



Australia to return three artefacts to India in January
page 9



We have curbed violence in Jharkhand, says CM Raghubar Das
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Pak. Supreme Court may decide on Army chief's extension today
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NEARBY



Protest in support of affordable education

NEW DELHI
Students from across Delhi gathered at Connaught Place and formed a human chain on Wednesday in support of JNU Students' Union's call to observe November 27 as "national day of protest". The students raised slogans demanding affordable and accessible education and went around explaining to shoppers at the market why they were protesting and how the JNU hostel fee hike would have an impact on everybody's life.

CITY ▶ PAGE 2

'Maximum work in illegal colonies during AAP rule'

NEW DELHI
Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal on Wednesday claimed that the scale of development of the Capital's unauthorised colonies over the last five years has been "the highest in the last 70 years" and lashed out at his political opponents for "doing nothing" for the development of these colonies.

CITY ▶ PAGE 3

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NCP to get Deputy CM post, Speaker will be from Congress

Ajit Pawar returns after failed revolt, says the Pawar family is united

ALOK DESHPANDE
MUMBAI

Two days after the failed rebellion to join hands with the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) in a bid to form the government, Nationalist Congress Party (NCP) leader Ajit Pawar returned, addressing party MLAs at a meeting here on Wednesday.

"I am with Sharad Pawar. I was always with him and the party. I have no complaint against anyone. Neither have I any ill will against anyone. There are no problems within the Pawar family," said Mr. Ajit Pawar.

On Tuesday night, Mr. Ajit Pawar had visited the house of his uncle and NCP president Sharad Pawar where both reportedly decided to let bygones be bygones.

Mr. Ajit Pawar's return to the State Cabinet was not confirmed till late in the night after a meeting of top leaders of the Shiv Sena, the NCP and the Congress was held for over four-and-a-half hours. The leaders clarified that the names of the Ministers will be announced only on Thursday morning.

Maharashtra Chief Minister-designate Uddhav Thackeray, the senior and junior Pawars, along with top NCP leaders and senior leaders of the Congress from Delhi and Maharashtra, participated in



Past is past: NCP leaders Supriya Sule and Ajit Pawar at Vidhan Bhavan in Mumbai on Wednesday. ■ SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

the meeting to discuss the distribution of portfolios.

NCP leader Praful Patel addressing a press conference after the meeting said one Deputy Chief Minister of the NCP will take oath along with Mr. Thackeray. "The post of Speaker will go to the Congress while the NCP will get the Deputy Speaker's post," he said.

Mr. Patel clarified that the Cabinet expansion will take

Jayant Patil. A group within the NCP is backing Mr. Ajit Pawar's name for the same.

According to sources, the bone of contention within the parties was the post of Speaker as the NCP was not ready to give the post to the Congress, especially former Chief Minister Prithviraj Chavan. The issue has now been sorted out. Mr. Uddhav Thackeray called Prime Minister Narendra Modi over phone and invited him to the swearing-in. Mr. Modi extended his best wishes to him. A formal invitation is also so being sent.

Newly elected MLA Aaditya Thackeray called on former Prime Minister Manmohan Singh and Congress chief Sonia Gandhi at their Delhi residence to extend a formal invitation for the swearing-in.

Sena MP Vinayak Raut said the party has invited 400 farmer families for the programme. In addition invitations have been sent to West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee and Delhi CM Arvind Kejriwal. Mr. Thackeray's estranged cousin and Maharashtra Navnirman Sena chief Raj Thackeray is also likely to get an invite.

(With inputs from Sandeep Phukan)

HUGS AND SELFIES ▶ PAGE 13

India's Cartosat-3 plus 13 nano satellites put in orbit

ISRO places the 'sharpest eye' in the sky using PSLV C-47

T.K. ROHIT
SRIRAKIKOTA

The 'sharpest eye in the sky', India's Cartosat-3, and 13 other nano satellites belonging to two companies in the U.S. lifted off successfully from the Satish Dhawan Space Centre SHAR, Sriharikota, at 9.28 a.m. on Wednesday, offering only a very brief glimpse of the PSLV C-47 before vanishing into the low-hanging clouds.

The Cartosat-3 is a high-resolution imaging satellite that will help large-scale urban planning, infrastructure development, and coastal land use, among others. The satellite is also likely to have a military use since it provides the highest-ever spatial resolution of about a foot.

Newly elected MLA Aaditya Thackeray called on former Prime Minister Manmohan Singh and Congress chief Sonia Gandhi at their Delhi residence to extend a formal invitation for the swearing-in.

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(With inputs from Sandeep Phukan)

HUGS AND SELFIES ▶ PAGE 13

Touching new heights

A look at the milestones reached by ISRO with this launch

74th launch vehicle mission from SDSC SHAR

9th satellite of Cartosat series

49th flight of PSLV

5th launch by ISRO in 2019

21st flight of PSLV in the 'XL' configuration

What's in store: 13 missions planned up to March

Blazing a trail: PSLV C-47 lifting off from the Sriharikota spaceport on Wednesday. ■ R. RAGU

solution civilian satellite and most advanced earth observation satellite built by the ISRO so far," ISRO chairman K. Sivan said.

CONTINUED ON ▶ PAGE 12

EDITORIAL ▶ PAGE 10

It is not recession yet: Finance Minister

Nirmala Sitharaman was replying to discussion in RS

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman told the Rajya Sabha on Wednesday that though economic growth had slowed, the economy was not in a recession. The government, she said, was aware of the situation and had taken sector-specific decisions.

"If you look at the econo-

my with a discerning eye, you see that growth may have come down... but it is not a recession yet and won't be a recession ever," Ms. Sitharaman said, while giving her reply during the short duration discussion on the economic slowdown.

The Congress, Trinamool Congress and Left MPs walked out while Ms. Sitharaman was speaking, saying

she was repeating what she had said in her Budget speech in July, rather than answering questions raised by MPs during the discussion.

The Minister said while she had patiently heard 23 MPs speak during the discussion, the Opposition MPs would not hear her reply.

CONTINUED ON ▶ PAGE 12

SPG Bill passed amid Opposition walkout in Lok Sabha

Former Prime Ministers and their immediate family members to get cover for five years

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

The Lok Sabha on Wednesday passed the Special Protection Group (Amendment) Bill, 2019 which will now protect only the Prime Minister and members of his immediate family residing with him at his official residence.

It will also provide security to former Prime Ministers and their immediate family members staying with them at the residence allotted for a period of five years from the date on which

they cease to hold office.

The Opposition walked out during the voting on the Bill.

Repeating to the debate in the Lower House, Home Minister Amit Shah said that with this amendment, his government would restore the original intent of the Act, which was to provide security for the Prime Minister.

He said: "The people of the country should know that the security of Congress president Sonia Gandhi and her children



The SPG was formed in 1988 by an Act of Parliament. ■ FILE PHOTO

Rahul and Priyanka has not been withdrawn but changed to 'Z-plus' with ad-

vance security liaison and ambulance that will be given across the country."

Refuting any charges of the move being a "political vendetta", Mr. Shah said: "The BJP does not carry out any action with a vindictive approach. It was the Congress which took many such decisions in the past. The term 'special' indicates its [the Special Protection Group's] special purpose.

Many countries have such elite and compact cover exclusively for their respective heads of state."

He said that when the SPG cover of former Prime Ministers Chandra Shekhar, I.K. Gujral and Manmohan Singh was withdrawn, "no one uttered a word".

Opposing the Bill, MP N. K. Premachandran said: "If there is any security threat, they [former PMs] have to be protected. Kindly don't play politics in this issue."

A. Raja of the Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam claimed that the amendment was being undertaken for political reasons.

Centre silent on consul's comments on Pandits

Had recommended Israeli model for Kashmir

KALLOL BHATTACHERJEE
NEW DELHI

A controversy erupted here after the Consul-General of India in New York, Sandeep Chakravorty, said India should follow the Israeli model of building settlements to facilitate the return of Kashmiri Pandits to their homeland.

The External Affairs Ministry declined to comment after Mr. Chakravorty assured a group of Pandits in New York that India would take steps to end the exile of the community.

"I believe the decision of August 5 will have long-term repercussions. I believe the security situation will improve, it will allow the refugees to go back, and in your lifetime, you will be able to go back and you will be able to find security, because we already have a model in the world. I don't know why we don't follow it. It has happened in the Middle East. If the Israeli people can do it, we can also do it," said Mr. Chakravorty while describing the migration of the Kashmiri Pandits under fear of terror



attacks in 1989 as a "big failure" of the Indian state.

Imran's comment
The comment was taken up by Prime Minister Imran Khan of Pakistan.

"It shows the fascist mindset of the Indian govt's RSS ideology that has continued the siege of IOKJ for over 100 days, subjecting Kashmiris to the worst violation of their human rights while the powerful countries remain silent because of their trading interests," he tweeted.

CONTINUED ON ▶ PAGE 12

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30 th Nov. 2019	Saturday	Polity-1 + Current Affairs June, July & August 2018	Introduction to Indian Polity, Evolution of Indian Polity, Salient features of the Constitution, Preamble, Union and its Territory, Citizenship, Fundamental Rights, Fundamental Duties, DPSPs, Emergency Provisions, Centre-State Relations, Inter-State Relations, Amendments
7 th Dec. 2019	Saturday	Economy-01 + Current Affairs of September, October & November 2018	Introduction to Economy, National Income Accounting, Planning in India, NITI Aayog, Money and Banking, Inflation, Poverty and Unemployment, Inclusive Growth, NCERTS of Economy
14 th Dec. 2019	Saturday	Geography-1 + Current Affairs of Dec. 2018 & Jan. 2019	Fundamentals of Physical and Human Geography + World Map
21 st Dec. 2019	Saturday	Environment and Ecology-1 + Current Affairs of February & March 2019	Ecosystem and Ecology, Biodiversity, Environmental Pollution and conservation, Theoretical aspects of Climate Change
28 th Dec. 2019	Saturday	Ancient India + Art and Culture of Ancient Times + Current Affairs of April & May 2019	Introduction to Ancient History, Pre-Historic cultures in India, Indus Valley Civilization, Vedic Society, Pre-Mauryan Period, Mahajanapadas, Mauryan Empire, Jainism, Buddhism, foreign invaders in ancient times, Post-Mauryan Era, Gupta Empire, Harshavardhan, Southern Dynasties + Architecture Styles, Literature and Philosophy, Dance, Drama/Theatre, Music, Paintings, Food, Puppetry, Crafts, Fairs and Festivals, socio-cultural movements

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IN BRIEF



Karmaveer Maharatna Award for senior scribe

NEW DELHI
Syed Nazakat, founder and Editor-in-Chief of DataEADS, has been honoured with the prestigious Karmaveer Maharatna award by the international confederation of non-profit organisations in collaboration with the United Nations. Mr. Nazakat was conferred with the award for his "consistent and outstanding contribution to Indian journalism at a ceremony held in Noida on November 26.

DELHI TODAY

Talk: Lecture on "New Water Strategy for India" by Prof. Mihir Shah, Distinguished Professor, Shiv Nadar University at Conference Room - I, India International Centre (IIC), 6.30 p.m.

Talk: Dayakrishna Memorial Lecture: "Can we afford not to be secular?" by Rajeev Bhargava, political theorist. Chair: Ashok Vajpeyi, poet & art administrator, at Gulgumah Hall, India Habitat Centre, 7 p.m.

Exhibition: Kala Salsali Memorial has organised a group art exhibition curated by Kavita Nayar at Sanskriti Kendra, Anandgram, MG Road, 11 a.m. - 7 p.m.

Exhibition: "Old Delhi," an exhibition of charcoal works by Yuvraj Patil at Delhi 'o' Delhi, India Habitat Centre (IHC), 11 a.m. - 7 p.m.

Exhibition: "Live Unbound," an art exhibition curated by Sugandha Chagti at Modern Art Gallery, Chanakyapuri, 11 a.m. - 7 p.m.

(Mail your listings for this column at cityeditor@thehindu.co.in)

South body employee held for graft

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

NEW DELHI

An employee of the South Delhi Municipal Corporation (SDMC) was arrested for allegedly taking a bribe of ₹5,000, the Delhi police said.

Manish Lal, a bill clerk helper at an MCD centre in Rajouri Garden, had demanded ₹5,000 from Prem Chand to release retirement benefits of the complainant's deceased father, who was also an employee of the SDMC, the police said.

Officials of the Anti-Corruption Branch arrested Lal while he was accepting bribe. A case was registered against him under Prevention of Corruption Act.

Students form human chain, support JNUSU's call for 'national protest day'

Protesters raise slogans, demand affordable and accessible education for all

STAFF REPORTER

NEW DELHI

Students from across Delhi gathered at Connaught Place and formed a human chain on Wednesday in support of Jawaharlal Nehru University Students' Union's call to observe November 27 as a "national day of protest".

The students raised slogans demanding affordable and accessible education and went around explaining to shoppers at the busy market why they were protesting and how the issues that they were raising would have an impact on everybody's life.

The JNUSU said that the hostel fee hike that was being imposed in JNU is a sign of things to be implemented once the new education policy is introduced.

Firm on demand

The students said that they would not end their protest until there is a complete roll back of the fee hike and said

Students of JNU staging a protest at Connaught Place on Wednesday. ■ SUSHIL KUMAR VERMA

that the protests that started at JNU last month have had an impact at other institutes and universities as well where students are fighting the imposition of high fees.

"While the Central go-

vernment proudly announces grand plans for creating a "new India", it is we the students of this country who will be the makers of new India and we must choose to make a new India which will

be one where the children of the working people of the country, coming from marginalised sections, enter universities and have the right to accessible and affordable education," the JNUSU said.

November rain



A woman protects herself from the rain as mild showers lash parts of the Capital on Wednesday evening. A few areas also received hail. ■ SANDEEP SAXENA

No error in granting clearance for Akshardham expansion: NGT

Temple does not fall under Yamuna floodplains, says tribunal

STAFF REPORTER

NEW DELHI

Following a plea challenging the environmental clearance granted for the expansion of Akshardham Temple, the National Green Tribunal (NGT) has held that there was no error in the grant of EC as it does not fall under the Yamuna floodplains.

A Bench headed by NGT chairperson Justice Adarsh Kumar Goel held that the project proponent was not liable to pay any compensation.

"We allow this application and hold that there is no ground to interfere with the grant of impugned EC granted by State Environment Impact Assessment Authority (SEIAA). The project propo-



nent is not liable to make any deposit in absence of any violation being shown," the Bench said.

Noting documents furnished by the temple management, the Bench said: "Representative of the applicant has also handed over two letters [furnishing] docu-

Plea alleges dumping of garbage near Najafgarh

NGT seeks report from authorities

STAFF REPORTER

NEW DELHI

The National Green Tribunal (NGT) has directed the South Delhi Municipal Corporation, Delhi Pollution Control Committee and other government agencies to furnish a report on a plea alleging unscientific dumping of garbage by hawkers on a land belonging to the Irrigation and Flood Department.

A Bench headed by NGT chairperson Justice Adarsh Kumar Goel directed the SDMC, DPCC, Sub-divisional Magistrate of Dwarka and Delhi Jal Board (DJB) to submit a factual and action-taking report on the matter.

The Bench added that the pollution control committee will be the nodal agency for coordination and compliance of the

order.

The directions came when the green panel was hearing a plea moved by the Federation of Vikas Nagar Residents Welfare Association which sought action against the unscientific dumping of garbage by hawkers on a land belonging to the Irrigation and Flood Department.

While noting allegations made in the plea, the Bench observed: "Regular burning of garbage is also taking place, including plastic and toxic waste material. There is continuous dumping of sewage in Najafgarh drain."

The plea had also said that students of several government schools in the vicinity were being affected by the pollution caused.

Sanitation workers to end strike today

Move comes after getting assurance on regularisation

STAFF REPORTER

NEW DELHI

Nearly 37 sanitation workers' unions that had gone on strike demanding regularisation of workers will call off their strike on Thursday after getting assurances from municipal corporation leaders and officials, union leaders said.

In a discussion with Mayors and Commissioners of all three municipal corpo-

rations on Wednesday, workers' demands were put forth and assurances on regularising those appointed before 2006 were received, said Sanjay Ghelot of Swatchta Karamchari Union.

A schedule of workers to be regularised systematically had been chalked out following discussions, North Delhi Mayor Avtar Singh said. Mr. Singh added that while arrears to sanitation workers

had also piled up, the current financial situation of the MCDs did not allow them to make the payments but had assured the workers that the amount due would be paid once the financial situation improves.

Up to 187 councillors of the municipal corporations will be carrying out protests at the Delhi Secretariat on Thursday demanding release of funds due to them.

As we have made 'mohalla clinic' a model across the world, we will also make mediation a model

Delhiites breathe easy after a month as air quality improves

Last time AQI was in moderate category was on Oct. 19

STAFF REPORTER

NEW DELHI

The air quality of Delhi improved to "moderate" category on Wednesday after more than a month. The air quality index (AQI) is likely to stay in the "moderate" category on Thursday and worsen to "poor" category on Friday, according to government-run monitoring agency System of Air Quality and Weather Forecasting and Research (SAFAR).

"Last time the air quality was in moderate category was on October 19 and since then it has been worse than it. The air quality improved due to light showers in parts of Delhi and strong winds on Wednesday," said V.K. Shukla, head of air quality management at Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB).



Vehicles at the Signature Bridge as Delhi's air quality betters to moderate category on Wednesday. ■ R.V. MOORTHY

Air quality of Delhi-NCR

Delhi	134	Gurugram	104
Ghaziabad	143	Faridabad	108
Noida	115	Greater Noida	144
Good	0-50	Satisfactory	51-100
Poor	201-300	Very poor	101-200
	301-400	Severe	>401

AIR QUALITY INDEX AT 4 P.M. YESTERDAY (AVERAGE OF PAST 24 HOURS) ■ SOURCE: CPCB

270, according to the 4 p.m. bulletin by the CPCB, which is the average of the past 24 hours.

The contribution of stubble burning in neighbouring States to Delhi's pollution was 2% on Wednesday and is likely to be 4% on Thursday, which is very less compared to the high of 44% earlier this season, according to SAFAR.

"The SAFAR model forecast suggests AQI is likely to be on the 'moderate' category for Thursday. Marginal deterioration to 'poor' AQI is forecasted for November 29," SAFAR said.

Court reduces maintenance in domestic violence case

Petitioner had demanded less than what was ordered by court

NIRNIMESH KUMAR

NEW DELHI

A Delhi court has reduced the maintenance granted to two children of a woman doctor in a domestic violence case, saying that the petitioner (woman) had demanded less than what was ordered by the subordinate court.

"The trial court ought to have awarded ₹30,000 per month towards the maintenance of children as claimed by the complainant. The award of ₹40,000 per month instead of ₹30,000 per month is uncalled for," the judge said.

A Metropolitan Magistrate court had granted a maintenance of ₹20,000 each to the two children, while the doctor's plea was for a consolidated relief of ₹30,000 for them.

Additional Sessions Judge

Manjusha Wadhwa reduced it to ₹15,000 each to the two children on an appeal by the husband of the petitioner, who is also a doctor.

"The interim maintenance is reduced from ₹40,000 to ₹30,000 per month for the children and the said maintenance amount shall be payable from the date of filing of the petition i.e. November 7, 2016. Impugned order dated March 19, 2018 is modified accordingly. Both the appeals are hereby disposed of in aforesaid terms," the judge ordered.

filings of the petition. The Magistrate had ordered its implementation from the date on which the order was passed.

"The interim maintenance is reduced from ₹40,000 to ₹30,000 per month for the children and the said maintenance amount shall be payable from the date of filing of the petition i.e. November 7, 2016. Impugned order dated March 19, 2018 is modified accordingly. Both the appeals are hereby disposed of in aforesaid terms," the judge ordered.

Interim cost of ₹10 cr. imposed on builder for violating green norms

NGT Bench directs Haryana govt. to focus on remedial measures

STAFF REPORTER

NEW DELHI

The National Green Tribunal (NGT) has imposed an interim cost of ₹10 crore on a Faridabad builder for violating environmental norms leading to pollution.

A Bench headed by NGT chairperson Justice Adarsh Kumar Goel directed the Haryana government and the State Pollution Control Board to blacklist the builder, Smart Housing Pvt Ltd, from undertaking such projects if relevant environmental norms are not met with.

While observing that "environment is priceless," the Bench said, "Pollution cannot be allowed to be a profitable activity. The environ-

ment is priceless. Intentional violations have to be visited with more stringent damages than accidental or unintended."

In this regard, State Environment Impact Assessment Authority and State Pollution Control Board may conduct a survey of such projects in the State and furnish a status report," the Bench said.

Govt. to promote mediation to ensure instant justice: CM

'Of 74,000 cases, Delhi Disputes Resolution Society has so far settled around 33,000 since its inception'

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'mohalla clinic' a model across the world, we will also make mediation a model

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Chief Minister

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INVESTMENT

INTEGRITY

INNOVATION

Maximum development in illegal colonies during AAP tenure: CM

'BJP indulging in gimmicks by giving registration papers to just 100 owners'

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal on Wednesday claimed that the scale of development of the Capital's unauthorised colonies over the last five years had been "the highest in the last 70 years" and lashed out at his political opponents for "doing nothing" for the development of these colonies.

The BJP, he alleged, was indulging in "political and media gimmicks" by providing registration papers to just 100 property owners before the upcoming Delhi Assembly election.

"Being the Capital, Delhi has a huge influx of migrants from all over the country. In the last 30-40 years, Delhi has seen migration of people from other States in large numbers. It has been the responsibility of the DDA to provide affordable housing to the people, but unfortunately, the stipulated demand for housing has not been met," Mr. Kejriwal said.



Arvind Kejriwal

"This has resulted in the set up of unauthorised colonies in large numbers. The previous governments did nothing to improve the conditions of these colonies," he said further.

The Chief Minister said that residents demanded the development and regularisation of the colonies but they were only given "false promises". Since its formation in 2015, he claimed, the AAP government in Delhi had worked extensively for the progress, development, and regularisation of unauthorised colonies.

The Delhi government, he

Kejriwal shifting blame'

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

The Opposition BJP on Wednesday said that Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal cannot escape "his responsibilities" of settling of people from neighbouring States in unauthorised colonies in Delhi by putting the blame on other State governments.

Mr. Kejriwal, Delhi BJP chief Manoj Tiwari

alleged, "did nothing" for the unauthorised colonies.

"Mr. Kejriwal has neither put a water pipeline nor built roads in unauthorised colonies... claims related to the colonies in which he said he had laid new pipelines to provide clean water have been exposed in a reality test by the BJP," Mr. Tiwari alleged.

constructed sewage systems and roads in 1,281 colonies at an expense of ₹4,312 crore. The number of water pipelines laid in 45 colonies from 2002 to 2009 and in 245 colonies from 2009-2014 were increased to 579 colonies with a total expenditure of ₹391 crore and thus, 1,554 colonies now had such pipelines, he added.

had spent ₹8,147 crore on developing unauthorised colonies. He added that during the tenure of the previous government, from 2004-2009, 309 out of a total of 1,797 such colonies had "properly developed" sewage systems and roads and ₹811 crores were spent on the work. From 2015 to 2019, he said, the AAP government

lakh per year after deducting income tax.

Driver held responsible

It held the driver responsible for the accident on the basis of the accident report filed by the police and the eyewitness account given by one of the students who was present in the vehicle.

The vehicle's driver, in his defence, submitted that it had turned turtle after one of the tyres burst. The tribunal, ho-

wever, rejected it as he could not specifically say which tyre had burst.

The insurance company's plea was that "the owner was misusing a private vehicle for commercial purposes" and therefore, it had no liability to pay the compensation.

The Presiding Officer of the tribunal, Vivek Kumar Gulia, dismissed the allegation saying: "The insurance company failed to bring on record convincing evidence to show that

₹1 crore to parents of IIT student who died in road mishap

Petitioner had alleged rash and negligent driving led to the car accident, killing four students

NIRNIMESH KUMAR
NEW DELHI

A Motor Accident Claims Tribunal has awarded a compensation of ₹1 crore to the parents of a 23-year-old IIT-Delhi student who died in a road accident in Rajasthan in 2014.

The victim had gone on a trip to Jaisalmer with five friends from his college. Their vehicle overturned and rolled over several times before stopping about 65 feet away. The accident claimed lives of

four students.

The petitioners had demanded ₹3.16 crore as compensation submitting that a private company had recruited the victim on a gross salary of ₹25 lakh for three years.

They further submitted that the vehicle had met with the accident due to rash and negligent driving on the part of the driver.

The Tribunal decided the compensation amount by fixing the victim's salary at ₹7.47

18 SDMC parking sites to get e-charging stations

Civic body signs deal with EESL

STAFF REPORTER
NEW DELHI

The South Delhi Municipal Corporation (SDMC) signed a memorandum of understanding with Energy Efficiency Services Limited (EESL) on Wednesday to set up electric public vehicle charging points at 18 parking sites, it said.

Following a feasibility survey of about 113 parking sites, up to 75 were identified for installation of charging points.

In the first phase, these points will be installed at Aurobindo Place Market, Safdarjung Enclave, GK-1 N Block Market, GK-1 R Block Market, Sukhda Hospital, Hauz Khas Village, Malviya Nagar main market, Max Hospital (Saket), PVR Priya (Vasant Vihar), SDA Rose Garden, Siri Fort Auditorium, H-block Market, Sarita Vihar, Lajpat Nagar, Living Style Mall (Jasola), BSES and another site at Nehru Place, Janakpuri District Center, Dwarka Sector-6 market and at Dwarka Sector-12 metro station.

Depending on the success of the initiative, similar charging points will be installed at other sites, SDMC

STAFF REPORTER
NEW DELHI

A four-year-old girl died after allegedly being beaten by her stepfather while he was accompanying her to a tuition centre in outer Delhi's Sultanpuri, the police said on Wednesday.

The accused, Danish, has been arrested in connection with the incident, which took place on Tuesday. The victim's mother told the police that her husband did not like her child and used to beat her often.

During interrogation, Danish told the police that on the way to the tuition centre, the child made some mistake crossing the road and he beat her.

The child lost consciousness and Danish brought her back to the house. The mother rushed the child to Sanjay Gandhi Memorial hospital where she was declared brought dead.

Danish tried to flee but was caught. A case of murder has been lodged and further probe is under way, a police officer said.

The woman got married to Danish early this year.

The accused works in a garments factory in Nangloi, the police added.

Commissioner Gyanesh Bhatia said.

As per plan, up to four charging stations for both four-wheelers and two-wheelers will be installed at each site. The EESL, which will be responsible for installation, maintenance and operation of the charging points, will pay a fixed monthly fee to the SDMC.

The company will also be allowed advertisement and branding rights on a revenue-sharing basis. The project will generate about ₹1 crore per annum from the project, as per estimates.

Stepfather held for killing 4-year-old girl

STAFF REPORTER
NEW DELHI

A four-year-old girl died after allegedly being beaten by her stepfather while he was accompanying her to a tuition centre in outer Delhi's Sultanpuri, the police said on Wednesday.

The accused, Danish, has been arrested in connection with the incident, which took place on Tuesday. The victim's mother told the police that her husband did not like her child and used to beat her often.

During interrogation, Danish told the police that on the way to the tuition centre, the child made some mistake crossing the road and he beat her.

The child lost consciousness and Danish brought her back to the house. The mother rushed the child to Sanjay Gandhi Memorial hospital where she was declared brought dead.

Danish tried to flee but was caught. A case of murder has been lodged and further probe is under way, a police officer said.

The woman got married to Danish early this year.

The accused works in a garments factory in Nangloi, the police added.

20,000 joined Kejriwal phir se campaign in 24 hours'

STAFF REPORTER
NEW DELHI

AAP national convener Arvind Kejriwal on Wednesday said that 20,000 people have joined 'Kejriwal phir se', a campaign, in just 24 hours of its launch on Tuesday on the party's eighth foundation day.

"Kejriwal phir se" means 24-hour electricity again, excellent government schools again, control over dengue and pollution again, free treatment to people who meet with road accidents again. Come, let us build Delhi together," the Chief Minister said in a video message on Wednesday.

To join the campaign, launched with the Delhi Assembly election due in February 2020, people are required to give a missed call to 9509 997979. Members can work full time or part time for the Assembly election campaign or can also make donations.

Of the 20,000 new members, 7,300 are said to be from other States.

offending vehicle was being used for commercial purpose in violation of the terms and condition of the insurance policy."

"This tribunal awards a total compensation of ₹1,02,35,000 along with interest of 9% per annum from the date of filing of the petition till the date of realisation. The insurer shall deposit the amount with the Tribunal within 30 days of the judgment," Mr. Gulia ordered.

Man kills wife over 'petty fights'

Body recovered after 17 days; accused, two accomplices held

STAFF REPORTER
NEW DELHI

A 21-year-old man allegedly killed his wife over "petty fights" and dumped her body in Panipat, Haryana, the police said on Wednesday.

"We have recovered the body of the victim [Nancy, 20] in a semi-decomposed state, 17 days after she went missing from her husband's house," said a police officer.

Nancy's husband, Sahil Chopra (21), a secondhand car dealer, and his employee, Shubham (24), were arrested from Delhi while the third accused, Badal, (26), a cousin of Shubham, was arrested from his village in Karnal, the police said.

Nancy and her husband, Sahil Chopra.

fights with Nancy after their marriage in March. Before that, the couple was in a live-in relationship for three months, the police said.

The three accused were produced in Dwarka court which remanded them in police custody for two days. Nancy's father has also alleged "torture for dowry" by Mr. Chopra's family in his complaint.

records (CDR) were analysed and Mr. Chopra were arrested in connection with case, said the police officer.

Mr. Chopra allegedly broke down and confessed to the crime. He took the police to a village near Panipat refinery where Nancy's body was recovered from roadside bushes. Mr. Chopra claimed that he shot Nancy in the head with the help of the co-accused. Later, postmortem report also confirmed bullet injury on the head, the officer said.

