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NEARBY



NCC has to be made compulsory: Venkaiah

NEW DELHI
A stint in the National Cadet Corps has to be made compulsory in all educational institutions, said Vice-President M. Venkaiyah Naidu, speaking to NCC cadets at the inaugural ceremony of the Republic Day camp on Monday.

DELHI METRO ▶ PAGE 1

Govt. says GDP to grow at 7.2% for FY19

NEW DELHI
The government has projected GDP growth for the full year 2018-19 to come in at 7.2%, which implies that growth in the second half of the year would slow significantly to 6.8% from the 7.6% clocked in the first half of the year, according to the first advance estimates of national income for 2018-19 released by the Ministry of Statistics.

BUSINESS ▶ PAGE 13

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DELHI METRO ▶ 6 PAGES

Maiden triumphs

India finally won a Test series on Australian soil, 71 years after its first tour. A look at other first overseas conquests

New Zealand Cricket	1967/68	3-1	M.A.K. Patoudi
West Indies	1970/71	1-0	Ajit Wadekar
Sri Lanka Cricket	1993	1-0	M. Azharuddin
Bangladesh	2000/01	1-0	S.C. Ganguly
Zimbabwe cricket	2005	2-1	Virat Kohli
Australia	2018/19	2-1	Ganguly

Centre plans 10% quota for the poor

Union Cabinet approves Constitution Amendment Bill for reservation in general category

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

The Union Cabinet on Monday approved a Constitution Amendment Bill to provide 10% reservation to the economically backward sections in the general category, a senior government official said. The Bill will also cover those from the Muslim, Sikh, Christian, Buddhist and other minority communities. The quota will be over and above the existing 50% reservation to the Scheduled Castes, the Scheduled Tribes and the Other Backward Classes (OBC).

The decision, which comes ahead of the general election in April-May, was taken at a meeting chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

The specific details of the Bill were not available as there was no word from the government after the meeting. A press briefing scheduled for the evening was cancelled. The reservation is for those castes that now do not avail themselves of quota in any category.

Bill likely today
Vijay Sampla, Minister of State, Social Justice and Empowerment, told *The Hindu* that those who have an annual salary of less than ₹8 lakh per year and possess less than 5 acres of land will be able to avail themselves of reservation in educational

Reserved category

A look at the details of the 10% quota and its ramifications

ELIGIBILITY

- People earning less than ₹8 lakh annually
- People who own farm land below 5 acres
- People who own a house measuring less than 1,000 sq ft

BACKGROUND

- In its famous Indra Sawhney judgment, the Supreme Court had set a cap of 50% on quotas
- Hence, a Constitution Amendment Bill would be required as the Constitution does not provide for reservation on the basis of economic criteria

institutions and jobs.

The government is likely to introduce the Bill in the Lok Sabha on Tuesday, the last working day of the winter session. Articles 15 and 16 of the Constitution will have to be amended for the implementation of the decision, the Minister said.

A nine-judge Constitutional Bench of the Supreme Court had, in the Indra Sawhney case, capped reservation at 50%. The court had ruled on November 16, 1992, that "clause (4) of Article 16 of the Constitution speaks of adequate representation and

not proportionate representation" and "relaxation can be done in extraordinary situations and while doing so, extreme caution has to be exercised and a special case made out."

According to the 2011 Census, the population of the country was 1.21 billion. The population of the Scheduled Castes was 201.4 million and that of the Scheduled Tribes stood at 104.3 million.

Reacting to the decision, the Congress said it agreed with the principle of helping the poor in getting access to education and jobs but ques-

tioned the Modi government's intent.

Where are the jobs?

Addressing a press conference, Congress communication chief Randeep Surjewala asked why the decision was taken when there are only 100 days left for the next Lok Sabha election.

"We are committed to giving opportunity, reservation and employment to the poor. But the youth of the country are asking basic questions to Modiji. Where are the job opportunities?" Mr. Surjewala said.

VIDYA RAM LONDON

India secured another legal victory in the U.K. as a judge at the Westminster Magis-

It may hit a legal hurdle

The Cabinet's approval to provide 10% reservation for upper castes (the unreserved category) with reference to their economic backwardness may run into rough weather if it is challenged in the Supreme Court. In the Indra Sawhney case, the court had said that a backward class could not be determined exclusively with reference to economic criterion. "It may be a consideration or basis along with and in addition to social backwardness..." the court had said. ▶ PAGE 11

'A political gimmick'

Some Opposition parties have criticised the decision as a political gimmick, announced with an eye on the Lok Sabha election. But others are cautious. RJD leader Tejaswi Yadav said reservation was not meant to improve financial condition but to improve the representation of the backward classes. AAP chief Arvind Kejriwal said that if the government brought in a Bill before the election, he would back it. BJP MP Udit Raj said: "This will open a Pandora's box." ▶ PAGE 11

T.N. Minister gets jail term for rioting

Balakrishna Reddy resigns from Cabinet



Convicted: P. Balakrishna Reddy leaving the special court in Chennai on Monday. ■ R. RAGU

R.SIVARAMAN CHENNAI

Tamil Nadu's Youth Welfare and Sports Development Minister P. Balakrishna Reddy, along with 15 others, was convicted and sentenced on Monday by a special court to three years' imprisonment in a case of unlawful assembly and rioting in 1998 in Bagalur village, near Hosur, in Krishnagiri district.

The court later suspended the sentences of the 15 persons, allowing them to appeal before the Madras High Court. Mr. Reddy resigned from the Cabinet later in the day.

Once a BJP man

Mr. Reddy, 49, was the Hosur MLA, and began his political career in the BJP. He had also served as chairman of the Hosur municipality.

CONTINUED ON ▶ PAGE 10

for a final decision. The development came at a procedural hearing on Monday before District Judge Rebecca Crane.

CONTINUED ON ▶ PAGE 10

India secures extradition of bookie

VIDYA RAM LONDON

India secured another legal victory in the U.K. as a judge at the Westminster Magis-



Success beyond the seas: India's captain Virat Kohli celebrates with teammates as they pose with the Border-Gavaskar Trophy after winning the Test series against Australia 2-1 at the Sydney Cricket Ground on Monday. ■ AFP

REPORTS ON PAGE 15

Mayawati backs Akhilesh

'He's being targeted in illegal mining probe to defame alliance'

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

LUCKNOW
Bajrang Samaj Party chief Mayawati on Monday came out in support of Samajwadi Party president Akhilesh Yadav in an alleged illegal mining case in which the CBI has said it would question him. She said Mr. Yadav was being targeted to "defame and oppress" the SP-BSP alliance.

Ms. Mayawati said the CBI's "threat" to question Mr. Yadav "under the guise of a probe" in the illegal mining case was an act of "election greed" issued with "feelings of political malice".

She said she spoke to Mr. Yadav on the phone on Sunday and reminded him of her own alleged persecution in the Taj Corridor case after she refused to "give in to the BJP's demands for 60 out of 80 Lok Sabha seats as part of an alliance".

"It's an old *hathkanda* (machination) about which the people know too well," she said in a statement.

The BSP chief's statement came a day after Mr. Yadav questioned the timing and intention behind the CBI linking his name to the illegal mining probe.

SEE ALSO ▶ PAGE 10

Citizenship Bill: AGP quits Assam coalition

But move will not affect Sonowal govt.

RAHUL KARMAKAR GUWAHATI

The Asom Gana Parishad on Monday decided to snap its two-year-old alliance with the Bharatiya Janata Party in Assam after the Joint Parliamentary Committee submitted its report on the Citizenship (Amendment) Bill, 2016, in Parliament.

However, the AGP's departure is unlikely to affect the Sarbananda Sonowal-led government as the other regional ally, the Bodoland People's Front (BPF), has decided to stick with the BJP.

CONTINUED ON ▶ PAGE 10

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Palam	19	08

Delhi Pali Today
18°C A very cold morning is likely with dense fog in many parts. AOL to remain very unhealthy.

Delhi Pali Tomorrow
19°C Dense to very dense fog likely during morning hours. Cool day with light wind would prevail.

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DELHI Timings

TUESDAY, JAN. 08
RISE 07:15 SET 17:41
RISE 08:47 SET 19:43
WEDNESDAY, JAN. 09
RISE 07:15 SET 17:42
RISE 09:26 SET 20:35
THURSDAY, JAN. 10
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RISE 10:02 SET 21:28

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Number No.227, Civil Side,
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Notice is hereby given that a notice u/s 13 of The LPL Act, 2008 will be sent to Registrar Office by the Goyal Mittal & Associates LLP for seeking confirmation for change of Registered Office from Delhi to Haryana. Any legal consequences arising therefrom will be affected by the proposed shifting of registered office from Delhi to Haryana may intimate to the Registrar within 21 days of the date of publication of this notice. The nature of interests and grounds for proposal, if any, will be sent by copy to the Goyal Mittal & Associates LLP at the registered office mentioned below.

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S/o CA Utkarsh Goyal
Designated Partner
DIN 07636737

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S/o CA Utkarsh Goyal
Designated Partner
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1 Floor, Krishna Enclave,
Shivaji Park, New Delhi-110026

Girl critical after gang rape

STAFF REPORTER

BHUABENSWAR

A student of a private engineering college in Odisha's Rourkela was gang raped allegedly by six persons before being dumped in a forest in neighbouring Jharkhand. Her condition is reported to be critical.

The victim filed a complaint with the GRP, Rourkela. The incident took place on December 31 when the

girl was waiting for a train to Jharsuguda at Rourkela railway station when an acquaintance misguided her into boarding another train with him. The two got off midway to take a bus to the girl's home. But the accused took her to a house in Lota-pahar where she was repeatedly raped for the next two days. Five friends of the accused had also allegedly joined in the assault.

The victim filed a complaint with the GRP, Rourkela. The incident took place on December 31 when the

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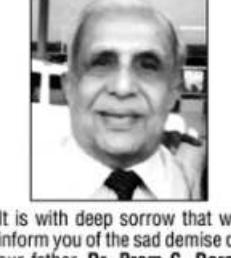
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DEATH



It is with deep sorrow that we inform you of the sad demise of our father, Dr. Prem C. Dore' (Appaji to all of us) at 19.26 on the 5th of Jan 2019 at the Rashid Hospital, Dubai after a brief illness. He was 89 and was practicing as a Senior Physician at St. Martha's Hospital, Bangalore till June 2014. He leaves behind his son, Dr. Srinath P. Dore', daughter-in-law Shyama Dore', daughter Aruna Subramanian, son-in-law Dr. Bala Subramanian, his grand children and great granddaughter.

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DONATE EYES-GIFT SIGHT

Kolkata Mayor Hakim hits another hurdle

CPI(M) councillor again contests Bill enabling his entry



Firhad Hakim • FILE PHOTO

the CPI(M) councillor's petition observing that the impugned amendment is within the competence of the legislature.

Challenging the Single Bench order, an appeal was filed and is likely to be taken up next week by a Division Bench, presided by Acting Chief Justice Biswanath Sommadder, the councillor's lawyer Shamim Ahmed said.

All the five victims, aged below 25 years, were returning after watching a cultural programme at Timimuni when the accident took place at 2 a.m.

The crash left the car badly mangled and the bodies had to be extricated from the vehicle by using gas cutters, Inspector of Derabish police station Sudhir Kumar Sahu said.

The youths succumbed to injuries while being taken to a hospital. The injured youth was rushed to SCB Medical College Hospital, Cuttack.

Meanwhile, the State government has come up with an amendment to the Odisha Motor Vehicles (Accident Claims Tribunal) Rules, 1960, empowering the departments to recover compensation from registered owner of vehicle which is not covered by policy of insurance against third party risks.

Five youths killed in road accident

STAFF REPORTER

BHUABENSWAR

Five youths were killed and one seriously injured when their car hit a stationary truck on the national highway near Kendrapara on Monday morning.

All the five victims, aged below 25 years, were returning after watching a cultural programme at Timimuni when the accident took place at 2 a.m.

The crash left the car badly mangled and the bodies had to be extricated from the vehicle by using gas cutters, Inspector of Derabish police station Sudhir Kumar Sahu said.

The youths succumbed to injuries while being taken to a hospital. The injured youth was rushed to SCB Medical College Hospital, Cuttack.

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Bomb attack on BJP office in Shillong

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA SHILLONG

Will restore old pension scheme: AAP

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
CHANDIGARH

Aam Aadmi Party convenor and Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal on Monday said the party would restore the old pension scheme for government employees within 15 days if it came to power in Haryana.

He was addressing a gathering in Panchkula here where he hit out at the ruling BJP, accusing it of ignoring the interest of government employees and adopting an anti-employee attitude in the State.

"In the last four years of the BJP rule, employees have been agitating for their rightful demands," Mr. Kejriwal said and termed Chief Minister Manohar Lal Khattar as "anti-employee".

He urged the employees to be united and support the AAP.

Congress to use farmers' rally for cultivating voters

Party chief Rahul Gandhi to attend the mega event in Jaipur on January 9

MOHAMMED IQBAL
JAIPUR

A huge farmers' rally to be organised here on January 9, which will be addressed by party president Rahul Gandhi, will provide an opportunity to the ruling Congress in Rajasthan to cultivate the agrarian community as voters for this year's Lok Sabha elections. Preparations were being made here to hold the rally as a mega event.

Mr. Gandhi, who took out roadshows and addressed several public meetings in the State during the Assembly election campaign, had promised that the farmers' loans would be waived within 10 days of the government's formation. The Congress government announced loan waiver of ₹2 lakh each as its first major



Congress president
Rahul Gandhi. •

decision within three days after Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot assumed office on December 17.

Mr. Gehlot told reporters at the Pradesh Congress Committee headquarters here on Monday that Mr. Gandhi had been invited to the State to affirm the party's commitment to farmers'

welfare. "We fulfilled our promise made to farmers. Preparations for Lok Sabha elections have also begun... Congress will benefit from the atmosphere building up in its favour," he said.

Campaign for LS polls

Amid indications that the farmers' rally at Vidyadhar Nagar Stadium here would be utilised to kick-start the Congress' campaign for Lok Sabha polls in the State, the Ministers in charge of various districts have been given the responsibility to mobilise the party workers and farmers for attending the event. The main focus is on the Jaipur and Ajmer divisions.

Mr. Gandhi is expected to announce the modalities and criteria for implementation of the loan waiver decision at the rally. The decision, which is set to benefit over 30 lakh farmers in the State, will result in the burden of an estimated ₹18,000 crore on the exchequer, as there will be no monetary ceiling on the short-term agricultural loans obtained from the cooperative banks.

As the Congress believes that it has returned to power largely because of farmers' support, the party leaders are likely to utilise the rally for attacking the NDA government at the Centre on the issue of farmers' welfare.

Of the three States where Congress won in the recent Assembly elections, Madhya Pradesh and Chhattisgarh announced the waiver of farmers' short-term loans before Rajasthan.

Will fill space lost by AAP, SAD: Khaira

Former AAP leader to announce name of his party today

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
CHANDIGARH

AAP leadership to get him disqualified under the anti-defection law.

"tomorrow," Mr. Khaira told reporters here.

The legislator from Bhatia had quit the AAP on Sunday, six months after he was ousted from the post of Leader of Opposition.

"Both the SAD and the AAP have lost political space in Punjab. The AAP lost space because of wrong policies and the Akali Dal over牺牲 issues. To fill this vacuum and for the cause of Punjab, we are going to announce a new political party

'AAP targeting me'
"I have resigned from the primary membership of the party. They want me to leave the seat and again contest the election to test popularity. They are full of hatred and targeting me," he said.

Mr. Khaira said the Punjab Democratic Alliance would meet later this week to take a call on whether to contest the Lok Sabha polls or not.



BJP to contest Speaker's post in M.P.

Congress fields N.P. Prajapati, a close confidant of Chief Minister Kamal Nath

ANUP DUTTA
BHOJAL

N.P. Prajapati, Congress MLA from Gotegaon and a close confidant of Chief Minister Kamal Nath, and BJP MLA from Harsud Vijay Shah filed their nominations for the post of Speaker on the opening day of the newly elected Madhya Pradesh Assembly on Monday. After decades, election to the post of Speaker, if needed, would be held on Tuesday.

Traditionally, election to the Speaker's post in M.P. is conducted unopposed and the post of Deputy Speaker is given to the Opposition party.

"It has been a tradition in M.P. to elect the Speaker unanimously. I hope the BJP



Newly elected Leader of Opposition Gopal Bhargava (centre) is greeted by Shivraj Chouhan, Rajnath Singh and State BJP chief Rakesh Singh in Bhopal on Monday. • A.M. FARUQUI

will withdraw its candidate," Public Relations Minister P. C. Sharma told media persons on the premises of the State Assembly.

The BJP, however, has decided to break away from the over two-decade-old tradition by fielding a candidate for the post.

Speaking to media persons here, State BJP chief Rakesh Singh said the Congress had forced their hand by deviating from tradition in appointing pro-tem Speaker.

Bhargava is Leader of Opposition

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
BHOJAL

In a fresh setback to former Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan, the State BJP on Monday elected his detractor Gopal Bhargava as Leader of the Opposition in the State Assembly.

The decision was taken at a meeting of the BJP legislature party, where Union Home Minister Rajnath Singh and State in-charge Vinay Sahasrabuddhe were present.

Amarinder rules out pact with AAP

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
CHANDIGARH

Punjab Chief Minister Amarinder Singh on Monday ruled out the need for an alliance with the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) in the State but said the decision would be taken by the Congress high command.

"The AAP is totally non-existent in Punjab and there is absolutely no need for the Congress in the State to go in for an alliance with the Arvind Kejriwal's party," Capt. Singh told reporters in New Delhi after meeting Congress chief Rahul Gandhi. He discussed a host of State government and party-related issues with Mr. Gandhi.

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4 WEST

THE HINDU
TUESDAY, JANUARY 8, 2019

Anganwadi workers to strike again, demands unfulfilled

Threaten to go ahead with Jail Bharo Andolan in February

SUJAY KARANGUTKAR

MUMBAI

Anganwadi workers will go on a two-day strike from Tuesday as their demands have not yet been met by the State government, after their protest last month. The workers have also threatened to continue their Jail Bharo Andolan that has been planned in February.

Anganwadi workers from across the State had gathered in Azad Maidan to protest against the delay in regulating the Centre's order of an increase in their honorarium. A day later, a delegation of Maharashtra Raja Anganwadi Kruti Samiti (MRAKS), an umbrella body of seven anganwadi unions, had met



Frustrated: Anganwadi workers had gathered to protest delay in increasing their honorarium in last month. ■ FILE PHOTO

with Rajgopal Deora, principal secretary Finance (Reforms), and Vinita Ved-Singhal, secretary, Women and Child Welfare Ministry.

