period of three (03) years which can be further extended by a period of 2 years solely at the discretion of Director Treasuries, Pension & Entitlements, Uttarakhand. Tender document downloaded from site www.uktenders.gov.in can be submitted along with the cost of tender ₹ 5,900/- in the form of DD in favour of Director Treasuries, Pension & Entitlements, Uttarakhand payable at Dehradun. Bidder have to submit Tender Cost and EMD in original at and time of Bid opening at the office in personally or by registered post otherwise e-tender will not be entertained.

E-Tender Schedule

1	Date of availability of Tender Documents on website for download	24 th July, 2019 at 17.00 hrs	17.00 hrs
2	Pre Bid Meeting	3 rd August, 2019 at 11.30 hrs	11.30 hrs
3	Bid submission start date	5 th August, 2019 at 11.00 hrs	11.00 hrs
4	Last Date of Bid submission	24 th August, 2019 at 14.00 hrs	14.00 hrs
5	Date of Opening of Technical Bid	24 th August, 2019 at 15.30 hrs	15.30 hrs
6	Date of Opening of Commercial Bid	Will be intimated separately	
7	Name and Address of the officer inviting the Bid	Director Treasuries, Pension & Entitlements 23, Laxmi Road, Dalanwala, Dehradun	

Director,
Treasuries, Pension & Entitlements,
Uttarakhand, Dehradun



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Bharat Nirman through Rural Roads
chief Engineer, Uttarakhand Rural Roads Development Agency,
First Floor, Directorate of Panchayat Raj, Opp-IT Park, Sahastradhara Road, Dehradun,
Ref. No.: TENDER/NPCC-PMGSY/2019/15
Dated: 16/07/2019

PRADHAN MANTRI GRAM SADAK YOJANA (PMGSY)

e-Procurement Notice

The Zonal Manager, NPCC on behalf of Chief Engineer, URRDA, Uttarakhand invites the item rate bids in electronic tendering system for construction of Roads under Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana in the Districts of Almora, Pauri & Rudraprayag for 05 number of Package with estimated cost totalling to Rs. 38.39 Crore including their maintenance for two years (for stage I)/five years (for stage I & II) from the eligible contractors registered with PWD/CPWD or equivalent".

Date of release of invitation for Bid through e-procurement : 20.07.2019.

Availability of Bid Documents and mode of submission: The bids documents are available online and should be submitted online in www.pmgstyendersuk.gov.in. The bidder will be required to register in the website which is free of cost. For submission of the bids, the bidder is required to provide Digital Signature Certificate (DSC) from one of the authorized Certifying Authorities. The bidders are required to submit (a) original demand draft towards the cost of bid document and (b) original bid security in approved form and (c) original affidavit regarding correctness of information furnished with the bid document as per provision of Clause 4.4B(ii) of ITB WITH THE NPCC LTD., 98- NEHRU COLONY, DEHRADUN (UTTARAKHAND) OR PIU NPCC, PMGSY, FIRST FLOOR, BICH GALL NEAR INDIAN GAS AGENCY, CHAUHITYA, ALMORA UTTARAKHAND on a date not later than three working days after opening of technical qualification part of the bid for phase XV and XVI and while for Phase XVII submission of all physical document will be accepted only upto or before the time and date of submission of bids, either by registered post or by hand failing which the bids will be declared non-responsive.

Last date/time for receipt of bids through e-procurement : 03.08.2019, 01:00 PM.

For further details please log on to www.pmgstyendersuk.gov.in

Directorate of Panchayat Raj, Dehradun, Uttarakhand

Chief Engineer, URRDA, Dehradun, Uttarakhand

Ref. No.: TENDER/NPCC-PMGSY/2019/15



A.P. Speaker suspends four TDP MLAs for a day

VIJAYAWADA
Andhra Pradesh Speaker Tammineni Sitaram on Thursday suspended four TDP MLAs — Bendalam Ashok, Vasupalli Ganesh, Velagapudi Ramakrishna, and Dola Bala Veeranjaney Swamy — for a day for "obstructing the proceedings" in the House. "With pain, I have suspended the MLAs. I need to conduct business in the House. Very important Bills are being tabled. The Chair cannot allow disruptions," he said.

HC dismisses plea against donation to CM's fund

KOCHI
A Division Bench of the Kerala High Court on Thursday dismissed a writ petition challenging the action of the Guruvayur Devaswom Managing Committee in donating ₹5 crore to the Chief Minister's Distress Relief Fund. The petition was filed by V. Anil, a member of the Antharashra Hindu Parishad. The petitioner alleged that the decision of the committee to donate the amount was in violation of the provisions of the Guruvayur Devaswom Act.

'Polavaram estimates hiked by ₹2,346.85 crore'

VIJAYAWADA
Estimates of various works of the Polavaram hydro-electric project and head works have been hiked by ₹2,346.85 crore against norms, according to the P. Subbarayya Sarma committee appointed by the Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy government to go into several allegations on the implementation of the project. Recommending that the agreement with the main JV partner Transstroy be cancelled, the panel suggested to the government to go for a fresh bid.

Rebels will tear Yeddyurappa apart if he fails: Shivakumar

They are standing on their toes to become Ministers, says Congress leader

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
BENGALURU

With the BJP central leadership yet to give its nod for the Karnataka unit to form the government in the State, senior Congress leader D.K. Shivakumar took a jibe at chief ministerial aspirant B.S. Yeddyurappa, saying that Congress and JD(S) rebel MLAs would tear him apart if he failed to form the government.

Mr. Shivakumar said 17 rebel legislators who were responsible for the collapse of the coalition government were standing on their toes to become Ministers. Mr. Yeddyurappa would survive only if he is sworn in along with other ministerial aspirants. "Otherwise, the collapse of the government is imminent. Govinda, Govinda," Mr. Shivakumar said, in a taunt.

"We had put in a lot of effort to help our leaders win the Assembly elections. Do you think they will save Mr. Yeddyurappa if the BJP denies Ministerial berths to them?" Mr. Shivakumar asked.

Meanwhile, the Congress Legislature Party leader Siddaramaiah on Thursday lashed out at critics who have pointed fingers at him alleging that he had a role in a group of MLAs resigning and destabilising the coalition government headed by H.D. Kumaraswamy.

On Twitter, Mr. Siddaramaiah said, "Some media houses are reporting that a few rebel MLAs have claimed that I instigated them to resign and destabilise our govt. This is nothing but a false allegation with mala fide intention. I will give a befitting reply if they repeat the same in front of me."



All India Congress Committee general secretary K.C. Venugopal, CLP leader Siddaramaiah and Deputy Chief Minister G. Parameshwara in Bengaluru. ■ PTI

CJI criticises senior lawyers, allows withdrawal of MLAs' plea

"We heard you at midnight, you don't appear when we want"

KRISHNADAS RAJAGOPAL

NEW DELHI

Chief Justice of India (CJI) Ranjan Gogoi on Thursday sharply criticised senior advocates in the Karnataka political crisis case, saying they did not think twice before waking up the Supreme Court at midnight for an urgent hearing, but chose not to appear when the court, in turn, sought their presence in the long-drawn, roller-coaster dispute that finally saw the fall of the Congress-Janata Dal (Secular) Karnataka coalition government led by Chief Minister H.D. Kumaraswamy.

The CJI's caustic remarks about the conduct of the senior advocates was triggered by what happened in

the court on July 24. A day after the holding of the long-awaited trust vote in the Assembly on July 23, a plea was made by an advocate for permission to withdraw the case.

The case pertained to an application made by two independent MLAs last week for conduct of the trust vote without delay.

Counsel for the legislators submitted before the CJI Bench that their application had become infructuous as the vote has already been held.

However, the CJI asked why none of the senior advocates such as Mukul Rohatgi or A.M. Singhvi, who had been leading the arguments in the case all along,

chose not to come and seek the court's permission to withdraw.

After all, the Bench said, the court had patiently heard them and passed interim orders over the past several weeks in the case. The court then refused to pass orders on July 24.

"When you want an urgent listing, you come before us — night, day or midnight. But when the court wants a counsel, you all choose not to appear," Chief Justice Gogoi said.

The "midnight" hearing referred to by the CJI was one which was held in 2018. That hearing led to a floor test that propelled the Kumaraswamy government into power.

Nature's fury



Tough task: Fishermen trying to retrieve a boat that overturned due to rough sea conditions in Visakhapatnam, Andhra Pradesh, on Thursday. ■ K.R. DEEPAK

Fear grips border villages of Telangana

Maoists to observe Martyrs' week

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
BHADRADRI-KOTHAGUDAM

Far-flung villages in the Bhadrachalam Agency on the Telangana-Chhattisgarh border continue to grapple with the spectre of violence with Maoists gearing up to observe Martyrs' Week from July 28 to August 3 and the police ramping up "anti-Maoist" operations in forest fringe areas.

Tension gripped the interior villages of Charla and Dummugudem mandals, which have been reeling under palpable fear ever since the rebels killed former MPTC member N Srinivas Rao after branding him a "police informer" two weeks ago.

Notwithstanding the increased vigil by the police in the remote corners of Bhadrachalam Agency, the rebels, as a prelude to the Martyrs' week, launched a

poster campaign in several remote habitations in Charla mandal.

The posters, bearing the name of CPI (Maoist) Charla-Sabari Area Committee, contained slogans eulogising Naxalbari movement ideologue Charu Majumdar and a host of other slain Maoist leaders and cadre.

Through the posters, the rebels condemned the Centre's "Operation SAMADHAN".

Meanwhile, late on Wednesday, the Charla police, in coordination with CRPF personnel, nabbed eight "Maoist militia members" along with explosive materials during a joint search operation at the Kaliveru crossroads in Charla mandal.

The joint squad claimed to have seized 30 gelatin sticks, eight detonators and two plastic bags from them.

Study alternative to Bandipur traffic ban: Rahul

The restrictions have led to increased wildlife movement across the highway



Jungle trait: A file photo of elephants crossing a road on the Kerala-Karnataka border. ■ K.K. MUSTAFAH

government, which had cited economic loss due to the closure. Numerous studies showed that the ban on traffic between 9 p.m. and 6 a.m. had led to increased wildlife movement across the highway.

Mr. Gandhi asked if the Centre proposed to mediate

to find an alternative to lift the ban "without disturbing wildlife", and whether it was "ready to amicably find out a solution by calling a meeting of the Chief Ministers of Kerala and Karnataka."

He also enquired if there was a proposal to construct an elevated corridor through

the park. The ban was imposed by the Chamrajnagar district administration in 2009, and was upheld by the Karnataka High Court in 2010.

Based on a Special Leave Petition filed by the Kerala Transport Department in the Supreme Court, an expert committee was constituted to sort the issue. The committee had met in February.

"It was recommended that status quo shall be maintained on restriction of night-time traffic through Bandipur National Park, as it is a core area of wildlife habitat and an alternative route is available for night traffic, and four buses and emergency vehicles are permitted through the park," said Nitin Gadkari, Minister of Road Transport and Highways.

A student and member of the SFI was stabbed on July 12; the incident was preceded by a campus dispute between two groups of students.

Traffic along M.G. Road was disrupted as early as 6 a.m., with UDF activists commencing their siege of the Secretariat. The demon-

Go to moon if you can't bear 'Jai Shri Ram', BJP leader tells Adoor

Filmmaker's comment on lynching irks party spokesperson

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

THIRUVANANTHAPURAM

A Facebook post of Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) spokesperson B. Gopalakrishnan exhorting filmmaker Adoor Gopalakrishnan to migrate to some other planet if he could not bear to hear chants of "Jai Shri Ram" has sparked a row.



Adoor Gopalakrishnan

before the residence of Adoor. That is a democratic right. Had Gandhiji been alive now, he would have gone on a fast in front of Adoor's residence. Sir, you are filmmaker who should be revered, but do not decry the culture of the nation," the post said.

While the BJP leader struck to his stance on Thursday, Mr. Adoor too reported strongly.

Film personalities and political leaders declared their solidarity with the latter.

The BJP leader's immediate provocation was Mr. Adoor joining a section of eminent citizens who had written a letter to Prime Minister Narendra Modi

against the lynching of Dalits and Muslims. Mr. Gopalakrishnan said that Rama and

Krishna were synonyms, that "this is Ramayana month and 'Jai Shri Ram' chants will be there in India as well as neighbouring countries" and that if Mr. Adoor could not bear it, "he may register his name at Sriharikota and go to the moon".

"The people of India voted for chanting 'Jai Shri Ram' in the country. It will be raised again and if needed, will be attempted even

before the residence of Adoor. That is a democratic right. Had Gandhiji been alive now, he would have gone on a fast in front of Adoor's residence. Sir, you are filmmaker who should be revered, but do not decry the culture of the nation," the post said.

He alleged that Mr. Adoor was upset that he had not received anything from the Centre since the new government had assumed office.

Mr. Adoor clarified that his protest was against chanting "Jai Shri Ram" during a lynching, and if someone raised the chant before his [Mr. Adoor's] residence, he, too, would join them [in the chanting]. He said he had received all coveted honours and was not keen on getting any more.

Kidnapped A.P. boy returns home, criminals still at large

STAFF REPORTER

VIJAYAWADA

Four-year-old Nuka Jashith, who was abducted by unidentified persons, has been reunited with his family in Mandapeta of Andhra Pradesh by the police on Thursday.



Jaswith with his mother Nagavalli. ■ S. RAMBABU

to their care. Later, they handed him over to parents Nagavalli and Venkata Rama Rao.

The parents and family members heaved a sigh of relief as Jashith was in good health and showed no fear from being with his kidnappers. He even spoke to reporters and said the name of

one of the persons who took him away was Raju.

Thank police, media

Jashith's family members appreciated police for swift action and also thanked the media for supporting them. They said the boy was abandoned by the kidnappers because the issue turned into a sensation and drew everyone's attention.

Meanwhile, the police continue to look out for the kidnappers who are still at large. "Jashith has given us some clues and names. In addition, we are probing every piece of information we had gathered," Mr. Asmi told reporters.

Kerala cashier helps bust fake currency racket

DTP shop owner involved in forgery

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
THIRUVANANTHAPURAM

A vigilant cashier at a private hospital in Attingal helped the Kerala police on Thursday bust a well-entrenched Statewide racket that injected fake Indian currency notes into general circulation routinely and undetected since early 2018. His tip-off led to the seizure of fake currency valued at ₹16 lakh.

The clerk had found a phoney ₹500 note in a payment made by one Rajan Pathrose, 61, to settle his daughter's hospital bill. He later found two fake ₹2,000 notes in an additional payment made by the accused.

Sensing a pattern, the clerk informed the District Police Chief, Thiruvananthapuram Rural, P.K. Madhu. The police raided the house of Rajan in Kadakkavoor and recovered more fake notes.

Based on his statement, they arrested Wahab of Pothencode and Pratapan of Chirayankeezhu. They traced the source of the notes to Shameer from Kozhikode.

Setting the trap

Investigators set a trap for Shameer. Through Wahab, they placed an order for ₹3 lakhs in exchange for ₹1 lakh in cash. They detained Shameer when he reached Attingal with the fake currency.

The police said that Shameer, 38, a school dropout, had studied DTP and fabrication. He was in the Gulf for several years. On his return, Shameer opened a DTP centre at Mukkom in Kozhikode. Shameer told officers that he had embarked on currency forgery to make quick money to settle his debts.

The police said that Shameer, 38, a school dropout, had studied DTP and fabrication. He was in the Gulf for several years. On his return, Shameer opened a DTP centre at Mukkom in Kozhikode. Shameer told officers that he had embarked on currency forgery to make quick money to settle his debts.

Twin protests bring Kerala capital to a halt

Host of demands raised; traffic disrupted on arterial roads; mass rally on Friday



Strong protest: UDF activists taking out a rally in Thiruvananthapuram on Thursday. ■ S. GOPAKUMAR

quiry into the University College issue and a Central Bureau of Investigation probe into the alleged irregularities in the functioning of the Kerala Public Service Commission, apart from price rise, power tariff hike, alleged police excesses and the move to scrap the Karunya Benevolent Fund. All entry points to the Secretariat except the Cantonment gate were blocked by protesters.

Inaugurating the demonstration, Leader of Opposition Ramesh Chemithala called Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan a tyrant who remained insensitive to the woes of the common man. The National Democratic Alliance is scheduled to take out a mass rally to the Secretariat raising the University College issue on Friday.



Jungle trait: A file photo of elephants crossing a road on the Kerala-Karnataka border. ■ K.K. MUSTAFAH

In an unstarred question in the Lok Sabha, which was answered on Thursday, Mr. Gandhi asked if the Centre was aware of the "hardships to a large number of people living in north Malabar" due to the night ban on NH-212 through the national park.

Incidentally, it was during the Congress rule in the State between 2013 and 2018 that the Forest Department had vehemently opposed the decision to lift the ban despite pleas from the Kerala

CM

A ND-NDE

IN BRIEF



Plight of home buyers raised in Parliament

BJP MP Vijay Goel on Thursday raised the plight of home buyers and demanded that action be also taken against celebrities who endorsed these failed projects. He mentioned the suffering of 48,000 home buyers of Amrapali housing project in Noida in Rajya Sabha. He added that in the Amrapali case, the Supreme Court had given relief to the 48,000 home buyers and said that the first right on the flats would be of the home buyers and not that of Noida Authority or the banks.

4 injured in Assam scrap godown blast

JORHAT Four persons were injured in a blast inside a scrap godown at Jorhat town in upper Assam on Thursday evening, a police officer said. The cause of the explosion is yet to be ascertained, Jorhat Superintendent of Police Vaibhav Nimbalkar said. The injured are the owner and three employees of the scrap godown located at Rajamaidam Path near Tocklai bridge. All four were first taken to a nursing home and then shifted to the Jorhat Medical College and Hospital, Mr. Nimbalkar said. PTI

GSLV Mk-III helps reduce orbit-raising manoeuvres

Rocket placed Chandrayaan-2 at a 6,000 km higher apogee

R. PRASAD
CHENNAI

In its maiden operational flight, the Geosynchronous Satellite Launch Vehicle - Mark III/M1 (GSLV Mk-III/M1) used for launching Chandrayaan-2 successfully placed the moon-bound spacecraft in a temporary orbit called the Earth Parking Orbit (EPO) with perigee (closest distance from the earth) of 170 km and an apogee (farthest distance from the earth) of 45,475 km.

The apogee of the EPO was about 6,000 km more than originally envisaged. As a result, the number of earth-bound phase steps or manoeuvres needed to take the satellite to the highest orbit of almost 1,44,000 km apogee has been reduced from six to five. The sixth would be a trans-lunar injection, said K. Sivan, Chairman of the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO). The reduced number of manoeuvres would translate into fuel savings, he explained.

After the satellite is placed in the Earth Parking Orbit, the apogee is increased in steps to take it to the final earth-bound phase orbit of about 1,44,000 km. The satellite goes around the earth

Flood duty keeps them away from affected kin

Assam's rescue workers hope for good news from home

RAHUL KARMAKAR
KAZIRANGA/GUWAHATI

On July 23, Panjit Basumatary received a message as he waited at Kaziranga National Park's Bagori Range for the arrival of a rescued rhino calf by boat through the flooded wildlife preserve.

The message was from his home at village Taktara, about 500 km west in Kokrajhar district bordering Bhutan and West Bengal. "We are back in the relief camp," the message from one of his elder siblings said.

Mr. Basumatary is the veterinarian in charge of the Centre for Wildlife Rehabilitation and Conservation (CWRC), about 25 km. east of the Bagori Range office.

"The last time I visited home was in January. I wish I could be with my 16-member family, including my parents, who have had to endure two waves of the flood. But tending to the animals is important, too," he said.

Mr. Basumatary and his team have so far rescued and treated 69 animals, mostly hog deer, injured or under stress while fleeing the flooded national park. The calf his team waited for is among three rhinos under



Call of duty: Dr. Panjit Basumatary, a veterinarian at CWRC, last went home in January. ■ SUBHAMOY BHATTACHARJEE

treatment at the CWRC.

The veterinarian's family members had in the first week of July moved out of their submerged home to the village lower primary school about 200 metres away. The school, on higher ground, was the designated relief camp for most of the villagers.

In relief camps

About a week ago they returned home after the water subsided. "They were hardly through with cleaning the house when another wave of flood struck the district, reportedly due to excess water released from the Kurichu Dam in Bhutan. They are back in the relief camp again," Mr. Basumatary said. Pradip Barua, a forest

guard posted in Bagori Range, has a similar story. But unlike the veterinarian's, his flooded house at Kuthari is about 2 km from his place of posting.

"We were instructed, and rightly so, not to take leave when Kaziranga began flooding a fortnight ago. We have been constantly patrolling on boat and following the animals to the hills to ensure their safety. None of us have had the time to visit home," he said.

Mr. Barua's brothers helped his wife and son construct a temporary shed beside the highway to spend a few days. "They are back home now, but the sheds remain, just in case the park and its vicinity are flooded again," he said.

Arunachal tiger park facing a wage crisis

Does away with 53 casual employees

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
GUWAHATI

Conservation of the Royal Bengal Tiger has taken a hit in India's easternmost tiger reserve.

The authorities of the Namdapha Tiger Reserve in Arunachal Pradesh have discontinued the services of 53 frontline staff, all casual employees.

The 1,895 sq km tiger reserve is now left with 113 casual employees, who were inducted under Project Tiger of the National Tiger Conservation Authority (NTCA).

In an order on July 14, Namdapha's Field Director T. Riba said the 53 were shortlisted after an assessment of the performing and non-performing workers. This was in view of non-payment of wages of the casual employees by the NTCA.

Officials said the NTCA, roped in 166 people for Namdapha a few years ago. But the NTCA did not provide any fund for wages of these casual employees during the 2018-2019 fiscal.

"Almost 80% of Namdapha is inaccessible, and it is difficult for the staff to monitor the remaining area of the tiger reserve. The reduced staff strength will make it harder for us, but one cannot help if there are no funds," Mr. Riba told *The Hindu*.

"There are a large num-

Tiger census data soon

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

The much-awaited tiger census is likely to be released on July 29, Global Tiger Day, two officials independently confirmed to *The Hindu*. The results of the census, conducted once in four years, has been delayed for over 7 months because of the intervening Lok Sabha elections, data collection anomalies from the States as well as a first-ever initiative to coordinate the counting exercise with neighbouring countries.

ber of non-performing casual employees adding to the burden of this establishment," the order said, adding that non-performing employees were evaluated and told to go.

"A huge amount of fund is required to meet the expenses of wages of these employees, and also a huge amount of arrear wages is lying outstanding," the order said.