The three accused were produced in Dwarka court which remanded them in police custody for two days. Nancy's father has also alleged "torture for dowry" by Mr. Chopra's family in his complaint.



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PUBLIC NOTICE

1. Ground water resources in many parts of the city are over exploited. The extent of replenishment of ground water is much less than what the city as a whole is withdrawing due to its rapid urbanization. There is need to preserve ground water resources and to take effective measures for its sustainable availability.
2. Rain Water Harvesting is considered as a simple, viable and eco-friendly method of conservation of water and a simple solution for ground water recharge. Ministry of Urban Development and Poverty Alleviation (Delhi Division), Government of India by its Notification dated 28-07-2001 has made Rain Water Harvesting mandatory in all new buildings on plots of 100 Sq. Mtrs. and above.
3. Further, Delhi Jal Board has already issued Public Notices regarding mandatory Rain Water Harvesting on plot size 500 sq.m. and above in accordance with Delhi Water and Sewer (Tariff & Metering) Regulations 2012 on 26-05-2015, 08-06-2015 and 11-02-2016 in leading newspapers. Delhi Jal Board has also decided vide Resolution No.829 dated 19-08-2019 to make Rain Water Harvesting mandatory for all old & new buildings on plots of 100 sq.m. or above but less than 500 sq.m. Public Notices in this regard has been published in leading newspapers on 19-09-2019 and 26-09-2019.
4. Hon'ble NGT in its order dated 11-09-2019 in O.A. No.496/2016 in the case of news item published in Hindustan Times dated 19-06-2015 titled "Dirty flows your drinking water" has issued directions that DJB should ensure that Rain Water Harvesting (RWH) System, is installed by all Group Housing Societies/ Government Buildings. All such Group Housing Societies Buildings/ Government Buildings where Roof Top Rain Water Harvesting is to be installed, will be required to furnish a declaration of compliance in the specified 'Web Portal' on DJB website upto 31-12-2019, indicating whether required system has been installed or not. 'Web Portal' is available at <http://djb.gov.in/NGTRWH> on which Cooperative Group Housing Societies/ Government Departments are required to furnish their details/status in respect of Rain Water Harvesting System.
5. To encourage installation of Rain Water Harvesting Structure by domestic consumers, having plot area of 500 sq.m. or more, Delhi Jal Board has approved a 'Scheme for Grant of Financial Assistance' to these consumers (including Group Housing Societies) for construction of Rain Water Harvesting Structure. Finance Assistance to a maximum of 50% of total cost of Rain Water Harvesting Structure or Rs.50,000/-, whichever is less would be given to the consumer by DJB. Detailed guidelines in this regard are being issued separately, by the RWH Cell of DJB. In view of this scheme and to enable domestic consumers who have not installed functional Rain Water Harvesting Structure, levy of Rain Water Harvesting penalty has been deferred till 31-03-2020.
6. For any technical assistance regarding design of Rain Water Harvesting Structure or related issues, consumers may contact Rain Water Harvesting Assistance Cell, Varunala Phase-I, Karol Bagh, New Delhi-110005 (Ph. 23558264 ; 23678380-82, Extension -227). Guidelines on Rain Water Harvesting and list of available service providers for Rain Water Harvesting System are also available on DJB website www.delhijalboard.nic.in.
7. All Cooperative Group Housing Societies/Government Departments are, therefore, once again advised to install Roof Top RWH System at the earliest, if not installed and are also called upon to upload their status of Rain Water Harvesting System on the 'Web Portal' on DJB website (<http://djb.gov.in/NGTRWH>) upto 31-12-2019 positively.

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Encountering an 'error'

A 20-year-old youth has claimed that U.P. police shot at him in a fake encounter and framed him in a robbery case, while the police claim they fired in self-defence and made a 'clerical error' while registering the FIR. **Hemani Bhandari** travels to Teharki village in Meerut to unravel the story

Lying in a bed at his residence in Teharki village in Meerut, 20-year-old Sheman Khan seemed bothered by the nip in the air even as a multicoloured blanket covered him below the waist.

"The doctor has advised me not to wear anything but a T-shirt to avoid aggravating the pain," he said, pointing to the wounds on his stomach and below that he suffered on October 17 when he was shot at by the Uttar Pradesh police in Meerut's Kankar Khera area.

The police claimed that Mr. Khan was shot at during an "encounter" and a stolen mobile phone, a sports bike, a country-made pistol and cartridges were recovered from him.

The First Information Report states that Mr. Khan, with the help of an associate, Shadab, robbed the motorbike and the mobile phone from a man on October 10.

However, Mr. Khan, who installs mobile towers, showed the sports bike's bill and insurance papers to *The Hindu* and said he bought it on October 9 as a wedding gift for his sister's groom. His sister, Fareeda, 25, got married on November 11.

"They shot me thrice, it was a staged encounter. Thank God, I have the proof of this bike's purchase," he said.

Station House Officer of Kankar Khera police station Bijen-

dra Singh Rana said the police made a "clerical error" while registering the FIR.

The discrepancies

"We meant to write that Sheman and his associate robbed the mobile phone while riding the motorbike," he said.

In the FIR, however, details of the motorbike, including chassis number and engine number, have been mentioned.

It also states that when asked about the mobile and the bike, Mr. Khan said that he and Shadab "robbed them from a man around 9 p.m. on October 10".

The "clerical error" led to the incident becoming a news report, labelling Mr. Khan as a "lootera (robber)" in at least two regional dailies.

The reports named him and quoted Mr. Rana as saying that "Sheman and Shadab have committed more than a dozen robberies". The news spread in the entire village.

"*Kya izzat reh gai hamari [our image has been tarnished]*," said Fareeda whose palms were still red from the henna applied during her wedding.

Sequence of events

Sharing the sequence of events on October 17, Mr. Rana said, around 2 p.m., some policemen were checking vehicles in the Kankar Khera when Mr.



Sheman Khan shows a photo of the sports bike that the FIR claimed he had robbed from a man. ■ R.V. MOORTHY

Khan and Shadab were seen coming on a white motorbike.

"Their movement seemed suspicious and the policemen asked them to stop but they sped away. Sheman was in the possession of a countrymade pistol. He fired shots at the police party and in self-defence, the policemen fired one shot which hit Sheman around his stomach," he said, adding that Shadab fled the spot and is still absconding.

Mr. Rana said he was uncertain of how many shots were fired by the two men.

Mr. Khan, on the contrary, said he was distributing invitation cards for Fareeda's wedding and was on his way to a place called 'Macchli' when five cops came in an SUV, hit his bike, and shot at him once.

His cousin Shadab fled in the nick of time.

"They hit my motorbike from the side and I fell. They shot me in the stomach, put me in the car and took me to a field in Kankar Khera where they

hit my motorbike from the side and I fell. They shot me in the stomach, put me in the car and took me to a field in Kankar Khera where they shot me again, twice... They also made a call to someone and said 'work has been done, prepare for the part'."

SHEMAN KHAN

shot me again, twice," he said.

Next, Mr. Khan said, the police placed a countrymade pistol and a mobile phone which were in their possession next to him.

Meanwhile, Mr. Khan received a call from his brother on his mobile phone and quickly told him that the police had shot him. By then, more police officers had arrived in a Police Control Room van.

"They started making videos and took photos while I lay there in a semi-conscious state.

I remember they had asked me whether I was Mittha of Teharki village. They also made a call to someone and said 'work has been done, prepare for the part'.

village. They also made a call to someone and said 'work has been done, prepare for the part'.

village. They also made a call to someone and said 'work has been done, prepare for the part'.

After the encounter, the police took Mr. Khan to a hospital in Meerut from where he was referred to AIIMS Trauma Centre in Delhi.

Medical report

Mr. Khan's medical record from AIIMS states "gunshot injury with three entry wounds, one exit wound with L3 middle column fracture with no bullets in situ".

He was discharged from the hospital on October 28. The doctor told him that he had a spinal cord injury and it might take years for him to walk again.

Fareeda said she was at a jeweller's shop on October 17 when she received a call about her brother getting shot at. Three days before her wedding, the family brought Mr. Khan to Delhi for treatment. "All the money saved for the wedding

went into his treatment. The motorbike which was bought as a wedding gift is in police custody," she said.

SHO Rana said Mr. Khan has five criminal cases registered against him – one rape, molestation and attempt to murder case registered in August 2018, another robbery case registered in Sardhana in 2018, one robbery case registered in Kankar Khera four months ago, and two cases of attempt to murder and under Arms Act from October 17 incident.

Mr. Khan claimed to be unaware of the rape and molestation allegations against him but said he was arrested on attempt to murder charge in 2018 based on a complaint filed by their neighbour. He was released from jail after 22 days and hasn't heard anything about that case's proceedings since then, he said.

Past hostilities

Recalling the 2018 incident, Mr. Khan's family said that a family

whose house is adjacent to their rear wall but falls in the Hindu-dominated area of the village alleged that Mr. Khan had barged into their house and threatened the family out of personal enmity. Two weeks later, Mr. Khan's family filed a counter complaint with the same allegations.

Village pradhan Vineet Singh, who had helped the neighbour file the complaint against Mr. Khan and his family, told *The Hindu*: "He [Mr. Khan] is a criminal who has robbed and snatched from many people in the area; he also molests women on the road without any fear."

There's no police record of the allegations levelled by Mr. Singh.

Narrating the August 2018 case against Mr. Khan (rape, molestation and attempt to murder), Mr. Singh said he himself went with the complainant to lodge an FIR, but claimed that the woman was molested not raped by the accused.

"I am happy that he [Mr. Khan] has been shot at. Everyone is happy. This is not Kashmir, this is not Kerala... This is Teharki and they should live here accordingly," he said, suggesting that different communities living in clearly demarcated areas in the village interact limited to requirement.

A villager who didn't want to be identified said there's a running rivalry between the pradhan and Mr. Khan's family over the post of village pradhan.

"Sheman's immediate and extended family has over 200 people and their vote matters. They are [Mr. Singh and Mr. Khan] always fighting with each other. Both sides have registered FIRs against each other," he said, adding that he wasn't aware of Mr. Khan's alleged criminal records before the encounter.

For Mr. Khan his immediate concern is whether he will be able to walk or even sit straight again. "*Isse achchha to maar hi dete mujhe* (It would have been better had they killed me)," he said, staring at the window of his room.

Strike by PwD job aspirants enters second day

42 detained, 5 arrested for theft during trade fair

A total of 18 FIRs registered; 50% dip in cases, say police

STAFF REPORTER

NEW DELHI

Traffic in central Delhi remained affected for the second day on Wednesday as differently abled Railways job aspirants continued their protest at Mandi House, said the police.

'Working on solution' The Railways has stated that it has met all the requirements under the rules in the recruitment process for persons with disabilities (PwDs), but is still trying to find ways to accommodate the protesters.

"Total 18 FIRs, including 14 e-FIRs and four regular FIRs of theft, were registered between November 14 and 27 at IITF Pragati Maidan police station," he said.

Disguised personnel

The officer said they had formed special teams of police personnel in civil dress to keep a check on suspicious persons (pickpockets).

We detained 42 people who were found moving in a suspicious manner. Most of the thefts were reported by visitors and some by stall owners. The size of the fair this year was small as compared to previous years due to ongoing construction work," Mr. Tomar added.

The IITF used to be sprawled over 18 halls but due to ongoing construction work, it was accommodated in just six. This year, an average of 25,000 people visited



An average of 25,000 people visited the fair daily. ■ PTI

C Around 1,500 personnel, from the Delhi police and paramilitary, were deployed all over Pragati Maidan. All entry and exit points were covered. A total of 97 CCTV cameras were installed on the premises

the fair daily.

Mr. Tomar said that the police also arrested a tout for selling trade fair tickets.

The accused, Sanjay Singh, was held near Pragati Maidan metro station where he was selling trade fair ticket for ₹200. A decoy customer was sent and he was

caught red-handed.

"Around 1,500 security personnel, from the Delhi police and paramilitary, were deployed all over Pragati Maidan. All entry and exit points were covered. A total of 97 CCTVs were installed on the premises. The police has witnessed a 50% dip in theft cases reported during trade fair. Everyday, around 20-25 PCR calls were received from the area, which included all kinds of incidents," said Mr. Tomar.

On Sunday, around 38,000 people had visited the fair. "We distributed pamphlets and used the public announcement system to sensitise people about suspicious persons at the fair. We are working on the remaining unsolved cases," he said.

PIL seeks Public Service Commission for Delhi

High Court allows Ministry of Home Affairs to intervene as party

STAFF REPORTER

NEW DELHI

The Delhi High Court on Wednesday allowed the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) to intervene as a party in a petition seeking establishment of a Public Service Commission (PSC) for the Capital.

A Bench of Chief Justice D.N. Patel and Justice C. Hari Shankar directed that the MHA be made a party in the petition which claimed that a PSC for Delhi would expedite selection of officers for its administration as well as bring greater accountability and transparency.



PETITION IN THE HIGH COURT

sently remained in the hands of the Centre.

The petition by Abhijit Mishra has alleged "critical failure" on the part of the Delhi government to comply

with provisions of Article 315 and Article 239 AA of the Constitution. Mr. Mishra contended that Article 315 states there shall be a separate PSC for the Union and each State. The Delhi government has not complied with the provision, he added.

The establishment of a PSC is item 41 in the State list, the petition said, adding that despite representations sent by him on the issue to the Lieutenant-Governor and the Delhi Chief Secretary, no efforts have been made to set up a service commission for the national capital.

HC extends ED custody of Malvinder Singh

He is accused of money laundering

STAFF REPORTER

NEW DELHI

The Delhi High Court on Wednesday allowed custodial interrogation of former Fortis Healthcare promoter Malvinder Singh by the Enforcement Directorate (ED) till Thursday in connection with a money laundering case related to alleged misappropriation of funds at Religare Finvest Ltd (RFL).

The High Court also allowed custodial interrogation of Sunil Godhwani, former CMD of Religare Enterprises Ltd (REL), till Thursday.



ED custody of the duo and had remanded them to judicial custody till December 7.

Custodial interrogation

The ED had taken both into custody on November 14 from Tihar jail, where they had been lodged in a case filed by the Delhi Police in relation to the alleged scam.

Mr. Singh and Mr. Godhwani have been accused of laundering money.

Justice Chander Shekhar passed the order on ED's plea challenging the trial court's November 23 order, which had refused to extend

Panel to frame rules for appointments in court

Plea in HC has alleged discrimination

STAFF REPORTER

NEW DELHI

The Delhi High Court on Wednesday directed the setting up of a committee to examine framing of rules for empanelment of local commissioners in the Saket District Court.

A Bench of Chief Justice D.N. Patel and Justice C. Hari Shankar gave the order on a plea challenging a circular issued by the District and Sessions Judge (DSJ) of the Saket District Court, which stated that only lawyers practising in the same court would be considered for empanelment as local commissioners.

Civil procedure code

The Bench said that the DSJ cannot frame such rules and it has to be done by the DSJ of the Saket Bar Association, thereby discriminating against applicants who are enrolled with other bar associations," the petition has claimed.

mine the issues raised in the petition.

In his plea, Abhijit Mishra, who claims to be a financial economist, contended that the circular issued by office of the DSJ of Saket District Court was "biased and discriminatory in nature" as it was seeking applications only from advocates who are members of the Saket Bar Association with 3-7 years of experience.

The criteria requirements for the empanelment of local commissioners, brings bias and discrimination in the application and selection process," the plea stated.

"The office of the DSJ is biased and favouring only applicants having registration number/membership number of the Saket Bar Association, thereby discriminating against applicants who are enrolled with other bar associations," the petition has claimed.

Haryana police nab man wanted in 11 cases of murder

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

GURUGRAM

A Special Task Force (STF) of the Haryana Police has apprehended Pawan alias Totla, an alleged sharpshooter, in Rohtak. He was wanted in several cases registered in Haryana Delhi, Rajasthan and Punjab.

An alleged member of the Raja Basaudi and Lawrence Bishnoi gang, Totla, a resident of Sonipat, carried a cash reward of ₹2 lakh on his arrest. Recently, Totla had allegedly murdered a schoolbus driver, Jagbir, in Sonipat's Kundli. He had also killed the victim's son, Anil, said the police.

The STF had received secret information that Totla would visit Bohar village in Rohtak. Based on the information, an STF team led by Inspector Sandeep appre-

hended him near the flyover at Bohar. He is being interrogated by STF personnel to obtain information about other criminal cases against him. He was wanted in 11 cases of murder, two cases of attempt to murder and 20 cases of robbery and dacoity.

The counsel appearing for the duo opposed the ED's plea contending that the agency was seeking their custody not for interrogation but to extort their confessions.

The directed constitution of the committee within a week and ordered it to ex-

13 women made to lie on floor after sterilisation

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
VIDISHA(M.P.)

At least 13 women were allegedly made to lie on the floor of a primary health centre in Vidisha district after they underwent sterilisation surgery, prompting the authorities to launch a probe into it, an official said on Wednesday.

The incident took place on Monday when the women underwent the procedure at a camp in Gyaraspur primary health centre.

"After I came to know that some women after the surgery had to sleep on the floor of the health centre, I ordered an inquiry," district Chief Medical and Health Officer Dr. K.S. Ahirwar said.

Notices have been issued to all staff members of the health centre, he said.

Congress seeks disqualification of Raebareli MLA Aditi Singh

Petition to U.P. Assembly Speaker seeking action says she defied party whip

OMAR RASHID
LUCKNOW

After expelling 10 party veterans on charges of indiscipline last week, the Congress has now moved to take action against its Raebareli MLA Aditi Singh.

The Congress has written to the Uttar Pradesh Assembly Speaker Hriday Narayan Dixit seeking Ms. Singh's disqualification for defying party whip and attending the 36-hour special session of the Uttar Pradesh Assembly convened by the Yogi Adityanath-led State government on October 2.

Ms. Singh had attended the session despite a call for boycott by the Opposition parties, landing her party in a spot.

Further triggering speculation on her future, Ms.



Aditi Singh, Congress MLA from Raebareli

and Kashmir under Article 370.

Aradhana Misra, the Congress leader of legislature party in U.P., said Ms. Singh was served notice on two occasions, including one on October 4, to explain her acts but she did not respond.

Following this, Ms. Misra said the Congress submitted a representation to the Speaker on Tuesday calling for Ms. Singh's disqualification.

"As per rules, if any person violates the party whip, punitive action can be taken against them," Ms. Misra said. Ms. Singh is an MLA from the Raebareli Sadar seat, one of the five constituencies in the parliamentary seat of UPA chairperson Sonia Gandhi.

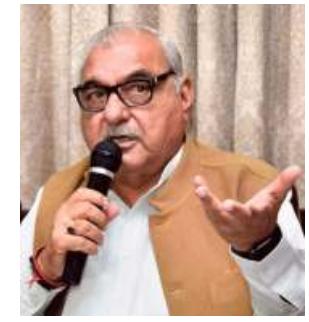
Her defiance of the Con-

gress has triggered speculation of her possible proximity to the BJP, especially after the death of her father Akhilesh Singh, Raebareli strongman and former MLA.

When asked by a news agency to comment on Ms. Singh's proximity to the BJP, Ms. Misra said, "Aditiji can answer that question."

MLA defends decision

Talking to reporters outside the House in October, Ms. Singh had defended her decision. She stated that she rose above party line and tried to talk about development. "...because that's what the people elected me for. That is my first and foremost priority. I have always tried to walk the path that I feel is correct, the path that my father has taught me," she had said.



Bhupinder Singh Hooda

Haryana BJP flays former CM's 'new State' statement

'Hooda's Vishal Haryana plan a conspiracy to create tension'

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
GURUGRAM

The Haryana unit of the Bharatiya Janata Party has taken strong exception to the recent statement of former Chief Minister Bhupinder Singh Hooda seeking creation of "Vishal Haryana" by including parts of Uttar Pradesh, saying that it was a conspiracy to create "tension" in the region.

Haryana BJP spokesperson Raman Malik, in a strongly worded statement, said Mr. Hooda's assertion seeking creation of greater Haryana was an attempt to invoke "casteist sentiments" and poison the society.

Accusing Mr. Hooda, a Jat leader, of appealing a particular caste, Mr. Malik, in an obvious reference to the Jat reservation agitation of 2016, said that "a movement

munity, Mr. Malik said that it was still fresh in the memory of the people.

He said that Haryana did not belong to one community, but to the remaining 35 communities as well. Mr. Malik said that Mr. Hooda would have to pay for any misadventure to push the State into anarchy for narrow political gains.

Common culture

Mr. Hooda had on Tuesday said that Haryana was the result of division of East Punjab between Punjabi-speaking and Hindi-speaking areas and appealed for creation of "Vishal Haryana" since some pockets of Uttar Pradesh shared Haryana's culture and language.

He had added that Delhi should be the capital of "Vishal Haryana".

Social media for speedy disposal of cases

M.P. info panel taking complaints, serving notices through Twitter and WhatsApp

SIDHARTH YADAV
BHOPAL

Even before the order copy from Bhopal reached his colleague in Rewa by post, Rama Vatar held the marksheets gleefully, thanks to WhatsApp. The Madhya Pradesh Information Commission, on his appeal, had ordered that the marksheets be released. He just had to carry the printout of the order copy to the college, received on the mobile application.

"This is a way to ensure speedy disposal of cases,"

said Rahul Singh, Information Commissioner. "Applicants come to us harassed. And hearing takes months, even years. If we follow the same bureaucratic methods, and not adapt to technology, the harassment will continue."

Mandatory condition
With the mandatory condition to provide information under the Right to Information Act, 2005, within 30 days often flouted, aggrieved appellants are left to grapple

with long-drawn-out hearings, fiendish paperwork and delayed communication.

To expedite proceedings, the Commission is admitting complaints, disposing of cases on Twitter too, and serving notices on government officials through WhatsApp.

"The Act doesn't rule out the use of technology for conducting hearings. As a result, videoconferencing has become a norm. Similarly, we are leveraging the social media and telephone to

speedily dispose of cases," said Mr. Singh. More than 7,000 cases dating as far back as 2012 were pending before the Commission.

However, the social media wasn't an alternative to postal correspondence, he cautioned.

"That takes weeks, allowing some officials to mislead or discourage applicants. Even so, the original order is sent by post. But at least the possession of their copies by us can set the ball rolling," said Mr. Singh.

A joint effort to conserve water in Rajasthan

Villagers and representatives of panchayat bodies to help in groundwater recharge

MOHAMMED IQBAL
JAIPUR

Villagers and elected representatives of Panchayati Raj bodies in Rajasthan will assist the State government in its efforts for water conservation and rainwater harvesting, which are expected to increase the groundwater level in the geographically difficult areas.

The projects have been formulated to meet the local needs with regular monitoring.

The Rajiv Gandhi Jal San-

chay Yojana (RGJSY), launched in all the 33 districts of the State on August 20 this year, has identified as many as 1.80 lakh works to be executed in its first phase for creating a robust water harvesting infrastructure in over 3,900 villages.

Erratic rainfall

Chief Secretary D.B. Gupta said here on Wednesday that the RGJSY's long-term projects would permanently resolve the issue of paucity of water caused by scanty and irrigation.

erratic rainfall in the State. The completion of works through convergence with the departments concerned will ensure the availability of sufficient water for drinking

and irrigation.

The RGJSY has incorporated the works identified in the Mukhya Mantri Jal Swavalamban Abhiyan undertaken during the previous BJP regime in the State.

Proposals for making budgetary provisions under the State Plan for 2019-20 have been submitted to the Fi-

nance Department, while a meeting of the Water Cess Committee for making the water cess provision was convened on October 31.

Mr. Gupta said at a meeting of the State-level committee on RGJSY that the contribution of villagers and elected representatives would help in identification of places where no water harvesting structures were constructed in the past.

He laid emphasis on stopping the practice of flood irrigation.

North Eastern Railway

Open Tender Notice No. N/539/2/OT/19-20/35

"Open Tenders" through online (E-Tendering) are invited by Divisional Railway Manager (Signal & Telecomm)/Varanasi/N.E. Railway for and behalf of the President of India for the following works:

S.N. : 1, Tender Notice No. and Description of work : N/539/2/OT/19-20/35 : Name of Work :- Signalling works in connection with Engineering works in the sections of SSE/Sig/CTC/GKP, SSE/Sig/SV & SSE/Sig/CPR of BSB division. Approx. Value : Rs. 54,34,02,75, Earnest Money : Rs. 1,08,700.00, Cost of Tender Form : Rs. 5,000.00, Completion Period : 270 Days, Tender Closing Date and Time : 23.12.2019 upto 15:00 hrs. 1. Tender online will be submitted up to 15:00 hrs. on date 23.12.2019. 2. For full details and submission of bid kindly visit the official website of Indian Railways i.e. www.ireps.gov.in. Divil. Rly. Manager (S&T) CPRO/Sig-78 N.E. Railway, Varanasi About our Passenger Amenty complaint SMS on Mob. No. 09794835955 Do not smoke Bid/Cigarette in train

OFFICE OF THE DIVISIONAL MANAGER CTU & DIRECTOR TRANSPORT, UNION TERRITORY; CHANDIGARH, E-TENDER NOTICE

E-tenders (online tenders) are invited from the firms/bidders for engagement of Project Management Consultant for Implementing Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS) in Chandigarh Transport Undertaking (CTU), Chandigarh, India i.e. technical bid and financial bid Which are to be submitted separately as per RFP on the website. The prospective bidders can also visit the office of the CTU during office hours on any working day by contacting Sh. Yashesh Gupta, General Manager, CBCCS at CTU Administrative Block, Plot No. 701, Industrial Area, Phase I, Chandigarh-160002, India for any kind of information with regard to the tender. The detailed terms & conditions of the tender documents may be downloaded from the website of Chandigarh Administration i.e. <http://etenders.chd.nic.in>.

1. Tenderers are required to quote their rates for Consulting Services for Project Management Consultant for Implementing Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS) in Chandigarh Transport Undertaking (CTU). The taxes/GST shall be as applicable from time to time. 2. EMD and bid processing fee as mentioned in the tender documents must be submitted in physical form in the shape of Bank Draft drawn on any scheduled bank at Chandigarh in favour of the Director Transport, Union Territory, Chandigarh-160002, India in the office of Divisional Manager CTU & Director Transport, U.T., Chandigarh, Plot No. 701, Industrial Area, Phase I, Chandigarh-160002, India on or before **30.12.2019 up to 14.00 hours**. Tenders without submission of Earnest Money Deposit (EMD) through bank draft in physical form within the stipulated date and time shall not be considered and shall be rejected out rightly. 3. The Pre-bid meeting will be held on **09.12.2019 at 11:30 am** at Conference Hall U.T. State Guest house, Uttar Marg, Sector-6, Chandigarh 160019, India. 4. The detailed bid documents can be downloaded from the website of chandigarh i.e. <http://etenders.chd.nic.in/nicetcp/app>. Tender documents completed in all respect duly signed must be uploaded on the above website on or before **30.12.2019 upto 14.00 hours**. The Technical bids will be opened on **30.12.2019 at 15:00 hours**. Financial Bids of only those bidders will be opened who qualify the technical bids and the date for which will be intimated later on No tender shall be accepted in physical form under any circumstances. 5. The Detailed Manager, CTU & Director Transport, U.T., Chandigarh shall have every right to (a) cancel/withdraw/amend the advertisement or extend the due date to his sole discretion or (b) accept or reject any tender without assigning any reason.

Divisional Manager CTU & Director Transport, U.T., Chandigarh

E-TENDER FOR INSTALLATION OF ATM AT 16 NOS. OF LOCATIONS OVER SEALDAH DIVISION

Railway administration invites e-tender from Public Sector Banks/Scheduled Commercial Banks through IREPS Portal i.e. www.ireps.gov.in for the following work : Name of Work : Installation of ATM at 13 nos. of Railway stations and 03 nos. office, colony and institution in Railway premises over Sealdah Division. Separate tender should be submitted for each location. S.I. no. & Tender No., Name of Railway Station/Office/ Institution/Colony and Area are as follows:- (1) CW-ATM-BBT-6-19, Birati (Station) - 6 ft x 6 ft (2) CW-ATM-BRP-6-19, Baruipur (Station) - 6 ft x 6 ft (3) CW-ATM-BSH-6-19, Basirhat (Station) - 6 ft x 6 ft (4) CW-ATM-GBG-6-19, Gobardanga (Station) - 6 ft x 6 ft (5) CW-ATM-HLR-6-19, Halisahar (Station) - 6 ft x 6 ft (6) CW-ATM-HNB-6-19, Hasnabad (Station) - 6 ft x 6 ft (7) CW-ATM-MJT-6-19, Majerhat (Station) - 6 ft x 6 ft (8) CW-ATM-MMG-6-19, Simurali (Station) - 6 ft x 6 ft (9) CW-ATM-SMX-6-19, Shantipur (Station) - 6 ft x 6 ft (10) CW-ATM-STB-6-19, Thakurnagar (Station) - 6 ft x 6 ft (11) CW-ATM-TKRN-6-19, Kormagatamar Budge Budge (Station) - 6 ft x 6 ft (12) CW-ATM-KBGB-6-19, Barrackpore (Station) - 6 ft x 6 ft (13) CW-ATM-BP-6-19, Barrackpore (Station) - 6 ft x 6 ft (14) CW-ATM-BRS Hospital-6-19, B. R. Singh Hospital (Institution) - Upto 7.5 sq.m. (15) CW-ATM-DRM-SDAH-6-19, Staff Colony Sealdah (Colony) - Upto 7.5 sq.m. and (16) CW-ATM-DRM-SDAH-6-19, DRM Office Sealdah (Office) - Upto 7.5 sq.m. Non-transferable tender document containing detailed terms and conditions are available at www.ireps.gov.in. The bidding for the instant tenders is to be submitted through the e-tendering module on said website. Tenderers are allowed to make payments against this tender towards cost of tender document and earnest money only through online payment modes available on IREPS portal. Pre-Bid meeting of the instant tender will be on 09.12.2019 at 13.00 hrs. in the office of Sr Divisional Commercial Manager, Eastern Railway Sealdah, DRM Building, Room no. 44, Kaiser Street, Kolkata-700014. Date of Closing of tender is on 19.12.2019 at 13.00 hrs.