However, on Monday, the delegation said that while the discussions were positive,

there has been no development since. "They have said our matter is being looked into, but we haven't heard from them," Shubha Shamim, member of the Centre for Trade Unions, who was a part of the delegation, said.

On Tuesday and Wednesday, anganwadi workers and helpers will gather at Azad Maidan in red clothes to support the nationwide strike called by 10 centrally recognised trade unions for minimum wages and social security, including pension for all workers, and against amendments to the labour law.

Workers and helpers from the other parts of the State will protest at the State-level and taluka-level on Tuesday and Wednesday respectively. They will raise the issue of honorarium, minimum wages, pension and unemployment. "We have also sought appointments in Mantralaya," said a member of the MRAKS.

Indira proved self without quota: Gadkari

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

NAGPUR

Union Minister Nitin Gadkari has praised former Prime Minister Indira Gandhi, saying she did not need reservation to prove her mettle and did better than male leaders in the Congress. The BJP leader said he was not opposed to women's reservation, but was against politics based on caste and religion. He was speaking at the inauguration of an exhibition by women self-help groups on Sunday.

A person excels on the basis of knowledge and not because of language, caste, religion or region, he said.

Modi's upcoming Solapur visit seen as start of BJP's election campaign

PM to launch slew of mega development projects

SHOUMOJIT BANERJEE

PUNE

Prime Minister Narendra Modi's visit to Solapur district on Wednesday is expected to officially inaugurate the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) election campaign in Maharashtra.

Mr. Modi's visit and public address in Solapur forms part of the party's massive, pre-poll, public canvassing before the general election.

The PM is to launch a slew of mega-development projects, most notably the affordable housing project at Kumbhari village outside Solapur city. The Kumbhari

scheme, which is spread over nearly 190 acres and is touted as one of Asia's biggest affordable housing projects, aims to provide durable housing to families of 30,000 unorganised sector labourers at an affordable cost.

The Centre of Indian Trade Unions (CITU), who initiated the Kumbhari model, have been involved in the construction of over 15,000 houses for beedi workers. The first batch of 10,000 houses was completed in 2006 and named after Communist leader and social activist Godavari Parulekar, while the second lot, completed in 2015, was named after trade unionist Meenakshi Sane, who strove to uplift beedi workers of the district.

Mr. Modi will also launch an underground sewerage scheme and a project for improving water distribution in Solapur city, sources said.

Mr. Modi's visit, which comes close on the heels of BJP president Amit Shah's visit to Latur, indicates the importance of Maharashtra for the saffron party. However, with hopes of an alliance with the Shiv Sena rapidly fading and with Swabhiman Paksha leader and MP Raju Shetti no longer with the BJP, the State now poses a challenge to the party.

Take responsibility for job losses: Sena to PM

Cites CMIE report claiming 1.09 crore jobs lost last year

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

MUMBAI

The Shiv Sena on Monday said that Prime Minister Narendra Modi should take responsibility for job losses in the country if he sought credit for its creation.

In an editorial in party mouthpiece *Saamana*, the Sena, a constituent of the BJP-led governments at the Centre and State, cited a Centre for Monitoring Indian Economy (CMIE) report which claimed 1.09 crore jobs were lost in the country in the past one year.

"If Mr. Modi seeks credit for creating 70 lakh jobs, then he should take the responsibility for loss of 1.09 crore jobs

■ If Mr. Modi seeks credit for creating 70 lakh jobs, then he should take the responsibility for loss of 1.09 crore jobs

SHIV SEN

jobs," Sena said. The party also cited earlier statements of Union minister Nitin Gadkari and BJP president Amit Shah about their (government's) inability to give jobs to everyone.

"If you cannot give jobs to everyone, then why did you make *jumbas* (poll rhetoric) about creating two crore jobs every year. This is the failure of the Union government and it cannot hide it for a long time," the party said.

Jobs have been lost not only in urban areas but also in the rural parts, the party's editorial said.

Almost 65 lakh women have lost jobs but PM Modi keeps chanting 'Beti Bachao, Beti Padhao' and woman empowerment, the party said.

Won't stay silent



Touchy topic: Congress activists protest against the film *The Accidental Prime Minister*, at Mulund on Monday. They claim it is an example of BJP-sponsored propaganda ahead of this year's Lok Sabha elections. ■ VIBHAV BIRWATKAR

Now, Goa police can live track illegal drones

PRAKASH KAMAT

PANAJI

The Goa police has successfully tested a new system which can live track the current location of unauthorised flying drones, with data which can also be stored for later investigation.

To increase in use of unauthorised drones or unmanned aerial vehicles in Goa during heavily crowded events and beach activities, which can be a potential risk to public safety and privacy, the police are geared with a mechanism to track their live current location.

The Goa police successfully used the Drone Detection System for public safety and privacy during New Year's Eve, said a spokesperson on Monday.

The system was deployed in Baga area of north coastal Goa with Anti Terrorism Squad personnel, under supervision of Superintendent of Police Karthik Kashyap. This system is mobile and works for a 5-km range. It has a public announcement system and can also be used to provide additional safety to VVIP movements and other big events in Goa.

This mechanism can be used to monitor crowd and vehicular traffic movements, and necessary instructions can be passed to the ground staff.

This new system will put a hold on unauthorised and unsafe use of drones and add to the safety and privacy of visiting tourists. The system was developed by Bengaluru-based startup IIO Technologies Pvt. Ltd. in association with DJI and L3 ASA Pvt. Ltd.

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IN BRIEF



Harivarasanam award for P. Suseela

THIRUVANANTHAPURAM Playback singer P. Suseela has been chosen for the Harivarasanam award instituted by the Kerala government. The award, comprising ₹1,00,000 and citation, will be presented at the Sabarimala Sannidhanam on January 14. The jury comprised former High Court judge S. Siri Jagan, Devaswom Commissioner N. Vasu and Principal Secretary N. Vasu, and Principal Secretary N. Vasu, and K.R. Jyothilal.

Modi to address meeting in Kerala on Jan. 15

KOLLAM Prime Minister Narendra Modi will address Bharatiya Janata Party workers from the constituencies of Kollam, Alappuzha and Mavelikara at a public meeting in Kollam on January 15, party State general secretary K. Surendran said at a press meet here on Monday.

Sabarimala-bound Sri Lankan woman detained at Nilackal

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

PATHANAMTHITTA The police detained a Sabarimala-bound woman pilgrim from Sri Lanka at the Nilakkal base camp for want of valid travel documents on Monday afternoon.

According to the police, the woman reached Nilakkal along with a 70-member team of pilgrims from Sri Lanka and the United Kingdom.

Above 50 years

There were reports that the woman had been detained by the police for not showing

Kerala HC sets 7-day notice period for hartals, strikes

Says that the right to life and livelihood outweighs the right to call strikes

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
KOCHI

The Kerala High Court has set a seven-day notice period for political parties and individuals to call a hartal and general strike in the State.

A Division Bench of Chief Justice Hrithik Roy and Justice A.K. Jayasankaran Nambari said here on Monday that the notice period would enable citizens to approach the court with their objections and examine the legality of the strike call.

It will also provide an opportunity for the State to safeguard the interests of the citizens, the court held. The order was issued by the court while considering a batch of petitions.

Referring to an earlier decision of the Kerala HC against bandhs, the court said: "What was said about the bandhs in 1997 squarely



Safeguarding citizens: A scene in Thiruvananthapuram during a recent hartal. ■ S. MAHINSHA

applied to hartals and general strikes."

Fundamental right

While the court recognised the fundamental right of those who call for strike and hartal to demonstrate their protests, the same cannot be exercised in violation of the fundamental rights of other citizens as mentioned in the Constitution," the Bench held.

Those who call for hartals will be held responsible for the losses suffered due to the event, the court held.

sons calling for strikes and hartals, the court said.

"While we recognise the fundamental right of those who call for strike and hartal to demonstrate their protests, the same cannot be exercised in violation of the fundamental rights of other citizens as mentioned in the Constitution," the Bench held.

It aims at providing due protection to private property from violence that erupts during protests.

Ordinance to curb hartal violence

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
THIRUVANANTHAPURAM

The Kerala Cabinet has decided to promulgate an Ordinance to curb destruction of private property in the name of protests.

Briefing reporters here about the decision on Monday, Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan said that the Cabinet had decided to recommend to the Governor to promulgate the Kerala Prevention of Damage to Private Property and Payment of Compensation Ordinance, 2019.

It aims at providing due protection to private property from violence that erupts during protests.

Naidu demands ₹3,715 crore Polavaram dues from Centre

Guinness record created at site of irrigation project

APPAJI REDDEM
POLAVARAM

Buoyed by the record-breaking feat by the Navayuga Engineering Company Limited (NECL) at the Polavaram multipurpose irrigation site where it found a place in the Guinness Book of World Records for the highest usage of concrete, 32,315.5 cubic metres within 24 hours, Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister Chandrababu Naidu on Monday asked the company to break its own record in three months.

He demanded that the Centre release ₹3,715 crore dues related to the project at the earliest. Announcing the record at a press meet at the project site, Mr. Naidu said,

"We have gone far ahead of Indian expectations. I want Navayuga to break its own record in March by filling in 65,000 cubic metres concrete within 24 hours."

The company on Monday broke an earlier record, where



Proud moment: A Guinness Book of World Records representative handing over a certificate to N. Chandrababu Naidu at the Polavaram project site on Monday. ■ A.V.G. PRASAD

21,580 cubic metres was poured in a hotel project by Abdul Wahed bin Shabib RALS Contracting LLC and Alfa Engg. Consultant in Dubai.

On the progress of the project, the Chief Minister said the cost, along with the Relief and Rehabilitation, was ₹58,000 crore as per the revised estimates.

About 7,000 MT of cement, 3,000 workers and 225 engineers, besides 90 transit

mixers, five telebelts, four book placers and 20 agitator trucks delivering concrete from three batching plants of 240 cubic metres per hour capacity and seven plants of 120 cubic metres per hour capacity were involved in the task, as per Navayuga.

The company was planning to complete the construction of the spillway and two coffer dams by June, NECL managing director C. Sudhir said.

They said society too had begun to change its perception. There was a time when a beard was looked down upon as a mark of dejection and drug abuse. Today, they said, it had acquired a good deal of dignity in society.

Branded as extremists

Some of them had been made fun of; some others branded as extremists.

"Yet we all want to be different. That's the driving spirit behind this beard," said Mr. Arshad. They said they were enjoying their carefully-maintained beards. But maintaining it has not been easy for them. It requires frequent washing and oiling.

"But it's an asset. People come for a selfie with us wherever we go," he said.

Not all men sporting a beard could be a part of the gathering.

They had to be 23 and above and should be working.

In Kerala, bearded youngsters come together

Members of group share their experiences

STAFF REPORTER
MALAPPURAM

When scores of bearded youngsters gathered at Kottakkunnu here on Sunday evening, it became the talk of the town and was a path-breaking event for similar groups to emulate.

At first, many thought it was a casual meeting when youngsters sporting beards in different styles began to reach the table-top tourist destination here. Soon it became a gathering of consid-



Bearded youngsters striking a pose at Kottakkunnu, Malappuram. ■ SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

erable size. People watched them with curiosity as the group members started to discuss an action plan of charity. "There's no point in making a gathering without

giving something back to society," said Arshad.

There was much joy and fun when the 100-odd gathering shared their experiences. Most of them said they

Stretch of Periyar turns rust-red, emits bubbles

Inspection of industries has not revealed cause: official

AATHIRA PERINCHERY
KOCHI

The stretch of the Periyar which flows by the industrial zone of Eloor-Edayar took on a rust-red hue on Monday and erupted in bubbles in some areas.

Locals claimed to have noticed the change of colour upstream of the Pathalam regulator-cum-bridge at 8 p.m. on January 6.

The next morning, the rust-red colour was evident till the Pathalam Kadavu bridge, said Mahesh Kumar V.B., a resident of Eloor and a local activist with Janajagrutha. He observed the bubbles on the water a few

metres upstream of the Pathalam

regulator-cum-bridge.

"Yesterday, there was also

some fish kill downstream of the regulator bridge," he said.

The reddish hue changed

into a turbid bronze-brown as the day progressed. Ever since this stretch of the river began changing colours, fish catch has decreased, claimed a resident, Thomas (name changed), who works in a factory nearby but comes to the Pathalam bridge to fish everyday.

Samples taken

collected this time too and sent to the laboratory, where it is being tested on a very urgent basis", she said. Tests would also be run for the presence of pesticides.

A head for science



Students and teachers looking at a demonstration during the Southern India Science Fair - 2019 at St. Joseph's High School in Bengaluru on Monday. ■ K. MURALI KUMAR

Dry winds make Kerala shiver

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

THIRUVANANTHAPURAM Most parts of Kerala are shivering under a cold spell characterised by nippy mornings as dry, cold winds from North India sweep across the southern peninsula.

"The cold wave in North India and the northerly winds are responsible for the dip in temperature across the State since January 3," says K. Santhosh, Director, Met Centre, Thiruvananthapuram.

Kottayam district has seen the highest departure in minimum temperature of 4.6 degrees Celsius from January 1 to 7. The district recorded the lowest of 16 degrees on January 3.

Animals begin to arrive at Wayanad sanctuary

Availability of water & fodder the attraction for wildlife from Karnataka and T.N.

E.M. MANOJ

KALPETTA

With the rise in mercury in the Nilgiri Biosphere, the seasonal migration of wild animals from wildlife sanctuaries in Karnataka and Tamil Nadu to the Wayanad Wildlife Sanctuary (WWS) has begun.

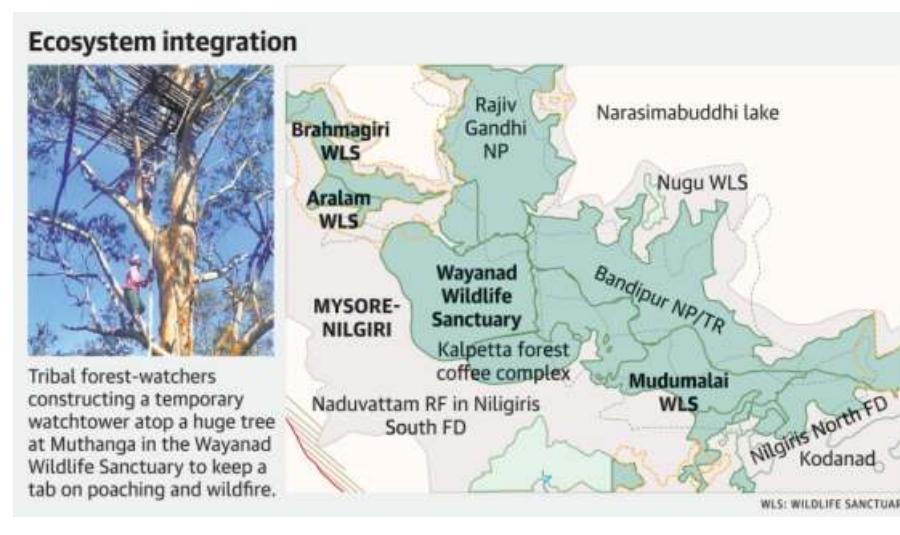
Mammals such as elephants and gaur migrate to the sanctuary from the adjacent Bandipur and Nagarhole national parks in Karnataka and the Mudumalai National Park in Tamil Nadu in search of food and water.

'A haven in summer'

"The WWS is a haven for migrating wild animals during summer owing to easy availability of fodder and water. We have taken highly structured measures at nearly ₹1 crore to ensure fodder, water and protection for the migrating wild guests," T.N. Sajan, wildlife warden of the sanctuary, told *The Hindu*.

Though the wildlife migration has started a little

Ecosystem integration



early this year, cases of man-animal conflict is comparatively very low on the fringes of the sanctuary, Mr. Sajan said, adding that no case of lifting of domestic animals by predators such as tiger or leopard has been reported so far. Mr. Sajan said water sources in the sanctuary, including 30 earthen bunds, 45 check-dams and 235 waterholes, are being closely

monitored with GPS every week to ensure drinking water for the wildlife.

Fire line

Fire line has been erected along 230 km on the forest fringes to prevent wildfire. Apart from 25 permanent anti-poaching camps and five watch towers at important strategic points, 12 new treetop 'machans' (tempor-

ary watchtowers) will start functioning in a week.

Forest officials, including guards and watchers, have been deployed there to keep watch over poaching and wildfire. As many as 340 watchers have been deployed inside the sanctuary, including 290 fire watchers and 50 anti-poaching watchers, with essential equipment and wireless sets.

Why not me, asks Perarivalan

Seeks information on premature release of Sanjay Dutt; both will face info panel

S. VIJAY KUMAR
CHENNAI

It does seem like actor Sanjay Dutt, who shook off his prison clothes short of his five-year term, just two years ago, could be back at Yerwada Central Prison, Pune. And this time, in the company of a convict serving a life sentence in Tamil Nadu.

The Bollywood star and A.G. Perarivalan, convicted in the Rajiv Gandhi assassination case, will present their arguments via written representation on January 16 before the appellate authority at the Yerwada Central Prison, on a petition from the latter seeking information on files relating to the actor's premature release from jail.

In a query under the Right to Information (RTI) Act sent to the Superintendent of the Yerwada Central Prison in 2016, Perarivalan had

sought a copy of the entire file relating to Dutt's premature release and also details of his conduct in prison.

The actor, convicted under the Arms Act in the 1993 Mumbai serial blasts case and then serving a five-year sentence in the prison, was given the benefit of remission of sentence by the Maharashtra government and released on account of "good conduct."

While the State government maintained that the decision to grant

remission to Dutt was taken by the Jail Superintendent, the Public Information Officer rejected the RTI petition for details of the premature release on the grounds that it was third party information and could not be revealed.

The authorities also cited a written representation from Dutt, while in prison, that his personal information should not be shared. However, Perarivalan appealed against this decision, stating that the information he sought on the release of the

actor was public information and could not be denied by invoking the exemption provisions under Section 8(j) of the Act.

After no decision was taken on his first appeal, Perarivalan moved the Maharashtra State Information Commission which ordered that a decision on sharing information sought by the petitioner could not be taken without hearing the third party (Mr. Dutt). The Commission directed the first appellate authority, the Superintendent's Office, Yerwada prison, to hear both sides and pass a speaking order before April 12, 2019.

Following this order, the prison officials have written to Perarivalan, presently lodged in the Puzhal central prison here, and Mr. Dutt to submit their written representations on January 16, 2019.

Seeking parity: Perarivalan, right, had sought a copy of the entire file relating to Sanjay Dutt's premature release.



