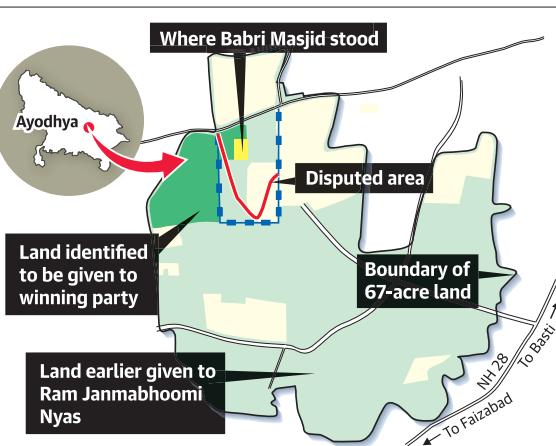




NEARBY

Extent of dispute

■ Government says core disputed area extends only to 0.31 acre, though it had acquired 67.70 acres in 1993 around the site
■ SC had ruled in 1994 that undisputed land could revert to original owners after title has been decided. In 1993, another Bench asked government to maintain status quo
■ Govt keen on handing over 42 acres out of this to Ram Janmabhoomi Nyas, a trust to which land had been leased in 1992



Adityanath, team take a dip at Sangam

LUCKNOW
Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath held a Cabinet meeting at the Kumbh Mela in Prayagraj (Allahabad) on Tuesday, with most of the Ministers also taking a holy dip at the Sangam ahead of the meeting.

NEWS ▶ PAGE 10

Delhi court summons journalist Priya Ramani

NEW DELHI
A Delhi court on Tuesday summoned senior journalist Priya Ramani in a criminal defamation case filed by former Union Minister M.J. Akbar accusing her of defaming him by alleging that he sexually assaulted several women journalists.

NATION ▶ PAGE 7

Yamuna cleaning: 3 States told to furnish ₹10 cr. each

NEW DELHI
Expressing dissatisfaction over the cleaning of the Yamuna, the National Green Tribunal on Tuesday directed the State governments of Uttar Pradesh, Haryana and Delhi to furnish a performance guarantee of ₹10 crore each within a month.

DELHI METRO ▶ PAGE 1

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OPPORTUNITIES ▶ PAGE 2
DELHI METRO ▶ 6 PAGES

Govt. wants to return 'excess' land in Ayodhya

Says it's bound to hand back 67.7 acres around disputed site

KRISHNADAS RAJAGOPAL
NEW DELHI

The Centre on Tuesday conveyed to the Supreme Court its intention to return the "superfluous" land acquired around the disputed 0.313-acre Ram Janmabhoomi-Babri Masjid area to its rightful owners.

The government said this could very well be done after mapping out the "exact extent of land" necessary for the future winner of the Ayodhya title dispute to gain proper access to the 0.313 acre where the Babri Masjid structure once stood before its demolition on December 6, 1992.

A total of 67.703 acres of land, including the 0.313 acre of disputed area, was acquired by the Centre in 1993 "to maintain communal harmony and the spirit of common brotherhood amongst the people of India."

Now, the Centre, in a 35-

page application, argues it is "duty-bound" to revert the superfluous land surrounding the disputed 0.313 acre to the owners.

Based on 1994 ruling
In fact, the application rides on the very shoulders of the Constitution Bench judgment of 1994 in the Ismail Faruqui case.

The Faruqui verdict had left it completely to the government's discretion to determine the "exact extent of land" which the party winning the Ayodhya dispute would need to access and enjoy the disputed area. The calculation was a "matter of policy" with no scope for judicial scrutiny, the government said.

The government justified that the continuous vesting of the superfluous land with it defeated the "very temporary nature" of the acquisition under the Acquisition of Certain Area at Ayodhya

Act, 1993.

It said owners such as the Ram Janmabhoomi Nyas, whose 42 acres were acquired in 1993, had approached the government for its return in 1996.

The Nyas had also unsuccessfully moved the apex court in 1998 for the same reason.

"The acquisition took place in the year 1993. Twenty-five years have passed by. It is submitted that the original owners whose lands (which were not even in dispute but were still acquired) are entitled to get the same back. The Central government is duty-bound to hand over the land after undertaking the exercise contemplated by the Constitution Bench judgment in Ismail Faruqui," the Centre said in its application.

CONTINUED ON ▶ PAGE 10
GOVERNMENT SIGNALS INTENT TO BUILD TEMPLE ▶ PAGE 11

Northeast allies put BJP on notice

JD(U) joins meet that resolves to stay united against Centre over Citizenship Bill

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
GUWAHATI

Ten regional parties of the northeastern region, including eight members of an anti-Congress forum led by the Bharatiya Janata Party, on Tuesday resolved to be united against the Centre's move to push the Citizenship (Amendment) Bill, 2016.

The BJP's ally, Janata Dal (United), also joined a convention here to fight against the "communal Bill".

To fast-track process

The Bill seeks to fast-track the process of granting citizenship to non-Muslims said to have fled religious persecution in Afghanistan, Bangladesh and Pakistan and taken refuge in India till December 31, 2014.

"We oppose the Bill to-



Meghalaya Chief Minister Conrad K. Sangma and former CM Donkupar Roy at the convention in Guwahati. ■ PTI

gether. We believe that the Bill will threaten and endanger the lives and identity of the indigenous people of Assam and other parts of the northeastern region," said Mizoram Chief Minister Zoramthanga, who heads the

Mizo National Front (MNF).

"We held this convention to unanimously oppose the Centre's push for the Bill. We also decided to approach President Ram Nath Kovind and Prime Minister Narendra Modi and appeal

for scrapping the Bill," said Meghalaya Chief Minister Conrad K. Sangma, the convenor of the meeting.

Mr. Sangma, who is also the president of the National People's Party (NPP), declined to say whether the regional parties would break away from the National Democratic Alliance, or the North East Democratic Alliance (NEDA).

"It is not right to comment on that as of now. But we will meet again to chalk out the future course of action in the unfortunate scenario of the Centre pressing ahead with the Bill," he said. The MNF and the NPP are members of the anti-Congress NEDA.

CONTINUED ON ▶ PAGE 10
INCLUDE CHIN REFUGEES, SAY CHAKMA NGOS ▶ PAGE 3

Gold turns red hot, price at a peak

Touches ₹33,800 mark in Mumbai as global demand rises

ASHISH RUKHAIYAR
MUMBAI



Jewellers attribute the surge to increased demand from central banks.

Jewellers at the Zaveri Bazaar here, one of the largest and oldest gold markets in India, said the price, inclusive of the 3% goods and services tax (GST), touched ₹33,800 on Tuesday, the

government announced demonetisation.

Jewellers, meanwhile, attributed the surge to increased demand from central banks, especially from countries facing currency issues. "Central banks of many countries like Russia and Turkey, along with a few other smaller economies that have seen currency issues, are buying gold, thereby pushing up the demand," said Kumar Jain, vice-president, Mumbai Jewellers Association.

CONTINUED ON ▶ PAGE 10

Remembering KS Narayanan on his Birth Centenary



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These are some of the questions addressed by a survey of employees in IT companies by Hush, an employee-focused HR tech platform.

The survey said a majority of people wanted the Government to make the notice period one month. More than 80% of employees in the survey, which covered 2800 professionals from IT companies

across the major metros, felt the notice period provision was being misused by most organisations. With the three-month notice period, outgoing employees are likely to miss out on good opportunities.

Employees also pointed that the three-month notice period was used as a mere retention tool by employers.

Many companies exploit using it as a tool of coercion, said the report. In the survey, eight out of every 10 said that whether one was being relieved before the stipulated time depended on their affinity with their immediate manager/boss and criticality of their role.

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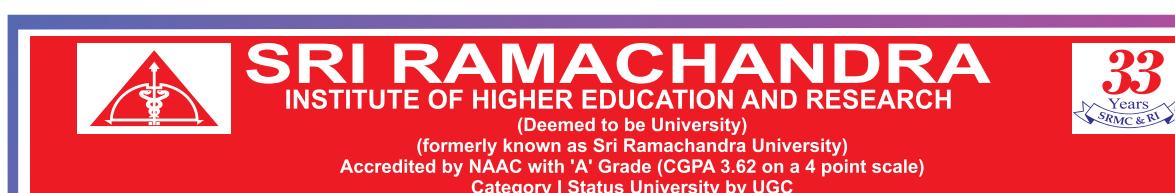
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Last Date for submitting ON-LINE Application and Payment of Intimation Charges	18.02.2019, 23.59 Hrs

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Manager (Debit Card Marketing/Smart City Project/ Transit - State Road Transport Corporation/ UP & Aggregator) (Advertisement no.: CRPD/SCO/2018-19/15)	14
Deputy Manager (IS Audit)	06
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Odisha hikes target beneficiaries to 5 lakh

Bhubaneswar
The Odisha Cabinet on Tuesday approved a proposal to enhance the target of the number of landless agricultural household beneficiaries under the KALIA scheme to 5 lakh from 1 lakh during this year itself. Each beneficiary household will be paid ₹5,000 in the first tranche. The Cabinet also cleared projects to provide safe drinking water to villages in Angul, Dhenkanal, Keonjhar, Mayurbhanj and Bhadrak districts.

Include Chin refugees in citizenship Bill: Chakma NGOs

The JPC had earlier rejected suggestions to include minorities from Myanmar and Sri Lanka

RAHUL KARMAKAR
GUWAHATI

Eight organisations of the Chakma community on Tuesday submitted a memorandum to the Ministry of Home Affairs seeking the inclusion of Chin refugees in India by further amending the Citizenship (Amendment) Bill, 2016.

The Bill awaits passage or rejection in the Rajya Sabha.

The Joint Parliamentary Committee that submitted its recommendations to the Centre after a series of discussions with stakeholders had rejected suggestions to include minorities from Myanmar and Sri Lanka.

HRW report
The memorandum was made on the basis of a January 2009 report by the US-based Human Rights Watch titled 'The Chin People of Burma: Unsafe in Burma, Unprotected in India'.

The report said that there are an estimated 100,000 Chins in Mizoram, which is 20% of the total Chin population in Myanmar.

Chin State. While some went back, around 1,440 refugees have reportedly refused to return due to insecurity," said Dilip Kanti Chakma, president of the Delhi-based All India Chakma Students' Union.

"The number of Chin refugees in India is at least 1.2 lakh. In November 2017, about 1,600 Chins, many of whom were women and children, fled to Lawngtai district of Mizoram following a military offensive against the Arakan Army militants in that country's

Chin State. While some went back, around 1,440 refugees have reportedly refused to return due to insecurity," said Dilip Kanti Chakma, president of the Delhi-based All India Chakma Students' Union.

Refugee status
About 4,000 Chin refugees are registered with the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees office in New Delhi but in June 2018, the UNHCR decided to cancel their 'refugee status' with effect from August 1, 2018.

"We appealed to the Centre to further amend the Citizenship (Amendment) Bill for including Myanmar along with Afghanistan, Bangladesh and Pakistan," Mr. Chakma said.

UP. to barcode stray cows

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
LUCKNOW

Grappling with the menace of stray cattle, the Uttar Pradesh government has told officials to barcode abandoned animals and set up temporary cow shelters at unused government buildings.

The suggestions figure in an order issued by the State's Animal Husbandry department on Monday, weeks after the Yogi Adityanath government announced a cess to set up shelters for cattle.

Temporary cow shelters

can be established at various cooperative institutions (such as mandi parishes and sugar mills) and at institutes of the Central government lying closed, it suggested. The order suggested that stray cattle should be barcoded and RFID-tagged, if possible.

RFID involves using radio frequency identification technology to scan identity tags.

The order said fodder banks can also be set up at the temporary shelters. Farmers can deposit crop waste there.

Mann to take charge as AAP's Punjab chief again

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
CHANDIGARH

The Aam Aadmi Party's senior leader and Sangrur MP Bhagwant Mann will be reappointed as its Punjab unit chief on January 30.

The event will be attended by Delhi Deputy Chief Minister and the party's in-charge of Punjab affairs Manish Sisodia.

The decision to reappoint Mr. Mann as AAP's Punjab unit president comes days after the party's core committee unanimously rejected his resignation and forwarded its decision to AAP's National Political Affairs Committee for a review, said an official statement on Tuesday.

Mr. Mann had tendered his resignation last year following AAP convener and Delhi CM Arvind Kejriwal's apology to former Akali Dal Minister Bikram Singh Majithia for alleging involvement in the rampant illegal drugs business in the State.

Court allows rape victim to go for abortion

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
JODHPUR

The Rajasthan High Court on Tuesday allowed a rape victim to abort her over 20-week-old foetus.

Before arriving at the decision, the HC had sought a report from a medical board here. The report stated that

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the physical and mental condition of the victim was right to undergo the procedure.

"After receiving the report, Justice Ashok Kumar Gaur granted her the permission with immediate effect in order to avoid any further complications," said the victim's counsel Ankur

Mathur.

The victim was raped about six months ago and learnt about her pregnancy last month. The matter was referred to the High Court by the District Legal Service Authority, Udaipur, to which the matter had been reported for termination.

Geography

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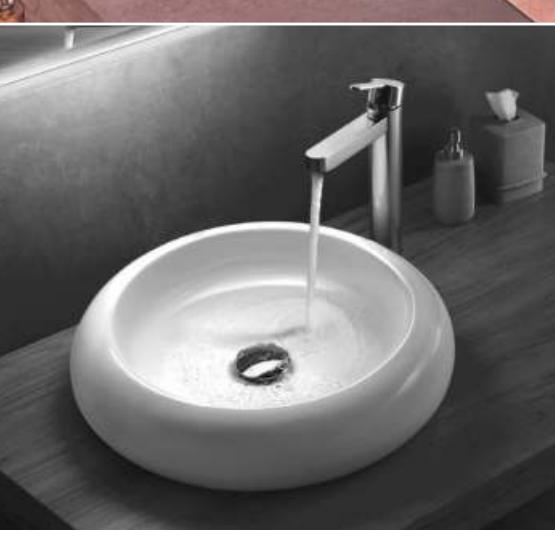
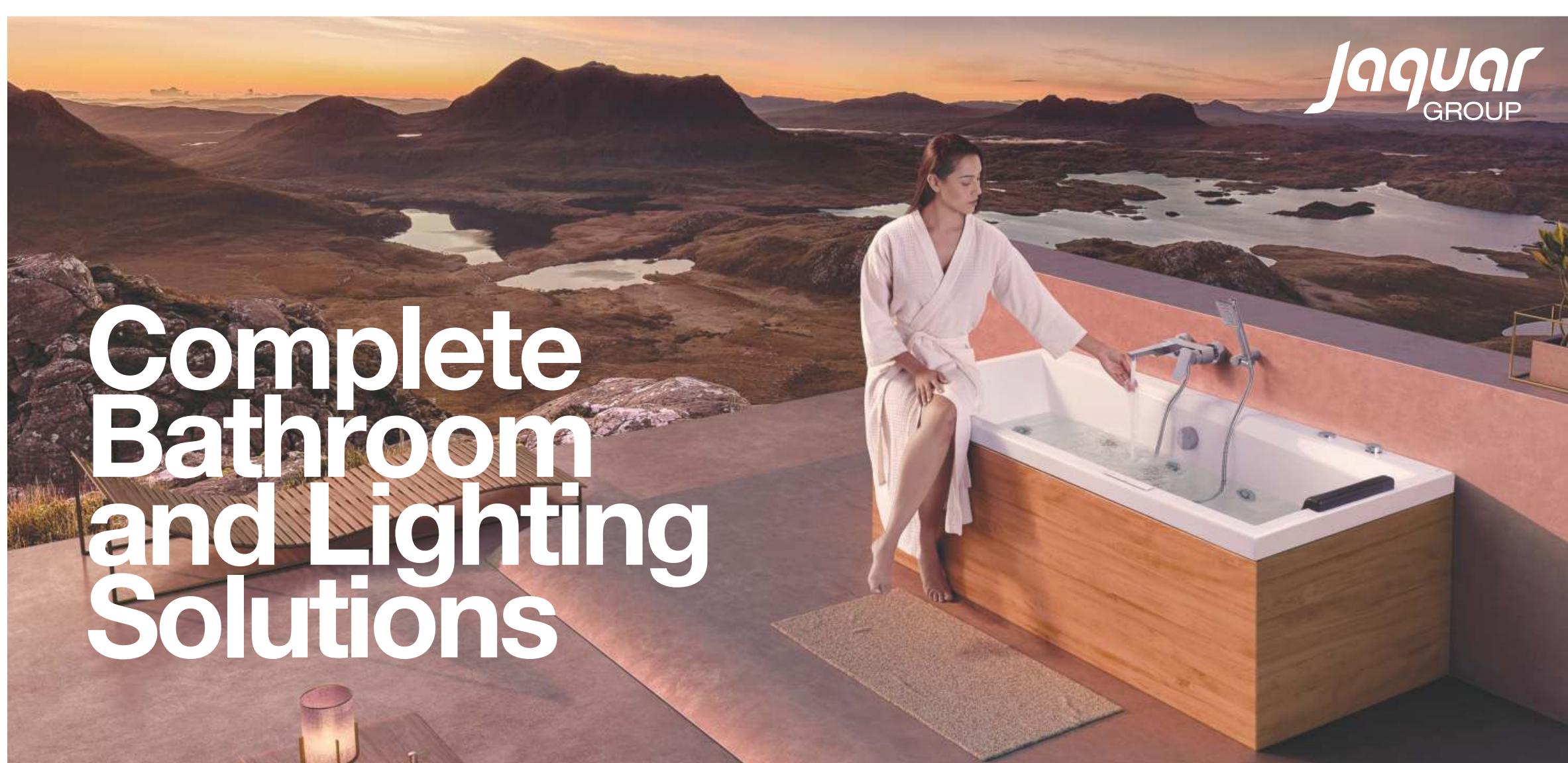
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Mees Jaiswani and Preeti Jaiswani, the sixteen and twelve year old founders of Born to Win (B2W) which has undertaken initiatives such as 'Say No to Crackers', 'Raise for Rice', 'He for She' and their most latest initiative 'Say No to Plastic', which collects old bed sheets from hotels, converts them into bags that are given away for free.

"During the 'Raise for Rice' campaign where we collected



nearly six tons of rice in about two months for donation, my son made visits to many old age homes and saw the plight of mentally challenged women who had to stitch bags to make a living. He said he wanted to help them but buying materials for stitching bags was not economical. So, we approached hotels like Sava and GRT

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sheets for these women to stitch," says Varsha, their proud mother.

Keeping in mind the recent ban on plastics in Tamil Nadu, vendors in vegetable markets are looking for cheaper alternatives to carry their produce. They do not even want bags with handles but just something that is strong and sturdy, so the boys encouraged their friends to collect pillowcases, and used them

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DELHI DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY**E-TENDER PRESS NOTICE NO.23/FO(NZ)/2018-19 (Part-I-B)**

Online Percentage Rate Tenders are invited through e-tendering mode for the following works by the Executive Engineers of ND-2, Motia Khan, New Delhi, ND-4, Munir Ji Ka Bagh, Narela, Delhi-110040, ND-5, Keshavpuram, Delhi-110035 & ND-10, Ashok Vihar, Phase-I, Delhi-110052 on behalf of Delhi Development Authority from the approved and eligible contractors of DDA. The last date and time of submission of tender for Sl. No. 2, 3, 4, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10 is 07.02.2019 upto 3.00 PM. and for Sl. No. 1, 5, 11, 12 is 11.02.2019 upto 3.00 PM.

1. NIT No. 31/EE/ND-2/DDA/2018-19, Name of Work: Fencing of vacant land under North Zone. SH: Protection of vacant plots under jurisdiction of ND-2. Estimated Cost: ₹ 20,99,101/-, Earnest Money: ₹ 41,982/-, Period of completion: 365 days.

2. NIT No.32/EE/ND-2/DDA/2018-19. Name of work: M/o completed scheme under North Zone. SH: Scavenging and sweeping of roads, paths, berms etc and desilting of drains at 656 MIG houses (Metro Apartment) Jahangirpuri. Estimated Cost: ₹ 10,14,979/-, Earnest Money: ₹ 20,300/-, Period of completion: 365 days.

3. NIT No.32/EE/ND-4/DDA/2018-19. Name of work: Fencing of vacant land in North Zone. SH: C/o boundary wall with fly ash lime bricks of vacant plots in residential cum work plots at Kureni, Narela. Estimated Cost: ₹ 6,14,093/-, Earnest Money: ₹ 12,282/-, Period of completion: 30 days.

4. NIT No.73/EE/ND-5/DDA/2018-19. Name of work: M/o park plantation truck and other equipments for Hort. Wing. SH: C/o damaged boundary wall and providing and fixing concertina coil fencing on existing stone masonry wall in Pkt-I, Block-F, J.J. Colony, Bawana in Sector G-8, Narela Sub City. Estimated Cost: ₹ 19,21,549/-, Earnest Money: ₹ 38,431/-, Period of completion: 60 days.

5. NIT No.81/EE/ND-5/DDA/2018-19. Name of work: M/o Park plantation truck and other equipments for Hort. Wing. SH: C/o 3 Nos. Site Office-cum-store in Distt. Park Sandesh Vihar, Old Orchard Shakur Pur at Pitampura and in Nepal Wala Bagh at Lawrence Road, Estimated Cost: ₹ 20,02,773/-, Earnest Money: ₹ 40,055/-, Period of completion: 60 days.

