



Alliance Air flights to Batticaloa likely to be announced on Feb. 7
page 13



Surrogate mother need not be a 'close relative', says Rajya Sabha panel
page 13



More Chinese cities shut down as virus death toll rises
page 14



NEARBY



Roll back CAA, M.P. Cabinet tells Centre

BHOPAL
The Madhya Pradesh Cabinet on Wednesday passed a resolution against the Citizenship (Amendment) Act, calling upon the Centre to abrogate it as it purportedly violates the basic tenets of the Constitution and the fundamental Right to Equality.

NORTH ▶ PAGE 5



Five-year-old raped in Chanakyapuri

NEW DELHI
A five-year-old girl was raped, allegedly by her neighbour, in the quarters of an embassy in Chanakyapuri, the police said on Wednesday. The 25-year-old accused has been arrested, they added. The incident took place on February 1 and a complaint was lodged by the girl's family members on Sunday, the police said, adding that the child was admitted in a hospital and is currently stable and out of danger.

CITY ▶ PAGE 4

Trust formed for Ram temple construction: PM

Track to the temple

A look at the key points of Prime Minister Narendra Modi's announcement regarding the construction of a Ram temple at Ayodhya

• Mr. Modi announced the formation of a 15-member Trust named 'Shri Ram Janmabhoomi Teerth Kshetra', to oversee the construction of the temple

• This Trust will be empowered to take independent decisions on the construction of the temple and other related subjects, Mr. Modi said

• He said the government will transfer the whole of the approx 67.703 acres acquired

The trust will comprise 15 members, including one individual from the Dalit community

land to the new Trust

• Its members include Jagatguru Shankaracharya, Jyothisheethadheeshwar Swami Vasudevanand Saraswati Ji Maharaj, Jagatguru Madhavacharya Swami Vishwa Prasannatheerth Ji Maharaj, Yugpurush Paramanand Ji Maharaj, Swami Govinddev Giri Ji Maharaj, Vimlendra Mohan Pratap Mishra, Anil Mishra, Kameshwar Chauhan and Mahant Dinendra Das

• Two prominent practising Hindus will be nominated by the board of trustees. Two Hindu IAS officials below the rank of Joint Secretary to the govt. will be appointed by the Centre and the U.P. govt. Ayodhya District Collector will be the ex-officio trustee

take any decision regarding the construction of temple."

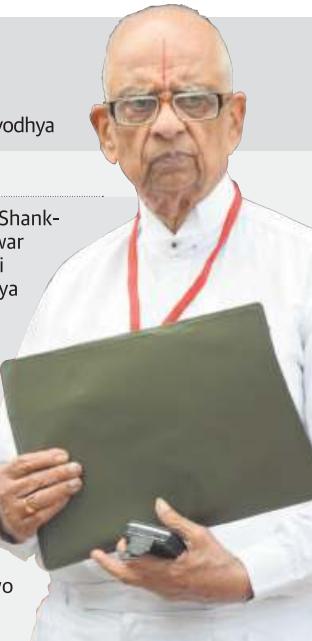
The Prime Minister complimented the citizens for showing maturity in accepting the court verdict of November 9 last. "People of the country have shown great restraint and maturity in accepting the court order and this is indeed praiseworthy. I salute them for this maturity," he said.

The Uttar Pradesh government had approved the Supreme Court's direction to grant 5 acres to the Sunni Central Waqf Board, he said.

Against the backdrop of

the ongoing protests against the Citizenship (Amendment) Act and the National Register of Citizens, Mr. Modi used the opportunity to reach out to different sections. "We believe in the philosophy that the world is one family [vasudhaiva kutumbakam] and everyone should be happy [sukhino bahavonto]. People professing every sect and every religion, be they Hindus, Muslims, Sikhs, Christians, Jains and Parsis, they are all part of the larger Indian family.

That's why my government has followed the principle of



The Trust will be headed by former Attorney General and Supreme Court lawyer K. Parasaran

Sabka Saath, Sabka Vikas and Sabka Vishwas," he said.

"Join me in support of the construction of a grand Ram temple in Ayodhya on this historic occasion and let us all speak in one voice," he addressed the members, especially those on the Opposition benches by repeating the words, 'ayeeye, ayeeye' (come, come).

Responding to Mr. Modi's call, several ruling MPs chanted 'Jai Shri Ram' amid thumping of desks.

CONTINUED ON ▶ PAGE 12

MORE REPORTS ON ▶ PAGE 12

U.P. govt. allots five acres for building mosque

The site is 25 km from old Babri Masjid

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
LUCKNOW

The Uttar Pradesh government has allotted five acres of land to the Sunni Central Waqf Board in Dhannipur village in Sohawal tehsil of Ayodhya, around 25 km from the site where the Babri Masjid once stood.

The land is 18 km from the district headquarters on the Lucknow State Highway, which had spearheaded the movement for the temple at Ayodhya. VHP's working president Alok Kumar said that his organisation wanted that the original design be adhered to as it had a large-scale endorsement from the movement. ▶ PAGE 12

could be decided at its meeting scheduled on February 24. "It was earlier scheduled for February 12 but due to certain reasons, it had to be postponed. It depends on the chairman if he keeps it in the agenda," Mr. Shoeb told The Hindu.

The issue of alternative land for a mosque in Ayodhya was, however, not yet included in the formal agenda of the next meeting, he said.

CONTINUED ON ▶ PAGE 12

'Seeking votes on the basis of performance'

AMIT BARUAH
NEW DELHI

Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal said on Wednesday that he was seeking votes from the people of Delhi on the basis of *kaam ki rajniti*, or the politics of delivery, that had been demonstrated by his government.

A desperate BJP, he said, had been unable to find any shortcomings in the performance of his government in the areas of electricity, water, schools and education. It had, instead, started abusing him.

In an interview to The Hindu, Mr. Kejriwal said, "They are unable to find any shortcomings in our work. What they frett out, it doesn't stick ... they want to divert attention from our work. Sometimes they bring Shaheen Bagh; sometimes they do Hindu-Muslimism."

The Chief Minister said his government's honest intentions, or *saaf niyat*, set it apart from other governments in the country.

FULL INTERVIEW ON ▶ PAGE 2



Centre moves SC in Nirbhaya case

Its plea to separately execute death sentences was rejected by Delhi HC

KRISHNADAS RAJAGOPAL
NEW DELHI

The Centre on Wednesday appealed to the Supreme Court within hours of the Delhi High Court's rejection of its plea to separately execute the death sentence of the Nirbhaya gang-rape convicts.

The Centre had challenged a January 31, 2020 decision of the sessions court to postpone the issuance of fresh death warrants against the four convicts, especially Mukesh Kumar Singh, whose mercy petition had already been declined by the President on January 17.

The government has argued in the Supreme Court that under the Delhi Prison Rules of 2018 the pendency of legal remedies or mercy petitions of other co-convicts would have no bearing on the fate of a convict whose plea for mercy has already been rejected.

'Miscarriage of justice'
The government has argued that the 2018 Rules does not prohibit the execution of death sentence of co-convicts, one by one, on the rejection of their respective mercy petitions.

Deferring the execution of

Nirbhaya's mother outside the Delhi High Court on Wednesday. ▶ PTI

death sentence of all the four convicts, specifically when Mukesh's mercy plea has already been dismissed by the President, has led to "gross

CONTINUED ON ▶ PAGE 12

miscarriage of justice" to the victim's family as well as the society as a whole, the government contended. The convicts, the Centre said, were taking the judicial process for a ride.

The High Court judgment, however, held that the 2018 Rules observe that pendency of any application filed by one convict would necessarily require the postponement of the death sentence of all his co-convicts, even those whose mercy plea had been rejected.

"We cannot comment on NPR at this stage," said a government senior official.

Odisha notifies house listing, silent on NPR

SATYASUNDAR BARIK
BHUBANESWAR

The Odisha government on Wednesday issued notification for carrying out house-listing operations as part of the Census between April and September 2020 while there was no word on conducting the National Population Register survey during the same period. House listing and NPR are usually conducted simultaneously.

The High Court judgment, however, held that the 2018 Rules observe that pendency of any application filed by one convict would necessarily require the postponement of the death sentence of all his co-convicts, even those whose mercy plea had been rejected.

"We cannot comment on NPR at this stage," said a government senior official.

CONTINUED ON ▶ PAGE 12

casting will be done on polling day as part of increased surveillance.

Stating that "confidence building" mechanisms were also under way in the constituency, Mr. Singh said that paramilitary forces will also be present in the area along

with local police personnel, according to norms meant for constituencies categorized as critical. A total of 516 locations, including 3,704 polling booths, have been identified as critical, the Delhi poll office said.

DETAILS ON ▶ PAGE 3



Electric vehicles, SUVs energise Auto Show

YUTHIKA BHARGAVA
GREATER NOIDA

Electric vehicles and new models of conventional SUVs are in the spotlight at this year's Auto Expo, being held here under the shadow of a prolonged demand slowdown that has hit the industry.

Billboards greeting car buffs and industry professionals to the various pavilions feature the gleaming new motors, making it clear that these are the machines the big marques are placing their bets on. Industry data point to electric becoming the new buzzword, and SUVs, the major vehicle segment in top gear when it comes to sales.

The biggest biennial automotive extravaganza is evidently feeling the ripple effects of the demand slowdown, with the majority of two-wheeler makers and many car makers skipping the event. These include market leader Hero MotoCorp, Honda Motorcycles, TVS Motors, Royal Enfield, BMW, Audi, Toyota Kirloskar Motors, Honda Cars, Ford and Fiat.

Suzuki Motorcycle looked like a lone-warrior for the



Great Wall Motors showcasing its electric vehicle at the Auto Expo 2020 on Wednesday.

■ KAMAL NARANG

two-wheeler on day one of the expo, launching the BS6 versions of the Access 125, Glxter series, Burgman Street and Intruder.

The mood is also dampened by the global coronavirus outbreak, with the top leadership of all Chinese participants staying away. Industry executives believe that this is likely to adversely affect the attendance at Auto Expo 2020, which will open for the public from February 7, until February 12.

The event was kick-started by the country's largest car maker, Maruti Suzuki, globally premiering its Future-e concept – an electric SUV with nuances of a coupe and flexible swivel travel seats.

CONTINUED ON ▶ PAGE 12

PRELIMS QUALITY ENRICHMENT PROGRAM 2020 (SECOND BATCH)

Faculty & Subjects

- **Rushikesh Dudhat:** Geography and Environment with Current Updates
- **Jayesh Khaddar:** History and Culture
- **Shubhra Ranjan:** Indian Polity
- **Vivek Singh:** Indian Economy with Current Updates
- **Santosh Kumar:** Science & Technology and Current Affairs

* OUR GS FOUNDATION PROGRAMME STARTING ON 6TH APRIL 2020 *



FEBRUARY						
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1						
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INTERVIEW | ARVIND KEJRIWAL

'BJP has no discourse and is desperate for a win; nothing is working for it'

Delhi Chief Minister says the work that has been done by the AAP is extraordinary compared with what has happened in the past 70 years in the country

AMIT BARUAH
NEW DELHI

The last five years have made him "more experienced and more patient", Delhi Chief Minister and Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) leader Arvind Kejriwal told The Hindu in an interview. Elections to the Delhi Legislative Assembly are scheduled to be held on Saturday. Edited excerpts:

Is this an election about AAP's governance record versus the issues of identity and religion?

■ The work that has been done by AAP is extraordinary compared to what has happened in the last 70 years in the country. They [governments run by other political parties] ruined the services of electricity, water, schools and the hospitals.

People had also lost all hope that a government can do anything. They [rival parties including the BJP] don't have an answer to what we have done in the past five years. They are unable to find any shortcomings in our work. What they ferret out, it doesn't stick. They don't have any discourse. Now, they want to divert attention from our work. Sometimes they bring Shaheen Bagh; sometimes they do Hindu-Muslim.

You have been Delhi's Chief Minister for five years now. If voted to power again, what is your vision for Delhi?

■ Our last five years has given hope to the entire nation – things can be done. If we have been able to fix government schools and hospitals, then it means they had been deliberately left in a poor shape. We had been kept poor and illiterate for the last 70 years. If all this could be done in five years, it could have been done in 70 years as well. This hope kindled in the country by AAP's governance in the past five years, this is a big deal – actually, it's a new kind of politics.

So, how were you able to accomplish this? Other governments have also tried to fix things.

■ Our *niyat* [intention] was *saaf* [honest]. The difference was only about intention. If you do something and the intention is to make money out of it, then you look at issues completely differently. And, if the intention is to do the job properly, then you

look at it totally differently. *Niyat* is at the root of the difference. Since, our intentions were honest, we were able to accomplish so many things in the past five years. Electricity, water, education and health are the four success areas of my government.

You have been accused of giving freebies like waiving electricity bills or free rides to women on public buses in Delhi.

■ What is our fault? If I was giving things free and raising your taxes, [if] our budget was in the red, or [we] took loans to make things free, then it would be problematic. Our budget is positive. In other parts of the country, State government budgets are in the red. The Central budget, too, is in the red. Five years ago, that was the case in Delhi as well. We reduced taxes from 12% to 5%, we didn't take any loans; what we did was to end corruption. That's why we were able to save money. If I am using that money to give relief to the people, what's the harm in it? What's the problem?

When you say nothing was done in 70 years, you seem to exclude what Sheila Dikshit did in Delhi, which includes the metro.

■ She did improve infrastructure; brought buses and constructed the metro and flyovers. But all this was done at the time of the Commonwealth Games, in those two-three years. So, that

C The country has to decide what is deshbhakti [patriotism]. Educating children is patriotism or dividing people in the name of Hindu, Muslim, Christian, Sikh, is patriotism? Is getting people medical treatment patriotism, or calling Kejriwal a terrorist, patriotism?



Arvind Kejriwal during an interview to *The Hindu* ahead of the Delhi Assembly elections. ■ V.V. KRISHNAN

was an extraordinary period.

The BJP has unleashed all its big guns against you – Prime Minister Modi, Home Minister Amit Shah, U.P. Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath. Why do you think this is the case?

■ Nothing is working for them. First, Amit Shah collected all the parties against us. It's for the first time that BJP, LJP, JD(U) and Akali Dal are all contesting the election together. That didn't work. Then they brought 200 MPs. That too didn't work. Then came 70 ministers and 10 Chief Ministers. That also didn't work.

And, then they started their abuse. This shows that *kaam ki rajni* [the politics of delivery] is very powerful. Electricity, water, schools, roads, nullahs, and streets – they have been unable to match this. Their entire politics is failing.

So, are you saying, you will be able to win this election on the basis of your performance?

■ I feel the people have made up their minds. People appreciate the work we have done.

At your public meetings, you raise the slogans of 'Inquilab Zindabad' and 'Vande Mataram' together. This is a new phenomenon in Indian politics. What is the message you are trying to convey?

■ Our party is the product of the [anti-corruption] Anna Hazare movement. This was a nationalist movement with wide acceptance – left, right and centre – all kinds of people were part of it.

The country has to decide what is *deshbhakti* [patriotism]. Educating children is patriotism or dividing people in the name of Hindu, Muslim, Christian, Sikh, is patriotism? Is getting people medical treatment patriotism, or calling Kejriwal a terrorist, patriotism? Is making roads patriotism, or abusing Kejriwal, patriotism? Is providing electricity patriotism or saying 'goli maro' [shoot people], patriotism? The

people will have to decide.

There are many people who say that it will be 'Modi at the Centre' and 'Kejriwal in Delhi'. Does this show that Modi and Kejriwal have a common support base?

■ Everyone is part of our support base. I say I will teach your child. You tell me one person who will say 'don't educate my child'. I educate the Congress person's child and the BJP person's child. I teach a Hindu child and a Muslim child; everyone's child. I get everyone access to treatment. This is real *deshbhakti*. From this, 21st century India will be created. Our country can become the most advanced in the world. Inside, I am convinced. Our people are so intelligent. The problem is that the systems in our country are bad. Our politics is bad. These need to be fixed. When I say these systems need to be changed, they say I am anarchist.

The country stands divided on

the CAA and the NRC. How do you see the politics around it playing out?

■ I have said again and again that 21st century India cannot be achieved through amended citizenship law and the National Register of Citizens. Such an India can be achieved when we have industry, shops will be opened, when people get jobs, where India moves ahead in science and technology, when we do research, only then will 21st century India become reality.

Your mohalla health clinics have found appreciation. In a possible second term, will you fix the Delhi-government run hospitals?

■ Our 35 hospitals have improved. Overcrowding is a problem, and we will fix this. Many new hospitals are in the pipeline. They will start in the next three-four years.

You came up with the odd-even

scheme to check air pollution in the capital. But we still have terrible air quality. What is the plan to fix this?

■ We will do vacuum cleaning to curb dust pollution, improve transport facilities by bringing in new buses. We hope this will reduce two-wheeler use.

We also need to know the real time sources of pollution. Without this, as an administrator, I can't act. We are setting up a full lab from April 1, where I will come to know what is the real time cause of pollution at this time. Then we can close down this activity.

You got into major conflicts with the Lieutenant-Governor and the Centre over how Delhi should be run. After five years in power, do you think Delhi will ever get full Statehood?

■ I think the time has come to give Delhi full Statehood. The Centre should realise this and, in the larger interest, Delhi should be made a full State.

You supported downsizing the State of Jammu & Kashmir into a Union Territory. The Opposition Congress suggests this is a double standard when you seek full Statehood for Delhi.

■ I don't think so. We thought this was in the country's interest and took a decision [to support it].

Do you see the Congress as a contender in the current elections?

■ The surveys coming in suggest that the Congress is settling for two-three per cent of the vote share [in the 2015 Assembly polls, the Congress got 9.8% of the popular vote].

You have completed, against pretty formidable odds, a full term in office. How do you feel about it?

■ There's no doubt that tackling those obstacles was extremely difficult. I hope that in the next five years, the Central and Delhi government will be able to work together. It's made me more experienced and more patient.

CM hails Centre's Ram temple trust move

STAFF REPORTER
NEW DELHI

With the Centre announcing formation of a trust for the construction of a Ram temple in Uttar Pradesh's Ayodhya three days ahead of the Delhi Assembly polls, Aam Aadmi Party national convener Arvind Kejriwal on Wednesday said there was no right time for "good work".

"I welcome this decision. It is a good thing and I congratulate the people of the country," he said, adding: "Some people are questioning the timing. There is no timing for good work. It should be announced any time."

Meanwhile, during a public meeting on Wednesday, Mr. Kejriwal said that he would make BJP leaders and supporters re-

cite the *Hanuman Chalisa* so they can "find peace and improve their language".

Mr. Kejriwal had recently recited the hymn during an interview with a TV channel.

"I sang the song... BJP leaders were burned by it. I said now that I have sung it, I will make all BJP people also sing it," said the AAP leader.

"Scheme for Celebration of Birth/Death Anniversary of Eminent personalities"

Delhi Government provide assistance through empanelled agencies to the desirous Organizations in the form of arrangement for tentage, sound system, lighting, banners etc. for celebration Birth/Death Anniversary of eminent personalities, Dr. B.R. Ambedkar, Mahatma Gandhi, Sant Ravidas.

Eligibility:-

The following are eligible to apply for assistance under the scheme:-

i.) Registered NGOs, under Societies Registration Act which are in existence.
ii.) Only those NGOs are eligible which are registered under Society Registration Act and having audited accounts.

List of the items for providing assistance to the desirous NGOs are as follows:-

- a. Tentage.
- b. Chairs.
- c. Sofa.
- d. Tables.
- e. Curtains, Mat etc.
- f. Sound System.
- g. Light System.
- h. Generator.
- i. Banners/Hoardings.

Procedure for applying:

The applicant Organizations may submit a detailed proposal, containing:-

- i.) Details of such celebrations / activities organized by them in the past.
- ii.) The duly filed in applications along with copies of Registration Certificate and audited accounts should be submitted by the registered NGO/Organization to concerned District Magistrate's office, minimum 15 days in advance positively.

For full details, please visit Department website: - scstwelfare.delhigovt.nic.in

DEPARTMENT FOR THE WELFARE OF SC/ST/OBC/Minorities
GOVERNMENT OF NCT OF DELHI,
B-BLOCK, VIKAS BHAWAN, I.P.ESTATE, NEW DELHI-02

MAHENDRA PAL
Deputy Director
Dept. for Welfare of SC/ST/OBC
Vikas Bhawan, New Delhi

DIP/Shabdharth/1350/19-20

Air Quality of Delhi-NCR

Delhi	312	Gurugram	266
Ghaziabad	328	Faridabad	270
Noida	311	Greater Noida	303

Good Satisfactory Moderate

Poor 51-100 101-200

201-300 301-400 >400

Air Quality Index at 4 p.m. yesterday (Average of past 24 hours) | Source: CPCB

DELHI TODAY

Talk: Seminar on "Pathway to Women in Politics". Panelists: Chitra Mudgal, Hindi writer; Dr Bijaylaxmi Nanda, Principal of Miranda House; Kalpana Sharma, Additional Secretary, Lok Sabha and Neerja Chowdhry, eminent journalist at Seminar Rooms I, II & III, Kamaladevi Complex, India International Centre (IIC), 6:30 p.m.

Dance: The second and final day of Yuva Shastriya, a two-day series of classical music and dance will feature a Hindustani vocal by Sawani Mudgal and a choreography between Bharatnatyam and Odissi by Tanya Saxena and Madhur Gupta at Triveni Kala Sangam, Tansen Marg, 5:30 p.m.

Exhibition: A solo paintings show by artist George Koshai at Open Palm Court Gallery, India Habitat Centre (IHC), 11 a.m.- 10 p.m.

Exhibition: "The Mysterious Strength of Anthropomorphism" by Artist Kisan Vora at Visual Arts Gallery (Atrium), India Habitat Centre (IHC), 11 a.m.- 10 p.m.

Exhibition: "Aarambh", a group show of sculptures and painting at Alturaash Art Gallery, 147, DLF South Court, Saket, 11 a.m.- 7 p.m.

Exhibition: "A Wonder", a solo show of artist Biplob Sarkar, Art District XIII, F-213 C, Ground Floor, Lado Sarai, 10 a.m.- 6 p.m.

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

Congress will usher in a manufacturing revolution: Rahul

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

Congress leader Rahul Gandhi on Wednesday said his party had spearheaded the "White Revolution, Green Revolution and Telecom Revolution", and the time has now come for India to seize the opportunity to bring about a "Manufacturing Revolution".

This revolution will solve the problem of unemployment in the country, said Mr. Gandhi during election rallies in Kondli and Matia Mahal. Mr. Gandhi asked people to vote for the Congress so that Delhi could be turned into a manufacturing hub that will employ the youth. He added that the world was looking towards India to become an alternate manufacturing hub to China but when they look towards India, they see a country filled with hate and violence that is being propagated by Narendra Modi at the Centre and Arvind Kejriwal in Delhi.

"Mr. Modi and Mr. Kejriwal have been in Delhi for only five years, and they have come to power with lies and false promises. The Congress has a family bond with the people of Delhi and I cannot lie to my family," Mr. Gandhi said. He added that when colonies were being established across Delhi, the Congress did not ask for registration charges or ask people which religion or caste they belonged to. The Congress saw everyone as Indians and set up colonies in Delhi.

Launching an attack on Mr. Kejriwal, the Congress leader said that the Aam Aadmi Party had come to power on an anti-corruption plank but when in power could not prove any of its allegations against the Congress.

Meanwhile, Congress general secretary Priyanka Gandhi Vadra hit out at BJP leaders, saying their character can be defined by the kind of slogans they raise.

"Their slogans tell their character. *Ye desh jodne wale nare hain?* (Are these slogans in favour of bringing the country together)," Ms. Vadra said at a poll rally in Chandni Chowk.

"No one can get freedom in this country without Hindu-Muslim unity. If there was no unity among religions, the Britishers would still have been here. The country cannot progress with their policies, they want to divide people and do not address the real issues," she added. (With PTI inputs)

OFFICE OF THE CHIEF ELECTORAL OFFICER, DELHI
OLD ST. STEPHEN'S COLLEGE BUILDING,
KASHMERE GATE, DELHI-110006
Helpline No.1800- 111-400 and 1950:
website: www.ceodelhi.gov.in

GENERAL ELECTION TO THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF NCT OF DELHI- 2020

PUBLIC NOTICE

Photo identity document to be produced by electors for establishing their identity at the polling station before casting vote

1. It is informed to all electors in the NCT, Delhi that as per the directions of the Election Commission of India, all electors who have been issued Elector Photo Identity Card (EPIC) have to produce the EPIC for their identification at the polling station before casting their votes. Those electors who are not able to produce the EPIC shall produce one of the following alternative photo identity documents for establishing their identity.

(i) Passport,
(ii) Driving License,
(iii) Service Identity Cards with photograph issued to employees by Central/ State Govt. /PSUs/Public Limited Companies,
(iv) Passbooks with photograph issued by Bank/Post Office,
(v) PAN Card,
(vi) Smart Card issued by RGI under NPR,
(vii) MNREGA Job Card,
(viii) Health Insurance Smart Card issued under the scheme of Ministry of Labour,
(ix) Pension document with photograph,
(x) Official identity Cards issued to MPs/MLAs/MLCs, and
(xi) Aadhaar Card.

2. In the case of EPIC, clerical errors, spelling mistakes etc, should be ignored provided the identity of the elector can be established by the EPIC. If an elector produces

Shaheen Bagh polling stations placed under 'critical' category

Webcasting will be done on polling day as part of increased surveillance: Delhi CEO

STAFF REPORTER
NEW DELHI

Delhi Chief Electoral Officer (CEO) Ranbir Singh on Wednesday said that all five polling stations in Shaheen Bagh, comprising 40 polling booths, have been put under the "critical" category and webcasting will be done on polling day as part of increased surveillance.

Stating that "confidence building" mechanisms were also under way in the constituency, Mr. Singh said that paramilitary forces will also be present in the area along with local police personnel.

A total of 516 locations, including 3,704 polling booths, have been identified as critical, the Delhi poll office said.

Addressing the media before the February 8 Assembly elections, the CEO said that over 2,600 people have already



Anti-CAA protests have been going on at Shaheen Bagh for nearly two months. ■ FILE PHOTO: SUSHIL KUMAR VERMA

dy cast their votes by availing the postal ballot provision made this year.

"Out of 2,917 senior citizens and PwD voters who had registered for the postal ballot system, 2,691 have cast their votes. Mobile teams were sent to their houses and the process has ended. We are happy that there was a 92.25% turnout. The postal

ballot system was rolled out for senior citizens, PwD candidates and essential services," said Mr. Singh.

"Those who did not avail the service but had registered for the postal ballot service will not be able to cast their vote on February 8," added Mr. Singh. He further said that 30 FIRs were registered against the Aam Aadmi Party



for defacement of property and violation of Model Code of Conduct; the count for the BJP and Congress were five and nine respectively.

Additionally, the poll office has received around 600 registrations for the pick-up and drop facilities, the CEO said.

"The booking for the facility had started on January 25 and was supposed to be on till January 31. But we extended the last date till February 5. Around 600 people are booked so far," Mr. Singh said.

The officer added that while all voter slips have QR codes, 11 of the polling stations will have the facility for scanning the code.

IN BRIEF

On AAP complaint, EC issues notice to Patra

NEW DELHI

The Election Commission of India on Wednesday issued a notice to BJP spokesperson and Rajya Sabha MP Sambit Patra over what it termed was, prima facie, a statement that had the "potential of disturbing communal harmony and aggravating the existing differences between social and religious communities". Taking action on a complaint filed by the Aam Aadmi Party on Monday, the ECI gave Dr. Patra time till 5 p.m. on Thursday to respond. The ECI said the statement, prima facie, was in violation of the Model Code of Conduct.

Poll panel flays DCP who spoke about Shaheen Bagh shooter's AAP link

Remove him from election duty, EC writes to police chief

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

NEW DELHI

The Election Commission of India on Wednesday asked the Delhi Police to issue a warning to Deputy Commissioner of Police (Crime Branch) Rajesh Deo for publicly speaking about the link between the Aam Aadmi Party and the man who fired at the anti-Citizenship Amendment Act protest at Shaheen Bagh.

Finding his conduct to be "totally uncalled for"

and having "consequences on the holding of free and fair elections", the ECI wrote to Delhi Police Commissioner Amulya Patnaik asking for Mr. Deo to be removed from any work related to the Delhi Assembly elections on Saturday.

Mr. Deo had told the media on Tuesday that Kapil Baisala, the man apprehended for firing in Shaheen Bagh last week, and his father had joined the Aam Aadmi Party last year.

"The Commission has considered the matter in detail and is of the considered view that the above-referred statements referring to a political party at this stage even as the investigation is still on going has the effect of adversely impacting the elections," the ECI wrote.

The Commission said a warning should be issued to the officer, mentioning the ECI's "displeasure" with his conduct.

Kejriwal challenges Shah to debate

+ 'I request him to stop playing politics with the nation's security'

STAFF REPORTER
NEW DELHI

AAP national convener Arvind Kejriwal on Wednesday challenged Union Home Minister Amit Shah to a debate on issues concerning the people of Delhi.

"With an open mind, I am inviting Amit Shah for a debate in front of the people of Delhi to strengthen democracy," Mr. Kejriwal said, while addressing a press conference.

On Tuesday, Mr. Kejriwal had challenged the BJP to declare a chief ministerial face and said that he was ready to debate with the particular leader.

"I want to tell the BJP that the people of Delhi want the BJP to declare a chief ministerial face. I am ready to debate with the person. The debate can be at any place," Mr. Kejriwal had said and given time till 1 p.m. on Wednesday to the BJP.

"...But the BJP has not declared its CM candidate, which clearly shows that the BJP does not have a [CM] face for Delhi," he said.

"Since Amit Shah has been at the forefront, I



AAP national convener Arvind Kejriwal during a roadshow in Sarojini Nagar on Wednesday. ■ PTI

would like to challenge him to a debate on any issue of his choice. The people of Delhi have a lot of questions that need to be addressed.

Issues like abrogation of Article 370 and Ram Mandir are national issues. People have already voted for you [BJP] at the Centre based on these issues. But what did the BJP do for Delhi? What did you [BJP] do for the people of the city in the last five years? Why should they vote for you?" the CM said.

Kejriwal also said that he did not know details related to photos released by Delhi Police, which claimed that Kapil Baisala, who allegedly

opened fire at Shaheen Bagh protest site on February 1, was an AAP member.

"I do not know. I have no idea," Mr. Kejriwal said when asked if the person was a party member.

"If he is an AAP member, then give him double the punishment," he added.

When asked whether his party is inquiring into the matter, he said: "Why do I need to inquire? The police are there to do the job."

"If he is even remotely related to AAP, he deserves the maximum punishment for what he has done. I want to request the Home Minister [Shah] to stop playing politics on issue of security of the nation," Mr. Kejriwal added.

IIM Bangalore invites applications for the Prof. N. S. Ramaswamy Pre-doctoral Fellowship Programme at IIM Bangalore

IIM Bangalore invites applications for the Prof. N. S. Ramaswamy Pre-doctoral Fellowship Programme. Applicants must belong to one or more of the following categories: SC, ST, NC-OBC; Religious minorities; Persons with Disabilities (as defined by Government of India); Women and gender-minorities; Persons with primary and secondary schooling from vernacular medium of instruction, rural schools, or government schools. The programme prepares the Fellows for an academic career, particularly for enrolling in a high quality doctoral programme in management and allied disciplines. The fellows will receive a stipend and a tuition waiver.

Register for INFORMATION SESSION
Wednesday 12th Feb 2020, 7 pm to 8 pm
Wednesday 4th Mar 2020, 7 pm to 8 pm
Register at: <https://bit.ly/2S1D4T>

For information on the eligibility criteria, selection process, financial support and how to apply, please visit <https://www.iimb.ac.in/programmes/nsrpprof>. Applications due by March 13, 2020 (5:00 pm IST). For queries: predoc@iimb.ac.in 080-26993013/3017/3388/3383

EC slaps campaign ban on BJP MP Parvesh

Faults his statements against Kejriwal

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

NEW DELHI

The Election Commission on Wednesday barred BJP MP Parvesh Sahib Singh from campaigning for the Delhi Assembly elections for 24 hours for making "vitriolic" statements against Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal.