6 NATION

IN BRIEF



Scuffle breaks out at BJP rally near CM's residence
LUCKNOW

The West Bengal unit of the BJP on Thursday held a rally at Hazra Road near Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee's residence in protest against the gang rape of the wife of a party activist recently. A minor scuffle also broke out between the BJP supporters and policemen when the former were stopped from proceeding towards the Chief Minister's house. PTI

2 killed, dozen injured as car collides with bus

BIKANER
Two persons died and a dozen others sustained injuries when a car collided with a bus due to poor visibility caused by dense fog in Rajasthan's Bikaner, the police said on Monday. The accident occurred on the Bikaner-Bajju State Highway, the police said, adding that two occupants of the car died on the spot. PTI

230 kg heroin seized near IB in Punjab in 2018: BSF

JAMMU
The BSF seized 230 kg of heroin and arrested 70 Indian border crossers, five Indian smugglers and five Pakistani smugglers along the India-Pakistan border in Punjab in 2018, a senior officer said on Monday. The BSF also seized 635 gram of opium along the border last year, he said. PTI

Forward Bloc to launch Netaji Idealism Yatra

KOLKATA
The Bengal unit of All India Forward Bloc would launch "Netaji Idealism Yatra" across the State to spread awareness against the rise of communalism, a senior party functionary said on Monday. The yatra will start on January 10 and continue till January 21. The tableau will travel across the 42 Lok Sabha, the party functionary added. PTI

Yogi faces heat from allies on OBC report

Apna Dal (S) demands caste census; SBSP gives govt. 100 days to implement quota sub-categorisation

OMAR RASHID

LUCKNOW

The sub-categorisation of Other Backward Class quota is turning into a hot potato for the BJP in Uttar Pradesh with its allies turning on the heat over the issue amid a clash of interests.

The Apna Dal (S), led by Union Minister of State for Health Anupriya Patel, on Monday accused the Yogi Adityanath government of trying to divide the OBCs and creating a rift among them.

Addressing a meeting of the party's national office-bearers in Lucknow, Ms. Patel demanded that the Adityanath government conduct a caste census of OBCs before it decides to implement sub-categorisation of the quota. She dared the State government to reveal the population of each caste under the OBC in U.P.



Power play: Apna Dal (S) leader Anupriya Patel at a party worker's meeting in Lucknow on Monday. ■ RAJEEV BHATT

Her statement came with reference to the silence maintained by the Adityanath government over the report submitted by a four-member Social Justice Committee formed to review the situation of different castes under OBC. If the U.P. government has not done any such study [caste census], then on what

basis is the SJC carrying out the sub-categorisation? You cannot snatch one's share and give it to another," Ms. Patel said, accusing the State government of "injustice" towards the OBCs. The Apna Dal (S) is based on Kurmi (an OBC caste) support.

The BJP's other ally, Sudheev Bharatiya Samaj Party, issued a 100-day ultima-

tum to Mr. Adityanath to implement the sub-categorisation, or else it would consider separation from the National Democratic Alliance ahead of the Lok Sabha elections. Om Prakash Rajbhar, SBSP president and Cabinet Minister in the Adityanath government, has threatened to contest all 80 Lok Sabha seats in the State alone.

Report complications

The SJC report, which was seen as a move to mobilise the most-backward castes against the dominant Yadavs, commonly associated with the Samajwadi Party, led to complications when it tagged the Yadavs in the same category as the Kurmis and Jats, two communities the BJP does not want to politically antagonise.

While the report has still not been made public or ta-

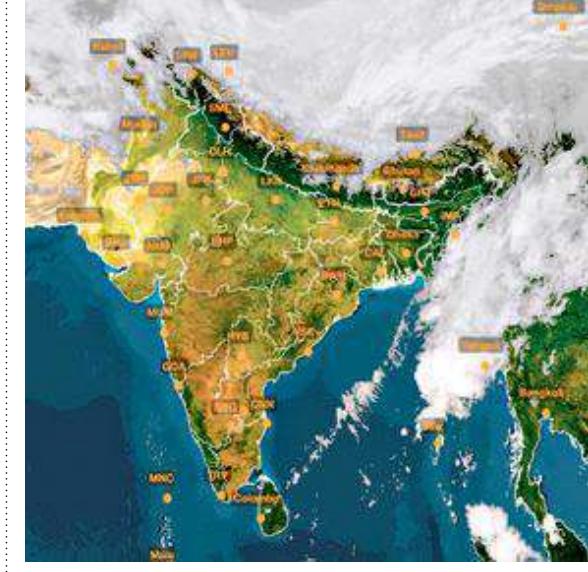
bled in the Assembly despite being sent to the government in October, a leaked copy of it suggests the panel has recommended a split of the 27% OBC quota into three categories.

The panel headed by retired Allahabad High Court judge Raghavendra Kumar has listed 79 sub-castes under the OBC category. Of these, nine fall under Backward Class, 37 under Most Backward and 33 under Backward categories.

Listed under the Backward Class – those who will be restricted to 7% quota – are castes like Yadav, Kurmi and Jat. The panel says that these castes are socially, economically and culturally "strong" and have been recruited in government jobs more than the ratio of their population, while also enjoying political representation.

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 Tuesday: Dense/very dense fog likely at few/isolated places over Haryana, Punjab, Delhi, Himachal Pradesh, west Uttar Pradesh, north Rajasthan and Madhya Pradesh

CITY	RAIN	MAX	MIN	CITY	RAIN	MAX	MIN
Agartala	—	28.3	9.6	Kozhikode	—	32.0	21.4
Ahmedabad	—	24.7	10.2	Kurnool	—	32.7	16.6
Aizawl	—	25.4	—	Lucknow	—	21.9	11.6
Aligarh	0.4	21.7	11.6	Madurai	—	32.3	18.1
Bengaluru	—	29.3	13.6	Mangaluru	—	35.0	19.8
Bhopal	—	20.5	7.2	Mumbai	—	32.9	14.2
Bhubaneswar	—	31.2	10.9	Mysoor	—	29.0	13.5
Chandigarh	—	20.2	5.6	New Delhi	—	20.1	7.1
Chennai	—	29.4	21.2	Patna	—	21.6	12.2
Coimbatore	—	30.5	17.6	Port Blair	74.6	30.0	23.7
Dehradun	0.7	21.6	5.2	Puducherry	—	31.1	17.4
Gangtok	—	17.0	7.8	Pune	—	28.2	9.2
Goa	—	32.9	19.5	Rajpur	—	27.8	14.0
Guwahati	—	26.6	7.3	Ranchi	—	24.6	8.5
Hubballi	—	29.0	16.0	Shillong	—	19.0	9.4
Hyderabad	—	29.7	15.7	Shimla	—	9.8	-0.7
Imphal	—	23.8	3.9	Srinagar	—	4.7	-4.0
Jaipur	—	21.0	8.9	Trivandrum	—	33.0	20.9
Kochi	—	30.8	20.2	Tiruchi	—	31.1	18.6
Kohima	—	18.5	3.2	Vijayawada	—	29.7	16.9
Kolkata	—	27.8	12.5	Visakhapatnam	—	28.0	18.5

(Rainfall data in mm; temperature in Celsius)

Pollutants in the air you are breathing

CITIES	SO ₂	NO _x	CO	PM _{2.5}	PM ₁₀	CODE
Ahmedabad	63	.79	.29	.125	.112	■
Bengaluru	.5	—	.158	.126	.112	■
Chennai	23	.15	.58	.226	.211	■
Delhi	24	.83	.105	.382	.321	■
Hyderabad	12	.29	.28	.158	.137	■
Kolkata	21	.140	.12	.312	.269	■
Lucknow	.9	.42	.49	.259	—	■
Mumbai	24	.74	.86	.97	.145	■
Pune	75	.13	.50	.169	.139	■
Vishakhapatnam	20	.117	.42	.308	.263	■

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

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

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

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

PM_{2.5} & PM₁₀: Particulate matter pollution can cause irritation of the eyes, nose and throat, coughing, chest tightness and shortness of breath, reduced lung function, irregular heartbeat, asthma attacks, heart attacks and premature death in people with heart or lung disease

'Allying with BJP like consuming poison'

Mehbooba explains father's decision

PEERZADA ASHIQ

SRINAGAR

Peoples Democratic Party president and former Chief Minister Mehbooba Mufti on Monday chose the third death anniversary of party patron Mufti Mohammad Sayeed to apologise for her controversial remarks made in 2016 and her father's decision to ally with the BJP in a desperate bid to rebuild the party.

Likening the alliance with the BJP to "consuming a cup of poison", Ms. Mufti said her party took the decision "to resolve the Kashmir issue". However, Prime Minister Narendra Modi wasted his mandate vis-à-vis Kashmir as well as the country, she said. She was speaking to the heart of a mother".

She referred to the exit of around 10 prominent faces from the PDP, including four ex-Ministers, as "garbage gone with the wind" and defended her recent visit to the families of militants saying "any harassment of militants' families should stop".

"RFP FOR APPOINTMENT OF MSP FOR IMPLEMENTATION OF CLOUD SERVICES IN MADHYA PRADESH"

MPSEDC invites Proposals from qualified and experienced agencies for Appointment of MSP for implementation of Cloud services in Madhya Pradesh. Interested Bidders, who qualify as per the criteria mentioned in the document, may submit their proposals through e-tendering latest by 22nd January 2019 till 3:30 P.M. on e-Procurement portal (www.mptenders.gov.in). Bidder has to submit the document fee of Rs. 100/- (Rupees One Thousand only) for RFP document along with e-Procurement Processing fees through online payment at e-Procurement portal. The detailed RFP document can be downloaded from the website www.mptenders.gov.in and www.mpsedc.com. M.P. Madhyam/92491/2019 (CGM) MPSEDC

SOUTH DELHI MUNICIPAL CORPORATION

OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER (Pr.-I & II/CENTRAL ZONE UNDER SEWA NAGAR FLYOVER, NEW DELHI-3

PRESS NOTICE FOR NOTICE INVITING TENDER

FOR ONLINE TENDERING TIME TABLE PLEASE REFER www.tenderwizard.com/SOUTHDMCETENDER, NIT No. EE (Pr.-I)/II/CNZ/T/2018-19/09 Date: 04.01.19

EE(Pr.-I)/CNZ- Name of Work (1). Improvement of roads by C.C Pavement from Tikona Park to Okhla Head In Ward No.102-S Abul Fazal Enclave, Central Zone. Estimated Amount Rs. 40,33,700/- Estimated cost put to Tender Rs. 38,41,958/- Earnest Money Rs. 76,850/- Time of Completion 03 Months, Tender Cost Rs. 500/- H/A-G-110-3551.

EE(Pr.-I)/CNZ- Name of Work (2) Construction of SW Drainage and Improvement of Road berms by RMC in Nizamuddin East in Ward No 154 Central Zone S.H. Construction of Sumpwell in Nizamuddin East in Ward No 55-S Central Zone. Estimated Amount Rs. 173,60,926/- Earnest Money Rs. 3,47,250/- Time of Completion 12 Months, Tender Cost Rs. 1,000/- H/A-F-100-1062.

Bidding Documents with detailed terms and condition can be downloaded from the website www.tenderwizard.com/SOUTHDMCETENDER. Last Date of Download/Purchase Tender Document 17.01.19 08:00 PM. Closing of Bid 17.01.19 08:00 PM. Opening of Financial Bid 18.01.19, 03:30 P.M. All details of Revision, Clarification, Corrigendum/Addendum, Time Extension etc., if any, respect of above tender(s) will be uploaded on SDMC website www.tenderwizard.com/SOUTHDMCETENDER. Bidders should regularly visit the website to keep themselves regularly updated in respect of these tenders.

No. : 154/DPI/S/2018-19 E.E. (Pr.-I & II/CENTRAL ZONE

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Chief Engineer (Kangra Zone)

HPPWD Dharamshala H.P., 176

NEARBY



'Jayalalithaa did not want to be taken abroad'

CHENNAI
A two-year-old video of Richard Beale, the London-based intensivist who treated late Chief Minister Jayalalithaa, saying the patient herself did not want to be taken abroad for treatment surfaced on Monday. The video was reportedly shot in February 2017.

Amit Shah arrives in Chennai for RSS event

CHENNAI
BJP president Amit Shah arrived here on Monday evening to take part in an RSS event. The visit was kept secret. Most BJP leaders were unaware of it and even party members were not allowed to take part.

IS-inspired module: NIA custody extended for 5

NEW DELHI
A Delhi court on Monday extended the NIA custody of five of the 10 people arrested on suspicion of being members of an Islamic State-inspired group who were allegedly planning suicide attacks and serial blasts, targeting politicians as also government installations, in Delhi and other parts of north India. The court remanded the other five accused in judicial custody after the agency said they were not required for custodial interrogation. PTI

Money laundering case filed against Hooda

NEW DELHI
The Enforcement Directorate has registered a money laundering case against former Haryana Chief Minister Bhupinder Hooda and a company allegedly linked to Robert Vadra, brother-in-law of Congress president Rahul Gandhi, in connection with 'irregularities' in a Gurugram land deal in 2008. The probe follows an FIR by the Haryana police in September last year.

Navy to set up new air base in Port Blair

DINAKAR PERI
NEW DELHI
Later this month, the Navy will commission a new airbase 100 miles north of Port Blair in the strategically located Andaman and Nicobar islands.

"The base, INS Kohassa, will be commissioned by Navy chief Admiral Sunil Lanba on January 24," spokesperson Capt. D.K. Sharma said.

This will be India's fourth air base and the third naval air facility in the archipelago, which are more closer to Southeast Asia than to the Indian mainland, overlook-

Lack of jobs, debts push villagers to illegal coal mines

Desperate, they overlook risks for a pay cheque

RAHUL KARMAKAR
BOGIDARI

Mohammad Hussain Sheikh recalls how a letter from the sirdar (manager and mine supervisor) of a Meghalaya coal mine in 2002 had helped him heave a big sigh of relief. It simply read: "You are hired. Come before the season starts in a few days."

Mr. Sheikh, now 48, was desperate for a job after a crop failure made him default on a loan from a local moneylender. While he had only borrowed ₹10,000, he owed more than twice the amount in interest alone.

"I really needed a job," recalled Mr. Sheikh, a resident of Bogidari, a village about 140 km west of Guwahati in western Assam's Chirang district. "An agent said I could make good money if I work in the coal mines. I found the work risky, but did not regret my decision to take it up."

About 70% of the men in Bogidari, one of a cluster of 22 villages largely inhabited by migrant Muslims in the Bhangnamari area, have worked or are working in the coal mines dotting Meghalaya's Jaintia Hills.

While the mining season across Meghalaya's coal belt is usually from October to March, miners often work during non-season monsoon months for extra money.



Md. Abdul Mian, the father of one of the trapped miners.

Tribunal banned rathole coal mining in April 2014. "I worked only once after the ban just to pay off a loan of ₹30,000 from a small finance bank. I realised the risk was no longer worth it."

Lack of options

But poverty and a lack of jobs still drive local youth to risk their lives. One of them was Nizdamugaon's Mohammad Safer Islam, who is among 15 miners still

trapped in the water-filled illegal coal mine at Ksan in the East Jaintia Hills district.

"He had a debt of ₹4 lakh after a trader took 12 truck-loads of bamboo from him to make incense sticks," said Mohammad Abdul Mian, Mr. Islam's 60-year-old father. "He had worked in the mines once 10 years ago but had vowed never to go back after he got married. This time he decided to take a chance to pay some labourers he had engaged for the business."

Before going to work in the mines, Mr. Islam took a further loan of ₹30,000 from Bandhan Bank. His father said he was now under pressure to repay unless he could get his son's death certificate.

"I have given up hope as no one trapped in those mines has ever come out alive," he said. "Local officials said I cannot get a death certificate in Assam because he died elsewhere. I don't

know if Meghalaya will give me one, since I am told he was engaged in illegal work."

Though the tragedy has shaken the Bhangnamari area, with three of its villagers trapped in the Ksan mine, many are still willing to take the risk as a lack of local options forces them to look elsewhere for sustenance.

"Frequent floods and sand deposited by rivers such as Mori Manas has made the farmlands lose much of its fertility," said Noor Kalam, a former coal mine worker willing to "take the plunge" again. "The inputs for growing a crop are higher than the output."

"One does not die every day in a coal mine," Tajuddin Ahmed of Nizdamugaon, remarked wryly. "And the money earned, which depends on the coal extracted, is much more than what other industries pay," he added.

Appropriate steps taken, Centre tells SC

NEW DELHI
The Centre informed the Supreme Court on Monday that all appropriate steps were being taken to rescue 15 miners trapped since December 13 in an illegal coal mine in Meghalaya and the Navy has deployed a remotely operated underwater vehicle in the operation there. PTI

children of those involved in coal mining, the association asserted.

"Recent incidents at Ksan and Jaliyai villages are unfortunate, and we condemn the mineowners for sending labourers to work during the ban and exposing them to unexplainable risks. Law should prevail and such people should not be spared," the association said.

It is a question of livelihood: dealers

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
GUWAHATI

An association of coal miners and dealers in Meghalaya has sought legalisation of mining for sustenance of the local economy and the livelihood of thousands of people.

"We have moved the Supreme Court for allowing legal and scientific mining," Balios Swer, president of Jaintia Coal Miners and Dealers' Association, said on Monday. "We appreciate Iber Laloo for standing with the affected coal mining community by filing the case in court."

In April 2014, the National Green Tribunal had banned rat-hole coal mining in Meghalaya. The ban had become a "cancer and killed the hope for a better future" of the

20 crore workers will strike work, say unions

Protest against government's labour law reforms

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

Ten central trade unions on Monday expected 20 crore workers to respond to their call for a nationwide general strike on January 8 and 9.

The strike was called in protest against the Modi government's "anti-worker, anti-national" policies, including unilateral labour law reforms, privatisation of public sector entities, policies encouraging contract work and destroying job security, and the proposed amendment to the Trade Union Act.

"This is the largest strike against this government, with more than 20 crore workers expected to participate. It is a historic moment," Tapan Sen, general secretary of the Centre of Indian Trade Unions (CITU), said on Monday.

The strike is backed by all central trade unions, except the Bharatiya Mazdoor Sangh, which is affiliated to the RSS.

Apart from unorganised workers, unions from a number of formal sectors, including banks, transport cor-

porations, water, power, post, telecommunication, health, education, defence, coal, steel and manufacturing, are expected to participate. They have already issued notice to employers, as legally required, said Amarjeet Kaur, general secretary of the All India Trade Union Congress.

"So far, there has been no response from the Centre to our strike call. There has been no attempt to reach out to the unions," she added.

No consultation
The government has undermined the spirit of tripartism and is making labour policy without consultation with workers' representatives, said Ms. Kaur, pointing out that the Group of Ministers on labour issues, headed by Finance Minister Arun Jaitley had not called unions for any discussion since September 2015. The Indian Labour Conference had not been held for three and a half years, and unions had boycotted the discussions on labour codes after their suggestions were rejected.