6. NIT No.86/EE/ND-5/DDA/2018-19. Name of work: M/o Park plantation truck and other equipments for Hort. Wing. SH: Jungle clearance, levelling and dressing of area at Boat Club near I.S.B.T. Kashmiri Gate. Estimated Cost: ₹ 8,65,801/-, Earnest Money: ₹ 17,316/-, Period of completion: 30 days.

7. NIT No.87/EE/ND-5/DDA/2018-19 Name of work: M/o Park plantation truck and other equipments for Hort. Wing. SH: Repair & improvement of Darbar Khan Wala Bagh/Nursery at Shastri Nagar. Estimated Cost: ₹ 18,54,506/-, Earnest Money: ₹ 37,090/-, Period of completion: 60 days.

8. NIT No.89/EE/ND-5/DDA/2018-19 Name of work: M/o park plantation truck and other equipments for Hort. Wing. SH: Improvement of Distt. Park Ram Bagh at Shahi Bagh. Estimated Cost: ₹ 18,62,985/-, Earnest Money: ₹ 37,260/-, Period of completion: 60 days.

9. NIT No.51/EE/ND-10/DDA/2018-19. Name of work: M/o completed scheme under North Zone. SH: Maintenance of 87 staff Qtrs. at Pitampura. Estimated Cost: ₹ 10,48,334/-, Earnest Money: ₹ 20,967/-, Period of completion: 180 days.

10. NIT No.52/EE/ND-10/DDA/2018-19. Name of work: M/o completed scheme under North Zone. SH: Running, operation and maintenance of two nos. R.O. plants at Pocket-A-I & B-I Siraspur Narela, Ph-II. Estimated Cost: ₹ 18,59,832/-, Earnest money: ₹ 37,197/-, Period of completion: 18 months.

11. NIT No.53/EE/ND-10/DDA/2018-19 Name of work: M/o completed scheme under North Zone. SH: Supply of drinking water after procuring from approved source at 880 EWS (LIG) houses Gr.-I at Siraspur Narela through water tankers. Estimated Cost: ₹ 21,20,654/-, Earnest money: ₹ 42,413/-, Period of completion: 06 months.

12. NIT No.54/EE/ND-10/DDA/2018-19, Name of work: Protection of vacant land under North Zone. SH: Disposal of building rubbish, malba etc. and leveling and dressing of ground at Auto repair shop plot B-Block Wazirpur Indl. Area. Estimated Cost: ₹ 21,36,538/-, Earnest money: ₹ 42,731/-, Period of completion: 02 months.

For terms & conditions, eligibility criteria and other any technical related queries please call at 24x7 Help Desk Number: 0120-4200462, 0120-4001002, 0120-400105, 0120-6277787 and e-mail ID support-eproc@nic.in Please visit the Website: <https://eprocurement.gov.in/eprocure/app>

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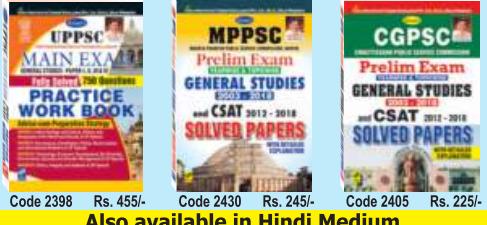
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to stitch bags for the vendors. Jaiswini and Preeti Jaiswani have been invited to many schools and colleges to talk about their initiatives and have been felicitated by Dr. Kiran Bedi in 2017 who encouraged them to diversify their initiatives. The two brothers

continue to better the lives of people and are proof that age is no barrier if you have the drive and determination.

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IN BRIEF



Kotla's entry talk creates flutter in Kurnool TDP

VIJAYAWADA
The Kurnool TDP unit is a divided house with Congress leader Kotla Suryaprakash Reddy, son of former A.P. Chief Minister Kotla Vijayabaskar Reddy, all set to join the party. He, along with his family members, had a dinner meeting with Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu at the latter's residence near here on Monday. It created ripples in the party circles.

A.P.: crucial meeting on bifurcation put off again

HYDERABAD
Resolution of bilateral issues between Telangana and A.P. arising out of Reorganisation Act is likely to take more time due to the postponement of the crucial meeting convened by the Union Home Ministry. The Ministry had invited the chief secretaries of the two States to come for a meeting convened in New Delhi on February 1, but A.P. had sought postponement of the meeting on the ground that the Legislative Assembly would be in session.

Police: illicit affair led to 'prasada' poisoning

BENGALURU
A conspiracy stemming out of an illicit relationship resulted in the death of two women after consuming 'prasada' at the Chintamani Gangamma temple in Karnataka last week, the police investigations have revealed. Three women were arrested and one man detained in connection with the case on Tuesday. The police arrested the prime accused, Lakshmi, 46, who had prepared the prasada. She had allegedly laced the kesari bath with a chemical used for polishing gold, to kill Gauri, wife of her paramour.

For Lok Sabha polls, JD(S) plans larger national footprint

We will stitch an alliance against BJP: Danish Ali

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
BENGALURU



Taking stock: JD(S) chief H.D. Deve Gowda speaking at the party's national executive meet. - G.P. SAMPATH KUMAR

T

Karnataka with the Congress while it is part of the Left Democratic Front government in Kerala. "We are taking opinions from colleagues as to how the party has to move forward in other States that would be in the best interest of the party," said Mr. Ali, who is here to attend the party's national executive which started here on Tuesday. He, however, said the party is not going to insist on seats anywhere. "Our motive

is to see that anti-people, anti-weaker sections and anti-democracy goes. We will stitch an alliance against the BJP," he said.

"The party at its national executive is cautiously deliberating what political line it should take in the election," he added.

According to him, the party believes that the BJP's tally in the Lok Sabha elections could be brought down with State-specific alliances.

Padmanabha Swamy temple belongs to public'

Wealth belongs to deity: royal family

LEGAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

The Sri Padmanabha Swamy temple in Kerala is a "public temple", the erstwhile Travancore royal family told the Supreme Court on Tuesday.

Arguing before a Bench of Justices U.U. Lalit and Indu Malhotra, senior advocate Krishnan Venugopal, for the erstwhile royals, submitted that the wealth of the Padmanabha Swamy temple belongs to the deity.

The ex-royal family was merely managing the wealth of the deity as 'Padmanabha dasa'.

The submissions were

part of the final round of hearings in a batch of special leave petitions filed against a 2011 decision of the Kerala High Court.

West will meet East in the South for Ilaiyaraaja's big musical bash

B. KOLAPPAN
CHENNAI

The West met East at the Prasad Studios in Chennai on Tuesday evening.

Composer Ilaiyaraaja, who had a harmonium handy, began the song *Poongatre ini podhum* and the music flowed from the instruments – 18 violins, four violas and one cello – of the members of the Budapest Orchestra who have come all the way from Hungary to participate in an event organised on February 3 by

Cong. to serve second notice on four MLAs

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
BENGALURU

The Karnataka Congress has decided to serve another show-cause notice on party MLAs Ramesh Jarkiholi, Umesh Jadhav, Mahesh Kumathalli, and B. Nagendra for failing to present themselves before Congress Legislature Party leader Siddaramaiah and providing a proper explanation for their absence from the CLP meeting. All of them have replied to an earlier notice but have not met senior leaders. In their written replies, they had reportedly expressed loyalty to the party.

'Sterlite plant has polluted groundwater, Uppar river'

NGT cannot delegate its powers, TNPCB tells SC

KRISHNADAS RAJAGOPAL
NEW DELHI

Pollutants have wormed their way from the Thoothukudi Sterlite copper plant into the ground water and the nearby Uppar river, the Tamil Nadu Pollution Control Board (TNPCB) told the Supreme Court on Tuesday.

Arguing before a Bench led by Justice Rohinton Nariman, the Board said it was a "scientific certainty" that the plant was the cause of contamination with pollutants entering the stream and impeding the flow of the river. The ground water contains total dissolved solids (TDS) more than 20 to 40 times the permissible limit, it contended. The Board, represented by senior advocate C.S. Vaidyanathan, said the National Green Tribunal, by setting up a committee

led by former High Court Chief Justice Tarun Aggarwala to examine the Vedanta appeals, ended up delegating its adjudicatory powers. "Adjudicatory powers cannot be delegated," Mr. Vaidyanathan submitted.

'Onus is on Vedanta'

He argued that the onus was on Vedanta to prove that the plant was not the source of pollution.

Mr. Vaidyanathan said the case flouts long-embedded environmental norms and principles like that of sustainable development, intergenerational equity, precautionary principle and the polluter pays principle. Mr. Vaidyanathan submitted that the violation of environmental norms have become so common that "the question now being asked by

certain sections of industry is why are we extracting just three per cent of our mineral resources... why not more?"

The court is hearing the appeal filed by the Tamil Nadu government that the NGT failed to consider the entire gamut of data, documents and evidence before directing the Board to pass fresh orders of renewal of consent and issue authorisation to Vedanta to handle hazardous substances.

The State argued that the tribunal went outside the four walls of the statute governing its functions to appoint the Justice Aggarwala Committee to prepare a report in the case. It said the NGT was not a constitutional court liked the Supreme Court to employ unbridled powers to constitute a committee like that.

From Hungary to celebrate the maestro's birthday



The twain meet again: Ilaiyaraaja rehearses with the Budapest orchestra in Chennai on Tuesday. - K. PICHUMANI

rehearsing is *Nee Engey En Anbe* from the film *Chinnathambi*. It is followed by *Unnaivida* from *Virumaandi*.

As Ilaiyaraaja's bongos player uses bells and a vessel to create the sounds of bells tied around cattle in the interlude, the Hungarians are amazed by the ingenuity.

'Music is our language'

Mr. Kovacs says he first worked with Ilaiyaraaja for the recording of *Hey Ram* in 2000 at Budapest.

"He is always open to every style of music. We understand each other without words because we speak the same language: music. Working every

minute with him is a pleasure," he says.

Ilaiyaraaja's music is full of fantasy and even though he has composed over 6,000 songs, no two songs are alike.

"It is very difficult for the composer to find his own notes and to write his own music. It is always improving and developing," he says. He praises the three-note song composed by Ilaiyaraaja.

"It's complicated to write music if you want to use the form sonata or fugue if your composing is limited. He is a virtuoso composer, who gives his audience the feeling of musical expression not only with a big orchestra but also with few notes."

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PUBLIC NOTICE

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This is for notice of the general public that a political party proposed to be registered by the name of Apni Party India. The office of the Party is located at H.No.8-4/19, 2nd Floor Sector-16 Rohini Delhi. This party has submitted application to the Election Commission of India, New Delhi for its Registration as Political Party under Section 29A of the Representation of People Act, 1951/Nom/Address of the Office bearers of the Party are follow:

President : Manoj Yadav
General Secretary : Rajiv Verma
Treasurer : Ms Neeraj

If any one has objection to the registration of Apni Party India they may send their Objection with reasons thereof, to the Secretary (Political Party) Election Commission of India, Nirvanan Sadan, Ashoka Road, New Delhi-110001 Within 30 days of the application of this notice.

PUBLIC NOTICE

This is for notice of the general public that a political party proposed to be registered by the name of Hum Log Party. The office of the Party is located at H.No.8-7/10, Priyadarshini Vihar Delhi-110092 This party has submitted application to the Election Commission of India, New Delhi for its Registration as Political Party under Section 29A of the Representation of People Act, 1951/Nom/Address of the Office bearers of the Party are follow:

President : Adash Gupta
General Secretary : Rahul Singh
Treasurer : Arun Aggarwal

If any one has objection to the registration of Hum Log Party they may send their Objection with reason thereof, to the Secretary (Political Party) Election Commission of India, Nirvanan Sadan, Ashoka Road, New Delhi-110001 Within 30 days of the application of this notice.

NORTH DELHI MUNICIPAL CORPORATION

Office of The Executive Engineer (M-CLZ), 2nd Floor MSO BLDG. 16-Rajpur Road, Delhi

No. EE-II/CLZ-I/2018-19 Date of Download of Tender Document : Upto 12:00 PM on 08.02.2019

Last Date of Bid Preparation : Upto 12:30 PM on 09.02.2019

Opening of Financial Bid : Upto 12:00 PM on 11.02.2019

FOR ONLINE TENDERING TIME TABLE PLEASE REFER <http://mcdtenders.com>

Sealed percentage rate for Tenders are invited for the execution of the following works by the MCD from approved and eligible contractor and www.tenderwizard.com/NORTHDPMCETENDER by Executive Engineer (M-CLZ), 2nd Floor MSO Bldg. 16-Rajpur Road, Delhi. The registered contractors of MCD only are eligible to tender for the amount they have registered in their respective category subject to the conditions that they are neither black listed nor debarred at the time of purchase of tenders.

S. No. Name Head of A/C Tender Amt. E/M Time of Compl. Rate goff for T. Cost

1. Imp. of facia by replastering and water proofing cement paint of A, B, C & D Block class-D employees in MVID Hospital. Sh: Imp. to shafts by pdg. Plaster, Cl and GI fittings etc in A Block Class D Employee in MVID Hospital. XL-IX-A-VI 2821636 56450 3 Months 5 Months 500

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The detailed NIT can be seen on the NOTICE Board/Office of the undersigned. Tender also available on the following websites for entire validity period. Tender documents can be downloaded online on website www.mcdonline.gov.in also available on the website www.tenderwizard.com/NORTHDPMCETENDER for bidding by approved and eligible contractor and detailed NIT can be seen on website. RO No. 142/DP/North/2018-19 Executive Engineer (M-CLZ)-I

249/2019

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TENDER NOTICE (through e-tendering)

Name of work with its location : Replacement of Non-RDSO type old Multiline TIDBs with RDSO approved 10 Line TIDBs at NDLS Railway station. App. Cost of the work (₹) : ₹ 65,44,738.8/- only. Tender Document Fee (₹) : ₹ 5,900/- only. Earnest Money Deposit (₹) : ₹ 1,30,900/- only. Address of the office : Senior Divisional Signal & Telecom Engineer-C, Northern Railway, 3rd Floor, Annexe-1, DRM office, New Delhi-110055. Date & Time for upload the tender / closing of tender : Tender uploading/closing date & time 20.02.2019 upto 15.00 hrs. Website particular & notice board location where complete details of the tender can be seen etc. : See the Northern Railway website www.ireps.gov.in & Notice Board at S&T branch, 3rd Floor, DRM office, State Entry Road, New Delhi-110055. Tender No. 558-Sig-16-Tele-OT-883 Dated : 29.01.2019.

(R.K. Goyal)
Senior Manager (Jal)-II, NOIDA

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IN BRIEF



Got nod to contest from Mathura again: Hema

MATHURA (U.P.)
BJP MP Hema Malini on Tuesday claimed she had been given the "green signal by higher-ups" to contest again from Mathura. The actress was elected to the Lok Sabha from Mathura in 2014. PTI

Punjab govt. approves Smart Village Campaign

CHANDIGARH
The Punjab government on Tuesday approved the 'Smart Village Campaign' for overall development of villages at a cost of ₹384.40 crore. The decision was taken at a meeting of the State Cabinet here.

BJP accuses Cong. of orchestrating attack

GUWAHATI
Refuting AASU's claims that the BJP had orchestrated the attacks on its members at Nalbari two days back, the saffron party's State unit on Tuesday accused the opposition Congress to be behind the incident. PTI

Army joins Meghalaya mine operations

SHILLONG
The Indian Army has joined the multi-agency operations to search for the remaining 13 miners trapped inside a 370-foot-deep coal mine in Meghalaya's East Jaintia Hills district, officials said on Tuesday. PTI

Two killed in U.P. road accident

GONDA
Two persons were killed when their motorcycle was hit by a sugarcane-laden tractor in Ballipur village here, police said on Tuesday. The incident took place when Shantanu Singh and his sister Garima Singh, both in their 20s, were returning home after appearing in an examination, they said. PTI

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5. Houseman 4
6. Gardner 1
7. Guard 6
8. Headguard 2
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Vice President,
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TMC, BJP workers clash after Shah rally

Three persons injured; parties blame each other; Rajnath calls up Mamata, asks her to take action

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KOLKATA

A Trinamool Congress party office was ransacked and vehicles ferrying BJP workers were set on fire in clashes that broke out following a rally by BJP chief Amit Shah at Kanthi in East Midnapore district of West Bengal on Tuesday, the parties claimed.

Sources in the two parties said three persons were injured in the clashes. The district police said they have received complaints from both sides and are looking into what led to the flare-up.

Union Home Minister Rajnath Singh called up West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee and expressed serious concern over reports of violence against people who participated in Mr. Shah's rally, officials said. During the telephonic conversation, Mr. Singh asked



BJP president Amit Shah addresses a rally in East Midnapore, West Bengal, on Tuesday. ■ PTI

Ms. Banerjee to take action against those who indulged in the violence.

Buses attacked

The BJP alleged that buses in which party workers were returning from Mr. Shah's rally were ransacked and set on fire allegedly by TMC activists. "This is a shame. We condemn it," BJP State president Dilip Ghosh said.

Senior TMC leader Suvenu Adhikari claimed that the BJP was trying to disturb peace and stability in the district. "BJP workers attacked our party offices and this led to retaliation by our workers. If our party office is attacked, we are going to offer sweets," he said.

A huge police contingent has been rushed to Kanthi to control the situation.

BJP chief gets defamation notice

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

KANTHI (W.B.)

BJP chief Amit Shah on Tuesday claimed that Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee's paintings were bought by chit fund owners for crores of rupees.

"So, will the chit fund owners ever be arrested if the person, whose paintings they had brought, is the Chief Minister?" he asked.

The TMC dismissed Mr. Shah's charges as "baseless" and alleged that the "BJP is trying to malign the party".

Chandrima Bhattacharya, senior TMC leader and Minister of State for Health, issued a defamation notice against the BJP chief.

"He (Mr. Shah) has to either give evidence in support of his statements or apologise publicly for his comments. If he doesn't do it, we will take legal steps against him," Ms. Bhattacharya said.

paintings cost? (₹) 10,000, (₹) 20,000, (₹) 1 lakh or (₹) 10 lakh. But her paintings were brought by chit fund owners for crores of rupees.

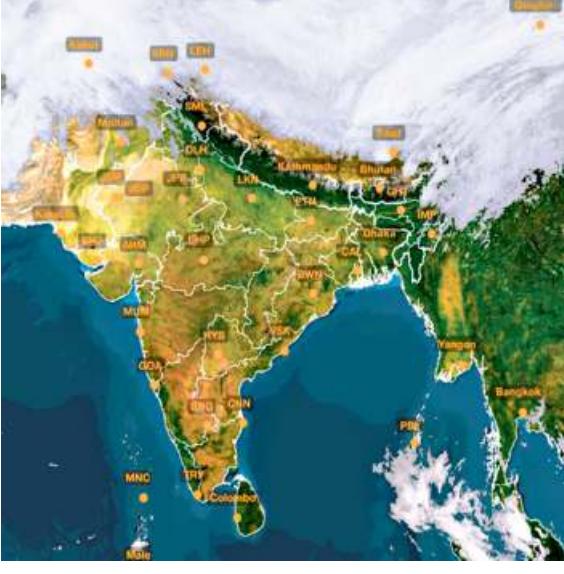
"So, will the chit fund owners ever be arrested if the person, whose paintings they had brought, is the Chief Minister?" he asked.

Vowing to uproot the Trinamool government, Mr. Shah said if the BJP comes to power in Bengal, it will ensure that each and every defrauded investor in the chit fund scam get their money back.

Making pointed attacks against Ms. Banerjee, Mr. Shah, at a rally in East Midnapore's Kanthi, said: "Even if someone is a great painter, how much would his/her

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 Wednesday: Cold wave conditions likely at isolated pockets over Madhya Pradesh, Vidarbha and Odisha. Thunderstorm accompanied with hailstorm likely over Jammu & Kashmir, Himachal Pradesh, Punjab, Haryana and west Rajasthan.

CITY	RAIN	MAX	MIN	CITY	RAIN	MAX	MIN
Agartala	—	26.3	15.5	Kozhikode	—	35.0	23.5
Ahmedabad	—	25.4	9.6	Kurnool	—	10.7	27.2
Aizawl	—	28.1	—	Lucknow	—	20.7	7.2
Aligarh	—	21.0	6.5	Madurai	—	30.3	21.8
Bengaluru	0.8	27.4	17.7	Mangaluru	—	35.4	20.0
Bhopal	—	20.5	4.8	Mumbai	—	31.8	19.2
Bhubaneswar	—	27.2	14.9	Myssur	—	29.0	18.9
Chandigarh	—	19.8	6.0	New Delhi	—	20.6	5.4
Chennai	0.2	29.9	22.2	Patna	—	22.2	8.5
Coimbatore	—	30.7	21.8	Port Blair	—	30.6	24.4
Dehradun	—	22.4	4.7	Puducherry	—	30.0	22.2
Gangtok	—	13.2	5.2	Pune	—	27.3	8.7
Goa	—	33.5	21.4	Raipur	—	23.3	12.6
Guwahati	—	23.8	13.2	Ranchi	—	21.5	9.0
Hubballi	—	28.0	17.0	Shillong	—	13.6	7.6
Hyderabad	—	26.7	12.8	Shimla	—	11.9	0.8
Imphal	—	20.3	9.4	Srinagar	—	6.7	-5.4
Jaipur	—	21.4	5.2	Trivandrum	—	34.5	23.4
Kochi	—	31.8	25.0	Tiruchirapalli	—	31.7	22.8
Kohima	—	18.3	7.0	Vijayawada	—	31.1	29.1
Kolkata	—	24.3	17.1	Visakhapatnam	—	28.4	21.0

(Rainfall data in mm; temperature in Celsius)
Pollutants in the air you are breathing Yesterday

CITIES	SO ₂	NO _x	CO	PM _{2.5}	PM ₁₀	CODE
Ahmedabad	53	90	26	152	—	■■■■■
Bengaluru	.4	49	81	44	.68	■■■■■
Chennai	48	15	36	39	—	■■■■■
Delhi	23	58	36	.336	.247	■■■■■
Hyderabad	.4	101	40	.167	.143	■■■■■
Kolkata	14	94	12	.266	.168	■■■■■
Lucknow	11	30	56	.264	—	■■■■■
Mumbai	18	45	93	.114	.110	■■■■■
Pune	36	—	6	.129	.110	■■■■■
Visakhapatnam	—	—	—	—	—	—

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.