Fr Divisional Commercial Manager, Sealdah

EASTERN RAILWAY

THE HINDU
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Request for proposal (RFP) (2nd Call) for Selection of Project Appraisal Agencies by PBSSD for appraisal of proposals for DDU-GKY implementation in the West Bengal

Request for Proposal (RFP) are invited from agencies having experience of doing Project Appraisal of Project Implementing Agencies (PIAs) for the purpose of undertaking appraisal of proposals for DDU-GKY implementation in the State of West Bengal for PBSSD, Department of Technical Education, Training and Skill Development, Government of West Bengal.

The link for online application is active from 29th November 2019 (Thursday), 10 A.M. at [https://wbtenders.gov.in](http://wbtenders.gov.in).

Last date for submission is 9th January 2020.

Date: 28.11.2019 Project Director

IC-A449(6)-2019 PBSSD

CM

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HP/3105/19-20

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INSTITUTE OF BIORESOURCES & SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT (IBSD)
 6th Mile, Upper Shillong-793009, Meghalaya
 (An autonomous Institute of Dept of Biotechnology, Govt of India)
No. 2019-IBSD/Meg/Ri-Bhoi/01

EXPRESSION OF INTEREST
 Institute of Bioresources and Sustainable Development (IBSD), Meghalaya invites sealed Expression of Interest (EoI) from reputed organisations/agencies who have adequate capacity and sufficient expertise in executing research facility in northeast region to undertake the following task on turnkey basis.
"Establishment of (i) Orchid Production units (two in number; 80 sq. meters each) and (ii) Floral production Units (two in number; 80 sq. meters each)" at IBSD-Rural Bioresource Complex, within the campus of: Conservation Training Institute (CTI), Byrnihat, Ri-Bhoi District, PIN Code – 793101, Meghalaya. Site can be visited anytime during office hours. General terms and conditions are available at www.ibsd.gov.in
 Last date of receiving EoI: 5.30 p.m. of January 2, 2020 at Institute of Bioresources and Sustainable Development (IBSD), 6th Mile, Upper Shillong-793009, Meghalaya.
 Opening of EoI and presentation by vendors : January 3, 2020 at 10 AM at IBSD, 6th Mile, Upper Shillong
 Sd/- Administrative Assistant
 IBSD, Meghalaya

Assam tribunals wreak havoc, says rights group

They are dismissive, use derogatory language, control their own procedures, apply them in arbitrary ways'

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT GUWAHATI

The Supreme Court and the Gauhati High Court have enabled the Foreigners' Tribunals to create a statelessness crisis in Assam, Amnesty International India said on Wednesday.

The global rights body made this observation in its briefing, 'Designed to Exclude', as it called for a review of the existing legislative regime governing the determination of nationality in India.

The FTs that determine the paramount right to citizenship in Assam are often dismissive, use derogatory language, control their own

procedures and apply them in arbitrary ways, AI's India head Aakar Patel said.

'Not fair trial'

Assam currently has 300 FTs, with 200 of these set up after the Centre approved the State's proposal to set up 1,000 new tribunals primarily for trying those excluded from the National Register of Citizens that was published on August 31.

"Holding governments accountable for the human rights abuses they commit has always been difficult," Mr. Patel said, adding that the judiciary has in the case of Assam aided the government institutions and the



Women in Assam enquiring about their names in the draft NRC. ■ FILE PHOTO

FTs in committing abuses with impunity.

People appearing before the FTs are not afforded the fair trial protections and human rights guarantees that flow from Article 21 of the Indian Constitution, applicable

to both citizens and foreigners.

This lack of protection has also been endorsed by the Gauhati HC, the rights body said.

"This includes reversal of the burden of proof on the person of the right to a fair

investigation, protection from multiple refusals, and a bar on the extension of deprivation of nationality from one family member to another family member," it said.

Along with the FTs, the Gauhati HC has failed to consider the vulnerabilities of these people. The burden of proof on the person suspected of doubtful nationality is absolutely divorced from the reality of documentation in India, the rights body said.

Alleging that the FTs have created havoc in Assam, Mr. Patel said they have not been held accountable by the courts, the Centre and the State government.

APPEAL FOR IDENTIFICATION



General public is hereby informed that an unidentified dead body of a male namely Unknown, S/o: Unknown, R/o: Unknown, was found on 23.11.2019 near KM Pole No. 0/29G UP Railway Line near Yamuna Bridge, Akshardham Mandir, Delhi. In this regard DD No. 2A, dated 23.11.2019 has been lodged at Police Station, Anand Vihar Railway Station, Delhi. Identification of unidentified dead body of male is as under:

Name: Unknown, Age: 25/30 Years, Height: 5'8", Face: Round, Built: Muscular, Complexion: Fair, Wearing: White checkdr shirt, white sando baniyan & light badami colour jeans.

If anyone have any information or clue about this male deceased may kindly be inform undersigned.

APPEAL FOR IDENTIFICATION

General public is hereby informed that an unidentified dead body of male Namely : Unknown S/o Unknown, R/o: Unknown, Age: 30 years, Height: 5' 2", Complexion: Shallow, Wearing: Grey colour Short and White colour T-Shirt, who was found near Sarai Basti, Rainbasera, Sarai Rohilla, Delhi. In this regard a case DD No. 39A dated 20.11.2019 has been registered at P.S. Sarai Rohilla, Delhi. Any person having any information or clue about the deceased may kindly inform to the undersigned on the following address or telephone nos.

Sd/- SHO
 P.S. Sarai Rohilla, Delhi
 Tel. No. 011-23693611
 DP/677/N/19

SEARCH FOR MISSING/KIDNAPPED

General public is hereby informed that a lady namely Jyoti, W/o Bedanand R/o H.No. 164, Satyam Vihar Phase-2, Kotla, Delhi has been missing/ kidnapped since 07.11.2019 from the area of Ranholia, Delhi. In this regard, DD No. 59-A dated 07.11.2019 has been registered at P.S. Ranholia, Delhi. Sincere efforts have been made by the local police to trace out the missing/kidnapped lady but no clue has come to light so far. The description of the missing /kidnapped lady is as under:

Name: Jyoti, Gender: Female, Age: 23 years, Height: 5', Complexion: Fair, Face: Long, Wearing: Unknown. If anyone has any information regarding this missing Lady and the girl, kindly inform SHO/Ranholia, Delhi.

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PUBLIC NOTICE

The Director, Town & Country Planning, Haryana has Granted License No 05 Of 2009 Dated 13-02-2009 valid upto 02-02-2022 for Developing a Commercial Colony on land measuring 4.68 acres in sector 82A, Village Shikhopur, Dist Gurugram to Sh. Pramil Jindal S/o Sh Puran Chand and Smt. Neeta Jindal W/o Pramil Jindal R/o 503/504, Adrana Apartment, R.K. Puram, Sector-13, New Delhi-110066.

Now on request of Sh. Pramil Jindal S/o Sh Puran Chand and Smt. Neeta Jindal W/o Pramil Jindal, DTCP Haryana has very kindly accorded in Principal approval for revision of building plan/ site memo no. ZP-627/AD(RA)/ 2019/26183 dated 23/10/2019, as per terms of the approval, we hereby invite objections from the EXISTING ALLOTTEES regarding the said amendments in the building plans. The objections if any to the proposed revision of building plans may please be sent to o/o STP, Gurugram within a period of 30 days (By 27 Dec 2019) from the date of publication of this notice.

SD/- Authorised Signatory Sh. Pramil Jindal S/o Sh Puran Chand & Smt. Neeta Jindal Company URL : www.felixrealty.com

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PUBLIC NOTICE

NOTICE is hereby given that KAWALEJET KAUR S/o SURPAL SINGH R/o H-198, 1ST FLOOR, VIKAS PURI, NEW DELHI-110018 OF AFGHANISTAN is applying to the Secretary to the Government of India in the Ministry of Home Affairs for Naturalization and that any person who knows any reason why Naturalization should not be granted should send a written signed statement of the facts to the said Secretary.

PUBLIC NOTICE

NOTICE is hereby given that HARMET SINGH S/o SURPAL SINGH R/o H-198, 1ST FLOOR, VIKAS PURI, NEW DELHI-110018 OF AFGHANISTAN is applying to the Secretary to the Government of India in the Ministry of Home Affairs for Naturalization and that any person who knows any reason why Naturalization should not be granted should send a written signed statement of the facts to the said Secretary.

PUBLIC NOTICE

It is for General Information that Anjali Anand Dio Mangala prasad R/o B 34/147, A-1, B-7 Batupura Sarainandan Varanasi Uttar Pradesh 221010. Here by undertake that I Anjali Anand to change my name to Anjali Anand and Gender as male. I Anjali Anand hence forth be known as Anjali Anand S/o Dio Mangala prasad. The Above statement made by me is true and correct to the best of my knowledge and belief. If any legal issue arises in this regard at any stage, I will be personally responsible for the same and will be liable for any consequences Arising therefrom. It is certified that I have complied with other legal requirements in this connection.

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Now, Meghalaya outfit wants separate flag

'Delhi laws not beneficial for tribes'

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT GUWAHATI

After the Isak-Muivah faction of the National Socialist Council of Nagaland, an extremist group in Meghalaya has demanded a separate flag and constitution as part of its peace deal with New Delhi.

The Centre's bid to pass the Citizenship (Amendment) Bill appears to have been the trigger.

The Hynniewtrep National Liberation Council (HNLC) was formed in 1993 to fight for the "liberation" of the Khasi-Jaintia people from the Indian Union. The outfit went into decline after its chairman Julius Dorphlang surrendered in 2007, but of late the outfit has been carrying out ex-

tortion and other subversive activities.

<p

BVA, with three MLAs, declares support to MVA

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
MUMBAI

Hitendra Thakur-led Bahujan Vikas Agadhi (BVA), which has three MLAs, pledged support to the Maha Vikas Agadhi (MVA) formed by the Shiv Sena, NCP and Congress on Wednesday.

MVA leaders had presented a list of 166 MLAs to the Governor when they staked claim to form government. With three members of BVA, the alliance will have 169 MLAs in the 288-member Assembly.

"BVA has given support to the MVA government," senior Congress leader Ashok Chavan said.

NCP sources said that Mr. Thakur met party chief Sharad Pawar to extend support.

In the results tally, the BVA with three MLAs is in fifth position after BJP (105), Shiv Sena (56), NCP (54) and Congress (44).

The BVA is dominant in Vasai-Virar belt of neighbouring Palghar district.

While Mr. Thakur is MLA from Vasai, other two legislators of his party are son Kshitij Thakur (Nalasopara) and Rajesh Patil (Boisar).

Murmurs of discontent in BJP

Would have got another 20 to 25 seats if it had taken people like us along: Khadse

SHARAD VYAS
MUMBAI

Former chief minister Devendra Fadnavis came in for sharp criticism from his party colleagues on Wednesday, a day after he quit his second tenure under dramatic circumstances following the resignation of deputy chief minister Ajit Pawar.

The Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) leaders held an introspection meeting on Wednesday where leaders openly voiced discomfort against the decision to take support from Ajit Pawar-led faction of the Nationalist Congress Party (NCP). Senior leaders said the party would have been better off without the support of a "scam-tainted" leader.

Inter and senior BJP leader Eknath Khadse told reporters on Wednesday.

Mr. Khadse was removed from the Cabinet following allegations of favoritism and illegalities in the Revenue Department headed by him. He said leaders like him, Chandrashekhar Bawankule, Vinod Tawde and some others were "deliberately kept out" of the election campaign.

Apart from Mr. Khadse, seven other senior Cabinet ministers were not fielded by



Shortlived: Former Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis has taken the brunt of the embarrassment caused to the BJP for aligning with Ajit Pawar. ■ FILE PHOTO



Eknath Khadse, not happy with turn of events.

■ FILE PHOTO

majority and Mr. Fadnavis should resign. There should not be any horse trading was also a common view," said senior leader Babanrao B. Patil.

Meanwhile, Mr. Fadnavis told reporters in the Vidhan Bhawan premises that he would speak at the right time about the support extended by Mr. Ajit Pawar. "I will say the right thing at the right time, don't worry. It is not the right time to comment if the decision to team up with Ajit was right or wrong. We will assess it in the future.

The decisions were all made at the State level," he said taking the brunt of the embarrassment caused to the party.

Was sure of Ajit's return, family stands united: Rohit Pawar

He is a capable administrator and key for the MVA

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
MUMBAI

Nationalist Congress Party MLA Rohit Pawar said on Wednesday that he was sure his uncle Ajit Pawar would return to the party and felt happy after the latter met party chief Sharad Pawar.

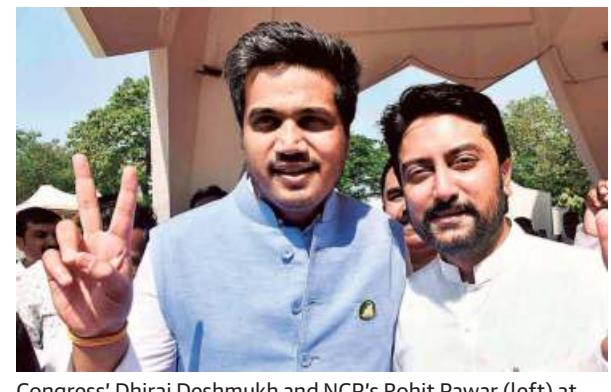
He also said that the Pawars "stand united" and will remain so.

Ajit called on the NCP patriarch Mr. Pawar late on Tuesday night, after first having joined hands with the BJP to form government in Maharashtra and then quitting it.

"I could not trust how it happened. As a worker, I did not go into the details of it. There was some confusion being a family member, I could not understand what was happening," Rohit, who is the grandson of Mr. Pawar's elder brother Appasaheb Pawar, told a news channel.

He made these remarks when asked about what he felt when Ajit took oath as deputy chief minister after tying up with the BJP last Saturday.

"But we were sure (about



Congress' Dhiraj Deshmukh and NCP's Rohit Pawar (left) at the Vidhan Bhavan for the oath ceremony of newly elected MLAs on Wednesday. ■ PTI

his return). We knew Dada well," Rohit said.

Praising Ajit, he said the former deputy chief minister is a very capable administrator and key for the Shiv Sena-NCP-Congress's Maha Vikas Agadhi that will form the government.

"So, I felt happy as a family member and also as NCP worker when Dada met saheb (Sharad Pawar) yesterday," he said.

Rohit also accused the BJP of resorting to poaching leaders from other parties.

"They tried to use that

in this case. Dada may have not liked that style and then met saheb. I hope we will soon be able to serve people under his (Ajit Pawar's) guidance," Rohit said.

Ajit, who won the October 21 elections from Pune's Baramati seat with a huge margin of 1.65 lakh votes, shocked his party and family last Saturday when he joined hands with the BJP and became deputy chief minister in the Devendra Fadnavis-led government.

Rohit Pawar won from Karjat Jamkhed seat in Ahmednagar district.

Gujarat to enforce new anti-terror law from Dec. 1

It will also help State deal with organised crime, says Minister

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
AHMEDABAD

Gujarat's controversial anti-terror law that has several draconian provisions like intercepted telephonic talk as legitimate evidence, and statement before a police official of SP rank being admissible evidence in the court, is set to be enforced from December 1.

Earlier this month, President Ram Nath Kovind had given his assent to the Gujarat Control of Terrorism and Organised Crime (GCTOC) Act, which had thrice failed to get the nod from three previous Presidents since 2004 owing to draconian provisions and apparently sweeping powers given to the police.

The revised version of the controversial legislation was passed by the BJP government in the State in March 2015, and was formulated to deal with terrorism and organised crime such as contract killing, ponzi schemes, narcotics trade, extortion rackets, cyber crime, land-grabbing and human trafficking.

On Tuesday, Minister of State for Home, Pradeep Singh Jadeja, said, "We will start the implementation of the GCTOC Act from December 1. A notification in this regard will be issued soon."

"The provisions of the Act will prove crucial in dealing with terrorism and

Shiv Sena could face 'expansion' problems in Pune

'It is the BJP which has expanded its base and presence among all sections of society'

SHOUMOJIT BANERJEE
PUNE

While Shiv Sena chief Uddhav Thackeray is all set to helm the new coalition government, the dramatically altered political equations could pose problems for his party's expansion in Pune and western Maharashtra, where Sharad Pawar's Nationalist Congress Party (NCP) and the Congress have their traditional vote bases.

According to analysts, while the NCP will aggressively expand and seek to reclaim lost ground in this region, the Sena faces a daunting challenge as its influence here has been stunted in recent years with the ascendancy of its erstwhile ally, the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP).

Weakest link

"Of the three parties in the Mahavikas Agadhi (MVA), the Sena is the weakest in terms of its party base in Pune. The Sena's new allies – Congress and NCP – have always been traditionally strong representation in the local bodies, the Zilla Parishads and the municipal councils and corporations in Pune and western Maharashtra," observed senior political analyst Rajendra Pandharpure.

He notes that while Mr. Thackeray would be Chief Minister, the dominant influence in this improbable coalition would be of the NCP, as the refrain among party workers is that their *saaheb* (Sharad Pawar) has



Shiv Sena supporters celebrate in Pune on Wednesday after party chief Uddhav Thackeray was designated CM. ■ PTI

been instrumental in forming this government.

Further, the BJP's refusal to leave a single seat in Pune for the Sena ahead of the Assembly elections had caused resentment among Sena leaders, while giving workers headaches about their party's future and existence in the city.

"Should this coalition continue till local body elections, especially the crucial Pune and Pimpri-Chinchwad civic polls in 2022, it remains to be seen how willingly the NCP and the Congress would share seats with Sena," Mr. Pandharpure added.

In the past, when the Sena was the 'big brother', it was said that the BJP had to hold the Sena's hand to win in the rural pockets in Pune district while the latter needed the BJP's base to win in the urban pockets.

"Since 2014, the BJP has expanded its base and presence among all sections of

society. The question is in which direction will Sena be able to expand in this region as the other three big parties – NCP, Congress and BJP – have their presence in different pockets and bodies," said Mr. Pandharpure, adding that a pall hangs over the Sena's renaissance in terms of party structure despite their securing the Chief Minister's post.

Another city-based political observer said that with daggers drawn between the two estranged allies, the BJP would also seek to wrest the 'Hindutva' space from the Sena, now that the latter has tied itself to so-called 'secular' parties.

The Congress in the city faces a challenge of a different sort. While the Assembly poll results proved that the party still retained a core base, the Congress' performance in the State has largely been due to the efforts of individual leaders and party

workers, who seized the initiative from a paralysed and muddled Central and State leadership.

"The Congress top brass in the State should encash on this opportunity [of government formation] to focus on building frontal organisations like the NSUI, the Mahila Congress and Youth Congress in the city

RAMESH IYER
Congress general secretary, Pune

lyst, the Congress had not much choice but to ally with the Sena and the NCP as 33 of their 44 elected legislators were allegedly strongly in favour of forming a government with Mr. Thackeray's party, despite the contrasting ideologies.

"The Congress would have faced a major split had it not gone along with the Sena as a majority of the elected MLAs were keen to be a part of the power sharing process. Having said that, the Central and State Congress leadership must now take measures to revive their moribund organisation in Pune and western Maharashtra," said the analyst.

"Congress leader Vijay Wadettiwar would be a good choice as a new MPCC chief as he is an aggressive leader with a mass base. His leadership could prove effective than that of erstwhile Congress state chiefs Manikrao Thakre and Ashok Chavan," he said.

The NCP, which won two Assembly seats in Pune, will seek to play a dominant role in this coalition in Pune and western Maharashtra.

"Besides our performance in the Assembly polls, we also have 40-odd corporators in the PMC. The Pimpri-Chinchwad civic body, too, was dominated by us until the BJP's win in the 2017 civic polls. Now, with the tables turned on the BJP, we will go all out and try and oust them from local bodies as well," said a Pune NCP leader.

Cong. tries to garland Goa CM over his Mahadayi remarks

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
PANAJI

Opposition Congress in Goa on Wednesday reached the State secretariat to garland Chief Minister Pramod Sawant to protest over his remarks on the Mahadayi river issue, but the attempt was foiled by the security personnel.

The Congress leaders said they wanted to garland the CM and tell him to take "all the credit" on the Mahadayi issue, but save the river water from being diverted.

This comes a day after Mr. Sawant expressed confidence that the Centre would withdraw the Environment Clearance (EC) given to Karnataka to build Kalasa Bandari project on the Mahadayi. The CM had also said that the Opposition should not try to take credit in case the EC is withdrawn.

Several Congress leaders, including Goa Pradesh Congress Committee member Janardan Bhandari, North Goa district president Vijay Bhike, Bicholim block president Meghashyam Raut, were among those who reached the secretariat.

GPCC chief Girish Chodankar said, "We don't want any credit for saving Mahadayi. Sawant and his party can take it, but they should save the river."

Mumbai zoo's wait for tigers gets longer

Shifting of two tigers is delayed as Aurangabad civic chief is on long leave

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
AURANGABAD

The Aurangabad Municipal Corporation (AMC)'s plan to shift two tigers from its zoological park here to Mumbai's Byculla Zoo is getting delayed as the chief is yet to sign papers to facilitate the move, an official said on Wednesday.

Two months back, the Aurangabad Municipal Corporation (AMC) had decided to send two tigers from its Siddharth Garden and Zoo to Veer Mata Jijabai Bhosale Udayan and Zoo (popularly known as Byculla Zoo) in Mumbai in exchange of a variety of birds.

According to the official, Siddharth Zoo has 12 big cats, which are "excess" in numbers.



Aurangabad's Siddharth Zoo has 12 big cats, which, according to zoo officials, is "excess" in numbers. ■ YOGESH LONDE

Naikwade said, Aurangabad civic chief Nipun Vinayak has gone on a long leave.

Mr. Naikwade said, "Senior civic officials had ordered us to survey the facilities at the Mumbai zoo. We carried out the survey and found them to be good for the tigers. The survey report was submitted to the office of the municipal commissioner and we are waiting for his signature."

Mayor Nandkumar Ghode said the commissioner has been on leave since October 25. "He has extended his leave several times. We have urged the State authorities to appoint a new officer in his place. Hope it happens soon so that we can send the tigers to Mumbai," he said.

Supporters on a high



Victory bugle: Workers of Shiv Sena, Nationalist Congress Party and Congress jointly celebrate the formation of Maha Vikas Agadhi government near Shivaji statue in Mahal area of Nagpur on Wednesday. ■ S. SUDARSHAN

IN BRIEF



Bindu Ammini set for next visit to Sabarimala

KOCHI
After failing to get police protection to visit the Sabarimala temple on Tuesday, Bindu Ammini, one of the two women who had prayed at the temple on January 2 this year, on Wednesday said she will be visiting Sabarimala on January 2 next year. "The upcoming visit is to mark the anniversary of our visit to the temple for the first time," said Ms. Ammini. IANS

Karnataka sisters now in government home

HASSAN
Responding to *The Hindu's* report on the sorry state of two sisters living in an abandoned government quarters at Hettur in Karnataka, the Hassan district administration has shifted them to the Girls' Home run by the Department of Women and Child Development here. Rosy C.P. and her younger sister, Sheela C.P., have been living in an old building with no power supply and proper security at Hettur for the last six months. *The Hindu* had reported about their plight on Wednesday.

Man files plaint against wife for rash driving

SHIVAMOGGA
A man from Hebbi in Karnataka's Udupi district, who was in a four-wheeler that met with an accident in Shivamogga district on Tuesday, has lodged a complaint against his wife for alleged rash driving. The woman, who was at the wheel, lost control of the vehicle owing to which the car fell into a roadside ditch. Three persons in the vehicle, including the couple's son, were injured. In the complaint the man has alleged that the accident took place owing to rash driving of his wife.

Police seek more information on IS-linked Kerala woman

Keralite among fighters who surrendered in Afghanistan



Nimisha Fathima, and right, Sonia Sebastian. ■ NIA



G. ANAND
THIRUVANANTHAPURAM
The Kerala police have sought more information on Nimisha Fathima, a Keralite, who is suspected to be among a group of Islamic State (IS) fighters who are in the custody of Afghanistan law enforcement authorities in the Khorasan province.

Officials said Fathima and her husband, Isa alias Beixin Vincent, had converted to Islam in 2015, got radicalised and fled to join the IS in Afghanistan when she was pregnant in July 2016.

The possibility that the trained dentist might be alive in the combat zone surfaced when the National Investigation Agency called on her mother, Bindu Sampath.

Officials said Fathima and

and showed her a set of photographs of foreign fighters and their families in the custody of the Afghanistan government.

Ms. Bindu said she had identified her daughter among them. Earlier, Central agencies had flagged the possibility that Sonia Sebastian, 33, alias Ayisha, a resident of Kasaragod, believed to have joined the IS along with her husband could be in the same group.

The police suspect that Nimisha, a Hindu, had converted to Islam while attending a dental college run by a Muslim trust in Kasaragod.

TSRTC employees decide to exercise restraint

All eyes on today's Cabinet meeting

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD

Contrary to Tuesday's scenes of Telangana State Road Transport Corporation (TSRTC) workers gathering at depots eager to resume duty after the strike was called off, only a few of them did so on Wednesday across Telangana.

The police picked up whoever went to depots and released them later. Apparently, sources said the workers did not repeat the act as they apprehended

that arrests could have an adverse impact on their job. Some women conductors were seen crying.

All eyes were on the Cabinet meeting on Thursday to discuss the issue. At the same time, the Joint Action Committee of the RTC unions gave a call to workers to submit letters in a given format to the Labour Commissioner in Hyderabad and subordinate officers in districts, requesting them to ensure that they were given back their jobs.

Mannequins with cameras to scan Bengaluru traffic

Police will equip the 200 figures placed on roads with CCTV to record violations and levy penalties

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
BENGALURU

The understaffed and over-worked Bengaluru Traffic Police have come up with yet another novel initiative to persuade motorists to follow traffic rules and observe lane discipline.

The department has installed as many as 200 life-size mannequins at trouble-prone junctions in Bengaluru. The mannequins, dressed as traffic police, will deter repeat offenders, according to the plan. The idea is apparently inspired by farmers using scarecrows.

The mannequins have been outfitted with standard police uniforms, reflector jackets, hats, boots, masks and even sunglasses, in an attempt to trick motorists into believing that it is a real cop. Unlike scarecrows, though, the mannequins will soon turn smart. The police are planning to install CCTV cameras on them to record violations.

More rule-abiding

"The behaviour of motorists changes automatically when they see a traffic policeman. Studies show that there are

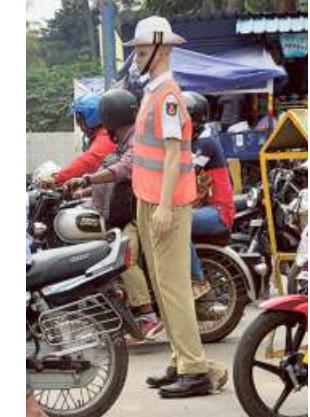
fewer violations at manned junctions compared to unmanned ones. However, the police cannot be deployed everywhere, and so we decided to put up mannequins," said B. R. Ravikanth Gowda, Joint Commissioner of Police (Traffic).

"The mannequins will be replaced by real policeman the next day, to ensure that motorists follow rules."

The initiative was launched early this week with 30 of the figures; another 170 were added on Wednesday. Traffic personnel, who are at their wits' end in

their effort to bring lane discipline, are optimistic. "Our effort is to ensure that every motorist follows traffic rules for his or her safety and that of other motorists and pedestrians. This way, there can be smooth vehicular movement and fewer traffic jams," a senior police officer said.

Motorists and pedestrians commuting to work were bemused at the sight of the mannequins, and remained cautiously optimistic. Many expressed hope that it would stop people from using their mobile phones while driving and jumping signals.



He's no dummy: A figure of a 'traffic policeman' in Bengaluru. ■ K. MURALI KUMAR

+ A.P. govt. to raise BPL income limit

'Ration cards in line with new criteria'

STAFF REPORTER
VIJAYAWADA

In a major decision that is likely to impact welfare schemes and programmes, the Andhra Pradesh Cabinet has decided to enhance the income limit for the Below Poverty Line (BPL) category.

A family with an annual income of ₹1.2 lakh in rural areas will now fall under the BPL category, and in urban areas, the upper limit is ₹1.44 lakh per annum. The government will issue new ration cards in line with the new BPL criteria.

Bifurcation
Addressing a press conference at the Secretariat on Wednesday, Information and Public Relations (I&PR) Minister Perni Venkataramaiah (Nani) also said the Cabinet had decided to bifurcate the Andhra Pradesh

Southern Power Distribution Company Limited (APSPDCL) into the Andhra Pradesh Southern Distribution Company Limited and the Andhra Pradesh Central Power Distribution Company Limited. The Cabinet also approved availing loans from banks through the Andhra Pradesh Power Finance Corporation, he said. The Minister said a proposal to constitute separate Commissions for the Scheduled Castes and Tribes was approved.

The AP State Commission for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes Act would be amended, and a Bill in this regard would be tabled in the Assembly in the coming session, he said.

Referring to the Kadapa steel plant, the Minister said that foundation stone would be laid on December 26.

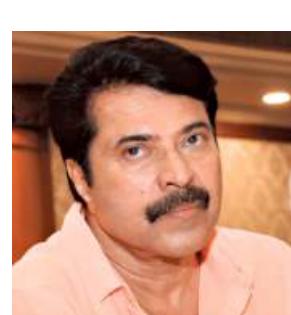
Protective fence



Plugging the leak: Workers of the BBMP, the administrative body responsible for civic amenities in Bengaluru, constructing a bund on Wednesday to stop water flowing out of the Hulimavu Lake after the recent breach. ■ BHAGYA PRAKASH. K

Upcoming Mammootty film caught in controversy

Case registered against former director of *Maamaangam*



Mr. Pillai, who directed the initial stages of the movie, had dropped out in 2018 following a dispute with the producer Venu Kunnapally. Mr. Kunnapally later claimed that he found Mr. Pillai wanting and had to discard the portions filmed by him. The movie fell behind schedule, and he incurred huge losses. Later, Mr. Kunnapally was constrained to start the project afresh under a new director.