"There are a large num-

WEATHER WATCH

RAINFALL, TEMPERATURE & AIR QUALITY IN SELECT METROS YESTERDAY



TEMPERATURE DATA: IMD; POLLUTION DATA: CPCB; MAP: INSAT/IMD (TAKEN AT 18.00 HRS)

Forecast for Friday: Heavy to extremely heavy falls likely over Rajasthan, Goa, Uttarakhand, Haryana, Chandigarh, Delhi, Madhya Pradesh, West Bengal, central Maharashtra, Odisha, coastal Karnataka, coastal Andhra Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Uttar Pradesh, Jammu & Kashmir, Himachal Pradesh, Punjab, Assam, Meghalaya, Gujarat and Jharkhand

CITY	RAIN	MAX	MIN	CITY	RAIN	MAX	MIN
Agartala	0.8...	35.0...	26.0	Kozhikode	17.6...	30...	24.0
Ahmedabad	...36.0...	27...	26.0	Kurnool	...35.0...	26...	25.0
Aizawl	...28.0...	22...	22.0	Lucknow	36.6...	29...	25.0
Altahabad	21.4...	30...	25.0	Madurai	...39.0...	27...	27.0
Bengaluru	...29.0...	21...	21.0	Mangaluru	0.9...	27...	23.0
Bhopal	...36.0...	29.0...	25.0	Mumbai	38.3...	29...	25.0
Bhubaneswar	22.2...	29.0...	25.0	Mysuru	...29.0...	20...	20.0
Chandigarh	1...	30...	27.0	New Delhi	21.6...	31...	25.0
Chennai	23.2...	34...	25.0	Patna	4.8...	32...	27.0
Coimbatore	...32.0...	23...	23.0	Port Blair	14.7...	32...	25.0
Dehradun	11.4...	28.0...	24.0	Puducherry	7.8...	35...	25.0
Gangtok	31.2...	22.0...	18.0	Pune	2.5...	27...	23.0
Goa	...30...	24...	24.0	Raipur	...33.0...	25...	25.0
Guwahati	...33.0...	27...	23.0	Ranchi	12.6...	29...	23.0
Hubballi	...27.0...	22...	20...	Shillong	3.0...	26...	17.0
Hyderabad	...33.0...	25...	25.0	Shimla	2.6...	22...	18.0
Imphal	1.8...	31...	23.0	Srinagar	36.7...	28...	21.0
Jaipur	70.5...	28.0...	22.0	Thiruvananthapuram	...32...	24...	24.0
Kochi	3.8...	30...	24.0	Tiruchi	...39...	28...	20.0
Kohima	2.8...	27...	18.0	Vijayawada	...34...	27...	27.0
Kolkata	...34.0...	27...	20.0	Visakhapatnam	...31.0...	28...	20.0

(Rainfall data in mm; temperature in Celsius)

Yesterday

Pollutants in the air you are breathing

CITIES	SO ₂	NO ₂	CO	PM2.5	PM10	CODE
Ahmedabad	67	172	44	...86	...—	■
Bengaluru	...4	23	18	...87	...—	■
Chennai	15	27	66	...72	...—	■
Delhi	21	31	63	...33	...174	■
Hyderabad	34	...19	33	...69	...69	■
Kolkata	11	65	22	...94	...91	■
Lucknow	...3	25	50	...21	...—	■
Mumbai	15	8	23	...40	...70	■
Pune	69	8	67	...22	...22	■
Visakhapatnam	8	45	68	...50	...80	■

In observation made at 4.00 p.m., Satna, Madhya Pradesh recorded an overall air quality index (AQI) score of 64 indicating a moderate level of pollution. In contrast, Elor, Keonjhar recorded a healthy AQI score of 29

Air Quality Code: ■ Poor ■ Moderate ■ Good (Readings indicate average AQI)

SO₂: Sulphur Dioxide. Short-term exposure can harm the respiratory system, making breathing difficult. It can affect visibility by reacting with other air particles to form haze and stain culturally important objects such as statues and monuments.

NO₂: Nitrogen Dioxide. Aggravates respiratory illness, causes haze to form by reacting with other air particles, causes acid rain, pollutes coastal waters.

CO: Carbon monoxide. High concentration in air reduces oxygen supply to critical organs like the heart and brain. At very high levels, it can cause dizziness, confusion, unconsciousness and even death.

PM2.5 & PM10: Particulate matter pollution can cause irritation of the eyes, nose and throat, coughing, chest tightness and shortness of breath, reduced lung function, irregular heartbeat, asthma attacks, heart attacks and premature death in people with heart or lung disease

U.P. policeman berates complainant

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
LUCKNOW

A head constable was suspended after he was caught on camera humiliating a young woman and her family with objectionable remarks when they had gone to a police station in Kanpur to report a case of molestation.

While the victim had gone to the police station with her mother and brother to lodge the complaint, the policeman could be seen repeatedly questioning her about the

ornaments like rings and bangles that she was wearing.

The viral video of the incident caused much outrage on social media.

Congress general secretary Priyanka Gandhi Vadra took to Twitter to slam the State government led by Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath for the insensitivity shown by the Uttar Pradesh police.

Chennai Petroleum Corporation Limited

(A group company of IndianOil)

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Tel: 044-24349833 / 24346807
CIN: L40101TN1965GOI005389

NOTICE OF 53rd ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Notice is hereby given that 53rd Annual General Meeting of the Shareholders of the Company will be held at 3.00 pm on Wednesday, the 21st August 2019 at Kamraj Arangam, 498, Anna Salai, Chennai-600006.

The Notice setting out the business to be transacted at the meeting together with the Abridged Annual Report of the company for the financial year 2018-19 has been dispatched to all members at their registered address. Abridged and Full Annual Report is also available on our website www.cpcl.co.in.

The notice of AGM and the Full Annual Report has also been sent electronically to those members who have registered their email address. Any such member who wishes to have a physical copy of the Full Annual Report may write to the Company and the same would be provided free of cost. Any member, who has not received the Annual Report or any investor who has become a member of the Company after the dispatch of Annual Report, may send a request to the Company Secretary at the registered office address for a copy of the Annual Report and can also attend the AGM in person or appoint a proxy.

Proxy: A member entitled to attend and vote at the AGM is entitled to appoint a proxy to attend and vote on behalf of member. Such a proxy need not be a member of the company. Proxies, in order to be valid and effective, must be delivered at the registered office of the company duly filled, stamped & signed not later than 48 hours before the commencement



The terrorist tag

India needs tough laws to combat terror, but the proposed amendments could be misused. The idea of designating an individual as a terrorist, as the latest amendments to the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act propose to do, may appear innocuous. However, designating an individual as a terrorist raises serious constitutional questions and has the potential for misuse. The practice of designating individuals under anti-terrorism laws, prevalent in several countries, is seen as being necessary because banned groups tend to change their names and continue to operate. However, there is no set procedure for designating an individual as a terrorist. Parliament must consider whether an individual can be called a 'terrorist' prior to conviction in a court of law. The absence of a judicial determination may render the provision vulnerable to invalidation. There ought to be a distinction between an individual and an organisation, as the former enjoys the right to life and liberty. The likely adverse consequences of a terrorist tag may be worse for individuals than for organisations. Further, individuals may be subjected to arrest and detention; even after obtaining bail from the courts, they may have their travel and movements restricted, besides carrying the taint. This makes it vital that individuals have a faster means of redress than groups. Unfortunately, there is no change in the process of getting an entity removed from the list. Just as any organisation getting the tag, individuals, too, will have to apply to the Centre to get their names removed.

A wrongful designation will cause irreparable damage to a person's reputation, career and livelihood. Union Home Minister Amit Shah's warning that his government would not spare terrorists or their sympathisers, and his reference to 'urban Maoists', are portentous about the possibility of misuse. It has been argued by some members in Parliament that the Bill contains anti-federal features. The provision to empower the head of the National Investigation Agency to approve the forfeiture of property of those involved in terrorism cases obviously overrides a function of the State government. At present, the approval has to be given by the State police head. Also, there will be a section allowing NIA Inspectors to investigate terrorism cases, as against a Deputy Superintendent of Police or an Assistant Commissioner. This significantly enhances the scope for misuse. The 2004 amendments to the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act, 1967, made it a comprehensive anti-terror law that provided for punishing acts of terrorism, as well as for designating groups as 'terrorist organisations'. Parliament further amended it in 2008 and 2013 to strengthen the legal framework to combat terror. While none will question the need for stringent laws that show 'zero tolerance' towards terrorism, the government should be mindful of its obligations to preserve fundamental rights while enacting legislation on the subject.

Boris days

Britain's new PM should abjure his dangerous brinkmanship in seeing Brexit through

Boris Johnson, Britain's new Prime Minister, has achieved one of his life's ambitions. His defiant speech at Downing Street on Wednesday, pledging a "no ifs, no buts" exit from the European Union before October 31, is clear indication that he will pursue a hard Brexit. "Doubters, doomsters and gloomsters," would be defeated, he declared in characteristic style. Several ministers from the previous government, who have either resigned or have been dropped, are all presumably among them. Conversely, the induction of several eurosceptics, most notably Jacob Rees-Mogg from the European Research Group, leaves no doubt that the Johnson team is nothing if not a Brexit cabinet. The other is Dominic Raab who, during the Conservative leadership race, advocated proroguing Parliament to ensure MPs did not stop a no-deal exit. Mr. Johnson's rhetoric is reminiscent of Theresa May's uncompromising early stance that no deal was better than a bad deal. While she was forced to back down from several unrealistic positions, Mr. Johnson's place in Downing Street is far more precarious than her's. His majority in the House of Commons could drop to just two seats if, as the polls forecast, the Tories lose the by-election in August. This arithmetic is crucial in what is a sharply polarised Parliament now. Party hardliners have threatened to vote out the government if the exit deadline was breached for a third time. With Brussels ruling out a renegotiation of the withdrawal agreement, the chances of leaving on October 31 seem remote.

Mr. Johnson has for too long painted the other 27 nations in the bloc as hostile adversaries that have undermined Britain's sovereignty. He has paid scant regard to mounting evidence, most recently from the International Monetary Fund, of the crippling economic impact of Britain leaving the union. Mr. Johnson has even dismissed the risks to the integrity of the Good Friday agreement between the U.K. and Ireland, in the absence of the prevailing soft borders connecting Dublin and Belfast. But as Prime Minister he can ill-afford to indulge the populist instincts of the narrow nationalists among the Conservatives. Instead, he must reckon with the real and grave consequences for the nation and even his party, of abruptly walking out on London's closest partners. The contradictions of that approach were laid bare this week in London's bid to coordinate with Brussels to protect European commercial shipping in West Asia. Clearly, London's interests lie in redoubling efforts to resurrect the multilateral order that U.S. President Donald Trump seems so keen to undo. The special relationship between the principal trans-Atlantic partners is nothing if it did not encompass a more universal vision. Mr. Johnson must abjure his dangerous brinkmanship. That would be in Britain's interest.

In white nation talk, the voice of the Squad

How the Democratic Party positions itself in the poll run-up cuts to the very heart of its identity and America's future



SANKARAN KRISHNA

For the first time in over 100 years, the U.S. House of Representatives passed a non-binding resolution on July 16 condemning the President of the United States, Donald Trump. Just days earlier he had tweeted that if four Democratic Congresswomen did not like the state of affairs in the U.S., they could "go back" to the countries they came from, countries whose governments were "a complete and total catastrophe, the worst, most corrupt and inept anywhere in the world." He went on to tweet, "Why don't they go back and help fix the totally broken and crime infested places from where they came. Then come back and show us how it is done."

Vote and politics

All four Congresswomen [they have given themselves the nickname, the "Squad"] are persons of colour; three of them (Rashida Tlaib, D-Michigan; Ayanna Pressley, D-Massachusetts; Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez, D-New York) were born in the U.S., and the fourth (Ilhan Omar, D-Minnesota) was a refugee from Somalia and a naturalised U.S. citizen. The resolution "strongly condemns President Donald Trump's racist comments that have legitimised and increased fear and hatred of new Americans and people of color by saying that our fellow Americans who are immigrants ... should 'go back' to other countries, by referring to immigrants and asylum seekers as 'invaders,' and by saying that Members of Congress who

are immigrants ... do not belong in Congress or in the United States of America."

The vote condemning the President (240 Democrats for, 187 Republicans against) was overwhelmingly along party lines. The Democrats were a united bloc and only four Republicans (one black Congressman from Texas, two others possibly either retiring or not seeking re-election, and the fourth a naturalised citizen of Polish origin) and the sole independent in the House (a Michigan Congressman forced out of the Grand Old Party, or GOP, for his opposition to Mr. Trump) joined them.

Leader, party and vision

In publicly telling these Congresswomen to "go back", Mr. Trump was explicitly saying the U.S. was a white nation in which coloured people and racial minorities irrespective of their citizenship status, place of birth, or length of residence, did not belong. And in refusing to join the Democrats in supporting the resolution, the GOP was clearly on board with his vision of a white nation. In the 1990s, faced with the demographic reality that the U.S. would in course of time become a white-minority nation, sections of the GOP had sought to broaden its appeal to Hispanics, Asian-Americans, middle-class Blacks, and other minorities. With the rise of a nativist and white supremacist fringe (epitomised by the Tea Party) the GOP has decided it can dispense with minorities.

Between gerrymandering constituencies, preventing minorities from voting through myriad restrictions, and legalising all this through increasing control over both the judiciary and various state legislatures, the GOP has anchored itself firmly in a white nation. Mr. Trump is both a symptom of this process and its great acceler-



ator. Far from being an aberration or outlier in the U.S. political landscape, he epitomises a considerable section of it only too well.

Mr. Trump was reportedly delighted at the display of Democratic unity on the resolution condemning him for his comments on the Congresswomen. It played fully into his hands for next year's Presidential elections wherein he would position himself as the candidate of a white nation under threat from a rising tide of minorities, immigrants, and various other un-American 'outsiders' living off government handouts and crime. The sight of House majority leader, Nancy Pelosi, standing shoulder-to-shoulder with the four coloured Congresswomen was precisely the sort of photo-opportunity that was dynamite as far as Mr. Trump was concerned. (The weeks prior to this show of unity had been marked by bitter differences between the centrist Pelosi and the more progressive Congresswomen on issues such as socialised health care, immigration reform, border control, and Israel-Palestine, to mention the most prominent).

Poll-centric theme

It is obvious that Mr. Trump intends to make the upcoming Presidential elections a contest about race, and paint the Democratic party as beholden to unpatriotic, intellect and artlessness, Ms.

Warren and Ms. Harris are likely to evoke the sort of misogyny that clearly contributed to Hillary Clinton's defeat, while Mr. Sanders' avowal of social democracy often bafflingly alienates many underclass people who need it most.

That his socialism is seen as a problem while Mr. Trump's practical treasonous and utterly pusillanimous relations with Russia's President Vladimir Putin does not deflect his followers simply beggars belief.

A thread of hatred

More importantly, as with a host of other countries (India, Turkey, the United Kingdom, the Philippines, Brazil – to mention only a few) right-wing strongmen and their supporters riding on a cocktail of racist, casteist, majoritarian and misogynistic ideologies seem to be winning everywhere. A visceral politics of hatred for racial minorities and other putative outsiders, energised by social media resonance machines we still poorly understand, has returned incumbent regimes that would have been swept out of power in times past. It may not matter what the Democrats do and Mr. Trump may yet be re-elected. But in confronting his racism and misogyny, in making a forceful case for progressive taxation, for reforming a dysfunctional health-care system, in bringing the U.S. back into conformity with international law on asylum seekers, and in derailing the endless war machine that it has become, whoever wins the Democratic nomination would be well advised to listen to the four minority Congresswomen: they represent the future, however cloudy that may seem at this moment in time. And it would be the right thing to do.

Sankaran Krishna teaches politics at the University of Hawaii at Manoa in Honolulu, U.S.

The minutiae of Trump's mediation claim

Governments pursue their national interests single-mindedly without allowing sentiment to influence their judgment



CHINMAYA R. GHAREKHAN

US. President Donald Trump's claim on Monday, during a press conference with Pakistan's Prime Minister Imran Khan in Washington, that Prime Minister Narendra Modi had told him at the G-20 summit in Japan in June, in so many words, that he wanted the American President's help, either through mediation or arbitration, in resolving the Kashmir dispute is a claim that has understandably raised hackles in India and jubilation in Pakistan. The Indian External Affairs Minister has denied that Mr. Modi had made any such request to Mr. Trump.

The Opposition is not satisfied with the Minister's denial and wants Mr. Modi personally to clarify the situation, which he seems reluctant to do; it is very difficult for the Prime Minister to call Mr. Trump a liar because that in effect is what he would be saying if he contested the latter's claim.

It hardly needs stating that Mr. Modi did not make any such request to Mr. Trump. The President's love for truthfulness in his own country is suspect. It is entirely possible that he thought of making such a statement, which he must have known was not true, to

please his guest; perhaps he was confident that he would be able to placate the Indian leader on some subsequent occasion, by for example, extending the deadline for reducing import of Iranian oil to zero.

The bottom line

The main lesson for us in India in all this is not that we cannot trust the American President – we should not trust any foreign leader in such matters. It is an object lesson how other governments pursue their national interests single-mindedly without allowing sentiment to influence their judgment. At this point in time, the U.S. is desperate for Pakistan's help in 'extricating' the American military from Afghanistan.

The use of the word 'extricate' was most suggestive; it indicates that the U.S. feels itself in a quagmire in that unfortunate country and is eager to pull out with some face-saving formula. Mr. Trump is thinking only of his country's interest; he is not bothered about India's reaction. If India feels offended, so be it. He knows that Pakistan is the only country with clout with the Taliban that can help him in reaching this objective.

If Pakistan does manage to persuade the Taliban to engage in direct talks with the Afghan government, it can expect substantial dividends from Mr. Trump – beyond the \$1.3 billion that was mentioned at the presser.

Imran Khan too has played his cards well. He did not allow him-



self to act hurt or annoyed at Mr. Trump's pungent criticism of Pakistan's 'lying and cheating' just days before his visit. On the other hand, he took some steps, including lifting the ban on overflights through Pakistan's airspace to create an impression of reasonableness in time for his Washington visit.

We Indians do not take kindly to such strong words from foreign leaders. We feel hurt and show our hurt publicly. In the old days, what Mr. Trump said would have led to demonstrations in front of the American embassy. We also get carried away by flattery. As they say, even god loves flattery, but governments cannot afford to take pride at face value. Thus, our ego gets inflated when we are told that India has a major role to play in the Indo-Pacific.

The concept of the Indo-Pacific is nothing but containment of China by another name. The Japanese Prime Minister takes credit for coining the phrase, suggesting that the name implies the importance of India in this region. He has his own problems with China, and Japan is a close ally of America. The two no doubt work closely with

each other and coordinate their actions in this area. But India has its own interests and concerns about China which are not shared by others. All 'strategic' experts are of one view, namely, in the event of a major crisis with China, we shall have to depend solely on ourselves; no other country will come to our help in any meaningful way. This calls for a certain amount of distancing ourselves from the game that other powers are playing. Surely, the experts in the government are conscious of these factors, especially now that we have a seasoned diplomat at the helm of Foreign Office.

The 'K' word

To come back to Kashmir, we are justified in our position that there can be no talks with Pakistan unless and until Islamabad effectively stops cross-border terrorism emanating from its territory. The question is: does either country really want to resolve the issue? It is not enough for either country to say that it wants to solve the problem.

When Pakistan says this, it means withdrawal of all Indian forces from the whole of Jammu and Kashmir, followed by a referendum. When India says it wants to resolve the problem, it means the vacation by Pakistan of its presence from the whole of Jammu and Kashmir. Pakistan's interpretation of the UN resolution is patently wrong; the resolution calls for withdrawal of all forces under Pakistan's control first. But it has managed to create a narrative of

self-determination for the Kashmiri people which is largely swallowed by other countries.

It makes sense for the Pakistan military not being keen on resolving the conflict, because it will lose its relevance and pre-eminent position in society once the Kashmir problem is out of the way. Surely that is not the case with the Indian military. India's military is highly disciplined and apolitical and will follow whatever the civilian government decides.

If each country wants to solve the problem only on its terms, it will never be solved. In any negotiation, both sides have to compromise, which means neither side will get all it demands. The only realistic and practical way out is the conversion of the Line of Control into an international boundary, with suitable, minor adjustments.

We did make this offer during the Bhutto-Swaran Singh talks in 1962-63. We even offered an extra 1,500 sq.km to Pakistan, but the latter wanted the whole State, except for the district of Kathua. It is obvious that neither country has the political courage or the mandate to officially put forward this proposal now or ever. Thus, the issue will not be solved bilaterally and will remain with us for a long, long time. And some might say 'so be it'.

Chinmaya R. Gharekhan, a former Indian Ambassador to the United Nations, was Special Envoy for West Asia in the Manmohan Singh government

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Letters emailed to letters@thehindu.co.in must carry the full postal address and the full name or the name with initials.

Panel scrutiny

The demand by Opposition leaders that the government must refer seven key Bills, which include the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Amendment Bill, 2019, the Right to Information (Amendment) Bill, 2019, and the DNA Technology (Use and Application) Regulation Bill 2019, for further scrutiny by a Select Committee of Parliament is reasonable and justified (Page 1, July 25). The government should not bulldoze things merely because it has a political majority. The essence of democracy is debate and discussion. The system of select committees is fully utilised in the Westminster system of parliamentary democracies. Since the

committee comprises both ruling and Opposition members there can be discussions at leisure. The services of experts can also be used. In the past, several useful suggestions have been offered by Opposition members, incorporated before the Bill was tabled. This way, precious time in Parliament can be saved.

S.V. VENKATAKRISHNAN,
Bengaluru

Population curbs

India is a democracy and cannot afford to pursue an authoritarian policy on population control (Editorial page, "Having the last word on 'population control'", July 25). However, I feel India's demographic dividend can be utilised only if the population growth does not outpace

the growth of infrastructure. On the contrary, such growth will only add to the burden as far as public health and education are concerned and result in greater unemployment. Economic growth will be unequal too.

DIVYA SHARMA,
Dehradun, Uttarakhand

A prominent feature of population control in India is that it has been achieved without coercive measures, examples of these measures being the Emergency phase or the rigorous norm of one-child per couple in China in the past. Voluntary efforts have been engendered by the spread of education as shown by the best total fertility rate (TFR) results in Kerala. Besides, greater awakening about the

importance of small family among the poor seems to be growing. However, we do need to bring down the total fertility rate (TFR) even further, from 2.2. For this, education, health care and infrastructure have to be in tandem. There needs to be better awareness, quality education and more incentives for adhering to a small family.

Y.G. CHOUSKEY,
Pune

Pockets of Indians across all religious denominations and economic brackets have been deriving direct and palpable benefits by adopting 'small family norms', as seen in terms of overall prosperity, quality of life and better rankings in the social indices of these nuclear units. But population

as an asset is not a theory that India can afford to buy. It may not be an exaggeration that all the progress achieved in the 70 years of independence has been overshadowed by an unbridled population explosion. We do not need a rocket scientist to tell us that excess population is India's bane. Let us not fight shy of the truth.

SIVAMANI VASUDEVAN,
Chennai

Other sources of power

Amidst the acute water crisis India is facing in many parts,

CORRECTIONS & CLARIFICATIONS:

In the Sports page story titled "Melissa Tapper – making the most of her disadvantage" (July 22, 2019) both the photo caption and the text erroneously said: "Born with brachial plexus – which means the nerves between her right neck and shoulder were torn apart..." This should be corrected to read brachial plexus injury.

The Readers' Editor's office can be contacted by Telephone: +91-44-28418297/28576300; E-mail: readerseditor@thehindu.co.in

How to make the Surrogacy Bill more inclusive?

PARLEY

The government need not restrict the surrogacy option to married couples only

The Surrogacy (Regulation) Bill was introduced in the Lok Sabha earlier this month with the intent of facilitating altruistic surrogacy in the country. The Bill stipulates that a surrogate mother has to be a close relative of the intending couple. The government claims that regulating surrogacy will put an end to rampant commercialisation of the practice. But in the process, it has left a lot of women from underprivileged backgrounds who lend their wombs worse off. In a conversation moderated by Ramya Kannan, gynaecologist Dr. Kakoli Ghosh Dastidar (KGD) and author Gita Aravamudan (GA) look at the Bill's shortcomings.

How will the Bill impact surrogacy in the country? Will it increase or decrease the chances for people to choose from the many reproduction options?

KGD: I would like to mention that I have spoken to Union Health Minister Harsh Vardhan. I have also, in fact, written to him that it looks like we are putting the cart before the horse. For surrogacy to happen, we need embryos, and embryos are cultured in various In-Vitro Fertilisation (IVF) laboratories. So, before speaking of surrogacy, we should have brought in the Assisted Reproductive Technology (ART) Bill, which has been lying in cold storage for years now. We should have formulated rules and regulations for ART because there is a mention of 'donor eggs' in the Surrogacy Bill; and it is the donor eggs that are used for the IVF procedures. Second, the Bill specifies that the intending couples should be married Indian couples. There is no mention of Non-Resident Indians working or studying abroad who may want to come back home to have a baby. As far as the other provisions go, they are mostly okay, but we need to be able to debate the Bill at length.

Are there any problems with the Bill?

GA: There are a lot of problems. First, as Dr. Kakoli said, we are put-

ting the cart before the horse because there is a whole process involved, and surrogacy is only the ultimate end of it. There are many other points in the Bill that are very problematic. First, it leaves out a lot of people in case they want to have a baby through IVF, including unmarried couples who want to have a baby through surrogacy, gay couples and single men and women.

Also, the Bill allows only altruistic surrogacy; this provision is very problematic as far as I'm concerned. I spent two years with surrogate mothers, clinics and intending couples; what I found is that the people who are lending their wombs in order to bear children for somebody else – they are doing a job which is very creditable because they want to help somebody, but it doesn't mean that they should put their life on hold for it, or that they should not be paid for it.