APPOINTMENT OF CHAIRPERSON AND MEMBERS FOR TAMIL NADU LOKAYUKTA

The Government of Tamil Nadu, vide G.O.(Ms.) No.178, Personnel and Administrative Reforms (N-Spl) Department, dated 28.12.2018, has constituted a Search Committee under the Chairmanship of Hon'ble Thiru Justice K.Venkataraman (Retd.), Thiru. R. Krishnamoorthy, former Advocate General of Tamil Nadu and Thiru. A.Pari, IPS (Retd.) as Members, for the purpose of submitting the names for consideration for the positions of Chairperson and Members of Lokayukta.

The Search Committee invites applications for the following positions from interested persons possessing the requisite qualification and experience as prescribed in section 3 of the Tamil Nadu Lokayukta Act, 2018 as below:-

Chairperson of Lokayukta: Person who is or has been a Judge of the High Court or a person with 25 years experience in Anti-Corruption Policy, Public Administration, Vigilance, Finance and Law;

Two Judicial Members of Lokayukta: Person who is or has been a Judge of the High Court or has put in 25 years of experience in State Judiciary with impeccable record;

Two Non-Judicial Members of Lokayukta: Person who has had 25 years of experience in Anti-Corruption Policy, Public Administration, Vigilance, Finance and Law;

The Chairperson and Members shall hold the office for five years from the date on which he/she enters upon his/her office or until attains the age of seventy years, whichever is earlier;

The applications already sent, if any, either to the Chairman of the Search Committee or to any other authority before publication of this news item will not be considered as a valid application. The applications received on or after the publication made in the newspaper alone will be considered.

Interested persons, may send their application by speed post / registered post, so as to reach the following address, on or before 5.00 pm of 18th January, 2019. Applications received after the closing date will not be entertained.

Address:

Hon'ble Thiru. Justice K. Venkataraman (Retd.)
Chairman of the Search Committee,
L-Block, 125, 17th Street,
East Anna Nagar, Chennai - 600 102.

NODAL OFFICER
SEARCH COMMITTEE

ODISHA CONSTRUCTION CORPORATION LIMITED
(A Govt. of Odisha Undertaking)
UNIT-VIII, BHUBANESWAR
e-mail: theoccltd@odishaconstruction.com
GSTIN - 21AAC02571KZM

e-Procurement Notice No. 16/OCCL/2018-19 (on-line)

Type of Work	Consultancy Work
Total No. of Works	01 (One) No.
Period of completion	06 calendar months
Procurement Officer	Bid Identification No.
Managing Director, OCC Ltd., Bhubaneswar	OCCL-AGPI-05/2018-19
5,05,35,600.00	5,06,000.00
05.01.2019, 10.00 AM to 22.01.2019, 5.00 PM	08.01.2019, 10.00 AM to 22.01.2019, 5.00 PM

Date of opening of the Technical Bid: 25.01.2019, 11.30 AM
Further detail can be seen from the Govt. website (www.tendersorissa.gov.in)

Managing Director

IAS officer in Bengal sent on leave

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
KOLKATA

The District Magistrate of West Bengal's Alipurduar, Nikhil Nirmal, was sent on leave on Monday after a viral video in which he, along with his wife, were seen beating a person inside a police station.

According to reports, the person had allegedly sent lewd and offensive comments to the DM's wife on a social media platform. In the video, Mr. Nirmal is seen slapping him while his wife is heard asking a policeman for a baton.

It is of vital importance that freedom of thought and expression, and freedom of speech and of writing, be exercised fearlessly in our country. Fear is a great evil and is completely inconsistent with democracy and republicanism," Mr. Gandhi said at the ceremony. He emphasised that "fear and democracy do not go together."

Patapur to live. Locals identify him as Jagu Das, a resident of Palaspur village under the Sanakhemundi block. It is speculated that he developed mental health issues some years ago, and his family may have had him chained and then abandoned him.

Locals have informed Berhampur Sub-Collector Diganta Rautray of his condition. Mr. Rautray said the administration would initiate an enquiry into his identity and take adequate action for his rehabilitation.

by lawyer Gaurav Kumar Bansal, who said shackling them went against the Mental Health Act, 2017, and violated their fundamental right under Article 21.

They were admitted there by their own relatives, Centre informs SC

Elderly man awaits rehabilitation in Ganjam

STAFF REPORTER
BERHAMPUR

In a telling example of the plight of mentally ill persons, an elderly man in his 60s, his hands and ankles chained, has been moving around Patapur of Odisha's Ganjam district for the past four years.

His appearance, with long beard and hair, is that of a roaming mendicant, and he does not speak of his family and place of origin. Strong iron rods restrain his limbs; he does not speak of who chained him. He begs at roadside kiosks in

chains, the court urged Mr. Mehta to take immediate action, saying "a mentally ill person is also a human being, and has dignity."

The plight of the inmates was brought to the court's attention

by lawyer Gaurav Kumar Bansal, who said shackling them went against the Mental Health Act, 2017, and violated their fundamental right under Article 21.

HIGH COURT OF JUDICATURE MADRAS

NOTIFICATION NO.06/2019, Dated: 08.01.2019

SHORT NOTIFICATION

Online applications are invited, through <https://www.mhc.tn.gov.in>, for direct recruitment to the post of District Judge (Entry Level) (under 25% Quota) in Puducherry Judicial Service. The last date for submission of On-line Application is 01/02/2019. For further details refer the notification hosted in the above website.

Sd/-
REGISTRAR GENERAL (i/c)

DIPR/02/DISPLAY/2019

BENGALURU CENTRAL UNIVERSITY (BCU)

Central College Campus, Dr. B.R. Ambedkar Veedhi, Bengaluru - 560 001.

Ph. No.: 080 - 22131385, E-Mail: registrarbcu@gmail.com / bcuccb@gmail.com

No:BCU/Ph.D/Admn/523/2018-19 Date: 03.01.2019

NOTIFICATION

Online Applications are invited from eligible candidates for admission to Doctoral Programme leading to Ph.D in the prescribed format. Details regarding eligibility, conduct of Entrance Test, provision for exemptions from entrance test, prescribed fee, mode of payment, subject-wise vacancy list, Research Centres etc., are notified in the University Website: www.bcu.ac.in.

Online application portal will be open from 12.01.2019 to 30.01.2019. The Entrance Test will be held on 12.02.2019 at Bengaluru Central University (BCU), Central College Campus, Bengaluru - 560 001. The candidates interested may visit the University Website for further details and instructions.

REGISTRAR



Death traps

The Meghalaya government must urgently ensure that all illegal mines are shut down

The tardy response of the Centre and the State of Meghalaya to the plight of at least 15 workers trapped in a rat-hole coal mine since mid-December has exposed the extraordinary indifference in government to labour welfare and the law. Two workers have been found dead in a second mine in the East Jaintia Hills district. The primary responsibility for the operation of illegal mines lies with the State government, and it should be called to account for ignoring the directions of the National Green Tribunal to close them and levy punitive royalties on those that extracted the coal. Several appeals are before the Supreme Court in connection with a ban ordered by the Tribunal on rat-hole mining and the transport of already mined coal. It should be possible at least now to put an end to it. The Meghalaya government has been evasive on the issue of the continued operation of the illegal mines, in spite of the adverse findings of the Justice B.P. Katoki committee appointed by the NGT. It avoided taking action even after a similar mine-flooding accident that claimed 15 lives in 2012 in South Garo Hills, and the subsequent ban. Although the NGT has ordered the State to deposit ₹100 crore with the Central Pollution Control Board for environmental restoration in the wake of the recent disaster at Ksan in East Jaintia Hills, the first-order priority is to close the rat-hole mines. It is the responsibility of the Centre and the State to rehabilitate the workers from impoverished communities, reportedly including some child labourers, who are ready to undertake the risky labour because of the higher-than-average wages paid. This should not be difficult, considering that the value of extracted coal stored in Meghalaya was officially estimated at over ₹3,078 crore four years ago, and mineral resources should be treated as state property.

The scale is high: as interpreted from satellite images and reported by the Katoki panel, it could be of the order of 24,000 mines, many of them illegal. If illegal mines continue to operate in flagrant violation of rules under the Mines and Minerals (Development and Regulation) Act, the responsibility lies with the State government. Chief Minister Conrad Sangma has said a ban on coal mining is not the solution, given the economic conditions in the region. Yet, the State government has done little to implement reforms and diversify employment away from dirty mining under primitive conditions over the years, in spite of judicial orders. In fact, authorities in Shillong continue to ignore such directions, as the accident at the Lumthai mine in East Jaintia Hills shows. As recently as in December, Parliament was informed that 22 States had constituted a task force to review illegal mining and act on it, but Meghalaya does not figure in that list. A clean-up is overdue.

The wizards in Oz

Pujara, Pant and a spirited bowling attack cast a fine spell over Australia

Dark clouds hung over the Sydney Cricket Ground on Monday, holding off India's bid to win the Test series against Australia in greater style. Yet, the final 2-1 result is historic, with India for the first time defeating Australia in Australia in a Test series. Having flourished at Adelaide and Melbourne, the two victories split by the solitary loss at Perth, Virat Kohli's men were in good spirits when they reached Sydney. Their soaring confidence found validation through a first innings total of 622 for seven (declared), a challenge to Australia that built upon Cheteshwar Pujara's 193 and Rishabh Pant's unbeaten 159. Australia scored 300 and suffered the ignominy of following on before bad light and wet weather rescued the hosts. But India had done enough to retain the Border-Gavaskar Trophy. The triumph is doubly delicious as it was seized within Australia, an achievement that eluded previous Indian squads. Since its maiden Test at Lord's in 1932, India gained strength as a powerhouse at home but remained diffident overseas. England, West Indies and Pakistan were humbled on their home turf but Australia, until now, never wilted. It remained unconquerable, unleashing fiery fast bowlers and marauding batsmen. Lala Amarnath's men were the first to tour Australia for the 1947-48 series and they returned after losing 0-4. Later Indian teams were either defeated or ended up forcing a stalemate.

When Kohli's men set foot Down Under, there was the weight of past losses to contend with, besides a need to prove that their No. 1 Test ranking could stand scrutiny when they travelled beyond the subcontinent. It didn't help that an enfeebled Australia, following the ball-tampering crisis of 2018, was expected to collapse. The expectation this time around was direct and strident: India had to win. Kohli's men did that gloriously against Tim Paine's men, who fought for large stretches before discarding their spirit towards the business end. It wasn't easy and India did have its headaches. Midway, it had to jettison the malfunctioning opening pair of Murali Vijay and K.L. Rahul. Lead spinner R. Ashwin, after choking the Aussies at Adelaide, picked up a side-strain, and the ambiguity over his fitness level before the concluding Test triggered some conspiracy theories. The squad missed two regulars, who were tending to injuries: wicket-keeper Wriddhiman Saha and opener Prithvi Shaw. Still, India found the right men for different occasions. Kohli scored a ton, Pujara did even better, delivering three centuries, amassing 521 and averaging 74.43. The fast bowling unit was incisive and Jasprit Bumrah sizzled with 21 wickets. Pant caught well and provided valuable runs lower down the order. The latest achievement in Australia has to be savoured. Now South Africa remains the "final frontier", as it were – India is yet to win a Test series there.

Still nothing to show for

Imran Khan appears to be banking on the establishment to help him and Pakistan out of its economic crisis



S. AKBAR ZAIDI

In October last year, Pakistan Prime Minister Imran Khan in a public address stated that Pakistan should stop worrying, "Ghabraein nahin, hausla rakhaein (do not worry, have fortitude)." But after five months of waiting for the government to deliver on its numerous promises, perhaps it is now time to really start worrying.

A different mandate

In each of the three recent elections in Pakistan, in 2008, 2013 and last year in July, a different political party won and formed the government. The Pakistan Peoples Party in 2008, following Benazir Bhutto's assassination, had two Prime Ministers in its five-year tenure; but with Asif Zardari as President of Pakistan, this five-year tenure is better known as Mr. Zardari's government. Similarly, after 2013, the Pakistan Muslim League's Nawaz Sharif made a remarkable reappearance in Pakistan's political scene and became Prime Minister for the third time, only to be debarred and removed from office, and subsequently imprisoned, and was replaced by one of his party members as Prime Minister. The 2013 government, even with Mr. Sharif behind bars, was known as his government. The third transition, or 'experiment' as it has been called since last year well before the elections took place, was for Pakistan's military and judiciary, the so-called 'establishment', to work together and

ensure an electoral victory for the third political party in as many elections, with Imran Khan winning.

The electoral results in 2008 and 2013 were not unexpected. After Benazir Bhutto's killing, a sympathy wave led to her party winning enough seats to form a coalition government, but with its particularly poor performance in its five-year tenure, Mr. Sharif's victory was also not unexpected. Despite the incarceration of Mr. Sharif and the multiple cases against him in 2017 and 2018, the general perception was that his party would probably get re-elected, albeit with a smaller majority. Mr. Khan's victory followed on a multi-month strategy by the establishment to ensure that he would win, with ample evidence suggesting that he was ushered in with much help from behind the scenes. His shell-shocked victory speech a few hours after the elections suggested that even he was taken aback when victory was handed to him.

Five months on

Five months is a long enough time to be able to assess what a new government has done and the direction it intends to follow. Both the Zardari government of 2008 and the Sharif government in 2013 quickly went into taking numerous decisions soon after being elected. In 2008, with support from the Opposition led by Mr. Sharif, Mr. Zardari and his government worked together to jointly address issues concerning the economy, and to remove the then President of Pakistan, Pervez Musharraf, by initiating a process to have him impeached, leading to his resignation. Differences emerged between Mr. Sharif and Mr. Zardari



over issues about an amnesty granted to political leaders and about the reinstatement of members of the judiciary dismissed while General Musharraf was President. Nevertheless, the main purpose apparent from the beginning had been served and was clear from the start, to reclaim popular political space from the military, and to reassert the sovereignty of the law. Mr. Sharif, when he was elected in 2013, from the very first moment, started work on addressing Pakistan's biggest problem at that time, the electricity crisis which was crippling the economy. After taking several decisions within days of assuming power, he started to put the economy on some track, and agreed to an International Monetary Fund programme.

The most noticeable demonstration of Mr. Khan's government over the last five months has been best reflected in its ineptitude, indecision, bumbling, sanctimoniousness. For the past five months, we have been waiting for some major policy direction, vision, even just a simple decision on what to do next, but nothing so far has emerged. Other than the 'we will put all the corrupt politicians in jail' mantra, this government has been lacking in foresight and a sense of purpose. It is not inexperience which is the cause for

this. Although Mr. Khan has not held a job for many years – his last paid job was probably as Pakistan's cricket captain – most of his Ministers and advisers have been in government with one political party or another. In fact, many worked with General Musharraf when he was President. The many claims that Mr. Khan makes about strong leadership seem to be undermined with him in charge of Pakistan's government.

Perhaps the most urgent and pressing problem facing Pakistan today is that of an economy quickly going into a crisis state, largely on account of inaction and uncertainty created by the Finance Minister. Pakistan's growth rate in the fiscal year ending in June 2018 was 5.8%, the highest in 13 years. For the current fiscal year the expectations are that it will be closer to 3%. Inflation today is the highest in six years, and interest rates have been driven to double-digit levels with the Pakistani rupee depreciating 34% in 12 months. There is a growing balance of payments crisis, with exports stagnant and imports still rising, along with a fiscal deficit of more than 6% of GDP. The stock market has fallen, as have investor confidence and ratings of the economy. Foreign direct investment has fallen drastically since early 2018. The China Pakistan-Economic Corridor (CPEC), which was touted as Pakistan's 'Marshall Plan', seems to have completely gone off the radar for now, as the Chinese rethink their strategy for Pakistan. Knowing all this, Mr. Khan and his finance and economic team have done little to stabilise Pakistan's economy, to draw a strategy to address these exacerbating problems. Other than begging for loans from the only three friends

Pakistan is left with – Saudi Arabia, China and the UAE – there has been an absence of ideas about what to do. The populist promises of the election manifesto of Mr. Khan, of making Pakistan a model welfare state on the lines of the Prophet's Medina, of providing millions of jobs and houses to Pakistanis, will all come undone unless the economy is first fixed.

A controlled democracy

The single most prominent feature of Mr. Khan's five months has been his repeated pronouncements that he and his government are 'on the same page' with Pakistan's military and judiciary. Unlike Mr. Zardari and Mr. Sharif, both fairly astute and experienced politicians, and not having had any government experience, Mr. Khan probably doesn't realise the consequences of what this means and how being on the same page with dominating and powerful unelected institutions undermines and stifles the agency of elected governments. Rather than having used the short breathing space following his electoral victory by taking some resolute decisions, his inactions may not only reflect his inability to understand how to run a government but might simply be because he expects others on this 'same page' to do his bidding. In many ways, with a media that is strangulated, and politicians of the Opposition being hounded in the name of 'accountability', Pakistan may be back to its tried and trusted model of controlled democracy.

S. Akbar Zaidi is a political economist based in Karachi. He teaches at Columbia University in New York, and at the IBA in Karachi

The un-Gandhian cane

The crossover of symbols that defined Gandhi – from benign to malevolent – is a revealing comment



JANAKI NAIR

Over the last few years, battles over symbols – for long an Indian pre-occupation – have reached a crescendo and show no signs of abating. Perhaps no historical figure has been mined as thoroughly as M.K. Gandhi (although B.R. Ambedkar today comes a close second). No government would dare dislodge his endorsement of all Indian currency notes, no matter what colour or denomination they come in, even though we know that this would have been the most distasteful of associations for someone like him.

We are only too painfully aware that this glut of images of Gandhi, avowed with such passion, frees the Indian people of any obligation to practise Gandhian ways of living, let alone uphold political principles or economic values. Neither a passionate adherence to truth nor an ardent desire for non-violence is the mark of our public life today.

But the reduction of the hallowed figure of the Mahatma to a social worker with a broom, from which no more than a pair of spectacles has been distilled, was an

achievement like no other of the present government at the launch of the Swachh Bharat Mission in 2014. The spectacles have assumed a menacing ubiquity, looming large on bus stops and calendars, even as sewer deaths, manual scavenging and a deep-seated aversion to public hygiene (linked no doubt to caste) continue to remind us of what really needs to be fixed for a cleaner, healthier and sustainable India.

Experiments with clothing

Gandhi himself spent a good part of his busy life experimenting with the symbols – particularly styles of dress – that would enhance his message. His experiments with the national cap pre-occupied him for some years during 1915-1919; from wearing a top hat, a sola topee, a turban, an embroidered Kashmiri cap, he came to the conclusion that the Kashmiri cap was the best. It is light as well as elegant; it is easy to make, it can be folded, which makes it easily portable' (his words) And he fixed on white khadi for this headgear, which simultaneously promoted handspun, easily showed up dirt, and was one of the most powerful symbols of anti-colonial nationalism. He himself wore it for just two years, but the symbol sent many dedicated nationalist wearers even to prison.