It also issued a warning to Mr. Kejriwal for a separate model code violation.

The West Delhi MP had earlier been barred for 96 hours starting 5 p.m. on January 30 for making statements about the ongoing protests at Shaheen Bagh.

In its Wednesday order, the EC said Mr. Singh's statement to a TV channel referred

ring to Mr. Kejriwal as a "terrorist" was a violation of the code. Campaigning for Saturday's election ends at 6 p.m. on Thursday.

The EC also warned Mr. Kejriwal over his statement while addressing lawyers on January 13, promising to build mohalla clinics in court complexes if the land was provided. In response to the EC's notice, Mr. Kejriwal's lawyer submitted that he had attended the event organised by the Delhi Bar Association at Tis Hazari Court in his personal capacity, not officially.

The EC, however, said it found the statement to be made in his official capacity.

The EC, however, said it found the statement to be made in his official capacity.

Balancing local and national issues

BJP's Rohini MLA Vijender Gupta is seeking re-election based on work done by him for the constituency and the work done by his party for the country

JATIN ANAND
NEW DELHI

BJP leader Vijender Gupta, a sitting MLA from the Rohini Assembly constituency, began his last full day of campaigning in Sector 8 at 7.30 a.m. on Wednesday. Over the next 12 hours, Mr. Gupta's itinerary included five more party meetings and as many *padyatras* in addition to four *nukkad sabhas* and the same number of *jan sabhas*.

The MLA is a familiar face to local residents and business alike in Rohini - one of the BJP's traditional bastions. The former Delhi BJP chief, who has led a minuscule Opposition of four MLAs in the Delhi Assembly for five years, talked about local developmental projects delivered by him as well as the ongoing situation in Shaheen Bagh.

"This election is very important... it is not limited to Delhi but the whole country. We are contesting on development. The BJP is synonymous with development... from garbage dumps to issues related to societies and rural pockets, the BJP has solved each problem and will continue to do so," Mr. Gupta told the residents of Yadav Market, located amidst the bustle of Naharpur village, one of the many rural-turned-semi-urban pockets in his constituency.

"We wanted to contest on the issue of development but the Opposition did Shaheen Bagh. They [the protesters] have shut the gateway to an important National Highway for months. It is where they are hatching a conspiracy to break the country into pieces. They are afraid of the development agenda of [Prime Minister Narendra] Modi... Your vote [for the BJP] will stop more roads and junctions from becoming Sha-



BJP leader Vijender Gupta campaigning in Rohini on Wednesday. ■ BIBEK CHETTRI

heen Bagh," he added.

Apart from the BJP's national pitches of abrogating Article 370, the construction of Ram Temple, and Centre-sponsored schemes such as 'Jahan Jhuggi, Wahin Makan' or the in-situ rehabilitation of slum clusters - promised to as many as 10,000 of his constituents, Mr. Gupta's vision for the coming five years, according to his constituency-specific mini-manifesto, includes significant local issues.

CAMPAIGN TRAIL

These comprise reconstruction of internal roads and facilities such as guard rooms and local gyms, better maintenance of street lights at cooperative residential societies, in addition to solving issues related to parking and vehicular congestion in Rohini.

Shopkeepers and senior citizens watched from balconies before welcoming him into their shops and offering him sweets amid chants of "Modi Zindabad" and "Jai Shri Ram".

"Look at the support, do not take anyone's word for it. This is real goodwill from real residents; not like [Delhi Chief Minister Arvind] Kejriwal's army of people from outside given the task of creating support for him out

of thin air," said Subhash Garg, a local resident.

"Shaheen Bagh and [U.P. CM] Yogi Adityanath's entry into the fray in Delhi have turned things around for the BJP over the last few days. Along with traditional loyalty of the local voter here, the nationalist narrative has made the chances brighter for the BJP," said another resident, a property dealer by profession, not willing to disclose his identity.

While some residents - especially the elderly - said their "lives had been made better" through recreational centres set up by Mr. Gupta through his MLA fund, others claimed their MLA had remained missing in action over the last five years.

"Just showing your face during election time once in five years is not enough," said Ashima Jain (name changed on request). "He has come to Naharpur village not more than twice in the last five years - this time and the last time there were elections around the corner," claimed Bhola Mishra, a local shopkeeper.



व्यापारियों के लिए कांग्रेस का संकल्प 2020

दुकानों और प्रतिष्ठानों पर कोई अवैध सीलिंग नहीं

दुकानों, कार्यालयों को 200 यूनिट निःशुल्क बिजली

विदेशी और घरेलू निवेश दिल्ली में वापस लाने को प्राथमिकता

गैर-प्रदूषणकारी उद्योगों को ₹6 यूनिट की दर से बिजली देना

दिल्ली की GDP को बढ़ाने के लिए हर संभव प्रयास होगा

GST संरचना को सरल और तर्कसंगत बनाने के लिए प्रयास



IN BRIEF

Avoid frozen meat:
advisory on coronavirus

NEW DELHI
The Delhi government on Wednesday issued a health advisory on the novel coronavirus and prescribed do's and don'ts for the public to ward off any infection, including avoiding frozen meat, officials said. A round-the-clock control room has also been set up at the Directorate General of Health Services headquarters to address queries related to the virus. PTI

New watch range pays tribute to Le Corbusier

NEW DELHI
At the India Art Fair 2020, leading watch manufacturer Rado paid a tribute to Le Corbusier by launching the 'True Thinline Les Couleurs Le Corbusier' which celebrates the work of pioneering and visionary architect in a unique collection.

In Tri Nagar, it's Team Tomar at work

Posters for Aam Aadmi Party's candidate Preeti Tomar bear not just her face but also of her husband and area MLA Jitender Singh Tomar

NIKHIL M BABU
NEW DELHI

On a chilly morning, a group of around 25 Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) workers took out a march in northwest Delhi's Lok Vihar for the party's Tri Nagar Assembly constituency candidate.

At first glance, it seemed like any other campaign march with several AAP flags, Arvind Kejriwal's photos, chants of "lage raho Kejriwal", and requests to the onlookers to vote for jhaadu (AAP's poll symbol).

But there was one marked difference: the AAP candidate, Preeti Tomar, was not the one leading the march or asking for votes through a handheld microphone.

Instead, it was her husband Jitender Singh Tomar, the sitting AAP MLA from Tri Nagar.

"Kaam karne wale ko vote dena [Vote for the one who works for the people]," Mr. Tomar told onlookers.

As the AAP MLA waved and shook people's hand, and asked them to vote for the party, Ms. Tomar – a few steps behind – flashed victory signs at the people.

During the one hour that *The Hindu* followed the march, Ms. Tomar came to the forefront just twice or thrice.

On January 14, AAP had declared Mr. Tomar as its

5-yr-old girl raped in Chanakyapuri

Neighbour has been arrested; crime took place in the quarters of an embassy

STAFF REPORTER
NEW DELHI

A five-year-old girl was raped, allegedly by her neighbour, in the quarters of an embassy in Chanakyapuri, the police said on Wednesday. The 25-year-old accused, who is a driver by profession, has been arrested, they added.

Child out of danger

The incident took place on February 1 and a complaint was lodged by the girl's family members on Sunday, the police said, adding that the child was admitted in a hospital and is currently stable and out of danger.

On the statement of the victim's mother, a case of rape was registered under relevant sections of the Indian Penal Code and the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences Act, a police officer said.

The police said that both the victim and the accused live in an embassy quarter.

The child's father works as a housekeeping staff at the embassy. The accused's



CThe child was playing outside her house when the accused, on the pretext of playing games on a mobile phone, took her to his residence and raped her. His parents were not present in the house at that time.

POLICE OFFICER

father is an employee at the embassy and the youth stays in the quarter with his parents. The girl used to visit the residence of the accused often as they were neighbours, a senior police officer said.

On the day of the incident, the child was playing

outside her house when the accused, on the pretext of playing games on a mobile phone, took her to his residence and raped her.

His parents were not present in the house at that time.

The girl later returned home and complained to her mother about discomfort and irritation in her private parts, he added.

When the victim's mother questioned her, the girl narrated the incident after which the mother approached the police and lodged a complaint, the officer said.

The child was taken for a medical examination after which the doctor confirmed penetrative sexual assault, the police added.

Nirbhaya case convicts will be hanged soon, says Law Minister

He expresses anguish over attacks on women across India

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

Union Law Minister Ravi Shankar Prasad has assured the Lok Sabha that convicts in the Nirbhaya gang rape case will be hanged soon.

He said that the culprits were trying to delay punishment by using legal provisions despite their mercy petitions having been turned down by the President as well as the Supreme Court.

Mr. Prasad was responding to several members, especially women MPs, across party lines who have raised the issue of attack on women in various parts of the country.



Ravi Shankar Prasad •

Expressing deep anguish over such incidents, he said, "I have deep concern in this regard."

"As far as hanging of convicts in the Nirbhaya case is concerned, the Supreme Court has already sentenced them to death. We

are very strict... justice will be delivered. The convicts will be hanged soon," the Minister said.

On January 7, the trial courts had issued black warrants for the execution of all the four convicts in Tihar jail on January 22, but the same was deferred as one of the convicts filed a mercy petition.

The subsequent date – February 1 – was also put off as all the legal remedies were to be exhausted by the convicts.

Members also highlighted the recent incident of wherein a 25-year-old college teacher was set ablaze by a stalker in Wardha, Maharashtra.

Shaheen Bagh protesters hand over burqa-clad YouTuber to police

Woman says she had come to make video for her channel

STAFF REPORTER
NEW DELHI

A day after it was reported

that a large group of farmers from Punjab, who arrived in Delhi to join the ongoing protest at Shaheen Bagh against the Citizenship (Amendment) Act, were detained by the Delhi police, the group was allowed to join the protest on Wednesday.

A large group of farmers

arrived in the city on Tues-

day night in around ten

buses and were heading

towards Shaheen Bagh

when they were intercept-

ed by the police merely 3

km away from the site.

They were moved to differ-

ent gurdwaras in the city

where they spent the

night, with policemen sta-

tioned outside.

On Wednesday, a dele-

gation of farmers and pro-

testers at Shaheen Bagh ap-

proached the Delhi police

and following negotia-

tions, the farmers were al-

lowed to come to the pro-

test site at Shaheen Bagh

where they were greeted

with hugs and smiles.

The police, however,

said that when the farmers

arrived in the city in bus-

es, they were stopped due

to "security reasons". Af-

ter people from Shaheen

Bagh approached them,

all of the farmers were al-

lowed to go to the protest

site.

at Shaheen Bagh, a senior police officer said.

"She was taken to Sarita Vihar police station police station where we questioned her. She said she was there to make videos for her online channel. She was released after few hours. We had received no complaint in the matter," an officer said.

Some of the protesters al-

leged that Mr. Kapoor was recording videos on his mobile phone.

In a statement, issued af-

ter the incident, Ms. Kapoor claimed that on Monday, when she had gone for a TV news debate at Jamia Millia Islamia, they were chased out in less than 20 minutes and people were not willing to talk to them.

Manhandling
Ms. Kapoor alleged that after a journalist of a new channel was recently "manhandled" at Shaheen Bagh, she decided to don a burqa assuming "too many questions". Shaheen bagh is the epicentre of

protests against the contro- versial Citizenship (Amend- ment) Act. She was handed over to the police by the protesters here.

The police also said that the women was caught by some of the women protes- ters after they identified her as "YouTuber Kapoor". The incident led to a commotion

Union Minister Paswan meets delegation

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

Union Minister Ramvilas Paswan met a delegation of 30 people from Shaheen Bagh and 11 other places in Delhi where anti-CAA protes-

ts are being held. He is the first Union Minister to hear out the protesters.

The delegation com- plained about "excessive use of police force and bruta- lity" against students of Jamia Millia.

The main grouse ex- pressed by the members of the delegation was that CAA and the proposed NRC has created an atmosphere of anxiety with many lining up at the revenue officials to get the documents that will prove their patronage.

Mr. Paswan explained that NRC is not unique to this government and that the UPA too had made a "half-baked attempt to im- plement it".

Man kills wife over suspicion of affairs

STAFF REPORTER
NEW DELHI

ting on Okhla Road outside Gate no. 7 of the university and protesting against the CAA and the NRC.

The city has witnessed inci- dents of firing in New Friends Colony and Shaheen Bagh recently. On the intervening night of Sunday and Monday, one such inci- dent took place near Gate 7 of the university. The road from the Holy Family Hospital to Jamia Millia Islamia metro station has been blocked.

On Tuesday, Jamia Nagar SHO had written a letter to the JMI Registrar, stating that some students, former students and locals were sit-

ting on Okhla Road outside Gate no. 7 of the university and protesting against the CAA and the NRC.

The city has witnessed inci- dents of firing in New Friends Colony and Shaheen Bagh recently. On the intervening night of Sunday and Monday, one such inci- dent took place near Gate 7 of the university. The road from the Holy Family Hospital to Jamia Millia Islamia metro station has been blocked.

Evict illegal occupants of govt. accommodations'

ing since 1998," a Bench of Chief Justice D.N. Patel and Justice C. Hari Shankar remarked.

"This casual and lethar- gic approach indicates con- nivance by your officials and connivance for such a long period amounts to conspira- cy under the IPC," the Bench remarked while warning about the possibil- ity of lodging FIRs against the officials concerned.

The High Court also pulled up the Ministry for failing to vacate about 575 il- legally occupied govern- ment accommodations in the Capital within the next 15 days.

"The High Court's direction came after perusing an affidavit filed by the Minis- try, indicating that 11 govern- ment residences were illegally occupied by former MPs, some of whom have been overstaying for over two decades now and have racked up dues of over ₹95 lakh.

"If someone is overstaying in government accom- modation, you do not need

a five-year plan to vacate

them. Have you given them notices for recovery of dues?... Some are overstaying-

the spot, the police said.

The illegal occupants in-

clude nine former Lok Sabha MPs and two Rajya Sabha

MPs.

TENDER NOTICE

SR. NO.	NAME OF BOARD/CORP./AUTH	NAME OF WORK NOTICE TENDER	OPENING DATE CLOSING DATE (TIME)	AMOUNT / EMD (APPROX.) IN RUPEES	WEBSITE OF THE BOARD CORP./AUTH	NODAL OFFICER/CONTACT DETAILS/EMAIL
1	HPGCL, PANIPAT	(NIT NO.02-2020 / V-231/GS)	28.01.2020 27.02.2020	23.32 LACS	www.hpgd.org.in & https://etenders.hry.nic.in	0180-2566015 xenmtcp1@gmail.com
2	HPGCL, PANIPAT	(NIT NO.02/SM-399/2020-21)	29.01.2020 27.02.2020	22 LACS	www.hpgd.org.in & https://etenders.hry.nic.in	0180-2566015 xenmtcp1@gmail.com
3	HPGCL, PANIPAT	(NIT NO.PTP/POM-100048)	31.01.2020 04.03.2020	3.27 LACS	www.hpgd.org.in & https://etenders.hry.nic.in	0180-2566015 xenmtcp1@gmail.com
4	HPGCL, PANIPAT	(NIT NO.PTP/POM-222172)	31.01.2020 04.03.2020	1.02 LACS	www.hpgd.org.in & https://etenders.hry.nic.in	0180-2566015 xenmtcp1@gmail.com
5	HPGCL, HISAR	NIT NO.318/RGTP/MM-I/TOE-12489 DT. 25.01.2020 SUPPLY OF STEEL REDUCERS AND BENDS AT RGTPP, KHEDAR, HISAR.	25.01.2020 24.02.2020	12200/-	https://etenders.hry.nic.in	9315146437 mm1rgtp@gmail.com
6	HPGCL, HISAR	NIT NO.01/RGTPP/CM/26/VOL-III DT. 25.01.2020 ARC OF VIBRATION ANALYSIS, ALIGNMENT & BALANCING OF CRITICAL AUXILIARIES INSTALLED AT VARIOUS SITES AT RGTPP, KHEDAR,				

Timings

DELHI

THURSDAY, FEB. 06
RISE 07:07 SET 18:04
RISE 15:00 SET 04:21
FRIDAY, FEB. 07
RISE 07:06 SET 18:05
RISE 16:00 SET 05:20
SATURDAY, FEB. 08
RISE 07:06 SET 18:06
RISE 17:06 SET 06:17

Delhi Weather max min
Delhi City 21 07
Safdarjang 21 07
Palam 21 08

Delhi Palam Today
22°C Shallow fog/mist is likely.
Day will be pleasant with mainly clear sky.

Delhi Palam Tomorrow
23°C Dry weather with cold misty morning is likely. Day will be pleasant.

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M.P. Cabinet passes resolution against CAA, calls to abrogate it

Begin NPR update without seeking new information, says State govt.

SIDHARTH YADAV
Bhopal

The Cabinet of the Congress government in Madhya Pradesh on Wednesday passed a resolution against the Citizenship (Amendment) Act, calling upon the Centre to abrogate it as it purportedly violates the basic tenets of the Constitution and the Fundamental Right to Equality.

"In order to stay away from division based on religion and ensure equality before the law for all religions, the Madhya Pradesh government requests the Government of India to abrogate the law," reads a note, passed at a meeting chaired by Chief Minister Kamal Nath.

Speaking to reporters later, Law Minister P.C. Sharma said, "The resolution will be forwarded to the



The passed resolution on CAA will be forwarded to the Centre

P.C. SHARMA
Law Minister

do away with apprehensions among people.

Stating that secularism formed the basic idea of the Constitution, the note said, "Article 14 guarantees equality and equal treatment before the law to everyone...the CAA has provisions making distinctions among illegal migrants based on religion."

After the adoption of the Constitution in 1950, it said, this was the first instance when "a law prescribing distinction based on religion was enacted. This will endanger the country's secular and tolerant being".

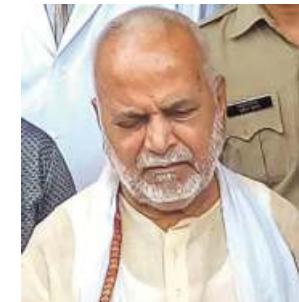
It was beyond people's

understanding why such provisions were enacted in the law, which created apprehensions in everyone's minds, it said. "As a result, there have been vast protests against it across the country, that are continuing. Even in Madhya Pradesh, there have been continuous protests against the law that have been peaceful and attended by all sections of society," it added.

Vote bank politics: BJP

Meanwhile, BJP State president and MP Rakesh Singh said,

"The State government, by opposing a law passed according to Constitutional principles in the Parliament, was indulging in vote bank politics. Citizenship is a subject of the Centre that has nothing to do with any State government."



Former Union Minister Swami Chinmayanand

hension that he could influence proceedings in his hometown.

The bail order directed Mr. Chinmayanand to file an undertaking that he would not seek any adjournments and be present in court.

Outside the Shahjahanpur jail, Mr. Chinmayanand's supporters waited for him with flowers. He was then driven to his ashram, where he offered prayers be-

fore leaving for his home.

Justice Chaturvedi had also directed Lucknow's Senior Superintendent of Police, to depute a senior sub inspector and armed constables for the security of the student and her family members during the trial period.

Charge against Swami

Mr. Chinmayanand, whose trust runs the Shahjahanpur law college where the woman studied, was arrested on September 20 under Section 376-C of the IPC, a charge short of rape. It is applied when someone in authority takes advantage of his official position to "induce or seduce" a woman to have sex with him.

In a parallel case, the woman was arrested for trying to extort money from Mr. Chinmayanand, whom she had accused of rape.

Probe seeks action against M.P. Collector

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
BHOPAL

A police inquiry report has indicted and recommended action against Rajgarh District Collector Nidhi Nivedita for allegedly slapping an Assistant Sub-Inspector of Police (ASI) during a pro-CAA rally last month, a Madhya Pradesh Police officer said on Wednesday.

He said the report has been forwarded by the Madhya Pradesh Police Headquarters to the Home Department.

The concerned ASI had complained to Rajgarh Superintendent of Police that the Collector had slapped him on January 19 when he was posted on law and order duty during the rally, he said.

Home Minister Bala Bachchan could not be contacted for his comment over the report.

Rowing the rapids



Tourists raft on the Beas river near Manali in Himachal Pradesh on Wednesday. ■ PTI

'Sunni Central Waqf Board not representative of all Muslims'

We will not take any land in Ayodhya, says AIMPLB

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
LUCKNOW

The All India Muslim Personal Law Board (AIMPLB) on Wednesday said the Sunni Central Waqf Board, which will get five acres of land in Ayodhya for the construction of a mosque, is not the representative of the entire Muslim community.

The AIMPLB also said that if the waqf board accepts the Centre's offer it should not be considered a decision of all Muslims of the country.

"The Sunni Waqf Board is not the representative of the entire Muslim community. If it takes land, it should not be considered a decision of Muslims of the country," AIMPLB senior executive member, Maulana Yasin Usmani, said.

He said the AIMPLB and

those associated with it have decided that they "will not take any land in Ayodhya."

All India Shia Personal Law Board (AISPLB) spokesman Maulana Yasooob Abbas said, "The Supreme Court had directed to provide the land to the Sunni Waqf Board. It's their decision whether they take it or not. Whatever decision it takes, there should be peace and communal amity."

Shia Board with AIMPLB

He however said that the Shia Board is with the AIMPLB on the matter.

Senior AIMPLB member Zafaryab Jilani said, "The decision of the U.P. government to give five-acre land for construction of the masjid (mosque) almost 18 kilometres away from the district headquarters of

Ayodhya is against the judgment delivered by a constitutional bench of the Supreme Court in 1994 in the Ismail Farooqui case."

'Land for four purposes'

"In the judgment it was said that the 67 acre of land acquired by the Centre will be used only for four purposes – temple, mosque, library and resting place (tahraav sthal). If any land is left, then it will be returned to its owners. Hence, the land for the mosque should be given from this 67 acre of land," he said.

Mr. Jilani also said, "AIMPLB has already decided that it will not take any land in lieu of the land of the mosque. Now, it depends on the Sunni Board to keep this point of view before the government."

Meeting in Karnal.

Addressing his supporters, mostly former Congress workers, the former Sirsa MP said he had worked hard all these years like a horse with the blinders, but would now play "smart politics" employing all tricks.

"It won't take more than ten days to build the organisation if each worker takes responsibility of ten villages. When a few months old party can climb to power in Delhi, it can be done in Haryana as well," said Mr. Tanwar, adding that the next government in Haryana could not be formed without them. His supporters from around 20 Assembly constituencies

were present.

Without naming anyone, Mr. Tanwar said the Congress distributed tickets in connivance with the BJP and the present government was a "milijuli sarkar" (coalition government) of all the parties and the Opposition was missing in the State.

'Divisive politics'

He also accused the BJP of playing divisive politics and said the people were looking for alternative to the BJP and the Congress.

Mr. Tanwar said he was in touch with like-minded leaders from across the country to work on an alternative to the two parties.

Tanwar hints at floating new political party

No outfit can accommodate my army of supporters, says ex-Haryana Cong. chief

ASHOK KUMAR
GURUGRAM

Hinting at the formation of a political outfit, former Haryana Pradesh Congress Committee president Ashok Tanwar, who had quit the party ahead of the Assembly polls last year, said that no party could accommodate his large army of supporters and therefore there was a need to float a new political party.

Rally in Karnal

Mr. Tanwar was in Gurugram on Wednesday as part of his tour across the State to mobilise support for "Swambhiman Diwas" rally at Karnal on February 16 to mark his



Ashok Tanwar in Gurugram on Wednesday

meeting in Karnal.

Addressing his supporters, mostly former Congress workers, the former Sirsa MP said he had worked hard all these years like a horse with the blinders, but would now play "smart politics" employing all tricks.

"It won't take more than ten days to build the organisation if each worker takes responsibility of ten villages. When a few months old party can climb to power in Delhi, it can be done in Haryana as well," said Mr. Tanwar, adding that the next government in Haryana could not be formed without them. His supporters from around 20 Assembly constituencies

were present.

Without naming anyone, Mr. Tanwar said the Congress distributed tickets in connivance with the BJP and the present government was a "milijuli sarkar" (coalition government) of all the parties and the Opposition was missing in the State.

'Divisive politics'

He also accused the BJP of playing divisive politics and said the people were looking for alternative to the BJP and the Congress.

Mr. Tanwar said he was in touch with like-minded leaders from across the country to work on an alternative to the two parties.

Decision taken at meet headed by CM

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
LUCKNOW

The Uttar Pradesh Cabinet on Wednesday approved a proposal to set up 16 cybercrime police stations in the State.

A total of 18 proposals were approved in a Cabinet meeting headed by Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath, government spokesperson Sidharth Nath Singh told reporters here.

The Cabinet has approved a proposal to establish cybercrime police stations in U.P. Police's 16 zonal headquarters in Bareilly, Moradabad, Saharanpur, These colleges were established with the help of the central Government.

Chinmayanand released from Shahjahanpur prison on bail

Supporters offer flowers; ex-Union Minister visits his ashram

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
SHAHJAHANPUR (U.P.)

Former Union Minister Swami Chinmayanand was offered flowers by supporters as he walked out of prison on Wednesday, two days after being granted bail in the case in which he is accused of sexually abusing a law student.

Mr. Chinmayanand, 72, was released from the Shahjahanpur district jail after the completion of legal formalities, prison superintendent Rakesh Kumar told PTI.

The Allahabad High Court had granted him bail on Monday. But he was not released earlier as the bail papers had not reached the jail.

While granting him bail, Justice Rahul Chaturvedi also transferred Mr. Chinmayanand's trial from Shahjahanpur to Lucknow, taking note of the victim's apprehension that he could influence proceedings in his hometown.

The bail order directed

Mr. Chinmayanand to file an undertaking that he would not seek any adjournments and be present in court.

Outside the Shahjahanpur jail, Mr. Chinmayanand's supporters waited for him with flowers. He was then driven to his ashram, where he offered prayers be-

fore leaving for his home.

Justice Chaturvedi had also directed Lucknow's Senior Superintendent of Police, to depute a senior sub-inspector and armed constables for the security of the student and her family members during the trial period.

Charge against Swami

Mr. Chinmayanand, whose trust runs the Shahjahanpur law college where the woman studied, was arrested on September 20 under Section 376-C of the IPC, a charge short of rape. It is applied when someone in authority takes advantage of his official position to "induce or seduce" a woman to have sex with him.

In a parallel case, the woman was arrested for trying to extort money from Mr. Chinmayanand, whom she had accused of rape.

Decision taken at meet headed by CM

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(In respect of Plot No. 87, Block
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Sector 36/RH-1, Greater Noida)This is for the information of
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Mr. Ishwar Singh s/o Mr. Shanta Singh from its owner Mrs.
Nirmala Kaul w/o Late Moti Lal Kaul. Mr. Moti Lal Kaul had
acquired the captioned property from Greater Noida Authority vide
Lease Deed dated 05.04.2007 bearing Document No. 4439.
After the death of Moti Lal, all his legal heirs viz. Mrs. Nirmala Kaul, Mr. Sanjog Tikku, Mr. Navita Bali & Mrs. Niketa Ganju have NOC Affidavits with Legal Heirs Certificate in Greater Noida Authority, by virtue of which the said property was mutated in the name of his wife, Mrs. Nirmala Kaul vide Mutation Letter dated 02.12.2019.Mr. Ishwar Singh intends to avail
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the undersigned. In case no
objection are received then Axis
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Plot No. E-56 (LGF), Sector 72, Noida (U.P.)
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IN BRIEF



Nilakkal-Pampa rail connectivity mooted

Road safety expert and former Regional Transport Officer P.D. Sunilbabu, who has been the nodal officer of the Safe Zone Sabarimala project ever since its inception in 2012, has proposed a metro or monorail connectivity between the pilgrim base camp of Nilakkal and Pampa. Mr. Sunilbabu says he has submitted a project report to the government.

ED begins probe into land deals in Amaravati

The Enforcement Directorate, Chennai, has begun a probe into deals related to alleged insider trading in Amaravati and the suspected nefarious deals by the political lobby during the Telugu Desam Party rule. A team of ED sleuths will visit Amaravati to further probe the land dealings. The YSRCP government has claimed that TDP leaders and their supporters had purchased lands to the extent of 4,000 acres in the capital area during June–December 2014.

Child welfare panel's notice to Bidar police

BIDAR/BENGALURU The Child Welfare Committee (CWC) of Bidar district has issued notice to the police over the manner in which investigation was carried out with reference to a sedition case on Shaheen school for staging a play on the CAA and the NRC. Kavitha Hushare, Chairperson of the committee, stated that she, along with three other members, visited the school and found that the police inquiry was "in violation of child rights". She said that it violated provisions of the Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act.

Panic as four-storey building tilts

It was built in violation of sanctioned plan, says Bengaluru civic body chief

BENGALURU BUREAU

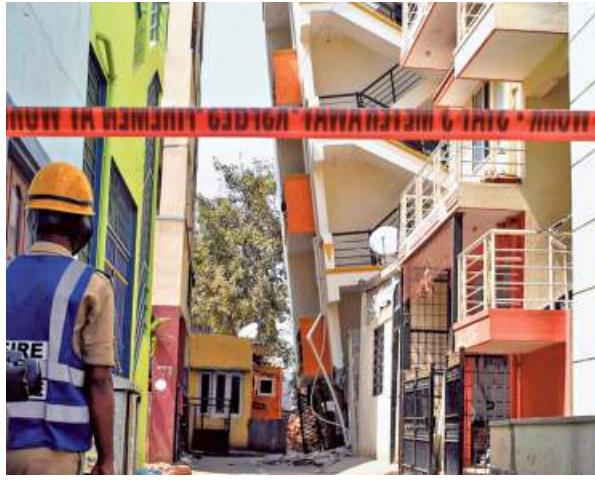
BENGALURU

Panic gripped residents of G. Ramaiah Layout, Kempapura in north Bengaluru as a five-storey building started tilting when the adjacent vacant site was being excavated for construction of a basement on Wednesday.

Residents were evacuated and the fire control room and the Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike (BBMP) quickly alerted.

The Amruthahalli police said they had detained the owner of the vacant site. No one was injured in the incident, a fire officer said.

BBMP Commissioner B.H. Anil Kumar told *The Hindu* that the body would file a complaint against the JCB owner and the owner of the tilted building. "The building tilted because it was built in violation of the sanc-



Leaning tower: An image of the tilted structure. No one was injured in the incident, a fire officer said. • SUDHAKARA JAIN

tioned plan. There is no setback area and five floors have been constructed on a small plot with a small road access, which is hardly 10 ft."

The owner of the build-

told *The Hindu* that the JCB hit the pillar of the house while digging. He said he would lodge a complaint with the police as the owner of the adjacent house did not even inform him about tak-

ing up digging work. Another adjacent house was also damaged.

It will be demolished

The BBMP is set to demolish the building since there will be a cascading effect on other structures if it falls. Mr. Kumar said the civic body would try to finish the demolition within a fortnight, and residents of buildings around it would be evacuated. "We will issue temporary eviction notices to them and they will be accommodated in a nearby choultry or school. Electricity and gas connections will be disconnected to avoid accidents."

Pradeep K.K., emergency coordinator, disaster management cell, Bengaluru district, said excavation work had affected the pillar base of the building – ground plus four floors – causing it to tilt.

Karnataka High Court cancels Nithyananda's bail in rape case

He misused liberty given by the court and ran away, it says

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

BENGALURU



Nithyananda

The High Court of Karnataka on Wednesday cancelled the bail granted to Nithyananda Swami of Nithyananda Dhyana Peetha in a rape case and observed that there is "overwhelming material to show that he has misused the liberty granted to him by the court and has run away to a foreign country to escape trial".

The High Court also directed the trial court in Ramanagaram district to take Nithyananda into custody and take further steps on his bail bonds.