Altruistic surrogacy has, in fact, failed in other countries, and has resulted in various other forms of assistance being given, though money may not be paid. If we are going to rely on relatives alone, many may not come forward. Surrogacy should be declared as a kind of profession – the person providing a womb must have a contract, must be paid properly and get insurance and proper medical checks.

Both of you sound quite agitated at the exclusion of certain groups of people.

KGD: I would like to mention here that our group, led by my husband, Dr. Sudarshan Ghosh Dastidar, was the first in the country, possibly globally too, to help a single-male parent have a baby through IVF surrogacy in 2005.

We have been working on IVF since 1986-87, so we have had so many experiences of dealing with people who seek surrogacy. Thus, I strongly speak in favour of transgenders and same-sex couples. I think they should have been included in this Bill.

But as far as the experience of surrogate mothers is concerned, some women had been exploited so much that the government was



A foreigner couple with their child, which was born through surrogacy, in Hyderabad in 2013. • P.V. SIVAKUMAR

forced to bring this proposal. The mothers were not being given good food or medical treatment and post-partum care was non-existent.

While in my own experience, I have always dealt with close relatives who came forward as surrogates, I am all for including other groups of people too in the Bill, if couples are unable to, or cannot bear children due to medical reasons. However, I'm strictly against 'fashion surrogacy', where women who feel their figure would be disturbed if they carry a baby opt for surrogacy.

GA: In the case of LGBTQI couples and single parents, when medical facilities are available, surrogacy should be allowed, because otherwise how will they have a baby? They will need the womb of a surrogate. Living in has become acceptable now, and live-in couples should also be allowed to have surrogate babies. All these archaic rules, I think, should be shed from the Bill.

Surrogate mothers have indeed been exploited, because there is no process to monitor the clinics or any law to ensure that the mothers are not defrauded by the clinics or the intending couples. The question is, will this Bill manage to ensure a fair and just process?

C Before speaking of surrogacy, we should have brought in the Assisted Reproductive Technology Bill, which has been lying in cold storage for years

GA: So, I agree with Dr. Kakoli that there are certain places where surrogates were thoroughly exploited and it was the agents, the middlemen, who did that. However, instead of removing the means of livelihood from them, you should have a contract that all surrogates and the commissioning parents have to sign.

The contract should include details of the payment to be made, specify insurance coverage, and give an assurance that the mothers will be treated properly even in the post-partum stage. I have come across a couple of surrogate homes in Gujarat, in Bengaluru and Hyderabad, where the surrogates are actually treated very well.

Surrogates are actually not very attached to the babies they are carrying in their wombs, because it is a means for them to get a livelihood. If the government can only ensure that everything is done legally, we don't need this kind of a Bill that is so non-inclusive and superficial, in the sense it doesn't delve deep into the problems.

So, it seems logical that ART is the key to surrogacy. Is it possible that the ART Bill will be fast-tracked now?

KGD: We are trying to solve the problems by talking, and we are going to discuss this next week. Only at the end of the discussion will we be able to see how many amendments the government has accepted.

If you have a surrogate pregnancy, it should be preceded by an IVF. That is why IVF should be discussed first. IVF clinics have mushroomed all across the country, and malpractices are happening, for instance, in dichotomy or seed-splitting. There are also advertisements where celebrities falsely claim to provide a 100% success rate, whereas the internationally acceptable rate for women is about 35%, and it can never be more than 40%.

We do have, in certain age groups, a 70% success rate; but it might be just 30% for the next age group, so the cumulative rate comes to 35%-40%. But these IVF units are claiming a 100% success, so more patients are going to them. Costs are also going up. While an IVF procedure earlier used to cost less than ₹1 lakh, it now costs ₹4 lakh-₹5 lakh.

So, the ART Bill should be tabled before the Surrogacy Bill.

GA: The ART Bill has been in cold storage. But the Surrogacy Bill, which deals with the end of the process, is being touted as very important. It is not. What is important is to take note of the fact that malpractices are taking place in these IVF laboratories, to the extent that somebody else's embryo can be put into you saying that it is yours. These fly-by-night operators have to be regulated. ART Bill has to be taken up again, and discussed first, after being tabled in Parliament, and passed. Otherwise, are going to have a very messy situation.

Have all points of view been represented in the Bill? Did a consultative process precede the introduction of the Surrogacy Bill?

KGD: When the ART Bill was drafted in the late 1990s, an expert committee was constituted by the Indian Council for Medical Research. It held public debates in all four

parts of the country and we involved the public. We put out advertisements in newspapers and asked the public to speak out. Only after this, did the ART Bill come about. Even for surrogacy, the public should have its say, because this is a democracy.

Couples with infertility problems, transgender people, single women, divorced women, and widows should be involved in the public debate and only then should the Bill be brought in.

GA: Exactly! I agree with you on that. The Constitution gives a woman the right to reproduce, or not to reproduce, as she wishes, and she has the right to privacy when she makes her reproductive choices. So, this has to be incorporated into the Bill – If I have a right to reproduce, that means I can hire a surrogate, I can go in for IVF whether I'm a transgender, a lesbian or a divorcee, I have this right as I wish.

A woman who has lent her womb also has these rights.

Any closing remarks?

GA: We need a law, but passing the Surrogacy Bill without looking at the whole process – I think this means we are heading for disaster.

The whole Bill has been drafted without taking into consideration the many physical and emotional factors at stake. Meanwhile, there are many people who don't know whether or not they can hire a surrogate. There are people who have already hired surrogates. What will happen to their baby? There is a lot of doubt in these areas now.

When the government banned surrogacy for foreigners, some foreigners who were here earlier had already put some embryos in deep freeze, thinking that they would come back and have another baby through the viable embryos. Following the ban, they asked for the embryos to be returned. They had gone through a lot to produce a life form, but the government said there can be no export and import of embryos any more. So what will happen to those embryos? You cannot put everything in jeopardy at the last moment, and then say 'let me think about it and get back to you after a year'. This is a very complicated issue.



Dr. Kakoli Ghosh Dastidar
is a gynaecologist and Trinamool Congress MP



Gita Aravamudan is a journalist with a special interest in gender issues



Scan the QR code to listen to the full interview online

Making national legislatures more gender-balanced

Quotas can ensure more number of women MPs

ARCHANA DATTA

The Global Gender Gap report for 2018 said that the widest gender disparity is in the field of political empowerment. To cite the Inter-Parliamentary Union 2018 report, women legislators account for barely 24% of all MPs across the world.

However, the experience of the top-ranked countries in the IPU list does give an indication of how women's presence in political spaces took an upward turn in those nations.

Rwanda, a landlocked nation with a population of 11.2 million, tops the list, with 61.3% seats in the Lower House and 38.5% in the Upper House occupied by women. Since 2003, the country has implemented a legislative quota of 30% in all elected positions, which has enabled a steady inflow of women parliamentarians after successive elections. Its Constitution has also set a quota of 30% in all elected offices. However, some believe that the higher representation of women in the country cannot be attributed solely to quotas – women were thrust into the political limelight due to the huge vacuum that emerged in the aftermath of the 1994 genocide, which resulted in a large chunk of the country's male population getting killed.

Leader in the Caribbean

Cuba, the largest Caribbean island nation with a population of about 11.1 million, holds the second rank, with 53.2% seats of its 605-member single House being occupied by women representatives. The Communist dispensation in Cuba did not opt for legislated gender quotas, but does follow a practice akin to voluntary quota systems. However, Cuban women are less represented at the local level, where candidates are selected by the local communities that often overlook women candidates.

Sweden, the fifth-rank holder in the IPU, has a professedly feminist government and has maintained a women's parliamentary representation of at least 40% since 90s. The

349-member single House, Swedish Parliament, now has 161 women with 46.1% representation. Sweden does not have any constitutional clause or electoral law earmarking representation for women in elected bodies. The issue of compulsory gender quota didn't find favour in Sweden as it was believed that such a quota will create reverse discrimination and violate the principles of equal opportunities. Almost all political parties there have adopted measures to ensure a fair representation for women at all levels. In 1993, the Social Democratic Party adopted the 'zipper system', described as "gender quota system whereby women and men are placed alternately on all party lists." This further boosted women's seat share.

Nepal's example

Closer home, Nepal occupies the 36th position in the IPU and its 275-member Lower House has 90 women, about 32.7% of the total strength. The Nepal Constitution stole a march over many others in the South Asia by earmarking 33% seats for women in all state institutions, including the legislature.

India, at 149 among the 192 countries in the IPU list, had barely 11.8% women's representation in the 16th Lok Sabha, which improved to 14.5% in the current Lower House. At least seven out of the 29 States have not sent a single woman MP. The 108th Constitutional Amendment Bill stipulating 33% quota for women in the Parliament and in State Assemblies remains in political cold storage. The system of voluntary party quotas, which has worked well in many countries, is not likely to cut much ice in India's deeply embedded patriarchal society. As has happened in the case of panchayats and municipalities, only a legally mandated quota could perhaps ensure a large-scale entry of Indian women into the higher echelons of political power.

The writer is a former Indian Information Service Officer and media educationist



NOTEBOOK

The dramatic ambulance ride that wasn't

How an idea for a 'perfect Mumbai feature story' failed to materialise

JAYANT SRIRAM

I try to plan my life around traffic but there was one instance when I was actually counting on it being busy. This was for what I imagined would be the 'perfect feature story'.

A couple of years ago, while working in Mumbai, I was commissioned to do a story about traffic jams. Classic big city reporting cliché yes, but this story had a twist. I would aim to do it while travelling in an ambulance as it navigated its way through traffic.

What I hoped to achieve was a kind of forensic analysis of how disorganized the Mumbai traffic might be, or if there was a sense of order behind the apparent chaos. I wanted to see if vehicles had the space to manoeuvre themselves out of the way when an ambulance needed to cut through and if there were systems in place, like traffic police stepping in, that could help ease the situ-

ation. I also wanted to observe what kind of skills an ambulance driver needed to do this.

Armed with this 'perfect image' of what my story should be, I managed to get the help of a government hospital located in the centre of the city and began hanging out with the ambulance dispatch unit from early morning.

What followed, however, was a sobering contrast between the dramatic image in my mind and the reality. Between 7 a.m. and 2 p.m., the unit was dispatched about nine times to different places, and each time, I eagerly geared myself up to report.

It turned out however, that an ambulance is not dispatched only in times of emergency. There are numerous trips it takes just to cater to the basic logistics of running a hospital. For instance, a patient may have to be transferred from one building to another, or

equipment or food may have to be moved between facilities. Members of the ambulance unit were initially sceptical of my idea but, as the day wore on, were totally into the story.

Waiting for emergency

By mid afternoon, we were all in the amusing position of hoping for an emergency call. "It can happen any time," they said, though I suspect now that they just felt sorry for me as I sat quietly in a corner of the dispatch room, looking 'hopeful' every time the phone rang.

More trips between hospital facilities followed and, towards the evening, there was even a trip to transfer a patient to another hospital a few kilometres away, one that proved to be largely uneventful.

I didn't get my 'perfect feature story' but was left with this lingering sense of 'what if'. Traffic jams are so common in Mumbai that

anyone there can recall several instances when he may have heard an ambulance, sirens blaring, trying to cut through. I was so convinced that this would be a great story that I went back thrice to hang out with the same unit.

Members of the unit thought I was a bit crazy and assumed that I must have been particularly jobless to spend hours with them, just waiting. However, they never discouraged me though, predictably, I never got the perfect scenario of that dramatic ambulance ride through busy traffic I assumed was commonplace in Mumbai.

The experience gave me a vague guiding principle, especially when it comes to writing features or other long form stories – never have the perfect scene in mind beforehand and be prepared to write, with a clean slate, on what you see. And, of course, never count on the traffic.

The Hindu

FROM THE ARCHIVES

FIFTY YEARS AGO JULY 26, 1969

Apollo men in good shape

Back from the moon, but isolated from the world the Apollo 11 astronauts to-day [July 25] underwent their first physical examinations since their historic moon trip and showed no signs of having picked up germs on the lunar surface. Dr. William Carpenter of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration said Neil Armstrong, Edwin Aldrin and Michael Collins were in "very good shape", despite a minor inflammation in one of Armstrong's ears. The doctor said the men of Apollo 11 were in a better condition than the previous Apollo astronauts. After 11 hours of examination of the spacemen, Dr. Carpenter said Armstrong, Aldrin and Collins showed less deterioration in the condition of heart and blood vessels than other Apollo men had. He was not sure why it was so. But he was sure that the inflammation in one of Armstrong's ears was not important. He said there may have been a buildup of fluid in the ear due to the pressures of re-entry and that the fluid was draining. The men will be under painstaking medical scrutiny for 21 days. Dr. Carpenter, has also been quarantined with the astronauts in the trail-like facility aboard this recovery ship.

A HUNDRED YEARS AGO JULY 26, 1919

Birth of a Prince in Mysore.

A Mysore Government order says: The Government of His Highness the Maharaja desire that the auspicious event of the birth of a son to His Highness the Yuvaraja should be suitably celebrated and observed as a day of rejoicing throughout the State on the 29th, public holiday, in honour of the event, and flags should be flown and special thanksgiving services should be arranged to be held in principal temples and mosques. For this purpose a sum of Rs. 100 for the districts of Bangalore and Mysore including the two cities, and Rs. 50 each for other districts, will be placed at the disposal of the Deputy Commissioner through muzr department. All prisoners under sentence of one month and less will be released and all other prisoners will be given a month's remission for every year or fraction of a year of sentence they have yet to undergo provided their conduct in jail has been satisfactory. Prisoners sentenced to transportation for life who have only one year or less out of their sentences to serve in jail and whose conduct in jail has been uniformly good and civil prisoners who have been confined in jails and look up for a debt not exceeding Rs. 100 and who are through poverty unable to pay the same will also be released.

CMK

FROM PAGE ONE

EC sets up teams to probe VVPAT mismatch

According to the order, the teams have been asked to probe the cases of one less VVPAT slip being found in the Sri Renukaji Assembly Constituency of the Shimla Parliamentary Constituency in Himachal Pradesh; one slip extra found in the Kshetriga Assembly Constituency of the Inner Manipur Parliamentary Constituency in Manipur; one slip extra each found in the Begun Assembly Constituency of the Chittorgarh Parliamentary

Constituency and the Osian Assembly Constituency of the Pali Parliamentary Constituency in Rajasthan; seven extra slips found in the Kodur Assembly Constituency of the Rajampet Parliamentary Constituency in Andhra Pradesh; and four less slips and 34 less slips respectively found in the Pyurals Assembly Constituency and Nongkrem Assembly Constituency of the Shillong Parliamentary Constituency in Meghalaya.

Karnataka Speaker disqualifies 3 rebel MLAs

When asked if he would resign before taking a decision on resignations, he said: "Only after I complete my responsibility and not going against my conscience that I will decide on my future."

On his suggestion that voters should be heard before a decision is taken on the MLAs' resignations, he said:

"I am setting a new precedent. Let the country and State discuss it."

"Let the lawmakers take a decision on public hearing before the resignations are accepted."

Mr Ramesh Kumar added that the opinion of the voters can be considered depending on the prevailing situation.

RS passes RTI Bill amid Opposition protests

Opposition members stormed into the Well of the House and raised slogans in protest. Amidst slogans, the BJP members initiated the debate.

Though the motion to refer the Bill to a select committee was signed by Biju Janata Dal and Telangana Rashtra Samiti members, the two parties spoke in support of the Bill during the debate.

When the Opposition sensed this change of stance, it decided to call off the protest and join the debate.

Congress MP Jairam Ramesh alleged that legislation

is an effort to kill the RTI Act as an act of revenge by Prime Minister Narendra Modi who has been put in an embarrassing position by queries often, including the case seeking information on the educational qualifications of Mr Modi.

Speaking at the conclusion of the debate Minister for Department of Personnel and Training Jitender Singh said the amendment was brought without any motivation and was in good faith.

This, he said, will lead to institutionalisation of the CIC and strengthen the provision of RTI Act.

Subhash Garg seeks voluntary retirement

Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman had announced the scheme in the budget earlier this month.

Source of friction
It is widely believed among Finance Ministry officials and watchers that Mr. Garg was a key source of the recent friction between the Ministry and regulators such as the Reserve Bank of India and the Securities and Exchange Board of India.

While members of the Jan Lok Sabha Committee looking into the issue of the RBI's reserves and how much should be transferred to the Centre asked Mr. Garg to tone down his dissent note on the Committee's report, this was apparently to no avail.

Similarly, it is believed that Mr. Garg was instrumental in denying SEBI's repeated pleas against transferring 75% of its reserves to the government. The Finance Bill 2019 was passed in both Houses of Parliament without the government changing this provision. Mr. Garg's voluntary retirement, if approved, will kick in about 15 months before his scheduled superannuation in October 2020.

Mr Garg was designated as Finance Secretary in March this year following the superannuation of A.N. Jha. He held this post in addition to that of Secretary Economic Affairs, which he held since June 2017.

Assam BJP slams NRC authority

For rejecting a plea for reverification

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
GUWAHATI

The BJP in Assam has slammed the National Register of Citizens (NRC) authority for rejecting a plea for reverification of names in the draft list published on July 30 last.

The Central and State governments, both headed by the BJP, had requested the Supreme Court for reverification of 20% of names in districts bordering Bangladesh and 10% in other districts. But NRC State Coordinator Prateek Hajela, on July 23, told the court that this was unnecessary as NRC officials handling the exercise had already reverified 27% of the names.

"We disapprove of Hajela having done, as he claims,

27% reverification on his own without any instruction from the apex court that is monitoring the exercise. The Centre and State had sought reverification to ensure not a single genuine Indian is excluded from or any illegal immigrant included in the list. We feel Hajela is being directed by some vested interests," Assam BJP said in a statement.

Memo to President
Sachetan Nagarik Mancha, an Assam-based group that had submitted a memorandum to President Ram Nath Kovind last year alleging that the draft contained the names of Bangladeshi people, said the government did not push hard enough for reverification.

LS passes Triple Talaq Bill after JD(U) walks out

Opposition leaders call for scrutiny of Bill

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

The Lok Sabha on Thursday passed the Muslim Women (Protection of Rights on Marriage) Bill, 2019, which criminalises divorce by instant triple talaq by Muslim men and attracts a jail term of three years for the husband.

A majority of 303 members voted for the Bill following a fractious debate, which saw a walkout by a constituent of the ruling National Democratic Alliance, the Janata Dal (United). The legislation was earlier introduced for the first time in the 17th Lok Sabha.

Tabling the Bill, Union Law Minister Ravi Shankar Prasad said: "Law is not about religion or garnering votes, it is for women's empowerment."

Questioning the rationale for a law that creates a "lack



Protest move: A television grab of Congress MPs leaving the Lok Sabha after the Triple Talaq Bill was passed by a voice vote on Thursday. ■ PTI

of trust in society," JD(U) members staged a walkout. Two Opposition parties – the Congress and the Trinamool Congress – also walked out after the voice vote.

The Bill now needs to be approved by the Rajya Sabha.

Opposing the legislation, AIMIM MP Asaduddin Owaisi termed it as "anti-Islam". "Introducing a law will not eradicate a social evil on wo-

men; in fact you have done more harm than good," Mr. Owaisi asserted.

Mr. Owaisi said a woman should have the right to leave the marriage. "Will the husband give maintenance from jail? Why should the woman remain married to the husband who is in imprisonment," he asked.

The Bill seeks to replace the Ordinance passed by the previous government in Fe-

bruary. Justifying the introduction of the legislation, Mr. Prasad said: "Twenty Muslim countries in the world, including Pakistan and Malaysia, have banned the triple talaq. Why can't a secular India do it?"

Opposition parties, on their part, demanded that the Bill be referred to a select parliamentary committee for discussion and debate.

Questioning the govern-

Session extended till Aug. 7

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

Parliamentary Affairs Minister Pralhad Joshi on Thursday informed the Lok Sabha that the government had decided to extend the first session of the 17th Lok Sabha till August 7.

The session, which began on June 17, was scheduled to end on July 26, but the government

decided to extend it by another 12 days.

As soon as the Lok Sabha passed the Triple Talaq Bill in the Lower House, Mr. Joshi got up to inform Speaker Om Birla about the government's decision.

The government's move is linked to ensure the passage of crucial pending Bills like the Triple Talaq and the Motor Amendment Act in the Rajya Sabha next week.

tory as it sought to target only Muslim men even when the problem of abandoning wives was not unique to the community.

Congress leader Shashi Tharoor said that the crime was the 'desertion of wife' without taking responsibility. "Why is a law criminalising Muslim husbands," he asked, adding that the Supreme Court had already criminalised Triple Talaq.

Azam Khan's 'objectionable' remark sparks furore in LS

Akhilesh Yadav defends party MP, amid calls for apology

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

Lok Sabha on Thursday witnessed high drama when BJP MP Rama Devi, in the Chair, took objection to a comment made by Samajwadi Party leader Mohammad Azam Khan who was speaking during the debate on the Muslim Women (Protection of Rights on Marriage) Bill, 2019.

The House erupted with demands for Azam Khan's apology even as Samajwadi Party chief Akhilesh Yadav defended him with Ms. Devi stating: "This is not the way to speak to a woman. Ex-punge your remarks."

Attempting to clarify, Azam Khan said: "You are my sister. I have had a long political career, it is not pos-

sible for me to say anything bad. If there is a single unparliamentary word in what I said, then I declare my resignation from Parliament."

Akhilesh Yadav, who stood up to defend Azam Khan, faced cries of "shame" from the ruling party. However, Mr. Yadav continued and said: "I don't

think Azam Khan ji meant any disrespect to the Chair (Rama Devi). They (BJP MPs) are *badtameez* (insolent)these people are so ill-behaved and they point fingers at us!"

Speaker Om Birla, who resumed Chair, demanded an apology from Akhilesh Yadav.

Earlier, Mr. Khan speaking on the triple talaq bill and referring to the intervention of Minority Affairs Minister Mukhtar Abbas Naqvi, read out a couplet "...*tu idhar-udhar ki baat na kar* (do not divert from the topic) ...".

At this, Ms. Devi asked Mr. Khan to address the Chair. It was in response to this that the SP member made the "objectionable" remark.

There was no mention of the Bill in the list of business for the day, a point that was repeatedly made by Trinamool Congress member Sugata Roy and Congress leader in the House Adhir Chowdhury. Both urged Speaker Om Birla to reintroduce the law on Friday.

"You are the supreme authority. You should not al-

Companies Bill introduced in LS amid opposition hue and cry

Parties say that the law is being enacted in a hurry

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman on Thursday introduced a Bill to replace the Companies (Amendment) Ordinance, 2019 in the Lok Sabha, a move strongly opposed by the Opposition, which claimed that the government had been trying to enact the law in haste.

There was no mention of the Bill in the list of business for the day, a point that was repeatedly made by Trinamool Congress member Sugata Roy and Congress leader in the House Adhir Chowdhury. Both urged Speaker Om Birla to reintroduce the law on Friday.

"A Bill to replace the first ordinance was passed in the Lok Sabha in January 2019 but could not get through in

the Rajya Sabha. Hence the second ordinance was promulgated in February. This Bill has been brought to replace the second ordinance. We are not bringing the Bill in haste," she said. The government was following the best practice by adopting the legislative route to enact the law, she added.

Mr. Chowdhury said the government on several occasions had brought Bills to the House without prior notice.

"If such trends continue, the dignity of the House will be hurt," he said. Mr. Birla said he had given a ruling that at least two days prior notice should be given to the MPs before the introduction of any bill from the next session and allowed Ms. Sitharaman to introduce the Bill.

INS meets Goyal on 10% newsprint duty

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NEW DELHI

A delegation of the Indian Newspaper Society (INS) on Thursday met Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal regarding the 10% customs duty imposed on newsprint in the Union Budget, an official said.

The delegation was led by Society president Jayant Mammen Mathew, executive editor of the *Malayala Manorama* Group.

Mahendra Mohan Gupta of *Dainik Jagran* and Mohit Jain of Bennett Coleman Ltd. were also present.

Earlier, the INS had sought rollback of the 10% duty saying the move would put unbearable burden on the industry.

Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman had said the 10% duty was to provide a level playing field to domestic manufacturers.

DD live



Enter innovation: Union Information and Broadcasting Minister Prakash Javadekar at the office of Doordarshan in New Delhi on Thursday. He said creative heads would be appointed in various channels to generate high-quality content. ■ PTI

President marks two years in office

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

President Ram Nath Kovind, who completed two years in office on Thursday, will become the first President in recent years to visit over 12 countries, including his upcoming visit to west African countries later this week.