NO_x: 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.

PM_{2.5} & 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

CBI summons two BJD MLAs in chit fund scam

Both were Ministers in Naveen govt.

STAFF REPORTER

BHUBANESWAR

Two senior Biju Janata Dal (BJD) MLAs have been summoned by the CBI in connection with the Seashore chit fund scam.

Atanu Sabayasachi Nayak and Arun Sahoo, senior MLAs and former Ministers in the Naveen Patnaik government, were asked to be present before the investigators, CBI sources said.

The CBI is likely to question them for their alleged involvement in the Seashore chit fund scam, which is one of the 44 companies being probed by the CBI since May 2014.

In 2017, Pravat Biswas, BJD MLA from Cuttack-Choudwar, was arrested on charges of involvement in the Seashore chit fund scam. He was granted bail in June 2018. Earlier, BJD MLA Pravat Tripathy and MP Ramachandra Hansda were arrested by the CBI in connection with different chit fund scams.

itself in the stock exchange which is mandatory if the number of shareholders cross 50.

Anticipatory bail

The High Court granted anticipatory bail to BJD MP Rabindra Jena in connection with the Seashore chit fund scam on Tuesday.

In 2017, Pravat Biswas, BJD MLA from Cuttack-Choudwar, was arrested on charges of involvement in the Seashore chit fund scam. He was granted bail in June 2018. Earlier, BJD MLA Pravat Tripathy and MP Ramachandra Hansda were arrested by the CBI in connection with different chit fund scams.

Municipal Council Of Madhupur

Government Of Jharkhand Urban Development Department

Very Short Term Tender

E-Tender Reference No.-UDD/MMC/14/2018-19

1.	Tender Inviting Authority	Executive Officer, Nagar Parishad Madhupur

</

IN BRIEF



Congress posters depict Rahul as Lord Ram

PATNA

Ahead of the 'Jan Akanksha' (people's expectation) rally in Patna on February 3, Congress workers have put up posters in which party president Rahul Gandhi is portrayed as an avatar of Lord Ram with a caption making an oblique attack on the BJP's stand on the construction of the Ram temple in Ayodhya.

Amit Shah says Odisha govt. is 'incompetent'

BHUBANESWAR

BJP president Amit Shah on Tuesday attacked the Naveen Patnaik government in Odisha, saying its "incompetency" had left the State lagging behind in development and it was not allowing implementation of Central welfare programmes.

Maoists burn bus in Odisha, passengers safe

BERHAMPUR

Maoists allegedly torched a private passenger bus near Mahupadar under the Mathili police station limits in Odisha's Malkangiri district on Monday night. The arson coincides with the 'Protest Week' being observed by the outlawed CPI (Maoist) organisation from January 25. The passengers were forced to vacate the vehicle before it was burnt down.

Child with black jacket stopped at CM's event

GUWAHATI

A three-year-old child was allegedly stopped from attending a programme addressed by Assam Chief Minister Sarbananda Sonowal for wearing a black jacket. The incident happened before Mr. Sonowal was to lay the foundation stone of a spun silk mill at Borgang in north-eastern Assam's Biswanath district on Tuesday. The Chief Minister has asked DGP Kuladhar Saikia to submit a report on the incident.

Rajasthan Zika strain is endemic to Asia, says new study

National Institute of Virology paper contradicts Health Ministry release that suggested Brazilian-like strain had entered India

PRIYANKA PULLA

The Zika virus that infected 159 people in an outbreak in Rajasthan last year, could have been circulating in India for several years and is endemic to Asia, according to a new study published in the journal *Infection, Genetics and Evolution* this week.

The study, led by authors from Pune's National Institute of Virology (NIV), an institute under the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR), is the first to sequence full Zika virus genomes from India.

Confers herd immunity

"The finding that the outbreak was caused by an endemic virus is quite important," said Nathan Grubaugh, an epidemiologist from the Yale School of Public Health, who was not involved in the study.

"It suggests that people in the region may have been



A file photo of a municipal worker fumigating a residential area to check the spread of Zika and other mosquito-borne diseases in New Delhi. AP

previously exposed to the virus, building herd immunity that may limit future outbreaks."

During the latter half of 2018, India recorded its first major Zika outbreaks in Ra-

asthan and Madhya Pradesh.

Around then, the ICMR said the Rajasthan virus had been sequenced and was closely related to a virus that had caused large epidemics

and birth defects in Latin America in 2015.

Then, in November 2018, the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare issued a press release, citing the NIV's research, to say that

"known mutations" for foetal microcephaly were not present in the Rajasthan strain.

The Hindu has previously reported that the statement about "known mutations" was interpreted by MP's health authorities to mean that the Indian viral strain could not cause birth defects. The Ministry and ICMR were criticised for the misleading wording, but did not issue a clarification.

Crucial contradictions

This week's publication contradicts the ICMR's previous statements in two ways. First, it indicates that the Rajasthan Zika strain is not closely related to the Brazilian one.

"It appears that the Indian strain has been around for a while...The Brazilian strain diverged more recently," said Farah Ishtiaq, who studies the effects of infec-

tious diseases on ecology at Bengaluru's Indian Institute of Science.

Prof. Grubaugh adds that the phylogenetic analysis in the paper, along with previous research, suggests that the virus has been in Asia for "at least 50 years".

"Based on limited data, I suspect it is [endemic to India]," he added.

While this is good news, because it implies that a portion of the population could be immune, it could also mean that Zika-related birth defects such as microcephaly were occurring even before the virus was first detected in India.

The NIV paper is also more cautious than the Ministry's press release on the implications of a mutation in the viral genome called S139N.

In a 2017 paper published in *Science*, the existence of this mutation in the Brazilian population is tested for Zika antibodies.

brian strain was linked, using animal data, with microcephaly.

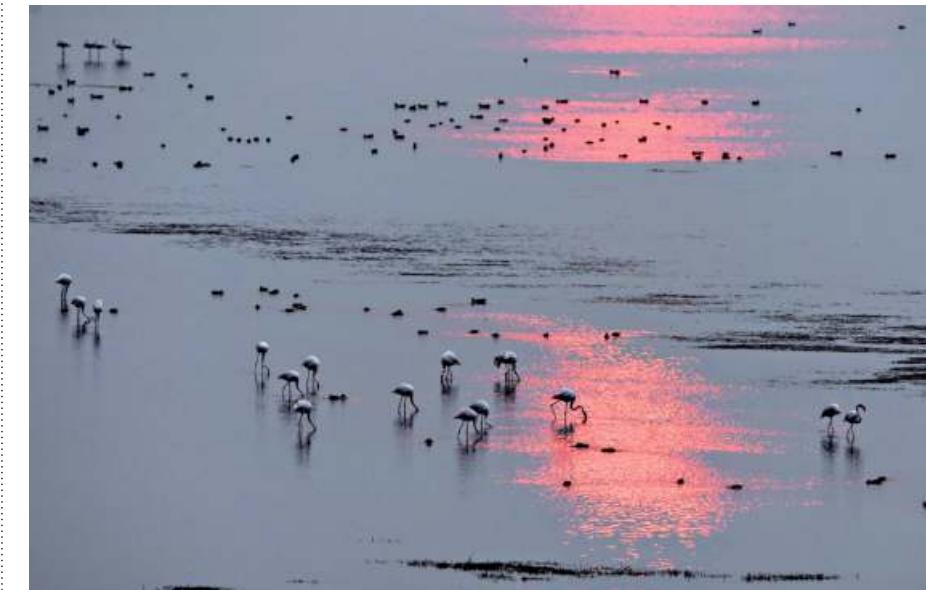
Based on this paper, the Ministry press release had said the Rajasthan strain didn't have the "known mutation".

The current paper says: "A word of caution should be maintained on the claims of these mutations on the development of microcephaly in humans, given no direct clinical evidence of their effect."

Emailed questions to Devendra T. Mourya, NIV Director and corresponding author of the paper, were not answered.

While endemicity means that large outbreaks, such as the Brazilian one, may not occur in India, serosurveys are needed to confirm this, said Prof. Grubaugh. In a serosurvey, a sample of the population is tested for Zika antibodies.

The shape of water



Early birds: Flamingos and northern pintail ducks feeding at the break of dawn at Nalbana Bird Sanctuary in Chilika Lake in Odisha. This year, Chilika, the second largest lagoon in the world, has received a record number of migratory birds. KK R. DEEPAK

I-T raids on realty firms, retail giant

S. VIJAY KUMAR
SANGEETHA KANDAVEL
CHENNAI

The Income Tax department conducted searches on Tuesday at several premises belonging to two real estate firms – G Square Realtors Private Limited and Lotus Ventures and Infrabuild Private Limited – and a large retail firm, New Saravana Stores Bramanam, suspecting tax evasion. Over 70 locations in Chennai and Coimbatore came under scanner. The searches continued until late in the evening. A taxman said that they had found unaccounted cash to the tune of ₹15 crore.

ponent Ms. Priya Ramani existed on record, and therefore there were sufficient grounds to proceed against her. Accordingly, Ms. Priya Ramani was summoned for commission of offence of defamation under Section 500 of the Indian Penal Code, he said.

The Magistrate said the allegations of the respondent (Ms. Ramani) were prima facie defamatory and referred to complainant Mr. Akbar. Therefore he was an aggrieved person within the meaning of Section 199 of the Code of Criminal Proce-

Delhi court summons journalist Priya Ramani

M.J. Akbar has accused the senior scribe of defaming him

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

NEW DELHI

A Delhi court on Tuesday summoned senior journalist Priya Ramani in a criminal defamation case filed by former Union Minister M.J. Akbar accusing her of defaming him by alleging that he sexually assaulted several women journalists.

Summoning Ms. Ramani, Additional Chief Metropolitan Magistrate Samar Vishal said all that was necessary to take a prima facie view that the offence of defamation had been committed against the complainant by the res-

dure to file this complaint. "He [Mr. Akbar] has denied the allegations made by the respondent as false and imaginary. These defamatory statements have been published, widely read and particularly by the witnesses examined who deposed that the reputation of the complainant was lowered. The inquiry as contemplated under Section 202 of the Code of Cr.P.C has been conducted by examining the complainant and his witnesses to arrive at the conclusion for this stage of this case," the 23-page order said.

139 polluted cities not on clean air plan: report

Greenpeace faults Centre's scheme to cut pollution

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

NEW DELHI

There are 139 Indian cities that breach air pollution standards but are not included in the Centre's National Clean Air Programme (NCAP), says a report by Greenpeace and made public on Tuesday.

The NCAP was launched by the government earlier this month and is a ₹300

crore initiative to reduce particulate matter (PM) pollution by 20-30% in at least 102 cities by 2024. Airpocalypse III, as the Greenpeace report is titled, analyses air pollution data of 313 cities and towns for the year 2017.

Beyond limits

Of these 313 cities, 241 (77%) had PM10 levels beyond the National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS). These specify upper limits to a range of airborne chemicals and compounds.

While 102 of these cities

were included in the NCAP, the remaining 139 cities were left out.

That's because, say the authors of the report, the government's list of 102 cities relied on average pollution data until 2015, whereas Airpocalypse III used data updated up to 2017.

Even if the NCAP were to allow to reduce pollution by 30% by 2024, 153 cities would still be left with pollution levels exceeding the NAAQS, the report added.

Of the 139 cities that have not been included in the

non-attainment list under the NCAP, there are several cities that have a population of more than 1 million, and PM levels (recorded in 2017) above NAAQS.

These include: Ranchi, Dhanbad (Jharkhand); Jabalpur (Madhya Pradesh); Chennai, Madurai (Tamil Nadu); Meerut (Uttar Pradesh); Pimpri-Chinchwad, Thane, (Maharashtra); Surat, Rajkot, Vadodara (Gujarat); and Howrah (West Bengal).

"Since the data for 2017 was available when NCAP

was finalised, it would have made more sense to update the non-attainment list to include all such cities in the final NCAP," said Sunil Dahiya of Greenpeace and one of the authors of the report.

The 102 cities, identified as hotspots of pollution, were asked to submit a plan for how they would address the problem. Broadly, the plans include increasing the number of monitoring stations, providing technology support, conducting source apportionment studies, and strengthening enforcement.

GOVERNMENT OF MAHARASHTRA
STATE COMMON ENTRANCE TEST CELL, MAHARASHTRA STATE, MUMBAI

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E-mail- maharashtra.cetcell@gmail.com Phone No- 022-22016153/57/59 Website- www.mahacet.org

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DGIPR/2018/2019/6207

Decision put off on Institutes of Eminence

PRISCILLA JEBARAJ

NEW DELHI

The University Grants Commission has deferred a decision on which institutions should be granted the prestigious Institutes of Eminence tag as an expert committee has recommended more names than the government scheme allowed for.

"The expert committee recommended 30 names, 15 in each category. But the government scheme said we had to select ten in each category [of public and private institutions]," UGC member Sushma Yadav told *The Hindu* after the Commission's meeting on Tuesday.

"It is not just a question of naming institutions, but there is also a ₹1,000 crore grant [for the public institutions]. So we decided to refer back to the government, whether they want to expand the scheme," she said, adding that the committee had not put its list of names in any preferential order or ranking.

The scheme is aimed at developing world-class institutions which would put India on the global education map. Institutions were offered greater autonomy and freedom to decide fees, course durations and structures. The 10 selected public institutions would also receive a grant of ₹1000 crore, while the 10 private institutions would not receive any financial assistance.

The empowered expert committee headed by former Chief Election Commissioner N. Gopalaswami had initially recommended 11 institutions for the tag in July 2018. Of those, the Centre had actually bestowed the tag on six institutions, three public – IIT Delhi, IIT Bombay and IISc Bangalore – and three private – BITS Pilani, Manipal University, and the yet-to-open Jio University. In December, the committee recommended 19 more names, taking the total

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MINISTRY OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT, GOVT. OF INDIA

प्रशिक्षण एवं विकास एवं पंचायती सरकार संस्थान

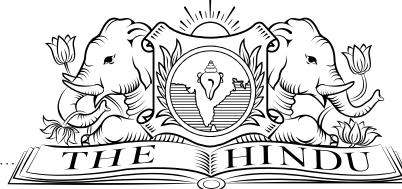
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प्रशिक्षण एवं विकास एवं पंचायती सरकार संस्थान

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Stress and strain

In politically charged Karnataka, words gather the power to unsettle those in authority

No relationship is free of tense moments and conflicting emotions. But the Congress-Janata Dal (Secular) alliance in Karnataka seems to have more than its share of stress and strain. The pressures on the post-poll tie-up are from multiple points: the Opposition BJP that believes it was robbed of its mandate, and is looking to win over some of the MLAs of the Congress to topple the government; Congress members, especially those owing allegiance to former Chief Minister Siddaramaiah, who argue that the chief ministership should not have been handed over to the junior partner, the JD(S); and the leadership of the JD(S) that tries to assert itself within the alliance and expand the party's base at the Congress's expense. With the Lok Sabha election approaching, the stakes are high for all. The JD(S) wants to ensure it gets a good share of the seats as part of the alliance; the Congress realises it will have to concede ground to the JD(S) to keep the BJP out of the political turf, and the BJP knows the importance of being in power at the time of polls. After days of high drama, when the BJP and the Congress herded their MLAs in resorts to protect them from poaching, the pressure point on the government is from Siddaramaiah loyalists. Congress MLA S.T. Somashekhar, on being appointed as the chairperson of the Bangalore Development Authority, claimed the city had not seen any development under the coalition government. Chief Minister H.D. Kumaraswamy promptly offered to quit if his style of functioning was found to be unacceptable, forcing a rattled Congress leadership to rush to make amends. While Mr. Siddaramaiah signalled to his supporters and the party leadership he was not manoeuvring to be Chief Minister again, Mr. Somashekhar apologised after KPCC president Dinesh Gundu Rao said he was at fault.

That a statement by one MLA can create such a storm speaks to the structural instability of the arrangement. The Congress and the JD(S) came together in a marriage of convenience; the JD(S) was allowed to head the government to prevent it from entering into a deal with the BJP. The only thing the Congress could offer the JD(S) that the BJP could not was the chief ministership. This was no gesture of magnanimity; only pragmatic deal-making. As negotiations on seat-sharing for the Lok Sabha polls begin, the strain is beginning to show. In these trying circumstances, the level of political discourse is also falling. While Union Minister Anantkumar Hegde made personal, derogatory comments about Mr. Rao, Mr. Siddaramaiah shouted at a party worker and grabbed the mike from her when she complained about the failure of officials to redress the grievances of her townspeople. In the surcharged atmosphere now, a remark is often enough of a spark to set off a ravaging fire.

Clearer TV

New TRAI order provides for greater choice and transparency on pricing of channels

The tariff order on broadcasting and cable services issued by the Telecom Regulatory Authority of India is set to become effective on February 1, giving the consumer the option to pay only for those channels she wants to watch. Under the scheme, there is also a maximum price for pay channels declared by the broadcaster, which is reported to TRAI, bringing about greater transparency. Each channel will be available on an *a la carte* basis. The effect is that the consumer's subscription cost on a base package of 100 standard definition television channels is fixed in the form of a network capacity fee. And even within this group, there is freedom to choose channels, with provision for appropriate revision for any pay channels. This is a welcome departure from a regime where combinations of free and pay channels were decided by distributors and broadcasters as bouquets that did not reflect actual demand for individual channels. Efforts to introduce *a la carte* choice were thwarted by pricing individual channels almost as high as the bouquets they were part of. Bouquets are enabled in the new scheme, but with the stipulation that at least 85% of the total price of all channels that form part of a bouquet be charged, removing the incentive to distort prices. Distributors including cable and DTH platforms, and advertisers, should welcome the order, which strengthens price discovery and eliminates inflated claims of the subscriber base.

Television in the conventional sense has changed in the era of the Internet, with the emergence of new distribution possibilities. Many broadcasters, including popular news channels, provide their content free on platforms such as YouTube and through mobile phone applications, reaching global audiences. Global Over the Top (OTT) providers such as Netflix and Amazon Prime have opened a new front and are competing for viewers who get advertisement-free programming streamed on subscription. TRAI has made clear that since broadcast licensing does not apply to such new technology platforms, these do not come under price regulation. In the fast-changing competitive landscape of home entertainment, conventional TV must now compete on the strength of transparent pricing and better programming for subscription revenue growth and viewer time that attracts advertising. Industry data show that there are about 197 million homes in India with a TV set, and 100 million more homes without one represent scope for growth. This can be achieved through regulatory schemes that empower broadcasters and subscribers alike. TRAI has done well to put up a calculator on its website to help consumers calculate bills under the new regime before signing up for a package with the operator. The broadcast industry must welcome a new era that promises to remove distribution bottlenecks and empower consumers with choice.

Think universal basic capital

A simplistic universal basic income will not solve the fundamental problems of the economy



ARUN MAIRA

India's GDP is growing quite well, though there are disputes about whether it grew faster under the present or previous governments. There can be no dispute though that India needs to do much better to improve overall human development, in which it continues to be compared with countries in Sub-Saharan Africa. Even its poorer sub-continental neighbours are improving health and education faster. Benefits of India's economic growth must trickle down much faster to people at the bottom of the pyramid: to poorer farmers, landless rural labour, and hundreds of millions of workers living on the edge in low-paying, 'flexible' forms of employment with no social security.

Economists seem to be offering three solutions to the economy's structural problems. One, that there is no problem. Two, more privatisation. And, three, a universal basic income (UBI) to be provided by the state.

Ground still to be covered

Many economists are juggling with statistics to prove that the Indian economy is doing quite well. It is providing enough jobs, they say. And, statistically, poverty has reduced a lot. However, even these economists admit that a lot more must be done to improve education and health care, and to address the persistent informality and small scale of enterprises that are providing most of the employment in the country.

An ideological solution, accompanied with evidence that the go-

vernment is unable to provide them, is more privatisation of public services. As U.S. President Ronald Reagan said, government is not the solution, it is the problem. However, the private sector is structurally not designed to provide affordable public services equitably. Milton Friedman, who too is often cited, said, the business of business must be only business. Businesses must be run with a profit motive. They cannot take on the burden of subsidising citizens who cannot pay for their services.

Disruption and basic income

Structural forces within the global economy have been driving down wages and creating insecure employment while increasing the mobility of capital and increasing incomes from ownership of capital. Thomas Piketty and Oxfam have also drawn attention to increasing economic inequalities around the world. 'Industry 4.0', which has not yet spread too far, is expected to worsen these problems. An economic consequence of declining growth of wage incomes will be reduction of consumption. Which will create problems for owners of capital and automated Industry 4.0 production systems. For, who will buy all the material and services that these systems will produce? Therefore, the UBI has appeared as a silver bullet solution. It will be an income provided to everybody by the very state that the capitalists say should get out of their way, and to whom they are unwilling to pay more taxes.