Justice John Michael Cun-

godman in June 2010.

Nithyananda was "successful in hoodwinking the court and misled the court to believe that he is engaged in propagation of Hindu religion, but facts clearly indicate that he is not available in India and his whereabouts are not known either to the prosecution or to the persons close to him," the court observed.

The High Court did not appreciate the stand taken on behalf of the Criminal Investigation Department that Nithyananda was not found at his Bidadi ashram, near Bengaluru, to serve the court's notice in this case.

ha passed the order while allowing a petition filed by K. Lenin, who is a witness in the rape case and a former aide of Nithyananda, seeking cancellation of the bail granted to the self-styled

court's notice in this case.

Jagan defends 3-capital decision for A.P.

State's move to introduce English medium in govt. schools a radical step: N. Ram

STAFF REPORTER

VIJAYAWADA



Chief Minister Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy and The Hindu Group Publishing Pvt. Ltd. Chairman N. Ram • K.V.S. GIRI

Chennai and Hyderabad in about 10 years.

Earlier, Mr. Ram called the decision to introduce English medium in government schools a radical step and said it seemed to be demand-driven and in tune with the thrust laid on the English language in the southern States. "What Chief Minister Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy proposed is universalisation of English medium education, which no other State has perhaps ventured out to do," Mr. Ram observed.

To a question by Mr. Ram on the reverse tendering process, Mr. Reddy said ₹2,000 crore was saved in various works in the last seven months. He exuded confidence that it would emerge as a model for other States.

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02	12190512	Split type air brake disc.	1600 Nos.	02.03.2020
03	12190392	Rubber pad for Longitudinal bump stop	2400 Nos.	06.03.2020
04	11190354	Set of Frame Part Complete and web for LHB Power Car Coach	100 Set.	24.02.2020
05	11190347	Set of Duct and Bracket	100 Set.	24.02.2020
06	12190179	Set of Bogie frame sub Assembly for non AC Air Spring type flat bogie	700 Set.	25.03.2020
07	12190054C	Horizontal Damper Bracket	9004 Nos.	21.02.2020
08	12190309	Bearing	14931 Nos.	24.02.2020
09	15195340	Supply, Erection, Installation, Commissioning and prove out of a wheel balancing machine	1 Nos.	20.02.2020
10	15195297	Supply, Installation, Commissioning and prove out of intelligent multi purpose welding machine	04 Set.	20.02.2020
11	11205003	Upper Frame Complete for (450 L) Water Tank	1146 Nos.	20.02.2020
12	15195339	Supply, Installation, testing Commissioning and prove out of Mobile Pump Unit	10 Nos.	20.02.2020
13	15195304	Supply, Installation, Commissioning and out of Limited Oxygen Index (LOI) tester	1 Nos.	20.02.2020
14	15195293	Supply, Installation, Commissioning and prove out of Wheel bolt Tightening System	1 Nos.	24.02.2020
15	15195338	Supply, Installation, Commissioning and prove out of Diplory for LHB type Shell	44 Nos.	26.02.2020
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17	04190371	Single leaf automatic sliding main entrance plug door	01 Set.	24.02.2020
18	12190331 B	Set of Axle Mounted disc Brake System for Alstom LHB Design (three types) AC & NAC, Power Car & LSLR (Coaches)	3107 Set.	03.03.2020
19	04190357	Sound Insulation wood panel of size 16x905x3090 MM	38118 Nos.	02.03.2020

Corrigendum No. 01

SN	Tender No.	Existing Description	Revised Description	Modified to be read as under
01	05195023	16 Pin Control Coupler/ Connector Having IP65 Coupler/ Connector or Better Ingress Protection	IP65 Coupler/ Connector Having IP65 or Better Ingress Protection	Instead of 21.01.2020
02	E-Tender No. 08/ET/ 2019-20 Dated 20.12.2019	12190531 &	Due date may be read as 25.03.2020 instead of 12.02.2019 hrs.	
03	E-Tender No. 08/ET/ 2019-20 Dated 20.12.2019	12190540 &	Due date may be read as 25.03.2020 instead of 03.02.2020	
04	E-Tender No. 10/ET/ 2019-20 Dated 10.01.2020	12190484 &	Due date may be read as 17.02.2020 instead of 04.02.2020	
05	E-Tender No. 10/ET/ 2019-20 Dated 10.01.2020	12190482 &	Due date may be read as 17.02.2020 instead of 04.02.2020	
06	E-Tender No. 10/ET/ 2019-20 Dated 10.01.2020	12190509 &	Due date may be read as 17.02.2020 instead of 04.02.2020	
07	E-Tender No. 08/ET/ 2019-20 Dated 20.12.2019	12190541 &	Due date may be read as 26.03.2020 instead of 04.02.2020	

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E-Tender Notice No. RE-DNR-Engg-CR-234-WT-07

Dated: 04.02.2020

On behalf of the President of India, Chief Project Director, Railway Electrification, Danapur, invites open & sealed e-tender for the following work from experienced, financially and technically sound contractors, to be opened on 25.02.2020.

(1) Name of the work & its location:

Construction of 02 units Type-II, 04 units

Type-III, 04 units Type-IV and

IN BRIEF



'No parallel government, only following rules'

PUDUCHERRY
Denying charges of running a parallel government in Puducherry, Lt. Governor Kiran Bedi on Wednesday said she is a public servant and is bound to act as per law. Speaking to reporters at a function here, the Lt. Governor said, "I am not permanent here nor am I here to compete but only to serve as per law and with the objective to make the Union Territory better."

Bengaluru techie who killed mother held

BENGALURU
The Bengaluru police on Wednesday tracked down and arrested software engineer Amrutha Chandrashekhar, 33, in Port Blair, Andaman & Nicobar Islands, where she was hiding with a male friend after allegedly stabbing her mother to death and attacking her younger brother with a knife in their house at K.R. Puram. The alleged crime took place early on Sunday morning. "We have arrested the accused and are escorting the accused and her friend back to Bengaluru," said a senior police officer.

Maharashtra says no to imported onions

MUMBAI
Increase in the production of onions leading to reduction in the price has forced the Maharashtra government to write to the Centre to cancel the earlier request for imported stock. The letter is aimed at protecting the interests of the onion growing farmers. The letter was sent by Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray to Union Minister Ram Vilas Paswan.

PM pitches for boost to defence exports

'Start-ups and MSMEs will be given emphasis'

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
LUCKNOW

India became the world's largest arms importer as it did not utilise its capacities to full potential after Independence, Prime Minister Narendra Modi stated on Wednesday and asserted that India was looking to achieve defence exports worth ₹35,000 crore in the next five years.

"Post Independence, we did not use our defence opportunities and abilities to the full potential. Our policies and strategies remained focused on import. India thus became the largest arms importer in the world," Mr. Modi said at the inaugural of the 11th DefExpo. After 2014, the government had undertaken several policy reforms, he pointed out.

Mr. Modi talked about India turning into a manufacturing hub for military platforms and noted that



On target: Prime Minister Narendra Modi holding a rifle during a visit to the DefExpo at Lucknow. ■ PRESS INFORMATION BUREAU

defence manufacturing had found new energy. "In the last two years, defence exports worth ₹17,000 crore has been achieved; it is up from ₹2,000 crore in 2014," he said.

A long-term integrated defence plan was being conceptualised with emphasis on start-ups and Micro, Medium and Small Enterprises (MSMEs). Two hundred defence start-ups were likely to come up to give a push to indigenisation. "Defence manufacturing will not only

make us self-reliant but also ensure we are prepared to help friendly countries in the region if required," he said.

Mr. Modi declared that India's ambitions in the defence sector were not directed against anyone. "India has been a trustworthy partner of peace."

Mr. Modi also spoke about the importance of Artificial Intelligence (AI).

He said his government had created a road map to increase its usage in the defence sector.

Navy will have its third Scorpene sub this year

'All six deliveries will be made by 2022'

DINAKAR PERI
LUCKNOW

The third Scorpene submarine, *Karanj*, will be delivered to the Indian Navy by December and all six submarine deliveries would be completed by 2022, Nicolas de La Villemarque, Vice President India, Asia and Pacific of Naval Group, said on Wednesday.

Mr. Villemarque said discussions were on to fit Air Independent Propulsion (AIP) modules on all Scorpene beginning 2023. "The Scorpene submarine has the ability to be equipped with an AIP system. The first AIP will be equipped during the first refit of the first Scorpene," he said in a conversation with *The Hindu* at DefExpo 2020, which began here on Wednesday.

Talks were underway with the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO), Mazagon Dock Shipbuilders Limited (MDL) and the Navy. A design agreement was expected to be signed with the DRDO by the year end, he stated.



Karanj at a shipyard in Mumbai. ■ VIVEK BENDRE

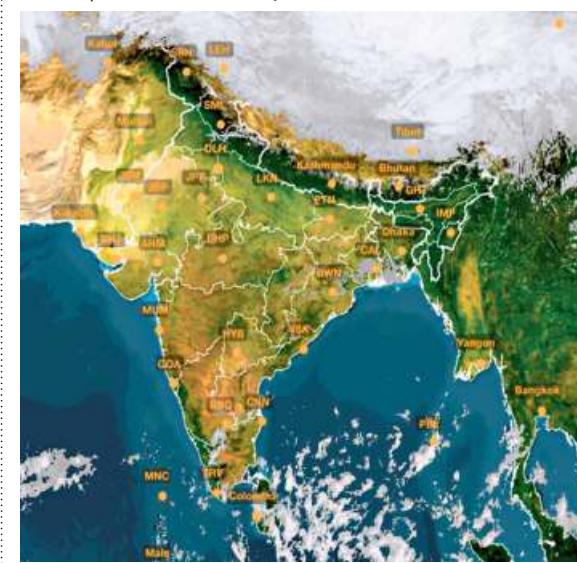
and Development Organisation (DRDO), Mazagon Dock Shipbuilders Limited (MDL) and the Navy. A design agreement was expected to be signed with the DRDO by the year end, he stated.

Karanj was launched into water in January 2018 and is currently in advanced stages of sea trials. The first Scorpene, *Kulvari*, was commissioned in 2018. The second Scorpene *Khanderi* was inducted in September last year.

and Development Organisation (DRDO), Mazagon Dock Shipbuilders Limited (MDL) and the Navy. A design agreement was expected to be signed with the DRDO by the year end, he stated.

WEATHER WATCH

RAINFALL, TEMPERATURE & AIR QUALITY IN SELECT METROS YESTERDAY



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

Forecast for Thursday: Thunderstorm accompanied with hail/lightning very likely at isolated places over Chhattisgarh and with lightning at isolated places over Vidarbha, Odisha and Jharkhand.

CITY	RAIN	MAX	MIN	CITY	RAIN	MAX	MIN
Agartala	26.8	12.9	Kozhikode	34.4	23.9
Ahmedabad	29.2	11.1	Kurnool	34.1	21.2
Aizawl	8.5	Lucknow	23.2	08.5
Allahabad	23.1	9.0	Madurai	33.8	23.2
Bengaluru	30.4	18.5	Mangaluru	33.9	22.7
Bhopal	3.0	Mumbai	30.6	15.3
Bhubaneswar	28.6	19.0	Mysuru	31.5	16.8
Chandigarh	19.8	7.0	New Delhi	21.2	07.6
Chennai	31.2	21.2	Patna	24.0	09.9
Coimbatore	32.4	22.6	Port Blair	30.0	21.8
Dehradun	20.2	5.0	Puducherry	00.8	31.0	23.0
Gangtok	10.4	5.4	Pune	30.7	16.5
Goa	31.5	21.3	Raipur	23.4	16.8
Guwahati	25.1	09.8	Ranchi	24.6	12.6
Hubballi	32.0	18.0	Shillong	14.7	04.1
Hyderabad	32.7	19.8	Shimla	11.7	00.4
Imphal	21.4	04.7	Srinagar	10.7	-3.9
Jaipur	23.7	10.7	Thiruvananthapuram	33.0	23.9
Kochi	33.0	24.0	Tiruchi	33.2	23.7
Kohima	15.6	5.8	Vijayawada	33.2	21.8
Kolkata	26.8	15.9	Visakhapatnam	04.3	29.0	22.4

(Rainfall data in mm; temperature in Celsius)

Pollutants in the air you are breathing

CITIES	SO ₂	NO ₂	CO	PM _{2.5}	PM ₁₀	CODE
Ahmedabad	62	.71	.29	.160	124
Bengaluru	13	.28	110	45
Chennai	57	.23	.51	165
Delhi	25	.86	100	352	292
Hyderabad	02	.60	.40	78	.87
Kolkata	31	.114	.27	258	192
Lucknow	09	.52	.50	352
Mumbai	19	.26	33	96	188
Pune	87	.26	.79	.129	105
Visakhapatnam	06	.73	.52	.113	.114

Yesterday

In observation made at 6 p.m., Bulandshahr, Uttar Pradesh recorded an overall air quality index (AQI) of 32, indicating a hazardous level of pollution. In contrast, Ramanagara, Karnataka recorded a healthy AQI score of 39.

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

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

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

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

SC firm on opening command posts to women

Government note had cast doubts on women officers matching up to men in physical prowess

LEGAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

Women should not just strive to equal men but go far ahead of them, Solicitor General Tushar Mehta told a Bench of Justices D.Y. Chandrabhagad and Ajay Rastogi during an urgent mentioning.

"We would like to see the government implement that," Justice Chandrabhagad responded.

The Bench said a will and a change of mindset on the part of the government would definitely see women officers rise to command

posts in the Army. There were many services in addition to combat posts.

More challenges'

The note containing the government's views on permanent commission for women officers in the Army said the "physiological limitations" of women officers, lower physical standards of women officers compared to men, prolonged absence due to pregnancy, children's education, husband's career prospects, etc, were great

challenges for women officers to meet the exigencies of service.

Besides, the note stated, the "composition of rank and file being male predominantly drawn from the rural background with prevailing societal norms, troops are not yet mentally schooled to accept women officers in command of units."

Army units were a "unique all-male environment". Presence of women officers would require "moderated behaviour", the note said. Thus, the posting of women officers in all-male units had its own "peculiar dynamics", it noted.

CPCB pulls up 14 coal plants

They have not complied with deadline to limit sulphur dioxide emissions

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

The Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB) has pulled up 14 thermal power plants for not complying with a December 31, 2019 deadline to limit sulphur dioxide emissions.

These are 5 plants in Haryana, 3 in Punjab, 2 in Uttar Pradesh, 2 in Andhra Pradesh, 2 in Telangana and 1 in Tamil Nadu with a total capacity of approx 15 GW that have missed the deadline.

Phased-approach
To limit particulate matter (PM), sulphur dioxide and nitrous oxide emission from thermal plants, India put in place a phased-approach that directs 440 coal-fired units – responsible for about 166,000 MW of power – to put in place measures to limit pollution by December 2022.

However, 11 plants in a 300 km radius of Delhi were to comply by December 31, 2019 because of the poor air quality in the city as well as the surrounding Gangetic plain.

Plea in NGT
Non-compliance by the thermal power plants is an ongoing dispute being contested at the National Green Tribunal

where as others said they were yet to award tenders. Only one of these plants has actually implemented technology to limit emissions.

The 14 plants have been given until the end of this month to explain to the CPCB why they have not complied with the norms and why action should not be taken.

The CPCB has the power to impose steep fines or shut a unit under the provisions of the Environment Protection Act. As per Centre for Science and Environment (CSE) estimates, these norms can help reduce PM emissions by about 35%, nitrogen oxide emissions by about 70%, and sulphur dioxide emissions by more than 85% by 2026-27 against a business-as-usual scenario with no pollution control technologies.

The officials urged people to instead follow good hand hygiene, have coughing and sneezing etiquette and eat nutritious and well-cooked food.

"Messages claiming that garlic, curry leaves and cow's urine can prevent or treat nCoV are being circulated in the name of doctors, medical institutions and the Health Department. They are all false," said Health Minister Rajesh Tope.

"At present, there is no specific treatment for nCoV and patients are given only symptomatic treatment. While there is no reason to panic, people should not fall prey to such misleading messages," he said.

Messages talking about superfoods and home remedies for prevention and

not actually the barred passenger fell entirely on him, just because they shared the same name.

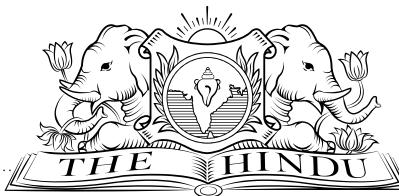
Having learnt from this experience, Mr. Kamra, who was to later fly Indigo from Mumbai to Delhi reached out proactively to the airline and ensured that his ticket was not auto-cancelled by the system based on the name in the PNR.

Comedian Kunal Kamra tweeted 'Collateral damage' after hearing of the incident.

who was the actually barred passenger.

The Boston resident was made to produce multiple ID proofs before being allowed to board after a quick re-issue of his ticket at the airport itself, Mr. Kamra was concerned that the onus of proving that he was

a strong institution of higher learning with a tradition of research, invites applications for admission to its Four-Year Bachelor of Science (Research) Programme. Candidates who have completed their 10+2 (or equivalent) examination in 2019, or expecting to complete in 2



Polarised state of union

There is more at stake in American politics for people world over than ever before

The politics of the United States has rarely, if ever, been as contentious, and riven by partisan hostility, as it is at the present juncture. U.S. President Donald Trump's State of the Union address exemplified the multiple fractures in the consciousness of the American collective psyche in this regard. His speech before both Houses of the U.S. Congress, minus some Democrat lawmakers who boycotted it, went on for more than an hour, yet there was no mention of arguably the most intensely polarising issue on Capitol Hill: impeachment. On the day before his likely acquittal by the Republican-majority Senate, the President showed restraint – possibly holding out for a victory lap after being cleared by the Upper House. This contrasted with his periodic Twitter outbursts attacking the impeachment process. However, there could be little doubt about how frosty cross-party relations are – he appeared to snub House Speaker Nancy Pelosi's attempt to shake his hand before the speech, and Ms. Pelosi ripped up a copy of the speech after it had ended, saying later that it was a "manifesto of mistruths". Nevertheless, substantively, Mr. Trump's annual address focused on claiming credit for a "great American comeback" on the back of a healthy economy – including historically low levels of unemployment, rising median income and unprecedented cuts in "job-killing" regulations – even though the economic recovery after the 2008 downturn began under his predecessor, Barack Obama.

However, that all is not well with the state of the American union is evident from the tenor of the ongoing Democratic nomination race. Democrats of several hues, from the more centrist, including former Vice-President Joe Biden, to the more leftist, such as Vermont Senator Bernie Sanders and Massachusetts Senator Elizabeth Warren, have focused their political attacks on Mr. Trump and less so on internal differences within their camp. Presently, the Iowa caucus, the first of a season of caucuses and primaries that will decide the ultimate nominee to take on Mr. Trump in the November 2020 election, has given Democrats renewed purpose. Yet the microcosm of the Democratic campaign process mirrors their biggest handicap on the national stage – too many aspirants jockeying for power and visibility, leading inevitably to fragmentation of their overall prospects against Mr. Trump's incumbency advantage. Unless they quickly rally behind one tall leader – if such a person exists in their midst – they stand a slim chance of mounting a serious challenge to the 45th President. Yet, given the vastly divergent views across party lines on core issues such as the economy and climate change, there could not be more at stake for Democrats, and indeed those who, despite residing beyond America's shores, are weary of trade wars and the relentless undermining of multilateralism.

Purifying water

The effort must be to ensure BIS-standard water at the consumer's end

The Environment Ministry's draft notification to regulate the use of membrane-based water purification systems primarily concerns the manufacturers of reverse osmosis (RO) water filters but effectively bars domestic users from installing RO systems. The notification is the culmination of a legal dispute before the National Green Tribunal, which had banned RO water filter use in Delhi as the purification process wastes water. The association of water filter manufacturers challenged this order and the litigation led to this pan-India notification, where the intent is to conserve water and cut waste. In RO, the total dissolved solids (TDS) in water – which covers trace chemicals, certain viruses, bacteria and salts – can be reduced, to meet potable water standards. Home filters waste nearly 80% of the water during treatment. Second, some research has shown that the process can cut the levels of calcium and magnesium, which are vital nutrients. The resort to prohibition (to restrict home filters) may cause consumer apprehension but it is unlikely that they will be taken to task for using such water filters. For one, the notification implies, these filters are only prohibited if the home gets water supply that conforms to Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS) for Drinking Water. Although several State and city water boards claim BIS standards, the water at homes falls short of the test parameters.

The BIS, last year, ranked several cities on official water supply quality. Delhi was last and only Mumbai met all the standards. In the 28 test parameters, Delhi failed 19, Chennai 9, and Kolkata 10. The BIS norms are voluntary for public agencies which supply piped water but are mandatory for bottled water producers. Moreover, most of the country does not have the luxury of piped water. The Composite Water Management Index (CWMI) of NITI Aayog says that 70% of water supply is contaminated. India is ranked 120th among 122 countries in an NGO, WaterAid's quality index. The case for restricting people's choices on the means they employ to ensure potable water is thus weak. The notification mainly deals with rules for commercial suppliers and for integration of systems that inform consumers about TDS levels – a major determinant of water quality. This is envisaged both before water enters filtration systems and after it has been filtered. The aim is also to ensure that after 2022, no more than 25% of water being treated is wasted, and for residential complexes to reuse the residual waste water for other activities, including gardening. When implemented, the notification's primary aim should be to persuade authorities to upgrade and supply BIS-standard water at the consumer's end. This should be done without additional costs, particularly on millions who now lack access to protected supply.

Fashioning the framework of a New India

A major solution to the present economic crisis is to go in for inclusive growth; it also means shared prosperity



INDIRA HIRWAY

The Indian economy is going through a severe crisis: a slowdown as well as a structural crisis. In the words of the former Chief Economic Adviser, Arvind Subramanian, it is headed towards the ICU. Almost all sectors of the economy are in decline: the rate of growth of the national GDP has declined to 5.0%, and may go down further; the construction sector, one of the fastest growing sectors so far, is growing at 3.3% this year; agriculture is growing at 2.1% while the auto sector is declining continuously in absolute terms.

The Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSME) sector too has declined, in turn raising the burden of non-performing assets of the banking sector as well as non-banking financial institutions. Also, exports have been declining in recent years, raising the crisis of current account deficit. Credit from banking and non-banking sectors has been declining in the last few years; the Financial Stability Report of the Reserve Bank of India (2019) says that it is unlikely to increase in the next nine months.

Impacting the poor

These developments have had an adverse impact on the bottom 30%-40% of the population. The incidence of absolute poverty, which has been falling since 1972-73, has increased to 30% (4% jump). As the Human Development Report (2019) has shown, more than 44% of the Indian population is under the multi-dimensional poverty line. The poorest 50% population at present owns

only 4.1% of the national wealth, while the richest 10% people own 73% of the total wealth in India (Suisse Credit 2019). India has 15.2% population malnourished (women 15%) as against 9.3% in China. And 50% of the malnourished children in the world are in India. India's global hunger rank has gone up to 112 while Brazil is 18, China is 25 and South Africa, 59. In the field of education as per a UN report (2015), overall literacy in India is 74.04% (more than the 25% are totally illiterate) against 94.3% in South Africa, 96.6% in China and 92.6% in Brazil. Almost 40-45% population is either illiterate or has studied up to standard 4. Given the quality of education in India, the overall population is very poorly educated, with the share of 'educated unemployed' rising by leaps and bounds.

It needs to be realised that when exports are declining, the economy will have to depend on domestic demand for growth. It is no more feasible for the top 20-25% population to continue growing without depending on the demand from the bottom 40-45% population. There is thus a strong reason now for the economy to increase effective demand of this bottom 40-45% population at least to continue growing – to reach a \$5-trillion economy by 2024.

Sub-optimal use of labour

However, this crisis needs to be viewed differently: a major reason for the crisis is that the growth process has marginalised the bottom 40-plus% of the population in the sense that they do not get a fair share of the economic growth, and are more or less deprived of productive employment with a decent income. These people have been treated as beneficiaries to whom some cash/kind grants are thrown at, but they have not been used as active participants in the growth process. Their potential has not been promoted.



Though the bottom population depends on the government for basic health and elementary education (and also for access to higher educational opportunities), the government spends just 1.4% of GDP on health (against the norm of 4-6% of GDP) and 3% of GDP on education (against the norm of 6-8% of GDP). As a result, these people are left hardly literate and sick, with poor nutrition and high morbidity. They are incapable of acquiring any meaningful skills or participating actively when new technology is spreading in the rest of the economy. This sub-optimal use of the labour force in the economy is not likely to enable India to achieve optimal growth with proper use of the national resources – the labour force.

All-encompassing growth

One important lesson for policymakers is this: a major solution to the present crisis is to go in for inclusive growth. Here, inclusive growth does not mean only including all sections of the population in the growth process as producers and beneficiaries; it also means "shared prosperity". Since India has already committed to sustainable and inclusive growth at the UN General Assembly, India is definitely obliged to implement inclusive growth. This should be our "New India".

Under the "New India" the main requirements are as follows: To start with, to improve the capabilities of the masses as well as their well-being by expanding productive employment opportuni-

ties for them. The main steps to expand productive employment for all in the economy should be made up of: a process of inclusion – expanding quality of basic health for all and ensuring quality education to all, which will by itself generate large-scale employment in the government; having a well-educated and healthy labour force will ensure high employability; such people will be able to participate actively in the development process; having a well-educated labour force will help start-ups and MSMEs, in turn triggering a cycle of more productive employment in the economy.

This will also improve the global competitiveness of our production units. Employment guarantee schemes such as the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA) will also increase employment. Following the economic logic of R. Nurkse and A.O. Hirschman, assets generated under MGNREGA will expand capital formation in the economy, thereby raising the labour-absorbing capacity of the mainstream economy.

Such a strategy has multiple advantages: First, it will raise incomes and the well-being of those who need it most urgently. Second, it will raise effective demand rapidly, which is so badly needed in the economy today to raise economic growth. Third, growth will be equitable and sustainable.

The discussion had important implications for the Union Budget: need to raise expenditure on health to at least 5% of GDP and expenditure on education to at least 6% of GDP; to push up infrastructural development to enhance capabilities and opportunities of the masses and not just to promote corporate units; to promote agriculture by raising investment in agriculture and not just cash transfer (cash transfer provides relief to them no doubt, and does not raise productivity of agricul-

ture which needs large public investment); and to facilitate credit flow particularly continuous working capital, to labour intensive sectors. Unfortunately, these steps are missing in the recent national Budget.

Public investments

Finally, how does one raise resources to increase new public investments in the selected sectors mentioned above, especially when public revenue is declining and the claims on public resources are rising? One major strategy is to raise direct taxes, both capital tax and wealth tax. Our experience in the past has shown by following crony capitalism, i.e. providing tax cuts and extra incentives and concessions to the corporate sector, exports increased and also our national GDP no doubt. But this growth does not much percolate to the poor. This is because during the growth process due to special treatment to corporate sector, the political economy radically changed in favour of the rich who are never willing to be taxed to raise government revenue to a level that it is enough to promote the capabilities and the well-being of the marginalised and the excluded.

On the other hand, the unholy alliance between the government and the corporate sector also does not allow them to worry about the poor. Consequently, taxing the rich has to be a major strategy to raise government revenue. Second, if the public expenditure on raising capabilities is treated as social investment rather than social welfare, policymakers will be willing to spend on this capital formation. And, finally, there was no sound economic reason to control fiscal deficit ratio. Sound macroeconomics never supports this.

Indira Hirway is Director and Prof of Economics, Centre For Development Alternatives, Ahmedabad

Course correction for the Speaker's office

Given how India's electoral system and political conventions shadow the office, a major revamp is necessary



ANMOLAM & FARHEEN AHMAD

Recently, the Supreme Court of India while adjudicating upon the matter relating to the disqualification of MLAs in the Manipur Legislative Assembly under the Tenth Schedule in *Keisham Meghachandra Singh vs. the Hon'ble Speaker Manipur Legislative Assembly & Ors.* made a significant suggestion. It recommended that Parliament should rethink as to whether disqualification petitions ought to be entrusted to a Speaker as a quasi-judicial authority when such a Speaker continues to belong to a particular political party either *de jure* or *de facto*.

It was of the opinion that Parliament may seriously consider a Constitutional amendment to substitute the Speaker of the Lok Sabha and Legislative Assemblies with a permanent Tribunal headed by a retired Supreme Court judge or a retired Chief Justice of a High Court, or some other outside independent mechanism. This is to ensure that such disputes are decided both swiftly and impartially, thus giving teeth to the provisions contained in the Tenth Schedule, which are so vital in the proper functioning of India's democracy', according to a media report. More

than such advice, what is interesting is the underlying reasoning which revolves around the nature of functions exercised by the Speaker.

Range of functions; a symbol
The nature of duties of the Speaker, technically as an "arbiter" or a "quasi-judicial body" should not be limited exclusively to matters under the Tenth Schedule; rather, it extends to a range of its functions. While facilitating the business of the House and to maintain decorum in the House, the Speaker has extensive functions to perform in matters regulatory, administrative and judicial, falling under her domain. She enjoys vast authority under the Constitution and the Rules, as well as inherent-ly.

She is the 'ultimate interpreter and arbiter of those provisions which relate to the functioning of the House. Her decisions are final and binding and ordinarily cannot be easily challenged. She decides the duration of debates, can discipline members and even override decisions by committees. She represents the collective voice of the House and is the sole representative of the House in the international arena'.

Jawaharlal Nehru, one of the chief architects of India's freedom and a moving force behind its Constitution, describes the position as: "The Speaker represents the House. She represents the dignity of the House, the freedom of the

House and because the House represents the nation, in a particular way, the Speaker becomes a symbol of the nation's freedom and liberty. Therefore, that should be an honoured position, a free position and should be occupied always by persons of outstanding ability and impartiality."

However, on several occasions, the Speaker's role has been questioned on the allegation of bias. The office has been criticised for being an agent of pernicious partisan politics. Notably, the Supreme Court has observed in *Jagjit Singh versus State of Haryana* as "...Without meaning any disrespect for any particular Speaker in the country, but only going by some events of the recent past, certain questions have been raised about the confidence in the matter of impartiality on some issues having political overtones which are decided by the Speaker in his capacity as a Tribunal." The reasons behind the counterproductive machinations of the Speaker are not too far to seek. As a minority view, Justice J.S. Verma in *Kihoto Hollola vs Zachilhu And Others* observed: "The Speaker being an authority within the House and his tenure being dependent on the

will of the majority therein, likelihood of suspicion of bias could not be ruled out." Currently, the extent of the Speaker's political commitment often depends on the personality and character of the person holding the office. Howsoever desirable the proposition of neutrality may be, in the present circumstances, it would be unrealistic to expect a Speaker to completely abjure all party considerations while functioning as there are structural issues regarding the manner of appointment of the Speaker and her tenure in office.

Since the electoral system and conventions in India have 'not developed to ensure protection to the office, there are cogent reasons for Speakers to retain party membership. A member is appointed to the office of the Speaker if a motion nominating her is carried in the House. Elections are not always by consensus and there have been cases when different parties have fielded their own candidates. All political parties campaign in the constituency of the Speaker. Even if the Speaker is re-elected to the House, the office of the Speaker in India is still open for elections', according to a paper published by The Hindu Centre for Politics and Public Policy. Therefore, what is required is not merely incidental changes in the powers of the Speaker; rather a major revamp in the structure of the office itself is necessary. It is suggested that a scheme should be brought wherein Speakers should

renounce all political affiliations, membership and activity once they have been elected, both within the Assembly and in the country as a whole.

Upending neutrality

Reference can be sought from the United Kingdom where the 'main characteristic of the Speaker of the House of Commons is neutrality. In practice, once elected, the Speaker gives up all-partisan affiliation, as in other Parliaments of British tradition, but remains in office until retirement, even though the majority may change. She does not express any political views during debates and is an election candidate without any ticket', says an IPU report. Impartiality, fairness and autonomy in decision-making are the hallmarks of a robust institution. It is the freedom from interference and pressures which provide the necessary atmosphere where one can work with absolute commitment to the cause of neutrality as a constitutional value.