Keeping with the government's Africa focus, President Kovind will embark on a week-long visit to Benin and Gambia.

The court said the support persons in these special courts, who performed the crucial role of a bridge between the child victim and the court's officers and investigators, should be dedicated people who had excellent academic qualifications and were devoted to child rights.

Rashtrapati Bhavan has come out impressive slides on how the 14th President has taken "India to the world".

A first

Apart from being the first Indian President to visit Australia, Bolivia and Croatia, he has travelled to Chile in South America.

The President takes keen interest and gives his suggestions when the Rashtrapati Bhavan secretary works out his schedule along with MEA officials," said an official.

U.P. govt. issues orders to withdraw 22 more cases of Muzaffarnagar riots

Govt. counsel says they are not keen to go on appeal

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
GAZIABAD

The Uttar Pradesh government has issued orders to withdraw 22 more cases linked to the 2013 Muzaffarnagar riots, taking the total number to 70. Additional district magistrate Amit Kumar confirmed to *The Hindu* that he has received the orders. "Out of 90 cases in which report was sought, the government has decided to withdraw proceedings in 70 cases. These are cases re-

lated to arson and loot," he said.

District government counsel Dushyant Tyagi said he would move the application at relevant courts. "I can't say much as the cases are still sub-judice. It is for the court to accept or reject the government's position."

The riots which swept Muzaffarnagar in 2013 claimed at least 65 lives and thousands were displaced. Since 2017, Muzaffarnagar courts have delivered ver-

dicts in 41 cases and have acquitted the accused in 40 cases where Muslims were attacked.

Mr. Tyagi said the government was not keen to go on appeal in acquitted cases. The prime reason, he said, was witnesses in most cases turned hostile.

Welcoming the move, senior BJP leader from Muzaffarnagar Sohanveer Singh said these were "fake cases" foisted by the then Samajwadi Party government.

IN BRIEF



India tells Pak. to grant full access to Jadhav

NEW DELHI
India on Thursday asked Pakistan to grant full consular access to Kulbhushan Jadhav at the earliest in "full compliance and conformity" with last week's verdict in his case by the International Court of Justice. External Affairs Ministry Spokesperson Raveesh Kumar said India is in touch with the Pakistani authorities on the issue. PTI

Bombay HC issues notices to Gadkari, ECI

NAGPUR
The Nagpur bench of the Bombay High Court on Thursday issued notices to Union Minister Nitin Gadkari and the Election Commission of India, seeking their stands on a bunch of petitions challenging the minister's election in the 2019 Lok Sabha polls. Justice A. S. Chandrakar heard three petitions filed by Congress leader Nana Patole, Vanchit Bahujan Aghadi candidate Manohar Dabrase and one Nafis Khan, alleging electoral malpractices and defective EVMs used in the polls. PTI

30 Bangladeshi immigrants deported

GUWAHATI
Bangladesh on Thursday took back 30 people, including three women, who had entered India illegally over the past five years. Officials in Karimganj district of Assam deported them through the Kalibari Ghat checkpoint. Karimganj Superintendent of Police Manabendra Debroy said the immigrants had infiltrated since 2015 and were arrested in 10 districts. The camps have 60 more Bangladeshi nationals awaiting their return home.

Move on from Trump controversy'

MEA says that there are plenty of things on the plate to take the India-U.S. relations forward

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

Officials of India and the United States have adequately presented their respective points of view and therefore it is time to move beyond the phase created by President Donald Trump's comment on Kashmir, the Ministry of External Affairs said on Thursday.

Speaking at the weekly press meeting, MEA spokesman Raveesh Kumar sought to put an end to the controversy that began after Mr. Trump, in a press conference with Pakistan Prime Minister Imran Khan, sought to mediate between India and Pakistan on Kashmir.

Important ties

"India's ties with the United States is extremely important. Our position on the matter has been explained in both houses of the Parliament by the External Affairs Minister. The State Department has issued a statement saying that their position remains the same and there has been no change," said Mr. Kumar recounting the clarifications that Indian and

Clearing the air

July 22

I was with him [PM Modi] two weeks ago and he asked if I would be a mediator or arbitrator on Kashmir

DONALD TRUMP,
U.S. President

July 23

I assure the House [Lok Sabha] categorically that no such request has been made by the Prime Minister

S. JAISHANKAR,
External Affairs Minister

July 25

It's time to move on from the issue; India's relationship with the U.S. remains multi-faceted and it stands on its own merit

RAVEESH KUMAR,
MEA spokesperson

partners and we have deep convergence in a range of issues. We are now going for hi-tech defence tie-ups."

Mr. Trump's claim has put spotlight on Mr. Modi's upcoming visits to multilateral summits where he is likely to interact with President Trump. The Indian leader is scheduled to visit Biarritz in France in August to participate in the events associated with the G7 summit.

'Episodic issues'

Sources said that the controversy associated with President Trump's comments will not put a brake on the smooth flow of interaction between the leaders and officials of both sides. The spokesman referred to the relationship as "multifaceted" and "broad-based" that is not influenced by episodic issues.

Following Mr. Trump's comment on Kashmir, Larry Kudlow, Chief Economic Advisor in the Trump administration, said that the U.S. President "doesn't make things up," arguing that Mr. Trump was indeed asked to intervene by PM Modi.



Planning ahead: Admiral Karambir Singh, right and former Admiral Sunil Lamba at a seminar on Thursday • PTI

Will respond within our budget: Navy

'Long-term fiscal support needed'

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

quired long-term fiscal support to build a Navy. "That is the only way we can plan," he noted.

On the proposed second Indigenous Aircraft Carrier (IAC-II), which has been on the drawing board for sometime but hasn't been approved by the government yet, Adm. Singh said he cannot give any timeline. "Our

plan is to build a 65,000 tonne with possibly electric propulsion and a Catapult Assisted Take-Off But Arrested Recovery (CATOBAR) so that if we have three aircraft carriers, we can have two operational at any given time," he said, adding that the plan to build IAC-II was a part of the Maritime Capability Perspective Plan (MCPP) 2012-27.

India's first Indigenous carrier Vikrant is under advanced stage of construction and expected to be delivered to the Navy by February 2021 and commissioned by early 2023 after aviation trials.

5G, data localisation to dominate BRICS meeting

Digital economy and U.S. opposition to telecom major Huawei likely to be prominent issues

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

Calling for a united stand on issues surrounding 5G networks and data storage, diplomats from the five-nation grouping of Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa said the digital economy would dominate the meeting of BRICS Foreign Ministers in Brasilia on Friday.

Making a special mention

of the U.S. opposition to Chinese telecom major Huawei, diplomats said the BRICS group of emerging economies would seek to "coordinate" positions on the contentious issue.

The BRICS countries may also search for common ground on data localisation, of particular interest to India, after the Reserve Bank passed guidelines ensuring

that financial data pertaining to Indians is stored only in Indian servers.

On Huawei

India is yet to clarify whether it will include Huawei in its trials of 5G equipment due to start in September. The issue had been raised on the sidelines of the Osaka G-20 summit in June, but no decision has been announced.

"Regarding the [policy] of the United States of America with regard to certain Chinese companies, we deem it an inappropriate way of dealing with competition," said Russian deputy Ambassador Roman Babushkin, indicating that Moscow believes the U.S. moves against Huawei are motivated by commercial considerations, not security risks, as

claimed.

"We will be discussing 5G," said Brazil's deputy chief of mission in Delhi Brenna Herman, adding that countries "coordinate positions, but BRICS is not a mechanism against any particular country or grouping."

India will be represented at the BRICS forum by Union Minister for Road Transport and Highways V.K. Singh.

FACT THE FERTILISERS AND CHEMICALS TRAVANCORE LIMITED.
(A Government of India Enterprise) Regd. Office: Elor MATERIALS, FACT-PD ADMINISTRATION BUILDING, UDYGAMANDAL, KOCHI- 683 501 (KERALA)

Tel: (0484)- 256 8625/8260, E-mail: julian@facttdl.com, Website: <http://www факт.коин>

TRANSPORTATION OF BAGGED PRODUCTS BY ROAD

Enquiry No. MM/TS1/E20004 dttd. 25.07.2019

Tender ID in <https://eprocure.gov.in> portal: 2019_FACT_489447_1

FACT invites Online Bids (TWO COVER SYSTEM) for Road Transportation of bagged products from FACT production units at Udyogamandal and Ambalamedu to various destinations in Kerala, Tamil Nadu & Karnataka through <https://eprocure.gov.in>, for 2 years. Estimated quantity: 9,76,050MT.

Any change / Extensions to this tender will be informed only through CPP e-procurement portal. Due date/ time for submission of bids: 10.08.2019/03.00 PM. Sd/- Asst. Gen. Manager (Materials)-T&S

REQUEST FOR EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST (CONSULTING SERVICES)

HIMACHAL PRADESH PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT (INDIA)

Assignment Title: Consultancy Services for carrying out Road Safety Audit of most vulnerable roads of HPPWD in the State of Himachal Pradesh

For implementation of the intended Road Safety Audit, the H.P. Public Works Department invites Expression of Interest from the Road Safety Auditors empanelled by the NHAI on the terms and conditions set forth in the offer document.

A Consultant will be selected on the basis of Least Cost Basis of the financial proposal to be submitted along with the Request for Expression of Interest.

The detailed Request for Expression of Interest for the proposed assignment along with scope of work shall be made available on the HPRIDC website at the following link w.e.f. 30.07.2019 <http://himachalservices.nic.in/hpridc/>

All future corrigendum / addendum will also be made available on the departmental website on the above link.

Expressions of interest must be delivered in a written form to the address below (in person, or by post) by **September 02, 2019** at 1500 hours (IST).

Sd/- Chief Engineer-cum-Project Director, State Roads Project, HPRIDC, Nirman Bhawan, Nigam Vihar, Shimla-171002 (H.P.). Tel: +91-177-2827602, Fax: +91-177-2826663, E-mail: pdsrp-hp@nic.in

SOUTH EASTERN COALFIELDS LIMITED "A MINI RATNA COMPANY"

E-TENDER NOTICE

NIT No: SECL/BSP/CMC/e-Tender/338, date: 19.07.2019 , **Tender ID:** 2019_SECL_145040_2 , Location of work: Sohagpur Area, Tehsil: Burhar, District: Shahdol, State: M.P., Estimated Cost: Rs. 16,93,84,870 (Excluding GST)

Description of Work: (1) Hiring of Surface miner and allied equipment of suitable capacity for mechanical excavation/cutting of coal/coal measure strata and deployment of dozer on hiring basis for removal of ridges, left out, while working coal seam in slices involving extraction/breaking of coal/cross measure strata in slices/layers to lumps size-100 mm without resorting to drilling and blasting for a quantity of 38.71 Lakh Cum (60.00 LT) with minimum 3535Cum (5480Te) per day (2)

5480, Period: 1095 days, Sohagpur Area, Tehsil: Burhar, District: Shahdol, State: M.P. Start date/time for submission of bid: 27.07.2019, at 10hrs, End date/time for submission of bid: 13.08.2019, at 17hrs, Date/time for opening of bid: 16.08.2019, at 11hrs.

GM - HOD (CMC) SECL,Bilaspur

Note : For details and submission of bid please visit website CPP www.eprocure.gov.in, and e-procurement portal of CIL <https://coaldinditenders.gov.in> and www.secl-cil.in. In case of any misprinting/error, details as per website document will be considered as final. 21986/

COAL : PRIME SOURCE OF ENERGY

GOVERNMENT OF KERALA STATE GOODS AND SERVICES TAX DEPARTMENT

e-Procurement Tender Notice

Work: Supply, installation and commissioning of intelligent ANPR System for Goods Vehicle Surveillance

e-tender Id	2019_CTD_286877_1
Published on	23/07/2019
Pre-bid meeting	01/08/2019 at 3:00 pm
Bid submission Start Date	05/08/2019
Bid submission end date	20/08/2019
Bid opening	22/08/2019

Please visit e-procurement portal for details. (etenders.kerala.gov.in)

Sd/- COMMISSIONER OF STATE TAX

Enquiries: Assistant Commissioner (ITMC), 5th Floor, Tax Towers, Karamana, P.O, Thiruvananthapuram - 695002
Email - acitmctd@kerala.gov.in Contact no - 9447786343 (3691612/D3/2019/I&PR)

General Manager

Please visit e-procurement portal for details. (etenders.kerala.gov.in)

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Sd/- COMMISSIONER OF STATE TAX

Ukraine seizes Russian ship in Black Sea

Crew were freed after Moscow warned of consequences if any Russian citizens were 'taken hostage'

REUTERS
KIEV

Ukraine on Thursday seized a Russian tanker for its alleged involvement in the capture of three Ukrainian Navy vessels by Russia, prompting Moscow to warn of consequences if any Russian citizens were "taken hostage".

The crew members were later freed by Ukraine and were on their way home, but the tanker remained in Ukrainian custody in the Danube river port of Izmail, a spokesman for the Russian Embassy in Kiev said by telephone.

Delicate negotiations

The seizure threatens to upset delicate negotiations on a possible prisoner swap between the two countries and came weeks after Volodymyr Zelenskiy, Ukraine's new President, spoke with Russian President Vladimir Putin for the first time.

The incident is also certain to further sour relations



Maritime tension: The Russian tanker, called 'Nika Spirit', detained by the Ukrainian security service in the Black Sea port of Izmail on Thursday. ■ REUTERS

between Kiev and Moscow, which remain blighted by Russia's 2014 annexation of Crimea from Ukraine and its backing for pro-Russian separatists in eastern Ukraine.

The Ukrainian prosecutor's office said 10 Russian crew were detained for questioning. Russian news agencies said around 15 Russians

had been on board at the time of the seizure.

Ukraine's security service alleged that the tanker, the 'Nika Spirit', used to be called 'NEYMA' and was placed beneath a bridge near Crimea in November in order to block three Ukrainian Navy ships from entering the Sea of Azov.

Russia seized the Ukrainian ships after opening fire on them and is still holding 24 Ukrainian sailors who were on board at the time, accusing them of illegally entering its territorial waters, a charge they deny.

The Ukrainian security service and military prosecutors' office detained a Rus-

sian tanker, the 'Neyma', which blocked Ukrainian warships in the Kerch Strait," Ukraine's SBU security service said in a statement.

The SBU published footage of the tanker being searched. The same footage showed the name of the detained ship, the 'Nika Spirit', on the vessel's bow next to a darker patch of paint that apparently covered up its old name. Two men in camouflage uniforms with Ukrainian insignia were shown walking through the Russian-flagged vessel.

Russia's Foreign Ministry warned Ukraine "there will soon be consequences" if any Russian crew members were "taken hostage", the RIA news agency reported.

The SBU said the Russian vessel had entered Ukraine under its new name, the 'Nika Spirit', "to cover its involvement in illegal actions", but that it had identified the ship from its unique International Maritime Organization number.

U.S. federal government to reinstate death penalty

Executions of five death row federal inmates scheduled

REUTERS
WASHINGTON

The U.S. Justice Department announced on Thursday it was reinstating a two-decades long dormant policy to resume the federal government's use of capital punishment and immediately scheduled the executions for five death row federal inmates.

"Congress has expressly authorised the death penalty through legislation adopted by the people's representatives in both houses of Congress and signed by the President," Attorney General William Barr said in a statement.

"The Justice Department upholds the rule of law and we owe it to the victims and their families to carry forward the sentence imposed by our justice system."

U.S. President Donald Trump has called for increasing use of the death pe-



U.S. Attorney General William Barr. ■ AFP

nalty for drug traffickers and mass shooters. The Justice Department said it has scheduled executions for five federal inmates who have been convicted of horrific murders and sex crimes.

Those inmates include Daniel Lewis Lee, a white supremacist who was convicted in Arkansas for murdering a family of three, including an eight-year-old girl.

Another one is Lezmond

Mitchell, who was found guilty by a jury in Arizona of stabbing a 63-year-old grandmother and forcing her young granddaughter to sit next to her lifeless body on a car journey before slitting the girl's throat.

"Each of these inmates has exhausted their appellate and post-conviction remedies," the department said, adding that the executions will take place in Indiana.

Billionaire Epstein found injured in prison cell

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
NEW YORK

U.S. billionaire Jeffrey Epstein, who is accused of sexually assaulting underage girls, was found injured in his jail cell after a possible suicide attempt, according to sources cited in multiple media reports.

Epstein was found semi-conscious with marks on his neck, anonymous law enforcement sources told U.S. media.

The injuries are not believed to be serious, they added. Guards are also investigating whether he was the victim of a possible assault as they piece together what happened.

The financier was denied bail last week after appearing at a New York court charged with one count of sex trafficking of minors and one count of conspiracy to commit sex trafficking of minors.

The attacks come amid U.S. General's meeting with top U.S. and NATO officials

REUTERS
KABUL

Three bombs rocked the Afghan capital of Kabul on Thursday, killing at least 11 people and wounding 45, officials said, as the chairman of the U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff was meeting top U.S. and NATO officials in the city.

A suicide bomber blew himself near a minibus carrying employees of the mi-

nistry and mines and petroleum, killing five women and a child.

Video footage shared with reporters by security officials showed the bodies of the women and a child lying on the road in the eastern part of city as bystanders tried to help the wounded.

Health officials said at least 20 people were taken to hospital by civilians, some on wheelbarrows.

A second bomb exploded on a road parallel to the site of the bus attack, killing five people and injuring police who were trying to manage the traffic after the first blast.

Islamic State claimed responsibility for the two attacks.

The third blast, about 3 km away, wounded at least 17 civilians, for which the Taliban claimed responsibility.

The Taliban, fighting to

restore strict Islamic law after their 2001 ouster at the hands of U.S.-led troops, said their fighters had used a vehicle-borne improvised explosive device to kill nine foreign forces and destroy two vehicles.

On Wednesday, a Croatian soldier serving in Afghanistan was killed and two were seriously wounded in a suicide attack on their convoy outside Kabul,

U.K. Cabinet has three Ministers of Indian-origin

All of them are Brexit supporters



(From left) Alok Sharma, Priti Patel and Rishi Sunak. ■ AFP

ment norms imposed by the European Union (EU).

Fellow Brexiteer Mr. Sunak had also issued similar open letters in favour of fairer visa norms for everyone in the world.

The 39-year-old Conservative Party MP, who is married to Infosys co-founder Narayana Murthy's daughter Akshata, is an MBA graduate and investment expert who takes charge of one of the most important jobs in the U.K. Treasury, serving under the new Chancellor, Sajid Javid.

The U.K.-born son of a pharmacist mother and a National Health Service general practitioner father is an Oxford and Stanford graduate.

India-born Alok Sharma, 51, backed Mr. Johnson in the Conservative Party leadership contest as the leader best placed to launch a coherent unambiguous plan to deliver Brexit and take us out of the European Union.

The Conservative Party MP, who was serving as Employment Minister, has been promoted to a Cabinet post.

Afghan Taliban ready to visit Pakistan on invitation

They are willing to talk to end conflict

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
ISLAMABAD/DOHA

Tunisian President Beji Caid Essebsi is dead

TUNIS

Tunisian President Beji Caid Essebsi, the North African country's first democratically elected leader, died on Thursday at the age of 92, his office said. The veteran politician, the oldest head of state after Britain's Queen Elizabeth II, came to power in 2014. ■ AFP

N. Korea fires missiles in latest provocation

SEOUL

North Korea fired two short-range missiles into the sea on Thursday, complicating efforts to resume stalled nuclear talks with Washington and signalling its anger over planned U.S.-South Korea joint military exercises. One had a range of 430 km while the other travelled 690 km. ■ AFP

Paris records its hottest day as heatwave sears Europe

Temperature is rising as hot, dry air comes in from N. Africa

ASSOCIATED PRESS
PARIS

A new record high temperature was recorded in Paris on Thursday, as Europe sweltered in what was its second heat wave this summer.

Climate scientists warn this could become the new normal in many parts of the world. But temperate Europe where air conditioning is rare isn't equipped for the temperatures frying the region this week.

On Thursday afternoon the Paris area hit 42.4 degrees Celsius, beating the previous record of 40.4 C set in 1947. Authorities said the temperature was still rising, as a result of hot, dry air coming from northern Africa that's trapped between cold stormy systems.

The Netherlands and Belgium also reported new record heats and Britain is expected to do so later. The Netherlands' meteorological institute said 40.4 C was recorded on Thursday in the municipality of Gilze Rijen, near the border with Belgium. In Belgium the new all-time high rose to 40.6 C. Britain also expects to breach the 39 C mark for the first time after London recording its hottest day on record for July, with the mercury climbing to 36.9 C at Heathrow Airport.

The previous July record was 36.7 C in 2015, while the all-time record is 38.5 C recorded in August 2003. The 47-year-old has vowed to fight the scourge of crime and will be in the hot seat to fulfil some of her past promises of a fairer post-Brexit visa regime for everyone around the world, free of the freedom of move-

ment norms imposed by the European Union (EU). Fellow Brexiteer Mr. Sunak had also issued similar open letters in favour of fairer visa norms for everyone in the world.

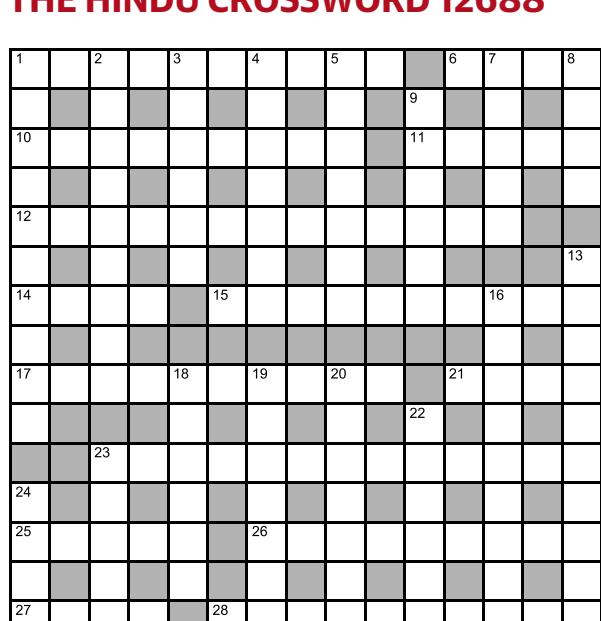
The 39-year-old Conservative Party MP, who is married to Infosys co-founder Narayana Murthy's daughter Akshata, is an MBA graduate and investment expert who takes charge of one of the most important jobs in the U.K. Treasury, serving under the new Chancellor, Sajid Javid.

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The Conservative Party MP, who was serving as Employment Minister, has been promoted to a Cabinet post.