We don't know as much about his cane, his indispensable walking aid by the late 1920s. We do know that the cane (lathi) as wea-



pon, rather than as loveable third limb, has attained unprecedented importance in our national life. It is this crossover of symbols – from benign to malevolent – that artist B.V. Suresh brought to his installation at the Kochi-Muziris Biennale in December 2018. Like so many young Kannadiga men growing up in the 1960s, B.V. Suresh was not impervious to the attractions of the local RSS shakha for the opportunities it gave the young to collectively exercise/play sport. Like so many young Kannadiga men of his generation, the attractions were very short lived.

A comment on the new India

B.V. Suresh's installation was no less than a comment on how thoroughly the Indian republic as we know it has been gutted in the last few years. He allowed his alarm – and indeed sorrow – about the new India that is taking shape to be seen and heard in the space of a semi-darkened, large godown space at Aspinwall. The dull, uneven thud of lathis was audible as

one approached, but nothing prepared you for the sight of dozens of them pounding the floor on two sides of the room. Two really long bamboos, like scaffolding, shielded a spool white Indian national bird: by draping the posts with some diaphanous synthetic material, rather than the more predictable khadi, B.V. Suresh self-consciously averted banality.

For this was no celebratory monument but a cry of despair, a warning, as the two videos that flanked the central arrangement – the now dismembered peacock – combined with the audio of a speech to darkly warn: both the taqdeer (fate) and the tasvir (picture) of this nation will be changed. On the wall facing the entrance, cast in a reddish hue, which allowed the decaying brickwork of the godown to show through, was finally an encounter with the man of peace, striding with his own cane. But here too he slowly dissolved as the Rudra Hanuman image loomed menacingly into view: a masculinist, muscular and militaristic (and angry) portrait that many cars have today made popular.

B.V. Suresh's installation included two mechanically rotating sets of brooms and cloths, which swept up dust, and re-distributed, rather than removed, it as a comment on the ambiguous achievements of Swachh Bharat. But it is the invitation to reflect on the travesties of our contemporary world that are

startling and touching. B.V. Suresh himself said that he did not intend the installation to be overtly political, but one could not think of a more apt instance of fearless speech, a comment by one of the multitudes who today feel increasingly suffocated as writers, artists, teachers, ordinary citizens all, crouching in fear of 'the people's' wrath.

So it was appropriate that the installation was called 'Canes of Wrath': 'Jiski lathi, uski bhaians' – at no earlier time in our independent nation's life did one feel so acutely the bestial power of the lathi, unrestrained in its authority when wielded as a 'people's weapon' especially against the most defenceless. At no earlier time has Gandhi been rendered so irrelevant as now; would his heirs in the Congress party dare to praise, as Gandhi did in 1915, that first devout Hindu and Indian nationalist, Gopal Krishna Gokhale, who declared, "Please publish it abroad that I am not a Hindu" when he was requested to push an overtly Hindu political agenda?

We have a lot to thank B.V. Suresh for, but especially for sharing this deeply contemplative perspective on our present, and the portentous and dystopic mood of the hour.

Janaki Nair is Professor, Centre for Historical Studies, School of Social Sciences, Jawaharlal Nehru 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.

Rafale, in Parliament

It appears that the government is in direct confrontation with the Opposition on the Rafale fighter aircraft deal. It is strange that the Prime Minister, who has been closely involved with the deal, maintains a stony silence while Ministers in his cabinet, some of whom have had no role in the deal, have been left to defend it. It is high time that all political parties realise that in trying to fulfil their political aspirations, they are also testing the patience of the general public. People have been shocked by several scams where public money has been misused by those in power. In its defence of the Rafale deal, the government cannot make the excuse of saying that previous governments (largely the Congress) too indulged in corruption. The

point of national security cannot be used when convenient if asked about transparency in government dealings. There is definitely something amiss with the Rafale deal; there is the strong perception that proper procedures were not followed.

K. RAHUL CHOURASHI,
Jodhpur, Rajasthan

■ Perturbed by the point-by-point replies by Union Defence Minister Nirmala Sitharaman, the Congress and its allies have only a one-point agenda in Parliament: to create a ruckus in the House. This only shows that the Congress and the rest of the Opposition are scared of hearing the truth. If the government maintains a dignified silence, it is accused of being cowardly and having no answers. If it places the facts before the

House, the speech is obstructed. The Congress party is the mother of all scams in India. Therefore it sees everything with jaundiced eyes.

K.V. SEETHARAMAIAH,
Hassan, Karnataka

Literary freedom

In 1644, at the height of the English Civil War, poet John Milton called on Parliament to bring to an end the state licensing of newspapers, with the request, 'give me above all liberties the freedom to speak.' That notion of liberty to free speech and print being above all liberties, endured for centuries till technology upended it.

P. MAHESH,

Chennai

expression is a product of application of sane human intellect to the issue at hand. Today, intellectualism per se is sought to be branded as anti-national and deserving of being suppressed by the might of the state (Editorial, "Removing fear," January 7).

R. NARAYAN,

Navi Mumbai

Sabarimala reports

The defence put up by the Readers' Editor is not very convincing (From the Readers' Editor, "The Sabarimala coverage", January 7). The headlines speak volumes about the coverage, which was most often toeing the line of the Kerala government and the CPI(M). There was very little coverage/space given to the views of Opposition parties or other social organisations that were speaking in support of devotees.

P. MAHESH,

Chennai

The Readers' Editor should realise that readers of *The Hindu* are so devout and possessive that they find even a mild shift towards a certain position unacceptable. They certainly do not want their dear paper to go the other way. While I am totally in agreement with the Readers' Editor that a newspaper has to report every story or event as it happens, there is certainly ample room for being a bit more discreet while choosing

CORRECTIONS & CLARIFICATIONS:

>> In "IndiGo plans daily flights to Istanbul" (Jan. 7, 2019), there was a reference to the airline's plan for launching non-stop flights to Turkey's capital city of Istanbul by March. The capital of Turkey is Ankara.

>> There was a reference to 'top quark' (one of the particles that make up protons and electrons) in the story titled "At Science Congress, a 'Vedic' rebel seeks physics glory" (Jan. 6, 2019). It should have been 'up qu

Jaitapur: A risky and expensive project

Unless the government is transparent about details, it will be engulfed in yet another controversy



SUVRAT RAJU & M.V. RAMANA



"Safety concerns about the project are exacerbated by India's flawed nuclear liability law." Protests in Mumbai in 2011 against the proposed Jaitapur nuclear power plant in Maharashtra. ■ PAUL NORONHA

In December, the French company Électricité de France (EDF) submitted a "techno-commercial proposal" to the Indian government for the Jaitapur nuclear power project in Maharashtra. The idea of importing six nuclear European Pressurised Reactors (EPRs) was initiated by the United Progressive Alliance government more than a decade ago, but the project had made little progress due to concerns about the economics and safety of the EPRs, local opposition, and the collapse of the initial French corporate partner, Areva. Despite these problems, in the past few months, the Modi government has taken several high-level steps towards actuating the project.

In March 2018, EDF and the Nuclear Power Corporation of India (NPCIL) signed an "industrial way forward" agreement in the presence of Prime Minister Narendra Modi and French President Emmanuel Macron. Last month, after meeting the French Foreign Minister, Jean-Yves Le Drian, External Affairs Minister Sushma Swaraj announced that "both countries are working to start the Jaitapur project as soon as possible". The urgency is inexplicable as it comes before the techno-commercial offer has been examined and as earlier questions about costs and safety remain unanswered. Moreover, with the Indian power sector facing surplus capacity and a crisis of non-performing assets (NPAs), a large investment in the Jaitapur project is particularly risky.

Delays and cost increases
It is clear that electricity from the Jaitapur project will be more expensive than many other sources of electricity, including solar and wind power. Using international estimates of capital costs for EPRs from the 2010-2012 period, and after adjusting for cost savings in India, we had shown in 2013 that first year tariffs from the project would be around ₹15 per kilowatt-hour ("Repeating Enron in Jaitapur", June 21, *The Hindu*). Even this

figure must be revised upwards to account for the construction experience with EPRs over the past five years. Across the world, EPRs have experienced delays and cost increases. The first EPR entered commercial operation in December 2018 at the Taishan site in China, five years later than originally projected. Its final capital cost was estimated by industry sources to be "40% over the original estimate". The story in Europe is more dramatic. The EPR at Flamanville in France, for example, went from an expected start date of 2012 to 2020, and a cost estimate of €3.3 billion to €10.9 billion. Two EPRs have been planned at Hinkley Point in the U.K. Even before construction began, the estimated cost has risen significantly to £20 billion (about ₹1.75 lakh crore). The British National Audit Office assessed that the project "locked consumers into a risky and expensive project with uncertain strategic and economic benefits."

While nuclear costs have been rising, other low-carbon sources of electricity, especially solar energy, have become cheaper. In 2010-11, tariffs for solar photovoltaic (PV) projects under the National Solar Mission were between ₹10.95 and ₹12.76 per unit. But several projects approved under Phase II of the mission have been connected to the grid in the last year with tariffs below ₹5 per unit. In recent auctions for solar PV projects, winning tariff bids in the range of ₹2 to ₹2.50 per unit have become routine.

The high capital costs of the EPRs are of particular concern because power-generating capacity in India has grown faster than demand causing projects to run into financial difficulties. In March 2018, the parliamentary standing committee on energy listed 34 "stressed" projects, including NPAs and "those which have the potential to become NPAs", with a cumulative outstanding debt of ₹1.74 lakh crore. In this context, the government seems to be throwing caution to the winds by investing lakhs of crores in the Jaitapur project. Because the NPCIL's debts would ultimately be underwritten by the Indian government, if the project encounters financial difficulties, the costs would fall on Indian taxpayers.

Safety problems

In addition to the high costs, safety problems with the reactor design and construction have emerged in several EPRs. The most serious of these pertained to the pressure vessel, which is the key barrier that prevents the spread of radioactive materials from the reactor. In April 2015, the French nuclear safety regulator, Autorité Sûreté Nucléaire, announced that some sections of the pressure vessel that the French Creusot Forge had supplied to the Flamanville and Taishan reactors had too much carbon in the steel. The Flamanville project was also found to have substandard welding in the reactor's pipes. The EPR at Olkiluoto in Finland encountered problems

with vibrations in the pipe that connects the primary coolant system with the pressuriser, which maintains the pressure of the water circulating in the reactor.

These safety concerns are exacerbated by India's flawed nuclear liability law. If and when completed, Jaitapur "will be the largest nuclear power plant in the world". In the event of an accident, the nuclear liability law would require the public sector NPCIL to compensate victims and pay for clean-up, while largely absolving EDF of responsibility.

The Indian law provides NPCIL with a limited opportunity to obtain compensation from EDF for the "supply of equipment... with... defects... or sub-standard services". But the joint statement issued in March 2018 promises that the "enforcement of India's rules" would be in accordance with the International Convention on Supplementary Compensation for nuclear damage, which severely limits the operator's right of recourse. This raises the disturbing possibility that the NPCIL may have promised not to exercise its right to claim compensation from EDF as allowed by Indian law. In any event, there is a "moral hazard" here: since EDF can escape with limited or no consequences even after a severe accident, it has little material incentive to maintain the highest safety standards, particularly if the requirements of safety come into conflict with the imperative to lower costs. Such pressures might be accentuated by EDF's poor financial state.

The Modi-Macron statement emphasized the need for the project to generate cost-effective electricity". It is hard to see how this is possible. To begin with, the government must answer several specific questions: how much will the entire project cost, who will be accountable for cost increases and delays, and what is the precise arrangement that the government has reached with France on liability? Unless it is transparent about these details, the Modi government may well find itself engulfed in yet another controversy involving overpriced French equipment.

Suvrat Raju and M.V. Ramana are physicists associated with the Coalition for Nuclear Disarmament and Peace, and currently based in Bengaluru and Vancouver, respectively. Views are personal

A different outreach

The Modi government's over-reliance on religion for diplomatic engagements is problematic



VINAY KAURA

Chief of the Army Staff General Bipin Rawat's argument that Pakistan must "develop as a secular state" to have any dialogue with India can be interpreted to convey two contradictory messages. The first is that India has no intention of engaging with Pakistan since there is no possibility of Pakistan being converted into a secular country in the foreseeable future. The second is that the Modi government's "faith diplomacy" has obvious limitations, and may prove costly for India's national interests in the longer run. That diplomacy rooted in religion can be a double-edged sword became evident when the narrative of Pakistan's "goony" forcing the Modi government's presence at the groundbreaking ceremony of the Kartarpur corridor gained widespread currency.

Marketing brand India

Prime Minister Narendra Modi has enthusiastically used the religious dimension of India's soft power in order to market brand India. Yoga and Ayurveda cannot be strongly associated with religion; however, Hinduism and Buddhism are being used to promote India's interests in the neighbourhood as well as to reconstitute the geopolitics of the Indo-Pacific region. Mr. Modi has often made visits to Hindu and Buddhist shrines in the neighbourhood, apparently to counter China's promotion of Buddhism. India hosted Sri Lankan military personnel and their families in Bodh Gaya last year. This was projected as an innovative way of wooing Sri Lanka back into India's geopolitical orbit. Serious attempts are also being made to encourage Nepal to reciprocate India's attempts to forge Hindu-based civilizational bonds with the country. U.P. Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath visited Janakpur in Nepal in December on the occasion of Vivah Panchami. Being an advocate of restoration of Nepal's monarchy and Hindu status, Mr. Adityanath's visit put a question mark on the usefulness of such gestures in creating an atmosphere of goodwill between the two countries.

Pakistan has been a master manipulator of religion to achieve its goals. If the Modi government believed that the success of the Kartarpur corridor project would allow it the elbow room to expand Sikh diplomacy to other holy sites, it was mistaken. The Pakistani establishment took advantage of cricketer-turned-politician Navjot Singh Sidhu's visit to roll out a red carpet for them.

sit to Pakistan in August for Imran Khan's swearing-in. Pakistan's Army chief Qamar Javed Bajwa suggested to Mr. Sidhu that the Kartarpur corridor should be opened to mark Guru Nanak's 550th birth anniversary. Since no diplomatic communication took place between the two countries regarding the project, the Modi government announced plans to develop the corridor till the border, and asked the Imran Khan government to follow suit. Pakistan was waiting for this moment. Soon, Islamabad declared that Mr. Khan would have a groundbreaking ceremony for this purpose on November 28. Hastily, India laid the foundation stone on the Indian side on November 26, which ironically marked the 10th anniversary of the Mumbai terror attacks carried out by Pakistan-based terrorists.

The proponents of Hindutva ideology believe that India's identity is made up of Hinduism and other religious faiths which originated from Indian soil, such as Buddhism, Sikhism and Jainism. Since the Modi government has given primacy to Hinduism and Buddhism for diplomatic outreach, quietly ignoring the rich Indian legacy of Sufi Islam, it could not afford to be seen denying India's Sikh community an opportunity to visit the Kartarpur shrine when Pakistan seemed willing to roll out a red carpet for them.

The impression Pakistan created

Given India's continued refusal to engage with Pakistan, it would have been a huge loss of face had External Affairs Minister Sushma Swaraj attended the groundbreaking ceremony in Pakistan. However, since it was not possible for India to be unrepresented in an event with so much symbolic value, two Union Ministers were sent to attend the ceremony. Is it not laughable that Mr. Sidhu was termed an anti-national when two Union Ministers represented the Modi government?

India made it clear that the opening of the corridor can't be the basis of a thaw between the two countries. However, Pakistan seems to have created an impression of generosity towards all Sikhs living in India, as well as projected itself as a champion of reconciliation. The Modi government seems to have become a victim of its own over-reliance on religion for diplomatic engagements.

There have been concerns that the government has been undermining India's secular foundations. It is time to ask whether the government's eagerness in tapping India's "original" religions as diplomatic resource has promoted India's interests or restrained its actions.

Vinay Kaura is Assistant Professor at the Centre for Peace and Conflict Studies, Sardar Patel University of Police, Security and Criminal Justice, Jaipur

SINGLE FILE

Border separations

Steps that the Trump administration could consider to mitigate the problem

NARAYAN LAKSHMAN


Starting around late 2017 and accelerating through 2018, the process of separating migrant children from their families at the U.S.-Mexico border resulted in an angry public backlash against the Trump administration's "zero-tolerance" approach to dealing with undocumented migrants. The President then ostensibly backed down on this policy, as a sense of dismay mounted over disturbing images and videos of screaming toddlers in the custody of Customs and Border Protection personnel, and of chain-link cages filled with children. But it now appears that the federal government has quietly resumed family separations, in many cases using "vague or unsubstantiated allegations of wrongdoing or minor violations against the parents... as justification."

During the first phase of family separations, between October 2017 and May 2018, reports suggest that more than 2,000 children were separated from their parents. Now, based on information reported to members of Congress and subsequently reported in the media, it seems that 12,800 children were held in federally contracted shelters in September 2018. Updates to that figure in mid-December put the number at 15,000. The sheer numbers are not the entire story, however. Disturbing accounts have also surfaced of immigration officials arrested for the sexual abuse of children in their care, even though the Immigration and Customs Enforcement detention centres have denied responsibility for these violations.

Then matters took a turn for the worse. First, political pressure on the Trump administration soared after a caravan of more than 7,000 migrants from Central America made its way through Mexico and reached the U.S. border, only to be tear-gassed by law enforcement. Images of families with children fleeing caused outrage across the world. Second, Republicans lost the House of Representatives to Democrats in the midterm elections, leading to more tension on Capitol Hill over border policy, especially Mr. Trump's proposal for the border wall. Third, and most tragic, two children, Jakelin Caal Maquin (7) and Felipe Gomez Alonzo (8), died in the custody of immigration officials in December leading to bitter recrimination on all sides. Homeland Security Secretary Kirstjen Nielsen suggested that the families of the children were to blame for undertaking such an arduous crossing, while the families and human rights group alleged lack of custodial care for the children.

A potential way out of this politically tenuous, arguably inhumane border crackdown would be for the Trump administration to consider adopting the policy of "catch and release" – where migrant families would be released from custody pending their deportation case adjudication. Otherwise under a decree known as the Flores settlement, migrant children may not be held with their parents in immigration detention for more than 20 days, usually insufficient time for a ruling in the case.