At a time when India's fall in ranks in the latest Democracy Index has evoked concern, it is expected that Parliament will pay heed to the reasoning of the Supreme Court and take steps to strengthen the institution of the Speaker.

Anmolam is a lawyer running a non-profit organisation, BDLAAP. Farheen Ahmad is a research scholar at the South Asian University, New Delhi

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.

Bidar case
First, with reference to the action taken by the police against the school in Bidar, Karnataka, there was no reason for the police to dramatise the issue as there was no violence either within or outside the campus (Editorial, "Punish the police" and "More Bidar school students questioned", both February 5).

Second, this being India, a school crawling with police personnel might affect its credibility and reputation in the public eye. Third, it is a mystery how the right-wing activist came to know about the school programme, unless he himself is a parent. If so, why could he have not protested in the first

instance with the school authorities? Equally, it is injudicious on the part of the school authorities to have thought of involving young children to enact something as serious a national issue as the Citizenship (Amendment) Act. Police personnel in India need exposure and training about the freedom of speech and personal liberty.

E.S. CHANDRASEKARAN, Chennai

law. The name of the school might have caused the authorities to have a closer look at its activities. The infringement on the right of expression and speech has breached new lows in Karnataka, but with a certain party in power, it does not spring a surprise.

G.B. SIVANANDAM, Coimbatore

■ The framing of sedition charges against a parent and teacher is disproportionate application of a law that was meant to remove threats against public order. The action of the police fails on two counts: reasonableness of restriction and proportionate action. The schoolchildren concerned might fear to express their thoughts and opinions freely

in the future as a result of the trauma they are sure to have undergone. Their ability to think critically could be limited due to this. The case is also symptomatic of a larger issue. There seems to be a gradual erosion of secular and democratic values from institutions that should be democratic and secular.

NIRMAL A.P., Thaliyil, Kannur, Kerala

■ The play only reflected contemporary reality – ongoing protests against the Citizenship (Amendment) Act across the country. It is a laughable contention that it poses a threat to the security of the state; it is irrelevant to use a colonial-era law against primary schoolchildren enacting a play on current

affairs. The police have disrupted the lives of the children, their parents and teachers.

S.S. PAUL, Chakdaha, Nadia, West Bengal

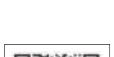
No public exams
Thank heavens for extinguishing hell-fire (Page 1, "Govt. withdraws plan to hold public exams for Classes 5, 8", February 5). Nature has given children the gift of inquisitiveness. Playing through learning or learning through playing should be the norm in every school curriculum on various subjects. Unfortunately, the cut-throat competitive spirit now prevalent appears to be affecting children too.

VICTOR FRANK A., Chennai

■ Big Three
It comes as news to me that Novak Djokovic's story is one of rags to riches ('Sport' page, "Greatest" tag there for the taking" and "Novak has put Serbia on the map"), both February 4. I feel that as of now, there is no big three. Only the big two, Novak and Rafael Nadal, my favourite, appears to be losing steam if one judges his serves and strokes. He is still good enough to reach the quarters, but thereafter, it becomes the familiar thus far and no further. But all three are great because of their persona off court. All are polite, non-controversial, and philanthropic.

A.R. RAMANARAYAN, Chennai

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A time for solidarity, not stigma

The response of health workers to the nCoV outbreak is being undermined by rumour-mongering



JAMES CHAU

The World Health Organization (WHO) has declared the novel coronavirus (2019-nCoV) a public health emergency of international concern – the sixth time since this alert mechanism was introduced after the SARS epidemic. That said, we need to be measured in our response. It is not a vote of no confidence in China's capacity to control the spread, but an acknowledgement that countries with weaker health systems may be ill-prepared for this outbreak, says WHO Director-General Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus.

The international repercussions are expanding fast. India is joining the U.S. in evacuating its nationals from Wuhan, the epicentre of the outbreak. Air India, British Airways, and Lufthansa have suspended flights to and from mainland China. As of February 4, according to the WHO, nine countries have recorded 27 cases of human-to-human transmissions.

Rumours, fear and racism

The impact is being felt deepest in China itself. Anecdotal evidence is emerging of Wuhan families being "rejected and even hunted". In rural areas surrounding Hubei province where Wuhan is located, vigilantes, some of them armed, are stopping 'outsiders' from entering their villages. In some cases, they are going door to door looking for suspected cases, and daubing homes with language that will encourage stigma.

Infections have spread through China to every province, municipality, and autonomous region. The number of confirmed cases on the mainland exceeds the global total in the 2003 SARS epidemic. For different reasons, SARS, a different coronavirus of zoonotic origin that was also traced to China, is a public benchmark by which the scale and severity of the Wuhan outbreak is being measured in the media. But convenient side-by-side comparisons are not always accurate, nor are they safe.

I experienced this as a journalist,



"It is more important now than ever to remain calm." A medical staff member shows samples from a patient suspected of having 2019-nCoV, in Wuhan. • AFP

when during SARS I saw first-hand how rumour and misinformation replaced evidence and honesty. It triggered panic and dismantled the response effort led by health workers and health authorities. This is what I fear again for the Wuhan outbreak – compounded in a digital age, where the tools we have to communicate are greater and more immediate.

Videos on social media show chaotic and distressing scenes at hospitals, patients apparently collapsed on floors, and agitated people shouting for treatment. Some of these people may be ill, but others may be drawn in by public anxiety, overwhelming exhausted health workers and putting themselves and the people around them at risk.

We can't assume that these videos are related to the Wuhan outbreak. Many of them are posted without a date, location or source. One journalist admitted on Twitter that the footage she shared was "unverified", a disclaimer which doesn't prevent it from being re-uploaded as fact. Other videos showing alleged consumption of exotic wildlife have also been widely posted, suggesting a link to some reports that the novel coronavirus may have originated at an unregulated food market in Wuhan. A viral video of a woman appearing to eat bat soup in China was debunked by an article published in *Foreign Policy* (the woman was identified as the host of an adventurer-style travel show and the video was filmed in a different country). Words like "dirty", "diseased", and "virus infected" are being used to describe Chinese

people. I am deeply concerned, not only because I am of ethnic Chinese descent myself, but because it evokes the painful stigma and discrimination that continues to attack people living with HIV. It is shaming and humiliating, barring them from accessing treatment, and in the case of the AIDS epidemic, contributing to significant loss of lives. This is not confined to one group – we are all interchangeable as the targets of bullies.

But there is an opportunity to turn this around. Twitter now provides a pop-up message in regions like Hong Kong and countries including Australia, which when you search for 'coronavirus' invites you to "know the facts" and opt for verified information provided by local sources and the WHO. The commitment to engage in accurate and meaningful information surely must be driven by everyone. As consumers of content, we can shape our knowledge by investing in health stories that go beyond the miracle cure or the current outbreak. Will Wuhan become 'yesterday's news', like Ebola and the Australian bushfires before it?

The reality is that Wuhan is about the hundreds who have died, the thousands who have been infected, and the millions who continue to be impacted. It is also about the families who live in lockdown, who fear the unknown, and the health workers who risk their lives by moving to the frontlines of this outbreak. But there is reason for hope: this week, China admitted patients to two new emergency hospitals built and equipped in around 10 days. Together, they can

accommodate at least 2,600 beds. Many more beds are to be made available in the sports halls and conference centres currently being converted for temporary medical use. This means Wuhan can better handle the current outbreak, and be properly prepared should it worsen.

Funding public health systems

I will finish with a memory from last September. As heads of state and government gathered at the UN General Assembly in New York, I moderated a small gathering of eminent leaders including Dr. Tedros. Together, they spoke in support of the Global Preparedness Monitoring Board, an independent body that tracks progress in anticipating the next health emergency, and identifies gaps in reaching that critical point.

They warned us that the world is extremely vulnerable to disease epidemics and pandemics that will not only cause loss of human life, but will destroy our economies and create social chaos. It is not a question of "if" but "when". What unites their recommendations is a serious commitment to ensure that public health systems are adequately funded. This would ensure that we don't react to each new outbreak as it happens, but strengthen and support systems even in the absence of epidemics or pandemics.

The Board will no doubt agree that the outbreak in Wuhan is a timely reminder that many of its recommendations must be urgently taken up at the highest levels: commitment and investment by heads of government, strengthening of coordination mechanisms by the UN, increase in funding for preparedness by development partners, and linking preparedness with economic risk planning by major financial institutions. Wuhan is also a reminder that we need vaccines and that vaccines work.

It is more important now than ever to remain calm, and allow our health workers and authorities to do exactly what they are trained to do at this time. As Dr. Tedros said: "This is a time for facts, not fear. This is the time for science, not rumours. This is the time for solidarity, not stigma."

*James Chau is the host of *The China Current* with James Chau, and a Goodwill Ambassador for the WHO and UNAIDS. Views are personal*

A litmus test for AAP

Defeat in the Delhi Assembly election could prove to be a big challenge to the party's survival



SHAIKH MUJIBUR REHMAN

The Delhi Assembly election will determine not only which party will govern Delhi, but also the Aam Aadmi Party's future. Will the AAP survive as a Delhi-based party or renew its ambition to emerge as a national party?

A party like any other?

Born in 2012 out of a high profile anti-corruption movement, the AAP captured the political imagination of people of all ideological shades. But between 2013 and 2020, the party has deviated from many of its founding principles. Some would argue that it is becoming like any other political party. This is apparent, for instance, in the AAP's list of 70 candidates for this Assembly election, which includes turncoats and tainted candidates.

The end of dynasty politics was a lofty ideal that the AAP said it stood for. It is worth recalling that after making an impressive debut in 2013 in Delhi, it was the AAP's Manish Sisodia who said at the victory rally in Jantar Mantar that party member Kumar Vishwas could contest the Lok Sabha election against Congress leader Rahul Gandhi. Though Mr. Vishwas launched the anti-Gandhi campaign in Amethi in 2014, it was the BJP's Smriti Irani who defeated Mr. Gandhi in the 2019 general election. By 2019, neither Mr. Vishwas nor the AAP was seen anywhere in Amethi.

In post-Mandal India, Arvind Kejriwal emerged as the poster boy of political protests. But now, when students, women and other citizens are taking to the streets of Delhi in protest against the Citizenship (Amendment) Act, the proposed National Register of Citizens and the attacks on universities, Mr. Kejriwal is nowhere to be seen in protest sites. His muted solidarity is shown only in a few tweets and statements.

With many of the AAP's founding members such as Yogendra Yadav and Prashant Bhushan no longer a part of the party, internal democracy, another ideal, seems to have changed. For all practical purposes, the party is now controlled by Mr. Kejriwal and Mr. Sisodia, similar to how the BJP is controlled by Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Home Minister Amit Shah. This development is worrying as the absence of internal democracy paves the way not only for a coterie who could tighten their control over the party, its agenda and resources, but also for dynasty politics.

Despite these shortcomings, however, the

AAP can claim to have done some good in Delhi, especially by improving school education and providing inexpensive electricity. While it may not be able to repeat its 2015 election performance, trends suggest that AAP is not affected by anti-incumbency. This makes it a potential contender for power. But this is easier said than done in a three-cornered contest, especially since the BJP won all the seven parliamentary seats in the 2019 general election.

Also, by announcing its list of candidates ahead of other parties, the AAP showed greater preparedness compared to the other parties. Both the Congress, which continues to be a house in disarray, and the BJP do not have leaders at the State level who can match Mr. Kejriwal's stature.

Challenges ahead

But the AAP cannot take anything for granted. The BJP is using its ultimate weapon, Mr. Modi, to secure votes and playing its politics of polarisation ruthlessly. Delhi has been the bastion of the Hindu Right since the early days of the Republic. It was the Bharatiya Janata Sangh that kept alive the flames of the Hindu Right. L.K. Advani made his career in Delhi and reshaped the BJP in the late 1980s nationally. Therefore, issues such as the CAA could resonate with many of its traditional voters who may have voted for AAP in 2015.

The AAP may also be losing some voters from the Muslim community. The Congress faces an enormous challenge in revival after the demise of former Chief Minister Sheila Dikshit, but looking at an analysis of vote distribution in the 2019 election, there are signs of Muslims voters returning to its fold. The Shaheen Bagh protests presented a golden opportunity for Mr. Kejriwal to cement the AAP's connection with Muslim voters, many of whom have looked up to him ever since he took on Mr. Modi in Varanasi in 2014. But by refusing to seize this opportunity, the AAP has in some ways closed its doors to the possibility of national expansion. Its ambivalence towards secular causes is similar to the Congress's ambivalence, and may create more space for the BJP to expand.

In 2014-2015, the AAP appeared to be emerging as a national party, but internal power struggles and the exit of prominent leaders downgraded it to a Delhi-based party. Even if it returns to power now, the AAP is unlikely to re-ignite its national dream. But if it fails to win this Assembly election, and if it loses to the BJP, the AAP might face severe challenges in survival.

Shaikh Mujibur Rehman teaches at Jamia Millia Islamia and is the editor of *Rise of Saffron Power: Reflections on Indian Politics*

The public school possibility

In Delhi, AAP has managed to combine excellence with equity in government schools

PULAPRE BALAKRISHNAN

In a passage in the biography of C. Rajagopalachari by Rajmohan Gandhi, as the end of colonial rule approaches, the civil servant B.K. Nehru proposes to the veteran freedom fighter that the government of independent India set up quality schools for talented children. And the latter replies: "You want young men a new Brahmanism. This country will not take it. It wants equality, not excellence." What was being expressed was very likely a view held by the emerging governing class, that nurturing talent is a form of elitism. In fact, the reverse could turn out to be true for, as depicted in the life of Ekalavya, nature does not favour the rich and the powerful when it comes to distributing talent. Innocent of this, a public policy obsessed with avoiding differentiation has avoided excellence in schooling. This has hurt the historically disadvantaged of this country.

Not an elitist aspiration

There is nothing that points to the inevitability of inequality when aiming at excellence in our schools. In fact, quite to the contrary, excellent public schools, which are accessible to all, can ensure that historic inequalities are levelled-off to a large extent.

Schooling is the formative stage in the life of an individual with respect to development of capabilities, gaining awareness of rights and responsibilities and moulding attitudes that matter in civic engagement. If India desires to be a successful democracy it is necessary to invest in a schooling that takes every child to the highest level in these three areas. School children must be imbued with the spirit of wanting to excel in everything they will do in the future, from their careers to their performance as citizens.

The idea that pursuing excellence in education reflects an elitist aspiration is not a view shared by the poor. Poor parents work exceptionally hard to send their children to fee-paying private schools so that they stand a better chance in life. Surveys by the educational foundation Pratham show learning outcomes in these schools to be barely ahead of those in

government ones. Yet, the poor must work that much harder and tighten their belts that much more to afford them, for they consider even this slight advantage as helpful to their children.

Encouraging signs

In one part of this country, however, the wait for an improved public school system may be beginning to come to an end. Along with an emphasis on primary health care the government of Delhi has, by all accounts, initiated the transformation of its schools. Only a detailed study can establish how far it has progressed and how deep are its roots but the signs yet seen are encouraging. First, the physical infrastructure has improved. The chosen schools have classrooms with good furniture and are smart, not only in terms of their appearance, but also in terms of IT-enabled teaching aids. There are clean playgrounds and functioning toilets, the absence of which has long meant a declining school attendance by girls across the country. Selected teachers have been given training overseas. Interviews reveal that they feel supported in their tasks by the government, which is perhaps more important for efficacy than funds.

Most important, some of the government schools have recorded better Board exam results than private ones, triggering a once unimaginable reverse migration! However, innovation has gone beyond what it takes to achieve superior exam performance, important as it is. There is also an effort to spur cognitive development, essential for a child to make sense of the world. This marks a shift from the emphasis on memorising content, for long the bane of schooling in India.

It is too early to make resounding claims about the success of the schools programme of the Aam Aadmi Party. But it has demonstrated that it is possible to combine excellence with equity in India's schools, the site where achieving excellence will yield the highest pay-off for its

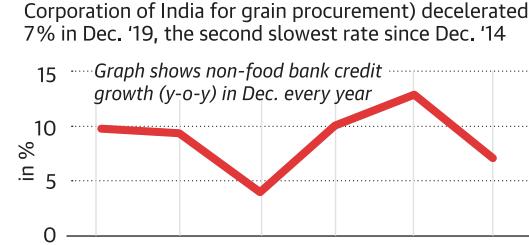


DATA POINT

Credit crunch

Growth of bank credit decelerated significantly in December 2019 compared to a year earlier. The downturn was seen across sectors with the credit growth in agriculture and service sectors recording the worst deceleration in six years. Credit growth in the priority sector too registered a deceleration in this period, with the education sector recording more loan repayments than borrowings. By Vignesh Radhakrishnan, Naresh Singaravelu and Sravya C

1. Credit slows down | Year-on-year (Y-o-Y), non-food bank credit growth (all loans except those given to the Food Corporation of India for grain procurement) decelerated to 7% in Dec. '19, the second slowest rate since Dec. '14



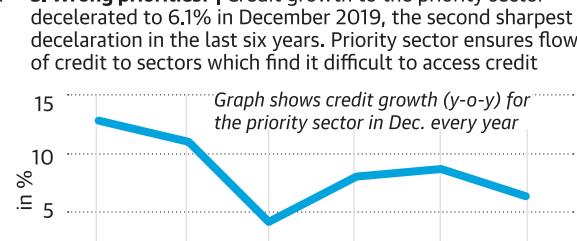
2. Non-food credit, sector-wise | Y-o-Y, the credit growth to the services and agriculture sectors recorded the sharpest deceleration in the last six years, while credit growth to personal loans saw significant acceleration

Table shows sector-wise non-food bank credit growth (Y-o-Y) in Dec. every year (in %)

Sectors	Dec 2014	Dec 2015	Dec 2016	Dec 2017	Dec 2018	Dec 2019
Agriculture & allied activities	18.3	12.7	8.2	9.5	8.4	5.3
Industry (MSME)	6.7	4.9	-4.3	2.1	4.4	1.6
Services	6.6	8.1	8.3	14.7	23.2	6.2
Personal loans	15.3	18.5	13.5	18.9	17	15.9

Source: Sectoral Deployment of Bank Credit, RBI

3. Wrong priorities? | Credit growth to the priority sector decelerated to 6.1% in December 2019, the second sharpest deceleration in the last six years. Priority sector ensures flow of credit to sectors which find it difficult to access credit



4. Priority lending, sector-wise | Under priority sector lending, credit growth to agriculture, MSME and education segments decelerated. Credit growth to education has consistently decelerated since 2014

Table shows sector-wise credit growth (Y-o-Y) for the priority sector in Dec. every year (in %)

Sectors	Dec 2014	Dec 2015	Dec 2016	Dec 2017	Dec 2018	Dec 2019
Agriculture & allied activities						

FROM PAGE ONE

Trust formed for Ram temple construction: PM

Union Information and Broadcasting Minister Prakash Javadekar denied any link when asked why the government didn't wait until Sunday for the Delhi Assembly election to be over before making the announcement.

U.P. govt. allots five acres for building mosque

At a meeting in November 2019 after the top court declared its verdict, the Board announced it was still undecided on whether to accept the five acres allotted to it, and reiterated that it would not go in for any review of the order.

Six out of seven members of the Board present at the meeting voted in favour of the decision not to challenge the court ruling.

'Against tenets of Islam' Abdur Razzaque Khan, who was the lone dissenting member then, said on Wednesday that Muslims should not accept the 5 acres as it "goes against the principles of Islam".

"In Islam, a mosque should be built by Muslims on a land purchased by them or a mosque should be built where the earlier one stood," he said.

Centre moves Supreme Court in Nirbhaya case

The court said there could not be a situation wherein one convict "swings" and the others' lives were later spared by the President. Commutation of death penalty of a fellow convict is a ground for filing fresh mercy petition after all, the court reasoned.

The convicts have to be executed together and not separately, the High Court held.

7 days' time Justice Suresh Kait of the Delhi High Court, however, gave convicts Mukesh Kumar Singh, 32, Pawan Kumar Gupta, 25, Vinay Kumar Sharma, 26, and Akshay Kumar, 31, seven days to exhaust all their available legal remedies.

After this, the authorities would act as per rules, the judge said.

Brutal assault On December 16, 2012, Nirbhaya, a paramedical student, was gang-raped and brutally assaulted by six men in a private bus and thrown out of the moving vehicle along with her male friend.

The victims later died of their injuries.

The four convicts have since been sentenced to death by a local court.

The order has been upheld by both the High Court and the Supreme Court.

Except Pawan, all convicts have exhausted their legal remedy available to file

"This is the decision taken for a temple in Ayodhya. Nothing to do with Delhi. The whole country is not under elections. Let us not confuse the situation," Mr. Javadekar told reporters at a briefing to announce Cabinet decisions.

Haji Mehboob, one of the litigants in the long-drawn case, also rejected the land. He felt the location, though having Muslim population, was too far from Ayodhya town.

"We have already said we don't want the land. Plus, the site is pretty far, 25 km outside of Ayodhya. Who will keep a watch over it?" he said.

Mr. Mehboob, who lives in the vicinity of the Ram Janmabhoomi police station, said if the government offered Muslims land close to Ayodhya, where once mosques stood, they could think about it. "But this [Dhannipur], there is no question," he said. "We are not beggars asking the government land for building a mosque."

Zafar Faruqui, Chairperson of the Waqf Board, was unavailable for comment.

Centre moves Supreme Court in Nirbhaya case

President rejects third convict's mercy plea

NEW DELHI President Ram Nath Kovind rejected the mercy petition of the third Nirbhaya gangrape convict Akshay Thakur on Wednesday. Earlier, the other two convicts Mukesh Singh and Vinay Kumar Sharma had filed their mercy petitions that were swiftly rejected by the President. A fourth convict, Pawan Kumar Gupta, is yet to file his. The Centre had moved the Delhi High Court arguing that the four death row convicts were taking the judicial process for a "joyride" and were acting in tandem to delay their execution. The hanging of the four men was scheduled for Feb. 1 in Tihar jail. A trial court last week postponed the execution. The judge noted that if an appeal or an application is made by even one convict, the execution of the death warrant shall be postponed in the case of the co-convicts also. The original date of hanging was January 22.

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Except Pawan, all convicts have exhausted their legal remedy available to file

a curative petition before the Supreme Court. The President has also rejected the mercy pleas of Mukesh and Vinay.

Juvenile convict A juvenile convict in the case has been released from a reformation home after serving a three-year term. One of the accused in the case, Ram Singh, died in Tihar jail.

(With inputs from Soibam Rocky Singh)

Electric vehicles, new SUVs energise Auto Show

French automaker Renault unveiled the AMT version of its SUV Triber, while South Korean manufacturer Hyundai Motor presented the 2020 Tucson.

Tata Motors is showing off a mix of SUVs and electrics, led by the latest version of its Harrier, along with an array of other SUVs, including Hexa Safari edition, Gravitas and a near-production version of HBX Show. It also took the covers off the Sierra EV Concept, drawing a lot of eyeballs.

Taking aim at the affordable segment under the

EV banner, Mahindra and Mahindra unveiled its e-XUV 100 hatchback with a price tag of ₹8.25-lakh.

The company is betting big on electric mobility with two more of its electric vehicles – the Atom, a small urban shared mobility option for last-mile connectivity, and e-XUV300 – with a commercial launch of both products promised in the next financial year.

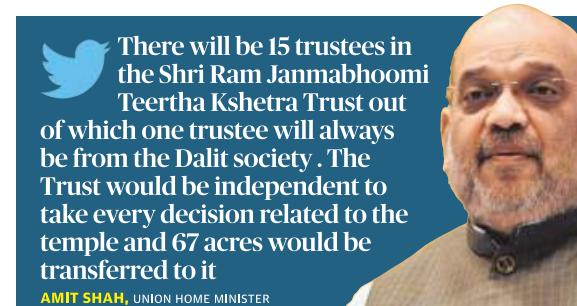
The showstopper at the Mahindra and Mahindra corner was a new concept EV named Funster, which features a convertible mode.

Ministry notifies temple trust, RSS, VHP members kept out

Dalit leader was among those who laid Mandir's foundation stone in 1989

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

The Union Home Ministry on Wednesday notified the Shri Ram Janmabhoomi Teertha Kshetra Trust out of which one trustee will always be from the Dalit society. The Trust would be independent to take every decision related to the temple and 67 acres would be transferred to it



AMIT SHAH, UNION HOME MINISTER

Politics over Lord Ram should now end: Cong.
NEW DELHI

The Centre should go ahead with the process mandated by the Supreme Court, but the politics over Lord Ram should now end, the Congress on Wednesday said in response to the setting up of a trust for the construction of a Ram temple at Ayodhya.

from the RSS or the VHP. Shankracharya Swami Saraswati Maharaj from Prayagraj, Uttar Pradesh, Anil Mishra, homoeopathic doctor from Ayodhya, and Paramanand Maharaj from Hardikwari are among the members.

Contributions

The Trust deed says that the "trustees may accept donations, grants, subscriptions, aids or contribution from any person, government, local authorities or any other institution in cash or in kind, including immovable property/ properties without

any conditions or terms inconsistent with this Trust or its objects."

The deed said that all the other members of the Trust, which includes an IAS officer to be nominated by the Central and State government each, will have to be practising Hindus.

Union Home Minister Amit Shah said in a tweet, "There will be 15 trustees in the Shri Ram Janmabhoomi Tirth Kshetra Trust out of which one trustee will always be from the Dalit society."

The Ministry's notifica-

tion said a scheme had been approved to "make necessary provisions in regard to functioning of the trust including matters relating to management of the trust, powers of the trustees including construction of the temple and all necessary, incidental and supplemental matters thereto."

"... accordance with the said Scheme, a Trust by the name Shri Ram Janmabhoomi Tirth Kshetra has been registered with its registered office at R-20, Greater Kailash Part 1, New Delhi, 110048," the notification said.

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Stick to Nyas's design of Ram temple: VHP

It calls for public subscription model

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

The Vishwa Hindu Parishad (VHP) on Wednesday requested the newly announced Shri Ram Janmabhoomi Teertha Kshetra Trust, which will oversee the construction of a Ram temple in Ayodhya following the Supreme Court verdict, to keep to the design finalised by the Ram Janmabhoomi Nyas, which had spearheaded the movement for the temple at Ayodhya.

Public processions He said many villages that had contributed "Ram Shilas" or bricks at the height of the movement three decades ago should between March 25 (the beginning of Chaitra Navaratri) and April 8 (Hanuman Jayanti) celebrate "Ramotsav" and take out shobha yatras (public processions) celebrating the construction of the temple.

Mr. Kumar later said it would take around four years for the construction of the temple to be completed, and that Ayodhya should have better infrastructure for pilgrims to visit, especially on their way to Prayagraj. Prime Minister Narendra Modi announced the setting up of the Ram Janmabhoomi Teertha Kshetra Trust in the Lok Sabha.

Trinamool objects to naming of MP

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

The Trinamool Congress on Wednesday objected to the fact that one of its members, Dola Sen, was named for gross disorderly conduct while she was actually absent in the Rajya Sabha.

Ms. Sen was named along with 20 other members for storming into the well of the House. The Opposition members were protesting after they were denied the opportunity to hold a debate on the nationwide protests against the Citizenship (Amendment) Act and the National Register of Citizens.

Ms. Sen was in Kolkata and was not present in the House. TMC MP Nadimul Haq flagged the error.

Chairman M. Venkiah Naidu assured Mr. Haq that the error would be rectified.

2 militants, CRPF jawan killed in encounter

Virtual private networks are being misused by ultras after restoration of 2G mobile service: J&K police

PEERZADA ASHIQ
SRINAGAR

Two militants and one CRPF jawan were killed in an encounter on the outskirts of Srinagar on Wednesday.

Meanwhile, the police have warned that virtual private networks (VPNs) were being misused by militants in Kashmir after the restoration of 2G mobile service.

"Two terrorists were killed on the Srinagar-Baramulla road after they fired at the police and CRPF party deployed there. Security forces had prior information about the movement of militants passing through the area," Director-General of Police, Jammu and Kashmir, Dilbagh Singh said.

Checkpoint attacked The incident took place around 11.45 a.m. when militants fired upon a joint checkpoint of the CRPF and



Shootout aftermath: A policeman washes blood stains after an encounter on the Srinagar-Baramulla highway in Lawaypora on Wednesday. ■ NISSAR AHMAD

the police at Lawaypora on the Srinagar highway. Constable Ramesh Rajan of the CRPF's 73 Battalion died in the exchange of fire. The attackers were believed to have come on a two-wheeler. The police identified the

slain militants as Khateeb Ahmad Dass from Anantnag's Bijbehara and Zia u Rehman Wani from Budgam's Aarath areas. "Dass was brother-in-law of slain terrorist Mugees Mir of Parimpura. Affiliated to the Hizbul Mujahideen, Dass had been part of groups involved in carrying out terror attacks in south Kashmir," the police said.

Zia u Rehman Wani was affiliated to the Lashkar-e-Taiba. "Wani was involved in

carrying out attacks on guard posts, security deployments and several other grenade attacks since 2018. He also figures in a case pertaining to decamping of weapons from the residential guard post of the erstwhile Congress MLC Muzaffar Paray at Jawahar Nagar, Srinagar," the police said.

Incriminating materials, including arms and ammunition, was recovered from the terrorists, said the police.

The police said they were ascertaining the identity of the injured person during the cross-fire. Earlier, the DGP said the injured was a militant.

However, a family from Srinagar contested the police claim, and said he was a civilian and "ran a shop near the encounter site". According to the DGP, 20 militants were killed this year so far in Kashmir. He hoped for a peaceful summer.

Sajjad Lone, Parra released from detention

But they will stay under house arrest

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
SRINAGAR

Peoples Conference (PC) chief Sajjad Gani Lone and Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) youth president Waheed-ur-Rehman Parra were released after 184 days of detention in Srinagar on Wednesday.

Mr. Lone, arrested during the clampdown launched on August 5 as the Centre revoked J&K's special status, was shifted to his official residence in Srinagar.

"On reaching his official home, Mr. Lone continues to remain under house detention," a PC spokesman said.

Mr. Parra, who is close to incarcerated PDP president Mehbooba Mufti, has also

been shifted to his residence and "would remain under house arrest".

The fresh release brings the number of detained politicians to 14 in the MLA Hostel, designated as a sub-jail.

Over 40 regional leaders were placed in the MLA Hostel in November.

mischief, have put it as a privatisation of LIC," said Mr. Chakrabarty.

He noted that it was time for citizens to be able to get a "richly deserved share" in the company's wealth if they chose to invest in it, adding that the IPO would bring more discipline to the company and bring much-needed depth to the market.

"This is certainly a very high value item... Some amount of narrative in the public space would need to be done because some people have, can I use the word

Odisha notifies listing of houses, silent on NPR

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
BHUBANESWAR

The Odisha government on Wednesday issued a notification for carrying out house-listing operations, as part of the census exercise between April and September, 2020. There was no word on the National Population Register (NPR) survey.

The house-listing and the NPR are usually conducted simultaneously. The non-issue of notification regarding the NPR assumes significance in Odisha as the

Naveen Patnaik government, unlike many non-BJP governments, had never opposed the NPR before. "We have issued notification for house-listing and we cannot comment on the NPR at this stage," said Pradipta Mohapatra, Additional Chief Secretary in charge of Revenue and Disaster Management. While supporting the Citizen (Amendment) Act, Mr. Patnaik had earlier said his government would not implement the NRC in the State.

He said the Centre needed to work to frame the narrative before the initial public offer (IPO), which it hoped to complete during the next fiscal year. "It takes about eight to nine months of preparations for its accounts and what kind of legal tweaking that need to be done."

The Centre has indicated that it may need to push

Budget interaction with industry leaders organised by the Confederation of Indian Industry on Wednesday.