THE HINDU CROSSWORD 12688



ACROSS

- Determined to transfer director to British capital; dejected and overwhelmed (6,4)
- Soldiers coming back after end of fight capturing a plant (4)
- Boy! Louis is mad to cross the middle of river. Evidently (9)
- Counter opening earlier, runs out of stock of calling device (5)
- Drawback! Book despatched for capital of Canada takes time, internal mix up at Germany. Get a courier (7,6)
- Chilled daiquiri, cognac, absinthe at the end leads to dysentry primarily (4)
- Perhaps extra zone Congress eventually conceded to Left in the poll for vacant seat (2-8)

DOWN

- 1 Born in difficulty, child is bearing a trouble from the start, leading to a complaint (10)
- Teacher manages to control errant students at the beginning (9)
- Sweetheart's hugs and kisses and stroke is almost sensational (6)
- Eldest royal, tucked in and put to sleep (7)
- Receipt for wife's account features an unknown quantity (7)
- Drawback to have son following and no turning back in the front and beyond (7)
- Shoe found in Britain, at Oxford's good, high class and cheap essentially (6)
- Attack is almost ending, to retreat against third front (5)
- Cast is primarily terrific, gets Oscar for keeping spectators on the edge repeatedly (4)

(set by Afterdark)

7 Gas in car gone (5)

8 Vegetable is good, recipe's awesome primarily (4)

9 A regular pint with ice flakes can be connected to breathlessness (6)

13 Father to learner; be free and ignorant (10)

16 Everything in street kept before often needs to be fixed (9)

18 Property of earl at the outskirts of Tilbury right in the front (6)

19 Company! Can it be endless and in the middle gain energy with drug? (7)

20 Drawback to have son following and no turning back in the front and beyond (7)

22 Shoe found in Britain, at Oxford's good, high class and cheap essentially (6)

23 Attack is almost ending, to retreat against third front (5)

24 Cast is primarily terrific, gets Oscar for keeping spectators on the edge repeatedly (4)

SUDOKU

3	8		4	2				
		2	7	4	9			
		1			6			
6			7		9	2		3
5								
2	4		6		5			
4			7					
1	8	9	6					
5	8		1	4				

DIFFICULTY RATING: ★★★★★

Solution to puzzle 12687

P	R	O	V	I	C	E	A	S
D	I	S	D	A	I	N	O	B
I	S	D	A	I	N	O	B	E
L	I	V	F	R	V	K	E	S
A	N	T	R	A	L	D	T	A
R	E	C	A	E</				

MARKET WATCH

	25-7-2019	% CHANGE
Sensex	37,831	-0.04
US Dollar	69.04	-0.09
Gold	35,870	0.00
Brent oil	63.65	-0.76

NIFTY 50

	PRICE	CHANGE
Adani Ports	380.35	-0.45
Asian Paints	1495.85	12.45
Axle Bank	723.15	10.85
Bajaj Auto	2547.00	24.40
Bajaj Finance	6782.30	-23.00
Bharti Airtel	339.00	0.10
BPLC	340.30	-8.80
Britannia Ind	2671.55	30.10
Cipla	536.65	17.90
Coal India	209.05	-7.80
Dr Reddy's Lab	2654.10	55.05
Eicher Motors	16436.85	55.80
GAIL (India)	134.75	-1.90
Grafix Ind	868.65	-9.80
HCL Tech.	1011.30	-10.00
HDPC	2195.35	11.10
HDFC Bank	2286.05	5.15
Hindalco Industries	2386.50	-16.90
Hindalco	196.75	-0.50
Hind Unilever	1736.65	8.00
Indiabulls HFL	612.00	0.30
ICICI Bank	409.00	0.50
IndusInd Bank	1391.65	29.65
Bharti Infratech	261.90	-2.25
Infosys	794.50	8.20
Indian Oil Corp	146.65	-1.30
ITC	267.85	-3.00
JSW Steel	248.65	-6.60
Kotak Bank	1485.00	-12.15
L&T	1372.40	-14.95
M&M	547.55	-2.45
Maruti Suzuki	5756.75	-11.25
NTPC	129.75	-2.10
ONGC	143.85	0.25
PowerGrid Corp	213.15	3.35
Reliance Ind	1231.50	-27.60
State Bank	341.30	1.70
Sun Pharma	437.15	11.60
Tata Motors	144.30	-6.95
Tata Steel	440.35	-5.65
TCS	2127.90	31.10
Tech Mahindra	652.50	-7.95
Titan	1090.45	3.05
UltraTech Cement	4460.10	17.25
UPL	604.35	-12.70
Vedanta	171.45	6.40
Wipro	262.25	-1.95
YES Bank	87.65	-1.50
Zee Entertainment	391.95	12.35

EXCHANGE RATES

CURRENCY	TT BUY	TT SELL
US Dollar	68.84	69.16
Euro	76.56	76.92
British Pound	85.97	86.37
Japanese Yen (100)	63.64	63.93
Chinese Yuan	10.02	10.07
Swiss Franc	69.57	69.90
ONGC	143.85	0.25
PowerGrid Corp	213.15	3.35
Reliance Ind	1231.50	-27.60
State Bank	341.30	1.70
Sun Pharma	437.15	11.60
Tata Motors	144.30	-6.95
TCS	2127.90	31.10
Tech Mahindra	652.50	-7.95
Titan	1090.45	3.05
UltraTech Cement	4460.10	17.25
UPL	604.35	-12.70
Vedanta	171.45	6.40
Wipro	262.25	-1.95
YES Bank	87.65	-1.50
Zee Entertainment	391.95	12.35

Source: Indian Bank

BULLION RATES CHENNAI

July 25 rates in rupees with previous rates in parentheses	
Retail Silver (1g)	45 (45)
22 ct gold (1g)	3345 (3340)

Ruchi Soya in Patanjali's pushcart

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

The National Company Law Tribunal (NCLT) on Thursday approved Patanjali's revised ₹4,350-crore bid to take over edible oil maker Ruchi Soya, which owed banks over ₹9,345 crore.

However, the tribunal said the approval was subject to the resolution professional bridging the information gap regarding the exact source of funds worth ₹600 crore (which is part of the bid amount) before the next date of hearing on August 1.

The tribunal also asked the resolution professional to furnish the actual cost of the entire resolution process before the next hearing.

The resolution professional is directed to submit detailed break-up of the entire cost for the corporate insolvency resolution process before the next date of listing on August 1," the tribunal said.

Tata Motors' loss doubles

Domestic and Jaguar Land Rover volumes drop during the quarter

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

MUMBAI

Tata Motors Ltd. has reported a consolidated net loss of ₹3,680 crore for the first quarter ended June 30 compared with a net loss of ₹1,863 crore in the year-earlier period owing to loss of sales volume both at Tata Motors and Jaguar Land Rover (JLR) during the quarter.

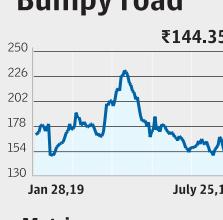
Consolidated revenue also dropped significantly to ₹60,830 crore compared with ₹65,957 crore in the same period last year.

'Challenging quarter'

Commenting on the company's performance, P. B. Balaji, group CFO, Tata Motors said, "It was a challenging quarter for the auto industry. During the quarter, we saw a 21% volume decline and revenue was down 7.7%. China and Indian operations had the biggest impact on overall revenue."

"The loss of volume during the quarter had signifi-

Bumpy road



Liquidity stress and the effect of axle load norms in medium/heavy duty trucks impacted overall demand
GUENTER BUTSCHEK, CEO & MD, Tata Motors

Metrics

	Q1 FY20	Q1 FY19
Revenue from operations (₹cr.)	60,830.1	65,956.7
Net loss (₹cr.)	(3,679.6)	(1,862.6)

cant negative impact on the business. However, the good thing is that China has started showing stability for JLR," he added.

On a standalone basis, Tata Motors reported a first quarter revenue of ₹13,352 crore, down 20% from the same quarter last year. It reported net loss of ₹97 crore compared with a net profit of ₹1,188 crore.

"The continued slowdown across the auto industry is due to weak consumer sentiments."

"Liquidity stress and the

effect of axle load norms, particularly in medium/heavy duty trucks, impacted overall demand," said Guenter Butschek, CEO & MD, Tata Motors.

Good balance

"Over the last few years we had struck a good balance between managing market dynamics and financial health."

"However, this time, despite continuous turnaround effect we could not prevent some impact on our Q1 performance," he said.

The company is now focusing on long term growth through emphasis on retail sales and is targeting an EBIT growth of 3 to 4% during the year, top executives said.

At JLR also, net revenues were down 2.8% to ₹5.1 billion. It reported a net loss of ₹402 million.

During the quarter, JLR made investments of ₹795 million in products and technologies. For the full year, investment has been capped at ₹3.8 billion.

JLR is expected to turn the tide as it is set to have electric versions of all its models by 2020 and with operations in China improving.

"JLR is in a period of major transformation. We will build on our strong foundations and increased operating efficiencies to return to profit this fiscal year," said Ralf Speth, CEO, JLR.

JLR has committed that its financial performance will improve in the remaining part of the year.

The High Court has provided relief to Reckitt Benckiser India Private Limited by ordering an interim stay on the notice issued by the Director General of Anti-Profitteering (DGAP) seeking information on all products of the company, whereas the National Anti-Profitteering Authority (NAA) had ordered an inquiry for only one product.

The grievance of the petitioner is that the Director General of Anti-Profitteering (DGAP) has by the impugned notice dated 8th/9th April, 2019 sought information on all products of the petitioner, that is, Dettol HW Liquid Original 900 ml (complained product). "The High Court has provided relief to Reckitt Benckiser India Private Limited by ordering an interim stay on the notice issued by the Director General of Anti-Profitteering (DGAP) seeking information on all products of the company, whereas the National Anti-Profitteering Authority (NAA) had ordered an inquiry for only one product.

Earlier this month, the government had provided the DGAP with precisely this power, to assess products that are currently not part of its investigation.

"It is pointed out by Mr. P.

TCA SHARAD RAGHAVAN

NEW DELHI

A decision taken by the Delhi High Court recently has the potential to undo the government's steps to provide the GST Anti-Profitteering Authority with greater powers to ensure no profitteering occurs.

The High Court has provided relief to Reckitt Benckiser India Private Limited by ordering an interim stay on the notice issued by the Director General of Anti-Profitteering (DGAP) seeking information on all products of the company, whereas the National Anti-Profitteering Authority (NAA) had ordered an inquiry for only one product.

The court, however, clarified the NAA's inquiry as far as the complained product is concerned would proceed in accordance with the law.

Pratik Jain

Pratik Jain, partner and leader indirect tax, PwC India said, "If this principle [of only looking into the complained product] is finally upheld by courts, it would provide the much needed relief to industry, which has been requesting the government for issuance of definitive guidelines with respect to anti-profitteering proceedings."

The court is of the view

PMO asks FinMin to study overseas bond issue

Concerns raised over its implications

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

NEW DELHI

The Prime Minister's Office (PMO) has asked the Finance Ministry to conduct a detailed study on the issuance of overseas sovereign bonds in the light of concerns raised by several experts, sources said.

The PMO has asked the Finance Ministry to examine the concerns raised by former RBI governors and deputy governors on the issuance of such bonds and its implications.

After the detailed consultation, a considered view will be taken, the sources added.

Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman, in Budget 2019-20, announced that the government would start raising a part of its gross borrowing programme from external markets in foreign currencies. She added that India's sovereign external debt-to-GDP level is among the lowest globally at less

than 5%.

The idea, however, has been criticised by many, including economists and allies of the ruling BJP alike, as they argued that it could create long-term economic risks by exposing the government's liabilities to currency fluctuations.

Rathin Roy, a member of the Prime Minister's Economic Advisory Council, has called for a discussion on sovereign bonds instead of an 'imperial announcement' of the borrowing programme.

"I have grave concerns about this proposal on grounds of economic sovereignty, and about the macroeconomic consequences... the government should instead look at relaxing the rupee bond limits for foreign portfolio investors," he said. Even Swadeshi Jagran Manch, the economic wing of the RSS, has opposed the idea of issuance of these sovereign bonds.

Deutsche Bank clocks €3.15 billion loss

It flagged €2.8 bn loss earlier in July

REUTERS

FRANKFURT

Deutsche Bank reported a bigger

**Ashok Leyland unveils premium bus Oyster**

MUMBAI

Ashok Leyland Ltd. has introduced Oyster, an air-conditioned midi-bus in the premium category in India. The multi-purpose premium bus, whose price has not been disclosed by the company, is designed and manufactured in-house. Anuj Kathuria, COO, Ashok Leyland, said, "With Oyster, which is already a huge success in the international market, we intend to further our leadership positioning."

Rane Brake Lining Q1 net profit rises 11.4%

CHENNAI

Rane Brake Lining Ltd. (RBL) has posted a 11.4% increase in its standalone net profit for the first quarter ended June 2019 to ₹7.3 crore aided by the aftermarket segment. During the quarter, RBL's net revenue dipped 3.5% to ₹118.9 crore. Sales to original equipment customers declined 9% on drop in volumes across segments. Revenue from two-wheeler segment grew 9%. Sales to aftermarket customers grew 1%, the company said.

TajGVK Hotels & Resorts Q1 net profit rises 24%

HYDERABAD

TajGVK Hotels & Resorts has posted a consolidated net profit of ₹5.60 crore for the quarter ended June 30, an increase of 24% from the year-earlier period. Revenue stood at ₹72.36 crore (₹72.79 crore). Chairman G.V.K. Reddy said the company was able to post a "healthy growth" in PAT (profit after tax) though revenue numbers were flat. The company repaid ₹6.98 crore debt and net debt as on June 30 was ₹191 crore.

Part of L&T projects in A.P. at stake

Some of the firm's ₹9,000-cr. works awarded in previous regime under review

PIYUSH PANDEY
MUMBAI

A part of Larsen and Toubro's ₹9,000 crore worth of projects in Andhra Pradesh is at stake as the new government headed by Jaganmohan Reddy has decided to review all projects where less than 25% of the work has been completed.

Asked for comments, L&T MD & CEO S.N. Subrahmanyam said, "This initial way of looking over the previous regime slows down the progress. Some of our contracts are facing problems. It's a general order which says those contracts [that have] not reached 25% of their execution are under review. About 3% of our ₹3 lakh crore order book is in Andhra Pradesh."

Some of the major projects L&T is implementing in



Looking over the previous regime's works slows down progress, says MD & CEO S.N. Subrahmanyam. ■ SHASHI ASHWAL

Andhra Pradesh include building bridges, roads, transmission lines, solar projects and cement plants among others.

Base infrastructure

The engineering and construction major is one of the key contractors to build the

base infrastructure for the new state capital, Amaravathi, which includes roads, bridges, stormwater drains, sewerage and utility ducts for power as well as information and communications technology. This massive project has been an integral part of former Andhra Pra-

desh Chief Minister Chandrababu Naidu's dream project of developing the capital city with global infrastructure. "We have not seen this in the past... where [when] one government goes and another government comes, they start reviewing everything the previous government did," Mr. Subrahmanyam said.

Early this year, the smart world and communication business secured a major order from the Andhra Pradesh State FiberNet Limited (APSFL) for BharatNet Phase-II works to establish an IP/MPLS Infrastructure covering the 13 districts of Andhra Pradesh. L&T shares on the BSE declined 1% to close at ₹1,372.95 in a flat Mumbai market on Thursday, valuing the company at ₹192,637.42 crore.

Mahindra unveils Cruzio bus range

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
MUMBAI

Mahindra Truck and Bus Division of Mahindra & Mahindra has unveiled Cruzio, a new range of buses based on its Intermediate Commercial Vehicles platform, at an unspecified price. Aimed at the employee transport segment, the Cruzio marks the company's debut in the Lastwagen Pullman Overhang segment, which is gaining popularity due to its enhanced consumer experience.

"In the last 15 days, we have already received 120 bookings for the Kona," said S.S. Kim, managing director and CEO, HMIL. "Hyundai Kona is for a niche segment and the market size is small. The initial response is quite positive," he added.

Asserting that the Kona was targeted at the high-end market segment, he said Hyundai would develop a mass market EV that would be rolled out in three to four

Hyundai Motor India to make mass market EVs

Product will be rolled out in 3-4 years

years time.

"We are working on a platform for the mass market. We will be investing hundreds of millions of dollars. It is too early to talk about the price point," he said.

Mr. Kim also said it was too early to talk about the indigenisation level in Hyundai Kona as the vehicle was imported as a total package from Korea.

On the high cost of the EV, he said the price was determined by the lithium-ion battery. "We are trying to find a partner to source it locally," he said.

To a query about the rollout of hybrid EV, he said, "in the current situation, there is no incentive to introduce a hybrid model."

Srikalahasti Pipes plans ₹400 crore capex

Firm will raise ductile iron pipe output

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
CHENNAI

Srikalahasti Pipes Ltd. (formerly Lanco Industries Ltd.) has drawn up a ₹400-crore plan to increase the production capacity of its ductile iron pipe plant by two lakh tonnes to meet the growing demand.

The board gave its approval for the plan to raise the capacity of the plant from the present three lakh tonnes to five lakh tonnes at a cost of ₹400 crore.

"The board, at its previous meeting had sanctioned a capex (capital expenditure) of ₹145 crore and the balance capex was approved recently. The investment costs will be met through internal accruals,"

said G.S. Rathi, whole-time director, Srikalahasti Pipes Ltd.

According to him, the new blast furnace for the plant would be commissioned by the third quarter of 2020 and the increased capacity of ductile iron pipe plant by end March, 2021.

Mr. Rathi said that the ferro alloys project was under the final stages of execution. The first furnace would go on stream by September 2019 and the second furnace by December 2019.

The firm reported a 93% rise in its standalone net profit for the first quarter ended June 2019 to ₹33.37 crore. Production of ductile iron pipe rose to 65,518 tonne from 59,555 tonnes.

Bengal Chemicals 'sale' plan leaves unions fuming

Ministers' panel to expedite 2016 decision for strategic sale; bid to sell a profit-making unit: INTTUC

INDRANI DUTTA
KOLKATA

Talks about a strategic sale of the Kolkata-based 118-year old heritage pharmaceutical company, Bengal Chemicals & Pharmaceuticals Ltd. (BCPL) founded by the doyen of Indian chemistry, Prafulla Chandra Ray, has left trade unions fuming and its workforce demoralised.

Acharya P.C. Ray had founded BCPL in 1901 as India's first pharmaceutical venture. However, its fortunes started sliding with its founder's death in 1944. BCPL was taken over by the government in 1977 amid persistent losses. Its losses peaked in 2003, touching ₹40 crore.

Through sustained efforts thereafter, a proactive management team led by the pre-

trade, and on e-commerce sites. It was also among the first Indian manufacturers of anti-snake venom.

As many as 185 employees, including 50 officers, have been discharging their duties on salaries that remained frozen for 22 years.

₹25.3-crore net profit
In 2018-19, BCPL reaped a ₹25.3-crore net profit on the back of a ₹119.7-crore turnover. Additionally, ₹28-crore bank loans have been repaid and the corporate office building in the central business district has been freed of a mortgage.

Just as they were expecting to be rewarded for putting in their best efforts, reports of the Centre renewing its efforts to divest their hold-

We plan to take this company to a ₹500-crore turnover by 2024

P.M. CHANDRAIAH
Director - Finance

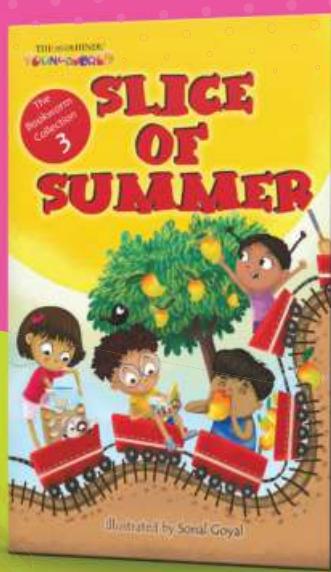
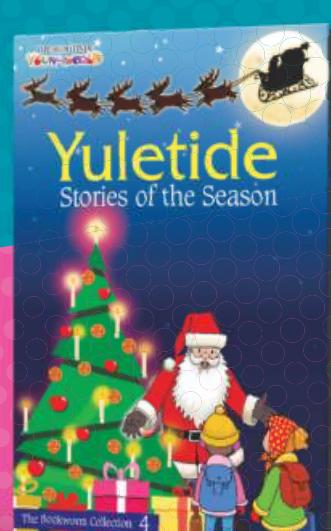
Official sources said that in its meeting earlier this month, the Union Cabinet had decided to constitute a Committee of Ministers for taking a decision on strategic sale of a few undertakings, adding that the setting up of this committee was likely to 'expedite the process of implementation' of the December 2016 Cabinet decision for strategic sale of BCPL.

"We know that the government is chasing a ₹1.05 lakh crore divestment and strategic sale target," Ms. Sen said. While announcing the 2018-19 results, Mr. Chandraiah had mapped out his plans for the company. "We work in mission mode here and we plan to take this great company to a ₹500-crore turnover by 2024, that is my mission BCPL," he said.

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MADHUR TANKHA

To get us, in Delhi, at least a little bit curious about understanding Iran, Aziz Mahdi, a Delhi-ite who lived for a decade in Tehran, where he studied Persian and then taught the language, is showcasing a pictorial exhibition. On display are 40 photographs (selected arduously out of 50,000 images) in different sizes, of this West Asian nation that gives us a glimpse into its culture and history. Aziz, or Dr. Mahdi, as he is fondly called by his Iranian and Indian students in Tehran and Delhi, has used handmade German paper to print on, ensuring the pictures last a lifetime.

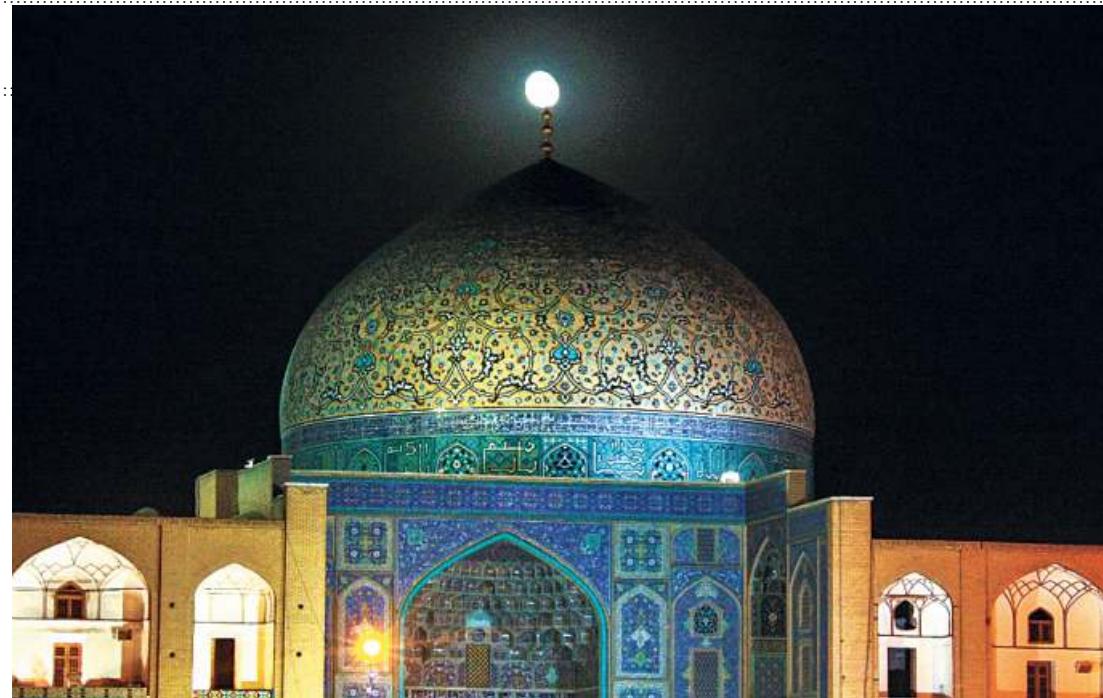
Little is known in India about Iran, barring its "political and bureaucratic side". On the other hand, there's a fair amount Iranians know about our country. "Some people think Iran is a desert country. Even my father's friend asked me if I got adequate drinking water in Tehran. I had to explain to him that there are reservoirs all across the country."

Travel tales

Between 2005 to 2016, when Aziz lived there, doing a Ph.D. at Tehran University, he would get asked questions relating to Amitabh Bachchan, Shah Rukh Khan and Salman Khan. He's watched *Sholay* in Persian, while travelling on a bus there. "Most Iranians know that India is a nation of diversity and democracy. They describe India as *Haftado do Mellat*. In English, it would mean a nation of 72 ethnicities."

As a history student at Jamia Millia Islamia in Delhi, Aziz had come across a classical dome of Persian architecture umpteen times in his textbooks. But the moment of seeing the Sheikh Lotfollah Mosque was something else. A perfect example of preserving heritage, it was built during the Safa-

Wonders of West Asia (Clockwise from below) An Iranian wedding at Sanandaj province; Sheikh Lotfollah Mosque; the bust of a musician playing the flute ; Aziz Mahdi



THE PERSIAN GULF

Aziz Mahdi, a Persian scholar, on how he balances his love for images and the language of his forefathers



vid Empire, in the early 17th century, and has now been designated by UNESCO as a world heritage site.

"It was almost a surreal experience. Architecturally speaking, Sheikh Lotfollah Mosque has a perfect dome. Domes are usually uneven structures. It also has glazed tiles. It was a palace of princess; royal women would go through the tunnel and come back."

Everyday life and some of the exotic
The exhibition

has different aspects of daily life, along with architecture. There's the Zoroastrian side of Iran with the Chakchak Fire temple; a ring seller leaning on his bike, the confidence in the way he wears his hat; the scissor-maker, an elderly man, with eyes sans pessimism, despite his years. Tehran as a cosmopolitan city comes through in a picture of a wedding where the bride and groom wear Western attire.