The beauty of a 'universal' basic income, its proponents say, is that it avoids messy political questions about who deserves assistance. It also side-steps the challenge of actually providing the services required: education, health, food, etc. Just give the people cash: let them buy what they need. Howev-



GETTY IMAGES/STOCKPHOTO

er, if the cash will not provide citizens with good quality and affordable education and health, because neither the government nor the private sector is able or willing to, this will not solve the basic human development problems that must be solved.

Some economists who were proponents of UBI, such as Arvind Subramanian, the former Chief Economic Adviser to the Government, have begun to dilute their simplistic concept of UBI to make it financially and politically feasible. They propose a QUBRI (quasi-universal basic rural income), targeted only at poorer people in the rural areas. Their scheme is no longer universal. First, it will exclude the not-so-poor in rural areas as morally it should. Political questions about who should be included will have to be addressed. Second, it will not cover the masses of urban poor working for low and uncertain wages. Therefore, some other schemes will have to be drawn up for the urban sector, and entitlement and measurement issues will have to be addressed for these schemes too. All the schemes, rural and urban, could be cash transfer schemes, which Aadhar and the digitisation of financial services will facilitate. However, this still begs the question about how to provide good

quality public services for people to buy.

A simplistic UBI will not solve the fundamental problems of the economy. An unavoidable solution to fix India's fundamental problems is the strengthening of institutions of the state to deliver the services the state must (public safety, justice, and basic education and health), which should be available to all citizens regardless of their ability to pay for them. The institutions of the state must be strengthened also to regulate delivery of services by the private sector and ensure fair competition in the market. The building of state institutions, to deliver and to regulate, will require stronger management, administrative, and political capabilities, not better economists.

Economic inequality matters

Some economists say that inequality does not matter so long as poverty is being reduced. In fact, some even say that inequality is necessary to reduce poverty. So long as the people have bread, why should they complain if the rich are eating more cake, they imply. However, economic inequality does matter because it increases social and political inequalities. Those with more wealth change the rules of the game to protect and increase their wealth and power. Thus, opportunities for progress become unequal. This is why economic inequality must be reduced to create a more just society.

In the present economic system, people at the top can make more profits by driving down prices and wages for people at the bottom. They may then recycle a small portion of their profits back as philanthropy, or corporate social responsibility. Or, if they were willing to, which they are not, pay the state more taxes to provide

services, and even a UBI, to people at the bottom. Tiny enterprises have very little clout compared with large capitalist enterprises; and individual workers have little power compared with their employers. Therefore, terms of trade remain unfair for small enterprises, and terms of employment unfair for unorganised workers. The solution is the aggregation of the small into larger associations, cooperatives, and unions. Aggregations of small producers, and unions of workers, can negotiate for more fair terms.

An alternative approach

A better solution to structural inequality than UBI is universal basic capital, or UBC, which has begun to pop up in international policy circles. In this alternative approach, people own the wealth they generate as shareholders of their collective enterprises. Amul, SEWA, Grameen, and others have shown a way. Some economists go further and also propose a 'dividend' for all citizens, by providing them a share of initial public offerings on the stock market, especially from companies that use 'public assets', such as publicly funded research, or environmental resources.

To conclude, three better solutions to create more equitable growth than the ones on offer are: one, focus on building state capacity beginning with implementation of the recommendations of the Second Administrative Reforms Commission. Two, strengthen the missing middle-level institutions for aggregation of tiny enterprises and representation of workers. Three, the creativity of economists could be better applied to developing ideas for UBC than UBI.

Arun Maira was a member of the Planning Commission

Gandhi and the Socratic art of dying

There is a process of learning in the Gandhian act of self-suffering



RAMIN JAHANBEGLOO

Today is the 71st anniversary of Gandhi's death. His assassination was a great shock. But, strangely, his death unified those in India who had lost faith in non-violent co-existence. As Nehru said, "the urgent need of the hour is for all of us to function as closely and co-operatively as possible."

As a matter of fact, Gandhi's death taught everyone about the worth of civic friendship and social solidarity. Gandhi himself was well aware of this, long before his return to India and his rise as the non-violent leader of the Indian independence movement. For example, in a letter to his nephew on January 29, 1909, he wrote, "I may have to meet death in South Africa at the hands of my countrymen... If that happens you should rejoice. It will unite the Hindus and Mussalmans... The enemies of the community are constantly making efforts against such a unity. In such a great endeavour, someone will have to sacrifice his life."

Socrates inspired Gandhi on the importance of self-sacrifice and the art of dying at a time when the latter was developing his idea of *satyagraha* in South Africa. Gandhi referred to Socrates as a "Soldier of Truth" (*satyavir*) who had the willingness to fight unto death for his cause. His portrayal of So-

uthers as a *satyagrahi* and a moral hero went hand in hand with the affirmation of the courage and audacity of a non-violent warrior in the face of life-threatening danger. Consequently, for Gandhi, there was a close link between the use of non-violence and the art of dying, in the same manner that cowardice was sharply related to the practice of violence.

An intertwining

In the Gandhian philosophy of resistance, we can find the intertwining of non-violence and exemplary suffering. Perhaps, self-sacrifice is the closest we come to ethical dying, in the sense that it is a principled leave-taking from life; an abandonment of one's petty preoccupations in order to see things more clearly. As such, there is a process of learning in the Gandhian act of self-suffering. For Socrates, to philosophise was to learn how to die. In the same way, for Gandhi, the practice of non-violence began with an act of self-sacrifice and the courage of dying for truth.

Socrates inspired Gandhi on the importance of self-sacrifice and the art of dying at a time when the latter was developing his idea of *satyagraha* in South Africa. Gandhi referred to Socrates as a "Soldier of Truth" (*satyavir*) who had the willingness to fight unto death for his cause. His portrayal of So-



THE HINDU PHOTO ARCHIVES

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Socratic aspects

Gandhi remained a Socratic dissenter all his life. Though not a philosopher, Gandhi admired moral and political philosophers, who, as a manner of Socrates, were ready to struggle for the truth. Like Socrates, Gandhi was neither a mystic nor a hermit. He was a practitioner of dissident citizenship. Gandhi considered Socrates' civic action as a source of virtue and moral strength. He affirmed: "We pray to God, and want our readers also to pray, that they, and we too, may have the moral

strength which enabled Socrates to follow virtue to the end and to embrace death as if it were his beloved. We advise everyone to turn his mind again and again to Socrates' words and conduct." Gandhi's approach to death exemplified another Socratic aspect: courage. Gandhi believed that when fighting injustice, the actor must not only have the courage of his/her opinions but also be ready to give his/her life for the cause. As George Woodcock says, "the idea of perishing for a cause, for other men, for a village even, occurs more frequently in Gandhi's writings as time goes on. He had always held that *satyagraha* implied the willingness to accept not only suffering but also death for the sake of a principle."

Gandhi's dedication to justice in the face of death was an example of his courageous attitude of mind as a Socratic gadfly. Further, one can find in Gandhi a readiness to raise the matter of dying as public policy. This is a state of mind which we can find as the background motto of Gandhi's political and intellectual life. Indeed, for Gandhi, the art of dying was very often a public act and an act of publicising one's will to be free.

There is something revealing in the parallel that Gandhi established between the struggle for

freedom and the art of dying. In a speech at a meeting of the Congress in Bombay in August 1942, he invited his fellow freedom fighters to follow a new mantra: "Here is a mantra, a short one, that I give to you. You may imprint it on your hearts and let every breath of yours give expression to it. The mantra is 'Do or Die.' We shall either free India or die in the attempt; we shall not live to see the perpetuation of our slavery... He who loses his life will gain it, he who will seek to save it shall lose it. Freedom is not for the coward or the fain-hearted."

Note here both the conviction in Gandhi that no other decision but dying was possible if the declaration of freedom was unachieved. Unsurprisingly, straightforward and honest. Which brings us back to January 30, 1948 when Mahatma Gandhi fell to the bullets of Nathuram Godse. One can understand this event as a variety of the Sophoclean saying: "Call no man happy until he is dead." Like it or not, it seems that for Gandhi, to be human was to have the capacity, at each and every moment, to confront death as fulfillment of a Socratic life.

Ramin Jahanbegloo is Director, Mahatma Gandhi Centre for Peace, Jindal Global University, Sonipat

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.

Congress's promise

The promise of a 'minimum income guarantee' by the Congress party offers hope of dignity to millions of the poor in India (Page 1, "Rahul promises income guarantee to the poor", January 29). If the scheme is well designed, with the honest intention of bringing succour to the poor, it is not difficult to find the resources needed to implement it. The scheme could be started in a few backward districts in each State as a pilot study for a year before it is fine-tuned for the rest of the country. Out of the elements of the slogan '*roti kapada aur makaan*', such a scheme should at least ensure '*roti*' to most of the poor.

KOSARAJU CHANDRAMOULI,
Hyderabad

plan seems to be a bit different especially when it comes to helping the poor. If implemented in a water-tight way, it could spell great relief to the poor.

P.U. KRISHNAN,
Udhagamandalam

■ Where does Mr. Gandhi expect to find resources from to provide such an income? What is the criteria to be used in declaring someone 'poor'? The promise appears to be a very fluid one. No citizen wants to thrive on a 'freebie' culture, but instead looks for free and good education, employment opportunities, good infrastructure, better health care and affordable housing. Mr. Gandhi, if voted to power, should concentrate on making an individual well enough to stand on his own feet and not make him 'poor' to avail of an 'income guarantee'.

A. JAINALABDEEN,
Chennai

■ 'Garibi Hatao' (Remove poverty) was the theme and slogan of Indira Gandhi's 1971 election campaign. Had it been implemented or fulfilled, after almost half a century, her grandson and Congress president Rahul Gandhi, would not have promised a minimum income guarantee. The people of the country have a right to know how he and his party propose to fund such a scheme. The Election Commission of India needs to look into unreasonable and unimplementable election promises.

C.G. KURIAKOSE,
Kothamangalam, Kerala

■ We are responsible for the plight of the Indian tiger (Inside pages, "India can't handle more big cats", January 29). Unbridled human activities are leaving no space for the great cat. The solutions lie in identifying and creating

more tiger reserves with the help of the *India State of Forest Report*. India should also take a leaf out of the book of Australia which has its Green Army of Australia to oversee environmental issues. There must be more aggressive reforestation so that there are more habitats for the tiger. Finally, we must sensitise young Indians on the importance of the tiger as a keystone species in the Indian environment.

DIWAKAR PRASAD TIWARI,
Bara, Satna, Madhya Pradesh

■ When I began reading the article, I was sceptical at first, wondering whether this

Unfair characterisation

It is startling that even the judiciary appears hesitant to recognise the talents and the potential of the disabled (Editorial page, "Capable even if disabled", January 29). We may become more sensitive in identifying the disabled ("visually challenged, differently abled"), but when it comes to accepting them in mainstream society, there

still seems to be a flood of doubts. In the case that was highlighted in the article, the judiciary could have recommended a year's apprenticeship for the applicant. It was inspiring to read about the writer too, who has also demonstrated that there is no hurdle that can stop the disabled.

RADHIKA KUMAR,
Bengaluru

■ When I began reading the article, I was sceptical at first, wondering whether this

CORRECTIONS & CLARIFICATIONS:

In the story on Cognizant's 25th year headlined "Future will see man-machine managers" (Business page, Jan. 28, 2019), there was a reference to growth of 6.9% organic in constant currency and 7.9% including inorganic options. It should have been 7.1% including inorganic options.

An agency report titled "Diesel prices up by 10 paise, petrol unchanged" (Jan. 28, 2019) was erroneous. Indian Oil Corporation authorities said that there had not been any price increase in diesel since January 25.

It is the policy of The Hindu to correct significant errors as soon as possible. Please specify the edition (place of publication), date and page. The Readers' Editor's office can be contacted by telephone: +91-44-28418297/28576300 (11 a.m. to 5 p.m., Monday to Friday); Fax: +91-44-285

THE WEDNESDAY INTERVIEW | P.T. USHA

'India should learn from Russia's doping scandal'

The former sprint queen on coaching, 'Khelo India', sports administration, and steps that can be taken to raise the profile of Indian athletics

P.K. AJITH KUMAR

She may have run her last race in 1999, but P.T. Usha remains India's best known track-and-field athlete. She missed an Olympic medal by one hundredth of a second at the 1984 Summer Olympics, won five gold medals at the Asian championship in 1985, and single-handedly lifted India's overall standing at the Asian Games in 1986. Unlike most of the country's champion athletes, Usha didn't leave sport after her retirement; she became a coach and set up the Usha School of Athletics in Kerala. In this interview, she speaks about promising Indian athletes, why Kerala produces so many sportspersons, and sports management in the country. Excerpts:

It has been nearly 35 years since you finished a close fourth in the women's 400 m hurdles at the Los Angeles Olympics. No Indian has come close to winning an Olympic medal in track and field since. When do you see this happening?

■ In 2024, I think javelin thrower Neeraj Chopra has a good chance of winning a medal at the Paris Olympics. He is the most talented athlete we have at the moment. He has progressed well, has an excellent coach in Uwe Hohn, and gets enough international exposure. And at 21, age is on his side. He seems to be a level-headed young man.

What do you think of Hima Das, the first Indian woman to win a gold medal at a World (Under-20) athletics meet?

■ She is a promising sprinter. She has improved her timing greatly. Let us see how she fares over the next year or so.

The second edition of the 'Khelo India' Youth Games concluded at Pune a few days ago. Your thoughts on this initiative by the Union government?

■ 'Khelo' Games is certainly a good idea. I am happy to see that the government is

trying to do something to improve sports at the grassroots level and that lots of money is being spent on it.

But I feel there are several areas that need to be fine-tuned. There is too much bureaucracy. They still want to 'assess' somebody like Jisna Mathew, my ward who has already competed at the Olympics and won multiple medals in international meets. In Pune, the Kerala team had to wait for eight hours after their arrival at the railway station before they were provided accommodation. Such things shouldn't happen at a prestigious meet like 'Khelo India'. And I feel the government should ensure that the huge amount of money spent on each athlete is properly utilised. There are chances of it getting misused, which would defeat the purpose of the initiative.

■ Kerala is doing well because here the kids are encouraged to compete in sports, both by parents and teachers in schools. Sport is well-run at educational institutions and clubs. Look at the way the State school athletics meet is organised. Most of our international athletes, including me, have come out of it. It is a huge event, and is covered extensively by the media. It is the Olympics of our schoolchildren.

Which are the other States that are doing a good job of promoting sport?

■ There are several issues. For one thing, I would like to see some new faces in all sports associations. Often you have the same people controlling a sport. They may change their designations or they may be controlling affairs from behind the curtain even when they don't have any role officially.

That takes us to the issue of sports administration in the country.

■ There are several issues. For one thing, I would like to see some new faces in all sports associations. Often you have the same people controlling a sport. They may change their designations or they may be controlling affairs from behind the curtain even when they don't have any role officially.

What about the role of the Sports Authority of India (SAI)?

■ The SAI has done some good things, but it could do a lot more, especially with the kind of machinery and infrastructure it has. I would like to see more people who have a background in sports or are passionate about sports in key roles in the SAI.

Kerala is a powerhouse in Indian sport, despite its relatively small size and population. Besides athletics, it is doing well in football, volleyball, basketball and now cricket (it played in the Ranji Trophy semifinals for the first time in history).

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Which are the other States that are doing a good job of promoting sport?

■ Haryana is now showing a lot of interest. Andhra, Telangana and Tamil Nadu are also encouraging their athletes. In States like Maharashtra, you will find excellent infrastructure for multiple sports.

But I am not amused by the tendency of the States to compete with one another in announcing cash prizes for a medal-winner at internation-

al meets. In our time, we ran our races to win medals, not to get crores of rupees from the government. When a minister announces that a medallist will be given a prize like ₹4 crore, the athlete would want to win at any cost, even with the help of banned drugs. Why don't you give that medallist better training and more exposure in quality meets abroad?

In India it appears that for many, the main aim of playing a sport is to get a government job.

■ That is true, sadly. I have seen many talented athletes quitting sports as soon as they land a job. There should be a rule that somebody who is given a job under the sports quota should not be confirmed if they don't compete for a specific number of years. There are also several cases of superior officers not giving time for athletes to do sports. I have seen one of my wards suffer because she is forced to do office work in her prime years as an athlete.

You started the Usha School of Athletics in 2002 with the aim of winning India an Olympic medal.

■ That is still what I am aiming for. I want to give

an athlete whatever is required to be an Olympic champion: facilities, a synthetic track, scientific training, proper diet and international exposure. If I had all that, I could have certainly won an Olympic medal.

My school has already produced quality athletes like Tintu Luka and Jisna. But I have had to mould them. I am still waiting for a gifted, natural athlete, someone like me. I am quite hopeful about one of the youngest girls at the academy right now, though.

I am proud that my school has already contributed hugely to Indian athletics. We have won 67 international medals, besides 456 in national championships, 17 at

inter-university meets as well as 499 at the State level. For a 16-year-old academy, that is an excellent record, I feel. I don't think anybody else other than the SAI has had as much success.

You have had to turn to crowdfunding for your school this past year.

■ I am glad that we did; we need something like ₹60 lakh per year to run the school. It is so overwhelming to see that so many people from all over the world have contributed. We had to look at that option because of the needless controversy I was dragged into about the non-selection of athlete P.U. Chithra for the World cham-

C In our time, we ran our races to win medals, not to get crores of rupees from the government.

pionship a year ago. I was painted the villainess of the drama, without even checking the facts; I was only the observer for the Central government. Just about anyone, without the faintest idea about athletics, could appear on television channel and call me names. Could anything be more ridiculous than the suggestion that I was jealous of Chithra? It is a little sad to reflect that many people don't know the contribution I made to Indian sport, against brave odds and often all alone for such a long time.

If they did, they wouldn't have put black oil on the signpost of the road named after me in Kochi. But it would not have been easy for them to destroy everything named in my honour: there is one in China, there are sports institutions in north India, and the coaching centre in Thiruvananthapuram.

Not that I hadn't been treated badly before. People from my own home town had hurled stones at my house alleging that I didn't give my best at the Seoul Olympics in 1988.

How much has Indian athletics changed since you began running as a schoolgirl 40 years ago?

■ On the positive side, we now have synthetic tracks all over the country. Before I made my Olympic debut at Moscow in 1980, I hadn't seen a single one in my life.

Another big change is that the competition used to be lot more fair for women. The sex verification rules were a lot simpler. I am not sure if some of the female athletes today would have been able to compete in my time.

And yes, doping wasn't this big an issue then. There

were stray incidents, like the one involving a male Indian athlete; his urine test said that he was pregnant (his sample was apparently swapped with that of a female nurse).

For the last few years, India is among the top offending countries listed by the World Anti-Doping Agency.

■ That is a matter of shame. We should learn our lessons from Russia, whose athletes have been banned by the world athletics body. It is disappointing to find that we continue to have most of our coaches from the former Soviet Union. I had protested against the appointment of Yuri Ogorodnik, who had trained many of those who were caught for doping, but he was still welcomed back to India. Why can't we get coaches from countries that have cleaner reputations? I also wonder why our athletes are sent to European countries for training in winter.

What do you think should be done to raise the profile of Indian athletics?

■ You have to take our meets to people, with quality television coverage. We certainly could do more publicly.

When you compete in places like Europe, you get to perform in front of packed stands. Here, our athletes are greeted by empty stadia.

Maybe athletics could also do with a professional league in India, about which there had been some talk but nothing has happened.

■ Yes, that is something we need. Look at what has been done to football and kabaddi.



K. RAGESH



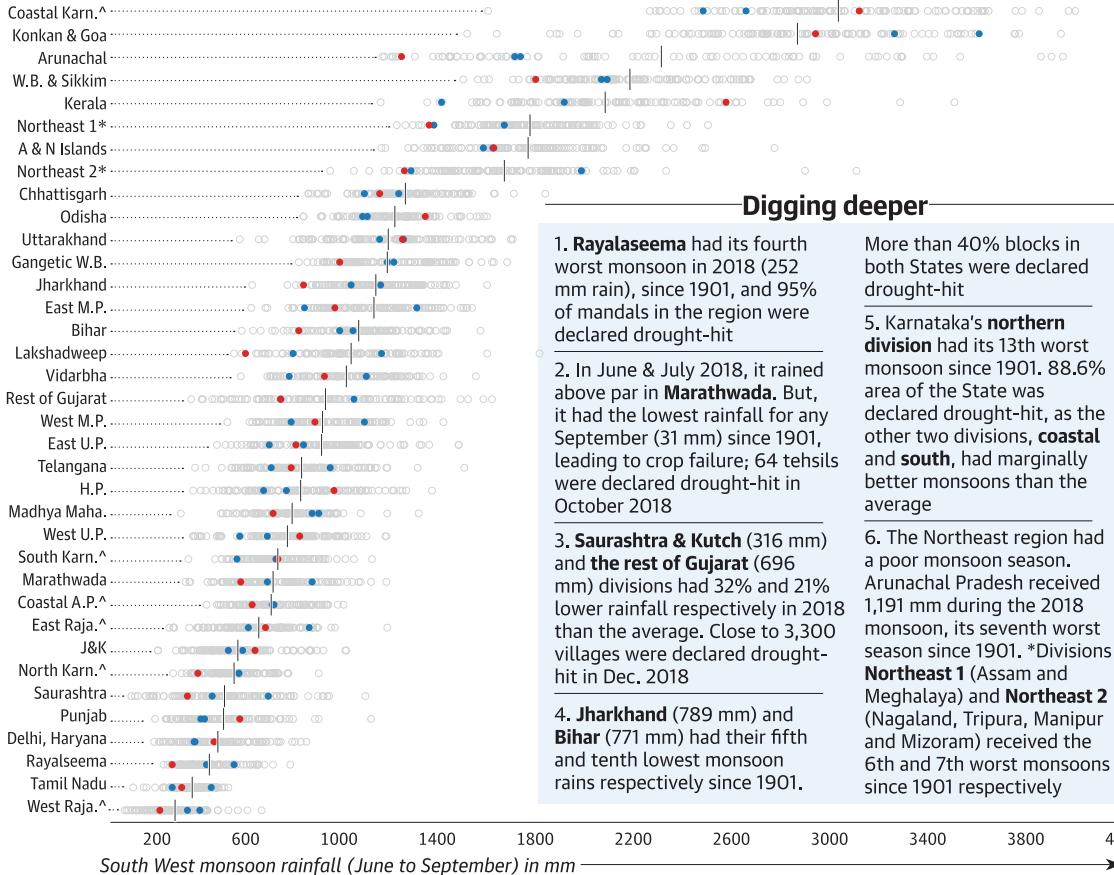
DATA POINT

Drought-hit

Of the 36 meteorological divisions in India, 25 received less rain during the South West monsoon in 2018 than the average precipitation in the last 118 years. By Vignesh Radhakrishnan

There is wide variation in the average rainfall across geographical divisions. The graphic compares South West Monsoon rainfall data for all divisions historically to find where their measures for 2016, 2017 and 2018 are placed.