The writer is an Associate Editor at The Hindu



NOTEBOOK

Beyond the lens in Jantar Mantar

Conversations with street vendors and children on the sidelines of protests

PRISCILLA JEBARAJ

As a journalist in Delhi, I have spent at least a couple of days every month at Jantar Mantar, the premier protest venue since the early 1990s. On some days mega rallies take place under the gaze of dozens of cameras. But even after the crowds have left, the space is dotted with small groups of people who simply want to be heard.

I spent one late summer afternoon exploring some of the more esoteric groups, bored with the long-winded speeches of the rally I had been assigned to cover. After a few minutes each at protests by railway coolie workers, PDS traders, and self-described anarchists, I stopped by a group of women gathered around a portrait of a young girl.

The girl was a high-schooler from a Gujarati community in northern Delhi, and had been harassed by a man for

several months. Days before her final school exams, she fell to her death. Local police ruled it an accident. Her neighbours were there to demand a thorough investigation, suspecting that she had either been pushed or killed herself.

There were too few facts to write a news report. In any case, the women seemed more interested in telling me about the girl's life than her death. I may have forgotten every aspect of the rally I was there to cover, but I will never forget that the girl's favourite sweets were jalebis, that she loved to dance the dandiya, and that her family wanted her to become a teacher.

While protesters may come and go, there are some constant faces at Jantar Mantar. In my early days in the city, a veteran reporter told me how to bypass the crowds at large rallies, the place to stand for the best view of both

the crowd and the stage, and which vendors on the side streets served unhygienic food. Those vendors are also a good source for an informal estimate of crowd size in comparison to previous protests.

During one rally for higher pensions, I chatted with Lal Poddar, who works in a small shop closest to the stage. He had seen hundreds of protests, but this one struck close to home. After 24 years in the shop, he wanted to return home in Bihar, but did not want to be a burden to his relatives. With a pension of ₹3,000 per month, as the protesters were demanding, he could stay as an independent man.

There are also tiny entrepreneurs at Jantar Mantar, street children who weave through the crowds selling pens, flowers or colouring books. Some ask for a meal. Once you've covered a few protests, you learn to

recognise the regulars. At a recent protest against the deaths of sanitation workers while cleaning septic tanks and sewers, a young artist had brought coloured chalks to draw slogans and stylised manholes using the road as his canvas. A journalist had brought her seven-year-old daughter to the protest, and the artist let her use the chalks to draw animals and flowers in a corner.

Soon, some street kids joined, begging for a turn. I watched a 10-year-old girl I had chatted with several times, the daughter of a single mother who works in the construction sector. She kept aside her stock of cheap ballpens, and squatted on the ground across from the journalist's daughter, trading colours and ideas.

For a few minutes, it didn't matter that they came from different worlds. For a few minutes, we celebrated childhood on the street outside Jantar Mantar.

FROM The Hindu ARCHIVES

FIFTY YEARS AGO JANUARY 8, 1969

Future of Kenya Asians

East Africa is not willing to be turned into a refugee camp for British citizens of Asian origin. Mr. Tom Mboya, the Kenya Minister for Economic Planning and Development, said here [Nairobi] yesterday [January 6]. Speaking as the Secretary of the Kenya delegation to the Commonwealth conference, Mr. Mboya stated, "if this subject comes up at the conference we shall want to know why Britain is discriminating against its own citizens. This is a British problem because Britain is refusing its own citizens the right to return to their home." Meanwhile, the Committee on U.K. Citizenship in London is convinced that the London conference will discuss immigration and in particular the future of Asian Britons in East Africa.

A HUNDRED YEARS AGO JANUARY 8, 1919.

India and Burma

The European Association at Rangoon proposes pressing for the appointment of a committee of officials and non-official Europeans and Indians to enquire into and report on the financial relations between Burma and India in view to the ultimate goal of separation of the former from the latter country. Sir Reginald Craddock's wish to keep Burma "unspotted" from India is very natural, but as we have said before Sir Reginald is a bird of passage and India and Burma go on for ever. In her palmyr days, Burma was never able to get on without India. Antiquarian research both in India and Burma prove that the very closest relations existed between the two peoples for centuries, and if Burmans now, as it is alleged, desire complete political separation, they must be doing it in ignorance of the great assistance India is to them materially and morally. It only wants railway communication between India and Burma to accelerate the best interests of both countries. Without India to back her, and cut off from the control of the Viceroy and placed under the bureaucratic control of a Lieutenant Governor, Burma would fast develop symptoms of atrophy political and social – and lend herself to foreign spoliation only too easily.

CONCEPTUAL Primordial soup

BIOLOGY

This refers to a hypothesis regarding the origin of life on earth. It states that life on the planet originated around 4 billion years ago through the combination of abiogenic material on the earth's surface and some form of external energy. This natural reaction led to the birth of the most primitive cells that are the building blocks of life. It is believed that, over time, these primitive cells gradually evolved into a huge variety of complex living organisms. The hypothesis was first proposed by Soviet biologist Alexander Oparin in 1924 and later independently by English geneticist John Haldane in 1929.

MORE ON THE WEB

Highlights of India's historic series win over Australia

<http://bit.ly/IndHistoricWin>

AN-NDNE

FROM PAGE ONE

T.N. Minister gets jail term for rioting

Pronouncing the judgement in the case, special judge J. Shanthi said: "Government buses were damaged. A police jeep and motorcycle were gutted in a fire. The court can not take it lightly. These buses are government buses totally estimated to cost ₹85,100. Further all other witnesses also stated that there was unlawful assembly of persons and a riot occurred due to unlawful assembly. The accused disrupted traffic and caused injury to police officials," she said.

The judge convicted and sentenced 16 persons including Mr. Reddy. The prime-accused Govinda Reddy was given maximum sentence of five years' rigorous imprisonment under the Tamil Nadu Public Property (Prevention of Damage and Loss) Act also

known as TNPPDL Act. Fifteen others, including Mr. Balakrishna Reddy, were convicted and sentenced to three years imprisonment. The Minister was found guilty and convicted under sections 147(rioting) and 341(wrongly restraining any person) of IPC and section 3 of the TNPPDL Act. In addition to handing him three years' imprisonment for damaging public properties, the court also imposed a total fine of ₹10,500 on him.

Given time by the judge to appeal, the convicted persons, including Mr. Reddy, walked out of the court premises after paying fines and executing sureties. Mr. Balakrishna Reddy told mediapersons while coming out of the court said he would appeal his conviction in the Madras High Court.

India secures extradition of bookie

It complied with a ruling by the High Court in London last year, which overturned the verdict of the Westminster Magistrates' Court discharging him on the basis of concerns over conditions at Tihar Jail.

The extradition of businessman Vijay Mallya was ordered last month. Mr. Mallya's case has also been referred to the Home Secretary for a final decision.

The Home Secretary will now have two months, from the time the case is passed to him from the court, to decide whether or not Mr. Chawla can be extradited.

Under the extradition procedure Mr. Javid had to give consideration to matters such as whether there was a possibility of the death penalty being applied or extradition to a third country (neither of which factors would apply in the

Chawla case). Should extradition be ordered, Mr. Chawla would have two weeks to lodge an application to appeal to the High Court. Should this appeal be unsuccessful a further attempt to appeal to the Supreme Court could be made (though this would only happen if the Supreme Court granted permission to do so).

In November, the High Court quashed the lower court ruling following an appeal by the Crown Prosecution Service acting on behalf of India. Contrary to Ms. Crane's initial ruling, Lord Justice Leggatt and Mr. Justice Dingemans at the Royal Courts of Justice High Court concluded that new assurances provided by India meant there was "no real risk that Mr. Chawla will be subjected to impermissible treatment in Tihar prisons."

Citizenship Bill: AGP quits Assam coalition

Mr. Mahanta said the party would step up opposition to the "anti-Assam" Bill and fight for the proper implementation of the Assam Accord. The Accord, signed in 1985, had ended a six-year agitation against illegal migrants.

The announcement was made by AGP president and Agriculture Minister Atul Bora in New Delhi, who said he "saw no point in continuing with the alliance."

The AGP has two more ministers – Keshab Mahanta and Phani Bhushan Choudhury – in the Sarbananda Sonowal government in Assam.

The Citizenship (Amendment) Bill seeks to legalise the stay of non-Muslims from Afghanistan, Bangladesh and Pakistan who have come to India before December 31, 2014, allegedly due to religious persecution. The Assamese and other indigenous groups fear the passage of the Bill would

make Assam a dumping ground of "Hindu Bangladeshis".

The row over the Citizenship Bill had put a strain on the relationship between the AGP and BJP, seen as natural allies with Congress as the common enemy. The AGP was under pressure from student organisations and NGOs to pull out as the Bill was against the very issue – saving Assam from illegal migrants – it was formed to uphold.

The Opposition Congress, which has 25 MLAs, and the 13-legislator All India United Democratic Front (AIUDF) had taunted the AGP to show some spine for the sake of the Assamese people. "We welcome the AGP's decision, but they now have to hit the streets against the Bill and other wrongs by the BJP," senior Congress leader and former Chief Minister Tarun Gogoi said. The AIUDF too welcomed the decision.

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

NEW DELHI

Former Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Akhilesh Yadav allegedly approved 14 mining leases in Hamirpur, in violation of his own government's e-tendering policy and an Allahabad High Court directive, according to the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI).

Approval for 13 of these leases was given on a single day, February 17, 2013, days after the High Court had on January 29 passed an order ratifying the e-tendering policy, said a CBI official.

Mr. Yadav had held addi-

Minister says orders worth ₹73,000 cr. in pipeline; Cong. chief rebuts claims, says govt. dues worth ₹15,700 cr. weakening PSU

SANDEEP PHUKAN

NEW DELHI

On the penultimate day of the winter session of Parliament, Defence Minister Nirmala Sitharaman and Congress president Rahul Gandhi on Monday continued their war of words over the fate of Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL) inside and outside Parliament.

Ms. Sitharaman told the Lok Sabha that contracts amounting to ₹26,570.8 crore have been signed with HAL between 2014 and 2018 and orders worth approximately ₹73,000 crore were in the pipeline.

She, then, accused Mr. Gandhi of "raising incorrect and misleading doubts" over her earlier statement.

Almost immediately, the Congress chief stepped up his attack, repeating his charge that the Defence Minister had "clearly lied" to Parliament, and accused the government of deliberately

weakening HAL to benefit the Anil Ambani group.

In a separate press interaction, Law Minister Ravi Shankar Prasad accused Mr. Gandhi of "raising the bogey of Rafale" for "pure commercial interests" to promote a competitor.

Suo motu statement

After Mr. Gandhi tweeted on Sunday asking Defence Minister to show the documents to back her claim of the Modi government supporting HAL with contracts worth ₹1 lakh crore or resign, Ms. Sitharaman made a *suo motu* statement in Lok Sabha to clarify the exact position.

"Doubts are being raised on my statement made on the floor of the House on January 4 regarding procurement orders in the pipeline for HAL... I would like to set all doubts to rest by adding that I have received confirmation from HAL that dur-

NIRMALA SEETHARAMAN, Defence Minister

I would like to set all doubts to rest by adding that I have received confirmation from HAL that during 2014-2018, contracts amounting to ₹26,570.80 crore have been signed with HAL.

RAHUL GANDHI, Congress president

The strategy of the government is – weaken HAL, do not give it money, destroy India's strategic capability and give the gift to Anil Ambani.

ing 2014-2018, contracts amounting to ₹26,570.80 crore have already been signed with HAL and orders approximately of ₹73,000 crore are in the pipeline," the Minister said.

"I had specifically mentioned that there are 83 LCA Tejas fighters ordered worth ₹50,000 crore, 15 combat helicopters worth ₹3,000 crore, 200 more helicopters worth ₹20,000 crore, 19 Dornier transport aircraft

worth ₹3,400 crore, helicopters worth ₹15,000 crore, and aero-engines worth ₹8,400 crore. All of them put together amount to ₹1 lakh crore," she added.

Reacting to her statement, Mr. Gandhi told presspersons that the Defence Minister had changed her statement of giving ₹1 lakh crore contracts to HAL.

"We challenged that and in today's statement she said ₹26,570 crore have been gi-

ven to HAL. This means that Nirmala Sitharaman clearly lied in Parliament," he said.

Paid ahead

He also asked why the government paid Dassault Aviation ₹20,000 crore as advance in spite of not receiving a single aircraft whereas HAL has not been paid ₹15,700 crore despite delivering aircraft and helicopters.

"The strategy of the government is – weaken HAL, do not give it money, destroy India's strategic capability and give the gift to Anil Ambani. That is the plan and that is what we are trying to thwart," Mr. Gandhi said.

The Congress chief once again dared Prime Minister Narendra Modi to a one-on-one debate for 15 minutes, and said the government had evaded answering his specific question.

"I ask Narendra Modiji and Nirmala Sitharamanji

that when the PM had done a bypass surgery and prepared a new contract of 36 aircraft, did the senior Defence Ministry and Air Force officials object to Narendra Modi's interference. Yes or no," he asked.

Middleman at work

In a new line of attack against the Congress, the Union Law Minister cited a document in the public domain that claimed that Christian Michel, the alleged middleman in the AgustaWestland deal currently in custody, was also working with Eurofighter, a competitor to Dassault Aviation, to change the contract for the fighter aircraft.

"Why is it that the leading family namely the Gandhi family appear in documents after documents, be it the AgustaWestland, be it the Air Force fighter planes for Rafale and their competitor Eurofighter," Mr. Prasad said.

Upper House adjourned

Cong., SP and BSP members protest

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

NEW DELHI

The Rajya Sabha witnessed repeated adjournments on Monday amid protests by members of various parties, including those of the Samajwadi Party and the Bahujan Samaj Party who al-

legedly misused of the CBI.

Venkaih Naidu

ness to take up discussions on the issues, but he did not allow it. He asked the members to resume their seats and allow the House to function.

"This is not the parliamentary way of functioning. You can discuss all the issues under relevant rules," he said. As his repeated pleas went unheeded, he adjourned the proceedings till 2 p.m.

As the protests continued after the House reassembled, the Deputy Chairman adjourned the proceedings for the day.

The House session has been extended by one more day till Wednesday.

In the first half, Chairman M. Venkaih Naidu said he had received notice from some members under Rule 267 for suspension of busi-

Centre okays Citizenship Bill

Redrafted document is likely to be tabled in Parliament today

VIJAYA SINGH

NEW DELHI

The Joint Parliamentary Committee (JPC) on the contentious Citizenship Amendment Bill, 2016 recommended that the Assam government should help settle migrants "especially in places which are not densely populated, thus, causing lesser impact on the demographic changes and providing succour to the indigenous Assamese people".

The Bill paves the way to grant citizenship to six religious minorities – Hindus, Jains, Sikhs, Parsis, Christians and Buddhists – from Pakistan, Afghanistan and Bangladesh who came to India before 1971.

"Our only concern has been that the agencies who are inimical to us should not have a legal framework within which they can exploit our situation and infiltrate their own people into our own country. That is matter of great concern for us," the report quoted a RAW representative as saying.

The committee headed by Rajendra Agarwal of the BJP appreciated the govern-

ment's decision, claiming such people were being subjected to "unfair treatment" in those countries and submitted the 440-page report in the Lok Sabha on Monday.

Dissent notes defeated
The dissent notes given by some parliamentarians were defeated.

"As a matter of fact, protecting the interest of the indigenous Assamese people is the responsibility of both the Central government and the State government of Assam. The resettlement packages and compensation to the State governments, as pro-

vided by the Central government for accommodating the migrants should motivate and encourage the State government to help settle such migrants especially in places which are not densely populated, thus, causing lesser impact on the demographic changes and providing succour to the indigenous Assamese people," the report tabled in the Lok Sabha said.

'Religious persecution'
Asked by the committee about the mechanism to establish religious persecution in a foreign land, the Home Ministry replied, "Inputs from security agencies along with other corroborative evidence in the print/electronic media would help to establish religious persecution in a foreign land."

The committee rejected the amendment to exclude Bangladesh from the list of benefactor countries.

The Director of Intelligence Bureau suggested that after the Bill was passed, one more round of verification should be done for the applicants.

'Akhilesh cleared 14 illegal mining deals'

Approval for 13 of them were given on a single day, says CBI official

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

NEW DELHI

Former Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Akhilesh Yadav allegedly approved 14 mining leases in Hamirpur, in violation of his own government's e-tendering policy and an Allahabad High Court directive, according to the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI).

Approval for 13 of these leases was given on a single day, February 17, 2013, days after the High Court had on January 29 passed an order ratifying the e-tendering policy, said a CBI official.

Mr. Yadav had held addi-

Samajwadi Party president and former U.P. CM Akhilesh

One of the beneficiaries was former Samajwadi Party MP Ghanshyam Anuragi, to whom the lease was granted during the tenure of Gayatri Prasad Prajapati as Mining Minister in February 2014."

The details pertain to a case registered by the CBI last week to probe the alleged illegal mining of minor minerals in Hamirpur.

Among those named as accused are IAS official B. Chandrakartha, Samajwadi Party Member of Legislative Council (MLC) Ramesh Misra, and Sanjay Dixit, who had fought the election in 2017 on a BSP ticket.

The Bill has sought to amend five Acts – the Divorce Act, 1869, the Dissolution of Muslim Marriage Act, 1939, the Special Marriage Act, 1954, the Hindu Marriage Act, 1955, and the Hindu Adoptions and Maintenance Act, 1956 – on provisions related to marriage, divorce, and separa-

Lok Sabha passes amendment Bill

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

NEW DELHI

The Lok Sabha on Monday passed a Bill seeking to remove leprosy as a ground for divorce, stating that this was a "discriminatory" provision for a disease that is now curable.

"Leprosy is being removed as a ground for divorce as it is now a curable disease as against the earlier notion of it being incurable," said Minister of State for Law P. P. Chaudhary moving the Personal Laws (Amendment) Bill, 2018, in the Lok Sabha.

The Bill has sought to amend five Acts – the Divorce Act, 1869, the Dissolution of Muslim Marriage Act, 1939, the Special Marriage Act, 1954, the Hindu Marriage Act, 1955, and the Hindu Adoptions and Maintenance Act, 1956 – on provisions related to marriage, divorce, and separa-

tion of Hindu and Muslim couples.

Each of these Acts prescribe leprosy as a ground for seeking divorce or separation from the spouse. The Bill cleared on Monday removes this as a ground for divorce or separation.

The Bill was passed by a voice vote amid din as the Congress protested over the Rafale deal and the Samajwadi Party over the issue of CBI searches.