"LIC will certainly happen next year," he said in response to a query about timelines for the partial disinvestment plan announced in the Union Budget speech last week. "It takes about eight to nine months of preparations for its accounts and what kind of legal tweaking that need to be done."

This is certainly a very high value item... Some amount of narrative in the public space would need to be done because some people have, can I use the word

scripture model for raising funds. "Every Hindu, if he/she so wishes should also be allowed to contribute physically (haat lagaane ka maaka) in the building of the temple," he said.

VHP's working president Alok Kumar said at a press conference in New Delhi that his organisation wanted that the original design be adhered to as the design had a large-scale endorsement from the movement.

Mr. Kumar later said it would take around four years for the construction of the temple to be completed, and that Ayodhya should have better infrastructure for pilgrims to visit, especially on their way to Prayagraj.

<p

Opposition parties misleading the public on CAA: Rajinikanth

Actor says National Population Register is 'very essential' to identify foreigners

STAFF REPORTER

CHENNAI

Actor Rajinikanth on Wednesday accused the Opposition parties of misleading the public about the Citizenship (Amendment) Act.

His comments came weeks after widespread protests broke out across the country against the controversial citizenship law, the National Register of Citizens and the National Population Register.

Addressing the media, Mr. Rajinikanth said the National Population Register was "very essential". "The Congress carried out the exercise in 2010, and it was also done in 2015. It needs to be done to identify Indian citizens and foreigners and determine where they (the foreigners) are from. Shouldn't we know



Rajinikanth

this? It is very, very essential. I don't know what problem others have with this," he said.

Citing the Central government's assurance that the CAA will not affect Indian citizens in any way, he said, "It is about giving citizenship to people who have come here from neighbouring countries. A big scare has been

created about the possibility of Muslims being affected by the citizenship law. How will it affect Indian Muslims? The Muslims in India decided to stay here during Partition, asserting that India is their land and that they will live and die here. How can they be sent out? If something like that happens, I will be the first to speak out," Mr. Rajinikanth said.

He alleged that a few political parties were instigating protests for political gain. "Some religious gurus are also supporting these efforts. This is very wrong," he said. He appealed to the agitating students to properly understand the issues surrounding the CAA, the NRC and the NPR. "Please do proper research on the subject and ask your parents and professors

about the issue before staging protests. Otherwise, political leaders will use you. Nobody knows how the police will react. If an FIR is lodged [against you], it will become an issue in your life," he said.

On the issue of Sri Lankan Tamil refugees in India being omitted from the CAA, he said, "It is my view that Sri Lankan Tamil refugees in India should be given dual citizenship."

The actor said he had not received summons from the Justice Aruna Jagadeesan Commission in connection with the comments he had made regarding the Thoothukudi police firing incident in which 13 people were shot dead by the police. "I will cooperate with them completely," he said.

ULFA and Naga groups hold 'solidarity meeting' in Guwahati

We have the common goal of taking the region forward while protecting our identity: ULFA general secretary

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

GUWAHATI

State-specific extremist groups have begun peace parleys alongside the Centre's push for resolving decades-old conflicts in the northeast.

On Tuesday, members of the Working Committee of Naga National Political

Groups (NNPGs) held a "solidarity meeting" with leaders of the pro-talks United Liberation Front of Assam (ULFA) in Guwahati toward peaceful co-existence.

The NNPGs, in talks with Delhi since 2017, comprise National Socialist Council of Nagaland (Unification), NSCN

(Reformation), NSCN (Khang), Naga National Council and two of its factions, and Federal Govt. of Nagaland.

'Significant step'

Leaders of the NNPGs and ULFA said the meeting for "appreciating each other's ongoing peace process" was

significant given the history of inter-State boundary disputes and apprehensions that the final solution to the Naga political problem could lead to Assam losing large swathes of land for a "Naga-administered sub-region".

Unification of all Naga-inhabited areas beyond Naga-

land has been a long-term demand of the Isak-Muivah faction of the NSCN, or NSCN-IM, the largest and strongest group in the peace process that has continued since August 1997.

"We have the common goal of taking the region forward while protecting our

identity and culture. We appreciated each other's peace process with New Delhi and hoped that an early inclusive agreement (with the Naga groups) would be inked fulfilling the aspirations of the indigenous people of Assam," ULFA general secretary Anup Chetia said on Wednesday.

CBI registers FIR in ₹1,000-crore scam

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

NEW DELHI

The Central Bureau of Investigation has registered a case against unknown officials for alleged misappropriation of ₹1,000 crore from the funds for the State Resource Centre and the Physical Referral Rehabilitation Centre

in Chhattisgarh in the last 10 years.

The agency has initiated the probe following a direction from the Chhattisgarh High Court. The court order came on a petition alleging the involvement of several government servants, including IAS officials.

SC panel recommends several prison reforms

Phone call a day, cleaner kitchens mooted



BJP creating atmosphere of unrest: Sharad Yadav
BHOPAL
Loktantrik Janata Dal chief Sharad Yadav on Wednesday said the NDA government was creating an atmosphere of unrest in the country for the last six years by raking up controversial issues. He said ever since the BJP government came to power, it has been talking about "ghar vapsi" (reconversion to Hindu faith), interfaith marriage and cows. PTI

'No plan now to set up deradicalisation centres'

NEW DELHI

The Centre informed the Rajya Sabha on Wednesday that there was no proposal under the consideration of the government to set up deradicalisation centres in the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir. To another question, Minister of State for Home G. Kishan Reddy said 389 people are currently in detention under the Public Safety Act (PSA) in J&K. Extension of detention or its revocation is made after a regular review, he added.

'Difficult to collect data on illegal Bangladeshi'

NEW DELHI

The Centre on Wednesday informed the Rajya Sabha that it is "not possible to collect accurate data" of Bangladeshi living illegally in the country since their entry is "clandestine and surreptitious." Minister of State for Home Nitinayand Rai said that last year, 1,351 illegal immigrants were nabbed along the border and handed over to Bangladeshi authorities. Till January 27, 83 illegal immigrants were caught. In 2017 and 2018, the number stood at 1,175 and 1,118.

EU Visa Code modified to include fee increase

MUMBAI

For the first time in over a decade, the European Union Visa Code that governs the Schengen visa rules and fees has been modified to include a fee increase and a provision for a longer-term visa to ensure a better balance among migration and security concerns, economic considerations and external relations. From February 2, the fees have been hiked from €60 to €80, while visas can be availed six months in advance.

The Prison Department has a perennial average of 30-40% vacancies.

"The shortage has lingered over the years," the report said.

Another recommendation is for the use of video-conferencing for trial. "Physical production in courts continued, which however remains far below the aspirated 100% in several States, mainly because of unavailability of sufficient police guards for escort and transportation," it said.

'Primitive and arduous'
The report described the preparation of food in kitchens as "primitive and arduous". The kitchens are congested and unhygienic and the diet has remained unchanged for years now.

The court had in September 2018 appointed the Justice Roy Committee to examine the various problems plaguing prisons, from overcrowding to lack of legal advice to convicts to issues of remission and parole.

Besides Justice Roy, a former Supreme Court judge, the members included an IG, Bureau of Police Research and Development, and the DG (Prisons), Tihar Jail.

The decision was in reaction to a letter written by former Chief Justice of India R.C. Lahoti highlighting the overcrowding of prisons, unnatural deaths of prisoners, gross inadequacy of staff and the lack of trained staff.

Surrogate mothers need not be close kin'

15 major changes in Bill suggested by Rajya Sabha Select Committee

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

NEW DELHI

A surrogate mother need not be a "close relative", recommended the Rajya Sabha Select Committee on Surrogacy (Regulation) Bill, 2019, which also advocated omission of the five-year limit before seeking surrogacy.

This is among the 15 major changes suggested by the 23-member committee that presented its report on Wednesday.

The major changes include allowing single women (widow or a divorcee and Persons of Indian Origin) to



The panel wants insurance cover for 36 months. ■ GETTY IMAGES/ISTOCKPHOTO

propose in the Bill to 36 months.

The committee has recommended the removal from the Bill of the requirement that the surrogate mother be a "close relative". It has argued that this potentially restricts the availability of surrogate mothers, affecting genuinely needy persons.

"A willing woman shall act as surrogate mother and be permitted to undergo surrogacy procedures as per the provisions of this Act," it said.

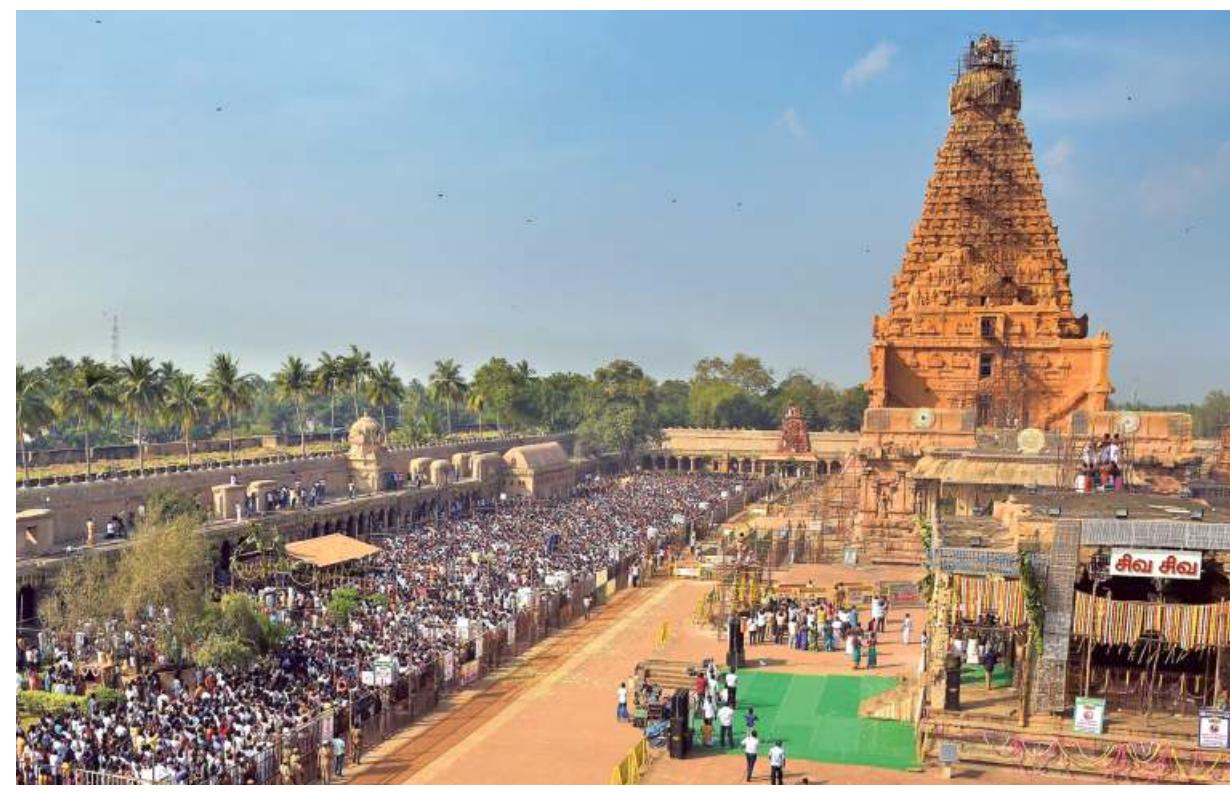
The other major recom-

mendation concerns deleting the definition of 'infertility' as "the inability to conceive after five years of unprotected intercourse" on grounds that it was too long a period for a couple to wait for a child.

The Surrogacy (Regulation) Bill, 2019, is yet to be passed by the Rajya Sabha, and the committee has held 10 meetings since the Bill was referred to it by the Lok Sabha on November 21, 2019.

Chairman of the Committee Bhupender Yadav presented the report.

Grand spectacle



Thousands of people converged on the premises of the 1,000-year-old Sri Brahadeeswarar Temple in Thanjavur, Tamil Nadu, for its consecration on Wednesday. The event, which was witnessed by Maratha royal family members led by Prince Babaji Rajah Bhonsle Chatrapati, was held after 23 years. ■ M. MOORTHY

Sonia Gandhi leaves hospital

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

NEW DELHI

Congress president Sonia Gandhi was discharged from Sir Ganga Ram Hospital here on Wednesday. She was admitted to the hospital on February 2 and was diagnosed with a stomach infection.

Her condition was stable, noted a bulletin.

Plea for keeping children out

LEGAL CORRESPONDENT

NEW DELHI

A 12-year-old national bravery award winner has written to Chief Justice of India Sharad A. Bobde, urging him to direct the Delhi police to stop children and infants from getting "involved" in the Shaheen Bagh protest against the Citizenship (Amendment) Act.

for six religious groups, excluding Muslims, from three neighbouring countries.

Mr. Naqvi said India was

"heaven for minorities",

while "Pakistan is hell" for them. He said political parties were trying to cause a "constitutional crisis" and "anarchy", with several States coming out in opposition to it.

Zen Gunaratna Sadavarte,

an Indian Council for Child Welfare bravery award winner for 2019, said bringing children and toddlers to the site amounts to "torture and cruelty".

KERALA UNIVERSITY OF HEALTH SCIENCES TENDER NOTICE

No: 01/21/453/2019/A2/Adm-P/
KUHS dated 20.01.2020
Competitive E-tenders are invited for the printing and supply of 12 Lakhs of 52, 32 and 12 paged Answer Booklets of estimated cost of Rs.1,64,58,000/- Last date: 10.2.2020 at 4 pm. Tenders shall be accepted only through online. Tender ID: 2020_KUHS_337281_1. For more details: Log onto: www.etenders.kerala.gov.in or call to 0477-2207716.

Thirissur Sd/- Registrar

DEPARTMENT OF HIGHER EDUCATION MS Building, Bengaluru.

No.: ED/184/UVB/2017

Dated : 03-02-2020

NOTIFICATION

The Government of Karnataka invites applications for the post of First Vice-Chancellor of Bengaluru Dr. B.R. Ambedkar School of Economics University from eligible distinguished academicians with following credentials for consideration of the Selection Committee:

- A person of the highest level of competence, integrity, morals and institutional commitment;
- A visionary with proven leadership qualities, administrative capabilities as well as teaching and research achievements;
- An eminent academician with specialization in Economics, Fiscal Management, Social Science, Mathematics, Banking other related subjects with minimum teaching experience of twenty-five years out of which at least ten years as Professor as per University Grants Commission norms or in equivalent position at a reputed research and development or administrative organization;
- As provided in the sec 13(7) and 13(8), the Vice-Chancellor shall, subject to the pleasure of the Chancellor and the State Government, hold the office for a maximum period of 4 years or until he attains the age of Sixty Seven years whichever is earlier. Consequently, a person to be appointed as Vice Chancellor shall have clear four years tenure.
- The application proforma is available on the website of Karnataka State Higher Education Council <https://www.kshec.ac.in>.
- The applications in the prescribed proforma should reach within 15 days at the latest from the date of publication of this advertisement by registered post/speed post to:- The Executive Director, Karnataka State Higher Education Council, # 30, Prasankumar Block, Y.Ramachandra Road, Gandhinagar, Bangalore - 560 009.
- Applications complete in all respects can also be emailed to edkshc@yahoo.com
- In support of unblemished career and undoubted integrity, the applicant who is retired from service, should file a self attested certificate to the effect that no departmental/criminal enquiry is instituted/pending against him or no enquiry is culminated in penalties. Whereas, in case of applicant in service, he should file a certificate of his employer in this regard.
- Incomplete applications and applications received after the stipulated time limit shall not be entertained. This office shall not be responsible for postal or other kinds of delays.
- The Selection Committee reserves the right to consider any person of eminence outside the list of applications.
- The candidature of those who indulge in undue influencing on the selection process through unethical means shall stand cancelled.

Sd/-
Additional Chief Secretary to Government
Higher Education Department

DIPR/DDU/RO No.2424/2019-20

A ND-NDE

State of the Union turns into a snub match

Trump declined to shake Pelosi's hand; she omitted his introduction and shred a copy of his speech

REUTERS
WASHINGTON

A bitter feud between U.S. President Donald Trump and top Democrat Nancy Pelosi boiled over at his State of the Union speech on Tuesday, with Mr. Trump denying her a handshake and Ms. Pelosi ripping apart a copy of his remarks behind his back.

Mr. Trump avoided the subject of his impeachment drama in a pugnacious 80-minute speech, but the raw wounds from the battle were evident with fellow Republicans giving him standing ovations while rival Democrats for the most part remained seated.

The Republican-led Senate was expected to acquit him of charges he abused his powers and obstructed Congress during a vote beginning at 4 p.m. EST (2100 GMT) on Wednesday.

Seeing Ms. Pelosi, the U.S. House of Representatives speaker, for the first time since she stormed out of a

White House meeting four months ago, Mr. Trump declined to shake her outstretched hand as he gave her a paper copy of his remarks before starting to speak.

Taken aback

Despite having not spoken to Mr. Trump since their last meeting, Ms. Pelosi appeared to be taken aback. She avoided citing the customary "high privilege and distinct honour" that usually accompanies the Speaker's introduction of the President to Congress.

"Members of Congress, the President of the United States" was all she said in introducing Mr. Trump.

When his speech ended, Ms. Pelosi stood and tore up her copy of the remarks he had handed her, later telling reporters it was "the courteous thing to do, considering the alternative."

Kayleigh McEnany, Mr. Trump's campaign spokes-



State of chaos: Mike Pence claps as Nancy Pelosi rips a copy of Donald Trump's speech on Wednesday. • AFP

woman, said of Ms. Pelosi: "Her hatred for @realdonaldtrump has blinded her to the repulsive nature of her smug, elitist behaviour."

After the event, Ms. Pelosi tweeted a photo of her with her hand reaching out to Mr. Trump and said, "Democrats will never stop extending the hand of friendship to get the job done #ForThePeople. We will work to find common ground where we can, but

will stand our ground where we cannot. #SOTU"

The tension was a sign that little legislative progress should be expected with the presidential election nine months away.

Impeachment case

The impeachment case has intensified bitter feelings between Mr. Trump and Ms. Pelosi that have existed throughout his presidency.

He routinely calls her "Crazy Nancy" at his rallies.

As he began the speech, Republicans from both houses of Congress chanted "four more years" while he stood at the lectern in the chamber of the House.

Democrats sat silently and some could be seen shaking their heads as Mr. Trump declared, "The state of our union is stronger than ever before."

Ms. Pelosi, who dropped her opposition to impeachment and allowed Democratic lawmakers to seek the charges against him, sat stoically and grim-faced behind Mr. Trump and paged through a paper copy of his speech as he spoke.

Mr. Trump entered the chamber with Democrats experiencing unease and chaos after technical glitches delayed the results of voting in Iowa on Monday, the first 2020 contest as the party seeks a nominee to face the incumbent Republican.

President wants to contain virus & safeguard economic stability

ANANTH KRISHNAN

During a visit last September to the Central Party School, an elite institution in west Beijing that trains China's future leaders, President Xi Jinping held forth on the major risks facing his country.

The slowing economy and the trade war with America would have been top of his mind as he warned of "complicated struggles" facing the country. Mr. Xi specifically mentioned the economy, China's diplomatic environment, Hong Kong and Taiwan.

Ms. Pelosi, who dropped her opposition to impeachment and allowed Democratic lawmakers to seek the charges against him, sat stoically and grim-faced behind Mr. Trump and paged through a paper copy of his speech as he spoke.

But just four months on after his speech, little would Mr. Xi have imagined that the biggest test of his eight-year rule would come not from far-away America but from Wuhan, a beautiful town of lakes and parks that is famous in Chinese history for launching the uprising that would bring down China's last imperial dynasty.

As China grapples with the fallout of the novel coronavirus outbreak, which as of February 5 has killed more than 490 people and infected more than 24,000, Mr. Xi and the Communist Party of China (CPC) are already counting the costs, both economic and political.

The 11 million people of Wuhan and more than 40 million others in Hubei province have been in lockdown, after Mr. Xi ordered the unprecedented quarantining of an entire city on January 23.

On Monday, Mr. Xi admitted that the outbreak was "a major test of China's system and capacity for governance", as he chaired a special meeting of the party's top Politburo Standing Committee.

The leadership is scram-



Testing times: Members of the Chinese guard of honour marching on Tiananmen Square in Beijing on Tuesday. • AP

bling to respond to growing public anger and to make up for days of inaction by the Hubei provincial government that allowed the virus to spread for close to one month before they realised the severity of the situation.

Two-fold agenda

Mr. Xi outlined a two-fold agenda: controlling the epidemic, which he warned "directly affects" economic and social stability, and "safeguarding economic and social order".

NEWS ANALYSIS

That is going to be easier said than done. China has come to a standstill because of the measures deployed to contain the outbreak. Factories are shut down. Many workers who were due to return this week after the Lunar New Year holiday remained confined to their villages and towns that are in effective lock-down.

Consumer spending is on pause. Apple and Starbucks are among the many outlets that have shut shop in the mainland. Cities as far away as Hangzhou, home to e-commerce giant Alibaba, are in complete lock-down.

The economic costs will be enormous. The timing,

during the New Year holiday, couldn't have been worse, with the outbreak costing the economy over 500 billion Yuan (\$72 billion), say economists. In 2020, growth could fall to 5.6%, down from 6.1% last year, estimates Oxford Economics, the lowest since 1990.

Then there are the political risks. Mr. Xi's comments suggest he is certainly aware that that the Party's credibility has been hit. There is an outpouring of anger towards the provincial leadership, and people are asking if China has progressed or regressed since the SARS outbreak 17 years ago.

At the same time, it's simplistic to assume that every piece of bad news in China will hurt Mr. Xi. If the country emerges quickly from the epidemic, an outcome the world will be hoping for, Mr. Xi may well frame it as a defence of the robustness of the Chinese system and further push the political tightening and centralisation that his two-terms have seen. The initial cover-ups, which have brought enormous costs to the people of Wuhan, will become a footnote on what Mr. Xi likes to call the country's road to rejuvenation.

Buttigieg, Sanders likely to win Iowa

Both got 10 pledged delegates each from State, Joe Biden finishes fourth

SRIRAM LAKSHMAN
WASHINGTON

As the Iowa Democratic Party began releasing partial results from Monday's caucuses that kicked off the primary race of the party, Pete Buttigieg, the 38-year-old Mayor from South Bend, Indiana, led the candidates in state delegates, followed closely by progressive candidate Bernie Sanders. Former Vice-President Joseph R. Biden performed poorly as per polls prior to the caucuses.

The Iowa race is crucial to winning the nomination as it

provides candidates with momentum to carry them through to July, when the Democratic Party will choose its presidential nominee.

The party released results first around 4 p.m. and then later on Tuesday night, with 71% of 1,765 precincts reporting. Mr. Buttigieg led with 26.8% of state delegate equivalents, followed Mr. Sanders, at 25.2%. Mr. Sanders' fellow progressive candidate Elizabeth Warren, Senator from Massachusetts, came in third with 18.4% of the vote followed by Mr. Bi-

den at 15.4% and Senator Amy Klobuchar, from Iowa's northern neighbour, Minnesota, in fifth place with 12.6%.

Lead in popular votes

Mr. Sanders, however, led Mr. Buttigieg narrowly in the first two popular vote statistics – the first and second alignment (the first round of voting and the second round of voting when supporters of non-viable candidates realign with a viable candidate). The Democratic party is reporting the first and second alignments as well as the state delegate equivalents this year as opposed to just the third number, which has

been historically reported. The state delegate equivalents is used to calculate the number of 'pledged delegates' a candidate sends to the nominating convention in July (currently Mr. Buttigieg and Mr. Sanders are equal on that count, with 10 pledged delegates).

Mr. Buttigieg, who came out as gay a few years ago, addressed supporters in New Hampshire, where Democrats will compete against each other next week in a primary race.

"It validates for a kid somewhere in a community wondering if he belongs or she belongs or they belong in their community, if you believe in your country, there's

a lot backing up that belief," Mr. Buttigieg said.

Mr. Biden, 77, who like Mr. Buttigieg, is making a play for moderate and independent voters, had relatively slim crowds at his events in the run-up to Monday's caucuses, based on reports. The former Vice-President is banking on the South Carolina primary later in February, where he is expected to win, as per polls, with support from African Americans.

For now, candidates have begun canvassing in New Hampshire, where Mr. Sanders has an advantage, as per the latest state poll, with Mr. Biden and Mr. Buttigieg tied for second place.

That is going to be easier said than done. China has come to a standstill because of the measures deployed to contain the outbreak. Factories are shut down. Many workers who were due to return this week after the Lunar New Year holiday remained confined to their villages and towns that are in effective lock-down.

Consumer spending is on pause. Apple and Starbucks are among the many outlets that have shut shop in the mainland. Cities as far away as Hangzhou, home to e-commerce giant Alibaba, are in complete lock-down.

On Monday, Mr. Xi admitted that the outbreak was "a major test of China's system and capacity for governance", as he chaired a special meeting of the party's top Politburo Standing Committee.

The leadership is scram-

More Chinese cities shut down as virus toll rises

Desperate bid to contain spread as toll inches close to 500

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
HANGZHOU

Millions more people have been ordered to stay indoors as China battles to curb the spread of a new virus that authorities said on Wednesday has already killed nearly 500 people.

With more than 24,000 cases in China, a growing number of cities have been imposing a range of restrictions in recent days far from central Hubei province, the epicentre of the outbreak.

Global concerns have risen as cases continue to spread abroad, with 10 people testing positive for the virus on a ship quarantined off the coast of Japan.

In Hangzhou, some 175 km southwest of Shanghai,

sities. "Please don't go out, don't go out, don't go out!" blared a message on a loudspeaker urging people to wear masks, wash their hands regularly and report any people who are from Hubei – reflecting a common fear that people from the province might infect others.

At least three other cities in Zhejiang province – Taizhou, Wenzhou and parts of Ningbo – have imposed the same measures, affecting 18 million people.

Similar restrictions have been put in place in Heilongjiang province on the Russia border.

The firm is based in one of three Hangzhou districts subject to new restrictions that allow only one person per household to go outside every two days to buy necessities.

Conditions were as grave as during the 2009 financial crisis due to the epidemic.

Cathay is also asking suppliers for price reductions, putting in place hiring freezes, postponing major projects.

Baby tests positive in Wuhan

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
BEIJING

A baby in China's Wuhan city has been diagnosed with the novel coronavirus just 30 hours after being born, Chinese state media reported on Wednesday.

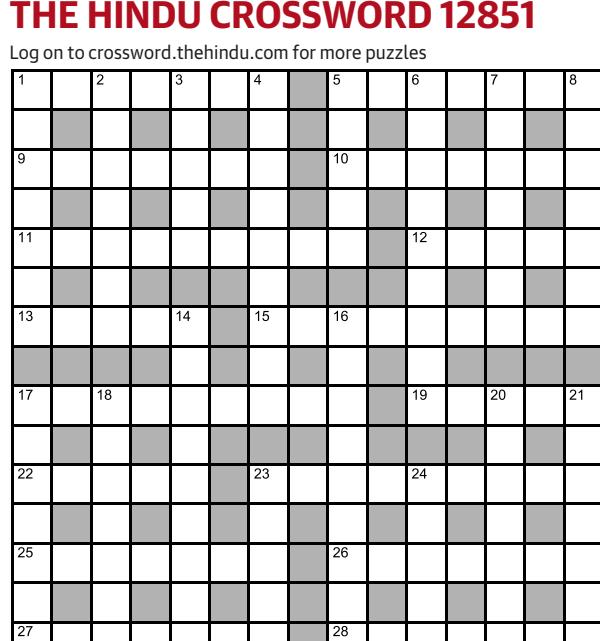
The infant is the youngest person recorded

as being infected by the virus.

CCTV quoted experts as saying it may be a case of "vertical transmission", referring to infections passed from mother to child during pregnancy, childbirth or immediately after.

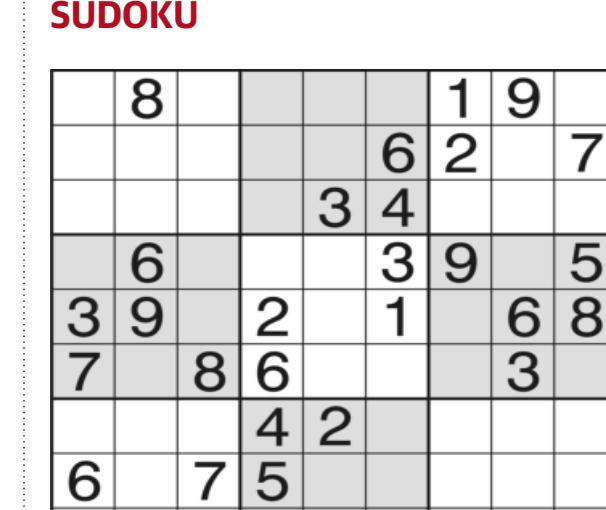
THE HINDU CROSSWORD 12851

Log on to crossword.thehindu.com for more puzzles



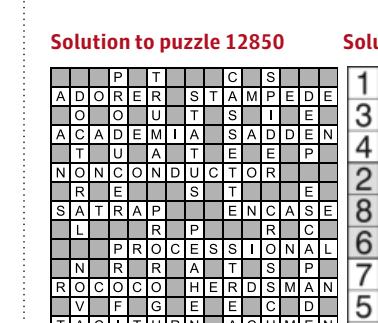
Narrow escape: A plane carrying 177 people skidded off the runway and split into three after landing in rough weather at an airport in Istanbul on Wednesday. About 120 people were injured and taken to hospital. • REUTERS

SUDOKU



DIFFICULTY RATING: ★★★★★

Solution to puzzle 12850



Solution to yesterday's Sudoku

FAITH

Curse and blessing

Evil and good co-exist in the individual as well as in society in various proportions. The uniqueness of the Bhagavata Purana is the positive vibrations it generates when dealing with this sensitive issue from various angles and contexts that the characters get exposed to, pointed out Sri Ramanujam in a discourse.

In the case of Parikshit, he is the righteous ruler and grandson of the Pandavas; he is the vanquisher of Kali Putrasha as well. But he commits an inadvertent act of disrespect towards a sage during a weak moment when he is tired, hungry and extremely thirsty after a long hunting session. Finding no water in the vicinity, he asks for water from a sage in a nearby hermitage. The sage, steeped in meditation, does not respond; but at that moment Parikshit forgets his principles and hurls a dead snake on the sage. He regrets it immediately and leaves the place. Moreover being a Kshatriya ruler responsible for maintaining law and justice, he knows too well that these are not arbitrary and that he is subordinate to the rule of law. In early times, kings are expected to act out of truth. Truth, dharma and justice are integral for society to thrive at all times.

On getting back to the palace, he imposes expiatory measures on himself for this unpardonable act. He renounces kingdom, riches, family, etc, and also gives up hunger and thirst that had caused him to sin against the sage. In fact, he is grateful to them as one would be to a true friend for making him realise what is truly beneficial for any human being. Likewise, the curse of the sage's son that he would die of Takshaka's bite in seven days time is also seen as a blessing; for he is now only bent on making the best use of the limited period of life to get liberated.



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

CM
YK



**GOVERNMENT OF TAMIL NADU
HIGHWAYS DEPARTMENT**
NABARD & Rural Roads Circle, Chengalpattu

TENDER NOTICE
Tender Notice No. 24 / 2019-2020 / SDO / Dt. 05.02.2020

For and on behalf of Governor of Tamil Nadu Percentage tender through online only will be received upto 12.03.2020, 15.00 hours by the Superintending Engineer (H) NABARD & Rural Roads, Chengalpattu Circle for Packages No.4 to 8 in respect of Vellore (H) NABARD & Rural Roads Division, under Upgradation of Panchayat Union roads and Panchayat Roads to ODR Standards.

Details of Name of works, approximate value of works, EMD, availability of tender documents and all other details are available from 14.02.2020 onwards in the Government website <https://tnitenders.gov.in>. If any changes / corrections / amendments etc to the tender, it will be published on the above Government website only.