Graph explained | The rainfall for each division is plotted in a row. Each circle represents the rainfall in a year. The years 1901 to 2015 are in grey (○); 2016 & 2017 are in blue (●); and 2018 in red (●). The dash (—) denotes the average rainfall of each division.



Digging deeper

More than 40% blocks in both States were declared drought-hit

5. Karnataka's northern division had its 13th worst monsoon since 1901. 88.6% area of the State was declared drought-hit, as the other two divisions, coastal and south, had marginally better monsoons than the average

6. The Northeast region had a poor monsoon season.

Arunachal Pradesh received 1,191 mm during the 2018 monsoon, its seventh worst season since 1901. *Divisions

Northeast 1 (Assam and Meghalaya) and Northeast 2 (Nagaland, Tripura, Manipur and Mizoram) received the 6th and 7th worst monsoons since 1901 respectively

3. Saurashtra & Kutch (316 mm) and the rest of Gujarat (696 mm) divisions had 32% and 21% lower rainfall respectively in 2018 than the average. Close to 3,300 villages were declared drought-hit in Oct 2018

4. Jharkhand (789 mm) and Bihar (771 mm) had their fifth and tenth lowest monsoon rains respectively since 1901.

Rayalseema, Tamil Nadu and West Raja.

FROM The Hindu ARCHIVES

FIFTY YEARS AGO JANUARY 30, 1969

Army aid sought to maintain order in A.P.

Army was called in to-night (January 29) in Andhra Pradesh to help the civil authorities in the maintenance of law and order in strategic places like Hyderabad, Vijayawada, Warangal, Guntur, Khammam, Kotahgudem and Kodad following violent demonstrations in some of these places. Army units had started moving and would be reaching the strategic points before dawn tomorrow [January 30], it was officially stated here [Hyderabad] to-night [January 29]. Earlier in the day the Chief Minister, Mr. K. Brahmanna Reddi, expressed his distress at the "acts of hooliganism" and said the Government would deal with the situation firmly to restore normalcy and maintain law and order. He appealed to the young men and women of the State "with their innate idealism and dynamism" to rise to the occasion of this juncture, and "play a positive role in bringing about complete integration." Earlier to-day, orders under Section 144 Cr. P. C. were promulgated in three major towns of the State – Guntur, Vijayawada and Warangal. Police opened fire in Kodad, a small Telengana border village on Hyderabad-Vijayawada trunk road, to-day to chase away some lorry loads of people from Vijayawada who attempted to enter the village allegedly to cause destruction, after lathi charge had failed to send them away.

A HUNDRED YEARS AGO JANUARY 30, 1919

Aeroplane Pleasure Flights Arranged at Calcutta. Messrs. Spalding and Company of Calcutta are now registering applications for accommodation for pleasure flights by aeroplane round Calcutta at charges of Rs. 50 for adults and Rs. 25 for children. The aeroplane which the company expect will arrive about the end of March and is one of the largest machines constructed and is equipped with four Royce engines aggregating about 1200 horse power and giving a speed of 120 miles per hour. An "Empire" representative who made enquiries says that the company hope to start shortly a daily service from Calcutta to Darjeeling and an aerodrome and landing ground on a space of 100 acres is now being prepared at Dum Dum from which flights will commence. It is calculated that the journey from Calcutta to Darjeeling will be made in 3 hours and fares when service starts will be about Rs. 80 for each passenger. Passengers will be carried from Calcutta to Siliguri in larger planes of the service and from Siliguri to Darjeeling in smaller planes.

CONCEPTUAL

Unfunded liabilities

FINANCE

This refers to any future debt obligation for which no proper provision has been made in the present. A company that promises to pay pension to its employees in the future, for instance, will generally have to set aside sufficient funds in the present in order to be able to fund its future obligation. While companies and governments are mandated by law to show unfunded liabilities as a liability on their balance sheets, accounting tricks may be used to hide the true size of such liability. It is believed that the actual debt load of many governments in the developed world could be many times higher if unfunded liabilities were properly taken into account.

MORE ON THE WEB

How to live together as man and wildlife

<http://bit.ly/mananimal>

FROM PAGE ONE

Government moves SC to return 'superfluous' land

The government said now the only roadblock to handing over the superfluous land to the rightful owners was a decision of the Supreme Court on March 31, 2003 in the case of Mohd Aslam @ Bhure.

The government wants the court to either vacate or modify this decision. Mr. Bhure had filed a writ petition in the Supreme Court in 2002, ostensibly incensed by a *bhumi pujan* function alleged to have been organised in the superfluous adjacent land.

The court had reacted to Mr. Bhure's petition by first

Northeast allies put BJP on notice

Apart from them and the JD (U), the parties that attended the convention were the Assam Gana Parishad that broke ties with the BJP over the Bill, the United Democratic Party, the People's Democratic Front, the Hill State People's Democratic

Gold turns red hot, price at a peak in India**Glittering high**

Price of 24 carat gold breached the ₹33,000 per 10 gram mark setting a new high for an extended period



Graph shows price for 10 grams of 24 carat gold over the past three years in India (₹)

A reduction in the quantum of mining is adding to price pressures, he added. While the Indian market is influenced by global prices – currently close to a seven-month high of about \$1,300 per ounce – the addition of import duties makes the metal more expensive than the global benchmark price in rupee terms.

Analysts expect global gold prices also to increase in the near future.

"We expect gold prices to trade higher over short to medium term eyeing short-term resistance at \$1,340, while prices may test previous resistance near \$1,380 in the medium term," HDFC Securities said in a report released on Tuesday.

Former Union Minister Fernandes is no more

The family is now awaiting the arrival of his son Sean Fernandes from the U.S. to proceed with the funeral arrangements. The funeral is scheduled on Wednesday. In a condolence message, Prime Minister Narendra Modi tweeted: "George Sahab represented the best of India's political leadership. Frank and fearless, forthright and farsighted, he made a valuable contribution to our country. He was among the most effective voices for the rights of the poor and marginalised. Sadened by his passing away."

Several leaders including Congress president Rahul Gandhi on Tuesday took to social media to express their condolences.

Mr. Gandhi said: "My condolences to his family and friends in this time of grief."

"Extremely pained to know about the passing away of Shri George Fernandes," said former Samata Party president Jaya Jaitly on Tuesday.

Two JMB operatives held

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

Two operatives of Jamaat-ul-Mujahideen Bangladesh (JMB), wanted in the 2014 Burdwan blast case, were arrested by the National Investigation Agency in West Bengal's Hooghly district.

Kadar Kazi, 32, was arrested Monday night from Dongol More locality under the Arambagh police station area of the district, NIA said.

"He was wanted in the Burdwan blast case and was also declared a proclaimed offender," an NIA official

said.

Kazi's associate Sajjad Ali, who was also involved in the activities of the JMB, was arrested in the late night operation, he said.

Kadar is from Nanur in Birbhum district, while Sajjad is a resident of Kandi in Murshidabad district.

The official said the two were on the run since the explosion took place at a house in the Khagrachari locality of Burdwan town on October 2, 2014, killing two persons and injuring another.

"He was wanted in the Burdwan blast case and was also declared a proclaimed offender," an NIA official

Adityanath, team take a dip at Sangam

In a first, Cabinet meeting held at the Kumbh; slew of decisions to appease Hindu sentiments

OMAR RASHID
LUCKNOW

Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath held a Cabinet meeting at the Kumbh Mela in Prayagraj (Allahabad) on Tuesday, with most of the Ministers also taking a holy dip at the Sangam ahead of the meeting.

In a first such government meeting to be held at the Kumbh Mela, Mr. Adityanath announced a number of decisions, including some aimed at appeasing Hindu cultural sentiments as well as at instilling a feeling of "nationalism."

Ganga Expressway

The Cabinet gave its consent in principle to the "Ganga Expressway", to connect Allahabad/Prayagraj to western UP. Around 600 km long, the proposed link will be the "world's longest expressway," Mr. Adityanath said. The four-lane road, upgradable to six lanes, would pass through Meerut, Amro-



Testing the waters: Yogi Adityanath taking a dip in the Ganga. ■ PTI

ha, Bulandshahr, Badaun, Shahjahanpur, Farukkhabad, Hardoi, Kannauj, Unnao, Rae Bareli and Pratapgarh districts.

It would cost ₹36,000 crore and require acquiring of 6,556 hectares of land. The previous BSP govern-

ment under Mayawati had announced a similar project connecting the eastern parts of the State to the western region, around 1,000 km in length.

However, the project was stalled by the Allahabad High Court in 2009 on an issue ov-

er environment clearance. The Adityanath Cabinet decided to waive State GST on recently released the Bollywood film *Uri*, based on the "surgical strikes" conducted by the Army in 2016.

Mr. Adityanath said the

film would "instill a feeling of

nationalism" among the common people, especially the youth. Briefing the media after the meeting at the Kumbh media centre, Mr. Adityanath announced that the Bharadwaj Ashram in Allahabad would be beautified, as would the Valmiki Ashram, located on the way to Chitrakoot.

In addition, a statue of sage Valmiki and a Ramayan research institute would be built at the site.

University of yore

Speaking of Maharishi Bhadravaj, Mr. Adityanath said the sage was the likely creator of the "Pushpak Vimān" and also hailed him for starting a "university" in Prayagraj (Allahabad) in the *Treta Yug*. Apart from this, the BJP government also announced that it would beautify Shringeripur, a site near Allahabad revered by Nishads, a riverine most-backward caste, and build a park dedicated to their icon Nishadraj.

Shankarsinh Vaghela joins NCP

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
AHMEDABAD

A year and a half after he quit the Congress and a few months before the Lok Sabha election, former Gujarat Chief Minister Shankarsinh Vaghela, 78, joined the Nationalist Congress Party (NCP) on Tues-

day. Inducting the veteran leader into the party here, NCP chief Sharad Pawar said Mr. Vaghela would play a crucial role in the party not only in Gujarat but also nationally, and he would be made a national general secretary.

Mr. Vaghela is likely to contest the Lok Sabha election from either Sabarkantha in north Gujarat or Panchmahal in central Guj-

"My joining the NCP is meant to strengthen anti-BJP forces ahead of the election because non-BJP parties will form the next government," he said.

Two members of statistical panel quit

Protest at the body being sidelined

TCA SHARAD RAGHAVAN
NEW DELHI

In a body blow to the National Statistical Commission, the two remaining members have resigned in protest at the body being sidelined.

The Hindu has learnt that P.C. Mohanan and J.V. Meenakshi tendered their resignations on Monday, leaving the NSC with only NITI Aayog CEO Amitabh Kant, who serves as an ex-officio member, and Chief Statistician of India Pravin Srivastava.

According to people in the know, Monday's resignations stem from the fact that the NSC has been running at half strength, with the government moving very slowly on appointing new members, and the institution has been "systematically bypassed in its functions".

One main grievance was the manner in which the

back series GDP data was released.

That is, the involvement of NITI Aayog at the expense of the Commission was a cause for conflict.

"The proper way would have been for the Ministry to have put this back series in front of the Commission and consulted it on which of the two estimates to go by, what to do. They were not consulted at all," a former member of the Commission said.

The second cause for protest was that the NSC had finalised the employment and unemployment data it wanted to release, had approved it on December 5, and said it should be released immediately. "It has not been released," the former member said. "So finally they said, why have us? If you are going to NITI Aayog for direction, then why have us?"

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Students learn a thing or two from PM

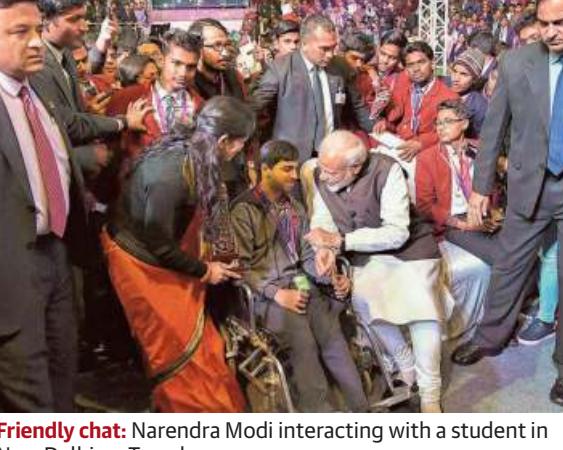
In a scripted interaction, he tells them how to cope with stress and pressure

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

On the eve of the examination season, Prime Minister Narendra Modi held a two-hour scripted interaction with selected school and college students on how to cope with stress and pressure.

The 2,000-odd students, parents and teachers present at the capital's Talkatora Stadium on Tuesday, as well as those who asked questions via videoconferencing from different parts of India and the world, had been selected through an online essay contest on how they were inspired by Mr. Modi's *Exam Warriors* book or caption-writing for a picture of the Statue of Unity.

In many schools and colleges across the country, viewing the *Pariksha pe Charcha 2.0* event broadcast was compulsory. The



Friendly chat: Narendra Modi interacting with a student in New Delhi on Tuesday. ■ PTI

University Grants Commission required colleges to upload information on students and teachers who viewed the programme – along with photo and video-graphic evidence of participation – on its University Activity Monitoring Portal by 5 p.m. on Tuesday. Hu-

man Resource Development Minister Prakash Javadekar led the crowd in a cheer borrowed from a dialogue in the movie *Uri* – "How's the josh? High, sir" – before chants of "Modi, Modi" reverberated across the stadium.

"I read Pradhan Mantri-

ji's book before my 10th board exams last year. It helped enhance my concentration and confidence," said Twinkle Sharma, a Class 11 student of Indraprastha Public School at Mavikala, a village in Uttar Pradesh's Baghpat district.

Other students at the event had written essays on how the PM's book honed their time management skills, clarified their life goals and eased stress for them and their parents.

In fact, a good chunk of the PM's remarks at the event seemed to be addressed to the parents.

"Parents should not treat their children's report cards as their visiting cards," said Mr. Modi.

He said that expecting children to fulfil parents' dreams would only add an unhealthy dose of extra pressure.

Why no experts on RTI panels, asks SC

Bench asks why only bureaucrats were appointed, excluding subject experts

KRISHNADAS RAJAGOPAL
NEW DELHI:

The Supreme Court on Tuesday asked why Right to Information bodies, especially the apex forum of Central Information Commission (CIC), were almost completely manned by bureaucrats.

Justice A.K. Sikri, who led a Bench comprising Justice S. Abdul Nazeer, pointed out that the Right to Information Act of 2005 mandates that people with a range of experience and from various fields should serve as information commissioners.

"A range of people could

that out of 280 applications received for the post of information commissioners at the CIC recently, 14 were shortlisted, and they were almost all bureaucrats.

"We are not blaming the appointments. But there were names who were not bureaucrats, but not one of them were appointed," Justice Sikri pointed out, agreeing with advocate Pranav Sachdeva, representing General Counsel Pinky Anand for the government.

Justice Sikri pointed out

be appointed to the Information Commissions, but only retired bureaucrats are appointed," Justice Sikri addressed Additional Solicitor General Pinky Anand for the government.

Justice Sikri pointed out

nently suitable people". She said the appointments process is an "ongoing process".

Non-applicants

Mr. Sachdeva argued that the minutes of the search committee showed that out of the five short-listed candidates for the post of Chief Information Commissioner, four had never even applied.

Of the 14 short-listed candidates for the post of Information Commissioners, two had not applied. He urged the court to usher in transparency in the appointments process.

Caste-based quotas are at risk: Tejashwi

SOBHANA K. NAIR
NEW DELHI

The legislation that seeks to extend 10% quota to the economically backward among the forward castes is the first step to end caste-based reservations, Rashtriya Janata Dal leader Tejashwi Yadav said on Tuesday.

"This is an attempt to end caste-based reservation. Right now, they (the government) have only inserted a thermometer to check the temperature," Mr. Yadav said at a convention on social justice.

The man who set out to be a priest became a politician

A photograph showing him lifting his handcuffed fist in defiance became a symbol of the Emergency

NISTULA HEBBAR
NEW DELHI

George Fernandes had set out to be a priest but instead became a trade union leader, socialist and finally Defence Minister of India. In his long career in public life, Mr. Fernandes was the old school buccaneer politician, taking risks, changing sides, but retaining his charisma, a maverick who won friends easily, but also left them perplexed with some of his choices.

Born in Mangalore in June 1930, he was sent off to Mumbai in 1946 to train to be a Catholic priest. Instead he founded trade unions, finding his mettle in organising the disadvantaged. His big moment came when as a Socialist Party (SSP) candidate he defeated the all-powerful S.K. Patil of the Congress in the 1967 Lok Sabha elections from south Mumbai, earning the sobriquet "Giant Killer" after that poll.

His trade unionism made him a natural for the anti-Congress politics that was firming up across the country and he organised, till date, the biggest strike of railwaymen in 1974, before being arrested in the Baroda Dynamite case in 1976.

His photograph, lifting his handcuffed fist in defiance while being led away by the police became the most powerful image of the Emergency movement.

His plunge into national politics was complete when he won the 1977 Lok Sabha

polls from Muzaffarpur in Bihar (in absentia) and went on to represent that seat multiple times in future.

He was made Minister for Industry, but was famously known for banning Coca Cola in India. After the short run of the Janata government he managed to retain his Muzaffarpur seat in 1980 and remained important in the various avatars of the Janata Party through the 1980s in the Opposition.

In 1989, he was the Janata Dal's candidate from Muzaffarpur and again made Railways Minister in the V.P. Singh government.

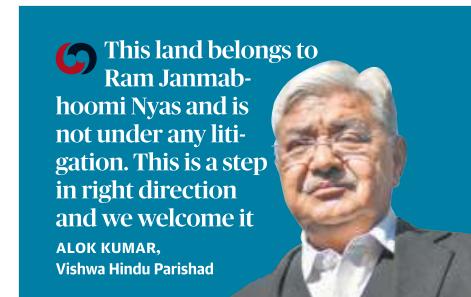
Politics of the socialists was coming to a head, however, and he and current Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar, unable to bear being

sidelined by newly emerged Mandal leader Lalu Prasad, broke away in 1995 to form the Samata Party.

He was made Minister for Industry, but was famously known for banning Coca Cola in India. After the short run of the Janata government he managed to retain his Muzaffarpur seat in 1980 and remained important in the various avatars of the Janata Party through the 1980s in the Opposition.

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Politics of the socialists was coming to a head, however, and he and current Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar, unable to bear being</p



This land belongs to Ram Janmabhoomi Nyas and is not under any litigation. This is a step in right direction and we welcome it

ALOK KUMAR,
Vishwa Hindu Parishad

We express strong disapproval of the petition moved by the Central government in the Supreme Court to remove the status quo in the non-disputed land that it had acquired in Ayodhya

CPI(M)

It would be up to Ram Janmabhoomi Nyas what it does with the land returned to it and the government would not interfere in that... Govt. is not touching the disputed land

PRAKASH JAVADEKAR
BJP

The Central Government is trying everything in its capacity to prevent a fair and independent adjudication of the Babri Masjid dispute... it's another attempt to save BJP from their rapidly diminishing political fortunes

ASADUDDIN OWAISI
AIMIM

After 16 years of stupor, why has the government suddenly woken up, that too with just two months remaining for the Lok Sabha elections?

ABHISHEK MANU SINGHVI
Congress



Modi govt. signals intent to build temple

Aimed at restive Sangh cadre who have been demanding proactive steps from Centre on Ayodhya

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

The BJP on Tuesday said the Centre's plea in the Supreme Court to return excess land around the disputed site in Ayodhya to the original owners (namely the Ram Janmabhoomi Nyas), was the "least it could do" looking at the "sentiment attached to Ram Mandir". The party also maintained that the move "would not affect the main case".

BJP general secretary Ram Madhav made these remarks in a Facebook post, adding that the move was much awaited and a "welcome one".

To mollify cadre

The move is also the strongest indication of the government's intention to construct a Ram temple in Ayodhya and a strong move to mollify upset Sangh Parivar cadre.