Early on, one of his friends gave him "sane advise" that if he wanted to be an Iranologist, he needed to know the country inside out. One way was to study it; the other, was through travel. "I explored this scenic country. However, I still like describing myself as a part Iranologist," says the 36-year-old, who stands at six feet, four inches.

Persian heritage
Aziz's father, Akhtar Mahdi, retired as professor of Persian language and literature from JNU. "While growing up, I was guided by him and learnt how Persian is important from the historical perspective. From the 11th century onwards, all our official documents, land deeds of the State and historical texts were printed in Persian. So for 800 years, Persian was the official language until the Mughal rule ended and the British abolished it."

In fact, Urdu is the daughter of Persian. "It was used during Nadir Shah's military campaign. It was basically a camp language which was spoken by Persian and Turk soldiers."

He has roots in Persia too, with his forefathers migrating during

the Mughal reign. As for photography, he's dabbled since childhood, but he began taking it seriously only in Iran. "The sheer beauty of Iran supported the artist in me. Architecturally, it grabs the eye."

Living in Delhi, where he was used to seeing smoky skies, Aziz was bowled over by blue skies of Tehran (also seen at the exhibition). "They were a welcome relief. Cleanliness and absolute stunning weather are other features of this country."

His next step is to do a coffee table book. "Not many Indians have stayed in Iran for so long," says Aziz, on a parting note.

Rowzaneh: Iran Through my Lens is on at the India International Centre Annex until July 30th

+

For this, my Singapore-based friends, Raj and Nirnima, took me to a restaurant called Blue Ginger on Tanjong Pagar Road. This is a two-storeyed restaurant with a somewhat retro design. The food here is simply superb. We had some otak-otak fish cake with turmeric and lime leaves, galangal, chillies, candle nut and shrimp paste, wrapped in a banana leaf, then steamed. This is a bit like the paturi that is a part of the Bengali cuisine.

The Beef Rendang – succulent cubes of meat simmered in a rich sauce of coconut milk, flavoured with ginger, lemon grass, lime leaves and curry powder – was delicious. I enjoyed the Chap Chye Masak Titik, mixed vegetables cooked in prawn stock. The strong stock had given a nice kick to the veggies. For dessert, there was Chendol, which looked as good as it tasted. This dish consisted of red beans and a Pandan-flavoured jelly in coconut milk, sweetened with durian puree.

The streets of Singapore – and its superb restaurants – make every food wish possible. Even vegan ones!

The writer is a seasoned food critic

FOOD SPOT

Vegans and others

Singapore is surprisingly for everyone, no matter what the food choice



Delectable delights A rich creamy vegan curry; (above) Chendol dessert

▪ SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

least, taken aback. The walk was down the food court in Singapore's Geylang Serai, and we stopped here and there for a vegan bite.

As they say in India, it's auspicious to start a journey with something sweet. So my first stop at Mr Teh Tarik was for some Putti Piring – steamed and fluffy rice cakes (as in our puttu), served with palm sugar and grated coco-

nut. I enjoyed that, especially its complementary flavours, and then walked ahead into a lane for Popiah, a kind of a spring roll, with a vegetable stuffing.

I liked the way it was prepared. A big ball of sticky wheat dough was spread out on a skillet. The top part of the wet dough was removed,

leaving behind a very thin layer on the heating pad. This formed the casing. It was taken off the skillet and kept aside. Then the crepe was filled with julienne carrots and slivers of green vegetables, and lashed with Chinese sauces. It was rolled up and served. I loved it, all the more when I realised (halo intact) that it had no oil.

Folks walked ahead and had some Laksa, a delicious Southeast Asian meal in a

bowl: noodle-filled broth usually flavoured with coconut milk, and garnished with mint, coriander, lemon and a host of other ingredients. But I wanted some Nyonya or Peranakan food – the cuisine that was born when the early Chinese came to Southeast Asia, got married to local women, and the cooking pot was enriched with the mingling flavours.

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5 EVENTS WORTH YOUR WHILE



Ramola Bachchan presents
FIRST RESORT
Collective
Resort Wear Exhibition
25-26 July 2019
Taj Vivanta Ambassador
Sohan Singh Park
New Delhi

FASHION

Lifestyle
The ongoing two-day resort wear exhibition titled, *The First Resort Collective* features an exclusive collection of holiday essentials for the season. Organised by the noted designer Ramola Bachchan, the show will have products such as kaftans, tunics, jumpsuits, beachwraps, bodycon dresses, and more.

VENUE: The Dome, Vivanta by Taj Ambassador

TIME: 11 a.m. - 8 p.m.



PERFORMANCE

Music project

IHC presents *7 Chakra Harmonizing Music Project*, an evening of Western, Indian classical and folk music by Nimesha Shankar with Silent Sage. The programme is an attempt designed to restore the natural balance of the chakras in the human body through Indian classical ragas, performed on electronic tracks.

VENUE: Amaltas Hall, India Habitat Centre

TIME: 7 p.m.



GOURMET

Peshawari food festival

Spice Art, a restaurant at Crowne Plaza, has organised a 10-day Peshawari Food Festival, which brings delicacies from the region. On until July 28, the festival offers dishes like Chapli Kebab, Peshawari Paneer Tikka, Lahori Aloo, Mahi tikka Saloni, Namkeen Mutton Karahi, Peshawari Choley, and more.

VENUE: Crowne Plaza New Delhi, Rohini

TIME: 12 noon-3:30 p.m. & 7 p.m.-11:30 p.m.



GIG

Live performance

Imperfecto Shor Club is hosting a live dance and music performance, featuring the Armenian-American rapper, Super Sako. Sarkis Balasanyan, better known by his stage name, Super Sako, rose to fame with his hit song 'Mi Gna' (meaning 'Don't Go'). The song was part of his album titled 'Love Crimes'.

VENUE: Hotel Pride Plaza, Asset 5A, Aerocity

TIME: 10 p.m. onwards

SHOWCASE 17

PEOPLE

Scenes for all mindsets

Explore Humans Of Cinema's collaboration with Mental Health Talks India to highlight positive change in film narratives, via an Instagram account



Dear Ananya,

You don't know how much you helped a fifteen year old girl into believing that she can pursue her passion irrespective of her gender after being told by one of her teachers in school that marketing is not a woman's job because women can't afford to travel so much.

- Aishwarya

Humans of Cinema

If one came across a page on Instagram called Humans Of Cinema (@humansofcinema), it'd be fair to assume there'll be a flurry of posts about film industry folks. But 23-year-old Harshit Bansal from Delhi took the idea beyond the predictable and caught netizens' attention in early May when he announced Mental Health Talks x Humans Of Cinema; a project inviting film enthusiasts to talk about film moments which helped them through tough times.

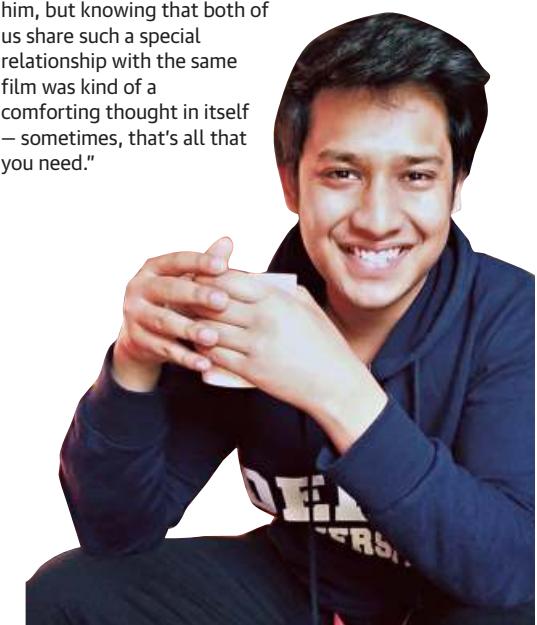
The series aims at highlighting the positive power of cinema. The link-up with Mental Health Talks India was serendipitous for Harshit. "The idea of correlating cinema with mental health came from a very personal space for me," he explains. "I've always had a very personal relationship with films. But two years ago, when my mental health was at its worst, watching my favourite film or TV show used to make me feel better. I think films have the potential to evoke emotions and induce empathy like no other medium in the world, which is why it becomes such a powerful tool of self-help as well as rehabilitation for people. Eventually, however, it's important to remember that films are only a temporary medium of escape and professional help should be sought when necessary."

Mental health narratives are prevalent in the series, through a sweet letter to Robin Williams' character John Keating in 1989's *Dead Poets Society* or Alia Bhatt's Ananya in 2014's *2 States*. It's worth noting many film characters tap into the mental health space in one way or another. "Cinema Therapy is a subject of study in itself, and is used by many therapists as a part of psychotherapy."

While his profession doesn't lie in the film realm (he co-owns artist merchandiser Frankly Wearing), he considers Humans Of Cinema to be more than just a passion project. He recalls a post about Manjari Phadnis' Meghna from 2008's *Jaane Tu Ya Jaane Naa*. "I really didn't make much of Meghna and always felt like her character hadn't been done justice in an otherwise well-written film. But in this specific story, the cinephile used instances from her own life to point out that letting Jai go was in itself an act of healing for her and was the most appropriate resolution to the character."

But what of global cinema? Harshit says he'd love to up the diversity of the film discourses across Humans Of Cinema, adding, "I also plan to share stories from non-Hindi Indian films as well as foreign language films in the immediate future. As OTT platforms are slowly becoming important parts of our lives and people are keen on exploring meaningful and impactful cinema from around the world, I think it's important for me as someone with this kind of reach to encourage that pattern."

One of the most rewarding aspects of curating a page such as this is the conversations Harshit has been able to have with other cinephiles. "A *Tamasha* fan got in touch with me recently to share how the film helped him muster the courage to leave his job and pursue his passion of writing," he recalls, "I couldn't not engage in a conversation with him after that, especially considering how the film was a driving force for me to start the page as well. I'll probably never meet him, but knowing that both of us share such a special relationship with the same film was kind of a comforting thought in itself – sometimes, that's all that you need."



DIVYA KALA BHAVANI

For a listing or to be featured here, email us at delhimetro@thehindu.co.in



FILM

Japanese film

The Japanese Foundation will be screening *Ballard*, a Japanese film, this evening. Directed by Takashi Yamazaki, the film is an adaptation of a Manga comic. The plot is about a boy who goes back in time somehow, to Sengoku-era Japan and struggles to find courage while dealing with several dangers.

VENUE: 5A Ring Road, Lajpat Nagar IV

TIME: 6:30 p.m.

5 EVENTS WORTH YOUR WHILE



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The hills are calling

Hill cuisines that celebrate local and seasonal produce are gradually making their way to urban tables by way of pop-ups and promotions

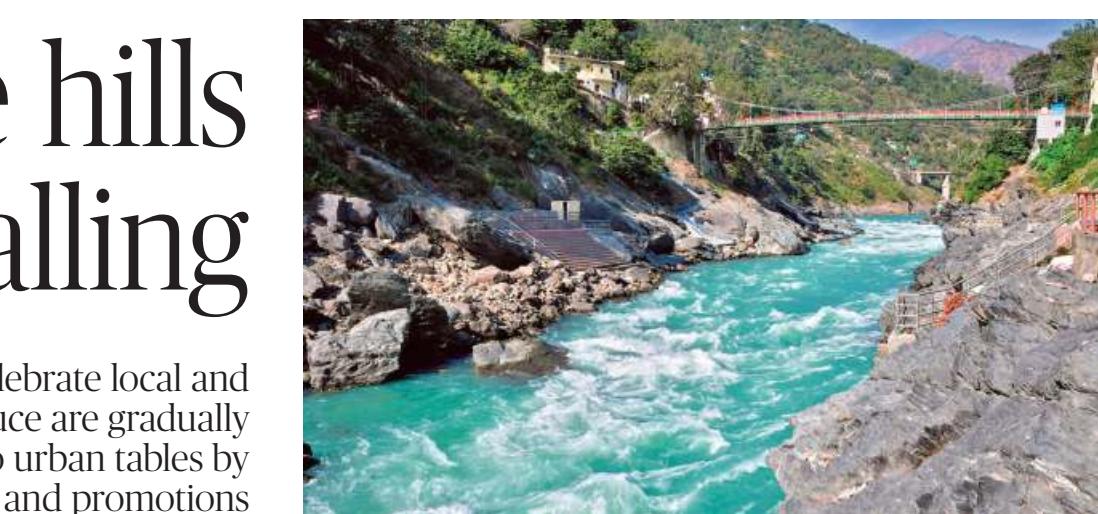
ANUBHUTI KRISHNA

Snow-capped mountains, sprawling meadows, deep forests and babbling brooks. Think of the Himalayas and the first thing that comes to mind is the abundance of Nature. But do you know that Nature also makes the region home to some of the most exotic cuisines in the country? Local, regional, and seasonal, while the food of the hills had so far been restricted to the home kitchens of the region, its uniqueness is steadily gaining popularity – one wholesome meal at a time.

"In the present-day context, what makes *pahadi* cuisine important is its sustainability," says Rushina Munshaw Ghildiyal, author and culinary researcher, who works extensively with the cuisine and conducts workshops and pop-ups. "It is interesting to note," adds Ghildiyal, "that principles like nose-to-tail eating, foraged greens, locally-grown lentils and millets, basically things that are touted as the newest trends around the globe, have always been a part of mountain cuisine."

This global trend could be one reason that is drawing more and more people to the cuisine; the other could be the effort put in by the culinary community. A sizeable chunk of chefs in the hotel industry come from the hills, and while they do adapt to the cities, they also carry their family recipes with them. Some of which have started to be showcased by way of food festivals, promotions, events, and pop-ups.

People travelling to the hills, meanwhile, are looking beyond the standard restaurant fare and demand authentic culinary experiences. "A lot of our guests want to try the local food," Faisal Nafees, GM, lebua Corbett says. "They demand authentic flavours of the region and we are only too happy to



include it in our menu," he smiles. The hill cuisine can be broadly divided into Uttarakhandi (Kumaoni and Garhwali), and Himachali (Upper and Lower Himachali). While the basic principles remain the same (think lentils, whole grains, plants, local spices), the treatment and flavour profiles vary, depending on the terrain and vegetation.

Since the people of the hills often do labour intensive work, the cuisine is meant to keep you nourished for long periods. Savoury pancakes, or *cheela*, made with mountain wheat, *kafli saag* made with foraged greens, *alu ki thechwani*, made with crushed potatoes, *bhat* or soybean *dal* are common everyday meals.

Of bhang and jakhya
While the *bal mithai*, a caramelised milk fudge made in the region, re-

mains the most famous export of the Kumaon hills, the kitchens here have much more to offer. Kumaon, a sub region of Uttarakhand, differs from Garhwal, another sub region, in small but significant ways.

The region also uses lentils extensively. "Garhwali meals," informs Rushina, "are balanced with fats, carbohydrates, and greens; ghee is used widely, spices are minimal." What sets the cuisine apart, however, is the use of millets. Jan-

Across the spectrum From millets to a variety of breads and foraged greens, hill cuisines have a lot to offer ■ SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

gura (banyard millet) is used for sweet porridges while *mandua* (finger millet) is used for *rotis* and unpolished rice is preferred.

Like Kumaon, mountain goat, and river trout are eaten regularly; offals are cherished and excess meat is pickled. The thread of local, regional and seasonal runs throughout too – even in desserts, which are tuned to the season and region.

Bread talk

Another element that binds the hill cuisines is respect for food. Food, say the locals, is not something to be consumed thoughtlessly. It is to be revered. Nothing represents the thought better than the Kangri Dham, a community meal cooked during celebrations, weddings or festivals in Himachal.

"Dham, a selection of various delicacies, is the most popular aspect of Himachali cuisine," informs Chef Upadhyay. The cuisine, however, is too wide to be boxed into just one meal.

"The terrain in Himachal determines the food that we eat," asserts Sherry Malhotra, a Himachali food expert, who conducts regular pop-ups of Himachali cuisine in Mumbai. People in the lower hills have access to vegetation and rely on foraged greens, lentils, and rice. The upper hill region, which is colder and often arid, uses a lot of meat. Buddhist and Tibetan influences ensure there is yak cheese, dry meat and fermented bread too.

"*Bhaturi* and *siddu*, the staple breads of Himachal, are both fermented," says Sherry, "while *siddu* comes from Tibet, *bhaturu*, the deep-fried fermented bread, seems to have been born out of leftover dough." Throwing food away, she says, was out of question.

Zero-waste, local, and seasonal, the principles surely remain constant through the region, but does the conscious cuisine find takers outside the hills?

"All my pop-ups are always sold out," grins Rushina, whose Garhwali food events are sold out weeks in advance. "People who know their food really appreciate the cuisine," smiles Sherry, whose food festivals and promotions are always a hit, and requests for more don't stop. "With the way the demand for the cuisine is growing, I am sure that we would soon have it on our menus outside of the region too," concludes Faisal.

HEMP FOR THE WIN
The word 'canvas' is rooted in the word 'cannabis', according to the North American Industrial Hemp Council. During the Second World War the US promoted growing hemp; the crop was needed to make rope and sails for ships.



HORS D'OEUVRES

A bend in the road

For the last 11 years, they've been the face of *MasterChef Australia*. But now the trio – Gary Mehigan, George Calombaris and Matt Preston – is set to bid farewell to the hugely popular show, over a pay dispute with the network that produces *MasterChef Australia*.

The decision was announced on Tuesday, ahead of the season 11 finale by Network 10, and came as a rude shock for many fans who've come to love the affable judges. The social media pages of the show too carried a farewell message, informing followers of the judges' and network's decision. According to an official statement released by Network 10, months of negotiation proved to have failed when it came to reaching a commercial agreement that was satisfactory to Matt, Gary and George.

The announcement came close on the heels of reports that Calombaris had been underpaying staff at his restaurants to the tune of \$8 million over the last few years. While the show is set to return for its twelfth season, the network is now looking to rope in new judges. Some of the names being thrown around by fans are Kylie Kwong, Maggie Beer and Curtis Stone.

Noodles, on-the-go

As the rainy season sets in, cravings for piping hot noodles do the same. Enter Wok to Walk, Hyderabad, Bengaluru and Srinagar will be seeing outlets coming up soon. The latest addition to the Wok to Walk family is in Hyderabad on Road Number 36 opposite Neeru's Emporio.



Wok to Walk started in 2004 in Amsterdam, after a serendipitous trip around Asia. What started out as a tiny restaurant quickly morphed into almost 100 around the globe, making them the number one wok-chain in Europe. The Wok to Walk model is based on customisation, plenty of flavour and speed of service. One can build their own noodle boxes by choosing noodle types, then rices and vegetable mixes. That's followed by the filling options – from chicken to nuts to peppers – along with sauces and toppings... and all of this is prepared in less than five minutes.

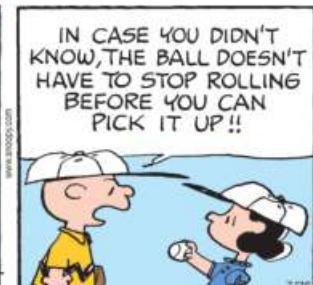
According to Gautam Kamra, general manager of Wok to Walk International, the chain uses fresh ingredients, ensuring no MSG is added. Additions to the menu include Indian-tailored items such as famous flammers, and hot wokkin treats using their Mumbai sauce. They aim to have 60-plus branches across India by 2022. Popular hashtags with Wok to Walk are #FeedTheFlame and #Don'tStopJustWok.

Existing branches in India include Defence Colony, Vasant Kunj and Kirti Nagar in New Delhi, Ardee City and Sector 49 in Gurugram and Jadavpur in Kolkata.

POOCH CAFE



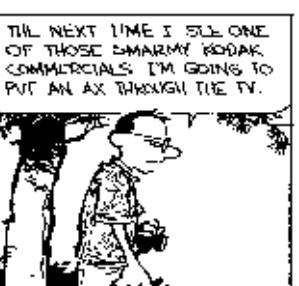
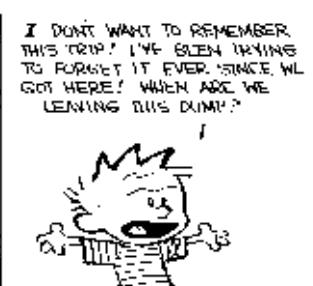
PEANUTS



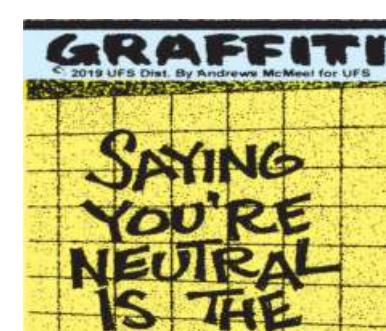
HAGAR THE HORRIBLE



CALVIN AND HOBBES



TIGER



THE GUARDIAN QUICK CROSSWORD-13132

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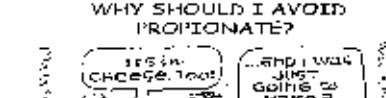
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3 Road safety device (7)
5 Needless (5)
6 Voluptuous (7)
7 Progress unsteadily (due to age?) (6)
8 Ceremony of conferring honours of rank on a person (11)
14 Bitter derision (7)
15 Failure to be there (7)
16 Sudden illegal acquisition of power (6)
17 Accumulation of electricity (6)
19 Envious – environmentalist (5)
21 Take as one's own (5)

Solution will appear in *The Hindu* dated July 27, 2019.

Solution No. 13131

WUMO



- Across
- 1 Knock off (6)
- 4 Detestable (6)
- 9 Small cube of fried bread (7)
- 10 Ate (5)
- 11 Make painstaking enquiries (into something) (5)
- 12 Kill (7)
- 13 By its very nature (11)

18 Pig hurt (anag) – noble (7)

20 Lacerate (5)

22 Alec's (anag) – graduation (5)

23 Malicious hostility (7)

24 Mankind (6)

25 Scurvy – small car (6)

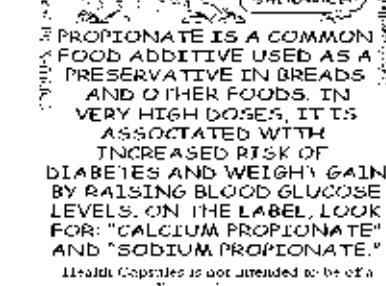
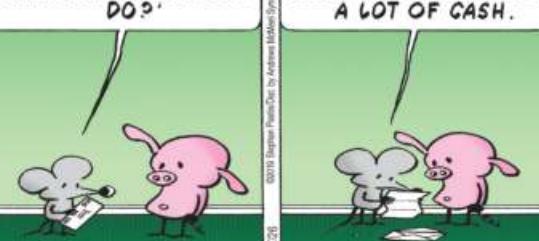
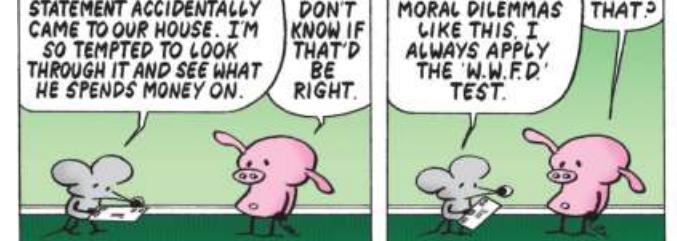
■ Down

1 Reach a conclusion (6)

2 Whimsically comical (5)

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PEARLS BEFORE SWINE



CM YK

England recovers, moves ahead by 181 runs

Leach at the forefront with a career-best 92; Ireland has a short period of ascendancy with some quick wickets

LORD'S TEST

IANS
AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
LONDON

Nightwatchman Jack Leach scored a career-best 92 while Jason Roy notched up his maiden Test half century as England recovered from a poor start to erase a 122-run deficit and take a 181-run lead with one wicket in hand at stumps on a rain-affected day two of the only Test against Ireland at Lord's on Thursday.

Leach, sent in as a night-watchman the previous evening to negotiate one over of England's second innings, played brilliantly for his 92 off 162 balls with 16 fours.

Test debutant Roy raced to 72 from 78 balls (10x4, 1x6) as the host gained the upper hand but just before tea, Ireland pacers dented England's charge with quick wickets to leave it at 209 for 5 at tea.