Nitish foes vow to defeat NDA

Grand Alliance leaders meet over fish and rice luncheon

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

PATNA

RJD leader Tejashwi Yadav on Monday demanded that Chief Minister Nitish Kumar apologise for calling Mukesh Sahni-Son of Mallah, a sadak chap (street smart). He was speaking to the media after a late-night discussion on seat-sharing with the Grand Alliance leaders. Mr. Sahni's Vikash Insaan Party (VIP) had recently joined the alliance. He hails from the Nishad fishermen community. Earlier the alliance leaders met over a 'macch-bhaat' (fish and rice) luncheon



Happy meal: Vikash Insaan Party president Mukesh Sahni serving fish to RJD leader Tejashwi Yadav. ■ RANJEET KUMAR

hosted by Mr. Sahni to take a pledge to defeat the NDA. "Macch-bhaat khayenge, NDA ko harayenge (we'll eat

SC to pronounce verdict on removal of Alok Verma today

He had filed plea challenging divestment from CBI post

LEGAL CORRESPONDENT

NEW DELHI

A three-judge Bench, led by Chief Justice of India Ranjan Gogoi, is scheduled on Tuesday to pronounce its judgment on a petition filed by exiled CBI Director Alok Verma against his "overnight" divestment from the top position in the country's top investigation agency.



10% quota Bill may fail legal test

Economic backwardness cannot be the sole criterion, nine-judge Constitution Bench has ruled

KRISHNADAS RAJAGOPAL
NEW DELHI

A proposed law, which got Cabinet approval on Monday, to provide 10% reservation for upper castes (or the unreserved category) exclusively with reference to their economic backwardness may run into rough weather if challenged in the Supreme Court.

A nine-judge Constitution Bench of the Supreme Court in the Indra Sawhney case of 1992 specifically answered the question "whether backward classes can be identified only and exclusively with reference to the economic criterion."

It categorically held that "a backward class cannot be determined only and exclusively with reference to economic criterion."

"It may be a consideration or basis along with, and in addition to, social backwardness, but it can never be the sole criterion. This is the view uniformly taken by this court..." said the majority judgment authored by Justice B.P. Jeevan Reddy, now retired.

The Indra Sawhney judgment declared 50% quota as the rule unless extraordinary situations "inherent in the great diversity of this country and the people" happen. Even then, extreme caution is to be exercised and a special case should be made out.

If the government proposes to bring a constitutional amendment to include the 10% quota for "unreserved economically weaker sections", the 11-judge Kesavanda Bharati judgment may



stand in the way. The judgment held that constitutional amendments which offend the basic structure of the Constitution would be *ultra vires*. Neither Parliament nor legislatures could transgress the basic feature of the Constitution, namely, the principle of equality enshrined in Article 14.

The government, it is reported, proposes to bring the 10% over and above the 49% quota – 7% for Scheduled Castes, 15% for Sche-

duled Tribes and 27% for Socially and Educationally Backward Classes, including widows and orphans of any caste, which is permitted. But a total 59% (49%+10%) quota would leave other candidates with just 41% government jobs or seats. This may amount to "sacrifice of merit" and violate Article 14.

This proposed Bill finds an echo in an ordinance promulgated in Gujarat in 2016. The ordinance provided 10% quota to upper castes there.

All the arguments here are based on the 104-page judgment of the Gujarat High Court in the Dayaram Khemkaran Verma versus State of Gujarat, which quashed the ordinance in August 2016. The case has been referred to a five-judge Bench of the Supreme Court

Gujarat had justified the ordinance by referring to how Article 46 of the Constitution, which deals with the Directive Principles of the State Policy, required the State to promote weaker sections.

It had categorised the 10% quota as a 'reasonable classification' under Article 14 and not 'reservation'. It said the 50% ceiling limit in the Indra Sawhney judgment applied only to SC/ST and SEBC. But the High Court said "reservation is nothing but an act of booking, kept blank, destined for particular use of a particular person."

The court observed that the "unreserved category itself is a class" and economic criteria was too fluctuating a basis for providing quota.

SC notice to EC on VVPAT verification

Plea says it should be done in at least 30% polling stations

LEGAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Monday directed the Election Commission to respond to a plea that the counts from electronic voting machines and voter verifiable paper audit trail (VVPAT) units should be cross-verified in at least 30% randomly chosen polling stations in each Assembly and Lok Sabha constituency, especially in light of the Lok Sabha election in May.

A Bench, led by Chief Justice of India Ranjan Gogoi, ordered the Commission to respond to the petition jointly filed by former IAS officer M.G. Devasahayam, ex-diplomat K.P. Fabian and retired banker Thomas Franco Rajendra Dev, represented by advocate Prasanna S.

'Inexplicably minuscule'

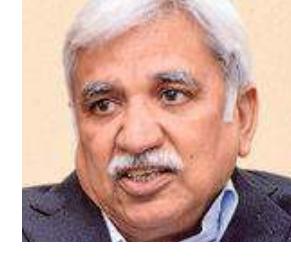
The petition said the commission had chosen to conduct the cross-verification exercise in an "inexplicably minuscule" manner in the recent Assembly elections.

The fraction of polling stations chosen for such random cross-verification has been inexplicably minuscule (less than 1% of polling stations in each constituency). This is manifestly arbitrary, irrational, unreasonable and in violation of Article 14 of the Constitution, the petition said.

The petition sought that "in order to detect and deter any such mischief or bias in the EVM process, at least 30% of all polling stations in a constituency must be chosen randomly for EVM counts to be cross-verified

EVMs cannot be tampered with: CEC

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
CHANDIGARH



Chief Election Commissioner Sunil Arora said here on Monday that electronic voting machines (EVMs) were tamper-proof and a highly qualified technical committee was monitoring their functioning. Delivering the inaugural address at a seminar at the Post Graduate Institute of Medical Education and Research, Mr. Arora said, "There are several technocrats here and let me

take this opportunity to let you know that the entire working and functioning of EVMs is under supervision of a competent and qualified technical committee."

M.P. CEO denies discrepancy in tally

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

The Madhya Pradesh Chief Electoral Officer (CEO) on Monday denied any discrepancy in counting of EVM votes for the Assembly polls on November 28. Quoting the figures displayed on the State CEO's website, a person tweeted alleging that

the votes matched only for 26 of the 230 constituencies. "Our votes are not captured accurately. All the data is from CEO MP website," said the complainant. The CEO said it was a quick estimate of provisional data of votes cast and collected within 24 hours of poll day on November 28.

with VVPAT counts". The petitioners submitted that the Supreme Court in its judgment in *Subramanian Swamy versus ECI*, reported in 2013, had held that it was imperative that elections held through EVMs ought to implement a mechanism of voter verifiable paper audit

trails so that the voter can satisfy himself that his vote was accurately recorded.

The court's judgment and need for voter confidence and transparency in the election process led to the mechanism for random cross-verification of EVM and VVPAT counts.

CPI(M) backs quota; LJP says positive move

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

Some Opposition political parties have criticised the Cabinet nod for 10% reservation for the economically backward section in the general category as a political gimmick, announced with an eye on the upcoming Lok Sabha elections. However, others have responded with

more caution, seeking time to examine the finer details of the government's proposal.

Rashtriya Janata Dal leader Tejashwi Yadav pointed out that reservation was not primarily intended to improve the financial condition, but to improve the representation of the socially backward people.

Even within the NDA, there were reservations. BJP MP Udit Raj was cautious in his praise. "This will open a

Delhi Chief Minister and Aam Aadmi Party chief Arvind Kejriwal said that if the government brought a Constitutional Amendment Bill to Parliament before the election, he would support it.

Even within the NDA, there were reservations. BJP MP Udit Raj was cautious in his praise. "This will open a

Pandora's box. Others will also demand reservation now," he told ANI.

"But we welcome the move."

Lok Janshakti Party leader Chirag Paswan said, "I am happy the government took this positive move."

Kerala Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan said: "We [CPI (M)] have always demanded

reservation for financially backward classes in the upper castes. Now that finally they have taken this decision, it is a welcome step."

CPI MP D. Raja told *The Hindu*, "They are doing it in haste in view of the elections. We have to examine the impact on SC, ST and OBC sections. It has to stand up to judicial scrutiny."

Stand by those jailed for activism: Amartya Sen

Says there is an extraordinary violation of human rights



Expressing concern: Nobel laureate Amartya Sen speaking at a function in Kolkata on Monday. ■ SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

In a two-minute solidarity video for human rights watch dog Amnesty International, Mr. Shah recently said that those who demanded rights were being locked up.

Professor Sen released a study conducted by the Pratichi Institute and Asiatic Society on the living conditions of the tribal people of West Bengal.

The survey report has identified "food scarcity in varying degrees" in about

31% of tribal households in the State.

Commenting on the report, Boro Baski of Bishnubati village in Birbhum district, said the government's policies, which were well intended, might "affect" the quality of living of tribal people. "The tin houses built under the government's housing scheme is leading to the slow disappearance of nicely painted tribal homes, causing changes in the lifestyle of the tribals," he said.

In solidarity

"We should stand by those who are targeted and ostracised. Or, we not only lose the quality of sympathy but also our analytical ability to distinguish between what is important and what is not."

"We need to protest the way this actor [Naseeruddin Shah] is targeted," Professor Sen said.

SC shocked as Section 66A of IT Act is still invoked

Warns of action if allegation in PUCL plea is found true



(PUCL) were found true.

The court ordered the Centre to respond to the petition in four weeks.

The PUCL said Section 66A, which restricted free expression online, continued to survive and occasionally found a place in the

FIRs registered by the police in complete contravention of the Supreme Court judgment in the Shreya Singhal case.

The judgment had found that Section 66A was contrary to both Articles 19 (free speech) and 21 (right to life) of the Constitution. The entire provision was struck down by the court.

The petition said the judgment rendered Section 66A extinct from the very date of its insertion into the IT Act, i.e. October 27, 2009.

The petition said many of

officials may not even know about the Supreme Court verdict.

KARNATAKA POWER CORPORATION LIMITED

CIN: U85110KA1970SGC001919
NO: KPCL/2018-19/PS/WORK_8067 Date: 21/12/2018

NOTICE INVITING BID & QR DOMESTIC COMPETITIVE BIDDING ABSTRACT TENDER NOTIFICATION

KPCL invites bids through GOK e-procurement platform www.eproc.karnataka.gov.in from the qualified bidders for the following brief scope of work: "Design, engineering, manufacture, Quality Surveillance, inspection & testing at supplier's works, supply, packing, forwarding to site, transportation, F.O.R-BTPS, unloading, storage, preservation, handling at site, all mechanical, C&I systems, electrical equipment and systems, steel structures, civil works with new chimney, insurance, erection, painting, start-up, trial operation, testing, commissioning, performance guarantee testing and warranty for wet lime stone flue gas desulphurization plant for 2 x 500MW, units-1 & 2 and 1 x 700MW, unit-3 of BTPS of KPCL, Kudlithini, Bellary District, Karnataka and handing over to the Owner an operating plant". Those who have not registered in e-procurement portal www.eproc.karnataka.gov.in, may do so in order to participate in the bid. The brief bid notification containing the pre-qualifying criteria for the bidders, EMD, Calender of bid activities and other details can be accessed from e-procurement portal. Further details can be had from: Chief Engineer (Thermal Power), KPCL, No. 22/23, "Sudarshan Complex", 2nd Floor, Sheshadri Road, Bengaluru-560009. Phone: 080-22345448, e-mail: cetd@karnatakapower.com, sem1cetd@karnatakapower.com, eem1cetd@karnatakapower.com. Website: www.karnatakapower.com

GREATER VISAKHAPATNAM SMART CITY CORPORATION LIMITED

Ref. No: GVSCL/Projects/105 (SL-ABDy/2018-19/2nd call), Dt: 04/01/2019

Ref. No: GVSCL/Projects/93(Digital Classroom Labs)/2018-19/2nd call), Dt: 04/01/2019

Notice Inviting Request for Proposal

GVSCL invites to invite Request for Proposal for:

1. Procurement of Implementing Agency for providing all in one solar LED street lights with poles including Design, Procurement, Erection, Testing & Commissioning and comprehensive operation & Maintenance for 15 years on Turnkey Basis along with associated Electrical & civil works under implementation of Smart City Mission in Visakhapatnam (2nd call) The last date for online submission of bids is 18th Jan '19 upto 5.00 PM.

2. Procurement of Implementing Agency for Modernizing Greater Visakhapatnam Municipal Corporation (GVMC) Schools (77 schools) as Smart Campus – "Digital Classroom Labs" in Visakhapatnam under Smart City Mission (3rd call) The last date for online submission of bids is 19th Jan '19 upto 5.00 PM.

3. Procurement of Implementing Agency for Modernizing Greater Visakhapatnam Municipal Corporation (GVMC) Schools (42 schools) as Smart Campus – "Digital Classroom Labs" in Visakhapatnam under Smart City Mission (2nd call) The last date for online submission of bids is 19th Jan '19 upto 5.00 PM.

The detailed tender documents can be downloaded from website of www.eprocurement.gov.in.

For more details contact:

E-mail: prabhul.sheela@vsnl.com

Cc: visakhapatnamsmartcity@gmail.com

Mobile No. 09901472092, 0772995934

SD-xxx MD & CEO GVSCL

Website: www.eprocurement.gov.in

Tender ID: 2218_GVSCL_105_2018_19

DPR/ICD/2218-19

Date: 21/01/2019

Time: 15:00 hrs

Place: VSNL, 10th Floor, VSNL Building, 10/12/2018

Address: 10/12/2018

City: Visakhapatnam

State: Andhra Pradesh

Pincode: 530001

Country: India

Latitude: 17.716666666666666

Longitude: 82.91666666666666

Altitude: 0

Area: VSNL

Building: VSNL

Room: 10th floor

Office: VSNL

<p

IN BRIEF



Suu Kyi calls for action on Rakhine rebels

YANGON
Myanmar government leader Aung San Suu Kyi on Monday discussed insurgent attacks on the Myanmar police in a rare meeting with the military chief. Her administration called for the armed forces to "crush" the Rakhine rebels, a government spokesman said. REUTERS

Kevin Spacey charged with indecent assault

NANTUCKET
Kevin Spacey was formally charged on Monday with the indecent assault of a teenager who alleged that the U.S. actor had groped him at a bar in Massachusetts in 2016. Local media said his lawyer entered a plea of not guilty on his behalf. AFP

21 killed in Taliban attacks in Afghanistan

KABUL
Taliban insurgents stormed security posts in west Afghanistan, killing 21 police and pro-government militia members, officials said on Monday. The Taliban attacked the checkpoints in Badghis province. Fifteen militants were killed and 10 wounded in the clashes. REUTERS

Family will kill me, says Saudi woman, pleads for asylum

Thai authorities halt plans to expel Rahaf Mohammed al-Qunun over safety concerns

EUTERS
BANGKOK

An 18-year-old Saudi woman who fled her family and barricaded herself inside a Bangkok airport hotel to prevent being expelled by Thai authorities has left the airport after talks with the United Nations refugee agency, an official said on Monday.

Rahaf Mohammed al-Qunun has been at Bangkok's international airport since Saturday when she arrived from Kuwait, saying she fears her family will kill her if she is forced to return home. Her relatives have not commented on her accusations of abuse and Reuters was not able to reach them.

The case has drawn new global attention to Saudi Arabia's strict social rules, including a requirement that women have the permission of a male "guardian" to travel, which rights groups say can trap women and girls as prisoners of abusive families.

Thai immigration officials had planned to put Ms. Qunun on a flight back to Kuwait on Monday, but relent-



Seeking help: Rahaf Mohammed al-Qunun before leaving the airport in Bangkok on Monday. ■ AP

ed after her online pleas drew international attention. She told Reuters via text and audio messages she had fled Kuwait during a family visit there, and had planned to travel to Australia to seek asylum. She said she was held after leaving her plane in Bangkok and told she would be sent back to Kuwait.

"They will kill me," Ms. Qunun said. "My life is in danger. My family threatens to kill me for the most trivial things."

A representative of the U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) met Ms.

Qunun at the airport and also discussed the case with Thai immigration officials. After the meeting, Thailand's immigration chief said she would not be expelled.

Safe shelter

"We will take her into Bangkok and provide her with safe shelter under the care of the UNHCR," immigration chief Surachate Hakparn told reporters.

He said the UNHCR would work on processing Ms. Qunun's request for refugee status. Giuseppe de Vincentis, the UNHCR representative in Thailand, said the Thai go-

vernment had given assurances Ms. Qunun would not be expelled to any country where she might be in danger while her case was being processed.

Imprisoned for months
Ms. Qunun posted a video on Twitter on Monday of her barricading her hotel door with a table and a mattress. She said her family was powerful in Saudi society but she did not identify them.

Asked why she was seeking refuge in Australia, she said: "Physical, emotional and verbal abuse and being imprisoned inside the house for months. They threaten to kill me and prevent me from continuing my education."

"They won't let me drive or travel. I am oppressed. I love life and work and I am very ambitious but my family is preventing me from living."

The Saudi Foreign Ministry said in a tweet that its embassy was in touch with the woman's father and the Thai government, but its diplomats had not met or communicated with her.

'Syria pullout to be done in prudent way'

Trump says media skewed his words

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
WASHINGTON

President Donald Trump on Monday sought to end fears of an abrupt U.S. pullout from Syria, saying the fight against the Islamic State group was not over and that withdrawal would be done in a "prudent" manner.

"We will be leaving at a proper pace while at the same time continuing to fight ISIS and doing all else that is prudent and necessary!" Mr. Trump tweeted.

The President has come under withering pressure both at home and in allied capitals after previous statements indicating that he considered the IS group vanquished and that he wanted U.S. troops out of Syria imminently.

Allies like Britain and France warned that IS was not defeated. Questions were also raised over the fate of Kurdish groups that have done much of the fighting alongside the United States in Syria, but now fear would not happen before "ISIS is defeated and not able to revive itself."

The reassurances followed a diplomatic storm caused by Mr. Trump's surprise announcement in De-



Donald Trump

cember that appeared to signal a rapid withdrawal from Syria, where U.S. special forces play an important role in supporting local forces fighting IS. "We've won against ISIS," he said at the time. "We've taken back the land. And now it's time for our troops to come back home."

Mr. Trump's new statement follows a trip by his National Security Adviser John Bolton to Israel in which he told Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu on Sunday that withdrawal would not happen before Syria is defeated and not able to revive itself."

On Monday, Mr. Trump said the media had skewed his original words, saying that his latest position on Syria was "no different" from my original statements." (With Reuters inputs)

Trump to visit Mexico border

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
WASHINGTON

President Donald Trump will visit the U.S.-Mexican border this week, his spokeswoman said on Monday, in the latest bid to pressure Congress over border wall negotiations that have led to a partial government shutdown.

He will "travel to the Southern border on Thursday to meet with those on the frontlines of the national security and humanitarian crisis," Sarah Sanders said in a tweet. There was no further information on where Mr. Trump would travel. The visit was announced as the White House and Democrats controlling the lower house of Congress refused to cede significant ground.