From RSS chief Mohan Bhagwat to the VHP's council of Hindu monks, there had been a demand from the larger Sangh Parivar for a proactive move from the government for the construction of a Ram temple in Ayodhya. Tuesday's act by



Matter of faith: Devotees standing outside a Ram temple at the Ram Janmabhoomi Nyas workshop in Ayodhya, in this file photo. • AFP

the government is likely to give it some political space on the issue.

Union Minister Prakash Javadekar also welcomed the government's move, stating that it was a "legal step" and did not detract from the government's commitment to a legal solution to the issue.

Assembly poll setbacks

Prime Minister Narendra Modi's negative response to a question on whether the government was contem-

plating an ordinance to facilitate the construction of a Ram temple in Ayodhya had dispirited the Sangh Parivar cadre, specifically the Vishwa Hindu Parishad (VHP).

With cadre sentiment downcast as witnessed during the BJP's loss late last year in the three Hindi heartland States of Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan and Chhattisgarh, and with general elections around the corner, the government and the party had been casting about for

ways to reassure them.

The move on temple land was welcomed by the VHP's international working president Alok Kumar, who had been leading the campaign for an ordinance for the construction of a Ram temple in Ayodhya. "The VHP hopes that the Supreme Court shall expeditiously decide on the application filed by the government," Mr. Kumar said.

Mr. Javadekar was quite explicit, saying the government had taken an impor-

tant decision to return the undisputed land to its original owners, who, he added, wanted to "build Ram temple" there.

Asked about the Congress questioning the timing of the government's decision, just weeks before the Lok Sabha election, Mr. Javadekar alleged that the Opposition party "never believed in existence of Lord Ram".

Not disputed land
Underlining that the government was not touching the disputed land in Ayodhya, Mr. Javadekar said only 0.313 acre of land was disputed where the title suit was yet to be decided.

"Today the government has taken a very important in-principle decision to return the excess land, which was acquired in 1994, to the original land owners," Mr. Javadekar said.

"Out of 67 acres of undisputed land, the land owner for 42 acres is the Ram Janmabhoomi Nyas. Government wants to return the land to its original owners and they want to build the Ram temple there," he added.

Why now after 16 years, asks Cong.

'Country will draw its own conclusions'

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NEW DELHI

The Congress on Tuesday questioned the timing of the Centre's application in the Supreme Court seeking to return "surplus" land around the disputed site in Ayodhya to its original owners, saying people will decide on the intent of this "sudden" move, which has come merely two months before the general elections.

The Opposition party, however, said it had "no opinion" on the plea for a change in status quo that has been maintained for 16 years and it was a matter between the Supreme Court and the Centre.

Congress spokesperson Abhishek Singhvi said the court had in its 2003 order clearly stated that status quo be maintained on the undisputed land. "You will draw your own conclusion, the country will draw its own conclusion.... What is important is that this application is moved on January 29, 2019, 16 years afterwards, in a matter of 2003 where the main writ of 2003



A worker polishing a model of the proposed Ram temple in Ayodhya. • AFP

is pending," he told reporters.

'Court will decide'

"This status quo has been continued for 16 years. Suddenly and suddenly... you know it better, whether it is because of election or some other reason, we do not know... So, you judge for yourself, but ultimate judge is the Supreme Court," Mr. Singhvi said.

"This move by the Centre is clearly aimed at appeasing the Sangh Parivar which is demanding immediate construction of the temple at all costs. Obviously, all these moves are being orchestrated keeping the impending Lok Sabha election in mind," the CPI (M) said.

An attempt to pacify Sangh Parivar: CPI(M)

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

Criticising the government's petition in the Supreme Court, seeking permission to return the excess land around the disputed Ayodhya site to its original owners, the CPI (M) said the move was to appease the Sangh Parivar which has been demanding immediate construction of the Ram temple.

"It (government) wants to hand over this land to the Ram Janmabhoomi Nyas that had been set up by the VHP to undertake the construction of the Ram temple on the site," the CPI (M) Polit Bureau said in a statement here. It is a devious attempt by the BJP government to preempt the Supreme Court judgment, the party said.

"This move by the Centre is clearly aimed at appeasing the Sangh Parivar which is demanding immediate construction of the temple at all costs. Obviously, all these moves are being orchestrated keeping the impending Lok Sabha election in mind," the CPI (M) said.

Parrikar has denied role in Rafale deal: Rahul

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
KOCHI

Congress President Rahul Gandhi on Tuesday said former Defence Minister Manohar Parrikar had said that he had nothing to do with the new Rafale deal.

"Ex-Defence Minister Mr. Parrikar clearly stated that he has nothing to do with the new deal that was or-

chestrated by Mr. Narendra Modi to benefit Anil Ambani," he told party workers here.

His statement came hours after he met Mr. Parrikar, now Goa CM, at the Assembly complex in Panaji.

Mr. Gandhi, however, did not clarify whether the issue was discussed during the meeting.

'Michel's extradition happened in a day'

DINAKAR PERI
NEW DELHI

else," Dr. Albanna said, addressing the media. "And India's relationship with UAE is not dependent on any third party. Ambassador Ahmed Al-banna asserted on Tuesday, when asked about the impact of the Gulf country's assistance of \$3 billion to Pakistan.

"Our relationship with India is not determined by our relationship with anybody

said it had happened due to the important strategic ties and the personal touch in the relationship. Some times "things that do not happen in a year, are done in one day," he remarked. In March last year, after an operation by the Coast Guard on the high seas, India repatriated Princess Latifa, daughter of Dubai's ruler and UAE Prime Minister Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum.

On the issue of upgrading of the bilateral air services agreement, Dr. Albanna said there were "some hiccups" due to lobbying by some Indian carriers. Citing the understanding reached between the two countries during External Affairs Minister Sushma Swaraj's visit to the UAE last month, he, however, expressed confidence that a pact would be concluded "very soon."

Jewellery gets a 'council'

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
MUMBAI

they could evolve a unified approach to promote growth in the sector.

"This Council will help in tapping new opportunities in the already existing large domestic market," Commerce & Industry Minister Suresh Prabhu said.

Foreign policy engagements to keep PM busy in February

Modi is set to visit Seoul and host Israeli Prime Minister



Narendra Modi

Prime Minister Narendra Modi will travel to Seoul in February to receive an award from an NGO, a visit that is one of several high-profile foreign policy engagements expected next month, before the country heads for general elections.

A bilateral visit to Bhutan has also been discussed, but not confirmed yet. Planning is also on for a visit by Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu to Delhi in the next few weeks, official and diplomatic sources confirmed. Israel is scheduled to hold general elections on April 9.

Sources working on the Korean visit said its "exact contours are still being worked out", but the Prime Minister is expected to make a short trip to South Korea towards the end of February. This will be his second visit to Seoul after May 2015. The trip will also follow the bilateral visit by South Korean President Moon Jae-In to India.

High profile visit

Meanwhile sources confirmed that a visit to India from Israeli Premier Netanyahu is "likely". On Tuesday, the Israeli newspaper *Haaretz* reported that the visit is being arranged in the second week of February", linking the recent visit of Is-

raeli National Security Adviser Meir Ben-Shabbat to India as an indicator that a "major Arms Deal" was on the agenda.

Officials said there was no date yet confirmed for the PM's visit to Bhutan. Mr. Modi had been expected to travel during the celebrations to mark the golden anniversary of the establishment of India-Bhutan ties which ends in February 2019, but has not yet been able to find a suitable time. Bhutan's Prime Minister Lotay Tshering had visited Delhi in December, and repeated the invitation.

The visit to South Korea and the yet-to-be scheduled trip to Thimphu, would take the number of trips to foreign countries (including some of them more than once) by Mr. Modi in his current tenure as Prime Minister (2014-2019) to 94, equalling the number of trips Dr. Manmohan Singh had made in his entire tenure as Prime Minister over two terms (2004-2014).

MISSING INFORMATION
The person shown in the photo named one Vishnu-29/ 18, s/o Chandu, Neeruty Veedu, Pokkulanagar bhagam, Engadiyur, Vandappanayyam, Thrissur District has been missing from Nedumbassery Airport on 25-07-18. In this regard a case in crime 1175/18 u/s 57 of KP Act was registered by Putthenvelikkara P.S. Enquiries being continued to find out the missing person. If any information is received about the missing person, please inform in the following phone numbers.

1. Dy SP District Crime Branch Aluva - 9497990075

2. SI of Police, Crime Branch Aluva - 9446493377, 9539007725

3. District Crime Branch Aluva - 0484-2623122

IDENTIFICATION MARKS

16 cm feet Height, Average colour, lean body. A scar of an operation at the inner side of the left palm.

1. Dy SP District Crime Branch Aluva - 9497990075

2. SI of Police, Crime Branch Aluva - 9446493377, 9539007725

3. District Crime Branch Aluva - 0484-2623122

RECRUITMENT RALLY of 115 INF BN (TA) MAHAR and 123 INF BN (TA) GRENADIERS from 16 FEB. 2019 to 23 FEB. 2019 at RMS Ground, Opp. HQ. J.L. Wing, CAMP, BELGAUM, KARNATAKA

Eligibility Criteria:

(a) Age : 18 to 42 years as on date of Recruitment Rally (Date of Birth Certificate issued by Registrar of Birth and Death or 10th Board Certificate showing date of birth)

(b) Education Qualification : (i) Soldier (General Duty) : Should be matric pass with min. 45% marks in aggregate and 33% in each subject or pass qualified in higher class (i.e. 12th or above)

(ii) Soldier (Tradesman) : 10th simple pass (excluding House Keeper and Mess Keeper 8th pass)

(c) Physical Parameters:

(i) Height : Min. 160 Cms (ii) Weight : Min. 50 Kgs

(iii) Chest : Min. 77 Cms (without expansion) / Min. 82 Cms (with expansion)

Details available on Territorial Army portal www.indianarmy.nic.in

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Date of commencement of online applications : 30.01.2019

Last date for receipt of online applications : 01.03.2019

Last date for receipt of hard copy of applications : 16.03.2019

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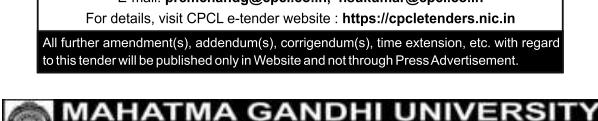
Designation	No. of posts & Reservations	Pay Matrix (7th CPC)	#Total Emoluments (approx.)	'Upper age Limit not exceeding as on 01.03.2019'
TECHNICAL ASSISTANT	Seventeen (17) posts [UR-SC-02; OBC-6]	Level - 6	Rs. 51000/- p.m.	28 years

#Total Emoluments means approximate total emoluments on minimum pay of the level including House Rent Allowance in Class 'X' City.

*Please see age relaxation under Age Limit & Relaxations (Sl.No. 3 of General Information & Conditions).

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e-Tender Notice

Online tenders are invited under Two-Bid

MARKET WATCH		
29-01-2019	% CHANGE	
Sensex	35,592	-0.18
US Dollar	71.11	-0.01
Gold	33,750	0.29
Brent oil	61.4	2.40

NIFTY 50

	PRICE	CHANGE
Adani Ports	349.25	23.15
Asian Paints	1393.30	13.80
Axle Bank	660.75	4.45
Bajaj Auto	2567.65	2.10
Bajaj Finserv	6233.05	182.15
Bajaj Finance	2515.55	57.05
Bharti Airtel	307.85	2.70
BPCL	344.90	-3.80
Cipla	505.05	12.90
Coal India	222.55	-2.65
Dr Reddy's Lab	2666.45	41.70
Eicher Motors	18877.25	1110.15
GAIL (India)	323.60	-9.60
Grasim Ind	733.50	0.70
HCL Tech	988.45	10.65
HDFC	1922.30	-24.60
HDFC Bank	2057.60	-26.55
Hero MotoCorp	2633.30	34.70
Hindalco	199.55	-0.45
HPLC	235.30	-3.90
Hind Unilever	1756.70	13.70
Indiabulls HFL	698.60	-0.70
ICICI Bank	346.85	3.30
IndusInd Bank	1461.85	18.15
Bharti Infralet	297.35	10.05
Infosys	727.90	-0.05
Indian Oil Corp	137.35	-0.70
ITC	278.45	3.70
JSW Steel	270.95	3.20
Kotak Bank	1251.40	-9.05
L&T	1278.05	-22.40
M&M	669.65	-3.40
Maurti Suzuki	6526.95	15.90
NTPC	138.50	-0.10
ONGC	141.05	-0.60
PowerGrid Corp	185.60	-2.20
Reliance Ind	1210.65	18.90
State Bank	280.60	-1.00
Sun Pharma	422.40	10.65
Tata Motors	173.60	1.30
Tata Steel	443.80	-1.90
TCS	1982.75	27.75
Tech Mahindra	731.50	-3.65
Titan	966.10	7.45
UltraTech Cement	3409.65	35.20
UPL	760.30	0.25
Vedanta	192.65	1.15
Wipro	359.40	4.25
YES Bank	202.90	-4.60
Zee Entertainment	377.40	4.10

Essar Steel: NCLT junks Ruia plea

Withdrawal of insolvency proceedings should be sought by the initiator: tribunal

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

AHMEDABAD

In a setback to the Ruia brothers, who are making last-ditch efforts to retain Essar Steel, which is under insolvency, the Ahmedabad bench of the National Company Law Tribunal (NCLT) on Tuesday rejected their proposal to repay the debt.

The tribunal pointed out that an application for withdrawal of insolvency proceedings under Section 12A of the Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code, 2016 can be considered only if it was filed by the applicant who initiated insolvency in the first place. In the Essar Steel matter, lenders State Bank of India and Standard Chartered Bank filed the insolvency cases, which means they are the applicants.

The bench also held that there was no illegality on the lenders' side for not accepting Essar Steel promoters' plan. Having rejected the settlement proposal



Clearing the air: There is no illegality on the lenders' part in not accepting Essar promoters' plan, the NCLT said. ■ PTI

floated by the promoter family on the same day as the Committee of Creditors (CoC) approved the resolution plan submitted by ArcelorMittal, the bench will now conduct hearing on the resolution plan of ArcelorMittal.

CoC decision upheld
According to Satish Kumar Gupta of Alvarez & Marsal, Essar Steel's resolution professional, the tribunal has, in effect, upheld the decision

taken by the CoC. Last week, the NCLAT had asked the NCLT Ahmedabad bench to decide on the proposal of Essar Steel's financial creditors to give ArcelorMittal the control of the company.

It may be noted that the ArcelorMittal group offered to pay creditors ₹42,000 crore to take over Essar Steel which faces insolvency proceedings to recover ₹50,800 crore of unpaid loans. The Committee of Essar

Steel creditors approved the proposal, ignoring a last-minute offer by the shareholders of Essar Steel to pay dues of ₹54,389 crore to both financial and operational creditors.

Reacting to Tuesday's order, an Essar spokesperson said: "We continue to believe that our offer of ₹54,389 crore is the most compelling proposal available to Essar Steel creditors. We submitted the proposal under the recently introduced Section 12A of the IBC, and the recent judgement of the Supreme Court has established that the Section's provisions are applicable retrospectively. We are awaiting a copy of the full NCLT order, and will take a call on next steps after we have thoroughly gone through the contents."

"This [order] is a positive development for both Essar Steel India and the country. We now hope for a swift resolution to this case," ArcelorMittal said in a statement.

Axis Bank Q3 net rises 131%

Stake sale, recovery, trading gains boost lender's profit

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

MUMBAI

Private sector lender Axis Bank has reported 131% year-on-year growth in net profit to ₹1,681 crore for the quarter ended December 31 on the back of healthy growth in core and non-core income.

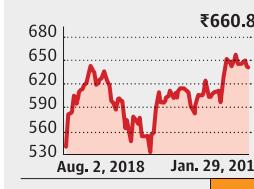
Net interest income, the difference between interest earned and interest expended, grew by a healthy 18% to ₹5,604 crore while non-interest income grew by 54% to ₹4,001 crore.

Non-interest income was boosted as the bank recovered ₹998 crore in the third quarter, largely comprising two accounts from the prudentially written-off pool, compared with ₹40 crore a year earlier.

The lender also gained ₹342 crore by selling stake in two strategic investments during the quarter. The trading profits for the quarter grew by 90% to ₹379 crore during the period under review.

"This was a quarter of strong profitability," said Jairam Sridharan, chief finan-

Good show



This is the highest profit after tax seen in the last 11 quarters
JAIRAM SRIDHARAN, chief financial officer, Axis Bank

cial officer, Axis Bank. "This is the highest profit after tax we have in the last 11 quarters."

but higher than 5.28% reported a year ago.

Fresh slippages to bad loans have been contained with the bank seeing ₹3,746 crore loan turning bad during the quarter as compared to ₹4,428 crore in the year ago period and ₹2,777 crore in the second quarter.

Corporate lending slippages were ₹1,887 crore and 98% of this came from BB rated and below accounts. The bank's BB and below rated book stood at ₹7,645 crore.

The bank reported ₹225 crore of divergence in NPA (NPA) ratio stood at 5.75% as at December end, compared to 5.96% in end-September,

but higher than 5.28% reported a year ago.

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Govt. may ask taxmen to file GST profiteering pleas

Currently, only consumers file plaints

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

NEW DELHI

The GST officials are working out mechanism to prompt taxmen to initiate profiteering complaints, which could be taken up for further investigation by the Directorate General of Anti-Profiteering (DGAP).

Currently, only consumers file complaints against businesses for not passing on the benefits of reduction of the GST rates on various products.

Under the standard operating procedure (SoP) being worked out by the GST offi-

cials, the central and State government tax officers will be encouraged to take up suo moto the issue of profiteering by businesses, sources said.

Once the tax officers find that GST benefits have not been passed on to the consumers, they will refer the case for further investigation to the DGAP. As per the procedure, the DGAP submits its investigation report to the National Anti-Profiteering Authority, which decides on the final quantum of profiteering and the monetary penalty.

Farm support as central scheme ideal

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

NEW DELHI

Any step announced by the government in the upcoming Vote on Account aimed at supporting the incomes of farmers would be better done as a centrally sponsored scheme rather than a debt waiver, India Ratings and Research said on Tuesday.

Reacting to Tuesday's order, an Essar spokesperson said: "We continue to believe that our offer of ₹54,389 crore is the most compelling proposal available to Essar Steel creditors. We submitted the proposal under the recently introduced Section 12A of the IBC, and the recent judgement of the Supreme Court has established that the Section's provisions are applicable retrospectively. We are awaiting a copy of the full NCLT order, and will take a call on next steps after we have thoroughly gone through the contents."

"There is a likelihood that the Union Government may announce a relief package for farmers while presenting the Vote on Account for 2019-20 in line with the Rythu Bandhu scheme of the government of Telangana," it said in a report.

"If it is rolled out as a core centrally sponsored scheme, the cost to the union government exchequer would be 0.43% of GDP, while the cost to the combined state government exchequer would be 0.27% of GDP," according to the report.

Yes Bank promoters to nominate a director each

Move part of truce bid by two factions

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

MUMBAI

Promoters of Yes Bank – Rana Kapoor and the Madhu Kapur family – have now agreed to nominate one representative each on the board of the bank.

"Madhu Kapur Group and Rana Kapoor Group have agreed to nominate one representative director each on the Bank's Board, subject to the completion of the necessary documentation.



directors of the bank," the bank said.

Interim director

The board has also approved and recommended to the RBI for its approval, a board member for temporarily holding the office as 'Board Director' on Interim Special Duty from Feb 1, 2019 till the new CEO Ravneet Gill takes charge in March, 2019.

The term of the present MD & CEO of the bank, Rana Kapoor, ends on 31 January, that is, Thursday.

HCL Tech Q3 net jumps 19%

IT firm's U.S. business grows 12.9%; deal pipeline good: CEO

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

NEW DELHI

HCL Technologies on Tuesday registered a 19% rise in consolidated net profit to ₹2,611 crore for the third quarter ended December 2018. The bank had logged a net profit of ₹111.78 crore in October-December 2017.

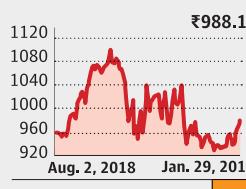
Total income in the reported quarter increased at ₹14,562.85 crore as compared to ₹12,976.28 crore in the year-ago period, BoB said in a regulatory filing.

The bank's asset quality improved a tad with gross non-performing assets (NPAs) falling to 11.01% of gross loans as of December-end 2018, against 11.31% in the year-ago period.

Net NPAs or bad loans too came down to 4.26% of total advances from 4.97% by December-end 2017.

In absolute value, gross bad loans of the lender stood at ₹53,184.28 crore as on December 31, 2018 as compared to ₹48,480.44 crore a year ago.

On a roll



ographies delivered double digit year-on-year growth. Our U.S. business grew 12.9%, Europe business has picked up momentum with a growth 14.5% and RoW [rest of the world] grew 12.1% excluding India business.

On the impact of the shutdown in the U.S., Mr. Vijayakumar said the company had not seen any impact on its business.

"Areas where we are dependent on the government would be visas. We have not seen any delays at all. It is pretty much on track. The deal pipeline looks very good. So, we feel positive about the coming quarter and the next year," he added.

IN BRIEF



M&M unveils Furio range of commercial trucks

MUMBAI Mahindra & Mahindra's Truck and Bus Division has unveiled the Furio range of Intermediate Commercial Vehicles (ICVs) to garner a large market share in the ICV segment in the country. All players put together sell about 1.5 lakh such vehicles annually. Furio has been launched in 14-tonne and 12-tonne capacity with price of between ₹17.45 lakh and ₹18.1 lakh (ex showroom, Pune) respectively.