Mr. Pillai told *The Hindu* that he had sued Mr. Venu for stealing his movie script. He said he had to part ways with Mr. Venu because the producer interfered with the casting and insisted on last-minute script changes.

He was charged with defamation under Section 500 of the Indian Penal Code. They have slapped an additional charge of using a "computer resource for cheating persons by personation" under Section 66 (D) of the Information Technology Act.

ISRO's launch tally hits 5 main satellites this year

India ranks fifth along with newbie New Zealand and each have 6% of the orbital launch pie

MADHUMATHI D.S.
BENGALURU

The Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) on Wednesday touched a tally of launching five main satellites so far in 2019 after sending up earth imaging satellite Cartosat-3.

Globally as launches go, China is set to top the chart of space-faring nations for the second year in a row, notes a recent report in the technology site Ars Technica.

India ranks fifth along with newbie New Zealand. They each have 6% of the orbital launch pie, according to website Space.Skyrocket.

It said the space majors totally made 87 orbital launches as on November 27. China

launched 28 satellites or 32% of them.

When the year ends, China's share will likely be still above Russia (20) and the U.S. (18), and the two old champions are unlikely to reach or overtake it in the remaining month, reckons Ars Technica.

By the end of 2019, India's launches may climb two numbers: that is if the radar imaging satellites RISAT-2BR1 and 2BR2 keep their December due dates.

The space agency counts a satellite and a launch vehicle as two missions.

Seven launches

By that yardstick, ISRO in 2018 made seven launches out of 16 missions and did

Bihar woman gives birth in toilet of running train

Pinky Devi wants to name her baby after the train

P. SRIDHAR
KHAMMAM

Call it providence followed by prompt action. A pregnant woman passenger from Bihar was delivered of a baby girl in the toilet of the Chennai-bound Ganga Kaveri Superfast Express on the Dornakal-Khammam section early on Wednesday.

The woman, identified as Pinky Devi, aged around 25, of Chhapra in Bihar, developed labour pains soon after she went into a toilet in the SI coach around 5.40 a.m. She gave birth in the toilet even as the train passed the Dornakal junction at the time.

The police believe that the families from Kasaragod, Kannur and Palakkad possibly travelled to Syria and Afghanistan via Sri Lanka with the help of local recruiters.

The accused had allegedly planned to launch terror strikes across Kerala and neighbouring States.



Baby on wheels: The passenger and her newborn at the District Headquarters Hospital on Wednesday. ■ G. N. RAO

Railway Protection Force (RPF) personnel deployed a woman constable Sashikala, along with Childline (1098) volunteers, who attended to the woman and her newborn infant after the train reached Khammam a little later. The train was detained at the station for six minutes

to facilitate shifting the mother and child into a 108 ambulance.

The ambulance staff rendered first aid to the duo before shifting them to the District Headquarters Hospital.

Ms. Devi expressed her wish to name her baby after the train.

The mannequins have been outfitted with standard police uniforms, reflector jackets, hats, boots, masks and even sunglasses, in an attempt to trick motorists into believing that it is a real cop. Unlike scarecrows, though, the mannequins will soon turn smart. The police are planning to install CCTV cameras on them to record violations.

The mannequins will be replaced by real policeman the next day, to ensure that motorists follow rules."

The initiative was launched early this week with 30 of the figures; another 170 were added on Wednesday. Traffic personnel, who are at their wits' end in

No bail for students held under UAPA

Releasing them may hamper probe: HC

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
KOCHI

A Division Bench of the Kerala High Court on Wednesday dismissed the bail pleas of Alan Shubaib and Thaha Fazal, two Kozhikode-based students arrested under the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act (UAPA) for suspected Maoist links.

The Bench observed that it was not persuaded to ignore the apprehension of the prosecution that if the petitioners were released on bail "they may not only meddle with the investigation but also flee from justice."

The Bench added that the submission of petitioners' counsel that the accused, if at all found to be in possession of certain materials, could not be regarded as associates, workers or sympathisers of the CPI(Maoist) and they could only be considered as "inquisitive students cannot prima facie be accepted in the light of the material produced before the court."

Dismissing the criminal appeals against the Kozhikode Sessions Court order

refusing them bail, the court noted the prosecution contention that third accused Usman was evading the process of law.

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Dismissing the criminal appeals against the Kozhikode Sessions Court order

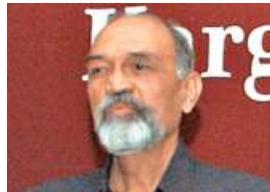
(scientific missions like a human space flight, 60% of the resources are attracted there. This year's Chandrayaan-2 alone equalled [the efforts of] five or six missions, given its complex elements such as an orbiter, a lander, a rover and a launch vehicle. Which is why such numbers are misleading."

He conceded that ISRO was "slightly behind its plan" for the financial year and would make up the shortfall in the next four-odd months. Delays in space missions, he said, are routine because each project must be 100% perfect.

"Adding numbers is a wrong way to gauge the output of a research organisation. For example, I can always repeat a routine remote sensing mission every month, but that is not the real objective of ISRO."

A ND-NDE

IN BRIEF



Ex-Navy Chief Admiral Sushil Kumar dead

NEW DELHI
Former Navy Chief Admiral Sushil Kumar passed away on Wednesday at the Army's Research and Referral Hospital in Delhi. He was 79. Admiral Kumar was the 16th Chief of Naval Staff and oversaw Naval operations during the Kargil conflict of 1999.

NDTV wins award for Kathua coverage

NEW DELHI
NDTV has won the IPI India Award for Excellence in Journalism, 2019, for its coverage of the rape and murder of a young girl in Kathua and the aftermath, anchored by Nidhi Razdan. NDTV was unanimously selected by a jury headed by former Attorney General of India Soli Sorabjee.

ED attaches ₹5.11-crore assets of gem exporters

NEW DELHI
The Enforcement Directorate has attached assets worth ₹5.11 crore in connection with a money laundering case involving Vipul Gems and others. The properties and ₹1.31 crore in fixed deposits belong to Shanti Kumar Chordia, Umrao Mal Chordia and Nayantara Chordia.

Haryana govt. transfers Khemka, 14 others

CHANDIGARH
The Haryana government on Wednesday transferred 14 IAS officers, including bureaucrat Ashok Khemka, who has been posted as Principal Secretary of the Archaeological department. Mr. Khemka has been transferred nearly 50 times in his career.

Schools will start the day with exercises'

CHENNAI
Soon, students in Tamil Nadu will start their day with 15 minutes of physical exercise, State School Education Minister K.A. Sengottaiyan has said. A circular will be issued shortly. The Minister urged Chief Educational Officers in all districts to take the idea forward.

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 Thursday: Thunderstorm accompanied with lightning very likely at isolated places over Kerala, Mahe, Tamil Nadu, Puducherry and Karaikal.

CITY	RAIN	MAX	MIN	CITY	RAIN	MAX	MIN
Agartala	—	30.1	17.5	Kozhikode	—	34.8	24.2
Ahmedabad	—	31.8	19.5	Kurnool	—	31.6	21.2
Aizawl	—	23.6	11.4	Lucknow	—	28.1	14.5
Allahabad	—	31.3	16.7	Madurai	—	31.2	24.6
Bengaluru	—	25.0	20.0	Mangaluru	—	37.2	23.0
Bhopal	—	29.3	15.6	Mumbai	—	34.0	21.4
Bhubaneswar	—	29.7	18.2	Mysuru	—	27.4	20.0
Chandigarh	15.2	22.2	14.6	New Delhi	—	27.4	14.5
Chennai	—	30.9	25.7	Patna	—	28.3	16.8
Coimbatore	—	30.0	22.6	Port Blair	—	31.2	26.3
Dehradun	0.3	25.0	13.6	Puducherry	43.6	30.4	21.4
Gangtok	—	15.7	10.7	Pune	—	29.3	14.9
Goa	—	34.0	23.0	Raipur	—	31.0	18.2
Guwahati	—	29.4	16.8	Ranchi	—	28.6	14.0
Hubballi	—	29.0	18.0	Shillong	—	20.2	9.6
Hyderabad	—	28.9	18.4	Shimla	9.0	13.5	4.7
Imphal	—	24.9	9.3	Srinagar	—	34.1	24.3
Jaipur	—	27.4	17.8	Thiruvananthapuram	—	31.4	23.4
Kochi	—	32.8	25.4	Tiruchi	1.0	31.4	23.4
Kohima	—	20.0	9.6	Vijaywada	—	31.1	20.8
Kolkata	—	29.9	19.7	Visakhapatnam	—	30.4	23.4

(Rainfall data in mm; temperature in Celsius)

Pollutants in the air you are breathing Yesterday

CITIES	SO ₂	CO	PM2.5	PM10	CODE
Ahmedabad	123	132	30	98	107
Bengaluru	02	43	42	72	83
Chennai	11	02	07	90	83
Delhi	07	48	30	200	—
Hyderabad	19	52	29	176	—
Kolkata	16	84	29	312	280
Lucknow	09	18	81	401	—
Mumbai	15	85	17	215	170
Pune	—	81	15	64	173
Visakhapatnam	12	36	41	151	115

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

Australia to return 3 idols to India in January

Return of artefacts underscores the world's debt to India's magnificent culture, history and legacy, says Australian PM

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
CHENNAI

Three culturally significant artefacts – a pair of 'Dwarapala' (door guardians) from Tamil Nadu and one 'Nagaraja' (serpent king) from either Rajasthan or Madhya Pradesh, purchased from idol smuggler Subhash Kapoor – will be returned to India by the Australian government during Prime Minister Scott Morrison's visit to India in January 2020.

While the Dwarapalas from Tamil Nadu are said to be from the 15th century, the Nagaraja, dated 6th to 8th century, is from Rajasthan or Madhya Pradesh.

A joint media statement from Mr. Morrison, Minister for Foreign Affairs and Minister for Women Marise Payne and Paul Fletcher, MP and Minister for Communications and Media.

'Deep relationship'
"Like India, we understand the value of our ancient cultures and artefacts," the Australian Prime Minister said.

Cyber Safety and the Arts, read: "The artefacts which were held by the National Gallery of Australia (Gallery), were purchased in good faith, but extensive research undertaken by the gallery has led to its decision to voluntarily return these artefacts to India."

The Dwarapalas from Tamil Nadu are said to be from the 15th century, the Nagaraja, dated 6th to 8th century, is from Rajasthan or Madhya Pradesh.

tralian Prime Minister said. "The return of these artefacts is the right thing to do. This is another demonstration of the deep relationship between Australia and India."

Both India and Australia are party to the UNESCO 1970 Convention on the

Means of Prohibiting and Preventing the Illicit Import, Export and Transport of Ownership of Cultural Property.

'Strong ties'

Ms. Payne said, "The strong ties Australian and Indian institutions have made in recent years have helped develop important professional relationships. The return of these artefacts also underscores the world's debt to India's magnificent culture, history and legacy."

Mr. Fletcher said that the historic artefacts play a significant role in modern society by allowing communities to acknowledge and

celebrate their shared history and culture. "The National Gallery of Australia recognises this, and is committed to the ethical collecting of cultural material and best practice collection management. I commend the Gallery for resolving these legal issues," he said.

The release further added that criminal law proceedings are underway in India and the United States against former New York art dealer Subhash Kapoor, from whom these artefacts were purchased. The Australian government does not have any role in these proceedings.

Punjab CM, son acquitted in multi-crore corruption case

Amarinder Singh's son-in-law also among 31 accused

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
CHANDIGARH

Punjab Chief Minister Amarinder Singh and 30 others accused in the multi-crore Ludhiana City Centre corruption case were on Wednesday acquitted by a court in Ludhiana.

Judge Gurbir Singh, while accepting the closure report moved by the State Vigilance Bureau, stated that no case of corruption had been made out against any of the accused.

Besides Capt. Amarinder, his son Raninder Singh and son-in-law Raminder Singh were also accused in the case.

'No evidence'
There was no evidence against any accused, the court ruled, adding that former chairman of the Improvement Trust, Paramjit Singh also did not indulge in corruption, though he may be accused of disobeying the orders of his senior.



project was announced and rolled out during Capt. Amarinder's previous term as Chief Minister between 2002 and 2007.

'Political victimisation'
Capt. Amarinder, who appeared before the court on Wednesday, told journalists that the verdict was a victory for him and others in their fight against what was a brazen act of political victimisation.

The truth had prevailed and their stand against the politically-motivated charges had been fully vindicated, he said. He had full confidence in the law, the Punjab Chief Minister said.

The Ludhiana City Centre

India a major gold smuggling hub: report

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

International non-government organisation IMPACT, in its latest report, has said that India has become one of the largest gold smuggling hubs in the world.

Gold, possibly tied to conflict, human rights abuses and corruption in Africa and South America, is entering legal international markets through India, said the Canada-headquartered organisation in a statement.

The NGO said it had uncovered how the country imported about 1,000 tonnes of gold per year – a quarter more than the official figures indicated.

"Actors across India's gold industry are failing to do proper checks on where gold comes from to ensure it's not financing conflict and human rights violations," according to Joanne Lebert, IMPACT's executive director.

The report said that refined gold was being smuggled into India primarily from the United Arab Emirates, while key traders and refiners in Africa's Great Lakes region, with links to India, were identified as being part of the illicit gold trade.

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Sibal casts doubts on ED's motive

Chidambaram appeals against bail order

Priyanka, Rahul meet Chidambaram in Tihar

NEW DELHI
Former Congress president Rahul Gandhi and party general secretary Priyanka Gandhi Vadra on Wednesday met Congress leader P.

Chidambaram, who is in judicial custody in Tihar jail in connection with alleged corruption cases for over three months. Karti Chidambaram, who was also present, said the visit had made it clear that the Congress party was with him.

"Why did they not question me all this time in judicial custody? Now they are claiming they want to question him, knowing the case is in this court," Mr. Sibal argued before a three-judge Bench led by Justice R. Banumathi.

Mr. Chidambaram has appealed against a Delhi High Court decision denying him regular bail in the ED's charge of money laundering slapped against him in the INX Media case. Senior advocate A.M. Singhvi, also speaking for Mr. Chidambaram, pointed out that the latter has been in jail for 99 days.

Mr. Sibal contended that

the ED has not been able to find even "one undisclosed property or asset" against his client. "All they claim is

Karti [Mr. Chidambaram's son and named an accused in the INX Media case] is an owner of the shell company, Advantage Strategic Consulting. Mr. Chidambaram is his father. So he crafted the entire scheme... But there is no proof of crime committed by the petitioner," Mr. Sibal argued. The ED is expected to argue against bail on November 28.

SOUTHERN RAILWAY

"PUBLIC NOTIFICATION" Pro-Forma 10-01

Notice is hereby given to all users of Railway lines and premises situated on the completed section of the under-noted section of the Southern Railway that the 25000 Volt, 50 Hz, ac, single phase overhead traction wires will be energised on or after the date specified against the Section. On and from the same date the overhead traction line shall be treated as "LIVE" at all times and no unauthorised person shall approach or work in the proximity of the said overhead line.

Section Date

Energisation of Overhead Equipment on the newly laid track, as part of (i) between Kadambur and Tattaparai Stations from OHE Mast Location No.607/32 (km/ch:607/32) & (ii) between Vanchi Maniyachi Junction and Gangalkondan Stations from OHE Mast Location No.0/3 (km/ch:607/32) to OHE Mast Location No.6/8(km/ch:16/8) at 25 KV, 50 Hz, ac, single phase system on Madurai-Tuticorin Section in Madurai Division of Southern Railway.

31.01.2020

Pro-Forma 10-02



More bang for the buck

ISRO should collaborate with the private sector to aid high-technology manufacturing

The Indian Space Research Organisation's successful launch on Wednesday of Cartosat-3, along with 13 other small U.S. satellites, marks a major technological milestone for India. Cartosat-3 is capable of unprecedented image resolution of nearly 25 cm on the ground as against the best global military-grade satellites that can provide a 10 cm resolution. The best satellite images commercially available are between 25-30 cm. Thus, as a commercial satellite, Cartosat-3 creates a wealth of applications. Military espionage is the lowest hanging fruit. It is believed that surveillance by the earlier Cartosat-2 satellite series – with a resolution, though coarser, of about 65 cm – was used to plan and execute military operations such as 'surgical strikes' across the Line of Control in 2016 and the Manipur-Myanmar border in 2015. For the government, such resolution can help monitor progress of road construction, coastal land-erosion, forest conservation, oceanic changes and infrastructure development. Image resolution is good to have but secondary to image processing. That means unless and until there is sophisticated technology available to analyse the generated images, it will forever be inferior, and less valued, than coarser images scanned by better processing software.

While satellite launches make for a good spectacle, they are meaningful only in so far as they aid commerce and generate revenue and jobs. Indian regulations restrict access to satellite images sharper than one metre to the government. Other than for transponders, there is a long way to go for Indian private companies sending innovative payloads aboard ISRO launch vehicles. ISRO recently launched a company called New Space India Limited (NSIL), a competitor to Antrix, but like it, is another public enterprise meant to commercialise space products and satellite development deals with private entities. The deal for the U.S. satellites launched along with Cartosat-3 was formally inked by the NSIL. A good beginning, it should not be shackled by bureaucratic encumbrances, à la Antrix. The host of interesting electronics aboard Cartosat-3 should ideally inspire ISRO to explore collaboration with the private sector in improving high-technology manufacturing. While ISRO's key capability still lies in developing and launching small- and medium-sized satellites, it ought to be able to market the technology aboard Cartosat-3 globally and induce the farming out of satellite development projects to ISRO or its subsidiaries. While ISRO's credentials as a poster child for India's technological abilities have been fortified, it still has a long way to go in terms of its reputation as an enabler of local business.

Caught in the Act

The Transgender Persons Act should have factored in suggestions from the community

It is inconceivable that any effort to ostensibly ameliorate the fortunes of a particular group should be completely impervious to the entreaties of intended beneficiaries. The Transgender Persons (Protection of Rights) Bill, passed in the Rajya Sabha on Tuesday, and seeking to ensure the fundamental rights of those who do not conform to the binary notions of gender identity, has disappointed the community. The Act's long history traces back to the judgment in *NALSA vs Union of India* of April 2014, which directed the Centre and State to grant legal recognition for the third gender, ensure there is no discrimination against them, and construct specific social welfare programmes. In August 2016, the government introduced the Transgender Bill in the Lok Sabha and this was referred to the Standing Committee on Social Justice and Empowerment, which submitted its report in less than a year. But that Bill lapsed with the dissolution of the 16th Lok Sabha. The current Act arose out of a Bill that the government introduced in the Lok Sabha in July 2019, and was passed there on August 5 this year, the same day the Centre revoked the special status of Jammu and Kashmir. In its passage through the Upper House, more recently, a motion to refer it to a Select Committee of the Rajya Sabha was defeated. The Act is progressive in that it allows self perception of gender identity, but regresses by mandating that each person would have to be recognised as 'transgender' on the basis of a certificate of identity issued by a district magistrate, rejecting the recommendation from the 2016 Standing Committee to have a screening committee. There are no avenues open either for appeal in the event a magistrate refuses to hand out such a certificate.

India's vocal LGBTQI community had problems with the Bill's basics – right from the nomenclature. Calling it a 'Transgender Persons' Bill would not give adequate play to the diversity of the non-binaries included, it argued, instead calling for a more broad-based definition. Activists have slammed it for its 'narrow understanding' of gender identities and for offering woefully inadequate mainstreaming opportunities. They remain unhappy with the silence on unnecessary and non-consensual sex selective or reassignment surgeries, despite the plea that it be made an offence. Elaborate detailing of the anti-discriminatory clause in the Bill might have gone a long way in ensuring implementation and legal recourse, they argue. With the Bill becoming law, unaltered in any significant form, in the face of such strident opposition, the community is seething at being ignored. Its only hope is that the National Council for Transgender Persons, which is supposed to provide the institutional framework for implementing the Act, might allow more latitude for incorporating genuine demands. Otherwise, this Act might well be a glove that ill fits the hand it was tailored for.

A revival of battles already fought and lost

In its review of the Sabarimala case, the Supreme Court went beyond its narrow capacity to revisit its own orders



SUHRIT PARTHASARATHY

Last year, on September 28, the Supreme Court of India delivered a momentous verdict in *Indian Young Lawyers Association v. The State of Kerala*. There, a majority of 4:1, in ruling in favour of women's entry into the Sabarimala temple in Kerala, presented to us the most attractive portrait of what the Constitution really means. But today that vision stands threatened. In early November, a sharply divided bench, in *Kantaru Rajeevru*, with two out of five judges dissenting, has decided to keep review petitions filed against the original judgment pending, and, in the process, has virtually unfastened the brilliance of the court's transformative verdict.

Contours of first ruling

There is no doubt the initial ruling could well have been rendered on narrow and technical grounds. But each of the three judges who wrote opinions for the majority of four chose to read the Constitution expansively, by leaving their respective imprints on the verdict. Their definitive and collective findings, though, are easily deductible. First, they ruled that the devotees of Lord Ayyappa did not constitute a separate religious denomination. Second, they held that the bar enforced on women aged between 10 and 50 years from entering the Sabarimala temple infringed the equal rights of those women to freedom of religion. And third, they found that Rule 3(b) of the Kerala Hindu Pla-

ces of Public Worship (Authorisation of Entry) Rules, 1965, on which the ban was grounded, violated not only the Constitution but also Section 3 of its parent law, which promised free access to temples for all classes of Hindus. What is more, these findings apart, three of the judges on the majority also expressly ruled that the exclusion of women was, in any event, not an essential religious practice, and was, therefore, undeserving of any constitutional protection (a fourth judge, Justice R.F. Nariman, proceeded on the assumption that the practice was essential but still found it unlawful).

On the ground

The verdict helped burnish India's grandest constitutional guarantees, but it also provoked strong criticism. Many felt the court had erred by wading deep into theological waters. At the same time, though, the resistance to the judgment went too far. Not only were protests held across the country but efforts made by women to access the temple were thwarted in open defiance of the judgment. Simultaneous with these acts of disobedience, pleas were filed in the Supreme Court, in some cases, seeking a review of the judgment, and, in others, seeking an issuance of a writ to once again forbid the entry into the shrine of women of menstruating age. The aim of these petitions was simple: to quench the flames of freedom that the court had helped light up.

Article 137 of the Constitution confers an express power on the Supreme Court to review its own decisions. But this authority is subject to both parliamentary law and to rules of procedure framed by the court. These rules, as the court's own prior judgments make plain, allows a bench the power of



review only when the earlier judgment is likely to result in a miscarriage of justice on account of any manifest error that is clear on the face of its record. In other words, the court's capacity to review its own orders is confined within narrow boundaries: it can neither rehear formerly concluded arguments nor can it reappreciate the evidence on record. There is a lamentable logic to this tenet. At stake when a judgment is sought to be reviewed is not only the court's authority – in that its carefully considered decisions are meant to be final and binding – but also, as Justice V.R. Krishna Iyer once wrote, its "precious public time", which can scarcely accommodate a revival of battles already fought and lost.

Speculative line

However, the majority's judgment in *Kantaru Rajeevru* simply does not grapple with these considerations. Instead, it offers a welter of 'ifs', 'buts', and 'maybes'. It begins by admitting that the petitioners' endeavour is to resuscitate a debate about what constitutes a practice essential to religion. This finding, one would have thought, would have served as sufficient cause for dismissing the claims for review. But, inexplicably, the opinion proceeds to refer to a series of other, unconnected cases where a similar debate might arise for consideration. This therefore necessitates, the judgment holds,

an "authoritative enunciation" by a "larger bench of not less than seven judges" of a judicial policy that will "put at rest recurring issues" concerning the right to freedom of religion. This holding, though, is baffling for many reasons, not least the fact that the court has already carved a rich jurisprudence touching upon the engagement of religious rights with other constitutional promises.

The court then says there is a "prospect" of the issues arising in the other cases – including cases concerning the entry of Muslim women into mosques, the conscientious rights of Parsi women married to a non-Parsi, and the validity of the practice of female genital mutilation in the Dawoodi Bohra community – "being referred to a larger bench". Having conjectured thus, the court stops short of framing issues for a referral and instead speculates, once again, on what some of these "issues could be".

As Justice Nariman points out, in a coruscating dissenting opinion that Justice D.Y. Chandrachud concurs with, these findings are entirely beyond the remit of the court's authority in determining a plea for review. "What a future constitution bench or larger bench... may or may not do when considering the other issues pending before this court," he writes, "is, strictly speaking, not before this court at all."

The majority's opinion then highlights a seemingly illusory conflict between the court's judgments in the Shirur Mutt's case (1954), which was decided by a seven-judge bench, and *Durgah Committee, Ajmer* (1961), which was decided by a bench of five judges. It is of no consequence to it, though, that this point of supposed divergence made no material difference to the original judg-

ment in *Indian Young Lawyers Association*. Indeed, the opinion fails to draw attention to a single error made in the judgment under review, let alone a manifest error apparent from the face of its record.

A diminished ideal

Each of us is free to formulate our own views on the court's original judgment. But the court itself can act on a review petition only within those limits prescribed by law. For the majority to order that the pleas for review be kept pending until the determination of a set of vague and unenumerated questions by a larger bench is, on any reading, extraordinary. Had the court found demonstrable errors in the original judgment, it ought to have allowed the review petitions and rescinded its earlier verdict. But it displayed neither the confidence to do this, presumably because it could not find any such errors, nor, more worryingly, did it show the moral courage to dismiss these petitions and make impregnable its previous ruling.

It is difficult to understand how this irresolution can at all be helpful. In the ultimate analysis, the court's ruling in *Kantaru Rajeevru* only denudes it of its authority and allows people to believe, as Justice Nariman notes in his dissent, that compliance with the law is a "matter of option". The majority's decision to open up for abuse the limited jurisdiction for review of its own orders that the court has hitherto permitted also has the potential to produce a miasma of public mischief. Only a swift dismissal of the review petitions can help reinvigorate some belief in the now diminished ideal of the rule of law.

Suhrit Parthasarathy is an advocate practising at the Madras High Court

Stubble burning is not the only culprit

A solution to Delhi's air pollution problem must look at farmers' economic conditions, science and policy change



T. NANDA KUMAR

Air pollution in Delhi has always been a topic of discussion during Deepavali. Almost everyone gets into the "act", the Supreme Court of India and top echelons of the Government not excluded, while children are forced to breathe polluted air. Airwaves are filled with immediate "band-aid" type solutions and television experts finally come around to just one issue – stubble burning by farmers in Punjab. Therefore, the solution also gets simplified; prosecute those who burn stubble (the stick) give them happy seeders by the thousands (the carrot). All is well till the next Deepavali.

An oversimplification

If the problem was that simple, it would have been solved long ago. The intention is not to justify stubble burning, but to point out that it is not the only culprit (though it is an important one) and other factors need to be attended to as well. The simplification of the narrative to stubble burning and the argument that all that smoke that comes out of Punjab's paddy fields lands in the National Capital Region (NCR), particularly in the capital city of Delhi, may not stand

scientific scrutiny considering the fact that wind speeds, dispersal rates and settling down of particles are governed by laws of science.

Recently, there was a reference in a television programme about satellite observations on stubble burning from 2002-17. Reportedly, there has been an increase of 3% in aerosol loading attributable to crop residue burning during October and November every year. However, no data was presented on the impact of burning of biomass in urban Delhi, coal fired ovens (tandoors) and coal-based industries, coal-based power plants in the outskirts of Delhi, the exponential increase in sport utility vehicles, or SUVs, in the NCR and so forth.

As for stubble burning, we need to stop this practice for sure. But how do we do it? Farmers do it out of economic compulsion. The "city centric" argument is that Punjab now produces 25% more rice than what it did 15 years ago, which is good for the country, but bad for Delhi. Others argue that the Punjab Preservation of Sub-soil Water Act 2009 is the main culprit. There are many who believe that a generous distribution of direct seeders (or "Happy Seeders" as they are called) should make the difference.

Three ways out

Essentially, we come to three options: Reduce paddy area/production, allow farmers to plant/transplant paddy before June and



distribute "happy seeders". This will, according to many, address the problem of air pollution in Delhi during October and November.

Let us start with reduction in production of paddy. Punjab was never a traditional rice cultivator. It took up rice cultivation in response to the national policy of food self-sufficiency. They achieved the highest productivity in the country and contributed maximum among all States to the central pool of rice procurement. In the process, the area went up from 2.6 million hectares in 2001 to 3 million hectares in 2017; production went up from 9 million tonnes to 12.5 million tonnes. Punjab dug deeper to get groundwater and caused long-term damage to itself.

Attempts at diversification did not take off because of the difference in net farm returns and market risks. A rice farmer earns about ₹57,000 per hectare whereas maize in a maize-wheat combination would set them back by about ₹15,000-17,000. The farmer will not bear this burden. An estimate by agricultural economist

Ashok Gulati suggests ₹12,000 per hectare (keeping power saving in mind) as an acceptable compensation. If the idea is to reduce area of common paddy by half a million hectares, resulting in a reduction of output of 2 million tonnes, the Central government has to step in and support this change for the next five years. This half-a-million hectare should be in water-stressed blocks and can be encouraged to shift to maize or any other crop. Another one lakh hectare can shift to basmati production.

Falling water levels

Coming to the more controversial argument about the Punjab Preservation of Sub-soil Water Act 2009, there exist strong arguments to prevent over exploitation of groundwater especially if farmers cultivate rice in April/May. Though strong evidence is necessary to establish improvement in groundwater levels, there is some evidence to show that the rate of deterioration has slowed down.