Rain interruption
In the final session which was cut short due to rain, England skipper Joe Root scored 31 from 64 balls (3x4) and Sam Curran added a quickfire 37 off just 29 deliveries (4x4, 2x6) as England finished on 303 for nine in

77.4 overs. For Ireland, Mark Adair was the pick of the bowlers with figures of three for 66.

Leach and Roy shared a 145-run stand for the second wicket as they went into lunch on 122 for one. But after resumption, Roy lost his wicket to Stuart Thompson while Leach missed out on a maiden and memorable hundred as he nicked first-innings hero Tim Murtagh to Mark Adair in the slip cordon.

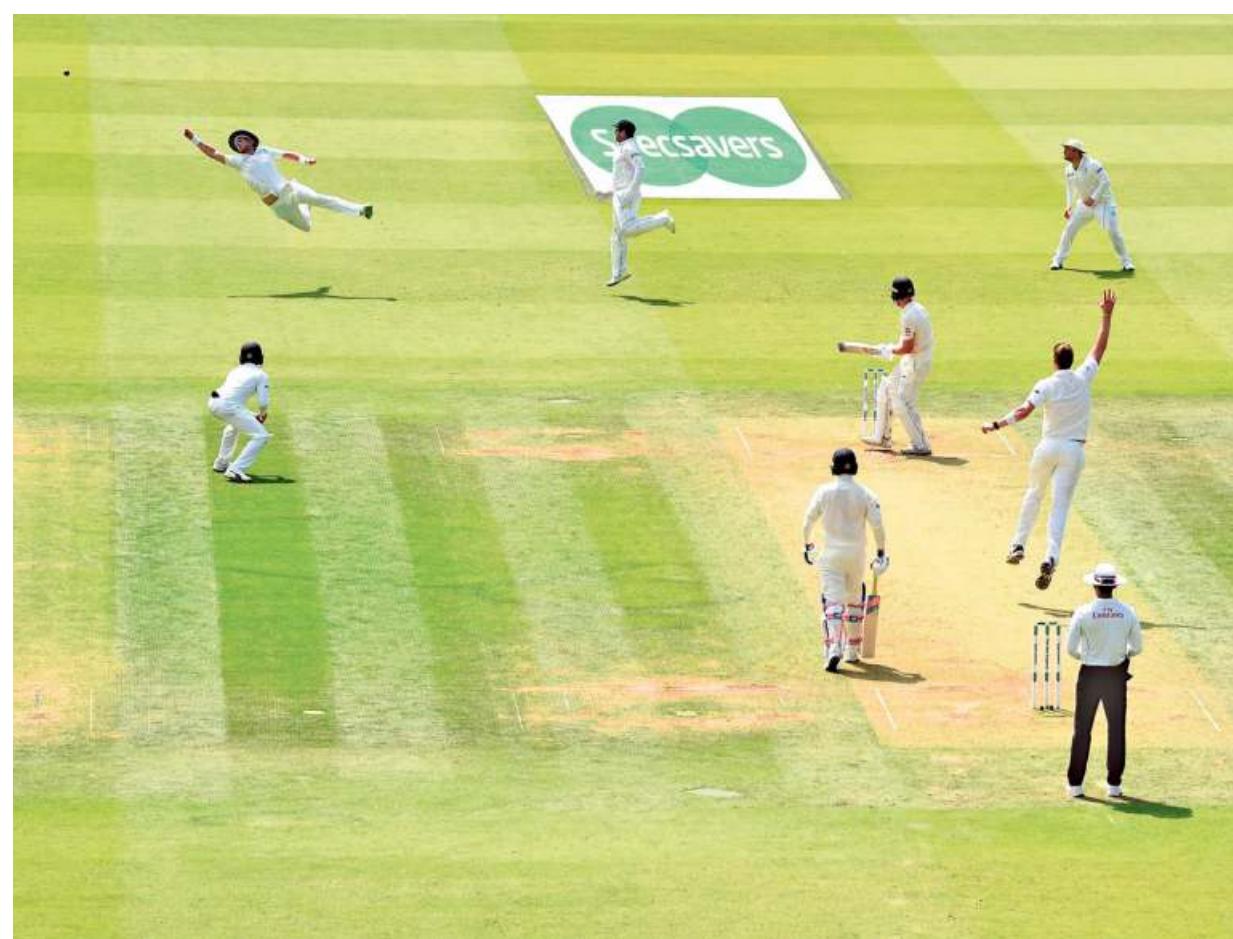
Joe Denly could manage only 10 and Jonny Bairstow once again got out for a duck like in the first innings. At tea, Root (12) and all-rounder Moeen Ali (7) were at the crease.

Watchfully straight

Unexpected opener Leach played watchfully straight. And when fast bowler Boyd Rankin, the first cricketer since the Nawab of Pataudi in 1946 to both play for and against England in a Test match, dropped short, Leach cut him for four.

Left-hander Rory Burns fell for six when he pushed hard at Rankin away from his body and edged a simple catch behind to wicket-keeper Gary Wilson.

Roy, looking to make England's problem position of Test opener his own after



Fighting knock: Opener Jack Leach gave a good account of himself while giving England's second innings a robust start. • AFP

starring in its World Cup triumph, off-drove a four off paceman Mark Adair and hoisted off-spinner Andy McBride for six.

It was a fine effort by

Leach, playing his fifth Test but first on home soil.

The bespectacled Leach should have been out for 72 when he edged Rankin, only for Wilson to drop the

chance despite getting both hands to the ball.

Leach had another reprieve on 92 when he edged Murtagh only for Adair, standing exceptionally close

at second slip, to drop the chance.

But two balls later a softer, defensive, edge went straight to Adair and this time he made no mistake.

SCOREBOARD

England – 1st innings: 85.

Ireland – 1st innings: W. Portierfield c Leach b Curran 14, J. McCollum b Curran 19, A. Balbirnie b Stone 55, P. Stirling lbw b Broad 36, K. O'Brien (not out) 28, G. Wilson c Root b Stone 0, S. Thompson b Broad 0, M. Adair b Curran 3, A. McBride b Broad 11, T. Murtagh c Burns b Stone 16, B. Rankin b Moeen 7; Extras (b-10, lb-6, w-2): 18; Total (in 58.2 overs): 207.

Fall of wickets: 1-32, 2-45, 3-12, 4-138, 5-138, 6-141, 7-149, 8-174, 9-195.

England bowling: Broad 19-5-60-3, Woakes 10-2-34-0, Stone 12-3-29-3, Curran 10-3-28-3, Leach 3-0-26-0, Moeen 4-2-1-14-1.

England – 2nd innings: J. Leach c Adair b Murtagh 92, R. Burns c Wilson b Rankin 6, J. Roy b Thompson 72, J. Denly run out 10, J. Root c Wilson b Adair 31, J. Bairstow lbw b Adair 0, Moeen c Wilson b Rankin 9, C. Woakes c Balbirnie b Adair 13, S. Curran c McCollum b Thompson 37, S. Broad (batting) 21, O. Stone (batting) 0; Extras (b-1, lb-7, nb-4): 12; Total (for nine wkts. in 77.4 overs): 303.

Fall of wickets: 1-26, 2-171, 3-182, 4-194, 5-194, 6-219, 7-239, 8-248, 9-293.

Ireland bowling: Murtagh 18-3-52-1, Adair 20-7-66-3, Rankin 17-1-86-2, Thompson 12-4-0-44-2, McBride 10-1-47-0.

Indian team set to have new jersey sponsor

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NEW DELHI

Indian cricketers will soon be wearing a new brand name on their official jerseys with Chinese mobile manufacturer Oppo handing over the sponsorship rights to Byju's, a Bengaluru-based educational technology and online tutorial firm.

The deal between the BCCI and Oppo, which was inked in 2017 for a five-year period, was reportedly worth ₹1,079 crore.

Virat Kohli and his men will be wearing the jersey with the new brand name from the upcoming home season, beginning with the assignments against South Africa from September 15.

A source said that the transfer is a "tripartite agreement" between Oppo, Byju's and the BCCI and will be signed on Thursday.

"Oppo and Byju's are negotiating among themselves on the possible handover of shirt sponsorship deal. The CoA has been intimated that they are discussing among themselves on the transfer of sponsorship," a senior BCCI official said on condition of anonymity.

In the semifinals of the men's 200 breaststroke, Matthew Wilson of Australia timed of 2:06.67 to match the World record set by Ippei Watanabe of Japan in January 2017.

Srihari's new mark

Meanwhile, India's Srihari Nataraj broke his own 200m backstroke National record in the heats.

The 18-year-old clocked 2:02.08s, bettering his own 2:02.37s, while finishing fourth in the heats but the time was not enough to carry him to the semifinal.

The results:

Men: 100m freestyle: 1. Caeleb Dressel (USA) 46.96s, 2. Kyle Chalmers (AUS) 47.08, 3. Vlastislav Grinev (Rus) 47.82.

200m IM: 1. Daiya Seto (Jpn) 5:16.14, 2. Jeremy Desplanches (Sui) 5:16.56, 3. Chase Kalisz (USA) 5:16.78.

Women: 200m butterfly: 1. Boglarka Kapas (Hun) 2:06.78, 2. Hali Flickinger (USA) 2:06.95, 3. Katie Drabot (USA) 2:07.04.

50m backstroke: 1. Olivia Smoliga (USA) 27.33, 2. Etienne Medeiros (Bra) 27.44, 3. Daria Vasina (Rus) 27.51.

4x200m freestyle relay: 1. Australia 7:41.50 (WR), 2. USA 7:41.87, 3. Canada 7:44.35.

Consecutive wins for India U-19

Beats Bangladesh; Priyam Garg scores an unbeaten ton

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
WORCESTER

Skipper Priyam Garg slammed a 97-ball century before the bowlers took centre stage to guide India U-19 to a 35-run win over Bangladesh U-19, its second consecutive in the Under-19 Youth ODI tri-series here.

Garg remained unbeaten on exactly 100, a knock that was studded with seven boundaries and four hits over the fence, taking India U-19 to 265 for five after opting to bat on Wednesday night.

Besides Garg, left-handed opener Yashasvi Jaiswal made 63 off 90 balls up the order. Jaiswal struck six fours and one six during his knock.

Tilak Varma (23) and Pragnesh Kanpallewar (23) got starts but couldn't prolong their stay, while wicket-keeper Dhruv Jurel (34) also chipped in with useful runs towards the end.

Ably supported by left-arm spinner Shubhang Hegde (three for 59) and right-arm medium-pacer Kartik Tyagi (four for 16)

then led India's bowling attack to bundle out Bangladesh U-19 for 229 in 47.1 overs.

Captain Akbar Ali (56), Shamim Hossain (46) and opener Tanzid Hasan (44) were the main run-getters for Bangladesh U-19.

India U-19 had defeated host England U-19 by five wickets in the tri-series opener last Sunday.

India U-19 will again meet Bangladesh U-19 in its next match in Cheltenham on Saturday.

The scores:

India U-19 264 for five in 50 overs (Priyam Garg 100 n.o., Yashasvi Jaiswal 63 bt Bangladesh U-19: 229 in 47.1 overs).

Kartik Tyagi four for 16, Shubhang Hegde three for 59).

Leading the way: Skipper Priyam Garg slammed a 97-ball century to guide his team to victory.

• FILE PHOTO: SHIV KUMAR PUSHPAKAR

penalized for not touching the wall with both hands in a simultaneous motion in the first turn of the four-lap race.

Dressel won the glamour

100 freestyle for his third gold and fourth medal overall.

King disqualified

Watching from the stands

was Lilly King, who was dis-

qualified from the morning

heats of the 200 breaststroke

and lost an appeal to be rein-

stated. The American was

under 47 seconds in the fi-

nal. He was only 0.05 sec-

onds off the 10-year-old

world record of 46.91 set by

Brazil's Cesar Cielo.

Olympic champion Kyle

Chalmers of Australia settled

for silver in 47.08. Vladislav

Grinev of Russia took bronze

in 47.82.

Dressel tied for quickest

off the starting block and

held off a challenge from

Chalmers in the closing me-

ters to defend the title he

won in 2017.

Dressel touched in 46.96

seconds, the only man to dip

under 47 seconds in the fi-

nal. He was only 0.05 sec-

onds off the 10-year-old

world record of 46.91 set by

Brazil's Cesar Cielo.

Fantastic four: Australians Brianna Throssell, Ariarne Titmus, Emma McKeon and Madison Wilson celebrate their record-breaking effort in 4x200m freestyle event. • AP

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Fantastic four: Australians Brianna Throssell, Ariarne Titmus, Emma McKeon and Madison Wilson celebrate their record-breaking effort in 4x200m freestyle event. • AP

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'Will play as hard as possible'

Malinga's final ODI won't distract Bangladesh from trying to win: Tamim

CRICKET

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
COLOMBO

Stand-in Bangladesh captain Tamim Iqbal on Thursday paid tribute to retiring Sri Lankan star Lasith Malinga but said the fast bowler's farewell match would not distract his team from winning.

Malinga will play his final One-Day International here on Friday in the first of three matches against Bangladesh, although he hopes to continue playing in the shorter T20 format.

"I think he is a great ambassador of this game," Tamim told reporters on Thursday, adding Malinga's achievements were "extraordinary". "Tomorrow is a special game for him. But one thing is for sure – when we play against him we will not keep it in our head that it will be his last match and will try to play as hard as possible. We will try to win the game for Bangladesh."

Malinga said he was "very happy" to make way for younger players after calling time on his illustrious 15-year career in the 50-over format.



Time to move on: Lasith Malinga said it was an opportunity for the likes of Kusal Mendis, left, Avishka Fernando, Dhananjaya de Silva and Kusal Perera to prove their credentials. ■ AFP

"I am very happy to leave at this time. This is an opportunity for new players to prove themselves and prepare for the next World Cup."

"We may have had some setbacks, but we have the capability to win another World Cup," Malinga said, pointing to Sri Lanka's success at the 1996 World Cup and 2014 T20 World Cup.

Malinga – known for his trademark blond-highlight-

ed mop and piercings – called on cricket administrators to be patient with up-and-coming stars and let them develop ahead of the next ODI World Cup.

Have belief

"The young players need to believe that they can deliver. They need to be dedicated and develop to a level that they can decide for themselves when they go to the

middle," Malinga said.

The match also holds special meaning for Tamim, who will make his debut as 14th ODI captain for Bangladesh. He will lead a new-look team that will also miss the services of all-rounders Shakib Al Hasan and Mohammad Saifuddin, and wicket-keeper-batsman Liton Das.

The second and third matches will be held on July 28 and 31.

ICA membership: women cricketers looking for old records

G. VISWANATH
MUMBAI

India's women cricketers, who played in the domestic tournaments under the aegis of the Women's Cricket Association of India (WCAI) are in deep predicament.

In the absence of any record of the matches played from 1973 to 2005, women cricketers across the country have virtually given up trying to find evidence of having played the WCAI organised tournaments until 2005.

Over the last 12 months, many of them have been calling up teammates, scorers, statisticians and friends in the newspaper offices to collect score sheets and clippings of the matches in which they had played.

Only verified records of a certain number of matches they have played will allow women cricketers to apply for the membership of the Indian Cricketers Association (ICA) which is registered as a company with Kapil Dev, Shantha Rangaswamy and Ajit Agarkar as the initial directors of the Board. The CoA has recognised the ICA as the only body for men and



Shubhangi Kulkarni.
■ FILE PHOTO

women cricketers.

Three years ago, the Lodha panel recommendations that was validated by the Supreme court empowered women cricketers with meaningful roles and a place in the BCCI and State's Apex Council.

Eligibility criteria

The eligibility criteria for former men and women cricketers to apply for membership of the ICA are: (1) men and women ex-cricketers who have played at least one international cricket match in any format of the game at the senior level; (2)

male ex-cricketers, who have played at least ten First Class matches at the senior level; (3) female ex-cricketers who have played at least five First Class matches in any format of the game at the senior level; and (4) differently-abled ex-cricketers who have played either international cricket or First Class cricket, where such cricket is recognised by the ICC or the BCCI and is organised by the BCCI or a body recognised by the ICC or the BCCI, in any format of the game at the senior level.

The CoA has also said that every three senior one-day limited-over matches and every five senior T20 matches of the BCCI-organised inter-State or inter-zonal tournament shall count as a First Class match for men and women.

Time limit

The CoA has also said that within 20 days, former men and women cricketers should inform the associations of the State they hail from, expressing their interest to apply for membership of the ICA with relevant proof of meeting the eligibil-

ity criteria.

Nutan Natu (nee Gavaskar) told *The Hindu* that records were not maintained by the WCAI.

"Most of the matches played by the women were one-day matches and only the final of the national championship was a three-day match."

"I have played many matches over a period of four or five years, but all zonal and the inter-zonal were one-day matches."

Former India captain and secretary of the WCAI till 2006, Shubhangi Kulkarni believes that some of the States which promoted women's cricket could be having the records and they could become useful for the cricketers of the particular States. "On the basis of these records, the States can issue certificates to the former players who played in the WCAI domestic tournaments."

While the records of women's international cricket has been obtained from the IWCC, the BCCI has maintained all records after it began conducting tournaments for women.

I wouldn't trade this group of men for the world: Neesham

ANI

New Zealand's defeat in the cricket World Cup final was heart-wrenching. Batting all-rounder James Neesham said on Thursday that it is hard to dissect an experience like that but he would not trade his team for the world.

England won the World Cup, while New Zealand won the world. If a third category is added it would be Neesham won the hearts!

In an Instagram post, Neesham shared pictures with his teammates, including the one where he can be seen consoling Martin Guptill. He captioned it, indicating that he will prepare for the next edition.

"It's hard to really dissect an experience like that until you get a bit of distance. Sure some things didn't fall our way, but we went into the cup saying we were gonna fire some shots and scrap like hell and boy did we do both of those. Another day things might have been different but I wouldn't trade this group of men for the world," Neesham said.



Tough luck: James Neesham shared pictures with his teammates in an Instagram post, including the one where he can be seen consoling Martin Guptill. ■ CLIVE MASON / GETTY IMAGES

Warner scores fifty in Ashes warm-up match

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
LONDON

David Warner made a timely fifty as Australia's bowlers continued to hold sway in an intra-squad Ashes warm-up match at Southampton.

A fixture scheduled for four days will barely make it into the third, with this match Australia's only red-ball warm-up game ahead of a five-Test series with England starting at Edgbaston

on August 1.

Warner hit eight fours in a 94-ball 58. It was the first fifty of the match between the Brad Haddin XII and the Graeme Hick XII.

Fast bowler Pat Cummins had earlier taken five for 24 to run through the tail of the Hick side, who led by 15 runs on first innings after being dismissed for 120.

By stumps on day two, Hick XII was 35 for two.

BBL unveils five-team finals series

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
SYDNEY

Australia's Twenty20 Big Bash League unveiled a new-look finals series and a shorter season on Thursday following fan feedback.

The ninth year of the domestic competition, starting on December 17, will again see the eight franchises playing 56 regular season games, but they will be condensed into 42 days with more double-headers.

Five teams will now be involved in the finals with a

new system that gives a double-chance for the regular season's top two teams.

The fourth and fifth-placed teams will play in the newly titled 'The Eliminator' with the winner facing the third-placed team in 'The Knock-Out'.

Teams finishing first and second play 'The Qualifier', with the loser taking on the winner of 'The Knock-Out' in 'The Challenger'. It will culminate with 'The Final' between the Challenger and Qualifier winners.

Going places



On a mission: Indian Divyang Cricket team poses for lensmen ahead of its departure to England where it will play the 6-Nation Physical Disability World Cricket Series in August. ■ SUPREET SAKPAL

India thumps Jamaica

KINGSTON: India blind cricket team registered a massive 238-run victory over Jamaica in the first T20 match to take a lead in a two-match T20 series here on Wednesday.

The scores:

India 286 for three (Sunil 107 n.o., Venkateswara 53) bt Jamaica 48 (Graham 12, Miles 9, Ajay four for 12). ANI

India drops to 103 in FIFA rankings

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NEW DELHI

The Indian football team slipped two places to 103rd in the FIFA rankings released on Thursday.

India, which lost to Tajikistan and DPR Korea and drew with Syria in the Intercontinental Cup, has 1214 ranking points to its kitty.

down by five from the previous chart issued last month.

The Indian team now lies at 18th among Asian countries with Iran (23rd) at the top. Overall, Belgium leads the chart, followed by Brazil, France, England and Uruguay.

Deepak loves to lead from the front

Enthused by the respect gained from being part of PKL

V.V. SUBRAHMANYAM
HYDERABAD

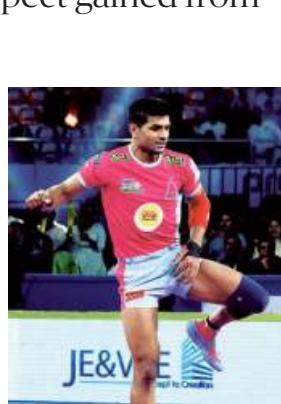
Deepak Niwas Hooda forms a feared combination with defender Amit Hooda for Jaipur Pink Panthers. U Mumba will vouch for this after its defeat in the ProKabaddi League Season-7 here the other night.

Not surprisingly, Deepak, who loves to lead from the front, did leave a huge impact on that game scoring 11 points from 15 raids and Amit notching up a high-five. "It's not about money alone. It's the kind of respect we get by playing in the PKL that is more important," emphasises Deepak in a chat with *The Hindu*.

"The growing fan following is a fair indicator of the popularity of not just the sport but also of the players," says the 25-year-old World Cup gold medallist.

Deepak, who is the big gest name for Pink Panthers, says: "I don't feel any pressure, but definitely lot more responsibility."

He is happy with the winning start and is obviously looking to sustain the mo-



Deepak Niwas Hooda.
■ SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

Home fans can expect something special

Narwal is growing in reputation as a brilliant defender and useful attacker

NANDAKUMAR MARAR
MUMBAI

Allrounder Sandeep Narwal is U Mumba's key player in the ProKabaddi League Season-7.

Credited with 200 league points so far, the Sonepat sensation is growing in reputation as a brilliant defender and useful attacker.

The vice-captain, focused on bringing excitement to home fans during the Mumbai leg (U Mumba won one and lost one in the opening leg at Hyderabad and faces Puneri Paltan here on Saturday), spoke to *The Hindu*. Excerpts:

What can Mumbai fans expect from Sandeep Narwal in the second leg? U Mumba will demonstrate something different this season.

Fans can expect something special when I am on a raid or lending my hand in defence.

After raiders and defenders ruled the previous seasons, will allrounders call the shots in future?

The allrounder's role is be-

ing talked about.

All teams have begun to realise the importance of allrounders.

Earlier, raiders called the shots, then teams with good defenders did well over the last two seasons.

Goals in mind for the season

ahead

Team result is more important than personal highs.

Getting two tackle or raid points and ending up on the winning side is equal to 200 points.

Raiders usually end up contributing more points

Fans can expect something special when I am on a raid or lending my hand in defence.

than catchers, I will try to deliver what I expect from me in both halves.



A point to prove: Sandeep Narwal, centre, sees a bigger role for allrounders henceforth. ■ SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

Phelps hails Milak's technique

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
GWANGJU (SOUTH KOREA)

Michael Phelps paid tribute to Hungarian teenager Krisztof Milak's "beautiful technique" after he took down the American legend's long-standing 200m butterfly record at the World championships here.

Phelps described Milak's time of one minute, 50.73 seconds as "incredible", although he admitted his astonishment was tinged with sadness at losing a World record which had stood since 2009.

"As frustrated as I am to see that record go down, I

couldn't be happier to see how he did it. That kid's last 100 was incredible. He put together a great 200 fly from start to finish."

"It happened because there was a kid who wanted to do it, who dreamed of doing it, who figured out what it would take to do it," said Phelps, who had a special fondness for the 200m butterfly.

"(He) worked on his technique until it was beautiful and put in the really, really hard work that it takes to do it – my hat's off to him," Phelps told the *New York Times*.

Sporting Lisbon holds Liverpool

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
WASHINGTON

Liverpool wrapped up its US tour with a 2-2 draw against Sporting CP as the English Premier side failed to win a game on its first trip abroad since being crowned European champion.

Marcus Wendel tied the game 2-2 in the 53rd minute

no victories to show from its three-match tour but did manage to salvage a tie against the reigning Portuguese champion at Yankee Stadium in New York.

Marcus Wendel tied the game 2-2 in the 53rd minute on Wednesday with a right-footed shot from the centre.