Superintending Engineer (H)
NABARD & Rural Roads Circle, Chengalpattu-1

DIPR/759/Tender/2020

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1800 102 1878
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customerservice@thehindu.co.in



**GOVERNMENT OF TAMILNADU
HIGHWAYS DEPARTMENT**
Chennai Construction and Maintenance Circle

TENDER NOTICE
Tender Notice No. 33/2019-20/HDO, dated 05.02.2020

For and on behalf of the Governor of Tamil Nadu, Schedule tender through online only will be received upto 11.03.2020 11.00 AM by the Superintending Engineer (H), C&M, Chennai Circle for works under Tsunami Rehabilitation Programme for 2007-08 pertaining to Thiruvallur (H) C&M Division.

Details of works, approximate value of works, EMD, availability of tender documents and all other details will be available from 07.02.2020 onwards in the Government website <https://tnitenders.gov.in>. If any Changes / Corrections in the tender, it will be published in the above Government website only.

Superintending Engineer (H)
C&M, Chennai Circle

GOVERNMENT OF TAMILNADU TECHNICAL EDUCATION DEPARTMENT
TENDER NOTICE - HIGH RISK CLASS ROOMS - TWO COVERS SYSTEM - ITEM WISE RATE

For and on behalf of The Governor of Tamilnadu: Two cover system sealed Tenders viz., Pre Qualification Bid and Financial Bid in separate covers both inserted in single cover will be received upto 3.00 pm on 11.03.2020 from the PWD Registered Contractors by the Chief Engineer, PWD, Technical Education Circle, Chennai 25, for the following work and Pre-qualification Bid will be opened on the same day at 3.30 PM.

Sl. No.	Name of Work	Approx. Value	EMD	Period of Completion
1	Construction of additional class room buildings in VSS Government Arts College at Puttikurichi in Swamimalai District.	Rs.324 lakhs	Rs. 172000/-	12 months
2	Construction of 20 class room and 3 Laboratory building in Government Arts College, Kullaihal in Karur District.	Rs.434 lakhs	Rs. 227000/-	12 months
3	Construction of 22 class rooms and 2 Laboratories building for HH Rajah's college at Pudukkottai.	Rs.455 lakhs	Rs. 238000/-	12 months
4	Construction of 20 class rooms and 4 laboratories building in Government Arts and Science College for women at Barur in Krishnagiri District.	Rs.500 lakhs	Rs. 260000/-	12 months
5	Construction of additional 11 class room with 1 Laboratory and 1 Library building upgradation of additional one laboratory in first floor and 2 class rooms in second floor over the existing laboratory building and upgradation of additional 1 laboratory in second floor over the existing eastern wing of main building under RUSA in Thiruvi Government Arts College at Thiruvanur District.	Rs.435 lakhs	Rs. 228000/-	10 months
6	Construction of Nine class rooms and 2 Laboratories and Library building in Kamrajgar Government Arts College at Surandal in Tenkasi District.	Rs.375 lakhs	Rs. 198000/-	12 months
7	Construction of High/Lab, strength of materials, lab and compound wall in Anna University Regional campus at Keezhakulukkudi, Madurai.	Rs.267 lakhs	Rs. 144000/-	5 months

Note: Contractor Class: I above 75 lakhs. Last Date for receipt of tenders: Upto 3.00 PM on 11.03.2020. Date of opening of tender: at 3.30PM on the same day. Date of availability of tender documents: 06.02.2020 to 10.03.2020 in CE office. The cost of tender Schedule Rs.1500/- + GST 1800/- Tender documents & other details are download in www.tnitenders.gov.in at free of cost. Any other details can be had from the office of the Chief Engineer, PWD, Technical Education circle, Chennai 25 during working hours. EMD in favour of Executive Engineer, Technical Education Division, (S.No.1 & 7) Madurai, (S.No.2 & 3) Tiruchy, (S.No.4) Villor, (S.No.5) Thanjavur, (S.No.6) Trichy.

DIPR/733/Tender/2020
Chief Engineer, PWD, Technical Education Circle, Chennai 25

ANDHRA PRADESH POWER GENERATION CORPORATION LIMITED
VIDYUTH SOUDHA :: VIJAYAWADA
TENDER NOTICE
NTI.No 95/2019-2020/CE/OS&MD/NTTPS(A&MM)

APGENCO invites Open Tenders for "Outsourcing of services for operation & maintenance and up keeping works pertaining to A&MM circle, Dr.NTTPS for the period from 01.04.2020 to 31.03.2021" through A.P e-Procurement platform. Estimated value of work : Rs.59,36,883.12, Tender Schedule Available Time & Date : From 30.01.2020 on 6:00 PM, Bid Submission Closing Date & Time : Up to 10:30 AM on 24.02.2020. For further details visit website : [www.apgenco.gov.in](http://apgenco.gov.in) or <https://tender.apgenco.gov.in>

RAIL WHEEL FACTORY
YELAHANKA, BENGALURU - 560 064.
Website: www.rwf.indianrailways.gov.in
TENDER NOTICE
No.: RWF/S/P1/006/2019-20 dated 04.02.2020

On behalf of the President of India, Principal Chief Materials Manager invites Electronic Tenders from Interested Vendors for supply of the following items on the Indian Railways E-Portal - www.reps.gov.in. The tender Documents and the Corrigenda to the Tenders, if any, will be available on the Portal only.

SL.No.	Tender No.	Due Date	Short Description	Qty.
1	P1201086	24.02.2020	630 MM Dia solid Driving Wheel Assembly for RWF drawing	8 sets
2	P1201092	27.02.2020	Silico Manganese to RWF Specification	360000 kgs

PRINCIPAL CHIEF MATERIALS MANAGER

TIRUMALA TIRUPATI DEVASTHANAMS: TIRUPATI VIGILANCE & SECURITY DEPARTMENT e-TENDER NOTICE

e-tenders were invited to engage the Security Staff/Man Power Entrustment of Security Services under man power contract by inviting tenders through online (e-Tender) to "Entrustment of Security Services Under Man Power Contract at S.V.Temple & TTD Information Centre, Chennai, VVR Dharmasala, Royapettah, Chennai, TTD Information Centre, Kanchi, TTD Information Centre, Vellore & TTD Information Centre, Madurai".

DATE OF OPENING TENDER: Pre-Bid Meeting: 11-02-2020;

Date of Tender Opening: 14-02-2020 @ 03:00 PM.

Tender documents can be downloaded from the website: <https://tender.apereproc.gov.in>. For further details contact phone No.0877-2264079, 2264555, FAX:2264554 and mail ID: cvsofficecttd@gmail.com

Roc.No.RP4/13915/advt.No.408/PRO/2020.DT. 05-02-2020 EXECUTIVE OFFICER

TAMILNADU NEWSPRINT AND PAPERS LIMITED
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Phone No.04324-277001 (10 lines), Extn. 4278/4206

NOTICE INVITING BIDS

Design, Manufacture and Supply of twin shaft Shredder of 5 TPH Capacity for TNPL - LSF (Mini-Cement Plant)

Bidders may request the tender document at the above address by post/mail. Detailed NIB may be viewed in websites: www.tnitenders.gov.in / www.tnpl.com

Due date for submission : 26th February, 2020.

DIPR/741/Tender/2020

TNPL - Maker of bagasse based eco-friendly Paper

SAINIK SCHOOL BIJAPUR - 586102 (KARNATAKA)

TENDER NOTICE SUPPLIES / SERVICES - 2020-2021

1. Separate sealed tenders are invited for the bulk supply and services of items for academic year 2020-2021. Tenders / Contractors with GST / TIN / Service Tax Numbers only to apply.

GROUP-A (Two Bid) GROUP-B (Single Bid) GROUP-C (Single Bid)

(a) Fresh Vegetables	(a) Printing Contract	(a) Clothing Items
(b) Fresh Fruits	(b) Stationery Items	(b) Uniform Items
(c) Potato & Onion	(c) Sanitary & Hygiene Items	(c) Shoes (Leather & Tennis)
(d) Chicken, Mutton	(d) Repair of Mattresses & Pillow Contract	(d) Sports Items
(e) Eggs	(e) Barber Contract	(f) Supply of Cement
(f) Dry Rations	(f) Electrical Items	(g) Hiring of Transportation / Vehicles
(g) Sweets & Soft Drinks	(g) Thrift Shop	(h) Hiring of Sound System & Decoration Items
(h) Animal Ration	(h) Washing Contract (Dhobhi)	(i) Hiring of Shyananas, Sidewalk & Runner Mat (k)
(i) Fish	(j) General Carpentry Items	(k) Contract for labour charges for Painting

2. Cost of the Tender form is Rs 3000/- each for Group 'A' and Rs 2000/- for Group 'B' & 'C' item. Separate Tender Form is to be obtained for each supply / services. Detail tender specification may be obtained from school website www.ssbj.in. Tender forms will be available 06 Feb 2020 to 26 Feb 2020. Interested contractor can download the tender forms through website: www.ssbj.in, the tenderer have to pay the cost of Tender Form Rs 3000/- each for Group 'A',and Rs 2000/- for Group-'B' & 'C' item respectively in the form of non-refundable Dd in favour of Principal Sainik School Bijapur (State Bank of India, Sainik School Campus Branch Code - 3163).

3. Last Date for receipt of tenders in sealed cover with samples is 02 March 2020 up to 1300 hrs. Tender under Group 'A',B' will not be accepted without EMD. EMD is not required in respect of Group 'C' items. Tenderers / Contractors with GST/TIN/Service Tax Numbers only to apply.

4. Principal reserves the right to accept or reject tenders without assigning any reasons thereof.

NOTE: As per section 51 of KGST Act 2017 a tax at the rate of two percent (1% CGST & 1% SGST) will be deducted as applicable.

Sd/- Principal
Sainik School Bijapur

Date: 03 Feb 2020

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DEPARTMENT OF ANIMAL HUSBANDRY AND VETERINARY SERVICES

Bengaluru - 560 001

No.: CAH/VMS/SSHVE/Short Term Re-Tender/2019-20

Date: 05-02-2020

TENDER NOTIFICATION

(e-Procurement Mode Only)

The Commissioner of Animal Husbandry & Veterinary Services, Government of Karnataka, Bengaluru hereby invites Short Term Tenders through e-Procurement (Website: <https://eproc.karnataka.gov.in>) from eligible tenderers, for the Supply of Veterinary Equipments to Super Speciality Hospitals / Speciality Hospitals / Polyclinics & Mobile Veterinary Clinics for the Department of Animal Husbandry and Veterinary Services through e-Procurement for the year 2019-20.

Interested eligible tenderers may obtain further information from the Deputy Director, Veterinary Medical Stores, Hebbal, Bengaluru - 560 024. Complete tender documents can be viewed by visiting Website: <https://eproc.karnataka.gov.in> from 05-02-2020.

Tenderers can upload all the necessary documents accompanied by Earnest Money Deposit through e-Procurement Portal from 05-02-2020 to 13-02-2020 till 16.00 hours.

The Technical Bid of tenders will be Opened on 15-02-2020 at 11.00 A.M. onwards in the presence of tenderers or their authorized representative who choose to attend in the Office of the Commissioner, Animal Husbandry and Veterinary Services, Pashupalaana Bhavana, Bellary Road, Hebbal, Bengaluru - 560 024. Complete tender documents

can be viewed by visiting Website: <https://eproc.karnataka.gov.in> from 04-02-2020.

Tenderers can upload all the necessary documents accompanied by Earnest Money Deposit through e-Procurement Portal from 04-02-2020 to 19-03-2020 till 17.30 hours.

The Technical Bid of tenders will be Opened on 21-03-2020 at 11.00 A.M. onwards in the presence of tenderers or their authorized representative who choose to attend in the Office of the Deputy Director, Veterinary Medical Store, Animal Husbandry & Veterinary Services, Pashupalaana Bhavana, Bellary Road, Hebbal, Bengaluru - 560 024.

Interested eligible tenderers may obtain further information from the Office of the Deputy Director, Veterinary Medical Store, Animal Husbandry & Veterinary Services, Pashupalaana Bhavana, Bellary Road, Hebbal, Bengaluru - 560 024.

Sd/- Member Secretary
Tender Inviting Authority

DIPR/Bengaluru/R.O. No.2427/2019-20

DIPR/Bengaluru/R.O. No.2425/2019-20

MARKET WATCH

	05-02-2020	% CHANGE
Sensex	41,143	0.87
US Dollar	71.25	0.03
Gold	40,871	-0.95
Brent oil	55.64	1.68

NIFTY 50

	PRICE	CHANGE
Adani Ports	366.60	-5.90
Asian Paints	1873.50	-17.80
Axis Bank	724.05	9.05
Bajaj Auto.	3161.50	-1.30
Bajaj Finance	9591.40	56.50
Bharti Airtel	4528.20	8.95
BPCL	533.35	14.45
Britannia Ind.	501.70	23.20
Cipla	3255.95	23.45
Coal India	447.55	-0.90
Dr Reddys Lab.	3133.35	-10.50
Eicher Motors	19487.05	-25.60
GAIL (India)	120.95	2.05
Grasim Ind.	799.90	6.20
HCL Tech.	595.60	9.10
HDFC	2391.65	45.70
HDFC Bank	1244.65	14.85
Hero MotoCorp	2373.25	-8.80
Hindalco	196.30	7.05
Hind Unilever	2160.30	4.70
ICICI Bank	539.10	8.30
IndusInd Bank	1272.80	0.15
Bharti InfraNet	246.05	6.00
Infosys	784.55	-3.30
Indian Oil Corp	114.70	0.90
ITC	216.45	0.80
JSW Steel	269.25	10.90
Kotak Bank	1689.75	-8.55
L&T	1310.05	18.30
M&M	584.35	7.45
Maruti Suzuki	7040.90	-158.70
Nestle India Ltd.	16384.85	-70.75
NTPC	111.20	-0.80
ONGC	106.80	0.65
PowerGrid Corp	189.35	-5.00
Reliance Ind.	1448.50	22.10
State Bank	311.00	4.75
Sun Pharma	426.25	0.60
Tata Motors	183.75	18.05
Tata Steel	475.05	23.15
TCS	2146.55	38.80
Tech Mahindra	814.05	2.95
Titan	1279.85	4.05
UltraTech Cement	4471.80	-2.45
UPL	537.45	14.85
Vedanta	143.10	4.55
Wipro	242.25	2.00
YES Bank	37.60	2.65
Zee Entertainment	226.65	-17.85

EXCHANGE RATES

CURRENCY	TT BUY	TT SELL
US Dollar	71.01	71.33
Euro	78.27	78.62
British Pound	92.68	93.10
Japanese Yen (100)	64.72	65.01
Chinese Yuan	10.18	10.23
Swiss Franc	73.00	73.34
Singapore Dollar	51.48	51.72
Canadian Dollar	53.44	53.70
Malaysian Ringgit	17.23	17.33

Source: Indian Bank

BULLION RATES CHENNAI

February 05 rates in rupees per gramme		
Previous rates in parentheses		
Retail Silver (1g).....	49.4.....	(49.7)
22 ct gold (1g).....	3837.....	(3856)

Source: Indian Bank

Cooperative banks to come under Reserve Bank purview

Regulator gets powers to supersede board of any such bank in financial distress

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

In the wake of the recent Punjab & Maharashtra Cooperative (PMC) Bank crisis, the Union Cabinet on Wednesday approved amendments to the Banking Regulation Act to bring 1,540 cooperative banks under the Reserve Bank of India (RBI).

Cooperative banks have 8,600 account holders, with a total deposit of about ₹5 lakh crore.

Union Minister Prakash Javadekar told reporters that administrative matters would continue to be under the Registrar, Cooperative. However, cooperative banks would be regulated under



In the PMC Bank case, RBI had to step in after massive irregularities were detected in its loan accounts. ■REUTERS

the RBI's banking guidelines. Their auditing would also be done as per its norms.

Qualifications would be laid down for appointments, including that of Chief Executive Officers. Prior permission from the RBI would be

required for the appointment of key positions. The regulator would deal with issues such as loan waivers.

The RBI would also have powers to supersede the board of any cooperative bank in financial distress.

These measures would be implemented in a phased manner, said Mr. Javadekar.

The proposed amendments, along with the government's decision to increase the insurance cover on bank deposits from ₹1 lakh to ₹5 lakh, have been brought to strengthen the financial stability of cooperative banks and boost public confidence in the banking system.

In the PMC Bank case, the RBI had to step in last year after massive irregularities in its loan accounts were detected. The regulator had to place a withdrawal limit for account holders, which led to a major public strife and protests by them.

Govt. reviewing dividend tax rules for real estate, infra investment trusts

Industry seeks meeting with FinMin to convey impact on plans to raise \$100 bn

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

The government is reviewing the negative implications of the scrapping of the Dividend Distribution Tax, announced in the Union Budget 2020-21, for investors in real estate investment trusts and infrastructure investment trusts, also known as REITs and InvITs.

Dividend income was tax-free in the hands of REIT and InvIT investors so far, making it attractive for high-net-worth investors to put money in these trusts. Now, the dividend income will be rendered taxable in the hands of the investors.

"(REITs and InvITs) have



Changing gear: If there are some anomalies, the Centre will address them, says the Revenue Secretary. ■P.V. SIVAKUMAR

been successful attempts at getting investments for real estate and other infrastructure," Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman said in a

meeting with the CII National Council on late Tuesday evening. "We don't intend to tax or burden InvITs," she clarified in response to con-

cerns raised by CII's taxation committee chairman Rajeev Memani.

Revenue Secretary Ajay Bhushan Pandey said the government had received some representations on the taxability of REITs and InvITs on Monday. "So we are looking at that and if there are some anomalies, we will see how to address them," he said.

Sources said senior Finance Ministry officials, including representatives from the Department of Economic Affairs, may also discuss the matter with industry executives over the Finance Minister's three-day tour of Mumbai, Chennai and Kolkata starting this Friday.

Too early to take a call on Air India: Tatas

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
GREATER NOIDA

Tata Sons chairman N. Chandrasekaran said on Wednesday it is "too early" to take a call on Air India, in which the government has decided to sell its entire 100% stake.

"It is too early..." Mr. Chandrasekaran told PTI when asked if the Tata Group would be putting in a bid for the Air India stake purchase, at the Auto Expo here.

The comments from the Tata Sons chief come in the wake of reports appearing in a section of the media saying that the Tatas appeared to be moving closer to a decision to bid for Air India in partnership with Singapore Airlines.

Joining the debate, his party colleague Shashi Tharoor said the bill equated an honest taxpayer with the dishonest tax payer and violated the principle of equality.

The Finance Minister, however, pointed out that the contents can be debated later.



Nirmala Sitharaman

but would have a specific timeline. She said the bill would reduce the litigation expenditure for the government and generate revenue.

Opposing the introduction, Mr. Chowdhury said the bill's name was not only an attempt to impose Hindi but will also hurt the tax collection efforts.

Ex-Yes Bank director seeks RBI action on CEO

Alleges governance, compliance issues

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
MUMBAI

He said discussion on his 'fit and proper' status was not in the board meeting agenda which he received on January 9.

Board meet
The board meeting was on January 10.

"This was done intentionally and purposefully to divert the attention from the regulators, stock exchanges, media and public at large from factual situation and his (Mr. Gill's) own failure on various counts, major being zero progress on capital raising created by Mr. Gill in the name of [Reserve Bank] for which I am initiating separate legal proceeding against him," the letter added.

Wipro's next CEO must fit in with Rishad, company culture

'Neemuchwala made wise calls, but a lot more is to be done'

MINI TEJASWI
BENGALURU

It is 'extremely critical' for tech firm Wipro to go for a strong leader who can gel well with company chairman Rishad Premji. And, the person will also have to fit in with its 'strong' culture, said industry watchers.

Peter Bendor-Samuel, founder and CEO of U.S.-based research and consulting firm, Everest Group, said the challenge for the junior Mr. Premji is to find a strong operator who would work well with him and fit into Wipro's working culture.

"This person, more importantly, should be able to drive growth as well by building further on the strong operations that Abid has put in place," said Mr. Bendor-Samuel. Wipro's outgoing CEO Abidali Neemuchwala made wise calls, but a lot more is to be done'



Rishad Premji did bring in necessary changes in the company in his four years at the helm. "He took a hard decision to walk away from low-value deals and turned the company's nose in the right direction. There is a lot more that needs to be done, for Wipro to catch up with competition," said Hansa Iyengar, senior analyst at Ovum, a U.K.-based consulting firm. Wipro was one of

the first Indian IT companies to talk about 'digital' and pivot its business towards it. Mr. Neemuchwala is seen as having laid the foundation for the company's digital business, according to analysts.

"However, [Wipro] was slow in making necessary investments and has lagged peers who are witnessing double-digit growth in their digital businesses. Slowing growth and declining margins mean less money to invest, which means lesser innovation, and that is a vicious cycle eating away at Wipro," said Ms. Iyengar.

Wipro has pockets of effective delivery, in areas such as energy, manufacturing and BPO, but needed to work harder on where it really wanted to excel, said Phil Fersht, chief tech analyst and CEO, HFS Research.

Services index hits 7-year high in Jan.

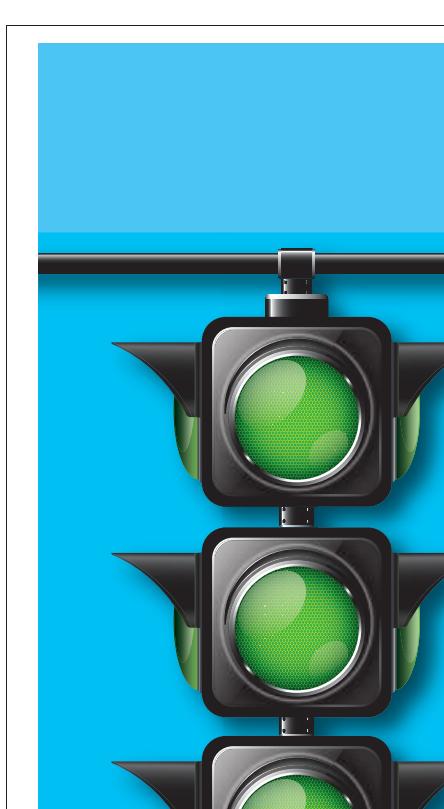
PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NEW DELHI

India's services sector activity surged to a seven-year high in January driven by sharp increase in new business orders, leading to job creation and business optimism amid favourable market conditions, a monthly survey said on Wednesday.

The IHS Markit India Services Business Activity Index rose from 53.3 in December to 55.5 in January, signalling the strongest upturn in output in seven years.

New work intake also expanded to the greatest extent in seven years. Fresh business orders were mainly generated domestically, as exports decreased at the start of the year.

A number of panellists mentioned weaker demand from China, Europe and the U.S.



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- Vocabulary - Words in the Indian Constitution, words relevant for exam preparation, etc.

Written Exam

IN BRIEF



Renault unveils Triber with 'Energy' engine

GREATER NOIDA

Renault on Wednesday unveiled the Triber Easy-R AMT. The new Triber comes fitted with the 'Energy' engine, a 1-litre petrol version. "The AMT technology is becoming a popular choice across segments and we are happy to build on our portfolio with the Renault Triber Easy-R AMT," said Venkatram Mamillapalle, country CEO and MD, Renault India.

Hyundai takes covers off New 2020 Tucson SUV

GREATER NOIDA

Hyundai Motor India on Wednesday unveiled the new 2020 Tucson at the Auto Expo. "Tucson has redefined the premium SUV segment with its class-leading features and unmatched performance... The feature-loaded New 2020 Tucson, powered by 2.0 litre petrol and diesel BS-VI engines, will further strengthen Hyundai's dominance in the SUV segment in India," S.S. Kim, MD & CEO, Hyundai Motor India Ltd., said.

Mercedes showcases ₹2.42-crore coupe

GREATER NOIDA

Mercedes-Benz India on Wednesday launched the AMG GT 63S 4M with a price tag of ₹2.42 crore (ex-showroom). The carmaker also showcased upcoming products of the brand, including the AMG A35 limousine and the EQC. Martin Schwenk, MD & CEO, said the introduction of the A-Class limousine was a strategic decision that would enhance the company's strong sedan segment.

M&M, Tata Motors up the ante on EVs

Mahindra launches electric version of KUV 100, Tatas unveil line-up of 4 EVs to hit market in two years

YUTHIKA BHARGAVA
GREATER NOIDA

Heating up the competition in the electric vehicle segment, homegrown Mahindra and Mahindra on Wednesday launched the electric version of its KUV 100 hatchback with a price tag of ₹8.25 lakh (ex showroom Delhi, post FAME benefits) at the Auto Expo 2020 – making the eKUV 100 the most affordable electric passenger vehicle.

As per the company, the eKUV 100 will offer peak power output of 40kW, torque of 120 Nm and a range of 147 km, which is ideal for city commuters. It will also come with an automatic transmission option, and can be fast charged to 80% within 60 minutes.

Further upping the ante in



Powering up: Pawan Goenka, right, with the Mahindra Funster EV Concept car at the Auto Expo 2020. ■ KAMAL NARANG

the EV space, the company has promised two more vehicles in the space in the next financial year – the electric version of its SUV XUV300 and Atom, which is a last mile urban mobility solution. The eXUV300 is expected to come with a powerful motor and a large battery capacity, ensuring a long range.

Plans for e-bus
Meanwhile, another home-grown firm Tata Motors announced that it plans to launch four electric cars over the next two years. Tata Motors, which recently launched the electric variant of its compact SUV Neon, also plans to roll out an electric 12-meter, low-floor bus and a 9-tonne ultra electric truck.

Stating that affordability is the guiding principle of the company in the EV category, Mahindra and Mahindra Managing Director Pawan Goenka said, "It is our firm belief that shared mobility would drive large scale adoption of electric vehicles and hence our product offerings

would continue to redefine shared mobility space. We intend to offer widest range of vehicles to meet the needs of shared mobility."

OEMs must set up infra

He further added that it is now time that OEMs also take the responsibility of building infrastructure for the electric vehicles and not put the onus just on the government.

Mr. Goenka added that till now the company has invested around ₹1,700 crore on development of electric vehicles, which includes technology, infrastructure and products.

Additionally, ₹500 crore is being invested to set up a new R&D centre at Bengaluru and in adding capacity in Pune.

fastest growing major economy, and the auto market is promising, making it a preferred investment destination for most auto companies... We firmly believe that India will become one of the top three auto markets in the world in the next 3-5 years."

The company also plans to launch a new brand Great Wall EV, in the country, besides working on battery research and development and manufacturing in India to reinforce and accelerate India's Electrification Strategy.

Speaking at the Auto Expo, Mr. Brar added that the company also intends to use manufacturing capabilities in India to export to other countries.

Great Wall Motors to invest \$1 billion in India

To employ 3,000 in a phased manner

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
GREATER NOIDA

The latest entrant into the Indian automobile market – Great Wall Motors, the largest manufacturer of SUVs in China – on Wednesday committed an investment of \$1 billion (about ₹7,000 crore) in the country.

The investment will be done in a phased manner in areas, including in the manufacturing plant, vehicle research and development and production of power batteries and electric drives.

The company said it expects to provide direct employment to 3,000 over the investment period.

Hardeep Singh Brar, Director (Sales & Marketing) at GWM India said, "India has become one of the world's

No plan to set up new unit now: Hyundai

South Korean automaker eyes exports of two lakh cars in 2020

N. ANAND
GREATER NOIDA

Hyundai Motor India Ltd. (HMIL) will decide on setting up a third plant only after three or four years, said a top official.

"We will manage with the current manufacturing facilities for the next three to four years," said S.S. Kim, managing director and chief executive officer, HMIL. "Last year, we produced 6.95 lakh cars against our annual installed capacity of 7.65 lakh cars," he said.

HMIL has two car manufacturing plants at Sriperumbudur, near Chennai that caters to domestic and export markets. During 2019, it exported over 1.80 lakh cars. It plans to hit the two-lakh mark this year.



Asserting that it might take two to three years for the automobile industry to reach the previous high, he said they would manage the situation by tweaking production and optimising products, among other things.

Agreeing that it would take at least two years to build a new plant, he said the automaker would take immediate measure to set up a new plant if it saw growth potential.

Asked about the market

conditions for 2020, he said: "The growth in the first half for HMIL will be flat due to unfavourable economic conditions, safety norms and BS VI transition. We might see some growth in the second half."

Denying that Kia motors was giving a tough fight, he said the market was too big and both the companies had adopted different sets of strategies.

On electric vehicles, he reiterated the company was building a mass market product which would be affordable. Besides, it was scouting for local partners to bring down the cost through localisation.

(The correspondent is in Greater Noida at the invitation of the company)

Skoda launches 5 SUVs, to continue India investments

Eyes increase in touch-points from 85 to 200 by year 2023

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
GREATER NOIDA

Skoda Auto India announced the launch of five new Sport Utility Vehicles (SUVs) for the Indian market.



Skoda Auto India brand director Zac Hollis with Vision IN sport utility vehicle. ■ SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

and deliveries will be made from April 2020," he said.

1-lakh brand

"Our long-term plan is to become a one-lakh brand in India. We will continue to in-

vest in India", he said. In this regard, the company said it planned to more than double its touch points from 85 to 200 by the year 2023 in 150 cities and by tripling marketing investments.

VW India showcases 3 big SUVs

N. ANAND
GREATER NOIDA

Volkswagen India showcased three of its biggest Sport Utility Vehicles (SUV) at the Auto Expo 2020 here on Wednesday.

The SUVs comprised Taigun, T-Roc and Tiguan Allspace.

"We are moving forward. It is the beginning of a new era in India," said Steffen Knapp, director, Volkswagen Passenger Cars India, while unveiling the cars at a event. "We are going to invest massively in India and our aim is to capture 3% market share in five years," he said.

A Sonet for the road



Kia showcased the Sonet, a new concept for a global SUV at the Auto Expo in Greater Noida. It will be developed further ahead of a launch in India in the second half of 2020. ■ KAMAL NARANG

Maruti Suzuki plans new SUV project

MD & CEO Ayukawa says growth will pick up once shift to BS-VI is complete

YUTHIKA BHARGAVA
GREATER NOIDA

Amid increasing competition in the SUV segment, particularly from new entrants like MG and Kia, the country's largest car maker Maruti Suzuki is working on a new SUV project, its Managing Director and CEO Kenichi Ayukawa said.

"We have to plan for the future. We are planning some new SUV project. But we are looking for a specific area to develop a new product," Mr. Ayukawa told The Hindu. He, however, did not elaborate.

Asked about the expected revival in the market, Mr. Ay-



Looks to die for: Maruti Suzuki unveiled the 'Concept Futuro-E' in the SUV segment at the Auto Expo. ■ KAMAL NARANG

ukawa said he expected the market to face difficulties till March due to the transition from BS-IV emission norms to new BS-VI emission

norms. "Fortunately, we are already shifting to BS-VI... we expect improvement April onwards. I believe 2020-21 will be better than 2019-20.

Talking about electric vehicles, Mr. Ayukawa said, "It will take time... normal customers cannot afford to purchase EVs as of now. A lot them don't have parking space, it is difficult to charge at night... there is no charging infrastructure. There are still a lot of problems... gradually, we have to set up an environment and then consider mass production."

Mindset will shift from 'savings' to consumption

Indian luxury car market to see big growth: Mercedes-Benz

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
GREATER NOIDA

Matthias Luehrs, Head, Region Overseas, at Mercedes-Benz Cars on Wednesday said that the German luxury brand sees 'big growth potential' in India, driven by the introduction of a wide range of products, besides an expected shift in society towards being consumption-driven, as opposed to savings-driven currently.

Replying to a query on the luxury market having been stagnant in India for the past couple of years, Mr. Luehrs noted that with the exception of China and Europe, the luxury market has stagnated globally due to political and economic situations.

However, "we are sure that after a stagnation always comes the mountain again... we are very bullish and optimistic that in India we will see the mountain."

Martin Schwenk, Managing Director & CEO, Mercedes-Benz India added that the company expects that in



the future, the generation that is growing up now will want to spend earnings on themselves."