If farmers are allowed to go back to the pre-2009 regime, what will happen to the groundwater in Punjab is anyone's guess. The elephant in the room, however, is free power to tube wells. Can this amount of about ₹6,000 crore be shifted to a direct benefit transfer as has been suggested by policy experts? Is there a political will? Are the large farmers the real opposition here? This shift could be a game changer. A bigger game changer will be a shift to cash transfer in lieu of grains in the pu-

blic distribution system by the Centre.

The "happy seeder" is the most talked about solution. Direct seeders do help but have limitations. First, the seeder has to operate within about 4-5 days of the harvest. The effectiveness depends on the moisture (not too moist, not too dry) present in the soil at the time of sowing. This requires a good understanding of soil conditions. The agronomic practices need to change particularly with regard to application of fertilizer and irrigation. These machines may be used only during the 15-day window in a whole year. They will remain idle for the remaining 350 days. My reckoning is that Punjab will need about 20,000 of these machines if basmati areas (about 6 lakh ha) and rice-potato areas are excluded from the calculation.

The problem is complex and needs a solution. But the solution should take into consideration the economic condition of farmers, the scientific options available and the willingness of the Central government to change policy and fund a major part of the expenditure. Blaming the farmers alone will not do; citizens need to put in their bit too. We owe it to the children.

T. Nanda Kumar is a former Food and Agriculture Secretary, Government of India, and a visiting fellow at the Indian Council for Research on International Economic Relations. The views expressed are personal

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.

Time to govern

The machinations of the last four days in Maharashtra have exposed the depth, depravity and immaturity of politicians. The ruling Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), which often claims to be 'principled', indulged in rank opportunism. It has lost face and even respect of the common man. Now, it is time for all political parties, to concentrate on the economy, which seems to be falling apart, with poverty, unemployment and inflation on the increase (Front page, "Uddhav stakes claim to form govt.", Nov. 27). RAJENDRA ANEJA, Mumbai

■ Amidst all the hullabaloo culminating in the Shiv

Sena-Nationalist Congress Party-Congress coalition being asked to form the government in Maharashtra, one fact has been completely forgotten – the BJP and the Sena had a pre-poll alliance. By breaking the pact, has the Sena not cheated the electorate? Was this democratic? The stability of the new coalition looks doubtful and it remains to be seen if it lasts long.

S. NARAYANAN, Chennai

Jallianwala Bagh Trust
The writer harps upon certain apparent irregularities in the conduct of the procedural affairs of the Jallianwala Bagh Trust but does not say anything about the way in which the memorial was being managed. Instead of finding

loopholes in secretarial practices of the Trust, the writer should have clarified the plans which he, and the Ministry of Culture, have to improve the facilities available to tourists. He should have also explained how the national memorial will be improved further to nurture national pride to signify our glorious history and the saga of freedom struggle, in which his own party has had no role to play ("Putting back the 'national' in the Jallianwala Bagh trust", Nov. 27).

THAYIL SETHUMADHAVAN, Bengaluru

■ First, the writer's primary identification of the Jallianwala Bagh as a 'pilgrimage' site is problematic. A rational citizen who believes in civic

nationalism should visualise Jallianwala Bagh as a 'memorial' site similar to other sites associated with freedom struggle. While considering it a memorial site opens up the possibility of critical engagement with our shared past, the idea of pilgrimage site reduces the site to an artefact of ritualised national worship. Once we establish this, we find that the amendment Bill initiated by the Centre is perhaps part of its larger plan of making Indian politics free of the Congress party.

Whose memory is the government trying to erase by removing the Congress president from the trust? The writer conveniently forgets that the Indian National Congress does have claims over the freedom movement, though the same cannot be said of the BJP or Jana Sangh.

CHRISTY ALEX PERAVIL, Kozhikode, Kerala

Injustice in Ayodhya

In his article "Vedic attachment and Islamic idolatry", Devdutt Pattanaik appears to be making a case to both Hindus and Muslims for giving up the claim to the Babri Masjid land. He says that for Muslims, "to accept the Supreme Court judgment is to accept the victory of idolaters". Let me emphasise that the nature of the other party has nothing to do with it. This is a simple fight for justice where a mosque that was standing on its rightful land was wrongfully demolished and the same land has now been given to the very people who committed the act. Letting go

of this right will not serve to foster peace, as Mr. Pattanaik seems to be saying, for the objective behind the mosque's demolition was to polarise the electorate and serve the BJP's ambitions. There is nothing pragmatic in being unfair and unjust. As for his argument that places associated with the Prophet in Mecca are being consciously monitored, I agree with him. But, there is a distinction between 'an associated place' and a 'mosque'. Also, these decisions are not arbitrary but taken on a case-by-case basis in consultation with Islamic scholars.

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Donald Trump, the disruptor

Taking stock of the President's performance eleven months before the U.S. goes to polls



KRISHNAN SRINIVASAN

With 11 months to go before the next U.S. presidential election, it is worth assessing the choices that President Donald Trump will need to make during the rest of his first term in office, and what past history indicates regarding the forthcoming poll.

Despite the current state of the economy, which is good according to most economists and could therefore benefit the incumbent, a challenger can nevertheless win. President Trump's national approval rating hovers in the low 40% range, and the public has been receptive mainly to his handling of the economy. However, fears of recession continue and if the economy moves downwards, the favourable sentiments could erode. Some Republicans are starting to call at Mr. Trump's trade wars, so any deterioration in confidence could hurt his prospects. Jimmy Carter defeated Gerald Ford in 1976, Ronald Reagan upset Carter in 1980, and Bill Clinton beat George H. W. Bush in 1992 by promising change in the middle of a faltering economy. Each of these three defeated presidents had faced a primary challenger – Ronald Reagan, Edward Kennedy and Pat Buchanan, respectively – before going on to lose in November of that year.

After President Trump's phone call with the Ukrainian president and Congressional impeachment procedure, it is now possible that he could face both primary challengers and a slowing economy. Healthcare spending, which constitutes more than a quarter of the American federal budget and is the biggest driver of the deficit, will be a major election issue. Mr. Trump ran on a promise to end the scheme approved under President Barack Obama, and Democratic Party candidates are now debating whether to propose an even more comprehensive Medicare system or the Affordable Care Act.

Breaking away
Mr. Trump's immigration policies have disrupted the reforms engi-



"President Trump has reshaped the Republican Party by alienating many business-minded and Spanish-speaking voters while attracting working-class white voters in the heartland." Mr. Trump at a campaign rally in Florida. AP

neered by Republican Presidents Reagan and Bush and Democrats Clinton and Obama. He has reshaped the Republican Party by alienating many business-minded and Spanish-speaking voters while attracting working-class white voters in the heartland.

His rhetoric and actions on immigration, race and religion have galvanised his Democratic opponents since these are seen by them as attacks on traditional American political identities based on race, religion, gender and region which motivate common values and goals.

The world's most important bilateral relationship is between the U.S. and China. Mr. Trump's trade war with China also breaks with traditional Republican Party orthodoxy. His tariff policies and advice to American companies to consider leaving China have sparked business anxiety, and his handling of the Hong Kong protests is being studied closely. His potential primary opponents have not challenged the substance of his trade strategies because most politicians share his concerns about China's actions, while the Democratic Party is silent on this issue for fear of

Foreign policy approach

Continuous disruption has extended to the American foreign policy agenda. The 'America First' doctrine can be traced back to previous presidents who also sparred with NATO and G-7 partners. But Mr. Trump has taken this attitude further by regularly challenging the U.S.-led international system constructed by both political parties in the aftermath of World War II. He has also discarded the previous script concerning multilateral efforts to curb nuclear programmes in North Korea and Iran, preferring to depend on 'deals' fashioned through personal diplomacy. He has avoided military conflict and appears committed to ending American involvement in wars like Afghanistan. This is popular domestically, despite informed criticism that withdrawal will result in what befell the U.S. pull-out from South Vietnam, which led to hundreds of thousands of cases of death and deprivation.

While frequently under criticism

by both political parties, most of Mr. Trump's foreign approaches are more popular than his opponents perceive, and there is wide public support for isolationist and protectionist policies. But in the election to come, there will be little interest in foreign policy or the working of multilateral alliances.

The election in early November next year will test whether the American electoral system is effective and robust. Foreign attempts to disrupt U.S. elections are now to be regarded as commonplace, putting intelligence, law enforcement and local election bodies on alert. Mainstream media is on the defensive to show accuracy and impartiality as it scrambles to compete with an ever-growing number of news sources, including the social media. In the centennial year of the 19th Amendment giving women the right to vote, female voters and elected officials will play an increasingly prominent role next year, as they did in the mid-term elections of 2018.

Remaining months

In the months that remain, President Trump will concentrate on energising his core support, with no attempt to seek cross-party backing. Politically antagonistic and blatantly partisan rhetoric will descend to unprecedented impropriety. Until a clear frontrunner emerges in the crowded field of Democratic candidates for the presidency, the incumbent President has the field to himself. The impeachment process in Congress cannot succeed without approval of two-thirds in the Senate which will not be forthcoming, and is accordingly to be regarded as a Democratic tactic to weaken Mr. Trump before the election.

If Mr. Trump wins a second term, impeachment will continue to be on the Democratic agenda with greater support from Republicans who will then be freed from relying on Mr. Trump's support base to win a re-election. Whoever wins the presidency, foreign policy will continue as dysfunctional and internally conflicted as hitherto, due to the multiple centres of power in Washington, each of which professes to be in exclusive charge of external relations.

Krishnan Srinivasan is a former foreign secretary

A blow to disclosure norms

The apex court's recent verdict makes several categories of information inaccessible to the public under RTI



M. SRIDHAR ACHARYULU

fect supersedes the *Girish Ramchandra Deshpande* verdict.

To cite paragraph 59 of the recent decision: "Reading of the aforesaid judicial precedents... would indicate that personal records, including name, address, physical, mental and psychological status... are all treated as personal information. Similarly, professional records, including... evaluation reports, disciplinary proceedings, etc. are all personal information. Medical records... information relating to assets, liabilities, income tax returns... are personal information. Such personal information is entitled to protection from unwarranted invasion of privacy and conditional access is available when stipulation of larger public interest is satisfied. This list is indicative and not exhaustive."

The last sentence of this paragraph, which makes the restrictions "indicative", could become another tool in the hands of public servants to deny access requests.

Restrictions under Section 8

The Bench's long list contradicts the provisions for disclosure available under Sections 8(1)(j) and 8(2) of the RTI Act. One, personal information can be disclosed if it has any relationship with public activity or interest.

Two, even if such details have no relationship with public interest, they can be given if the disclosure does not cause an unwarranted invasion of privacy. Three, even if the information causes unwarranted invasion of privacy, it could still be given if the larger public interest justifies the act. Finally, even if there is no larger public interest, it could still be shared if the public interest in disclosure outweighs the interest in its protection.

The only points the Supreme Court Bench was asked to consider pertained to assets report and appointment criteria of public servants. Its declaration in the form of the above-cited paragraph was uncalled for. For instance, how can the court declare educational qualifications, performance report or disciplinary proceedings pertaining to public servants as being outside the ambit of disclosure? If a specific educational degree is 'qualification' for a post, is it not related to public activity? Similarly, if the cost of medical treatment is reimbursed by the state, how can medical record become personal information?

Every time, the applicant will now be made to prove public interest, a concept which has been made further complex and ambiguous by the court.

M. Sridhar Acharyulu is a former Central Information Commissioner and Dean, School of Law, Bennett University

Gubernatorial restructuring

The appointment and tenure of Governors need to undergo radical reform

MANURA SHUNMUGASUNDARAM

The actions of the Maharashtra Governor over the last few days have invited scrutiny. From the early morning swearing-in ceremony to the unceremonious pre-floor test resignation of Devendra Fadnavis and Ajit Pawar, Raj Bhavan has found itself in the centre of controversy.

Soon after the Karnataka Assembly elections earlier this year, the actions of the Karnataka Governor were also subjected to judicial scrutiny on aspects of the discretionary powers of the Governor with regard to formation of government. Nevertheless, this week, the Supreme Court had another occasion to reaffirm the law. However, it is unlikely that these controversies will be resolved until there is a constitutional restructuring of the office of the Governor.

The Centre and its Governor
In April 1948, the Drafting Committee of the Constitution insisted on omitting all references to the discretionary powers of the Governor. On May 31, 1949, B.R. Ambedkar said in unequivocal terms that the Governor "is required to follow the advice of his Ministry in all matters". However, it is trite that the Governor is required to exercise discretion in deciding the formation of government when there is no clear post-poll majority. Here, the cases of *S.R. Bommai v. Union of India*, *Rameshwar Prasad v. Union of India*, and *Nabam Rebia v. Deputy Speaker* provide unambiguous judicial guidance to how the office of the Governor must encounter tricky post-poll claims to form government and stay immune to political bias.

Unfortunately, the appointment process of Governors has made the office vulnerable to the influence of the Union government. Over the years, occupants of this office have continued to look towards New Delhi for guidance. Constitutional expert A.G. Noorani cautions that a "state's autonomy comes to naught if its people's mandate can be defied or ignored by a central appointee."

In the Karnataka and Maharashtra cases, it is evident that the Governors invited the leader of the BJP when they did not have the support of the majority in the respective Legislative

Assemblies. It begs the question what claims of support were made by the BJP leaders to the Governors and how the Governors satisfied themselves of these claims when there was verifiable, adverse information available in public. The Raj Bhavan in Mumbai also witnessed a curious swearing-in ceremony which happened with little or no public notice. Such actions create a reasonable apprehension that the office of the Governor is open to be manipulated and misused in furtherance of political partisanship. This strengthens a call to review and restructure the office of the Governor if its constitutional values are to be safeguarded.

Constitutional correction

There is little doubt that the appointment and tenure of Governors need to undergo radical reform. The Justice P.V. Rajamannar Committee, which was tasked by the Tamil Nadu government to look into Centre-State relations in 1969, recommended that State governments be included in the appointment process of Governors to drastically reduce their discretionary powers. The call to rectify the imbalance in Centre-State equations must begin with such a reform.

Furthermore, for too long, Governors have enjoyed a legal immunity, granted by the Constitution, on account of their sovereign functions. Over time, the Supreme Court has confirmed its powers to review the actions of the Governors. Any decision of the Governor can be subjected to judicial scrutiny, including the materials placed to arrive at that decision. However, there is a compelling case that the Westminster model of sovereign and symbolic head of state is past its expiry date. The powers and privileges that are attached to the office of the Governor must be accompanied by answerability, transparency and accountability. Governors and their offices must be scrutinised as much as any other public office. Considering the number of cases involving actions of Governors going to the Supreme Court, the court must lay down guidelines in this regard.

The writer is an Advocate at the Madras High Court and Spokesperson, DMK



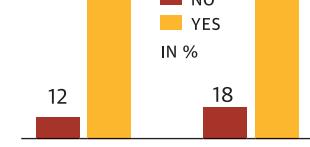
DATA POINT

Police woes

Basic infrastructure and human resources are insufficient in police stations across the country, according to the Status of Policing in India Report 2019. On both counts, West Bengal performed the best, while Chhattisgarh and Uttarakhand were below the Indian average. The survey covered close to 12,000 police personnel across 21 States

1. Lacks basic infrastructure

Police personnel across the country reported that even basic facilities such as clean toilets and drinking water are lacking in a large number of stations



■ FREQUENTLY ■ RARELY IN %



■ FREQUENTLY ■ RARELY IN %

3. State of affairs

The table shows the % of police personnel who said they (a) had drinking water in their stations; (b) had clean toilets in their stations; (c) could not frequently reach crime scenes on time; and (d) could not escort the accused to courts due to lack of staff.

Nagaland performed the worst in providing drinking water. Bihar was the most ill-equipped in providing clean toilets. Human resources were most insufficient in Rajasthan. Shaded boxes indicate that basic infrastructure and human resources in that State were below the Indian average.

States

States	Drinking water available ^a	Clean toilets ^b	Crime scene ^c	Escort accused ^d
Nagaland	59	83	5	4
Bihar	67	54	10	12
Chhattisgarh	80	68	20	15
Himachal	81	72	15	3
Assam	82	66	7	5
Kerala	84	87	6	1
Uttarakhand	84	67	17	12
Jharkhand	88	95	11	10
Maharashtra	88	84	13	5
U.P.	88	79	19	13
Andhra	91	87	5	3
Karnataka	91	95	14	13
Punjab	91	71	4	5
Gujarat	93	96	8	3
Haryana	93	82	7	3
Rajasthan	94	92	47	40
Delhi	95	88	10	5
Odisha	95	93	16	7
Telangana	95	63	17	12
M.P.	96	96	18	9
W.B.	96	97	1	1
India avg.	87	81	15	10

The Archives

FIFTY YEARS AGO NOVEMBER 28, 1969

Strange Satyagraha

(From an Editorial)

The strange phenomenon of a Chief Minister offering Satyagraha against the errant ways of his own government is to come off as scheduled from Monday next, notwithstanding the ominous warnings of his Deputy Chief Minister, Mr. Jyoti Basu. The Gandhian protest is against the continuing lawlessness and violence in West Bengal whose Home Minister is the Marxist leader, Mr. Basu. The provocation is certainly there for some kind of action against the wave of terror sweeping not only the countryside but factories, collieries and even educational institutions. Arson, inter-party killings, gheraos, forcible seizure of land and murder of jotedars have been allowed to become a regular feature of life under the Marxist-dominated regime. Even as Mr. Basu took objection to the Union Home Minister describing the situation in West Bengal as "serious" and blandly asserted that there was "nothing wrong" in the law and order situation, fresh reports of political goondaism and murder were being received. The common factor in most of these fatal clashes among groups of workers or other sections of the people is the Marxists or their supporters, using violence to capture labour unions or for sheer political vendetta.

A HUNDRED YEARS AGO NOV. 28, 1919

What is Nationalism?

By V. Mangalvedkar.

The interests of the country are inseparably interwoven with nationalism and none else. The strength and fortune of the future are intimately associated with the cult of nationalism. But it is most essential to understand nationalism as the philosophy of the combined efforts of the secular and temporal powers of the nation towards its elevation. The unfaltering and faithful recognition of the dual character – that is the secular and temporal – of nationalism will alone best serve the real needs of the country. Any other conception of serving the interests of the country; any attempt to discredit, deny or overlook the dual aspects of nationalism, any suggestion to single out the secular and temporal aspects of it, must be taken to be mischievous, unwarranted and short-sighted. Because the two, secular and temporal aspects of nationalism are inseparable, because its divided conception of separate control of each to the great disadvantage of the temporal invariably lands the country into a situation to which no serious students of history will ever tolerate for a moment.

FROM PAGE ONE

India's Cartosat-3 plus 13 nano satellites put in orbit

The Cartosat-3 is the 9th satellite of the Cartosat series and ISRO's fifth launch this year. One of its cameras offers a ground resolution of 25 cm, while the best ground resolution till now was 31 cm offered by WorldView-3, a satellite owned by U.S. company Maxar.

The commercial satellites carried on board in the mission were launched under a commercial arrangement with NewSpace India Ltd. Mr. Sivan said.

Centre silent on consul's comments on Pandits

Israel has often been criticised for building settlements in the occupied territories of Palestine which is viewed as an expansionist policy.

Mr. Chakravorty, however, said in a social media post that his comments were "taken out of context".

The official spoke at an event to welcome filmmaker Vivek Agnihotri in the United States, and said that India had been gentle in its international behaviour but henceforth will be realistic.

It is not recession yet, says Finance Minister

She cited statistics to show that key macroeconomic indicators, such as headline inflation, core inflation, food inflation, foreign direct investment, foreign exchange reserves, and the government's liability ratios were in a better position at the end of NDA-I's term as compared to the end of UPA-II's term.

The Minister said GDP growth accelerated from 7.4% in 2014-15 to 8% in 2015-16 and 8.2% in 2016-17. It was only at this point that the delayed impact of the 'twin balance sheet problem' of stressed balance sheets of corporates and banks began to show itself and, as a result, investments also began to slow down.

"Even for the first quarter of 2019-20, clearly the decline is very pronounced, and we are aware of it," she said. "But it has not come out of nowhere, there is a trail."

On the Goods and Services Tax, the Minister said various rate cuts implemented by the GST Council were to benefit consumers and to spur manufacturing growth. "To help consumers and to induce growth in manufacturing, the government consciously recommended decrease in GST rates for 90% of the items, from 28% to 12% or 18%, and that helps the consumers," she said. "The rate has been decreased for about 400 goods and 77 categories." Further, against the target of ₹6.63 lakh crore net GST collection this year, the government had collected ₹3.23 lakh crore by October, which was 49% of the target.

Gold worth ₹87 lakh seized from 7 passengers at Chennai airport

Customs officials file case

**SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
CHENNAI**

The Chennai Airport Customs seized more than 2.5 kg of gold valued at ₹87.50 lakh on Tuesday.

According to a press release issued by the Commissioner of Customs, Chennai Airport, customs officials intercepted seven people who attempted to smuggle gold.

In the first case, Abdul Rahim who arrived from Kuala Lumpur was found concealing gold in the handle of his suitcase.

5 persons intercepted

Similarly, five persons were

sul Kutha, Mohamed Rahumullah, and Mohamed Naleem, all from Ramanathapuram and Abdul Hak of Thiruvananthapuram and Sadham Usean. A total of 1.75 kg gold were recovered.

Customs officials later found that a passenger, Fazal Kunhalil of Kasaragod, who arrived from Dubai, had attempted to smuggle gold by using gold plates in cylindrical rods of an imported pasta machine.

Both the gold rods weighed more than 576 g.

Officials of the Customs Department have filed a case under the provisions of the Customs Act, 1962.

Terror incidents down to almost nil in J&K: Rajnath

Normalcy returning in the Union Territory 'very fast', says Defence Minister

**SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI**

Normalcy is returning to Jammu and Kashmir (J&K) "very fast" and terror incidents in the now Centrally administered Union Territory had substantially come down since August 5, when the Centre abrogated J&K's special status under Article 370, Defence Minister Rajnath Singh said in the Lok Sabha on Wednesday.

"Terror incidents have been taking place in Jammu and Kashmir for the past 30-35 years. But I must compliment the forces. Terror incidents have now come down to almost nil," he said.

The Minister was responding to Congress member K. Suresh's remark that terror attacks and killing of innocent civilians continued even after the dilution of the special status.

On Tuesday, two people were killed and seven injured in blasts in Anantnag



On record: Defence Minister Rajnath Singh addressing the Lok Sabha on Wednesday. ■ PTI

district. Before this, last month, five migrant labourers from Murshidabad (West Bengal) and two truck drivers were killed by terrorists in separate incidents.

Congress leader in the Lok Sabha Adhir Ranjan Chowdhury wanted to speak on the issue since his constituency is part of Murshidabad, but Speaker Om Birla allowed only Mr. Suresh, who

charged the government with misleading the House.

The Minister responded, saying the Army, paramilitary forces and the Jammu and Kashmir police have been coordinating to fight terrorism. In the past five years and six months, except in Kashmir, there had been no major incident in the country, he said.

Last week, Home Minister

Amit Shah told the Rajya Sabha that total normalcy prevailed in Kashmir, with government offices and educational institutions functioning fully but Internet connection would be restored after the local administration felt it was fit to do so.

During the Question Hour, National Conference member Hasnain Masoodi had separately raised the issue of Internet and telecommunication blockade for over four months and how it inconvenienced people.

Bill withdrawn

The Centre withdrew the J&K Reservation Bill from the Lok Sabha as the Central laws providing quota to the economically backward class are now applicable to the Union Territory.

The Bill was moved by Mr. Shah on June 24 to extend reservation benefit to people residing along the International Border.



Shripad Naik

Bhartruhari Mahtab and Rahul Ramesh Shewale.

The government is taking measures to ensure that defence forces were in a state of readiness to meet operational and security challenges, he added.

Mr. Naik said that during the recent visit of Chinese President Xi Jinping to India, views were exchanged on outstanding issues, including the boundary question.

"Due to both sides undertaking patrolling along their respective perception of the LAC, transgressions do occur," he said in a written reply in the Lok Sabha in response to a question from

1,025 transgressions by China in three years

However, there are no casualties: govt.

**SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI**

There were 1,025 transgressions by the Chinese People's Liberation Army (PLA) along the Line of Actual Control (LAC) in the past three years, Minister of State for Defence Shripad Naik informed Parliament on Wednesday.

Giving details of the transgressions, Mr. Naik said there were 273 transgressions in 2016, 426 in 2017 and 326 in 2018. For 2019, the information is being collected, he said. "No casualty has been reported," he said.

Mr. Naik said there was no commonly delineated LAC between India and China and there were areas along the line where both sides had differing perceptions of the border.

"Due to both sides undertaking patrolling along their respective perception of the LAC, transgressions do occur," he said in a written reply in the Lok Sabha in response to a question from

'States' info on farmer suicide untenable'

**SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI**

National data on causes of suicide in farming sector could not be published by the National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB) as the information provided by the State governments were "untenable", Union Minister of State for Home G. Kishan Reddy informed the Rajya Sabha on Wednesday.

Mr. Reddy said as informed by the NCRB, many States and Union Territories reported "nil" data on suicides by farmers or cultivators and agricultural labourers after several validations, even while reporting suicides in other professions.

"Due to this limitation, national data on causes of suicide in farming sector is untenable and not published separately," he said in reply to a written question.

LS passes Bill to merge two UTs

**SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI**

The Lok Sabha on Wednesday passed a Bill to merge the Union Territories Daman and Diu, and Dadra and Nagar Haveli. The Bill was passed by voice vote with the government asserting that the merger will fast-track development of the two Union Territories.

The Dadra and Nagar Haveli and Daman and Diu (Merger of Union Territories) Bill 2019 seeks to provide "better delivery of services to the citizens of both Union Territories by improving efficiency and reduction in paper work."

SC reserves pleas challenging J&K curbs

Petitioner Ghulam Nabi Azad questions government's claim that normalcy has returned to Valley

**LEGAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI**

A three-judge Bench of the Supreme Court, led by Justice N.V. Ramana, on Wednesday reserved the petitions filed by Congress leader Ghulam Nabi Azad and *Kashmir Times* editor Anuradha Bas hin against the restrictions on movement, communications and press freedom in Jammu and Kashmir.

Senior advocate Kapil Sibal, representing Mr. Azad, questioned the claim made by the Jammu and Kashmir government that normalcy has returned to the Valley.

Senior advocate Kapil Sibal, representing Mr. Azad, questioned the claim made by the Jammu and Kashmir government that normalcy has returned to the Valley.

and people are happy. "You [government] claim things are normal in Kashmir. But you were the one who made it abnormal. For example, what is the point of



saying there is no crime when no FIR is registered on complaints... What is the logic behind saying there are no traffic violations when people cannot take out their cars in the first place..." Mr. Sibal argued.

He said when security personnel in the Valley could very well identify the troublemakers, what was the point in imposing restrictions on the fundamental rights of movement and means of communication of seven million people since August 5 following the Centre's abrogation of their special rights and privileges

under Article 370. The government claimed restrictions have been removed and all rights restored.

Counters govt. claims

Mr. Sibal asked the court whether the government had produced any written order of withdrawal of the restrictions.

"There must be a withdrawal order of restrictions under Section 144 CrPC. For everything, there must be specific orders. They cannot just come and claim here that the restrictions have been lifted. We want the

Railway tests in regional languages

**SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI**

More than 47.18 lakh candidates opted to use vernacular languages during their direct Railways recruitment exams in the past three years, with the highest number of candidates using Telugu, followed by Bengali and Marathi, Parliament was informed on Wednesday.

"For examinations for direct recruitment, instructions provide for an option of 15 languages, which include Hindi and English and 13 vernacular languages," Minister of Railways Piyush Goyal informed the Lok Sabha.

He said 55,209 opted for regional languages in 2019.



nister of State for Programme Implementation, told the House.

"The government is aware of the shortcomings in data collection centres. It is a continuous process. We are trying to upgrade it. We are aware of it and would be happy to have any inputs that the Honourable Member might want to give on this," Rao Inderjit Singh, Mi-

the country was facing a statistical crisis as government data was being constantly revised.

"The fact is that we are facing a crisis in terms of statistical credibility worldwide. There is a constant revision of numbers by the government. We have seen, for example, its own Chief Economic Adviser questioning the revision of GDP growth from 6.7% to 8.2%.

We have seen extremely great embarrassment when they revised GDP calculations based on a data bank of corporations, of which 36% were non-existent or wrong-ly classified," he added.

"But this is a decision that the government will have to take on its own after taking inputs from all those concerned, whether they are international or domestic entities," he added.

Asking a supplementary question, Mr. Tharoor said

"We have seen the National Consumer Survey ... being discredited and withdrawn

It is a continuous process... we are trying to upgrade, Minister tells Lok Sabha

**SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI**

The Union government on Wednesday admitted that there were "shortcomings" in collection of data, and welcomed suggestions to improve it.

The Minister was responding to concerns expressed by Congress member Shashi Tharoor in the Lok Sabha during the Question Hour.

"The government is aware of the shortcomings in data collection centres. It is a continuous process. We are trying to upgrade it. We are aware of it and would be happy to have any inputs that the Honourable Member might want to give on this," Rao Inderjit Singh, Mi-

nister of State for Programme Implementation, told the House.

"But this is a decision that the government will have to take on its own after taking inputs from all those concerned, whether they are international or domestic entities," he added.

Asking a supplementary question, Mr. Tharoor said

"We have seen the National Consumer Survey ... being discredited and withdrawn

even though numbers are being leaked all over the country. Those of us who are Lok Sabha MPs know from our constituents the financial difficulties they are going through," the Congress MP said.

Union Minister of State for Electronics and Information Technology Sanjay Dhotre had a tough time when Lok Sabha members, including party colleague Rajiv Pratap Rudy and Dushyant Singh, asked him why, despite tall claims about rural connectivity under Bharat.net, end users didn't benefit.

Speaker Om Birla congratulated the members as the Lower House took up a record 20 questions during the Question Hour.