Gradiant secures four ZLD projects in India

CHENNAI Gradiant Corporation, a solution provider for industrial waste water treatment, has expanded its operations in India with four zero liquid discharge (ZLD) projects in sectors such as textile processing, caustic soda, pharma and dyestuff. "The first two projects would go on stream by March and August respectively, while the other two are on pilot basis," said S. Ravichandran, managing director, Gradiant India.

Renault-Nissan signs pact with NSDC

CHENNAI Renault-Nissan has signed a pact with National Skill Development Corporation to train its workforce in the alliance plant in Chennai for future technologies. NSDC would assist the Renault-Nissan workforce develop competency standards in emerging manufacturing technologies. In the first year, the carmaker aims to get 10% of staff trained to support its growth and expansion plans in India.

'FMCG sector to clock double-digit growth'

Industry likely to grow between 11% and 12% in 2019, a tad lower than 13.8% in 2018, says Nielsen study

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
MUMBAI

The fast moving consumer goods (FMCG) industry is expected to clock double digit growth in the current year, though the growth is likely to be lower than that of the previous year, which saw the sector benefit from the overall health of the economy and lower inflation.

According to the latest study by market research firm Nielsen, the FMCG industry is expected to grow between 11% and 12% in 2019, which is a tad lower than the 13.8% growth in 2018. Incidentally, the FMCG industry growth in the fourth quarter of 2018 was quite buoyant at 15.9%. Nielsen takes into account the calendar year while making projections. The growth in the current year will be



Greener pastures: Various initiatives such as agriculture credit are expected to boost farm income, the report said. ■ REUTERS

primarily on the back of conducive macroeconomic environment, rural consumption, sustained benefits of GST regime and election impact, according to the study.

"Our projections suggest that the first half of the year (Jan.-Jun) will have decent

double-digit growth, while industry growth in the second half will taper down to high single digits. Similar trends will be witnessed across the key super group of product categories viz Food, Personal Care & Home Care," the Nielsen report stated.

While GDP is expected to be buoyant at 7.5% in 2019, Consumer Price Inflation (CPI) estimates for the year suggest that it will gradually increase. However, it will be within 5%, it added.

Crude prices

The market research firm, however, added that crude prices in global markets and exchange rates would be the factors to watch out for.

Meanwhile, Nielsen expects the sustained government focus on rural infrastructure and surging non-farm income in rural areas to support rural FMCG consumption story. "Indian rural consumption story is projected to be continuing in 2019. Various farm level initiatives by the government including agri credit and di-

rect subsidy transfer, along with orientation on minimum support prices for crops, are expected to boost farm income further," it said, adding that rainfall performance and its spatial and geographical distribution need to be watched out for.

Interestingly, with the general elections scheduled later this year, Nielsen has highlighted how historical trends around elections in the last few years suggest that the FMCG industry demonstrates a stable to marginally lower growth in the election year.

Consumption growth in 2018 was led by favourable macros like growth in GDP, lower inflation and manufacturers passing on the benefits of margin expansion from the GST regime.



Behave yourself: Uber is notifying some riders who have consistently been rated poorly by drivers. ■ B. JOTHI RAMALINGAM

Uber to block unruly riders from its app

Firm updates community guidelines

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

Being rude or unruly during Uber rides may now lead to riders being blocked from using the cab aggregator's application.

The U.S.-based firm on Tuesday announced update of its community guidelines following which a "small minority" of riders may lose access to their Uber app if persistent bad behaviour.

"We are notifying a small number of riders, who have consistently been rated poorly by drivers over a prolonged period of time, to improve their behaviour. If that doesn't happen, a handful of riders could lose access to the Uber application," Prabhjeet Singh, Uber India and South Asia Head of Cities, said.

Rider behaviour will be reflected in the ratings given by their drivers. The national roll-out of an emergency button and the 'share trip feature' reiterates our commitment to their safety," he said. Reasons for riders losing access to Uber would include damage to drivers' or other passengers' property, use of abusive language or gestures and breaking local laws while using Uber.

same behavioural standards to the riders that Uber has for the driver partners... these guidelines will help us to foster mutual respect between riders and drivers," Mr. Singh added.

Driver safety

Additionally, the cab aggregator has introduced a driver safety tool-kit for its driver partners. Under this, drivers will be able to share the trip details with their friends and family from within the application and use an emergency assistance button to connect with law enforcement agencies during an unwanted emergency situation.

Uber has also incorporated a feature wherein drivers will be alerted when they exceed the speed limit.

"There can be no Uber without driver partners – they are at the centre of Uber's business. The national roll-out of an emergency button and the 'share trip feature' reiterates our commitment to their safety," he said. Reasons for riders losing access to Uber would include damage to drivers' or other passengers' property, use of abusive language or gestures and breaking local laws while using Uber.

Ramco Cements Q3 net dips on cost pressures

Sales volume rises 21% in south, east

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
CHENNAI

Ramco Cements has posted a 17.65% dip in standalone net profit at ₹10.07 crore for the third quarter ended December 2018 against ₹12.74 crore in the corresponding year-earlier period, due to increase in power and transportation cost.

During the period under review, the sales volume increased by 21% to 27.47 lakh tonnes in the southern and the eastern markets. "The power and fuel cost continue to remain at higher levels compared to the corresponding year-earlier period due to higher cost of petcoke and coal. The prices of petcoke and coal have softened and the effect of the



A.V. Dharmakrishnan

Cement companies, unions enter fresh wage accord

4-year pact provides for ₹5,000 hike a month in gross pay

K.T. JAGANNATHAN
CHENNAI

The Cement Manufacturers' Association (CMA) and major central trade unions have signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) to herald a new wage accord in the industry.

The MoU will cover a four-year period between April 1, 2018 and March 31, 2022. It provides for an increase of ₹5,000 a month in the gross pay of employees.

Two instalments

It will be paid in two instalments of ₹2,500 each – one with effect from April 1, 2018 and the other from April 1, 2020. The MoU also pro-



vides for an enhanced DA besides offering service weightage and other benefits. Arrears for 10 months will be paid in two instalments, said a release.

Twenty-one cement companies, which cover 60% of country's total cement capacity, are part of the pact.

After the two arbitration awards in 1978 and 1982, there have been eight such national-level settlements.

N. Srinivasan, vice-chairman and MD, The India Cements Ltd., led the negotiations on behalf of the industry. He was president of CMA for five terms.

"The national-level, industry-wide settlement is unique as it is collective bargaining in its truest sense, as the management and the unions sit across the table and it is signed before the Central Chief Labour Commissioner in New Delhi. This has assured industrial peace in the industry in the last 26 years," Mr. Srinivasan said.

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Smriti stars again in India's series-clinching victory



Going great guns: Smriti Mandhana was in fine form once again, flaying the New Zealand attack with utter disdain. ■ KERRY MARSHALL/GETTY IMAGES

Team in auto mode: Kohli

Solid performances put captain in a happy place

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
MOUNT MAUNGANUI

Team India captain Virat Kohli on Monday said his team had hit the "auto mode" going into the 2019 World Cup and there weren't too many areas of concern for him at the moment.

India is runaway favourite for the 50-over global tournament after dominating series wins in Australia and New Zealand.

Good signs

"I have said that No. 4 is a position that we are looking to solidify, but when (Ambati) Rayudu starts playing like that, you start feeling more confident about the batting line-up," Kohli said at the post-match press conference here on Monday.

"Dinesh (Karthik) is in great form as well, he can step in at any time if we need to shuffle the middle-order. MS (Dhoni) is hitting the ball really well, so I don't think we have a lot to worry about," the skipper exuded confidence.

Asked if the intensity would drop (in his absence for the following two ODIs and three T20s), the skipper replied: "Not at all. Now things are more or less running in auto mode for us."

"When these two guys (Karthik and Rayudu) were finishing the game for us, we were all sitting together and clapping for every run. I don't think that intensity will drop."

He also hoped all-rounder Hardik Pandya would come out a "better cricketer" and scale new heights after making a promising return from the suspension that followed his sexist remarks on a TV show.

Pandya did not get to bat in the third ODI, but bowled and fielded with purpose, taking two crucial wickets

■ Kohli says Pandya provides balance to the team

and a brilliant catch to send back Kane Williamson.

Kohli had words of encouragement for the all-rounder.

"In life, there are only two ways to deal with a situation like that. Either you hit rock bottom or you can learn from the situation and see it as a motivation to make things right," he said.

On road to redemption

The skipper said Pandya showed the required intensi-

ty in his comeback game and was already on the road to redemption.

Kohli said any team in the world would love to have Pandya.

"It is very very good to have him. He provides balance to the team. The way he bowled today showed that he went back and was practising his skills.

"He is someone who will give you those important contributions in all three departments. The team also looks much more balanced with him around. He is in a good head space and I hope he can continue with that," added Kohli.

Value addition: Ambati Rayudu and Dinesh Karthik have given the middle-order a settled look. ■ AP



Value addition: Ambati Rayudu and Dinesh Karthik have given the middle-order a settled look. ■ AP

Core squad for WC almost ready, says MSK Prasad

Heaps praise on the current unit, and credits workload management for its success

EXCLUSIVE

V.V. SUBRAHMANYAM
HYDERABAD

The BCCI senior selection committee chairman M.S.K. Prasad believes that India more or less has the core team for the World Cup in England.

In an exclusive interview with *The Hindu*, the former India stumper shared his thoughts.

Excerpts:

What are the strong points of this team?

First is that it is led by an able leader in Virat Kohli, who doesn't leave any stone unturned to win the game. There are no half-measures about the efforts this team puts in.

Earlier, we used to bank upon our batsmen to win. Now, we have both fast bowlers and spinners, who can pick 20 wickets on any surface and against any side.

The trio of (Mohd.) Shami, (Jasprit) Bumrah and Ishant (Sharma) is perhaps the best right now.

Bhuvneshwar (Kumar) and Umesh (Yadav) bowled

Moreover, this is a fit team. Very good in fielding and catching. A balanced team that has excelled in all departments.

Kohli's captaincy and his way of handling difficult situations.

With every passing game we can see Kohli maturing. He led extremely well in South Africa and England; unfortunately the losses overshadowed his good leadership skills. The series victory in Australia has put him on a higher plane as a leader.

Personally, Kohli is one of the greatest captain-cum-players around, who has raised the Test standards with his exceptional skill as player and leader.

Your thoughts on our fast bowling.

Right through the year, our fast bowlers bowled outstandingly. After a long time we have five fast bowlers, who are equally adept at bowling well on any surface and in the world.



Prasad and Kohli.
■ SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

extremely well when they were given opportunities.

What are the areas of concern, if any, looking ahead?

I don't really see any. Our panel has created a healthy bench-strength in all departments. Every player is keen to get on to the field and con-

tribute to the team's success. Have you achieved your target of having a core team for the WC?

Yes, we are almost there. A few experiments happened in Australia and New Zealand. I am sure we will be able to go with the final squad against the Aussies at home after certain permutations and combinations. Otherwise we are very clear about our team for the World Cup.

You backed M.S. Dhoni. Are you pleased with his recent performances?

I am absolutely happy to see Mahi among runs. I always say that he is still the best wicketkeeper in the world. Apart from that he brings in his huge experience and also a sense of calmness when needed in crunch situations.

Kohli and Mahi's chemistry is only going to help the team in major events and I can openly say they have huge respect for each other.

Kramnik calls it quits

REUTERS
MOSCOW

Russian chess grandmaster Vladimir Kramnik, regarded as one of the strongest players in the world, announced on Tuesday he was retiring from professional competition.

Kramnik, 43, made waves in 2000 when he defeated defending champion Garry Kasparov at the World Championship. Currently ranked seventh by the World Chess Federation, he became the undisputed World champion in 2006.

"I already decided to finish my professional chess career a couple of months ago and now, after having played my last tournament, I would like to announce it



publicly," he said on the website of the Tata Steel tournament that ended in the Netherlands on Sunday.

Wanted: a top batsman who can bowl, to ensure team balance

The World Cup is no place to experiment or build for the future and a decision needs to be taken soon



BETWEEN WICKETS

SURESH MENON

No country ever won the World Cup by accident. India might have been 66-1 outsiders in 1983 when they won, but the team then was the perfect exemplar of the tactical and technical nature of the one-day game at that point. Successful teams relied on batsmen who could bowl and bowlers who could bat – all-rounders, to stretch a point – and India applied that theory the best. It was a game of medium pacers. Roger Binny rather than

Kapil Dev or Mohinder Amarnath typified the ODI player of the day.

In the two tournaments before that, Australia had decided, against the prevailing orthodoxy, that bowlers served their teams best by taking wickets rather than by restricting runs. But in the 1970s, the West Indies had such great teams that they seemed above theory and beyond patterns that worked for others.

In that decade it was difficult to imagine a team that could upset them, so naturally did they take to the format and so easily could they field two world-class teams, such was their strength. And then India happened, and everything changed. Despite 2011, the win in 1983 must remain the more significant, for it showed how a great team could be beaten.

The remaining slots – one opening batsman, two in the middle order, one wicketkeeper (per-

haps two, both who fit in as batsmen), two bowling batsman or batting bowlers – are important.

It might mean a pure batsman or a pure bowler losing out to someone who can do a bit of both. In English conditions that would mean a dabbly-dobblly bowler, a type that seems to thrive there, and has not been given his due in One-Day Internationals.

The World Cup is no place to experiment or build for the future; teams go in with their best players and focus on balance. Balance involves all rounders, even the bits-and-pieces players who are generally looked down upon in red ball cricket but are invaluable in the white ball format.

India's one handicap currently (despite the successes in Australia and New Zealand) is the lack of a batsman in the top six who can

also bowl. In 1983, three of the top six bowled; in 2011, four of the top six bowled in the final if you count Virat Kohli's lone over. Virender Sehwag, who did not bowl in that match, finished with 96 ODI wickets overall.

In the third ODI in New Zealand recently which India won to wrap up the series, only one batsman in the top six – Kedar Jadhav – also bowled. The highest-ranked Indian all-rounder in the ICC's rankings list is Kuldeep Yadav, and that tells us something.

The true all-rounder, being chosen either for batting or bowling alone, is increasingly becoming a rarity.

In the period between the last World Cup in England (1999) and Mahendra Singh Dhoni's final six that sealed the 2011 tournament, India could usually call upon

three or four bowlers in the top six who finished their careers with a significant bag of wickets. Tendulkar had 154 wickets, Sourav Ganguly 100 and Yuvraj Singh 111 to add to Sehwag's haul. It meant greater options for the team, and the opportunity of playing an extra batsman, maybe even two.

Best bet?

Not so long ago, Rohit Sharma would occasionally turn his arm over, but he doesn't nowadays. Of the rest, Dhawan and Ambati Rayudu both have dodgy actions, and the best bet seems to be Dhoni who has a nice line in medium pace.

India play a minimum of seven ODIs before the IPL and the World Cup, and that might not give them enough time to experiment

with a batsman-who-bowls-a-bit in the top order. Especially since the team management (read: Kohli) feels that it is more important to win every match than to experiment and open a door to possible defeat. It will mean that Jadhav and Jadeja might have bigger roles to play along with Hardik Pandya.

Will it be two medium pacers and two spinners and a bowling all-rounder? Or three medium pacers and two spinners, with at least two who can also bat?

India do not go into the World Cup as favourites – whatever the team rankings, hosts England probably start that way – but they are just a whit behind. Will an unexpected name emerge between now and then, someone who will plug the one gap the team currently seems to have?



Vlady, a friend, rival and confidant. One of the most influential chess players of our times. I will miss his dry humour at tournaments.

— VISWANATHAN ANAND

publicly," he said on the website of the Tata Steel tournament that ended in the Netherlands on Sunday.

REUTERS MOSCOW

Russian chess grandmaster Vladimir Kramnik, regarded as one of the strongest players in the world, announced on Tuesday he was retiring from professional competition.

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Mithali drops anchor; Jhulan's three-wicket haul restricts NZ to below-par total

INDIA IN NZ

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
MOUNT MAUNGANUI

Opener Smriti Mandhana led the chase for India with familiar panache after a feisty bowling performance that steered the side to a series-clinching eight-wicket triumph over New Zealand women in the second One-Day International here on Tuesday.

Opting to field, India produced an excellent effort to bowl out New Zealand for a paltry 161 in 44.2 overs before Player-of-the-Match Smriti (90 not out) and skipper Mitali Raj (63 not out) stitched a 151-run unbroken third-wicket stand to guide the team to an easy win.

The duo resurrected the Indian run chase from 15 for two after the early loss of opener Jemimah Rodrigues (O) and Deepti Sharma (8).

"It feels great but I think our bowlers deserved the Player-of-the-Match award

more than me. I will give it away to our bowlers, they did a great job to restrict New Zealand on a good wicket," Smriti said at the post-match presentation.

Fine form

The 22-year-old Smriti has been in excellent form in recent times and Tuesday's half-century was her eighth in the last 10 innings. She hit 105 in the first match of the ongoing series.

Opting to field, India produced an excellent effort to bowl out New Zealand for a paltry 161 in 44.2 overs before Player-of-the-Match Smriti (90 not out) and skipper Mitali Raj (63 not out) stitched a 151-run unbroken third-wicket stand to guide the team to an easy win.

The duo resurrected the Indian run chase from 15 for two after the early loss of opener Jemimah Rodrigues (O) and Deepti Sharma (8).

"It feels great but I think our bowlers deserved the Player-of-the-Match award

more than me. I will give it away to our bowlers, they did a great job to restrict New Zealand on a good wicket," Smriti said at the post-match presentation.

On Tuesday, she took just 82 deliveries for her unbeaten knock of 90.

Mitali, on the other hand, faced 111 deliveries in her sedate knock of 63. But, she was a perfect counterfoil to the aggressive Smriti.

India has now taken an unassailable 2-0 lead in the three-match contest, which is part of the ICC Women's Championship series.

Just as in the first match, India opted to field and shot

New Zealand out for 161 with senior pacer Jhulan Goswami grabbing three for 23.

The spin trio of Ekta Bisht, Poonam Yadav and Deepti Sharma, who had tormented New Zealand in the first ODI, took two wickets each to stifle the Kiwi innings yet again.

New Zealand captain Amy Satterthwaite top-scored with a 71 off 87 balls before she became Poonam's first victim in the 34th over. But she got little support.

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New Zealand captain Amy Satter

TV PICKS

NBA: Sony ESPN (SD & HD), 6.30 a.m.**South Africa vs Pakistan:** 5th ODI, Sony ESPN (SD & HD), 4.30 p.m.**I-League:** Star Sports 3, 5 p.m.**PWL:** Sony Six (SD & HD), 7 p.m.**ISL:** Star Sports 1 (SD & HD), 7.30 p.m.**Premier League:** Star Sports 1, 2 & SS Select 1, 2 (SD & HD), 1.30 a.m. (Thursday).

IN BRIEF



Murray undergoes hip surgery

LONDON

Andy Murray has undergone hip resurfacing surgery here, the British tennis great told Instagram followers on Tuesday. The two-time Wimbledon champion had been weighing the pros and cons of the operation. "I underwent a hip resurfacing surgery in London yesterday (Monday) morning... feeling a bit battered and bruised just now but hopefully that will be the end of my hip pain," Murray said on Instagram. AFP



Curry stars as Warriors rout Pacers

LOS ANGELES

Golden State star Stephen Curry scored 26 points on another milestone night on Monday, leading NBA champion Golden State Warriors in a 132-110 rout of Indiana Pacers. Warriors stretched the longest winning streak in this season to 11. **Other results:** Charlotte Hornets 101 bt New York Knicks 92; Boston Celtics 112 bt Brooklyn Nets 104; Denver Nuggets 95 bt Memphis Grizzlies 92; Atlanta Hawks 123 bt Los Angeles Clippers 118. AFP

Kvitova hails end of Slam bad luck

She is fighting memories of a knife attack at her Czech home in December 2016

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE

PRAGUE

Australian Open finalist Petra Kvitova hailed the end of her Grand Slam bad luck – and of a two-year transition following a knife attack that almost ended her career.

Having played only two Grand Slam quarterfinals since her Wimbledon triumph in 2014, Kvitova joked last year that she might as well quit playing at the top four events.

This year's Australian Open offered a different picture of the left-handed Czech who did not lose a single set on her way to the final in which she lost to Japan's Naomi Osaka in three sets on Saturday.

"I'm glad it was only a joke that it didn't happen," the 28-year-old, who also won Wimbledon in 2011, told reporters here.

A compensation

"I guess it's a compensation for last year which wasn't the best when it comes to Grand Slams," added Kvitova, who

in 2018 reached the last-32 at the French and US Open, bowing out of the Australian Open and Wimbledon at the first hurdle. "I wasn't too happy after the loss but now the positive things prevail," said the new World No. 2.

"I felt very well throughout those three weeks I played in Australia."

Kvitova started the year poorly at Brisbane where she lost in the last 16, but she took the top honours at Sydney a week later – at a tournament where she initially was not expecting to play.

Besides the on-court battles, Kvitova is fighting memories of an attack at her Czech home by a knife-wielding burglar in December 2016, which left deep scars on her left hand.

She identified the man and is willing to give her testimony in court in early February on the condition she does not meet the suspect.

"Petra takes this as an inevitable thing. She knows it's necessary to put an end to the whole affair," her spokes-

man Karel Tejkal said. Kvitova herself declined to speak about the attack that required a complicated surgery and saw her sink from sixth to sixteenth in the world.

"Such questions make me a bit angry but I can't do anything about it. But it will be over some day."