The German luxury carmaker, which will kick off its electric vehicle journey in India with the electric SUV EQC model in April, said the company will be importing the car as of now.

"We are introducing the EQC in the (Indian) market. We are quite bullish on this segment. What we see today is a GST advantage in selling fully EVs," Mr. Luehrs said.

Sundaram-Clayton Limited

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CIN : L35999TN1962PLC004792

STATEMENT OF UNAUDITED STANDALONE & CONSOLIDATED FINANCIAL RESULTS FOR THE QUARTER AND NINE MONTHS ENDED 31ST DECEMBER 2019 (Rs. in Crores)

S. No	Particulars	Standalone		Consolidated	
		Quarter ended	Nine Months ended	Quarter ended	Nine Months ended
1	Total Income	307.65	1,029.37	516.90	5,004.85
2	Net Profit before tax (before Exceptional Items)	4.55	18.72	59.48	282.30
3	Net Profit before tax (after Exceptional Items)	0.24	7.34	59.48	201.95
4	Net Profit after tax (after Exceptional Items)	0.41	6.65	50.28	158.64
5	Total Comprehensive Income for the period [Comprising Profit / (Loss) for the period (after tax) and Other Comprehensive Income (after tax)]	14.90	(19.44)	44.64	188.93
6	Equity share Capital (Face value of Rs.5/-each) (in Rs.)	10.12	10.12	10.12	10.12
7	Earnings Per Share (Face value of Rs.5/-each) (not annualised) (in Rs.) (i) Basic (ii) Diluted	0.20 0.20	3.29 3.29	24.85 24.85	43.91 43.91
				522.10	162.07
				204.43	53.06

Notes:

- The above is an extract of the detailed format of financial results filed with the Stock Exchanges under Regulation 33 of the SEBI (Listing Obligations and Disclosure Requirements) Regulations, 2015. The full format of the unaudited financial results are available on the Stock exchanges websites (www.bseindia.com and www.nseindia.com) and on Company's website (www.sundaram-clayton.com).
- The Standalone figures of Total income for the quarter and nine months period ended 31st December 2018 includes dividend received from a subsidiary of Rs. 57.27 Cr. For the quarter and nine months period ended 31st December 2019, dividend declared by the subsidiary is yet to be received.
- The Company has prepared these standalone and consolidated financial results in accordance with the Companies (Indian Accounting Standards) Rules, 2015 (Ind AS) prescribed under Section 133 of the Companies Act, 2013.
- Effective 1st April 2019, the Company has adopted Ind AS 116 "Leases", using the modified retrospective method and applied the Standard to its leases retrospectively and has recognised the effect of the cumulative adjustment in the opening balance of retained earnings, on the date of initial application (1st April 2019). Comparative numbers in the previous year have not been restated.

Place : Chennai

Date : 5th February 2020For Sundaram-Clayton Limited
Sd/-
Chairman

In the Misaal Hyderabad project, artist Rouble Nagi uses community art as a tool for social change

Walls that speak



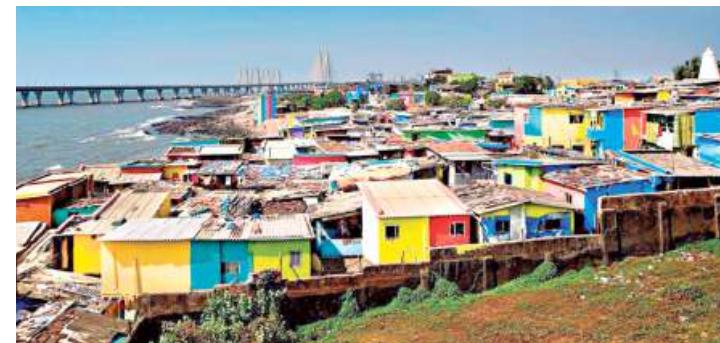
NEERAJA MURTHY

On a quiet Saturday morning, residents of Babu Jagjivan Rao Nagar in Film Nagar saw the arrival of unusual visitors. The group was of Mumbai-based artist Rouble Nagi and her team of volunteers, armed with colours, rollers and loads of enthusiasm; they were set to give the area an artistic makeover. Their task was a part of Misaal Hyderabad, a social welfare initiative of the Rouble Nagi Art Foundation (RNAF) and Phoenix Foundation (the CSR arm of the Phoenix Group). *Misaal* means example, indicating the initiative leads by example.

Out with the old

The walls that looked worn out now don splashes of colour. But beautification is not the only aim at Misaal. With community art as a medium, the focus is to improve the living conditions and surroundings. "Misaal...is not only about painting walls and graffiti. We promote waste management, education, sanitation, hygiene, skill development among youngsters, and empower women to work even from home," says Rouble Nagi.

An artist and sculptor who works in more than 30 mediums, Rouble doesn't want to be an artist who works for commercial purposes alone. Her passion for art also in-



volves social activism. Project Misaal originated in her hometown, Mumbai, and was born two years ago in Dharavi. The story began when Rouble went to a slum to check on her student who had shifted there.

"I have lived in Mumbai for 20 years but had never seen this slum; I was overwhelmed. Misaal Mumbai was near Sea Link and most people use it to commute," she says.

It was easy to connect with people through art and colours. Once Rouble and her team began beautification, residents were curious about this sudden spurt of colour. Some asked if the painting was to mask their dirty houses or for a movie or TV serial shooting. The four coloured walls brought a huge change in their mindset. She recalls, "I was colouring it because I wanted them to keep their area

clean. I thought 'Even if you live in a slum, you have a right to have a beautiful home.' As work progressed, many residents had tears and said, 'You brought Diwali to us in January'.

With art as a medium, the initiative also includes workshops that focus on neighbourhoods and on how to minimise the use of plastic. The cleanliness drive in Mumbai attracted teams of doctors, lawyers and those working in the fashion and music industry who volunteered to work on weekends.

In with the new
The colourful and vibrant scenario from Sea Link caught the attention of celebrities like Amitabh Bachchan and Aamir Khan,

who tweeted about it. "They didn't know it is my work, but they tweeted about it; that is how you bring in change," says Rouble.

Artwork on walls are also inspired by different themes. For World Water Day, the team joined hands with UNICEF to talk about the water crisis. Involving residents to offer suggestions and feedback brings in a positive change. "We ask if there is any favourite freedom fighter, sports person or colour they want to see on their walls. We want that participation from them."

Thanks to a father in the Army, Rouble travelled with her family across India, meeting different kinds of people. She says, "Being a creative person, I wanted to explore and learn

Splash of colours (Clockwise from above) Coloured walls at Film Nagar; and near Worli in Mumbai; art work depicting the water crisis; and (below) artist Rouble Nagi ■ SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

Positive impact

■ "Together we can bring a change," says Suresh Chukkapalli, managing trustee of Phoenix Foundation on their CSR initiative Misaal Hyderabad in collaboration with Rouble Nagi Art Foundation. The first phase of Misaal...will be spread across a month and intends to impact and empower many lives. "Colours and works of art have a power to enlighten our ways and lives," he says. With this belief, the company also organises painting competitions for its construction workforce.

and knew my art was not limited to doing commissioned works. I want to use my art to bring in change."

Besides Mumbai, the team has worked in Uttarakhand, Rajasthan, and has begun work in Delhi. There are plans to go to Chennai, Gujarat and Assam. Anyone can volunteer and take part in the drive. "I want people to come out of their homes, add new colours, change their lifestyle, approach and bring joy."

POP-UP**Soundscapes by the lake**

What you can expect at the Udaipur World Music Festival this weekend



Up to 150 musicians from 13 countries will come to the fifth edition of the Vedanta Udaipur World Music Festival, conceptualised and produced by SeHeR this weekend. The festival that began as a two-venue, two-day event, now spills over to three days and three venues – Manji ka Ghat, Fateh Sagar Paal and Gandhi Ground – with We Are The World: Unity in Diversity as the theme.

Sanjeev Bhargava, festival director and founder-director SeHeR (an imaginative initiative in the sphere of the performing and fine arts), first conceived the idea when he visited a festival in Fez, Morocco. A student of Pandit Vinay Chandra Maudgalya who trained him in Hindustani vocal, Bhargava likes to introduce a mix of old names and new artistes. Five years ago, the Rajasthan Government supported his idea to design a festival beyond the capital Jaipur. Bhargava chose Udaipur for the beauty of its Mewari architecture and its lakeside venues. The festival is open to all, free of cost, because "why should someone unable to pay not enjoy it? My idea is to democratise culture."

Bhargava says that the focus of the festival is to bring together two unlikely musicians, two different sounds and meld them. "I have introduced sarangi players to Brazilian musicians, who have then created their own unique style." In this pursuit, Bhargava has brought together another unusual line-up this year. "I travel to smaller towns and villages to listen to the real sounds of a region. The musicians we've invited are not only cultural ambassadors of their genres but also custodians of a rare kind of music."

The festival will open with a tribute to Mahatma Gandhi on his 150th birth anniversary, and feature among others 19-year-old Dalit singer Ginni Mahi from Punjab, whose music is a revelation; Habib Koite who plays West African blues and who I first heard in Senegal in 2010. Music from Kurdistan and Karelian music from Russia are other rare finds." With a footfall of nearly 50,000, the city's mix of the rural and urban, and pleasant weather this time of the year, Bhargava promises to have something for everybody at the festival. "If it is literature for Jaipur, it has to be world music in Udaipur."

Details at [Udaipurworldmusicfestival.com](http://udaipurworldmusicfestival.com), February 7th-9th

DEEPA ALEXANDER

ABHISHEK GULSHAN

In testing times where a naturalist like me is stuck at home, I find solace in the theatrics of two Oriental Magpie-Robins in my backyard, ready to pair up for the breeding season. The males sit on conspicuous perches, raising their beaks and singing incessantly.

They puff up their feathers, fan their tails and swoop down, over the females, who will also do a little dance in the air. Not that the Magpie-Robin (*Copsychus saularis*) is quiet the rest of the year.

The most common call is a whistle, mostly at dawn and the typical harsh hissing *krrshhhh*. You might even see that the tail movement is often synchronised with its call. The species is generally distributed across the Indian subcontinent and it typically avoids dense forest and open plains. It avoids both extremes and likes the in-between of an urban garden, with sunshine and shade.

Here, it sings from the topmost boughs of garden trees in the early morning and the late evening. The Magpie Robin is one of the best songsters in the city, where singing birds are scarce.

The bird dislikes thick undergrowth and is mostly seen hopping along branches or foraging in leaf-litter on the ground for insects such as grasshoppers, crickets, ants, beetles, and insect-larvae, but may sometimes take a fancy to an occasional earthworm or gecko. In the

IN OUR BACKYARD

The SINGING minstrel

The Oriental Magpie-Robin keeps our spirits up when things seem gloomy



A female Oriental Magpie-Robin; (left) a male Oriental Magpie Robin

■ DR. RAJU KASAMBE AND SELVAGANESH. K., ON WIKIMEDIA COMMONS

males are greyish-brown with the white wing-bar being a common feature. Both sexes have brown iris, a black bill (beak), and dark legs.

One way of spotting this bird is its tail movement: It carries its tail very high over the back, will frequently lower and expand it into a fan, then close and jerk it up again over the back.

The Oriental Magpie-Robin's breeding season lasts from the end of March to the end of July and the nest is neatly placed in holes in tree trunks, in gaps in walls and sometimes on the roofs of houses.

It is cup-shaped and is built with grasses, fibre and feathers, with a definitive lining. The depth and compactness of the nest often depends on the size of the hole.

Once the eggs hatch, the females spend their time and effort feeding

the young, while the males are usually on nest watch. Their aggressive behaviour during breeding season helps them defend their territory and safeguard the area against marauders.

These birds were once kept in cages because of their singing, and were also used for fighting matches. Both are now illegal in India, and so a rare occurrence, but the avian pet trade is still prevalent in parts of Southeast Asia. The Oriental Magpie-Robin is the national bird of Bangladesh, where it is known as *doyel/doel* and appears on their currency notes as well.

The writer is the founder of NINOX - Owl About Nature, a nature-awareness initiative. He is the Delhi-NCR reviewer for Ebird, a Cornell University initiative, monitoring rare sightings of birds. He formerly led a programme of WWF India.

PRODUCTS**Welcome home**

Ellementry, a home decor brand that existed in an online avatar and offline in other cities, has launched a store in Gurugram. The almost all-white interiors, with wood and metal accents reflect the contemporary aesthetic of the functional products the store stocks. Situated on the ground floor, across 500 sq ft, the space holds a range of handcrafted kitchenware, tableware, wall, furniture and home décor pieces.

At SG-83, Ground floor, DLF Galleria Market, Gurugram; prices upwards of ₹350

Contact us at delhimetro@thehindu.co.in

5 EVENTS WORTH YOUR WHILE**DANCE****Bharatanatyam**

IHC is hosting Nritya-Swaroop: Exploration within Traditions, a Bharatanatyam performance by Anannya Chatterjee, this evening. Accompanying artistes are: Guru Jayalakshmi Eshwar (*nattuvangam*); Sudha Raghuvaran (*vocals*); Ramamurthy Keshavan (*mridangam*); and Raghuvaran Govindarajan (*flute*).

VENUE: Stein Auditorium, India Habitat Centre

TIME: 7 p.m.

**F&B****Cocktail**

SodaBottleOpenerWala has launched a special bar menu with a wide range of signature and classic cocktails, shots and non-alcoholic beverages. On till 9th February, some of the items include Chai ki Whisky, Tipsy Suzie, Peena Colaba, Rani Toh Pappa Ni, Masala Vodka and WhiskeyWali Coffee.

VENUE: All Delhi/NCR outlets

TIME: 8:30 a.m. - 12:30 a.m.

**EXHIBITION****Sculptures**

Growing Wild, a second solo exhibition of works by Rajesh Ram is currently on display. The show comprises his most recent body of life-size bronze sculptures and oil paintings. Through this series of composite sculptures, the artist delves into stereotypical human and animal behaviour that influences socio-economic structures.

VENUE: Palette Art Gallery, 14, Golf Links

TIME: 11 a.m. - 7 p.m.

**FOOD****Noodle special**

The casual dining restaurant The Darzi Bar and Kitchen has organised a Maggi Fest, which offers various types of Maggi noodles. On till 25th February, this specially curated menu has Rock-n-Roll Maggi, Maa ke Hath Wali Maggi, Bhajiy Maggi, Atya Ayachar Maggi, Mumbai Maggi, all served with a special *adrak chai*.

VENUE: H-55, Outer Circle, Connaught Place

TIME: 12 noon - 12 midnight

**FILM****French drama**

Alliance Française de Delhi will screen *Donne-Moi La Main*, a 2008 French family drama this evening. Directed by Pascal-Alex Vincent, the film follows a pair of 18-year-old identical twin brothers living in France with their father, and their journey to Spain to attend the funeral of the mother they never knew.

VENUE: M.L. Bhartia Auditorium, Lodhi Estate

TIME: 6:30 p.m.

New York-based Nathan Sawaya, who works with toy LEGO bricks, currently has five ongoing solos around the globe that are drawing crowds

VANGMAYI PARAKALA

Nathan Sawaya's art is currently on display in multiple continents at the same time. From the end of 2019, until the first quarter of 2020, he has his work showing at the New York Hall of Science and the Houston Museum of Natural Science in the United States; at the Lucas Nogueira Garcez Pavilion in São Paulo, Brazil; at the Great Northern Warehouse in Manchester, United Kingdom; and at the Tank Shanghai Museum in China.

This is, by no account, a mean feat. All of these ongoing shows are solo outings of Sawaya's travelling exhibit, called The Art of The Brick. Though he's experimented and worked with various media, including clay, wire, bottle caps, and candy, the artist, also known as the Brickartist, works with the popular toy company LEGO's building blocks.

Over the years, he has joined a small club of 14 global LEGO Certified Professionals – a handful of artists, programmers, architects, and animators who are not employed by LEGO but are "officially recognised" by the toy company due to the medium they have chosen to work with.

In 2011, CNN had named The Art of The Brick as one of the top 10 'Global Must-See Exhibitions'. Nine years later, and there seems to be no looking back for Sawaya, who was once a corporate lawyer with a practice in New York.

Here, the artist talks about why he gave up law for art, how travel keeps him creating, and the logistics of trans-continental shipping of artworks that are made of thousands of LEGO bricks. Edited excerpts from an interview.

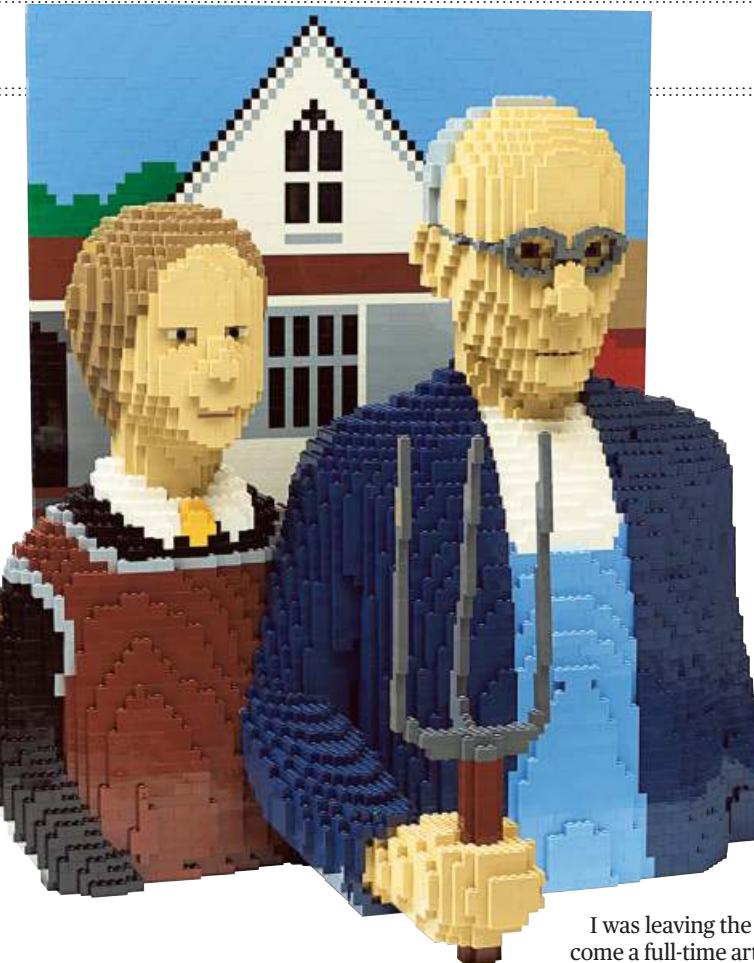
Why LEGO?

I decided to become an artist that uses LEGO bricks for my medium because it makes the art very accessible. Families who may have never been to an art gallery are drawn to my exhibitions because of that familiarity with the toy.

When did it occur to you to work with LEGO?

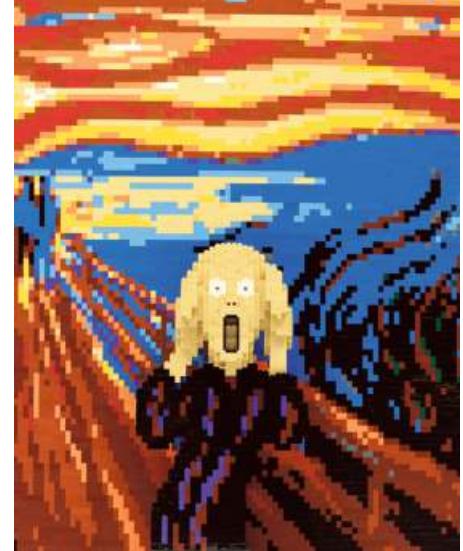
Like most kids, I had LEGO bricks growing up. My parents were always en-

Around the world with BUILDING BRICKS



Success, piece by piece Clockwise from left: Grant Wood's American Gothic and Edvard Munch's Scream made of LEGO; the artist; a dinosaur skeleton as LEGO installation

• SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT



couraging creativity. One of the stories I write about in *The Art of the Brick: A Life in LEGO* [his autobiography, from No Starch Press] is that when I was 10 years old, I asked for a dog, but when I couldn't get a dog, I built a life-size dog out of LEGO bricks. That might have been the first a-ha moment when I realised that you didn't have to build what was on the front of the box. I could let my imagination go.

It was later in life, when I was sculpting out of other media, that I thought about this childhood toy. I started experimenting with LEGO bricks as an art medium, and went from there.

How did you make the switch from law?

I used to practise corporate law in New York City. When I came home at night, I would need a creative outlet. Some nights I would draw, some nights I would paint, and some nights I would sculpt. One day I challenged myself to sculpt out of this toy from my childhood: LEGO bricks. I started doing large-scale sculptures. Most nights, I would find myself snapping LEGO bricks together even before I took off my suit or ate dinner. After a long day of negotiating contracts, it felt good to build something with my hands.

Slowly, my New York apartment started to fill up with sculptures. The artwork consumed almost every room. I posted photos on my website to showcase my artwork in a virtual gallery to friends and family. When my site crashed one day from too many hits, I realised it was time to leave the law firm and pursue my passion to become a full-time artist. I quit my job as a lawyer, opened an art studio, and took the leap of faith.

Your reinterpretations of famous paintings as LEGO sculptures connects with people of many generations. Did you foresee this?

The series of works on art history



were intended to be a way for adults to speak to kids about the art world. For example, how do you talk to a five-year-old about the Mona Lisa? By creating the works out of a medium that children are familiar with, it opens the door to the conversation.

Your original pieces comment on human nature, sometimes

I was leaving the practice of law to become a full-time artist. At the time, I was surprised to find people in my life who were very negative about my decision to leave law. They told me I was crazy and making a mistake. I was frustrated and channelled those feelings into a new sculpture.

Do you create even as multiple shows are ongoing? How?

I am constantly working on new works of art. I think it is important to refresh The Art of the Brick when I can. But it can prove challenging with five different exhibitions on tour. Inspiration is a tough thing to define because it can come from different places. Fortunately, having multiple art exhibitions touring the globe, I get to travel around the world a lot. I get to meet different people, go to different locations and experience different cultures. And I use those moments for inspiration. I carry a sketch pad to jot down ideas as I go.

How long does it take to finish a medium-sized piece, and how ready do you get an assembled piece ready to ship to different countries?

When I do find inspiration for a new work of art, there is a bit of planning. I want to be able to visualise the final piece before I put down that first brick. As I am building, I do glue each brick together. Because we ship artwork all over the world, I found that it is important to glue all of the bricks together to survive the shipping process.

That means that I sometimes have to use a chisel and hammer to break the bricks apart if I make a mistake. This can make for a slow process. When I am working on a sculpture, I spend 10-12 hours a day in my art studio. A life-size

human form can take me up to two to three weeks to complete. And I will use as many as 25,000 bricks.

What is the most number of LEGO bricks you've used in a piece that is currently showing?

One of the largest works that I have created is a dinosaur skeleton [on show at the New York Hall of Science currently] that measures almost 20 feet long. I spent an entire summer working on it, and I used over 80,000 bricks. But over the course of my career, I have also built an entire life-size coffee shop out of LEGO bricks, which used almost 1 million bricks.

You also run Art Revolution for art education in schools. How many schools have you managed to impact and how?

Throughout my own personal journey, I have learned that art is not optional. It's not a nice-to-have, it's a must-have. When I was an attorney, I wasn't happy, but creating art made me happy. It has been proven time and again that students do better in schools when they are exposed to art as part of the curriculum. I want to inspire people to make art, so that they make a better world. Lofty? Sure, I know, but why not?

So, a few years ago, I started the Art Revolution Foundation with that goal in mind. It has been a fantastic way to encourage more art and creativity in schools. This past year, we impacted nearly 85 [American] classrooms with over 2,500 students.

For more about his work and touring schedule: BrickArtist.com

The writer was in New York on the invitation of NYC & Company

POOCH CAFE



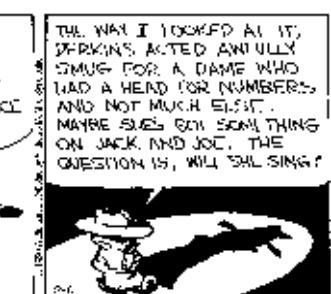
PEANUTS



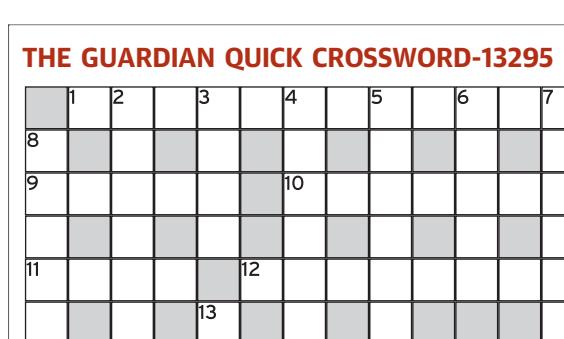
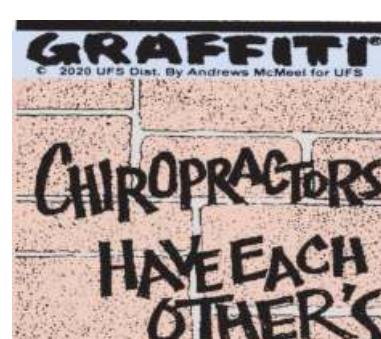
HAGAR THE HORRIBLE



CALVIN AND HOBBES



TIGER



To play The Guardian Quick Crossword, The Hindu Cryptic crossword, Sudoku & other puzzles online, scan the QR code.

5 Something seen as comparable to another (8)

6 Metal cast as a block (5)

7 Fulfilling expectations (12)

8 Defuses a tense situation by talking frankly (6,3,3)

13 Tactic of aggressive promotion (4,4)

16 Manx capital (7)

17 Invitees (6)

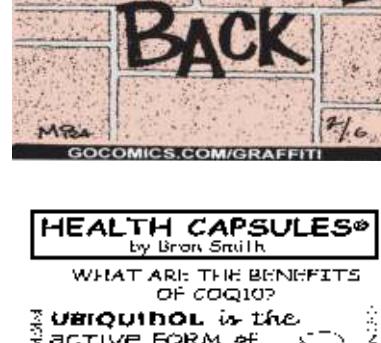
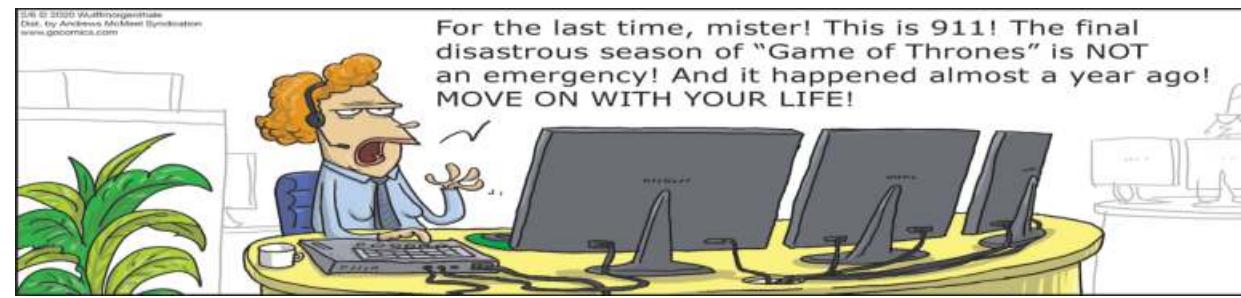
19 Supports (5)

21 Omen (4)

The solution will appear on February 7, 2020.

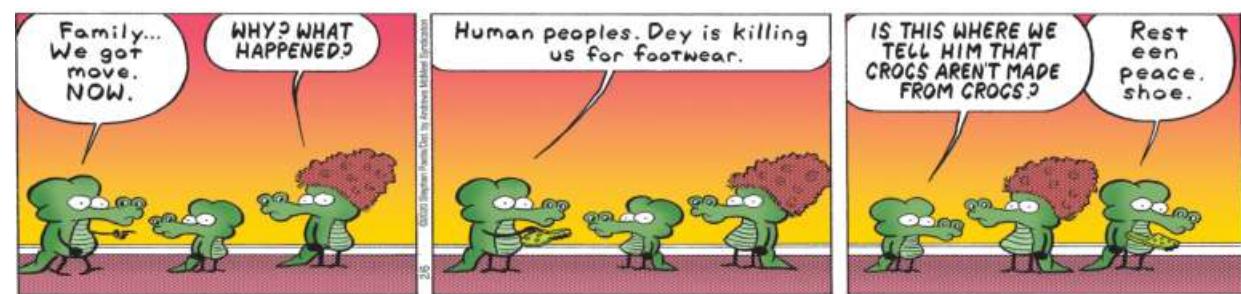
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WUMO



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R	U	N	O	V	E	V	E	T	C	H	
L	E	E	I	E	L	I					
E	R	R	O	R	G	A	L	L	A	N	T
W	A	S	T	E	E	I	S	I			
E	A	E	X								
U	N	C	L	A	D						
C	A	L	I	M	E						
L	A	R	V	A	N	P	H	T	A		
I	D	T	G	L	E	N					
D	R	I	V	E	N						

PEARLS BEFORE SWINE



perfect enlightenment (6)
1 Unlawful secret agreements (12)
18 Hit man (5,3)
20 Mongolian tent (4)
22 Inflamed swelling (7)
23 Wastrel (5)
24 Inability to relax – lessen stress (anag) (12)
■ Down
2 My dear chap! (3,4)
3 Killed intentionally (4)
4 Inward flow (6)

Taylor-made victory for Black Caps

The veteran's unbeaten century helps New Zealand overhaul India's imposing total; Shreyas' ton goes in vain

INDIA IN NZ

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
HAMILTON
An unbeaten century from veteran batsman Ross Taylor powered New Zealand to a stunning four-wicket win over India in the first One-Day International here on Wednesday.

The host completed the second highest run chase in its history to finish on 348 for six and overhaul the imposing target set by India.

It was a morale-boosting victory for the Black Caps, who went into the match as underdogs after a 5-0 whitewash in the recent Twenty20 series, when they repeatedly squandered winning opportunities.

Role reversal

The roles were reversed at Seddon Park, with India posting a mammoth total of 347 for four after losing the toss, including a maiden century to Shreyas Iyer and half-centuries for skipper Virat Kohli and K.L. Rahul.

But the tourists' bowling attack failed to prevent a match-turning innings from Taylor, who scored a 73-ball century, his 21st in ODIs, and ended the match on 109 not out.

He was supported by a quickfire 69 from captain Tom Latham and Henry Nicholls' hard-fought 78, although three late wickets gave India hope of rescuing the match.

Long-awaited

"It's been a long time between drinks," said Latham, whose side suffered a 3-0 Test series defeat in Australia before the T20 drubbing on home soil.



Experience counts: Ross Taylor brought all his years of playing top-level ODI cricket to bear in powering New Zealand home. ■ AFP

"It's nice to get over the line and we managed to keep our composure at the end and get there."

Kohli

was gracious in defeat, saying India produced a "decent" performance that was not quite good enough on the day. "You have to say that the opposition played better than us because they were more intense," he said.

New Zealand started its chase well, reaching 147 for two after 25 overs as Taylor and Nicholls developed a promising partnership of 50.

Fielding brilliance
It took a piece of fielding brilliance from Kohli to break it

with India's skipper swooping on the ball and tossing it underarm with skill in mid-air to run-out a diving Nicholls.

But Taylor continued his assault with Latham to take New Zealand to 292 for three with 10 overs remaining and the 35-year-old remained at the crease to hit the winning run.

While Shreyas' 103 from 107 balls was the highlight of India's innings, debutant opening batsmen Mayank Agarwal and Prithvi Shaw also performed solidly, bring up an opening partnership of 50.

Shreyas rode his luck at

times – dropped on nine and 83 – but earned praise from the legendary V.V.S. Laxman for the way he set about dismantling New Zealand's attack.