"We have seen the National Consumer Survey ... being discredited and withdrawn

AI will have to shut down if it is not privatised: Puri

Issue of bids arise after processing'

**SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI**

Civil Aviation Minister Hardeep Singh Puri, while discussing the divestment process of Air India in the Rajya Sabha on Wednesday, said the airline would have to close down if it was not privatised.

Trinamool member Santanu Sen raised the statement made by Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman that the divestment process would be completed by March 31, 2020, and sought to know whether it can be ensured that not a single employee will lose his or her job after the divestment.

In response, Mr. Puri said: "I am not in a position to place any interpretation on the statement of the Finance Minister. I think what she said was that the pro-



cess of disinvestment for which, as Finance Minister, she is responsible, is under way. The issue of getting bids will arise only after we have completed the processing. Once we invite bids, then we will see how many bids have come in. But, as I said, the issues relating to employees, their health cover, etc., we are committed to securing a favourable deal for all employees."

Punjab, Bengal MPs raise delayed GST compensation payment

States are facing a financial crisis due to this, they say

**SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI**

Members of Parliament from Punjab and West Bengal on Wednesday raised in the Rajya Sabha the issue of Centre not releasing the State's share of compensation under the Goods and Service Tax (GST), leading to a financial crisis causing a delay in the release of salary and pension.

Mentioning the issue during Zero Hour, Congress MP Pratap Singh Bajwa said the States were assured of compensation for five years after the introduction of the GST. "GST compensation, which used to be given every month initially, has subsequently been made once in two months. We are expecting compensation for August and September some

time in October. October went past and November is about to finish. There is no explanation from the Centre. This is not the way a modern country runs."

INTERVIEW | RAGHUBAR DAS

'We have curbed violence in Jharkhand, people are now breathing easy'

With the double engine government — Modiji at the Centre and the BJP at the State — people have tasted development, they'll vote us back, says Chief Minister

NISTULA HEBBAR

Jharkhand Chief Minister Raghubar Das speaks on the BJP's electoral prospects in the Assembly election in the State.

What are the achievements of your five-year tenure that you are going to the people with?

■ The biggest achievement of the past five years is security. In Jharkhand, it was difficult for people to move around after 5 p.m. for fear of terrorists, even to move from Ranchi to Palamu or Ranchi to Lohardaga. People are now breathing easy as, leaving aside possibly three districts near the borders, we have managed to exercise a firm control over such violence.

Because of this secure environment, we have been able to bring roads and electricity to such areas. For example, there is a village called Garu in Latehar, from where Sudhakaran, who recently surrendered in Hyderabad because of our pressure, used to terrorise the populace. Now, we have been able to provide electricity and roads to such places. People's confidence in the

government, therefore, has grown.

Our surrender policy has also been appreciated, where in the earlier 14 years, only five surrenders happened, under our government, 61 terrorists have surrendered.

If the State is so secure then why election in five phases?

■ There was a five-phase poll in 2014 for both Lok Sabha and Assembly, and the 2019 Lok Sabha. The ebbing of terror in Jharkhand does not mean that it's gone from bordering areas or that provocation will not be done while elections are on. We have to take precaution for at least a year as we share borders with terrorism-affected States. The Opposition can make whatever accusations they want.

After what happened in Maharashtra and Haryana, isn't keeping a target of 65-plus over-ambitious?



movement in Jharkhand. Could we have run the government if the tribal population of the State had been so opposed to us? The Opposition's base has eroded, tribal sections are also aware of all this. Otherwise, how could Shibu Soren have lost from Dumka (in the 2019 election)?

You had to withdraw amendments to land acquisition law with the Opposition saying that you have compromised on tribal rights on "Jal, Jungle, Zameen" (water, forest, land)?

Could we have run the government if the tribal population of the State had been so opposed to us?

■ There was no issue. They have been raising "Jal, Jungle, Zameen" since the 2014 Lok Sabha and Assembly polls, and in 2019 too, because to talk of development they will have to acknowledge the work done by the BJP government. They [Opposition] are playing with the emotions of tribal populations, as they have nothing to show for when they were

in the government. After becoming Chief Minister, I would hold chhaups in various places and ask the people whether even an inch of land had been taken away from them.

The answer was no. I then explained how the Jharkhand Mukti Morcha's Soren family has snatched land from tribals. Under the Chota Nagpur Tenancy Act (CNT Act), and the Santhal Pargana Tenancy Act (SPT Act), provisions for selling land between tribals is also stringent, but the Opposition leaders have bought land in Pakur, Dumka while hailing from Gola. Go to Bokaro, Dhanbad, the Opposition has violated the SPT Act flagrantly. People are aware of it and the Opposition has no moral right to talk about this issue.

Could you have adjusted your allies better in seat sharing. Are you creating a Shiv Sena-like situation of resentment?

■ Lok Janshakti Party and Janata Dal (U) are our allies in Bihar not in Jharkhand. We who has filed nominations against you. Will that affect your prospects?

What about the All Jharkhand Students Union (AJSU)?

■ The AJSU had been given eight seats in 2014, but now their ambitions have risen. We have consistently kept to our alliance dharma. For example, in the just-concluded Lok Sabha poll, we gave our seat, which we had won for the past five terms, Giridih, to the AJSU. Even now we offered up to 12 seats, but if your ambitions have become even higher, then you are free to contest on your own.

But have you kept your options open for a post-poll understanding?

■ In politics, you never close any doors, you have the example of Maharashtra in front of you.

from workers and based on it we distributed ticket. Whoever you are, if you are not in a position to win, the party will not give you ticket, not even to Raghubar Das, if such a situation arises. Here the organisation is bigger than the individual.

When you are growing and are not in a position to win, as in the time of the Jan Sangh, then you fight to register a presence, spread the ideology. Now we are the biggest political party in the world, and will work accordingly.

The people reject negative politics. Just look at the 2019 poll. Rahul Gandhi had been running an intensely negative campaign against Prime Minister Modi. People rejected him. It may work for the media, but not among the people.

Will the Supreme Court verdict on the Ayodhya temple issue have an impact on the poll?

■ It will certainly have an impact. Jharkhand is a part of India and whatever happens in the rest of the country will surely have an impact here.

IN BRIEF



Ensure disbursal of maternity benefits: Sonia

Congress president Sonia Gandhi on Wednesday wrote to Chief Ministers of Congress-ruled States, asking them to ensure that lactating mothers and pregnant women receive a payment of at least ₹6,000 as promised under the National Food Security Act. Ms. Gandhi said though the莫 government introduced the maternity benefit scheme, Pradhan Mantri Matru Vandana Yojana, in 2017, it has failed to take off and barely 22% of the women received benefits of ₹5,000 under the scheme.

Lok Sabha passes Bill banning e-cigarettes

Health Minister Harsh Vardhan on Wednesday told the Lok Sabha that the Union government's move to ban the sale of electronic cigarettes was a "pre-emptive strike" before the new form of intoxication spreads as the companies making them were looking at India as an attractive market. He made these remarks during the passage of a Bill in the Lower House that bans the sale of e-cigarettes with a penal provision of up to six months imprisonment or a fine of up to ₹50,000 or both.

Haryana Cong. wants probe into illegal mining

Hitting out at the ruling BJP-JJP government in Haryana, State Congress president Kumari Selja on Wednesday demanded a probe under the supervision of the High Court into the alleged prevalence of illegal mining across the State. Ms. Selja said the latest Comptroller and Auditor General of India report highlighting irregularities in the execution of mining projects in the State needs to be probed thoroughly. The CAG had detected a loss of ₹1,476 crore in Haryana's Mines and Geology Department.

J&K's 'Back to Village' plan sees low response

The J&K administration's ambitious "Back to Village" initiative on Wednesday saw subdued response from locals, and even officials avoided visiting gram panchayats located in "hyper sensitive" locations in Pulwama, Shopian and Kulgam districts, a day after a grenade attack on one such programme in Anantnag left one sarsang and an officer dead. "The attack was aimed at hampering development process, but I assure it won't stop the process," said Kashmir Divisional Commissioner Baseer Khan.

Hugs, selfies and sulks at House

Aaditya Thackeray and Rohit Pawar the centre of attraction as MLAs take oath

ALOK DESHPANDE

MUMBAI

Nationalist Congress Party (NCP) MP Supriya Sule welcoming MLAs of her party, the Congress and the Shiv Sena, jubilant supporters hugging each other and sulking Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) leaders exuding confidence that the government won't last for more than six months. These were some of the scenes in the Maharashtra Assembly on Wednesday as the newly elected MLAs took oath.

Ms. Sule was among the first NCP leaders to arrive at the legislature building. She stood at the entrance and greeted all MLAs coming for the oath-taking ceremony. Her cousin and NCP leader, Ajit Pawar, who had attempted rebellion but backtracked and returned to the party, hugged her before entering the building.

Will do as told'
"I am with the NCP and Sharad Pawar is our leader. I will do as Sharad Pawar tells me to do," Mr. Ajit Pawar said. Ms. Sule expressed happiness over the fact that three parties were coming together.

Shiv Sena MLA Aaditya Thackeray and NCP MLA Ro-



The debutants: Shiv Sena leader Aaditya Thackeray and NCP leader Rohit Pawar after the oath-taking ceremony at Vidhan Bhavan in Mumbai on Wednesday. ■ VIVEK BENDRE

er to form the government.

On Wednesday, 287 of the 288 MLAs took oath. Former Finance Minister Sudhir Mungantiwar was not present in the Assembly owing to a family function at his native district Chandrapur. Pro-tem Speaker Kalidas Kolambkar, who was sworn in by the Governor on Tuesday night, administered the oath.

Shiv Sena MLA Aaditya Thackeray and NCP MLA Ro-

hit Pawar, both elected for the first time and touted as future leaders of their respective parties, were the centre of attraction with a huge crowd surrounding them to click selfies and greet them.

The young leaders posed together showing the victory sign for a special photo session on the Assembly building staircase.

Apart from the two leaders, the new Assembly con-

sists of youngsters such as Dheeraj Deshmukh, Ruturaj Patil, Zeeshan Siddiqui of the Congress, Yogesh Kadam of the Sena, Aditi Tatkare of the NCP, and Ram Satpute of the BJP.

"The mandate of the people is to create a new Maharashtra. We youngsters will all work under the leadership of our senior leaders and for the welfare of common people of Maharashtra," said Mr. Thackeray.

Information security stepped up at KKNPP after cyberattack'

Complete check of administrative network carried out: MoS

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

TIRUNELVELI

A comprehensive safety audit was conducted on the administrative network of the Kudankulam Nuclear Power Plant (KKNPP) following a recent cyberattack, and appropriate safety measures have been put in place to thwart similar attacks in the future, Jitendra Singh, Minister of State for Personnel, Public Grievances, Pensions and Prime Minister's Office, has said.

Responding to a question from Congress MP from Pallakkad V.K. Sreekandan on the recent cyberattack on the KKNPP network and the safety measures put in place in the wake of the incident that rattled project proponent Nuclear Power Corporation of India Limited (NPCIL), Dr. Singh said a complete check of the administrative network of the Kudankulam Nuclear Power Plant was done by the Indian Computer Emergency Response Team (CERT-In), along with the Computer and Information Security Advisory Group (CISAG) of



Safety matters: Opposition leaders and anti-nuclear groups have raised concerns about the safety of the reactors.

the Department of Atomic Energy (DAE).

"Certain measures for immediate and short-term implementation have been recommended. Several measures have been taken for further strengthening of Information Security in administrative networks like hardening of internet and administrative intranet connectivity, restriction on removable media, blocking of websites and IPs which have been identified with malicious activity, etc.," he said.

Immediately after the cyberattack was brought to light by a cyber security expert, the KKNPP administration had declared that their

"isolated network with firewalls" cannot be accessed through the internet from any part of the world, and hence, there was no need for panic.

Moreover, the strict ban on bringing communication gadgets, including mobile phones, WiFi devices and USBs, inside the KKNPP premises had further strengthened security, a statement from the KKNPP had claimed.

However, much to the embarrassment of the KKNPP administration, the NPCIL admitted within the next 24 hours that a "failed cyberattack" on its network did take place.

AIMPLB to file review plea before Dec. 9

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

LUCKNOW

The All India Muslim Personal Law Board (AIMPLB) said on Wednesday that it will file a review petition against the Supreme Court's verdict on the Ayodhya title suit before December 9.

"The board is firm on its decision to file a review petition in the Supreme Court and we have time till December 9 for doing so," AIMPLB secretary Zafaryab Jalani said.

"Exercising our constitutional right, we are going to file a review petition in the Supreme Court and we have time till December 9 for doing so," AIMPLB secretary Zafaryab Jalani said.

"The date for filing the review petition cannot be announced as of now as it is yet to be decided on whose behalf it will be filed," he said, alleging that prospective Muslim parties, who can file the review petition, are being harassed by the Ayodhya police.

Sena sounds warning to BJP

Surya-yaan may land in Delhi in future, says Sanjay Raut

STAFF REPORTER

MUMBAI

Senior Shiv Sena leader and Rajya Sabha member Sanjay Raut on Wednesday slammed the BJP once again, and said nobody should be surprised if Sena's *surya-yaan* lands in Delhi in the future.

Mr. Raut held another press conference in Mumbai against the backdrop of the BJP criticising the Sena's alliance with the Congress-NCP as desperate.

He said, "This decision is for the benefit of the country. The BJP could not force its CM upon Maharashtra despite *aghori* [dirty] prac-



Sanjay Raut

tices. There is rage among the people and people have struck back. The process of transforming the nation has started. The way BJP tried to prevent the Sena from coming to power, and through the Centre and State, they

wanted to gain power come what may. We have ended that dirty practice and shown Maharashtra a new day. My mission is complete. I had said *surya-yaan* will land on the sixth floor of Mantralaaya [after ISRO's Chandrayaan], people laughed at me. But now it has safely landed. You should not be surprised if this ship lands in Delhi."

He added, "I had predicted that Ajit Pawar will return after resigning. Now everyone will have to come together and work because people wanted the BJP government to go and Sena to come to power."

GOVERNMENT OF TAMILNADU PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT WATER RESOURCES DEPARTMENT TN I AM PROJECT REQUEST FOR BIDS (RFB) (One-Envelope Bidding Process without e-Procurement) NATIONAL OPEN COMPETITIVE PROCUREMENT Bid Invitation No.: 05/DB/DO.1/F.TNIAMP/2019/Dated:27.11.2019				
1. The Government of India has received financing from the World Bank toward the cost of the TamilNadu Irrigated Agriculture Modernisation Project and intends to apply part of the proceeds toward eligible payments under the contract for construction of works as detailed below.				
2. Bidding will be conducted through national open competitive procurement using a Request for Bids (RFB) as specified in the World Bank's "Procurement Regulations for IPF Borrowers, July 2016_Revised August 2018". ("Procurement Regulations") and is open to all Bidders as defined in the Procurement Regulations.				
3. Bidders from India should, however, be registered with the Government of Tamilnadu under class I (State level) or other State Governments/Government of India, or State/Central Government Undertakings. Bidders from India, who are not registered as above, on the date of bidding, can also participate provided they get themselves registered by the time of contract signing, if they become successful bidders.				
4. The Water Resources Department, Government of Tamilnadu, For and on behalf of Governor of Tamil Nadu, The Superintending Engineer, PWD., WRD., Upper Cauvery Basin Circle, Salem - 636 007. Tamil Nadu will be responsible for the postal delay if, in the delivery of the documents or non-receipt of the same. The bidding documents can be downloaded from the website http://www.tenders.tn.gov.in at free of cost. In such cases, the bidder is responsible for ensuring that any addenda on the website is also downloaded and incorporated.				
5. The bidding document may be purchased by interested eligible Bidders from the office of The Superintending Engineer, PWD., WRD., Upper Cauvery Basin Circle, Salem - 636 007, Tamil Nadu from 04.12.2019 to 02.01.2020 upon payment of a non-refundable fee (three sets) as indicated in the table below, in the form of Demand Draft (DD) on any Scheduled/Nationalized bank payable at Mettur Dam in favour of The Executive Engineer, PWD., WRD., Mettur Dam Division, Mettur Dam - 1, Salem District, Tamil Nadu Bidding document requested by mail will be dispatched by courier/speed post on payment of an extra amount of Rs. Rs.500/-, The Superintending Engineer, PWD., WRD., Upper Cauvery Basin Circle, Salem - 636 007, Tamil Nadu will not be held responsible for the postal delay if, in the delivery of the documents or non-receipt of the same. The bidding documents can be downloaded from the website http://www.tenders.tn.gov.in at free of cost. In such cases, the bidder is responsible for ensuring that any addenda on the website is also downloaded and incorporated.				

7 get death penalty for Dhaka cafe attack

Those convicted belong to Jamaat-ul-Mujahideen Bangladesh group; they will appeal the verdict

REUTERS
DHAKA

A Bangladesh court handed death sentences to seven members of an Islamist militant group on Wednesday for their role in an attack on a cafe in 2016 that killed 22 people, mostly foreigners, in the south Asian nation's worst such incident.

"Charges against them were proved beyond any doubt. The court gave them the highest punishment," public prosecutor Golam Sarwar Khan told reporters after the verdict, amid tight security at the court in the capital, Dhaka.

One of the eight accused was acquitted, he added. A defence lawyer said the convicted men would appeal the charges, which include training the attackers and supplying arms, explosives and funds. After the ruling, they shouted "Allahu Akbar" (God is Greatest) and "We did nothing wrong" from the



Islamist militants being taken to court for trial in the Holey Artisan Bakery attack case in Dhaka on Wednesday. ■ AFP

dock to a packed courtroom, witnesses said.

IS insignia

Two were seen wearing prayer caps bearing the insignia of Islamic State; authorities opened an investigation into how the caps reached them while they were in police custody.

The July 1 attack on the restaurant popular with fo-

reigners in Dhaka's diplomatic area shocked the nation of 160 million and unversed businesses.

Five young militants, armed with guns, sharp weapons and grenades stormed the Holey Artisan cafe, took diners hostage and killed them over 12 hours. Nine Italians, seven Japanese, an American and an Indian were among the dead. The

attackers were also killed in a rescue bid by Army commandos.

Prosecutor Khan said the seven men convicted on Wednesday belong to Jamaat-ul-Mujahideen Bangladesh, a group that seeks to establish sharia rule in the predominantly Muslim country.

"The ruling will set an example. It will give a message to militant groups that none of them will be spared," Law Minister Anisul Huq said.

Under Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, Bangladesh has been cracking down on militant groups to preserve its image as a moderate Muslim nation. After the cafe siege, police raided suspected hideouts and killed dozens of militants believed to have helped mount the attack. Hundreds more were arrested. "We are happy that justice has been served," said Shamsuzzaman Shams, whose policeman brother

was killed when he tried to enter the cafe, adding: "We want immediate execution of the ruling."

But defence lawyer Delwar Hossain said all seven men convicted on Wednesday will challenge the verdict in a higher court. "They didn't get justice," he said.

The assault was claimed by the IS but the government has consistently denied the presence in the country of any transnational militant organisation such as al-Qaeda or the IS, blaming domestic militants instead.

Polic said a faction of Jamaat-ul-Mujahideen Bangladesh, which has pledged allegiance to Islamic State, was involved in organising the cafe attack.

In the year before the atrocity, Bangladesh saw a string of grisly individual murders, including of secular writers and foreigners, claimed by the IS or al Qaeda.

U.S. to label Mexican cartels as 'terror' groups

The move comes after 9 women and children were killed by drug traffickers

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
WASHINGTON

U.S. President Donald Trump said in an interview posted online on Tuesday that he planned to designate Mexican drug cartels as terror groups.

The move comes after Mr. Trump called for a "war" on the cartels in early November when nine women and children from a Mormon community in northern Mexico were killed in a hail of gunfire. The victims were dual U.S.-Mexican citizens.

"Are you going to designate those cartels in Mexico as terror groups and start

hitting them with drones?" asked Bill O'Reilly, a conservative media personality.

"I don't want to say what I'm going to do, but they will be designated," Mr. Trump answered. He added: "I will be designating the cartels... absolutely. I have been working on that for the last 90 days... Designation is not that easy, you have to go through a process and we are well into that process."

Mexican authorities reacted swiftly, with the Foreign Ministry saying that it has contacted U.S. officials "to understand the meaning and scope of the remarks".



Donald Trump

Mexico will also "seek a high-level meeting as soon as possible to present Mexico's position" and hear Washington's views, the Foreign Ministry said.

Mexico will seek talks to "make progress with reducing the flow of arms and money from the U.S. to organised crime in Mexico, in addition to drug precursors that cross Mexican territory en route to the U.S.", the statement read. Mexico has long complained about the flow of weapons bought in the U.S. and smuggled south of the border.

Foreign Minister Marcelo Ebrard's reaction was more forceful on Twitter. "Mexico will never allow any action that means a violation of its national sovereignty," he wrote.

Swiss authorities have also sought a guarantee of the security of the Swiss representation in Colombo and its employees, a spokesperson of the Swiss Foreign Ministry said

'Unacceptable attack'
"We can confirm that a local employee of the embassy was detained against her will on the street and threatened at length by unidentified men in order to force her to disclose embassy-related information. Switzerland regards this incident as a very serious and unacceptable attack on one of its diplomatic



Hanspeter Mock

representations and its employees," the Ministry spokesperson told *The Hindu* via email from Bern.

The development comes

less than two weeks after the new government, helmed by President Gotabaya Rajapaksa, took charge in Colombo following Sri Lanka's presidential poll.

Sri Lanka's Foreign Ministry is yet to comment on the development, and *The Hindu* was not able to reach its officials for comment.

A tweet from the verified Twitter handle of the Ministry said on Wednesday evening: "Swiss Ambassador Hanspeter Mock called on Foreign Minister Dinesh Gunawardena and discussed the progress of bilateral relations."

Iran firms up response to protests

Six suspects arrested, Iranian journalists overseas penalised

FARNAZ FASSIHI
RICK GLADSTONE

Three injured in blast at Texas chemical plant

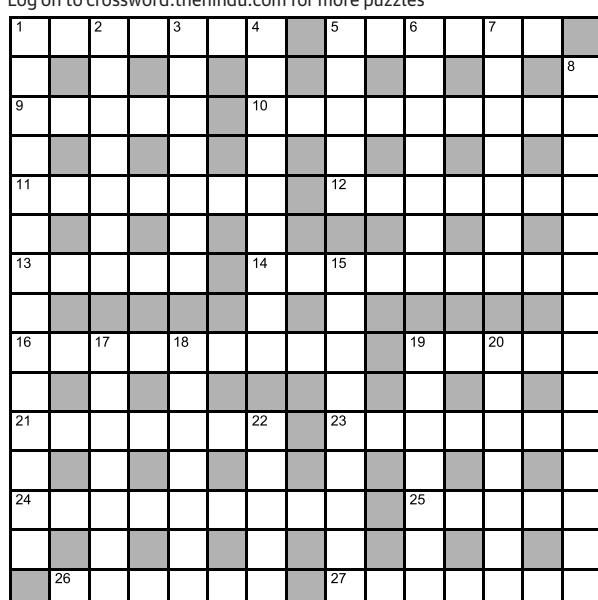
WASHINGTON
Three people were injured in an explosion at a chemical plant in Texas on Wednesday, which sent a huge fireball into the sky and triggered evacuation. TPC Group said two employees and a contractor were injured. AFP

Nineteen killed by militia in east DR Congo

BENI
Nineteen people were killed on Wednesday in eastern DR Congo by suspected group ADF, blamed for massacres that have sparked deadly protests against the UN peacekeeping mission, the UN said. AFP

THE HINDU CROSSWORD 12792

Log on to crossword.thehindu.com for more puzzles



ACROSS

- 1 Boorish fellow therefore does not start providing voice modulation (7)
- 5 Anticipate what's here (6)
- 9 Doctor and I, by the way, are slightly wet (5)
- 10 Surpass deliveries by US President (9)

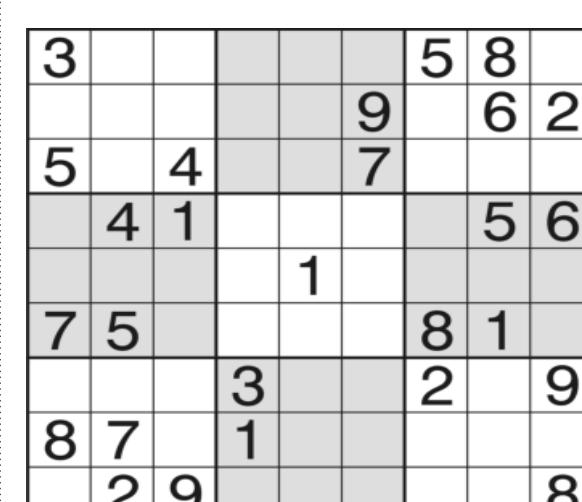
To play an interactive version of this crossword online, scan the QR code



(set by Gridman)

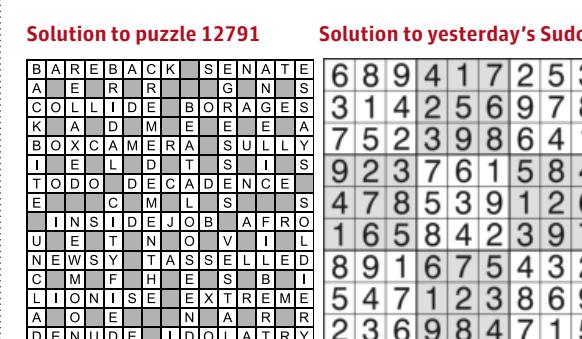
- 11 Writing about origin of love gives hint (7)
- 12 Admirer neglects to start air freshener (7)
- 13 Such a container could do with a refill (5)
- 14 Jack and missionary in waterproof cloth (9)
- 16 Master mad about Dutch city (9)
- 19 Pasta? Push this central dish from Japan! (5)
- 21 Fashionable ways to make progress (7)
- 23 Somehow ignore a historic period (4,3)
- 24 Carrier of printed matter to retail it (9)
- 25 She originally stole your lovely pencil holder (5)
- 26 Cheats Greek character backing mineral (6)
- 27 Nonsense work with lines embedded in desk (4-3)
- DOWN
- 1 Sympathies for deputy getting English speeches with no order (14)
- 17 Son, with stomach extremely nasty, is unhealthily thin (7)
- 18 Passes English with shortcomings (7)
- 19 Marriage-related opus put out on brief shop event (7)
- 20 Red-faced, allowed evidence of injury to show up first (7)
- 22 Son and father recall writing on muscular problem (5)

SUDOKU



DIFFICULTY RATING: ★★★★☆

Solution to puzzle 12791



Solution to yesterday's Sudoku

FAITH

Surrender to His will

A diligent student of Vedanta may develop erudite skills, such as the ability to expound the sastras, or even compose works and texts based on these. But Adi Sankara reiterates that more than such scholarly attainments that indicate intellectual proficiency, it is the extent to which one internalises this valuable esoteric knowledge to bring it into practice in day-to-day life that will be truly beneficial to one, pointed out Swami Vidyashankara Saraswati in a discourse. To feel and experience the truth of God is different from merely stating esoteric truth.

It is not easy to give up the affinity to the body and the world, despite the awareness of their impermanence. Renunciation or tyaga that leads to surrender to the will of God is the springboard for God realisation. It is an arduous path even for the devout who have renounced everything. Pattinathar, a great Siva devotee, is born into a rich family. Eventually, he gives up everything and adopts the lifestyle of a wandering devotee, visiting temples and offering prayers to the deities. Once, during his visit to Ujjain, he is wrongly accused of theft and the king orders him to be punished and he is sent to be burnt in the "kazhu maram." Even in that difficult situation he does not lose heart. He is unable to explain how this accusation pertains to him and the punishment is executed. But the wonder is that he remains unscathed while the tree is burnt.

He says in his hymn that he experiences the power and presence of the Almighty. It is clear to him then that none can stand against the force of destiny and fate and that there is something beyond individual action and effort. He then surrenders all to God's will and Sankalpa which alone prevails in the life though it is difficult to realise and accept it.

18 dead after bus falls into gorge in Nepal

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
KATHMANDU

At least 18 people died after a bus skidded off a highway in Nepal and plunged into a deep gorge on Wednesday, authorities said, while rescuers scoured the steep terrain for survivors.

The bus was travelling from hilly Arghakhanchi district west of Kathmandu to the southern city of Butwal when it left the road and plummeted some 350 m to the ground.

"We have recovered dead bodies of 17 passengers and the bus driver, including two infants," chief district officer Bijayraj Poudel said. Twelve others were taken to hospital, Mr. Poudel said.

Labour says U.K. govt. holding secret talks to sell NHS to U.S.

Corbyn shows papers on trade negotiations to attack Johnson

ASSOCIATED PRESS
LONDON

The leader of Britain's main opposition party, Jeremy Corbyn, accused Prime Minister Boris Johnson of secretly negotiating the basis of a trade deal with the U.S. ahead of the country's departure with the European Union, including a contentious plan to extend patents for American drug companies.

Companies at the expense of taxpayers, who would be barred from buying cheaper generic drugs.

"We have got evidence that under Boris Johnson the NHS is on the table and will be up for sale," Mr. Corbyn said.

Mr. Johnson described Mr. Corbyn's claims as "an absolute invention," and "completely untrue."

"We are absolutely resolved that there will be no sale of the NHS, no privatisation," Mr. Johnson told the BBC.

"The NHS is not on the table in any way... in no aspect whatever."



Jeremy Corbyn

liminary soundings ahead of formal trade talks.

With the future of the National Health Service in focus in the December 12 general election, Mr. Corbyn highlighted the drug price issue and argued that extending patents would boost the profits of big pharmaceutical companies.