Chequered flag

"I guess this trophy is a chequered flag on those two years," Kvitova said, looking at the silver plate she won at Melbourne.

One of those to ask her was former World No. 1 Jim Courier – on court, following her quarterfinal win against the home crowd's favourite Ashleigh Barty.

"I suppose he didn't want to make me cry, but he did," Kvitova said. "The interview was pretty tough, but he's a nice guy."

Next, the 'Czech Lioness' faces a defence of last year's titles from St. Petersburg this week and Doha a fortnight later.



Smiling again: The Australian Open offered a different picture of Petra Kvitova. ■ AFP

Fed Cup: Indian captain hopeful of better show

Ankita and Karman are playing their best tennis at the moment

KAMESH SRINIVASAN

NEW DELHI

Topping the group ahead of host Kazakhstan will be the focus for the Indian team in the Fed Cup World Group-I tennis competition to be staged in Astana from February 6 to 9.

"I am very optimistic," said captain Vishaal Uppal. He has a reason to be so, as Ankita Raina and Karman Kaur Thandi are possibly playing their best tennis at the moment.

"Last time we lost the doubles against Kazakhstan. Ankita and Karman are playing much better doubles now.

We have a good chance," said Vishaal.

Ankita Raina had beaten Yulia Putintseva in the tie against Kazakhstan last year when India hosted the Fed Cup in Delhi, but Karman could not pull her weight then, in that tie.

It will once again be the 41st ranked Putintseva spearheading the Kazakh challenge along with the 96th ranked Zarina Diyas.

"We first play Thailand. Thailand will not have its No.1 player, Luksika Kumkum," observed Vishaal, about the absence of the 83rd ranked Luksika.

Peangtarn Plipuech, ranked 286, will be the main player for Thailand. "We are definitely in a better group," said coach Ankita Bhamori.

The other group will have favourite China, Indonesia, Korea and Pacific Oceania. In fact, both China and Korea will be formidable.

The group toppers will fight for the only qualification spot available from the zone for the next stage. Two teams will be relegated to group-2.

"It is a good thing that our players have been busy in tournaments. In fact, Mahak Jain and Riya Bhatia are com-

peting in Jodhpur this week. We are scheduled to reach Astana early, so as to get acclimated to the conditions and prepare well," said Vishaal. The absence of Y. Pranala and Rutuja Bhosale, owing to injuries, could be felt, but the good form of Ankita and Karman should keep the team in the race.

"For our team, it is a matter of three days of competition. Am sure Ankita and Karman will be able to share the load, as they are professionals.

"If we aspire to achieve something, we have to be ready to fight it out in every rubber," said Vishaal.

Riya sails past Zeel

SPORTS BUREAU

JODHPUR

National champion Riya Bhatia beat fellow wild card entrant Zeel Desai 6-2, 7-5 in the first round of the \$25,000 ITF women's tennis tournament at the Saradar Club courts in Ratnada, on Tuesday.

The results: Singles (first round): Hiroko Kuwata (Jpn) bt Nefisa Berberovic (BIH) 1-6, 6-3, 7-6(5); Riya Bhatia bt Zeel Desai 6-2, 7-5.

Qualifying singles (second and final round): Lulu Sun (Sui) bt Jennifer Luikharm 6-1, 6-0; Verena Meliss (Ita) bt Sathwika Sama 6-2, 6-0; Yuuki Tanaka (Jpn) bt Soha Sadiq 6-1, 6-2; Mihaela Djokovic (Srb) bt Mihika Yadav 6-3, 6-2; Sai Samitha bt Bhuvana Kalva

6-1, 2-1 (retired).

Doubles (pre-quarterfinals):

Eri Hozumi & Miyabi Inoue (Jpn) bt Jodie Anna Burrage & Freya Christie (GBR) 6-2, 3-6, [12-10]; Paloe Hourigan (Nzl) & Valeriya Strakhova (Ukr) bt Nastja Kolar (Slo) & Alexandra Riley (US) 6-4, 6-2; Sofia Sharapatava (Geo) & Emily Webley-Smith (GBR) bt Saithamihi & Sathwika Sama 6-2, 6-3; Mihaela Djokovic (Srb) & Verena Meliss (Ita) bt Soha Sadiq & Avika Sagwal 6-2, 6-4; Hiroko Kuwata (Jpn) & Diana Marinkevica (Lat) bt Farhat Aleen Qamar & Ayushi Tanwar 6-0, 6-2; Mana Ayukawa & Haruka Kaji (Jpn) bt Nefisa Berberovic (BIH) & Bojana Marinkovic (Srb) 6-2, 6-2, [10-7]; Miharu Imanishi & Akiko Omae (Jpn) bt Mai Hontama & Michika Ozeki (Jpn) 6-4, 6-0.

Shria prevails over Hrudaya

SPORTS BUREAU

INDORE

Shria Atturu of the US had to be at her fighting best to beat Hrudaya Shah 7-5, 4-6, 6-4 in the girls' first round of the ITF grade-5 junior tennis tournament here on Tuesday.

The results (first round): Boys: Krish Patel bt Chirag Dahan 7-5, 6-4; Vansh Kapoor bt Mohit Bondre 6-4, 6-2; Heerak Vora bt Sammi Raina 6-1, 7-5; Girish Chougule bt Yash Chauraia 6-2, 6-2.

Girls: Vaishnavi Adkar bt Raina Zaffar 6-4, 6-1; Divya Bhardwaj bt Amishi Shukla 6-2, 3-6, 6-4; Shria Atturu (US) bt Hrudaya Shah 7-5, 4-6, 6-4; Shreya Gulia bt Riya Uboveja 6-1, 6-1.

Rayo out of drop zone

EURO LEAGUES

AGENCIES

BARCELONA

Rayo Vallecano's Raul de Tomas scored with a 47th-minute header for a surprise 1-0 win at Alaves and drag his side out of La Liga's relegation zone for the first time this season.

The striker, on loan from Real Madrid, nodded home his ninth league goal of the season from close range to earn Rayo its fourth win from five matches.

Rayo's surge in form has helped it rise to 17th place, two points clear of Galician side Celta Vigo.

Fifth-placed Alaves was far below its best and fell to its first defeat at Mendizorrotza all season, with Abelardo's side winning just two of its last nine in all competitions.

Meanwhile at Rome, Genoa took a step toward safety with a 3-1 win at relegation-threatened Empoli in Serie A.

Christian Kouame, Darko Lazovic and Antonio Sanabria scored for Genoa while Giovanni Di Lorenzo had a temporary equalizer for Empoli.

Genoa moved up to 13th place, nine points above the drop zone, while Empoli remained 17th, only three points above the bottom three.

It was Genoa's second win in seven matches under

GOVERNMENT OF KARNATAKA Office of the Director, Department of Women and Child Development, 2nd Floor, M.S. Building, Bengaluru - 560001	
No. DWCD/ICD/CNP/PSEK/09/2018-19 Date: 29.01.2019	
CORRIGENDUM	
Modification to the Tender notification Dated : 21-01-2019 for supply of pre school education kits is uploaded in the http://www.eproc.karnataka.gov.in	
Sd/- Director, Department of Women and Child Development, Bengaluru	
R.O. No.DIPR/2026/18-19	

KERALA WATER AUTHORITY e-Tender Notice

Tender No : 17/2018-19/EPH/CHN, State Plan 2017-18 - Strengthening of Water Supply Distribution in Maradu Municipality -Supplying and laying 700mm to 200mm DI and 160mm PVC Distribution mains -PACKAGE II, EMD : Rs. 1,00,000/-, Form Price : Rs. 8,400/-, Last Date for submitting Tender : 28-02-2019 03:00pm, Phone : 0484-2394155, Website : www.kwa.kerala.gov.in, Superintending Engineer : PW Circle, Kochi

GOVERNMENT OF TELANGANA O/o CHIEF ENGINEER, HYDROLOGY & INVESTIGATION

Tender No. NHP/TSSW/NCP-3/EI/2018-19 Date: 29.01.2019

ABRIDGED E-TENDER NOTICE

1. Online Tenders are invited through E-Procurement Mode for the following item from reputed Firms In India: Description of Equipment: Supply, Installation, Testing, Commissioning, Training and Maintenance of Hydrological and Meteorological Stations with Real Time Data Acquisition System (RTDAS) for selected Barrages Reservoirs and Rivers/Streams for Surface Water section in Telangana and integrate with Data Center located at Hyderabad, Telangana. Quantities: 27 Nos, Display and Sale of Tender Documents Period: 01-02-2019 from 11:00 A.M to 12.03.2019 upto 3:00PM Last Date and Time for Bid Submission: 12-03-2019 upto 3:30PM, Tender Fee in Rs. 10,000.

Sd/- Chief Engineer Hydrology & Investigation

Detailed Invitation for Bid is available on www.tender.telangana.gov.in

Advt. No.26/APPCB/TIoT/2019 dt.30.01.2019

APPCB is inviting Expression of Interest (EoI) for "Empangement of suppliers for Supply, Installation & Maintenance of IoT / Modem (devices)". Interested parties / agencies may send their proposals for empanelment duly showing their strengths in the field along with profile and expertise.

EoI addressed to the Member Secretary, APPCB shall reach the above mentioned address by 28.02.2019 at 4.00PM. For further details please visit website: www.appcb.apnic.in.

Sd/-Member Secretary

ANDHRA PRADESH POLLUTION CONTROL BOARD D.No.33-26-14/D2, Near Sunrise Hospital, Pushpa Hotel Centre, Chalamalavar Street, Kasturiapet, Vijayawada - 520 010, Ph: 0866-246323/250

EXPRESSION OF INTEREST FOR EMPANELMENT OF SUPPLIERS FOR SUPPLY, INSTALLATION & MAINTENANCE OF IOT / MODEM (DEVICES)

Advt. No.26/APPCB/TIoT/2019 dt.30.01.2019

APPCB is inviting Expression of Interest (EoI) for "Empangement of suppliers for Supply, Installation & Maintenance of IoT / Modem (devices)". Interested parties / agencies may send their proposals for empanelment duly showing their strengths in the field along with profile and expertise.

EoI addressed to the Member Secretary, APPCB shall reach the above mentioned address by 28.02.2019 at 4.00PM. For further details please visit website: www.appcb.apnic.in.

Sd/-Member Secretary

CONCOR

CONCOR invites E-Tender in Single Packets system of tendering for the following work:

Tender No.: CONEP/PDM/Bal.Addl.CC Pav/R-1/2018

Name of work: Balance work of Additional CC Block Paving in Empty/Coastal load Container Parking and Construction of Peripheral RCC wall to arrest settlement of warehouse flooring at CFSVallarpadam, Kochi, Kerala.

Estimated Cost: ₹.347.47 Lakhs.

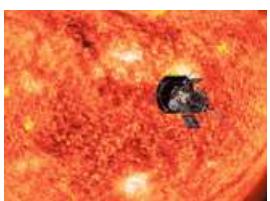
Completion Period: 10 (Ten) Months.

Earliest Money Deposit: ₹.3.23.735.00 (through e-payment).

Cost of Tender Document (Non-refundable): ₹. 1,000/- (inclusive all taxes & duties through e-payment).

Tender Processing fee (Non-Refundable): ₹. 5,310/- (inclusive all taxes & duties through e-payment).

IN BRIEF



NASA solar probe begins second orbit of sun

WASHINGTON NASA's Parker Solar Probe has begun its second orbit of the sun and is on track for its closest approach to our star, the U.S. space agency said. Just 161 days after its launch, the Parker probe completed its first orbit of the sun on January 19. The spacecraft has now begun the second of 24 planned orbits, on track for its second perihelion, or closest approach to the sun, on April 4. Parker Solar Probe entered full operational status on January 1. PTI



'French spiderman' scales Manila skyscraper, held

MANILA French urban freeclimber Alain Robert was arrested on Tuesday after he scaled one of Manila's tallest towers in his latest high-risk ascent. The 56-year-old adventurer, dubbed the "French spiderman", climbed the 47-storey GT Tower without safety equipment, leaving watchers on the ground staring in amazement. Police were less enthusiastic and took him into custody. AFP



CALIFORNIA Apple Inc said on Monday it will issue a software patch later this week for a bug that lets iPhone users hear audio from users who have not yet accepted a video call. The bug allows user placing a call using FaceTime feature to hear audio from the recipient's phone even if the recipient has not picked up the call. In certain situations, the bug also broadcast both video and audio from the recipient's phone. "We're aware of this issue and have identified a fix," an Apple spokesperson said. REUTERS

Study offers hope for dementia patients

People who receive intensive treatment for hypertension are less likely to develop cognitive problems

PAM BELLUCK

In dementia research, so many paths have led nowhere that any glimmer of optimism is noteworthy.

So some experts are heralding the results of a large new study, which found that people with hypertension who received intensive treatment to lower their blood pressure were less likely than those receiving standard blood pressure treatment to develop minor memory and thinking problems that often progress to dementia.

The study, published Monday in *JAMA*, is the first large, randomised clinical trial to find something that can help many older people reduce their risk of mild cognitive impairment – an early stage of faltering function and memory that is a frequent precursor to Alzheimer's disease and other dementias.

The results apply only to those aged 50 or older who

have elevated blood pressure and who do not have diabetes or a history of stroke. But that's a condition affecting a lot of people – more than 75% of people over 65 have hypertension, the study said. So millions might eventually benefit by reducing not only their risk of heart problems but of cognitive decline, too.

Cardiovascular study

"It's kind of remarkable that they found something," said Dr. Kristine Yaffe, a professor of psychiatry and neurology at University of California San Francisco, who was not involved in the research.

It is very exciting because it tells us that by improving vascular health in a comprehensive way, we could actually have an effect on brain health."

The research was part of a large cardiovascular study called SPRINT, which began in 2010 and involved more than 9,000 racially and ethnically diverse people at 102



More than 75% of people over 65 have hypertension. ■ GETTY IMAGES/ISTOCKPHOTO

sites in the U.S. The participants had hypertension, defined as a systolic blood pressure (the top number) from 130 to 180, without diabetes or a history of stroke.

These were people who could care for themselves, were able to walk and get themselves to doctors' appointments, said the principal investigator, Dr. Jeff D. Williamson, chief of geriatric medicine and gerontology at Wake Forest School of Medicine.

The primary goal of the SPRINT study was to see if people treated intensively

enough that their blood pressure dropped below 120 would do better than people receiving standard treatment that brought their blood pressure just under 140. They did – so much so that in 2015, the trial was stopped because the intensively treated participants had significantly lower risk of cardiovascular events and death that it would have been unethical not to inform the standard group of the benefit of further lowering their blood pressure.

But the cognitive arm of the study, called SPRINT MIND, continued to follow the participants for three more years even though they were no longer monitored for whether they continued with intensive blood pressure treatment. About 8,500 participants received at least one cognitive assessment.

Probable dementia

The primary outcome researchers measured was whether patients developed

"probable dementia." Fewer patients did so in the group whose blood pressure was lowered to 120. But the difference – 149 people in the intensive-treatment group versus 176 people in the standard-treatment group – was not enough to be statistically significant. But in the secondary outcome – developing mild cognitive impairment or MCI – results did show a statistically significant difference.

In the intensive group, 287 people developed it, compared to 353 people in the standard group, giving the intensive treatment group a 19% lower risk of mild cognitive impairment. Mr. Williamson said.

Mr. Williamson said that following the patients for longer would yield enough cases to show whether intensive blood pressure treatment helps prevent dementia, too. To find out, the Alzheimer's Association said it would fund two more years of the study. NY TIMES

Artificial skin could give 'superhuman' perception

Sensor may detect magnetic waves

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE WASHINGTON

Scientists have developed a sensor for artificial skin that may not only help burn victims feel, but also lend humans 'superpowers' to detect sound waves and magnetic fields.

Researchers from University of Connecticut in the U.S. wanted to create a sensor that can mimic the sensing properties of skin. Such a sensor would need to be able to detect pressure, temperature, and vibration.

However, the artificial skin could do other things too, researchers said.

"It would be very cool if it had abilities human skin does not; for example, the ability to detect magnetic fields, sound waves, and abnormal behaviours," Islam Mosa from University of Connecticut.

Researchers created such a sensor with a silicone tube wrapped in a copper wire and filled with a special fluid

made of nanoparticles. The nanoparticles rub around the inside of the silicone tube and create an electric current. The copper wire surrounding the silicone tube picks up the current as a signal.

When this tube is bumped by something experiencing pressure, the nanoparticles move and the electric signal changes. Sound waves also create waves in the nanoparticle fluid, and the electric signal changes in a different way than when the tube is bumped.

The researchers found that magnetic fields alter the signal too, in a way distinct from pressure or sound waves. Even a person moving around while carrying the sensor changes the electrical current, and the team found they could distinguish between the electrical signals caused by walking, running, jumping, and swimming.

Heavy drinking can modify your genes, says study

It may trigger changes resulting in even more craving for liquor

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE NEW YORK

Are you a heavy drinker? Take note. Besides alcohol taking a toll on your health in many ways, it may also trigger a long-lasting genetic change resulting in an even greater craving for alcohol, researchers including one of Indian-origin have warned.

"We found that people who drink heavily may be changing their DNA in a way that makes them crave alcohol even more," said Dipak K. Sarkar, professor at Rutgers University in the U.S.

"This may help explain why alcoholism is such a powerful addiction, and may one day contribute to new ways to treat alcoholism or help prevent at-risk people from becoming addicted," said Mr. Sarkar.

For the study, researchers focused on two genes implicated in the control of drink-



No control: The study may help identify those at risk of becoming addicted. ■ GETTY IMAGES/ISTOCKPHOTO

ing behaviour: PER2, which influences the body's biological clock, and POMC, which regulates our stress-response system.

By comparing groups of moderate, binge and heavy drinkers, the team found that the two genes had changed in binge and heavy drinkers through an alcohol-influenced gene modification process called methylation, according to the findings, published in the

journal *Alcoholism: Clinical & Experimental Research*.

In addition, the binge and heavy drinkers also showed reductions in gene expression, or the rate at which these genes create proteins. These changes increased with greater alcohol intake.

Also, in another experiment, the drinkers viewed stress-related, neutral or alcohol-related images. They were also shown containers of beer and subsequently tasted beer, and their motivation to drink was evaluated.

Results showed that alcohol-fuelled changes in the genes of binge and heavy drinkers were associated with a greater desire for alcohol. The findings may help in identifying biomarkers that could predict an individual's risk for binge or heavy drinking.

In 2016, more than 3 million people died from the harmful use of alcohol.

How our diet can impact memory

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE NEW YORK

Although you might be familiar with the statement, "you are what you eat", the food you consume could also impact your memory, suggests a new study.

A team of researchers discovered that cholecystokinin (CCK), a satiety hormone which is highly expressed in memory formation, could, at higher levels, decrease a person's likelihood of developing Alzheimer's disease by 65%, said the study published in the journal *Neurobiology of Aging*.

CCK is found in both the small intestines and the brain. In the small intestines, CCK allows for the absorption of fats and proteins. In the brain, CCK is located in the hippocampus, which is the memory-forming region of the brain, said Auriel Willette, assistant professor at the Iowa State University.

Success for golden langur breeding project in Assam

Monkey shifted from display site to quiet space gives birth

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT GUWAHATI

Assam Environment and Forest Minister Parimal Shuklabaidya on Tuesday announced the success of the Golden Langur Conservation Breeding Programme in the State.

The golden langur conservation project was undertaken at the Assam State Zoo in Guwahati during the 2011-12 fiscal.



Lovely, a golden langur, with her baby. ■ SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

ly has been fiercely guarding her baby.

The golden langur (*Trachypithecus geei*) is currently endangered.

Apart from a 60 square mile area in north-western Assam, small populations are found in Bhutan and Tripura.

ATTENTION : TAX DEDUCTORS



Tax Compliance on time makes your Nation shine

e-file TDS statement for the quarter ended on 31st December, 2018 by 31st January, 2019

File your TDS Statement before the last date 31st January, 2019 to avoid late fee of ₹200 per day and penalty upto ₹1,00,000

DOWNLOAD TDS CERTIFICATE

- In Form 16A, containing 7 character TDS certificate number, mandatorily from TRACES Portal <https://www.tdscpc.gov.in> (TDS certificate downloaded from TRACES Portal only, is the valid certificate. TDS certificate cannot be downloaded from TRACES Portal in case the PAN is incorrect or not specified in the e-filed TDS statement).
- For deductions made from non-PAN non-residents, and reported in 27Q, Transaction Based Report (TBR) may be downloaded instead of TDS certificate.

ISSUE TDS CERTIFICATE

In Form 16A (on income other than salary) for the quarter ended 31st December, 2018 by 15th February, 2019. (Delay in issue of TDS certificate shall result in penalty of ₹ 100/- for each day of default not exceeding the amount of tax deductible/collectible)

ALERT

- Deductors who have deducted tax and have not deposited the same by the due date must do so immediately.
- All deductors must register themselves at <https://www.tdscpc.gov.in>
- Quote correctly their TAN and also PAN of the deductee so that they get their due tax credit.
- Non-quoting of PAN or TAN in TDS statement may lead to levy of penalty.
- Quote correctly CIN of the challan to avoid default for short payment.
- Deductors may avoid defaults about PAN and challan errors in preliminary screening, by responding to email/SMS from CPC(TDS) within seven days of receipt of email/SMS.
- Use PAN-TAN master facility at TRACES Portal to verify correctness of PAN of the deductees.
- If there is no transaction liable to TDS/TCS to report for the quarter, do intimate the same at TRACES Portal using "Declaration for Non filing" functionality to avoid notice for non-filing of TDS statement.