"I really enjoyed the way he paced his innings, a very mature knock," the Indian batting legend said in commentary.

Praise for Rahul

Laxman's praise for Rahul, who scored an unbeaten 88, was even more fulsome, saying the wicketkeeper-batsman had cemented his spot in the Indian side after recovering from a form slump.

"He's a special talent, I'd

STAT SPHERE

1 This is the highest successful run-chase for NZ against India in ODIs. Taylor has played a key role in three of them

348, Hamilton, 2019: Taylor 109*

281, Mumbai, 2017: Taylor 95

279, Hamilton, 2014: Taylor 112*

1 The 136-run partnership between Shreyas and Rahul is the highest for the fourth wicket by an Indian pair against New Zealand in ODIs, surpassing the 135 between Dhoni and Tendulkar at Christchurch in 2009

4 This is the fourth time two Indian openers – Shaw and Mayank – are making their ODI debuts in the same game. The last time this happened was when Rahul and Karun Nair made their debut against Zimbabwe at Harare in 2016

put him in the league of Rohit Sharma and Virat Kohli," he said.

The ever-reliable Kohli cruised to his 58th ODI half-century in a 102-run partnership with Shreyas that ended when spinner Ish Sodhi clean bowled him on 51 with a flighted ball.

It was a rare highlight for the New Zealand bowlers, whose inaccuracy proved expensive on the small ground.

Tim Southee was the best performer with two wickets, but he conceded 8.5 runs an over taking them.

The second ODI will be

played at Eden Park on Saturday.



1 Shreyas' maiden ODI hundred in his 16th match and 14th innings

24 Wides conceded by India in the first ODI. The last time the Men in Blue conceded 20 or more wides (26) in an ODI was against Australia (Mumbai, 2007)

101 Number of fifty-plus scores for Kohli in ODIs (he also has 43 hundreds). Since the beginning of the 2019 World Cup, the India skipper has reached the half-century mark 11 times, but has converted only two of them into three-figure knocks (both against WI)

MOST 100S BATTING AT NO. 4 IN ODIS

19 – Taylor | **15** – de Villiers

10 – Aravinda de Silva

9 – Jayawardene

SCOREBOARD

Prithvi Shaw c Latham b de Grandhomme 20 (21b, 3x4), Mayank Agarwal c Blundell b Southee 32 (31b, 6x4), Virat Kohli b Sodhi 51 (63b, 6x4), Shreyas Iyer c Santner b Southee 103 (107b, 11x4, 1x6), K.L. Rahul (not out) 88 (64b, 3x4, 6x6), Kedar Jadhav (not out) 26 (15b, 3x4, 1x6); Extras (lb-7, nb-1, w-19), 27; Total (for four wkts. in 50 overs): 347.

FALL OF WICKETS
1-50 (Shaw, 7.6 overs), 2-54 (Mayank, 8.4), 3-156 (Kohli, 28.4), 4-292 (Shreyas, 45.3).

NEW ZEALAND BOWLING
Southee 10-1-85-2, Bennett 10-0-77-0, de Grandhomme 8-0-41-1, Neesham 8-0-52-0, Santner 10-0-58-0, Sodhi 4-0-27-1.

NEW ZEALAND
Martin Guptill c Jadhav b Shardul 32 (41b, 1x4), Henry Nicholls run out 78 (82b, 11x4), Tom Blundell st. Rahul b Kuldeep 9 (10b, 1x4), Ross Taylor (not out) 109 (84b, 10x4, 4x6), Tom Latham c Shami b Kuldeep 69 (48b, 8x4, 2x6), James Neesham c Jadhav b Shami 9 (14b, 1x4), Colin de Grandhomme run out 1 (2b), Mitchell Santner (not out) 12 (9b, 1x4, 1x6); Extras (lb-4, nb-1, w-24): 29; Total (for six wkts. in 48.1 overs): 348.

FALL OF WICKETS
1-85 (Guptill, 15.4), 2-109 (Blundell, 19.1), 3-171 (Nicholls, 28.3), 4-309 (Latham, 41.4), 5-328 (Neesham, 45.2), 6-331 (de Grandhomme, 45.6).

INDIA BOWLING
Bumrah 10-1-53-0, Shami 9-0-63-1, Shardul 9-0-80-1, Jadeja 10-0-64-0, Kuldeep 10-0-84-2.

Toss: New Zealand.
Man-of-the-Match: Taylor.

New Zealand won by four wickets with 11 deliveries to spare and took a 1-0 lead in three-match series.

Next match: February 8 (Saturday), Auckland, 7.30 a.m. IST.

Latham's innings took the momentum away: Kohli

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

HAMILTON

Ross Taylor got the hundred but India captain Virat Kohli said it was Tom Latham's 48-ball 69 that took away the momentum from his side on Wednesday.

"It was an outstanding performance by New Zealand. We thought 348 was good enough. Ross is the experienced batsman they have but Tom's innings was the one that took away the

momentum. Credit to Taylor and Tom," Kohli said at the post-match presentation ceremony.

India was below-par on the field with Kuldeep Yadav dropping a skier and bowlers doing a less than commendable job.

"Look, we didn't grab onto one chance, but we were decent. Something we need to keep (on) improving. We can't focus too much (on negative things)."

Aces beat Hunters, move into last four

Mithun pips Priyanshu in an engrossing duel; Sindhu and Ivanov-Sikki pair win

PBL

V.V. SUBRAHMANYAM

HYDERABAD

Pune 7 Aces scored a hard-fought 2-1 win over Hyderabad Hunters to take it tally to 20 and qualified for the semifinals of the Premier Badminton League here on Wednesday.

Hunters finished their engagements with 11 points and bowed out.

In men's doubles, Aces' Chirag Shetty and former World champion Hendra Setiawan combined well to outplay Ben Lane and Sean Vandy.

The 18-year-old Priyanshu, ranked World No. 284 and playing the Trump match for Hunters, lost to the more experienced Mithun Manjunath in a thriller.

In the first game, Manjunath raced away to an 8-2 lead before Priyanshu levelled, clinching the next six points. With the match tied at 13, Mithun unleashed two powerful cross-court returns which brooked no reply.

the decider, Manjunath

the dec

TV PICKS

PBL: Star Sports 1 (SD & HD), 6.45 p.m.
Ranji Trophy: Star Sports 2 (SD & HD), 9.15 a.m.
ISL: Star Sports 2 (SD & HD), 7.15 p.m.
ICC U-19 WC: Star Sports 3, 1.10 p.m.
Tata Open Maharashtra: SS Select 2 (SD & HD), 3.10 p.m.
NBA: Sony Ten 1 & Six (SD & HD), 6 a.m. & 8.30 a.m.

IN BRIEF

Jindal Panther posts win
 NEW DELHI: Simran Shergill and Phil Seller scored five goals between them in helping Jindal Panther to a 5-4 victory over Rajnigandha Achievers in a league match of the Radha Mohan Rajinder Mohan Gold Vase polo tournament at the Army Equestrian Centre, Delhi Cantonment, on Wednesday.

The results (league): ASC Col. Girdhari Singh 6 (Naveen Singh 3, Ravinder Mang 2, G.S. Pandher) bt Cavalry-APRC 2 (Ravi Rathore, Gaurav Sahgal).
 El Dragon Polo 5 (Siddhant Sharma 3, Abhimanyu Pathak 2) bt Araval Polo (Manuel Llorente 3, Angad Kalaan).
 Jindal Panther 5 (Simran Shergill 3, Phil Seller 2) bt Rajnigandha Achievers 4 (Padmanabh Singh 2, Daniel Otamendi 2).

Aman Dahiya in quarterfinals

NEW DELHI: Aman Dahiya proved too strong for top seed Aditya Vardhan Roy Chowdhury as he raced to a 6-2, 6-2 victory in the boys' quarterfinals of the ITF grade-5 junior tennis tournament in Kathmandu, Nepal, on Wednesday.

The results (quarterfinals):

Boys: Aman Dahiya bt Aditya Vardhan Roy Chowdhury 6-2, 6-2; Vansh Bhagnani bt Kartik Saxena 6-4, 6-3; Dhruv Tangri bt Yuvan Nandal 6-2, 6-2; Kirshan Hooda bt Nikhil Nirajan (USA) 6-2, 3-6, 6-2.
Girls: Ines Faltinger (Aut) bt Maitree Dilksa Rout 6-1, 6-2; Riya Uboveja bt Huayi Zhang (Chn) 6-2, 6-1; Hetvee Chaudhuri bt Deanne Choo (Sgp) 6-4, 6-1; Xintong Zhou (Chn) bt Gargi Pawar 6-2, 6-0.

Zeel Desai in second round

SPORTS BUREAU
NONTHABURI (THAILAND)

Making the main draw as a lucky loser, Zeel Desai beat qualifier Riya Bhatia 3-6, 6-2, 6-4 in the first round of the \$25,000 ITF women's tennis tournament here on Wednesday.

The results: First round: \$25,000 ITF women, Nonthaburi, Thailand: Zeel Desai bt Riya Bhatia 3-6, 6-2, 6-4.

Doubles: Moyuka Uchijima (Jpn) & Zhang Ying (Chn) bt Ho Ching Wu (Hkg) & Riya Bhatia 7-6(4), 2-0 (retired).

\$15,000 ITF men, Sharm El Sheikh: Vaughn Hunter (RSA) bt Aryan Goveas 3-6, 7-6(6), 6-3.

FC Goa books playoffs berth

SPORTS BUREAU
MARGAO

Hugo Boumous, with two goals and an assist, was the catalyst in FC Goa's 4-1 win over Hyderabad FC in the Indian Super League (ISL) on Wednesday.

Ferran Corominas also netted a brace as Goa pulled three clear at the top with 33 points from 16 matches, assuring itself of a playoff spot. Marcelinho scored HFC's consolation goal in the 64th minute.

The result: FC Goa 4 (Hugo Boumous 19, 50), Ferran Corominas 64, 87) bt Hyderabad FC 1 (Marcelinho 64).

Katsumi heads CCFC past Arrows

I-LEAGUE

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
COIMBATORE

Katsumi Yusa headed home a beauty in the 49th minute as Chennai City scored a 1-0 win over a young Indian Arrows side in the Hero I-League clash at the Nehru Stadium here on Wednesday.

The result: Chennai City FC 1 (Katsumi Yusa 49) bt Indian Arrows 0.

Juneja and Rawal put Gujarat in command

Take advantage of Delhi's limited bowling resources and Shorey's defensive approach

RAKESH RAO
NEW DELHI

Delhi's limited bowling resources and the overly defensive approach of skipper Dhruv Shorey stood exposed as Manprit Juneja and Dhruv Rawal raised 181 runs in their ongoing fifth-wicket stand and put Gujarat on top at stumps on the second day of their Ranji Trophy match here on Wednesday.

After cleaning up the last four Delhi wickets for just 23 runs in the morning session and restricting the host to 293, Gujarat found itself in trouble at 88 for four. But thereafter, right-handed Juneja (88 batting, 13x4, 1x6) and left-handed Raval (83 batting, 12x4) counter-attacked and won the day for Gujarat.

In strong position

At stumps, Gujarat was 269 for four and needed another 25 runs to take the first-innings lead. With two days to go, Gujarat is in a position to press for an outright victory.

It was in the post-tea session that Juneja and Rawal were at their assertive best with some free-stroking batting. The session produced 122 runs off 27 overs, with boundary-hits coming thick and fast. With the bowlers consistently erring in line and length, the left-right combination from Gujarat

spared none.

In the morning, Roosh Kalaria scalped three tailenders to finish with five for 78 after Chintan Gaja bowled Kunwar Bidhuri (78) on his overnight score.

The scores:
Delhi – 1st innings: Anuj Rawat lbw b Kalaria 4, Hiten Dalal c Nagwaswala b Kalaria 69, Dhruv Shorey lbw b Nagwaswala 28, Nitish Rana b Nagwaswala 0, Jonty Sidiq c Gohil b Nagwaswala 18, Himmat Singh c Bhatt b Axar 56, Kunwar Bidhuri b Gaja 78, Siddant c Gohil b Kalaria 5, Simarjeet Singh c Juneja b Kalaria 15, Tejas Baroka (not out) 3, Kulwant Khejroliya lbw b Kalaria 0; Extras (lb-13, nb-4): 17; Total (in 101 overs): 293.

Fall of wickets: 1-4, 2-77, 3-79, 4-128, 5-136, 6-270, 7-270, 8-286, 9-293.

Gujarat bowling: Kalaria 28-8-78-5, Gaja 29-12-62-1, Nagwaswala 18-3-54-3, Axar 20-6-60-1, Bhatt 5-1-25-1. Merai 1-0-1-0.

Gujarat – 1st innings: Samit Gohil c Rawat b Simarjeet 51, Priyank Panchal c Rawat b Simarjeet 10, Rajul Bhatt c Rana b Siddhant 1, Bhagwan Merai c Himmat b Bidhuri 18, Manpreet Juneja (batting) 88, Dhruv Rawal (batting) 83; Extras (b-4, lb-11, nb-3) 18; Total (for four wkt. in 67 overs): 269.

Fall of wickets: 1-22, 2-33, 3-78, 4-88.

Delhi bowling: Siddhant 16-3-53-1, Simarjeet 17-3-58-2, Khejroliya 13-1-49-0, Bidhuri 7-0-32-1, Baroka 11-0-52-0, Rana 3-0-10-0.



Driving force: Manprit Juneja's stroke-filled, unbeaten 88 was the highlight of Gujarat's first innings on Wednesday.

* SANDEEP SAXENA

Breen, Nagle to spearhead MRF's European Rally campaign

MOTORSPORTS

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
CHENNAI

Team MRF Tyres will be back on the international rally stage in 2020 with a full season European Rally Championship campaign. Ireland's Craig Breen and co-driver Paul Nagle will spearhead the campaign driving a Hyundai i20 R5 prepared by the Italian BRC Racing Team.

The first round of the Championship is the Azores Rallye, which will take place on the Portuguese island from March 26-28.

Breen has competed in 61 WRC rallies, twice finishing on the podium.

He is the reigning Irish Tarmac Rally Champion and finished second in the 2015 European Rally Championship.

Nagle has won five WRC events as a co-driver. Now

back with Breen, they bring a wealth of experience to the MRF Tyres team.

The MRF Tyres Rally team has won the FIA Asia Pacific Rally Championship (APRC) nine times and made an entry into the World Rally Championship in 2018 in the WRC2 class for gathering data for product development. The 2020 European Rally Championship represents the next big step for MRF Tyres.

In the girls' under-16 event, Bhumika Gupta beat top seed Maitreyi Phogat for the loss of just three games.

The results (quarterfinals):

Boys: Under-18: Naresh Badgajjar bt Jitin Kumar Chetry 6-0, 6-1; Navya Verma bt Dhairya Chadha 6-0, 6-0; Sarthak Arora bt Anirudh Sangra 7-5, 6-4; Sarthak Gandhi bt Harmanjot Singh 6-3, 6-2.

Under-16: Anirudh Sangra bt Lakshya Gupta 4-6, 6-2, 7-6 (3); Arjun Jitendra bt Tarun Sharma 6-3, 6-2; Rakshit Dhankar bt Arush Sharma 6-1, 7-5; Navya Verma bt Arnav Malik 6-0, 6-4.

Girls: Under-18: Simran Pratam bt Riya Kaushik 6-3, 6-0; Harnoor Kaur Sidhu bt Avneet Kaur 6-1, 6-1; Pawandeep Kaur bt Mehr Kohli 6-3, 6-4; Radhika Vasudeva bt Vanya Arora 6-4, 6-3.

Under-16: Bhumika Gupta bt Maitreyi Phogat 6-1, 6-2; Khaira Chetna bt Rubani Kaur Sidhu 6-2, 6-4; Vanya Arora bt Anusha Verma 6-0, 6-1; Bhumi Kakkar bt Riya Kaushik 7-5, 6-3.

Indian women beat New Zealand 3-0

The tour ends on a bright note

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
AUCKLAND

Striker Navneet Kaur scored a brace to guide the Indian women's hockey team to a convincing 3-0 win over New Zealand in the last game of its five-match tour here on Wednesday.

Naveen found the net in the 45th and 58th minutes, while Sharmila scored a field goal in the 54th minute as India drew curtains on the New Zealand tour on a bright note.

After a goalless opening two quarters, Navneet finally broke the deadlock for In-

dia in the 45th minute.

Sharmila then doubled the lead when she struck a powerful shot past the New Zealand goalkeeper in the 54th minute. Navneet found the net again just two minutes from the final hooter with a beautiful field strike.

"I am happy we produced three goals against New Zealand in the last match. This tour gave us a good insight about where we need to improve and one of the things is to create faster play than we do now," said India's chief Coach Sjoerd Marijne.

Commenting on his side's performance during the tour, Marijne said, "Sometimes we tend to keep the ball too long on the stick and then we create pressure. We need to avoid that by passing faster."

"On the defence side, we need to be a bit more calmer and need to improve our tackling. We will have a four week camp after a short break when we return home and we will be working on these points."

The Indian team will re-

turn home on February 7.



Devinder Walmiki.
 ■ FILE PHOTO: PRASHANT NAKWANE

Harjeet Singh.
 ■ FILE PHOTO: K. MURALI KUMAR

Walmiki, Harjeet making the most of Dutch experience

HOCKEY

UTHRA GANESAN
NEW DELHI

Playing for the National team may be the ultimate ambition for most hockey professionals across the world. The holy grail, however, remains the Dutch League. Only two Indians have managed to not just make the cut there this season but also play the European League.

Devinder Walmiki and Harjeet Singh may have been cast out of the Indian side, but have earned enough plaudits with H.O.C. Gazellen Combinatie (HGC), one of the oldest and most prestigious clubs in the Hoofdklasse, the top-division Dutch league. After a month-long winter break, the duo will rejoin the club for the second half of the season on February 20.

"I have played in the German league for three years and was looking to expe-

rience the Dutch league. Everyone knows it is the best and toughest domestic league in the world – all the top guys from across the world play there. When (former India coach) Paul van Ass took charge of HGC last year, I got in touch with him. I already had offers from HC Bloemendaal and SV Kampong, but my com-

fort level with Paul made me decide on HGC," Walmiki told *The Hindu*.

"We are still third in the league. Our target is to finish in the top-three and qualify again for the EHL. Personally, I can say that the level of competition and professionalism in the Dutch league is so high that I don't think any Asian side can match up to

them," Walmiki said.

Harjeet, meanwhile, admitted it was huge culture shock both on and off the field but has now accustomed to it.

"You get to learn so much about European hockey and their structure. Playing other Dutch top-level teams is big enough but playing in the EHL against the best from all of Europe is a huge thing," the former junior India captain said.

van Ass has kept track of the Indian team and was even present during the first leg of the Pro League in Bhubaneswar recently. "Devinde should be part of the national set-up, he is at that level. Harjeet, because he was out for a long time, is now on his way back and I am sure by the time the season ends (in June) should be perfectly placed to join him. But it is up to the Indian selectors," the Dutchman asserted.

RANJI SCORES, ROUND 8, DAY 2

GROUP A

At New Delhi: Delhi 293 in 101 overs (Hiten Dalal 69, Himmat Singh 56, Kunwar Bidhuri 78, Roosh Kalaria 5/78) vs Gujarat 269/4 in 67 overs (Samit Gohil 51, Manpreet Juneja 88 batting, Dhruv Raval 83 bat).

Patiala: Andhra 97 & 134 in 60.4 overs (Ricky Bhui 61, K.V. Sasi Kanth 47, Vinay Choudhary 6/46, Mayank Markande 4/46) lost to Punjab 108 & 129/6 in 39 overs (Anmol Malhotra 51 n.o.).

Points: Punjab 6 (24), Andhra 0 (27).

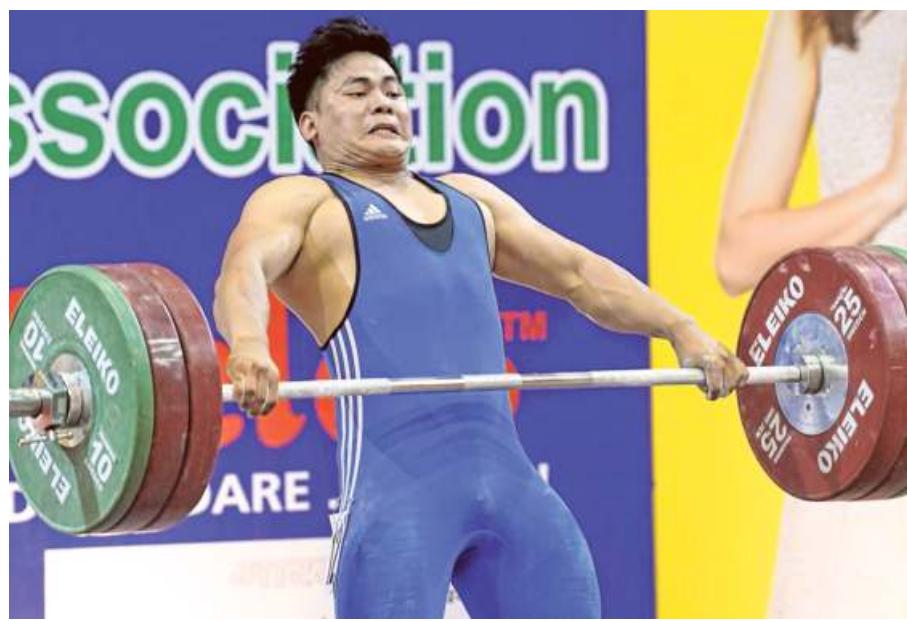
Jaipur: Rajasthan 241 & 156/8 in 48 overs (Rajesh Bishnoi 46, Nilkantha Das 4/26) vs Bengal 123 in 52.4 overs (Tanveer Ul-Haq 4/48, Rituraj Singh 4/30).

Nagpur: Vidarbha 326 in 107.4 overs (Wasim Jaffer 57, Ganesh Satish 58, Siddhesh Wath 43, Darshan Nalkande 66 n.o., M.D. Nidheesh 5/82) vs Kerala 191/3 in 54 overs (Mohammed Azharuddin 81).

GROUP B

Vadodara: Baroda 174 & 100/0 in 6 overs vs Tamil Nadu 49/0 in 7 decl. in 108.4 overs (Abhinav Mukund 206, L. Suryaprakash 75, Dinesh Karthik 49, M. Mohammed 54 n.o.).

Shivamogga: Karnataka 426 in 132 overs (R. Samarth 108, K. Siddharth 62, Shreyas Gopal 50, K. Gowtham 82) vs Madhya Pradesh 193 in 101.1 overs (Shantanu Mishra 84, Anurag Sarangi 41, Rajesh Dhuper 110 n.o., Ashay Palkar 4/81) vs Maharashtra 219/2 in 73 overs (Ruturaj Gaikwad 110 batting, Ankesh Bawane 8



Storming back: Sambo Lapung broke the clean and jerk record of 187kg in his final attempt to aggregate 333kg. • RAJEEV BHATT

A new record – and gold – for Lapung

Rakhi Halder clinches women's 64kg crown

NATL WEIGHTLIFTING

Y.B. SARANGI
KOLKATA

Services lifter Sambo Lapung scripted a new National record of 188kg in clean and jerk on his way to the gold medal in the men's 89kg in the National weightlifting championships at the Khudiram Anusilan Kendra here on Wednesday.

Lapung, who had secured the silver medal in 81kg last year, hoisted 145kg to take a one kg lead over R.V. Rahul in snatch. Later, he broke the clean and jerk record of 187kg in his final attempt to aggregate 333kg.

Hailing from Arunachal Pradesh, Lapung – a former National champion in 69kg – won a National title after four years. "I switched to 89kg immediately after the last Nationals. I was getting injured for lowering my body weight too much. Am

happy to create a new record," said Lapung.

Railways' Rahul was second with 323kg, while Ram Karan Prajapati – another Services lifter representing Uttarakhand – got the third place with 314kg.

Below-par show

Despite her below-par performance, local girl Rakhi Halder won the women's 64kg crown with 210kg.

Rakhi's effort earned her a comfortable victory as her nearest competitor Harjinder Kaur registered 200kg. However, the total of 210kg was below her best showing of 218kg, including 95kg in snatch and 123kg in clean and jerk, in the Qatar Cup Olympic qualifying event in December.

The 26-year-old, who lifted 93kg in her final snatch attempt, managed 117kg in her first clean and jerk effort. Gritting her teeth, she

tried to raise the bar in her next two attempts – including her bid to do 125kg in the last – but did not get the desired result.

"My sore left thigh prevented a smooth action. I will try to improve and qualify for the Olympics," said Rakhi, who had totalled 214kg in the World championships in Pattaya in September last.

The results: Men, 81kg: 1. Pa-pul Changmai (SSCB) snatch 145kg, clean and jerk 172kg, total 317kg; 2. Amarjit Guru (RSPB) 137kg, 172kg, 309kg; 3. U. Sivaprakash (Pud) 136kg, 171kg, 307kg. 89kg: 1. Sambo Lapung (SSCB) 145kg, 188kg [NR, Old 187kg, Harshad Wadekar], 333kg; 2. R.V. Rahul (RSPB) 144kg, 179kg, 323kg; 3. Ram Karan Prajapati (Ukd) 138kg, 176kg, 314kg.

Women, 64kg: 1. Rakhi Halder (WB) 93kg, 117kg, 210kg; 2. Harjinder Kaur (Chd) 90kg, 110kg, 200kg; 3. K. Roshilata Devi (Mani) 80kg, 107kg, 187kg.

Chinese for Asian meet: nod awaited

WRESTLING

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

Even as the world grapples with the Coronavirus and its spread, the Wrestling Federation of India is confident of the government agreeing to allow the Chinese delegation for the upcoming Asian Championships here.

India has stopped e-visa facility for Chinese visitors and there are doubts on their participation due to health concerns since wrestling is a contact sport with a high possibility of infection. "Chinese officials have claimed that the 40-member delegation has been tested and quarantined, and cleared of any infection. Even if they do come, they will have to follow the due process of being tested on arrival," WFI president Brij Bhushan Sharani Singh said here on Wednesday.

He added that the federation had already written to the MEA and was confident of getting a positive response for both the Chinese and Pakistan delegations. Sports Minister Kiren Rijiju, however, said a final call would be taken by the MEA in consultation with the Health Ministry. "We cannot take any risk, especially in an Olympic year. It is an extraordinary situation and we will act accordingly," Rijiju said.

The Asian Championships will be held from February 18-23.

Asked about Sushil Kumar's chances of making it to Tokyo 2020, Brij Bhushan insisted that the federation would not allow a repeat of the 2016 fiasco and controversies that saw India go unrepresented in the 74kg category at Rio.

Jeremy looks to give his best in Asian championships

'I am trying to improve two to five kg in every event'

Y.B. SARANGI
KOLKATA

For Youth Olympics gold medallist weightlifter Jeremy Lalrinnunga, winning his maiden National title was an emotional moment. The 18-year-old quickly put on the traditional Mizoram attire, a black and white checked half-sleeved shirt and a matching bandana, for the medal ceremony.

It was a proud moment for Jeremy as he received the 67kg gold from his father Lalnaihehtlu, a National level medal-winning boxer of the 1990s.

"My father had never seen me doing weightlifting in a competition," said Jeremy.

Jeremy, third among Lalnaihehtlu's five sons, takes pride in his sport and his father's sport.

Two tattoos, depicting a lifter and a boxer with dates – July 7, 1988 (when his father began boxing) and No-



Jeremy. • RAJEEV BHATT

vember 11, 2011 (when he touched the barbell) – written in Roman numerals, adorn his left forearm.

Belief in hard work

His father underlines his family's strong belief in hard work and God. "I tell Jeremy, 'give your best, God is up there,'" said Lalnaihehtlu.

With the Olympics around the corner, expectation has

I never thought I would be part of Olympic qualifiers. The improvements have been rapid.

JEREMY LALRINNUNGA

taken shape. After winning the Youth Olympics gold in Buenos Aires in October 2018, Jeremy, who increased his body weight a year ago, has successfully graduated from junior to elite level by taking part in some top events.

As he looks forward to give his best in the upcoming Asian championships, an Olympic qualifying event, Jeremy knows where he stands in terms of performance in the world level.

"I am trying to improve two to five kg in every event. The target for April is to improve 10kg each in snatch and clean and jerk. That will help me qualify for Olympics."

In the World championships in Pattaya in September last, Jeremy lifted a total of 296kg to finish 21st.

Here, he lifted a total of 299kg, including the National record of 167kg in clean and jerk.

"My target is to do 320kg in the Asian championship."

Listening to music

The Aizawl boy does not feel pressure though. Whenever he feels low, he reads the Bible or listens to Ed Sheeran and Justin Bieber.

National coach Vijay Sharma says Jeremy should use Tokyo to get a hang of the Olympics before approaching the 2024 Games as a full-grown experienced man.

"I never thought I would be part of Olympic qualifiers. The improvements have been rapid. My aim is not just to qualify for (Tokyo) Olympics, but to try for a medal," Jeremy signed off.

Every person is an ambassador for India: Rijiju

Sports Minister backs Khelo University Games to unearth more talent

GENERAL

VIJAY LOKAPALLY
NEW DELHI

The Indian Olympic Association (IOA) may have invited the former captain of the Indian cricket team – Sourav Ganguly – to be the Goodwill Ambassador of the Indian contingent at the 2020 Tokyo Olympics but Union Sports Minister Kiren Rijiju

a government I look forward to every Indian as an ambassador."

Speaking on various issues, the Union Sports Minister reassured the sports fraternity there was no slashing of funds.

"If there are shortage of funds for the federations, these can always be taken up, that is why there is a provision for revision. If they need more money, they will get more money," Rijiju said.

He insisted, "You are looking from a different angle. Whatever we got in the last budget allocation, we had a jump of more than 50%.

What you are comparing from the Revised Estimate (RE), if you see the original allocation in last budget, it is an historical jump. You have to see from the actual stand



Union Sports Minister
Rijiju. • SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

point, then you will get the complete picture."

The Sports Minister also spoke on the inaugural Khelo India University Games, featuring 177 institutes and 3340 athletes, to be held at the KIIT University Campus in Bhubaneswar from February 22 to March 1.

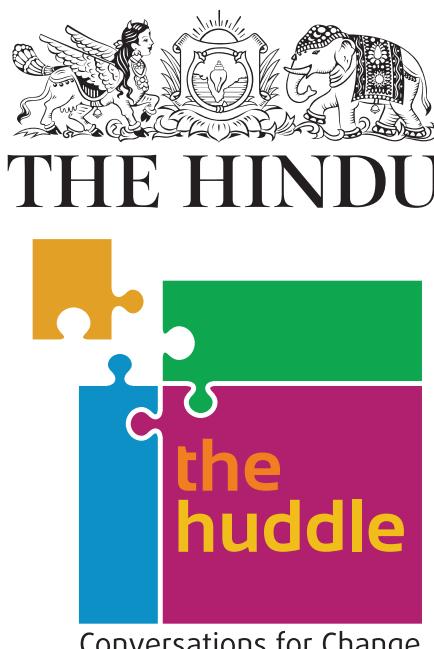
"I am excited to see the huge shift in the way we organise sporting events in India.

If there are shortage of funds for the federations, these can always be taken up, that is why there is a provision for revision. If they need more money, they will get more money

dia. Now we are going to have Khelo India University Games. It would happen in a mega scale, it would not be like what we used to see, where each university used to host one discipline.

"World wide the standard of University Games is high, most of the stars of the Olympics come from here. Because the age bar is higher than Youth games, the standard will be higher and we will definitely see many champions from this."

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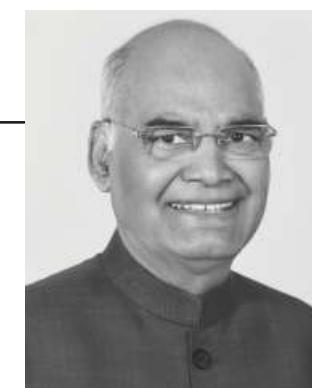
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