The Labour Party's Corbyn waved 451 pages of documents at a press conference on Wednesday, declaring that they covered six rounds of negotiations beginning in July 2017 – pre-

MARKET WATCH

	27-11-2019	% CHANGE
Sensex	41,021	0.49
US Dollar	71.35	0.21
Gold	38,503	-0.09
Brent oil	64.28	0.56

NIFTY 50

	PRICE	CHANGE
Adani Ports	372.95	2.55
Asian Paints	1715.35	5.05
Axist Bank	752.90	0.65
Bajaj Auto	3212.05	33.90
Bajaj Finance	9228.45	107.15
Bharti Airtel	433.35	1.00
BPCL	505.90	9.25
Britannia Ind	3091.10	35.85
Cipla	468.00	-10.55
Coal India	201.00	3.25
Dr Reddys Lab	2972.00	6.15
Eicher Motors	23021.65	215.95
GAIL (India)	124.45	-0.55
Grasim Ind	788.10	-2.95
HCL Tech	1128.25	20.20
HDFC	2336.30	31.65
HDFC Bank	1278.40	3.35
Hero MotoCorp	2523.25	28.65
Hindalco	203.00	4.30
Hind Unilever	2093.25	34.90
ICICI Bank	505.50	-5.20
IndusInd Bank	1526.35	10.45
Bharti Infralet	225.30	-7.35
Infosys	695.75	5.15
Indian Oil Corp	131.10	1.80
ITC	246.95	-2.20
JSW Steel	252.95	-0.30
Kotak Bank	1617.90	13.50
L&T	1335.50	-27.50
M&M	539.95	1.35
Maruti Suzuki	7294.40	169.40
Nestle India Ltd.	14562.70	38.30
NTPC	115.75	-0.90
ONGC	132.65	2.40
PowerGrid Corp	195.10	0.70
Reliance Ind	1569.85	9.60
State Bank	343.55	8.05
Sun Pharma	458.75	8.00
Tata Motors	165.90	2.50
Tata Steel	421.35	-2.80
TCS	2054.30	7.65
Tech Mahindra	767.55	3.95
Titan	1167.15	1.05
UltraTech Cement	4234.65	121.80
UPL	551.85	10.15
Vedanta	146.95	1.85
Wipro	240.05	2.50
YES Bank	68.25	5.10
Zee Entertainment	319.50	-0.20

EXCHANGE RATES

CURRENCY	TT BUY	TT SELL
US Dollar	71.15	71.47
Euro	78.34	78.69
British Pound	91.67	92.09
Japanese Yen (100)	65.19	65.48
Chinese Yuan	10.13	10.18
Swiss Franc	71.31	71.63
Singapore Dollar	52.09	52.33
Canadian Dollar	53.62	53.89
Malaysian Ringgit	17.05	17.14

Source: Indian Bank

BULLION RATES CHENNAI

November 27 rates in rupees with previous rates in parentheses		
Retail Silver (1g)	47.9	(47.7)
22 ct gold (1g)	3612	(3618)

review the norm.

According to RBI norms, small finance banks need to list the entity within three years of having ₹500 crore capital.

"Our deadline was January 31," Mr. Ghosh, who is retiring by the end of the month, said. The new MD & CEO Nitin Chugh, a former HDFC Bank executive heading digital banking, will take charge on December 1.

On whether the lender had any plans to convert itself into a universal bank, Mr. Ghosh said they would look at it after completing five years as a small finance bank.

"After completion of five years, we can apply for universal bank licence. We will look at it at that time. Since the capital requirement of a universal bank is much lower, our ability to leverage is much better in [a] universal bank," Mr. Ghosh said.

Govt. extends 15th finance panel term

Commission to submit two reports; recommendations will be applicable for six years

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

NEW DELHI

The Union Cabinet on Wednesday approved the extension of the term of the 15th Finance Commission, which will now submit two reports.

The term had been extended till October 30. The first report, for financial year 2020-21, will be submitted in the coming months before the Union Budget, and the second report for the period 2021-26 will be presented by October 30, 2020.

This will effectively mean the 15th Finance Commission's recommendations will be applicable for six years and not the conventional five-year period.

"The extension of the term will enable the Commission to examine various comparable estimates for financial projections in view



The extension will help the N.K. Singh-led panel to examine comparable estimates for financial projections. ■ R. V. MOORTHY

of reforms and the new realities to finalise its recommendations for the period 2020-2026," the government said in a release.

"The Commission, on account of the restrictions imposed by the model code of conduct, completed its visit

to States only recently," the release added. "This has had a bearing on the detailed assessments of States' requirements."

According to a former chairman of a previous Finance Commission, it is not unprecedented for the term

to extend when there is a restructuring of States, or if the terms of reference for the Commission have been significantly expanded.

"This Commission has seen its terms of reference expanded and the reorganisation of J&K, and so, an extension of the term is not unusual," the former chairman said. "It happened before in the 14th Finance Commission when Andhra Pradesh and Telangana were split."

In a situation where the number of States has changed, the former chairman explained, the Commission then has to alter its calculations for every State and this takes time.

"The report for the year 2020-21 will be submitted soon, before the presentation of the Budget," the office

of 15th Finance Commission Chairman N.K. Singh told *The Hindu*. "The formula for the first year (2020-21) will not be carried forward for the next five years in a mechanical way, but will be subject to any changes that the Finance Commission may consider appropriate based on the circumstances at that time."

The 9th Finance Commission under the chairmanship of N.K.P. Salve also saw its recommendation period extended to six years from the conventional five.

"The proposed increase in coverage of the period for which the Commission's recommendations are applicable will help medium-term resource planning for the State governments and the Central government," the government release said.

"The regulations are very clear on what brokers can do with client securities," Ajay Tyagi, Chairman, SEBI said while addressing the media on the sidelines of Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) Asian Round Table on Corporate Governance here.

"The latest salvo from the SEBI Chairman comes close on the heels of the regulatory directive last week that barred Karvy Stock Broking from signing new clients for alleged offences related to misuse of client funds.

"What is basically never allowed was being done," he added, while referring to the circular issued in June that stipulated that a brokerage cannot transfer or pledge client securities with banks or financial institutions to raise funds for itself.

"It cannot be anyone's case even if these instructions were not so explicit that they can use clients' securities for doing something (of) their own... This is a very basic thing that cannot be allowed," he said. Apart from barring Karvy Stock Broking from signing new clients, the capital markets

SBI Cards files papers for ₹9,600 crore IPO

130 million shares on offer for sale

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

MUMBAI

SBI Cards and Payment Services Ltd., the credit card joint venture of State Bank of India, has filed a draft red herring prospectus with market regulator SEBI for an initial public offer (IPO) of ₹9,600 crore.

Most of the shares on offer for sale will come from SBI, which has 74% stake in SBI Cards, and CA Rover Holdings, which has 26%.

There will be fresh issue of shares of around ₹500 crore and offer for sale of 130 million shares. According to the offer document, SBI and CA Rover will offer 37.3 million, or 4%, and 93.2 million, or 10% shares,



through the IPO.

Up to 1,864,669 shares have been reserved for employees and 13,052,680 for SBI shareholders. SBI Cards is the second-largest credit card issuer in the country after HDFC Bank with 9.5 million cards. It will be the second company among SBI's arms to go public, after SBI Life Insurance Company.

ZEEL comes under SEBI scanner

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

MUMBAI

Zee Entertainment Enterprises Ltd. (ZEEL) has come under the scanner of the Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) after it emerged that two directors – independent director Neharika Vohra and non-independent director Subodh Kumar – had raised concerns

relating to corporate governance and related party transactions in their resignation letters.

The capital market regulator is believed to be looking into some of the allegations, including non-implementation of certain board decisions taken in October relating to treasury operations and issues raised regarding build up of related party balances and advances for content acquisition.

The board of directors noted that all of the issues raised by the resigning directors have been duly discussed, deliberated and acted upon... in the previous committee / board meetings

Ujjivan SFB to reverse-merge holding firm

Price band for the bank's ₹750-crore initial public offering is ₹36-₹37 per share

MANOJIT SAHA

MUMBAI

Ujjivan Small Finance Bank, which is coming out with an initial public offer on December 2, will reverse-merge the listed holding company after two years.

In an interaction with *The Hindu*, Samit Ghosh, MD and CEO of the bank, said that the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) had asked the bank to apply for the reverse merger after it completed five years of operations. The bank started operations in February 2017. The holding company, Ujjivan Financial Services, is also listed.

On Wednesday, the small finance bank announced its initial public offering to raise ₹750 crore. The bank has raised ₹250 crore through pre-IPO placement.

The IPO, with a price band of ₹36 to ₹37 per equity share, will open on December 2 and close on December

utilising the fund within two years," Mr. Ghosh said. "After the IPO, the promoters' holding will come down from 100% to 84-85%."

Bank may request review

Ujjivan Financial Services is the promoter of Ujjivan SFB and has 100% stake in the bank. The bank will also have to bring the promoters' holding to 40% by 2022, but may request the regulator to

review the norm.

According to RBI norms, small finance banks need to list the entity within three years of having ₹500 crore capital.

"Our deadline was January 31," Mr. Ghosh, who is retiring by the end of the month, said. The new MD & CEO Nitin Chugh, a former HDFC Bank executive heading digital banking, will take charge on December 1.

On whether the lender had any plans to convert itself into a universal bank, Mr. Ghosh said they would look at it after completing five years as a small finance bank.

"After completion of five years, we can apply for universal bank licence. We will look at it at that time. Since the capital requirement of a universal bank is much lower, our ability to leverage is much better in [a] universal bank," Mr. Ghosh said.

Auto slowdown may bottom out in Q3: ATMA

Steady revival will mark FY21, says DG

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

CHENNAI

The contraction in the automotive sector due to economic slowdown will bottom out in the third quarter of the current fiscal, according to the Automotive Tyre Manufacturers' Association (ATMA).

'Amazon is burning every year'



National Geographic Society's chief scientist Jonathan Baillie warns that we need to heed nature's wake-up call

PRAVEEN SUDEVAN

Jonathan Baillie was 12 when he got his first National Geographic magazine. He opened it to see pictures of the English primatologist Jane Goodall with her customary company – chimpanzees. Till then, Jonathan never knew one could actually have a career by studying the natural world, especially chimpanzees. "I saw that there was a whole new world out there. And at that moment, I realised that was the type of career I wanted."

A few days later, when Jonathan's parents took him to one of Goodall's lectures, he handed her his pocket money – two dollars, to support her conservation efforts. "I ended up studying gorillas for years after I finished my PhD and followed the footsteps of my childhood idol." Last November, when he got a chance to interview her, he "was more nervous than usual." Jonathan is now the Executive Vice President and Chief Scientist of National Geographic Society. He is an important part of the environmental organisation he used to follow as a child.

He spoke to *The Hindu* during his visit to Bengaluru as part of the annual TN Khosoo Memorial Lecture, organised by Ashoka Trust for Research in Ecology and the Environment. Edited excerpts.



One step at a time Jonathan Baillie feels a lot can be done individually ■ SUDHAKARA JAIN



When it comes to sustainability, are we fighting a losing battle?

● There is no doubt that there are great challenges. When National Geographic started in 1888, there were 1.5 billion people on the planet and now we are at about 7.7 billion and in 2050, we will be about 9 or 10 billion. The big challenge is to figure out how we can effectively use the resources and create what is called a circular economy, wherein we do not create things that we can not destroy (like plastic). But with breakthroughs in technology, I am relatively optimistic for the future.

How are people across the world reacting to grim warnings about the world?

● I feel particularly sorry for the next generation because, I have young children myself. And, having to explain to them what we are leaving them does not feel very good. I think there is a lot of

pressure on the next generation. But I also think they raise up and address these challenges, and basically hold us a little accountable for not doing it properly. We saw Greta Thunberg talking about climate-related issues. So, they are not going to put up with us making a whole bunch of promises and not doing anything.

When I travel around the world, it is clear that everyone sees that we are facing the greatest challenges humanity has ever faced. Now, we need some exceptional leadership globally to think of new ways of doing things so that we can provide for humanity and other forms of life.

But if we continue to be the way we are, what are the adverse effects we would be facing in another 50 years?

● We have currently converted about half the planet. So about half is in a semi-natural state. In 2050, if our current projections are followed, we will only have about 10% of the wild space left. And that is devastating because the earth's ecosystems, like forests, are absorbing human-created Carbon dioxide. If they are not absorbing the carbon, then the planet will get warmer faster and that will be extremely challenging. We need to basically maintain what we have left, which is about half the planet in a natural state, and then we govern and manage the rest more sustainably.

How did you react to the Amazon rainforest wildfires this year?

● Amazon has been burning every year. It was just that more attention was raised this year. That is because I think there is a greater understanding of the imperilled state of biodi-



More than 5 trillion pieces of plastic are already floating in our oceans.

World plastic production has increased exponentially from 2.3 million tons in 1950 to 162 million in 1993 to **448 million** by 2015.

By 2050, virtually every seabird species on the planet will be eating plastic.

Estimates for how long plastic endures range from **450 years** to forever.

Some **700 species** of marine animals have been reported so far to have eaten or become entangled in plastic.

Source: National Geographic

versity and our major ecosystems. Amazon also works as a water pump. If you did not have a large forest coverage, you would not have the local climate to grow the food you want... they are all linked. It made me realise that we have these large life-support systems on the planet that we do not understand very well. So next year, we are planning a major expedition going into tropical rainforests to understand what they do for biodiversity and for humanity in terms of impacting local and global climate.

It does not seem like we have collectively realised the global peril that we are facing. Do you think it should be communicated more effectively?

● For a long time, people were talking about climate change. Many just thought this is not really happening. But we are starting to see the impacts of climate change with more fires. People are dealing with the implications of this change, seeing hotter seasons and crops being devastated because of it. I think we are still moving too slowly. We have the Convention of Biological Diversity happening in October 2020 in China, which is an opportunity to set a whole range of new targets that can actually be measured.

Can a developing economy like India, with millions of impoverished people, afford to adopt sustainable measures – using renewable energy, for instance?

● I find India, in particular, has a cultural appreciation for the natural world. It is stronger than many other parts of the world, which gives me hope that the people here will make the right decisions. When you go to international conventions, it is the developing countries that are leading the environmental movements. We are seeing plastic bans in many developing countries. So, I personally see leadership coming primarily from these countries.

At the household level, what can a person do to help the planet?

● The reality is that each individual has an impact on the planet. If we live our lives slightly differently, we can have a much lower negative impact. It has to do with how you vote, what you eat, schools you send your children to, where you buy things from. For example, you could be a vegetarian; and reduce, reuse and recycle. These are things that are within our power.

IN OUR BACKYARD

ABHISHEK GULSHAN

Low temperatures in the city gives us bird watchers a cause for great celebration. Bird sightings go up as many winter migrants make their way into Delhi-NCR, keeping all of us on the lookout every day.

One bird to visit the city is the Common Chiffchaff or *Phylloscopus collybita*, as it's known scientifically. *Phylloscopus* literally translates to leaf-seeker and 'collybita' has been derived from the Latin word 'collybita', meaning the money-changer, from the sound it makes.

In its breeding time, the song of the bird resembles a two-note high-pitched sharp and rhythmic 'chiff-chaff-chiff-chaff-chiff-chaff'. In areas where they migrate to, they generally utter a warbling 'hweet'. The bird has onomatopoeic names in many other languages apart from English, reiterating the significance of its sound. *Zilpzap* in German, *Tijtjaf* in Dutch, and *siff-saff* in Welsh.

The Common Chiffchaff is a small-sized bird, mostly 10-11 cm in length. It is often found flitting in trees in our backyard. The only way to describe it is to say it's plain – brown overall with a dull white or yellowish front and a dull



The greater adapter Common Chiffchaff ■ ABHISHEK GULSHAN

Into the city

The Common Chiffchaff is a warbler that makes the sound of money, and is making its winter appearance

white to grey-brown underside. The only colour it has is yellow/green at the bend of its wings, extending to its rump.

The wings are square-ended or have a slightly forked tail. It has a short, straight and slender blackish bill and long, generally dark-coloured legs. Both males and females look very similar.

It is most often found in small groups of its own kind, other leaf

gardens, marshes and near water or damp areas.

The Chiffchaff breeds in the Himalayas and mainly inhabits open forests, mountain scrubs, orchards and gardens. They'll be around through winter, right upto May.

Movements are very quick and frenzied, with noticeable and frequent wing-flicking, like most leaf-warblers. Tail movements are pronounced with flicking and wagging vertically and even sideways flick-

ing, much like Hume's Warbler, from our previous article.

If you are not a bird watcher, you may confuse a female sparrow with this bird, but know that sparrows are bigger, with broader beaks to be able to crush grains.

The writer is the founder of NINOX - Owl About Nature, a nature-awareness initiative. He is the Delhi-NCR reviewer for Ebird, a Cornell University initiative, monitoring rare sightings of birds. He formerly led a programme of WWF India.



5 EVENTS WORTH YOUR WHILE



DANCE

Bharatanatyam
Natya Vriksha will stage Gandhi: Warp and Weft, a solo Bharatanatyam performance by dancer and choreographer Geeta Chandran. The presentation, comprising six themes, showcases the key concepts of Gandhian philosophy, including satyagraha, ahimsa, the campaign against manual scavenging and khadi promotion. **VENUE:** Kamani Auditorium, Copernicus Marg **TIME:** 7 p.m.



FILM

Himalayan documentary
Mountain, Priest, Son, a documentary on metaphysics and morality of risk in the face of socio-environmental change, will be screened as part of 10th CMS Vatavaran International Film Festival and Forum on Environment and Wildlife. Vaibhav Kaul, a geographer, is the director. **VENUE:** Nalanda Hall, Dr Ambedkar International Centre, 15 Janpath **TIME:** 10 a.m. - 11.30 a.m.



PERFORMANCE

Lute and sitar
The Italian Embassy Cultural Centre, in collaboration with IIC, is organising the Sangam Strings Concert this evening. A confluence of the music of Italian lute player Emilio Bezzini and Indian sitar player Rohan Dasgupta, the performance will also feature Arunava Mukherjee on the tabla. **VENUE:** C.D. Deshmukh Auditorium, IIC **TIME:** 6.30 p.m.



FOOD

Thanksgiving special
AnnaMaya, the European foodhall at Andaz Delhi has curated a special menu for Thanksgiving Day. On till 1st December, this four-course set menu offers a Golden Glazed Turkey (whole) with a special Pumpkin Pie. Besides, a Thanksgiving turkey, prepared traditionally, is also available as a takeaway option. **VENUE:** Asset No.1, Aerocity **TIME:** 24 hours

PEOPLE

Coconuts about the planet

Learn how to make spoons and bowls with used coconut shells from Tirunelveli-based artisan Ananda Perumal

For Ananda Perumal, the best thing about working with coconut shells is that he does not "disturb anyone" in the process. "Like the rain, my material comes from above," says the artisan, adding, "I use what the trees offer." The products he makes, be it a utility item or accessory, decompose without leaving a mark of its existence on the planet. Ananda, who runs Kavin Art Gallery in Tirunelveli, has been into coconut shell craft for eight years now. "But in India, the products are not that popular as compared to say, the Netherlands or Scotland," he feels.

Which is why Ananda wants to teach the craft to more people and popularise it. "A soap dish made of coconut shell can cost ₹150. People often raise questions about the high cost," he says. Coconut shell can be a delicate material to work with, despite it being sturdy. "I cannot predict how the shell I pick to work on will turn out to be. It might develop cracks mid-way as I sculpt; there are instances when a cup splits just as I give the finishing touches... For every five cups I craft, two tend to break during their making." The many implements used in the craft, such as blades, often hurt the fingers of the artisan.

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AKILA KANNADASAN

Contact us at delhimetro@thehindu.co.in



RETAIL

Fashion
Péro, the brand by textile designer Aneeth Arora, is hosting its annual fashion and lifestyle exhibition called 'péro weekend of love'. This four-day show, which begins today, will have the label's collections including ready-to-wear garments, hats, handbags, shoes, accessories, and more. **VENUE:** 231, Patparganj Industrial Area **TIME:** 10 a.m. - 8 p.m.

Cheesecake and a day IN THE LIFE OF PHOEBE

After culture, selfies and food, people are now travelling for another reason — to get a feel of what it is like to be on a television show's set, reliving their favourite characters



SRIVATSAN S

"How you doin?", "We were on a break", "The art of unagi"... these phrases might put an instant smile on your face, if you have grown up religiously following the celebrated sitcom *Friends*.

The TV show from the '90s is no longer a pop culture phenomenon; it has become a part of our lives. Ever wondered what transpired inside the walls of Central Perk, the iconic cafe where Ross, Joey, Chandler, Monica, Phoebe and Rachel whiled away 10 seasons? Have you daydreamed about spending #ComfyTime on that orange couch at Central Perk or breaking into an impromptu dance in front of the fountain that features in the title song.

Make your wish come true by embarking on Friendsgiving, a three-hour-long studio tour, organised by Warner Bros to commemorate the 25th anniversary of *Friends*, as part of Thanksgiving celebrations. It is priced at \$139 (approx ₹10,000), and is on till December 1.

The idea behind these tours is to offer an immersive experience, thereby allowing visitors to relive and recreate fan moments inside the sets. "Studio tours give guests a unique opportunity to step behind the lens and see the actual sets and sound stages where great names in the industry made history. In intimate groups led by knowledgeable guides, guests explore the sets of their favourite films and TV shows," says an official from Warner Bros Studio, in an



Lights, camera, action (Clockwise from above) Prof Carl Chinn; Central Perk set at Warner Bros Studio in Burbank; fans in their Game of Thrones outfits in Northern Ireland • SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

email interview.

The Central Perk set is just the icing on the cake at the 110-acre Warner Bros Studio, which also encompasses Apartment 4A, The Elevator and Caltech Physics Department Cafeteria from *The Big Bang Theory* as well as exhibits from the *Harry Potter* series and *Fantastic Beasts*.

Every year, fans arrive in batches at Warner Bros Studio located in Burbank, California, to experience the joy of being an 'insider' and explore the various facets of Hollywood.

Studio tours are typically organised by giant production houses. But there is another brand-building exercise wherein the tours are moderated and

operated by fans at places made popular by TV shows.

These are independent bodies that have no connection with either the production house or the broadcasting company, but work with a singular purpose: that of offering a memorable experience. Fans tour, as it is called, also enables in registering maximum footfalls, therefore making the filming locations a global travel destination.

For instance, take the case of Northern Ireland, where the sensational period drama *Game of Thrones* was shot. It has now become a sought-after place for tourists, after Dubrovnik in Croatia. According to Tourism Northern Ireland's website, the region made over 50 million Euros in 2018, most of which came from *GoT* fans.

Thanks to the show's popularity, the *GoT* tour, which started with a 25-seater coach operating three times a week from Dublin in 2014, has now expanded to 25 full coaches per week from Dublin, Derry, Tollymore and Belfast – the tickets priced under €70 (approx ₹5,530).

"We provide replica Stark cloaks and leather Ironborn jerkins as well as replica swords, shields and banners from the show and our guides have all worked as extras on *GoT* for many years. They will lead you through old growth forests, through crumbling ruins and along windswept rocky beaches to see some of the most beautiful scenery in Northern Ireland," says Dorothy Nealon, business development manager of Game of Thrones Tours, shedding light on their model, adding, "At each location, our guide will use video footage to show how the location looked before the show and share interesting behind-the-scenes stories."

Given the divided reviews for the final season, which premiered earlier this year, was there a major dip in the number of

AROUND THE WORLD IN FIVE SHOWS

The Vampire Diaries: Mystic Grill, Georgia

Sherlock: Speedy's Sandwich Bar & Cafe, Kings Cross, London

House of Cards: Baltimore Museum of Art, Baltimore, Maryland, USA

Sacred Games: Nash & Nayo by Vista Rooms, Lonavala

The Walking Dead: Woodbury, Main Street, Georgia

NM 87111 is not some random address in New Mexico.

It was where Walter White (Bryan Cranston), the chemistry professor-turned-kingpin, resided along with Skyler (Anna Gunn). Fans drive around the property, clicking selfies – sometimes, facing the wrath of its current owner. The tour covers multiple stops, including Walter White's house, Jesse Pinkman's RV junkyard, Jesse's house and Saul's office.

A rewarding experience

But these guided-tours are not limited to taking Instagrammable photos and recreating scenes from the shows.

At least, that is the line of thought that Brum Tours, which organises *Peaky Blinders* set visits in London, subscribes to.

The British drama, based on the real mafia gang that terrorised Birmingham in the 1900s, has earned a niche fan base of its own. What is fascinating about Brum Tours is its guide, Prof Carl Chinn, who is the great grandson of one of the original gang members, Edward Derrick.

"Guests enjoy the history and wealth of facts they discover on our tours. We have had guests who have lived in Birmingham their whole lives walk away after learning something new about their hometown. We have visitors who choose to dress up on the tour, which makes for fantastic pictures under the dark viaducts," explains Stacey Deely of Brum Tours, about their programme, developed primarily to disseminate the rich history of England.

This eight-hour tour is planned in such a way that fans can wander through Tommy Shelby's mansion (Arley Hall in Cheshire), relive the moments of Tommy-Grace's wedding at the church, and stand at the exact spot where the deadly bomb went off in Season Five. "They will then take you on a tour back to the 1890s and early 1900s, recounting the story of the real gangs and taking in the Rainbow Pub because, most importantly, the term 'Peaky Blinder' was first penned there," she says, adding that they average at 45 visitors for each tour, costing not more than €60 (around ₹4,700).

footfalls? "We have been busy all through the year. The show has highlighted important landscapes and scenery of Northern Ireland to the world. Getting to the country is as accessible as it has ever been. These things combined ensure we have visitors all year round," she adds.

Walter White was here

Speaking of divided reviews, Netflix's latest movie *El Camino*, a spin-off of the cult series *Breaking Bad*, was

much-publicised before its release.

Unlike the gold-standard status set by the show, the movie opened to mixed reactions from fans and critics. However, nothing could deter fans from taking the *Breaking Bad* RV Tours (priced at \$75, approx ₹5,400) in Albuquerque, New Mexico, which has three packages – *Breaking Bad*, *Better Call Saul* and *El Camino* tours.

"We noticed an increase in the bookings due to *El Camino*," says Frank Sandoval, public relations director of NM Film Tours. 3828 Piermont Dr NE Albuquerque, NM 87111.



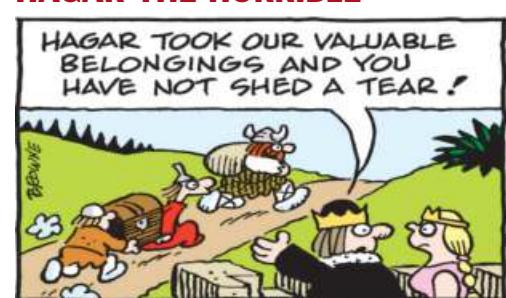
POOCH CAFE



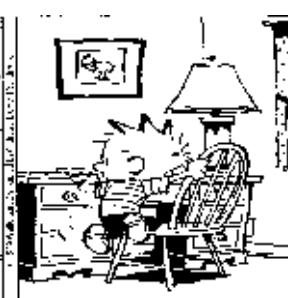
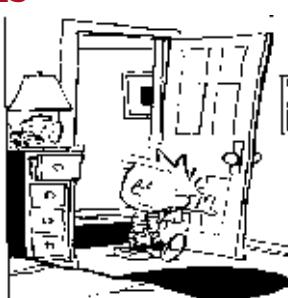
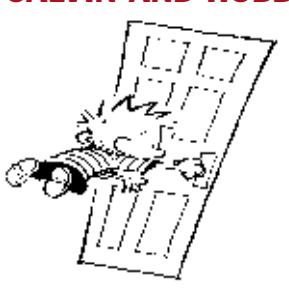
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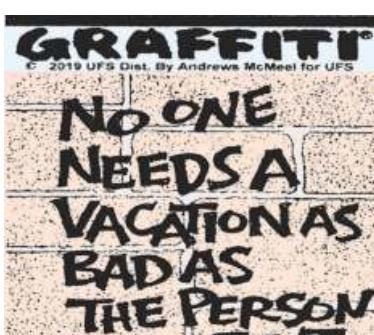
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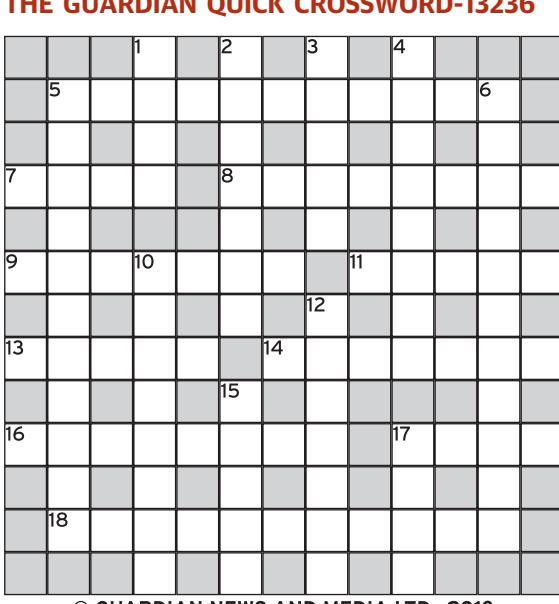
CALVIN AND HOBBES



TIGER

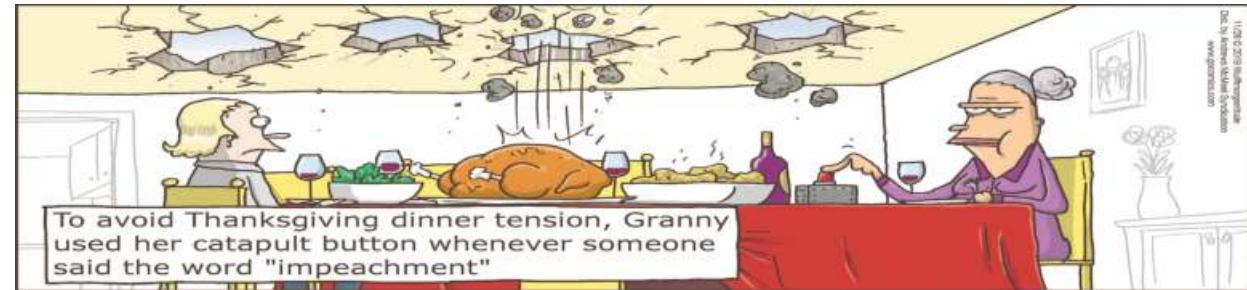


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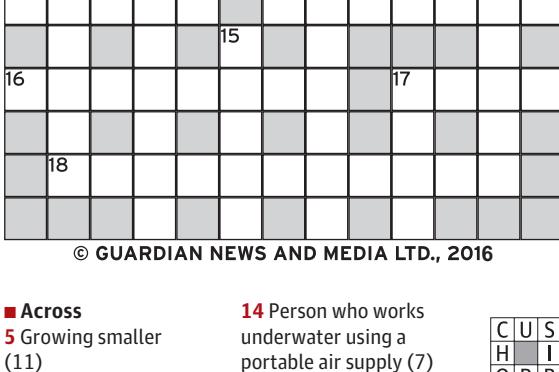


4 Becoming more mature (8)
5 Chop-chop (6,5)
6 Mixture of spices used in curries – am a gas alarm (anag) (5,6)
10 Colder (8)
12 Paper folding art (7)
15 LX – highest possible score with one dart (5)
17 Device that rotates to show the direction of the wind (4)

WUMO



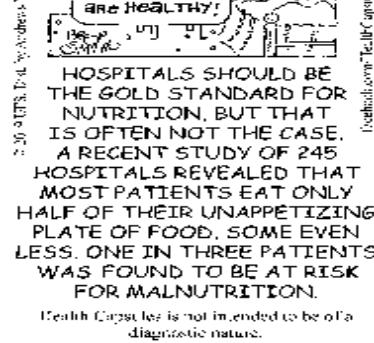
THE GUARDIAN QUICK CROSSWORD-13236



Solution will appear in The Hindu dated November 29, 2019.