AN-NDNE

TV PICKS

Badminton: Japan Open, Star Sports 2 (SD & HD), 6.30 a.m.
Sri Lanka vs Bangladesh: 1st ODI, Sony Six (SD & HD), 2.30 p.m.
England vs Ireland: Only Test, Sony ESPN, 3.30 p.m.
Ultimate Table Tennis: Star Sports 1 & Star Sports Select 1 (SD & HD), 7.30 p.m.
PKL: Star Sports 2 (SD & HD), 7.30 p.m. & 9 p.m.
TNPL: Star Sports 3, 7.15 p.m.

IN BRIEF



Leonard, George want to create history
LOS ANGELES Kawhi Leonard and Paul George (in pic) made their debuts on Wednesday as Los Angeles Clippers teammates, vowing to turn their hometown club into an NBA champion and eclipse city rival Lakers. "We're not looking at the Battle of LA. We've got bigger goals in mind," George said. "We're not thinking about the Lakers shadow. We want to be holding that trophy and we'll build up Clipper Nation along the way." AFP



Maradona undergoes successful knee surgery
BUENOS AIRES Former Argentina World Cup-winning captain Diego Maradona underwent a successful knee operation at a clinic here, his lawyer has revealed. The former coach of the Argentine national team quit his job at Mexican second division outfit Dorados last month for health reasons after just nine months in charge. AFP

Pau Gasol agrees to Trail Blazers deal

NEW YORK Spanish star centre Pau Gasol, a two-time NBA champion, has agreed to terms on a one-year deal with Portland Trail Blazers, ESPN reported on Wednesday. The 39-year-old 7-footer, who helped Los Angeles Lakers to the 2009 and 2010 titles, joins his sixth league club for a 19th career NBA campaign. The deal was reportedly worth \$2.6 million. AFP

Harmanpreet to lead in Tokyo Test event

NEW DELHI Captain Manpreet Singh and goalkeeper P.R. Sreejesh were among a few senior players rested from the Indian hockey team for next month's Olympic Test event in Tokyo. Dragflicker Harmanpreet Singh will don the captain's armband.
The squad: Krishan Bahadur Pathak, Suraj Karkera, Gurinder Singh, Harmanpreet Singh (Capt.), Kothajit Singh Khadangbam, Hardik Singh, Nilakanta Sharma, Vivek Sagar Prasad, Jaskaran Singh, Mandeep Singh (Vice-capt.), Gursahibjit Singh, Nilam Sanjeev Xess, Jarmanpreet Singh, Varun Kumar, Ashish Topno, S.V. Sunil, Gurjant Singh, Shamsher Singh.

Relay gold for Indian men

SPORTS BUREAU
ERZURUM (TURKEY)
The Indian men's 4x400m relay team won the gold, clocking 3:02.59s, in the Balkan Relays here on Thursday evening.

Amoj Jacob, Noah Nirnal Tom, K.S. Jeevan and 400m national record holder Muhammed Anas, in that order, ran the event. Host Turkey (3:03.31) and Romania (3:59.43) took the second and third spots in the relay which featured three teams.

The Indian women's team did not take in Erzurum.

Sindhu, Sai Praneeth in quarterfinals

Prannoy bows out after losing to Gemke

JAPAN OPEN

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
TOKYO

Indian shuttlers P.V. Sindhu and B. Sai Praneeth moved into the quarterfinals of the Japan Open after registering contrasting wins here on Thursday.

While fifth seed Sindhu had to toil hard in an hour-long battle to get the better of unseeded Japanese Aya Ohori 11-21, 21-10, 21-13 in the second round, Praneeth sailed past another local shuttler, Kanta Tsuneyama, 21-13, 21-16 in an encounter that lasted 45 minutes.

However, H.S. Prannoy, who knocked out compatriot K. Srikanth in the opening round, went down to Rasmus Gemke of Denmark 21-9, 21-15 in his second round match.

The win at the BWF World



On course: Sai Praneeth cruised into the quarterfinals after taking out Kanta Tsuneyama in straight games on Thursday. ■ MATT ROBERTS/GETTY IMAGES

Tour Super 750 tournament on Thursday extended Sindhu's head-to-head record to

8-0 over Ohori. It was good news for India in the men's doubles event as the pair of

Satwiksairaj Rankireddy and Chirag Shetty made it to the quarterfinals after emerging

victorious in a tough three-game second round affair in 53 minutes.

The Indian pair came from a game down to quell the challenge of China's Kai Xiang Huang and Cheng Liu 15-21, 21-11, 21-19.

It was curtains in mixed doubles as Satwiksairaj and Ashwini Ponnappa lost 21-16, 21-17 to fourth seeds Dechapol Puavaranukroh and Sapsiree Taerattanachai of Thailand.

The results (second round):
Men: B. Sai Praneeth bt Kanta Tsuneyama (Jpn) 21-13, 21-16; Rasmus Gemke (Den) bt H.S. Prannoy 21-9, 21-15.

Doubles: Satwiksairaj Rankireddy & Chirag Shetty bt Kai Xiang Huang and Cheng Liu (Chn) 15-21, 21-11, 21-19.

Women: P.V. Sindhu bt Aya Ohori (Jpn) 11-21, 21-10, 21-13

Mixed doubles: Dechapol Puavaranukroh & Sapsiree Taerattanachai (Tha) bt Satwiksairaj & Ashwini Ponnappa 21-16, 21-17.

Shivpal finishes fourth

MOTONET GP

SPORTS BUREAU
JOENSUU (FINLAND)

Javelin thrower Shivpal Singh, who has been trying out changes in his technique, finished fourth with 76.90m at the Motonet Grand Prix here on Wednesday.

That was way below his personal best of 86.23m which brought the 24-year-old the silver at the Asian championship in Doha in April.

"I felt some pain in my shoulder, that's why I think my throw was not that good," Shivpal told *The Hindu*. "I've been having easy 78m throws during training but I think I'm overexcited in competition. I hope to do well in the World Championships."

Estonia's Magnus Kirt, the world leader this year with 90.61m, won with 87.35m while Finland's Antti



Ruusukanen, the 2012 London Olympics silver medalist, as second with 80.79.

Meanwhile National record holder Amiya Kumar Mallick clocked 10.60s as he finished last in the men's 100m 'A' race in 10.60s in the same meet. Japan's Takuwa Kawakami, a former Asian junior champion, took gold in 10.27s.

Mallick figured in the startlist in the 200m too but did not start the race.

Mixed fortunes for Indian junior shuttlers

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NEW DELHI

over Hong Kong's NG Tin Yan. The Indian's campaign, however, was cut short 21-8, 21-13 in that round by the fifth seed Benyapa Aimsaard of Thailand.

Tanisha-Aditi in last 16

In girls' doubles, Tanisha Crasto and Aditi Bhatt were brilliant in their 21-12, 21-18 win over Chinese Taipei's Jiang Pin-Yue and Ting Yau that put them in the pre-quarterfinals.

Earlier, Aashi Rawat succumbed to a 21-10, 21-14 defeat at the hands of the second seed Zhou Meng while Aditi Bhatt lost 21-13, 21-15 to fourth seed Han Qian Xi.

In boys' singles, Sathish Kumar Karunakaran was the only one to enter the third round, courtesy of his 21-11, 21-7 win over Sumiyasuren Enkhbat of Mongolia.

Natl. coaches workshop

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

The 10th National tennis coaches workshop will be held in Goa from September 20 to 23.

The workshop – for coaches (of other sports as well), tennis facility managers, tennis parents and enthusiasts – will offer coaches the latest sports science information and practical on-court presentations.

The venue will be the Caravela Beach Resort.

Coach Nar Singh will be the administrator and coordinator, while Hemant Bendrey and Manoj Vaideya will be the directors. Dr. Vece Paes, Nandan Bal, Kawaaljeet Singh, Suresh Kumar Sonachalam, Gary O'Brien and M. Balachandran, form the advisory panel. Registration (₹20,000) will be accepted till September 1.

Priyanka springs a surprise on Vantika

Bhakti sitting pretty at the top with 8.5 points

NATL. CHESS

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
KARAIKUDI

Defending champion Bhakti Kulkarni of Air India is sitting pretty at the top with 8.5 points after the ninth round of the 46th National women's chess championship here on Thursday.

But her nearest rival Vantika Agrawal of Delhi, who was cruising well, crashed to her first defeat as K. Priyanka of Tamil Nadu, the National under-17 champion, surprised her in 70 moves with the Modern Defence.

It was an important win for Priyanka as she moved to the second slot with Vantika. In the penultimate round, all eyes will be on this young girl from Coimbatore as she takes on Bhakti while Vantika is pitted against three-

time champion Mary Ann Gomes. V. Varshini of Tamil Nadu also sprung a surprise. She shocked top seed Soumya Swaminathan of PSPB. Playing black in a Pirc Defence, Soumya blundered on the 31st move. It turned out to be costly as Varshini made the best use of it to win in 46 moves.

Eight players, including third seed Divya Deshmukh (Maharashtra) and Mary, share the third spot with 6.5 points.

Important results (ninth round, TN unless specified): Bhakti Kulkarni (AI) 8.5 bt S. Odi (5).



Focused: K. Priyanka pulled off a crucial win that took her to the joint second spot. ■ SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

Shashikant Rajput stuns Krishan Hooda, makes final

AITA TENNIS

SPORTS BUREAU
CHANDIGARH

games. Krishan and Uddayvir won the doubles title.

In girls under-18 section, Sandeepi Singh Rao set up a title clash against Kaavya Sawhney and also made the doubles final.

The results: Boys: Under-18: Semifinals: Shashikant Rajput bt Krishan Hooda 6-1, 6-7(0), 6-4; Uddayvir Singh bt Bhupender Dahiya 6-1, 6-2. **Doubles (final):** Krishan & Uddayvir bt Bhupender Dahiya & Karan Parashar 7-5, 7-5.

Under-16: Semifinals: Ajay Kundu bt Rishi Jalota 6-0, 6-1; Ajay Singh bt Kartik Saxena 6-1,

6-0. **Doubles (final):** Lakshay Kumar & Lokesh Pun bt Arjun Kundu & Yashraj Dalvi 3-6, 6-4, 10-6.

Girls: Under-18: Semifinals: Sandeepi Singh Rao bt Lakshmi Arunkumar 6-3, 6-1; Kaavya Sawhney bt Vanisha Choudhary 7-5, 6-2. **Doubles (semifinals):** Vanisha & Sandeepi bt Inayat Roy & Ridhima Mehra 6-1, 6-0;

Under-16 (semifinals): Lakshmi Arunkumar bt Kaavya Palani 6-7 (6), 6-2, 6-3; Tanushri Pandey bt Sanvi Ahluwalia 6-3, 7-5.

Qamar siblings in last four
GURUGRAM: Fardeen Qamar

beat top seed Yugal Bansal 6-2, 6-3 in the quarterfinals of the AITA men's ranking tennis tournament at the Pradhan Tennis Academy in Sector-103 on Thursday.

Fardeen's brother, second seed Faisal Qamar beat seventh seed Hardeep Singh Sandhu 7-6(7), 6-3 in another quarterfinal.

In the semifinals, Fardeen will play Amit Beniwal while Faisal will be challenged by qualifier Ashutosh Tiwari.

The results (quarterfinals): Fardeen Qamar bt Yugal Bansal 6-7(4), 6-2, 6-0.



Winning run: Nairo Quintana prevailed from the day's breakaway, thanks to an impressive attack in the ascent to the Col du Galibier. ■ REUTERS

Quintana, who dropped out of overall contention last week, prevailed from the day's breakaway thanks to an impressive attack in the ascent to the Col du Galibier.

Frenchman Romain Bardet took second place 1:35 behind Quintana.

Frances Julian Alaphilippe retained the overall leader's yellow jersey but Bernal emerged as the strongest of the top contenders on Thursday. Twice Tour runner-up

he gained 32 seconds after also attacking about two kilometres from the top of the Col du Galibier. Defending champion Geraint Thomas later jumped away from the favourites group, only to be reined in by Frenchman Thibaut Pinot as Alaphilippe cracked in the final part of the climb before coming back in the descent to the finish.

Twice Tour runner-up

and 6-2, 6-3; Amit Beniwal bt Aakash Ahlawat 6-2, 4-6, 6-4; Ashutosh Tiwari bt Abhishek Gaur 2-6, 6-4, 6-3; Faisal Qamar bt Hardeep Singh Sandhu 7-6(7), 6-3.

Pre-quarterfinals: Bansal bt Bikramjeet Singh Chawla 6-4, 4-6, 6-7(5); Fardeen bt Anuj Malik 6-3, 4-6, 6-4; Ahlawat bt Ricky Sehrwan 6-7(5), 6-4, 6-4; Beniwal bt Kaivish Kathuria 6-3, 6-1; Ashutosh Tiwari bt Mohit Bhardwaj 6-3, 6-2; Gaur bt Yashdeep Gahlot 6-3, 7-5; Hardeep bt Varnit Arora 7-5, 6-2; Faisal Qamar bt Amit Biaz 6-7(4), 6-2, 6-0.

Quarterfinals: Bansal bt Bikramjeet Singh Chawla 6-4, 4-6, 6-7(5); Fardeen bt Anuj Malik 6-3, 4-6, 6-4; Ahlawat bt Ricky Sehrwan 6-7(5), 6-4, 6-4; Beniwal bt Kaivish Kathuria 6-3, 6-1; Ashutosh Tiwari bt Mohit Bhardwaj 6-3, 6-2; Gaur bt Yashdeep Gahlot 6-3, 7-5; Hardeep bt Varnit Arora 7-5, 6-2; Faisal Qamar bt Amit Biaz 6-7(4), 6-2, 6-0.

Results (final): Fardeen Qamar bt Yugal Bansal 6-3, 6-1.

Final: Fardeen Qamar bt Yugal Bansal 6-3, 6-1.

IN BRIEF



Musk changes Twitter profile name to '-1'

SAN FRANCISCO

Tesla CEO Elon Musk has left his 27.6 million Twitter followers puzzled after he mysteriously changed his name to "-1" on the micro-blogging platform. "What's the deal with -1? Can someone explain?" a user asked. "Elon you ok man?" another user wrote. IANS



China launches private rocket to carry satellites

BEIJING

A Chinese start-up has launched the country's first commercial rocket capable of carrying satellites into orbit, as the space race between China and the U.S. heats up. Beijing-based Interstellar Glory Space Technology — also known as iSpace — said it launched two satellites into orbit from Jiuquan, a state launch facility in the Gobi desert, on Thursday. AFP



Pak. to send astronaut into space by 2022

ISLAMABAD

Pakistan said on Thursday that it aims to send its first astronaut into space by 2022. "This will be the biggest space event of our history," Science and Technology Minister Chaudhry Fawad Hussain tweeted. A selection committee will begin choosing candidates in February 2020. REUTERS

Earth is warming at faster pace than in last 2,000 years: study

Researchers used data compiled from nearly 700 temperature indicators

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE

PARIS

World temperatures rose faster in the late 20th century than at any other time in the last 2,000 years, according to a study released on Wednesday.

Climate variability — the fluctuation of surface temperatures over time — has long been the subject of debate.

While average global temperatures are currently around 1°C hotter than pre-industrial times, there have been a number of periods of cooling and warming over the centuries. This had led sceptics of manmade global warming to suggest that human activity is not the main driver of climate change.

Researchers used data compiled from nearly 700



Cool meal: An Amur tiger at a zoo in Chicago, U.S., is given a meat-filled slab of ice to prevent dehydration.

temperature indicators — tree rings, sediment cores, coral reefs and modern thermometer readings — to provide a comprehensive timeline of the planet's recent climate history.

The findings are clear: at no point in modern human history did temperatures

rise so quickly and so consistently as in the late 20th century — the period where the world's post-war, fossil fuel-powered economy reached unprecedented heights of production and consumption.

A paper, published in the journal *Nature*, examined

regional temperature trends over time.

A second paper, in *Nature Geoscience*, examined rates of surface warming, averaged over sub-periods each a few decades long.

The study found that pre-industrial temperature fluctuations were largely driven by volcanic activity.

But it also concluded that humans had never witnessed such rapid global warming as in the latter part of the 20th century.

Commenting on the studies, Mark Maslin, Professor of Climatology at University College London, said their results "should finally stop climate change deniers claiming that the recent observed coherent global warming is part of a natural climate cycle".

Titanic explorer to search for aviator Amelia Earhart's plane

National Geographic plans to document the quest

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE

WASHINGTON

Robert Ballard, the underwater explorer who found the Titanic, has a new quest — searching for the plane of famed aviatrix Amelia Earhart, who disappeared over the Pacific in 1937.

National Geographic said Mr. Ballard plans to leave from Samoa on August 7 to carry out the hunt with his state-of-the-art research vessel *E/V Nautilus*.

The prevailing belief is that Earhart, 39, and Noonan, 44, ran out of fuel and ditched their twin-engine Lockheed Electra in the Pacific near remote Howland Island while on one of the final legs of their epic journey.

One of the most popular theories is that Earhart and Noonan crash-landed on uninhabited Gardner Island,



Amelia Earhart.

now known as Nikumaroro, part of the Republic of Kiribati, where she survived briefly as a castaway.

National Geographic said Mr. Ballard, who also located the remains of the German battleship *Bismarck*, would head from Samoa to Nikumaroro.

It said the search team will use sonar to map the ocean floor and deploy remotely operated vehicles, including one that can dive as deep as 13,000 feet.

Earhart, who won fame in 1932 as the first woman to fly solo across the Atlantic, took off on May 20, 1937, from Oakland, California, hoping to become the first woman to fly around the world.

She and Noonan vanished on July 2, 1937, after taking off from Lae, Papua New Guinea.

Tokyo 2020 medal designer basks in fame

Kawanishi won national contest

REUTERS

TOKYO

Designer Junichi Kawanishi is enjoying his sudden fame, a couple of days after his design for the medals to be awarded at the Tokyo 2020 Olympics was unveiled to the world.

Mr. Kawanishi, a graphic designer from Osaka, won a nationwide competition to design the medals for the Olympics and Paralympics next year.

The medals, which are 85 mm in diameter, feature the Greek goddess of victory Nike in their design along with the Olympic symbol and are made from recycled



metals, collected from 6.21 million electronic devices donated across Japan.

Mr. Kawanishi said he wanted the circular design on the front of the medals to represent the globe and reflect light.

Arm implant seeks to fight HIV infection

DONALD G. MCNEIL JR.

In what could eventually become a milestone for HIV prevention, very preliminary tests of an implant containing a new drug suggest that it may protect against infection for a year.

The new implant, by the drug company Merck, was tested in just a dozen subjects for 12 weeks. But experts were quite excited at its potential to revolutionise the long battle against HIV. The research was described this week at an international AIDS conference in Mexico City.

Merck's innovation is to deliver its new antiretroviral drug, islatravir, with a proven technology long used for birth control: a matchstick-sized plastic rod inserted just under the skin of the upper arm that releases tiny doses of the medication. NY TIMES



Sky high: Franky Zapata taking off on a flyboard. ■ REUTERS

20 minutes, keeping an average speed of 140 km an hour at a height of 15-20 metres above the water. The flyboard is fuelled by kerosene stored in the backpack.

Mr. Zapata carried 47 kg of fuel on Thursday. But as that

would only take him part of the way across the Channel, he needed to pick up a new backpack in mid-Channel for the second half of the trip.

"I think it was just a case of a few metres, even a few centimetres," said the Mayor

of Sangatte, Guy Allemand, after the mid-Channel mishap was confirmed.

In a scene resembling a science fiction film, Mr. Zapata had zoomed into the sky wearing a full body suit, helmet and clutching a joystick to control the device.

Onlookers gasped in astonishment as he soared high above the sea and rapidly became just a tiny speck on the horizon.

In a tribute to past aviation heroes, Mr. Zapata had picked the day that marks 110 years since pioneer Louis Bleriot made the first airplane flight across the Channel on July 25, 1909.

Mr. Zapata's flyboard, which is about the size of a skateboard, is powered by five small jet engines.

Jewel tones



A model presents a creation by Colombian designer Renata Lozano at the Medellin Fashion Week in Medellin, Colombia. ■ AFP

Letterbox campaign helps Afghans cope with stress

Notes sent to U.S. diplomats, the Taliban and govt. officials

REUTERS

KABUL

Hundreds of Afghans, weary of war and unsure of the future, have joined a letter-writing campaign to share their feelings with the powerful few who will decide on peace with the Taliban and, with it, the fate of their country.

The letters from different parts of Afghanistan express a tangled mix of confusion, resignation and fear.

"I live in grief but I smile. People think I am brave but I have no choice," wrote one unidentified person.

The letters, part of a project called Dard-e-Dil (a painful heart) are addressed to U.S. diplomats, the Taliban and government officials.

They are being written as high-level talks are under way to find a political settle-



A member of the ArtLords sorts letters of Dard-e-Dil project in Kabul.

ment to end a war that has raged on for 18 years.

"I am writing with a hope that we have a better life in Kabul, we live amidst so much tension, I can do nothing to change the situation but I am still writing," wrote another person from the Afghan capital.

"The prevailing political uncertainty is clearly the most nerve-racking phase for Afghans, most of us are already battling depression and mental health issues," said artist Omaid Sharifi, who organised the project.

Mr. Sharifi's interest in expressing the feelings aroused by the conflict goes back to his work with ArtLords, an art collective he co-founded that has become famous for the dramatic murals it has painted on grim concrete walls around Kabul.

His team has installed special letter boxes outside cafes, educational centres, hospitals and government offices, encouraging people to try to deal with their anxieties and voice their opinions about the peace talks in letters.

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Electronic visas will come into force in October for stays of up to 8 days in St. Petersburg and the surrounding region



Burst of sunshine: A woman snapping a selfie by the 'Friendship of Nations' in Moscow. ■ AFP

With ambitious plans to become one of the world's top 10 travel destinations, Russia is offering tours off the beaten track and lifting visa restrictions to attract more visitors.

A year after it hosted the World Cup, the ex-Soviet country is looking for new ways to attract international visitors with the goal of more than doubling tourism revenues to \$25 billion by 2035.

"Young people will now be able to see Russia in a way their parents could not," said Maya Lomidze, executive director of the Association of Russian Tour Operators.

cities still put off many visitors.

Nearly 25 million tourists visited Russia last year, making it the world's 16th most popular destination, according to the World Tourism Organisation. They largely came from the ex-Soviet bloc and China.

During last summer's World Cup, Russia offered visa-free entry for international fans and Ms. Lomidze said the tourism sector had hoped for a substantial boost from the tournament played in 11 Russian cities.

"But the effect of the World Cup was practically reduced to zero by the eternal problems with visas," she said.

Apparently aware of the problem, President Vladimir

Putin has ordered the government to introduce electronic visas, which are free of charge and issued quickly, for citizens of a number of countries.

Imperial experience

Electronic visas will come into force in October for stays of up to eight days in the former imperial capital of Saint Petersburg and the surrounding region, though Russia has not yet said which countries' citizens can apply.

From July, there has been a similar deal for travellers from 53 countries visiting the Kaliningrad, formerly part of Germany.

Since 2017, nationals of 18 countries have been eligible to receive free e-visas to visit Russia's Far East including

the Kamchatka region, where tourists can ski and trek in pristine landscapes.

Tour operators are seeking to diversify, luring visitors with Arctic tours featuring reindeer herders, rides in Soviet-era tanks or a night at a palace that belonged to Peter the Great.

But Russia as a whole only spends around €1 million per year on promoting itself to visitors, according to estimates from the Association of Russian Tour Operators.

The country needs to invest billions of dollars in infrastructure and new facilities for travellers but equally crucial is a major publicity campaign to improve its image tarnished by the conflicts in Ukraine and Syria and spying scandals, experts say.

But University of Tasmania scientist Scott Carver

New drug to combat wombat-killing disease

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE

SYDNEY

A disease that has ravaged wombats in southern Australia could be brought under control using a treatment commonly applied by pet owners on cats and dogs, researchers have found.

Mange — which causes wombats to lose some or all of their fur and starve to death within months — has wiped out more than 90% of bare-nosed wombats in a single national park on the island state of Tasmania.

Squat and furry, wombats are small burrow-dwelling marsupials that are largely nocturnal and walk on all fours. They are not a threatened species.

But University of Tasmania scientist Scott Carver