Solution No. 13235

PEARLS BEFORE SWINE



- Across
5 Growing smaller (11)
7 One of five at a birth (4)
8 Tree whose leaves are eaten by silkworms (8)
9 Pacify (7)
11 Florida resort city (5)
13 Jumping firework (5)
■ Down
14 Person who works underwater using a portable air supply (7)
16 Submissive (8)
17 Small medicine bottle (4)
18 Impulse to steal (11)
■ Across
15 Prayer ending (4)
2 Living (7)
3 Lamps (anag) – song (5)

C	U	S	T	O	M	M	U	S	S	E	L	I	N	T	I
H	I	U	N	T	I										
O	R	B	I	T	W	E	D	L	O	C	K				
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IN BRIEF



Bailey appointed Australia cricket selector

SYDNEY

Former Australia T20 captain George Bailey was appointed on Wednesday as one of the country's three national selectors, replacing Greg Chappell. He joins chairman Trevor Hohns and coach Justin Langer and draws the curtain on his long playing career after the Big Bash League in early February to take on the role full-time. AFP

Hughes remembered

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
ADELAIDE

Phillip Hughes is always in his teammates' thoughts and the Australian team will raise a toast to "absent friends" in the memory of the cricketer who died five years ago.

In a tragic chain of events, 25-year-old Hughes died after being struck by a bouncer on the neck while batting for South Australia in a Sheffield Shield match in Sydney on November 25, 2014. Three days short of turning 26, he suffered a brain hemorrhage and died without regaining consciousness.



Phillip Hughes. ■ FILE PHOTO

Rajasthan makes last four after final day drama

Pips Delhi and takes the second spot in Group A; Washington proves his all-round mettle as TN tops the other group

MUSHTAQ ALI

S. DIPAK RAGAV
SURAT

Washington Sundar had bowled well but had been unlucky not to get a wicket in the first three matches. On Wednesday, it was his turn to set up the match for Tamil Nadu with three quick strikes. He then returned from the dugout to make an unbeaten 38 (22b, 3x6) and guide the team past Jharkhand. The eight-wicket win helped Tamil Nadu reach the semifinals of the Mushtaq Ali Trophy.

Electing to bat, Jharkhand was shot out for 85 with left-arm spinner M. Siddharth continuing his dream-run with a second four-wicket (4/18) haul in three matches after Washington had removed the top three batsmen.

Three strikes

The India off-spinner first dismissed Kumar Deobrat, caught at square-leg, before Virat Singh miscued a shot to give a simple catch to the backward-point fielder. Washington then had Supriyo Kumar leg-before, leaving Jharkhand tottering at 27/3 in the seventh over.

Siddharth cleaned up the lower half, with a few batsmen holing out in the deep, even as Sai Kishore picked up a wicket with a beautiful delivery that spun and bowled left-hander Sonu Kumar.

In reply, Washington and Dinesh Karthik saw the team home within 14.5 overs to ensure TN finished ahead of Karnataka on Net Run Rate.

Ashwin boost for TN

Tamil Nadu will get a huge boost for its semifinal clash with off-spinner R. Ashwin set to join the squad on Thursday.



Star of the day: Washington Sundar removed three Jharkhand batsmen with his off-spin before steering Tamil Nadu home.

■ FILE PHOTO: K. PICHUMANI

THE SCORES

Group A: Rajasthan 133/7 in 20 overs (Rajesh, Bishnoi 36, Deepak Chahar 55 n.o., Subodh Bhat 2/20, Nitish Rana 2/25) bt Delhi 131/9 in 20 overs (Rishabh Pant 30, Lalit Yadav 30, Aniket Choudhary 2/35, Khaleel Ahmed 2/20, Arjit Gupta 3/12, Rahul Chahar 2/26).

Maharashtra 167/5 in 20 overs (Ruturaj Gaikwad 27, Vijay Zol 38, Rahul Tripathi 61, Sumit Kumar 3/32) bt Haryana 165/7 in 20 overs (Shivam Chauhan 33, Himanshu Rana 28, Rahul Tewaria 28, Azim Kazi 2/41).

Group B: Jharkhand 85 in 18.1 overs (Washington Sundar 3/10, M. Siddharth 4/18) lost to Tamil Nadu 86/2 in 13.5 overs (Washington Sundar 38 n.o.).

Mumbai 243/3 in 20 overs (Prithvi Shaw 53, Shreyas Iyer 80 n.o., Suryakumar Yadav 80, Harpreet Brar 2/44) bt Punjab 221/6 in 20 overs (Shubman Gill 78, Abhishek Sharma 47, Gurkeerat Mann 40, Sharud Thakur 2/41, Tushar Deshpande 2/35, Shubham Ranjane 2/40).

Thursday is a rest day.

Chahar's bat does the talking

SPORTS REPORTER
SURAT

The fight for the final semi-final spot in Group A went down to the wire before Rajasthan booked it by the slightest of margins on Net Run Rate (NRR).

Rajasthan defeated Delhi by two runs as Deepak Chahar showed the way with an unbeaten 55 off 42 balls with seven sixes. The skipper had walked in with his side tottering at 50 for five – it had lost four wickets for seven runs at one stage.

In reply, from 63 for six in the 12th over, Lalit Yadav and Varun Sood kept Delhi in the hunt with cameos. However, Aniket Choudhary and Khaleel Ahmed picked up wickets at crucial stages to help their team prevail.

In the Haryana-Maharashtra contest, the latter won by two runs, leaving three teams – Baroda, Rajasthan and Maharashtra – tied on eight points.

Maharashtra (-0.444) needed to restrict Haryana to less than 150 after making 165/7 to get its NRR above Rajasthan (-0.254).

In reply to take its NRR above Karnataka's and make the semifinal grade, Suryakumar's side had to restrict Punjab to 150 or below.

Gill and Gurkeerat Mann added 70 for the second wicket as Punjab reached 150 by the 14th over.

But after the fall of Gill, Punjab lost momentum and finished 22 runs short.

Mumbai loses the race



On the go: Shubman Gill feasted on the Mumbai bowlers.

■ VIJAY SONEJI

S. DIPAK RAGAV
SURAT

Mumbai, needing to win big, made a mammoth 243 after Prithvi Shaw (53, 27b, 4x4, 6x6), Suryakumar Yadav (80, 35b, 8x4, 5x6) and Shreyas Iyer (80 not out, 40b, 7x4, 4x6) swatted the Punjab bowlers to all parts of the ground.

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TV PICKS

NBA: Sony Ten 1 (SD & HD), 6.30 a.m.
ISL: Star Sports 2 (SD & HD), 7.30 p.m.
Euro League: Sony Ten 2 & ESPN (SD & HD), 9.30 p.m.

IN BRIEF



Leonard and George deliver for Clippers

WASHINGTON
Kawhi Leonard (28 points) and Paul George (26), playing together for only the fourth NBA game this season, powered the Los Angeles Clippers over the Dallas Mavericks 114-99 on Tuesday. The Clippers stretched their win streak to six games and so did the Denver Nuggets, which defeated visiting Washington 117-104 in the night's only other league game. **AFP**

Samir slots five

NEW DELHI
Samir Suhag top-scored with five goals as Col. Girdhari Singh Army Service Corps (ASC) team beat Ascension 9-6 in the Col. Girdhari Singh Cup 8-goal polo tournament on Wednesday.

The results (league): Jindal Panther 9 (Phil Seller 4, Simran Shergill 3, Akshai Malik) bt 61st Cavalry 4 (Ravi Rathore 3, Aman Singh); Col. Girdhari Singh ASC 9 (Samir Suhag 5, Naveen Singh 3, Ravinder) bt Ascension 6 (Siddhant Sharma 4, Abhimanyu Pathak 2).

Yuvraj Lamba wins double trap

NEW DELHI
Yuvraj Lamba of OP Jindal Global University, Sonepat, had won the men's double trap gold with a score of 72, in the all India inter-university shooting championship hosted by the Manav Rachna University at the Dr. Karni Singh Range, Tughlakabad. It was wrongly published in these columns that Lakshay Sheoran, of the Guru Nanak Dev University, Amritsar, had won this event. Lakshay had finished second with 68 in double trap, the same score with which Subeer Sharma of Amity University, Noida, had taken the bronze.

Likhitha advances

SPORTS BUREAU
MONASTIR (TUNISIA)

Likhitha Kalava fought her way past fourth seed Anna Hertel of Poland 2-6, 7-5, 7-6 (2) in the first round of the \$15,000 ITF women's tennis tournament on Wednesday.

Other results:
\$15,000 ITF men, Cairo, Egypt: Singles (first round): Carles Hernandez (Esp) bt Dhruv Sunish 6-7(3), 6-3, 6-1; Sahil Gawar bt Christos Avraam (Cyp) 6-4, 6-1.

\$15,000 ITF men, Monastir, Tunisia: Doubles (pre-quarterfinals): Francesco Vilardo (Ita) & Kai Wehnelt (Ger) bt Yash Chaurasia & Tushar Madan 6-4, 6-1.

Spurs make it to the last 16

Bayern's Lewandowski hits four in 16 minutes; late strikes help PSG hold Real

CHAMPIONS LEAGUE

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
PARIS

Tottenham Hotspur battled back from two goals down to beat Olympiakos 4-2 and qualify for the Champions League last 16 as manager Jose Mourinho enjoyed a dramatic home debut on Tuesday.

Dele Alli gave last season's runners-up hope of a comeback on the stroke of half-time after the Greek visitors netted twice early on, before a Harry Kane double and Serge Aurier's 73rd-minute goal completed the comeback for Spurs.

Tottenham will finish second in Group B behind its final-day opponent Bayern Munich, which made it five wins from five in Europe this season as Robert Lewandowski's quadruple helped it to a 6-0 win at Red Star Belgrade.

Prolific

The Pole scored four goals in the space of 16 second-half minutes, the first of them a penalty, in between goals by Leon Goretzka and Corentin Tolisso.

Lewandowski has scored



Hit-man: Harry Kane nods in his second and Tottenham Hotspur's fourth goal in the remarkable comeback win against Olympiakos on Tuesday. ■ GETTY IMAGES

four times in a Champions League game once before, for Borussia Dortmund against Real Madrid in 2013. He now has 27 goals for Bayern this season.

Pep Guardiola's Manchester City got the point it needed to progress from Group C, drawing 1-1 with Shakhtar Donetsk. On a subdued occasion, Ilkay Gundogan got a 56th-minute opener, but Manor Solomon levelled for the Ukrainians.

Benzema slots two

Karim Benzema scored

twice for the host in an impressive performance, while there was controversy between the Portuguese referee showed Real goalkeeper Thibaut Courtois a red card and gave PSG a penalty for a foul on Mauro Icardi, only to overturn his decision following a VAR review.

Teams that have qualified for last-16: Bayern Munich, Juventus, Manchester City, Paris Saint-Germain, Real Madrid and Tottenham Hotspur.

The results: **Group A:** Galatasaray (Buyuk 11) drew with Club Brugge 1 (Diatta 90+2); Real Madrid 2 (Benzema 17, 79) drew

with Paris Saint-Germain 2 (Mbappe 81, Sarabia 83).

Group B: Red Star Belgrade 0 lost to Bayern Munich 6 (Goretzka 14, Lewandowski 53+, 60, 64, 68, Toliso 89); Tottenham 4 (Ali 45+1, Kane 50, 77, Aurier 73) bt Olympiakos 2 (El Arabi 6, Semedo 19).

Group C: Atalanta 2 (Muriel 27+, Gomez 47) bt Dinamo Zagreb 0; Manchester City 1 (Gundogan 56) drew with Shakhtar Donetsk 1 (Solomon 69).

Group D: Juventus 1 (Dybala 45+2) bt Atletico Madrid 0; Lokomotiv Moscow 0 lost to Bayer Leverkusen 2 (Zhemaltdinov 11+og, Bender 54).

Bhubaneswar, Rourkela to host 2023 men's hockey World Cup

UTHRA GANESAN
BHUBANESWAR

It was no surprise but the official announcement here on Wednesday confirmed the obvious – Odisha would continue to be the hotbed of hockey tournaments in the country with the FIH naming the city as the host for the 2023 men's World Cup.

It would be the first time a country would be hosting successive editions of the premier tournament in the sport but the same city hosting it twice makes it even special.

This time, however, Bhubaneswar (which hosted the 2018 WC) would share hosting rights with the Biju Patnaik Hockey Stadium in Rourkela.

"World Cup is the pinnacle of tournaments in hockey for the FIH. It needs to

have a certain standard and, at present, only Bhubaneswar and Delhi have facilities up to that.

Now Rourkela also has it, it only needs to be upgraded. Delhi is not possible because the stadium is completely occupied by the Union Home Ministry and severely restricting government rules," IOA president Narinder Batra, who is also the FIH president, said.

Upgrading turfs

Although Rourkela already has two turfs, they would need to be upgraded to FIH standards and Odisha sports secretary Vishal Dev expressed confidence of completing all necessary work with Hockey India.

The turfs, though, would use sand-dressed turfs, which do not need water and cost less.

belongs to the Rourkela Steel Plant.

"We also have the Pampash Sports Academy which will also be upgraded," Dev said.

However, Rourkela is 330 kilometres away and although it has a domestic airport, the only way to reach there from Bhubaneswar is via road or train and the government would need a massive overhaul of the entire city infrastructure, not just the stadium.

Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik also laid the foundation stone for 17 new turfs in each block of Sundergarh district, the hockey nursery of the State through a tie-up with Hockey India.

The turfs, though, would use sand-dressed turfs, which do not need water and cost less.



Big-ticket event: Odisha Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik at the unveiling of the hockey World Cup Trophy. ■ BISWARANJAN ROUT

Motorsport is slowly getting its due recognition: Gill

The Arjuna awardee hopes the XI Racing League becomes successful

ABHISHEK MUKHERJEE
NEW DELHI

With some of the world's best racers from across formats, the XI Racing League aims to hand Indian fans a spectacular experience of racing.

Gaurav Gill, who will race for the AD Racing Delhi team, points out the league's "unique" format distinguishes it from other franchise-based sports leagues in India.

"One of the unique factors here is that we've got an Indian international driver like me who's Indian and who's been in the international arena."

"Now we've got international drivers who's been either in F1 or ex-F1, or Le Mans – so they're all different kinds of racers. And then we've got lady drivers. Then we have junior drivers and they're Indian. So we've got a

big mix of different people who are going to be racing within the team to pick up points," Gill told *The Hindu* at an interaction here.

More sponsorship

Gill hopes the league, which begins on November 30, becomes successful enough to attract more sponsorship in the future. "[The idea is] just to put a package together with the right names and the right guys with the right cars," he said.

Motorsport may be a niche sport in India but it is slowly getting its due recognition, observed Gill.

"It's slowly getting recognition. I've been awarded the Arjuna award recently, so it's big thanks to the Sports Ministry and the Hon'ble Minister (Kiren Rijiju) for looking at

sport it will take a little bit of time [to come into the mainstream]," he said.

Motorsport is not a sport just for the wealthy, felt Gill. He said he hadn't spent any money while taking his first steps and making his reputation as a driver. So, who handed him his first car?

"Luckily, I had a friend who gave me my first car and then from thereon I had sponsors like JK Tyres, then I progressed further on, then I had MRF – I was with MRF for many years, and I'm back now [with] JK Tyres, so they're funding me and funding my talent at the world level now," he said.

The tournament will be held at the Buddhi International Circuit in Greater Noida and the MMRC in Tamil Nadu.



as a sporting background (sic) and given the fact that we guys can be fitter than most other sports, so why not? But since it's a niche

an eight-member FIFA inspection team on Wednesday expressed happiness at the infrastructure at the Salt Lake Stadium, one of the venues for the 2020 under-17 women's World Cup.

"The stadium has already hosted a FIFA World Cup (under-17) so the core infrastructure is in place. It is great to see that the legacy from 2017 – the infrastructure is in good shape, and that the same operational plan is being used," the Local Organising Committee of the under-17 women's World Cup said in a statement.

The FIFA and LOC delegation, led by project head Oliver Vogt, will next inspect the venue at Guwahati on Thursday.

The FIFA under-17 women's World Cup India 2020 will be held in India from November 2 to 21.

Lonah – a star attraction in TSK 25K

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
KOLKATA

World athletics championships in Doha earlier this year, recovered in quick time to win the Frankfurt marathon last month with a timing of 2:23:11.

The Israeli can pose serious challenge to Ethiopian Degitu Azimeraw's TSK course record of 1:26:01, set on December 15.

Lonah, who will celebrate her 31st birthday three days prior to the Kolkata race, is currently sixth on the marathon world list and third on the European all-time list.

Lonah, who dropped out of the marathon in the

10,000m London Olympics bronze medalist Tariku Bekele, Kenenisa's brother, will be among the elite men runners.

Expected leading runners:
Men: Leonard Barsoton (Ken), Solomon Dekkisa (Eth), Tariku Bekele (Eth), Bayelign Yegsw (Eth), Daniel Chebib (Ken), Betesfa Getahun (Eth), Tsegay Tuemay (Eri), Ben Somikwo (Uga), Desmond Mokgobu (RSA), Faraja Damasi (Tan).
Women: Lonah Salpeter (Isr), Birke Debele (Eth), Failuna Matanga (Tan), Tejitu Daba (Brn), Guteni Shone (Eth), Nazret Welsu (Eri), Chaltu Kekab (Eth), Magdalena Shauri (Tan).

Two-time World cross country silver medallist Leonard Barsoton of Kenya and

tislav Galfinger (Kaz) & Dragos Petre Popeanga (Rou) bt Chirag Duhan & Denim Yadav 7-5, 6-1;

Samir Banerjee & Ekansh Kumar (US) bt Sushant Dabas & Krishnamoorthy (Tha) bt Vidyut Jani 6-0, 6-3; Tianyi Mi (Chn) bt Sayaka Ishii (Jpn) 6-2, 7-6(8).

Doubles (quarterfinals): Zijun Jiang & Xiaoyan Xue (Chn) bt Mei Hasegawa (Jpn) & Vipasha Mehra 1-6, 6-2, [10-6]; Sayaka Ishii (Jpn) & Qianyu Liu (Chn) bt Eva Gartseva (Rus) & Bhakti Parwani 6-1, 6-3; Sarah Dev & Prerna Vichare bt Skia Kung & Chao-Yi Wang (Tpe) 6-3, 6-4; Kirara Morioka (Jpn) & Maria Sholokhova (Rus) bt Reshma Maruri 6-2, 7-5; Liu Qianyu (Chn) bt Farhat Aleen Qamar 5-0 (re-

tired); Chao-Yi Wang (Tpe) bt Zijun Jiang (Chn) 7-5 (retired); Sanjana Sirimalla bt Eva Gartseva (Rus) 3-6, 7-5, 6-3; Salakthip Ounmuang (Tha) bt Vidhu Jani 6-0, 6-3; Tianyi Mi (Chn) bt Sayaka Ishii (Jpn) 6-2, 7-6(8).

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IN BRIEF



Explorer Barbara Hillary passes away at 88

Barbara Hillary, who was in her 70s when she became the first black woman to officially make it to the North and South Poles, has died at 88. She had retired from a nursing career and survived separate occurrences of breast and lung cancer when she started travelling in the Arctic. AP



Kamala Harris makes dosas with Mindy Kaling

WASHINGTON U.S. Senator and Democratic presidential candidate Kamala Harris recently joined comedian, actor and writer Mindy Kaling at the latter's Los Angeles home to make masala dosa, during which they discussed their south Indian heritage. The video of their joint dosa making adventure has gone viral on social media. PTI



Australian writer Clive James is dead LONDON Clive James, an expatriate Australian writer and broadcaster who wrote incisively and often hilariously about television, literature and current affairs, has died aged 80, his agents said on Wednesday. James has won awards for journalism and broadcasting. His memoirs *Unreliable Memories* was a bestseller. REUTERS

Global warming alters rainfall pattern'

Scientists say that a shift in a key weather system is stimulating cyclones in the Bay of Bengal

JACOB KOSHY
NEW DELHI



After the gale: In this photo dated November 19, 2019, men are clearing debris from their damaged house after cyclone Bulbul hit the area in Namkhana, West Bengal. ■REUTERS

Global warming has altered a key weather system and that may be whetting cyclones in the Bay of Bengal, decreasing winter rain in north India and altering global rainfall patterns, a study by a team of Indian and U.S. researchers has found.

The Madden-Julian Oscillation (MJO), as it's called, is a moving band of rain clouds that travels around the globe spanning 12,000-20,000 km across the tropical oceans. In its journey, it interacts with surface waters of the Indo-Pacific ocean, the largest pool of warm water in the globe, and due to this – the authors say – the lifecycle of the MJO gets affected.

The MJO clouds on average are spending only 15 days, instead of 19, over the Indian Ocean.

Over the west Pacific, it increases by five days (from an

average 16 days to 23 days). "It is this change in the residence time of MJO clouds that has altered the weather patterns across the globe," according to the research paper that appears in the latest edition of the journal *Nature*.

When the MJO appears in the Indian Ocean during the

monsoon months of June-September, it can increase rains over India. This year, India was poised to receive below normal monsoon rainfall in April but ended up with excessive rain partly due to the MJO.

The study, led by Roxy Mathew Koll, a researcher at the Indian Institute of Tropi-

cal Meteorology, Pune doesn't delve into the impact of the MJO during the monsoon months. However, Mr. Koll told *The Hindu*, the change in the MJO could drift warmer surface water towards the Bay of Bengal and increase cyclones. "The MJOs haven't been as extensively studied as say the El Niño. This study shows that we need better observation of the Indian Ocean and improve forecasts that can warn us about a cyclone."

Ocean temperatures

To compute the reduction in the number of MJO days over the Indian Ocean, the researchers – they included scientists from the U.S. National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), the University of Washington and the University of Tokyo – compared ocean temperatures from 1981-2018 to compute the

changes. Global warming has been expanding the size of the warm pool on average by 2,300 sq. km. annually from 1900-2018 and at an accelerated average rate of 4,000 sq. km. per year during 1981-2018.

The changes in MJO behaviour have increased the rainfall over northern Australia, west Pacific, Amazon basin, southwest Africa and southeast Asia (Indonesia, Philippines and Papua New Guinea).

At the same time these changes have brought a decline in rainfall over central Pacific, along the west and east coast of U.S. (e.g., California), north India, east Africa and the Yangtze basin in China. The frequent California fires, droughts in Africa and East Asian floods and cyclones in the Bay of Bengal may be linked to these changes in global weather, the study noted.

Singapore shows off rare Philippine raptors

Only 800 believed to be left in the wild

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
SINGAPORE



A male Philippine eagle named Geothermica. ■AFP

main aviary and were shown to the media, as part of events marking 50 years of diplomatic relations between the countries.

"Any future offspring of the eagles will be returned to the Philippines to contribute to the sustainability of the species' population," said Wildlife Reserves Singapore, which runs the aviary.

Outside the box: Takashi Miike's latest film explores the greys

The celebrated Japanese filmmaker discusses his thriller, *First Love*, which had its Indian premiere at the 50th edition of IFFI

KENNETH ROSARIO
PANAJI

The Hindu, the 59-year-old film-maker said, "Where there is love, there is a possibility of violence but it's not that love is connected to violence but there's a possibility." Taking place overnight in Tokyo, the film revolves around the rather fragile relationship between a young boxer, who believes he is terminally ill, and a drug-fuelled sex worker, who hallucinates about her torturous father. The two find themselves in a drug-smuggling racket, battling the police, assassins and a lot of bad luck.

Receiving thunderous applause and whistles in a packed Kala Academy, *First Love*, concluded a five-film



Takashi Miike tribute to Mr. Miike, the festival's 'director in focus' this year. The retrospective included *Ichi the Killer* (2001), *Audition* (1999), *Dead or Alive* (1999) and *13 Assassins* (2010).

In a short interview with

With *First Love*, Mr. Miike sought out to revisit the yakuza gangs, whose stories have formed a sub-genre of gangster films in Japan. "They exist in the society, and it's not that they are bad people but they are also not good," said Mr. Miike. Caught in the web of yakuza are three unsuspecting characters – boxer Leo, sex worker Monica and Julie, a woman seeking revenge for her slain pimp boyfriend. Laced with humour, the chase in the film, often resulting in bloodshed, is sharp and flavoursome.

Does the filmmaker intend to generate catharsis among his audience through violence, as is the case with his characters? "When you see the violence of Hollywood movies, there is a tendency that the hero is combating and confronting many people, without much harm to himself," says Mr. Miike. "But in my films, the hero takes a lot of hits so the very act of the hero being the one on the receiving end, makes the audience cheer and connect with him."

Bending genres

With a vast repertoire of over 100 films, the auteur has tried his hand at everything from horror, gore, action, family drama to even musicals. But he prefers to abstain

from labelling his own films. "It's the audience or the media who classify it in a certain genre but for me, I'm just making a movie," explained Mr. Miike. At present, he is working on a Japanese television drama, which airs on Sunday mornings and is catered towards girls, as young as three. "It shows women as heroes, and it shows that I can go beyond violence," he said.

Interestingly, the female characters in *First Love*, Julia and Monica, are complete opposites of each other. While one is strong and vengeful, the other is docile and traumatised. Mr. Miike informed that the two actresses

Deck the fairground



Fun time: A glowing Ferris wheel at the Christmas Market in Bremerhaven, Germany. ■AFP

1,500-year-old shipwreck discovered

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE
NICOSIA

An official with the Department of Antiquities in Cyprus confirmed on Saturday the discovery of an ancient shipwreck laden with cargo of ceramic pots off the south shores of Cyprus.

Ceramics expert at the University of Cyprus, Stella Demesticha, said that an abundance of underwater findings were ceramic pots dating back to the end of the 6th century or 7th century.

Extensive remains of amphorae were found scattered over an area that seemed to be part of an ancient commercial port.

Can the apex court of a secular state direct the government to construct religious structures? Constitutional expert A.G. Noorani examines the Ayodhya verdict.

SECULARISM AT STAKE



Protests escalate at JNU as steep fee hike makes higher education unaffordable for disadvantaged sections.



Dec 6th, 2019
Price ₹125/-

New snake species found in Arunachal

Researchers spotted the reptiles inside the thickly forested Tally Valley Sanctuary

SHIV SAHAY SINGH
KOLKATA

Researchers have discovered a new species of non-venomous burrowing snake in Arunachal Pradesh, named *Trachischium apteii*.

The snakes were found under fallen logs inside a thickly forested area of the Tally Valley Wildlife Sanctuary near the town of Ziro in Arunachal Pradesh during a field expedition by researchers in July 2019.

Researchers Harshal Bhonsle, Gaurang Gowande and Zeeshan Mirza have published their find in the international science journal *Comptes Rendus Biologies*.

While Mr. Bhonsle is associated with the Bombay Natural History Society (BNHS), Mumbai, Mr. Gowande is associated with Pune's Ferguson College, and Mr. Mirza works with the National Centre for Biological Sciences (NCBS), Bengaluru.

Mr. Mirza said that the newly discovered species

Elusive type: *Trachischium apteii*. ■SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

belongs to a group of fossorial snakes that live mostly underground, and surface mainly during or after a heavy monsoon shower.

Trachischium are commonly called slender snakes. Seven species are distributed across the Himalayas, and the Indo-Burma and Indo-China regions.

Morphologically, the snake is distinguished by smooth and dorsal scales arranged in 15 rows throughout the body. The dorsal colour of the

holotype is dark brown to black with faint dorsal longitudinal lines. Large-sized members of the genus measure about 293 mm to 299 mm (measuring a little less than a foot).

Biodiversity hotspot

Researchers behind the discovery, who covered large tracts of forested land in northeast India, said that they have documented more species from the forests of Arunachal Pradesh, which is likely to yield new species. Work is under way to describe them.

Underlining that forests across northeast India have not been well-explored for their biodiversity, especially reptiles, amphibians and most invertebrate groups, the authors said that "anthropogenic pressures like road widening, construction of dams and hydropower plants threaten the forest and biodiversity across Arunachal Pradesh".

Latin America witnesses angry popular response to US and IMF policies implemented by the region's right-leaning governments.

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