Mr. Trump had pledged on Sunday not to bend in his demand for a wall but said the barrier could be made of steel instead of concrete as a potential compromise with Democrats.

"The barrier, or the wall, can be of steel instead of concrete, if that helps people. It may be better," he said.

(With Reuters inputs)

Beijing protests over U.S. warship sighting

The incident comes as the two countries began talks to resolve trade disputes

ASSOCIATED PRESS
BEIJING

Chinese and American officials began talks on Monday aimed at ending a bruising trade battle between the world's two biggest economies, as Beijing complained over the sighting of a U.S. warship in what it said were Chinese waters.

It was unclear if the ruck-

us over the warship might disrupt the working level talks being held at the Chinese Commerce Ministry. The two sides have provided scant information about the discussions.

Both sides have expressed optimism over the potential for progress in settling their tariff fight over Beijing's technology ambitions.

Ministry spokesman Lu Kang said on Monday that Chinese military aircraft and naval vessels were dispatched to identify the U.S. vessel and warn it to leave the area near disputed islands in the South China Sea.

"We have made stern complaints with the U.S.," Mr. Lu said. He said the warship, which he said was the

destroyer the USS McCampbell, had violated Chinese and international law, infringing on Chinese sovereignty and undermined peace and stability.

"As for whether this move has any impact to the ongoing trade consultations... to properly resolve existing issues of all kinds between China and the U.S. is good

for the two countries and the world," Mr. Lu said. But he added, "The two sides both have responsibility to create necessary and good atmosphere to this end."

A Pentagon spokesman, Lt. Col. David Eastburn, said "The United States will continue to fly, sail, and operate anywhere international law allows."

N. Korean train enters China

Speculations is that Kim Jong-un may be on board

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
SEOUL

A special North Korean train entered China late on Monday, Yonhap news agency reported, raising speculation that leader Kim Jong-un could be on his way to Beijing.

The train crossed the border around 10.15 p.m. local time and was expected in

the Chinese capital on Tuesday morning, the Southern news agency reported, citing an informed source.

China is the isolated, nuclear-armed North's key diplomatic ally and main source of trade and aid. Mr. Kim visited three times last year to pay his respects to leader Xi Jinping.

None of Mr. Kim's 2018 trips to China were announced in advance, and the earliest indications of the first one came when his train was spotted in Beijing.

In the Chinese border city of Dandong, dozens of security vehicles and officials blocked the roads around the train station on Monday before the train passed through, Yonhap reported.

Gabon rebel chief held, 2 killed in failed coup

They had stormed a public radio station

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
LIBREVILLE



A video grab of the rebel soldiers inside the radio station. ■ AFP PHOTO / YOUTUBE

May to hold Brexit vote on Jan. 15

REUTERS
LONDON

Prime Minister Theresa May will hold a delayed parliamentary vote on her Brexit deal on January 15, the BBC reported on Monday, citing government sources.

Ms. May was forced to pull the vote on her deal in December after she said it would be defeated by a large majority.

The government had previously said the vote would be held in the week of January 14.

Meanwhile, the Prime Minister said on Monday that Britain will set out additional proposals for Northern Ireland and giving parliament a bigger role as the government seeks more assurances from the European Union on her Brexit deal.

read by a person who identified himself as Lieutenant Ondo Obiang Kelly, the deputy commander of the Republican Guard and head of a previously unknown group, the Patriotic Youth Movement of the Gabonese Defence and Security Forces. He said a "national restoration council" would be formed "to guarantee a democratic transition for the Gabonese people".

NSIC Technical Service Centre
Okhla Industrial Estate, N.Delhi,
Ph: 26826801, 26826847
CORRIGENDUM
Refer to tender no. NTSC/NSIC/MECHATRONICS SETUP/2018-19/32(7) for the procurement of ARC Welding Robot. The last of applying in tender has been extended up to 15.01.2019 at 15.45 Hrs. Other terms & conditions will remain same as published earlier. For more information, please visit NSIC website (www.nsic.co.in).

HARYANA POWER GENERATION CORPORATION LIMITED
Regd. Office: C-7, Ujjai Bhawan, Sector-6, Panchkula
Corporate Identity Number: U45207HR1997SGC033517
Website: www.hpgcl.org.in

CORRIGENDUM

Sr. No.	NIT Number	Event No.	Brief scope of Work/ purchase	Last date of submission of bids
1	2nd Corrigendum PTP/CPOM-222106	100737	Supply of VRLA 750Ah Battery Bank for UPS System for max DNA DCs in unit-7, PTPS, Panipat	Extended till 09.01.2019 up to 13.00 Hrs.

Note: The detail of the above NIT along with Tender Document can be seen & downloaded from the HPGCL website i.e. www.hpgcl.org.in and <https://haryanaprocurement.gov.in>. Bidder can participate only through e-portal of Haryana Government i.e. <https://haryanaprocurement.gov.in>.

PRDH-74644
Chief Engineer/PTP

**C.P.W.D.
Notice Inviting e-Tender**
The Executive Engineer (E), Electrical Division-III, CPWD, I.P. Bhawan, New Delhi -110002 Ph. 23378113 on behalf of President of India, invites online percentage rate bids, (1) from the approved and eligible contractors in appropriate class (Lit: category) and those are annually pre-qualified in the works of Lit category in CPWD, for the work:
(1) R.M.O. of Passenger lifts in JOA Block no. -I & II at Minto Road, New Delhi. (SH:- Round the clock operation of 4 Nos. passenger lifts Johnson make installed at JOA block - I & II). (2) RMO of 2 Nos. 8 Passenger lifts at W/W Hostel at Minto Road, New Delhi. (SH:- Providing 3 nos. Lift operator at Minto Road Hostel.) NIT No: - 72/EE (E)/ED-III/2018-19, Estimated Cost: Rs. 14,40,528/-, Earnest Money: Rs. 28,812/-, Period of completion: 06 Months. (2) from the approved and eligible contractors of CPWD in appropriate class in composite category, for the works: Providing & replacement of outlined WTAC & STAC with energy efficient star rating AC units at NCDC, Delhi-110054. (In all three heritage buildings i/c Porta Cabins only.) NIT No:- 73/EE (E)/ED-III/2018-19, Estimated Cost: Rs. 6,05,278/-, Earnest Money: Rs. 12,106/-, Period of completion: 02 Months. Last date and time of submission of online tenders: 14-01-2019 up to 03.00 PM. The bid forms and other details can be obtained from the website www.tenderwizard.com/CPWD or www.cpwd.gov.in. The Press Notice is also available on www.eprocure.gov.in.

**NORTHERN RAILWAY
SHORT E-TENDER NOTICE**
(Authority: Railway Board's letter No. 2014/CE-CT/10/TN dated 18.24.2014/01.07.2014)
Sr. DEE-TR5-GZB acting for and on behalf of President of India invites E-Tender against Tender No. 230-TR5-GZB-2018-19-11. A Manual offers is not allowed against this tender. The details are as under:- (1) N.I.T. No.: 230-TR5-GZB-2018-19-11. (2) Name of the work: Overhauling of Air Dryer of SII make of Electric locomotives, Qty. - 128 Nos. (MOH-80 & IOH-48) for 02 (two) years. (3) Tender cost: ₹ 3,540/- (TD cost ₹ 3,000/- + GST@18% i.e. ₹ 540/-) Note:- online payment mode available on IRPS website. (4) Approximate cost: ₹ 44,54,278/- (5) Earnest Money: ₹ 89,100/- Note:- online payment mode on IRPS website. (6) Completion period: 24 Months. (7) Validity of offer: 45 days. (8) Date from tender advertised on IRPS website: 07.01.2019. (10) Bidding Start date: 22.01.2019 (15.30 Hrs.). (12) Tender opening date: 05.02.2019 (15.30 Hrs.). (12) Eligibility Criteria: Only those firms which in their individual capacity satisfy Standard Financial Criteria(s) need to quote for this tender. As a proof of sufficient financial capacity and organizational resources, bidder should have produced/uploaded evidence of his capacity to carry out the proposed work for supply/service efficiently and of a sound financial capacity. Authentic certificate shall be produced by the bidder(s) to this effect which may be attested certificate from the employer/client. Audited balance sheet duly certified by chartered accountant etc. Note:- (i) All participant Bidder(s) will submit their requisite documents along with their tender offer on IRPS website: i.e. www.irps.gov.in "No post tender correspondence for submission of additional document shall be entertained after opening of the Technical & Commercial offer. Even sub-molo post tender letters of the tenders shall be treated as null & void". Tender Notice is available on website of www.irps.gov.in. No.: 230-TR5-GZB-2018-19-11 Dt: 05.01.2019.

Serving Customers with a Smile



10 arrested for gang-rape on vote night

REUTERS
DHAKA

The Bangladesh police said on Monday they have arrested 10 men, including a ruling party worker, in connection with the alleged gang-rape of a woman who voted for the main opposition group in a controversial general election last month.

The police said medical examination of the woman had confirmed sexual assault. They are also investigating complaints of threats against her family following the arrests over the past few days.

Process starts to elect new Malaysia king

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
KUALA LUMPUR

Malaysia's royals prepared on Monday to pick a new king to replace Sultan Muhammad V, who abdicated in a historic first after reportedly marrying a Russian former beauty queen, holding a special gathering at the national palace.

As the country reacted with shock to the news, Malaysia's Islamic royal families set about the task of electing a new king. A special meeting of the rulers was held at the palace in Kuala Lumpur to set a date for a new king to be elected, official news agency Bernama reported. It will happen in the coming weeks.

The national palace did not respond to requests for comment.

Tenders of State and three State Ministers. Her Cabinet is mostly made up of new faces. Thirty-one members of the new Cabinet are first-timers.

Ms

MARKET WATCH

	07-01-2019	% CHANGE
Sensex	35,850	0.43
US Dollar	69.68	0.06
Gold	32,650	0.46
Brent oil	58.5	0.46

NIFTY 50

	PRICE	CHANGE
Adani Ports	381.65	-0.50
Asian Paints	1396.00	10.15
Axia Bank	637.45	17.85
Bajaj Auto	2658.55	-75.65
Bajaj Finserv	6407.15	-3.30
Bajaj Finance	2553.60	-22.45
Bharti Airtel	324.95	2.50
BPLC	355.55	-3.90
Cipla	514.05	1.25
Coal India	234.50	-2.00
Dr Reddys Lab	2558.65	-41.35
Eicher Motors	19830.40	-273.20
GAIL (India)	357.10	3.95
Grafix Ind	820.65	14.50
HCL Tech	941.55	9.20
HDFC	1972.90	0.30
HDFC Bank	2120.65	3.20
Hero MotoCorp	2957.95	-29.90
Hindalco	208.55	-2.35
HPLC	249.80	1.60
Hind Unilever	1784.95	3.25
Indiabulls HFL	793.90	-35.90
ICICI Bank	367.70	2.50
IndusInd Bank	1559.15	10.95
Bharti Infratel	293.75	8.70
Infosys	671.70	10.65
Indian Oil Corp	133.45	-0.50
ITC	281.65	0.70
JSW Steel	289.85	1.90
Kotak Bank	1246.60	-1.35
L&T	1383.80	-4.25
M&M	729.55	3.95
Maurit Suzuki	7362.05	127.55
NTPC	148.60	2.85
ONGC	147.85	2.15
PowerGrid Corp	198.45	2.55
Reliance Ind	1104.75	6.10
State Bank	296.30	-1.35
Sun Pharma	430.80	-3.00
Tata Motors	175.35	4.40
Tata Steel	485.50	-2.15
TCS	1897.90	21.05
Tech Mahindra	687.50	6.40
Titan	944.05	15.60
UltraTech Cement	3926.75	12.20
UPL	763.75	7.35
Vedanta	193.45	0.55
Wipro	324.25	-0.20
YES Bank	187.15	-2.50
Zee Entertainment	462.95	-1.00

	EXCHANGE RATES	
Indicative direct rates in rupees a unit except yen at 4 p.m. on January 07		
CURRENCY	TT BUY TT SELL	
US Dollar	69.48	69.80
Euro	79.50	79.87
British Pound	88.57	88.98
Japanese Yen (100)	64.12	64.42
Chinese Yuan	10.14	10.19
Swiss Franc	70.75	71.08
Singapore Dollar	51.17	51.41
Canadian Dollar	52.00	52.24
Malaysian Ringgit	16.88	16.96

Source: Indian Bank

	BULLION RATES CHENNAI	
January 07 rates in rupees with previous rates in parentheses		
Retail Silver (1g)	42.6.....(42.4)	
22 ct gold (1g)	3044.....(3048)	

Source: Indian Bank

Govt. says GDP to grow at 7.2% for FY19

Projection implies growth in second half may slide to 6.8% from the 7.6% clocked in the first 6 months

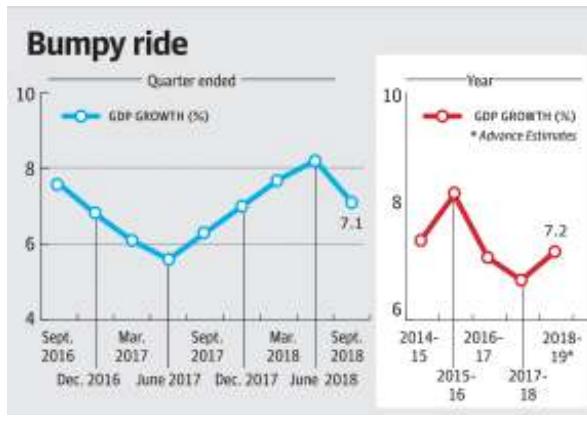
SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

The government has projected GDP growth for the full year 2018-19 to come in at 7.2%, which implies that growth in the second half of the year would slow significantly to 6.8% from the 7.6% clocked in the first half of the year, according to the first advance estimates of national income for 2018-19 released by the Ministry of Statistics.

This growth estimate for the entire year is slower than the Reserve Bank of India's forecast of 7.4%.

'Conservative estimates' Economists, however, feel that the government's prediction for the second half of the year is too conservative.

"Overall, it does seem to



be a little on the lower side," D.K. Srivastava, chief policy advisor, EY India, said.

"There is an indication of a slowdown in the second half, but not for such a slowdown. Some of the slowdown seems to be in the services sector, particularly in those sectors with a larger

weight such as transport and communications, and financial services. Otherwise, there doesn't seem to be a reason for the slowdown. A growth rate of 7.7.2% for the second half might have been more realistic," he said.

The advance estimate says that the growth in the agri-

culture sector would be 3.8% in 2018-19, faster than the 3.4% in the previous year. The manufacturing sector is estimated to grow at 8.3% in 2018-19 compared with 5.7% in 2017-18.

However, this represents a dramatic slowdown in the manufacturing sector in the second half of the year, to 6.3% from 10.3% in the first half.

Construction set to grow

The construction sector, however, is expected to witness an acceleration in the second half of the year.

For the entire year, the growth has been estimated at 8.9%, with 8.3% having been recorded in the first half of the year. This implies a growth of 9.5% in the second half.

The transport and communications services sector is expected to grow at 6.9% in 2018-19, down from 8% in the previous year.

The financial services sector is set to grow at 6.8% in 2018-19 from 6.6% in 2017-18.

"The estimates seem to be on the conservative side and the final numbers would depend on three factors – how the oil prices pan out and hence, inflation, the government spending in the pre-election last quarter and the mood of the economy post conclusion of U.S.-China trade negotiations," Ranen Banerjee, partner & leader - public finance and economics at PwC India, wrote in a note. "The nominal GDP has been estimated at 12.3% that is surprising given the muted inflation outlook."

World Bank President announces resignation

Over 3 years left in his current term

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
WASHINGTON

Jim Yong Kim

President in 2012, is to join an as-yet unnamed firm focussing on investments in developing countries, the bank said in a statement, and will return to the board of Partners-in-Health, which he co-founded.

World Bank CEO Kristalina Georgieva will serve as interim President.

'No decision yet on quantum of interim dividend to govt'

RBI wary of excess liquidity, will release funds only if absolutely needed, says Das, stresses on central bank's independence

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

The Reserve Bank of India has not yet taken a decision regarding the quantum of the interim dividend it will transfer to the government, RBI Governor Shaktikanta Das said on Monday. The central bank would not delay in announcing the decision once made, he said.

Mr. Das was responding to queries based on a *Reuters* report that the RBI would be transferring anywhere between ₹30,000 and 40,000 crore to the Centre as interim dividend. "There have been reports, even I have seen them," Mr. Das said at a press conference. "As and when the RBI takes any decision on any issues, you will come to know about it."

Mr. Das said that he would



Report card: There is definitely an improvement in reduction of bank NPAs, says Shaktikanta Das. ■ SANDEEP SAXENA

be meeting the NBFCs on Tuesday to get a better idea of their liquidity situation. He said even though the RBI was monitoring the liquidity situation closely, it would be careful to infuse liquidity only as and when it was absolutely necessary, so as to avoid a situation of excess liquidity in the system.

"I have had several meetings with the stakeholders and we have a sense of the current liquidity situation. We do believe that the liquidity requirements of the economy and financial institutions to a great extent are met," Mr. Das said.

"Regarding liquidity, the RBI is constantly monitoring

the situation and will take steps whenever there is a need to deal with a liquidity deficit if it is noticed," the Go-

vernor added. "At the same time, I must also add that the RBI would not like a situation where liquidity becomes a kind of loose money."

Mr. Das said that he held a two-hour long meeting with MSME associations as well,

on Monday, during which he

achieved greater clarity on the issues to do with the sector. "The banks have been asked to look at the viability of individual MSME before making the restructuring scheme applicable to them. We hope that the banks and the MSME units work together

so that the scheme is implemented in letter and spirit," he said.

Restructuring scheme

He said that the viability of each MSME unit will be gauged to ascertain whether the restructuring scheme would be available or not.

"One issue which engages our attention on almost a daily basis is the status of NPAs and the health of PSBs," Mr. Das said.

"There is definitely improvement noticed in the reduction of NPA levels in the banking sector as a whole and with PSBs in particular. But the improvements have to be sustained if the banks have to fulfill their responsibilities and some of the banks have to become healthy."

On farm loans waivers, the RBI Governor said that such loans are based on States' fiscal capacities, but added that generalised farm loan waivers did have an impact on the credit culture.

He added that though the RBI did not want to "throttle the functioning of the bank", it did realise that there was a need for governance reforms to be implemented.

Mr. Das also indirectly

stressed on the independence of the central bank, saying that the final decision on issues within its ambit would be RBI's. "The RBI will listen to everybody and interact with everybody including the government, but the final decision will be taken by the RBI in an objective manner to the best of its abilities," Mr. Das said.

'Corporate revenue growth to slow in Q3'

Contempt plea moved against the RCom chairman over non-payment of dues

LEGAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

for the company, offered ₹18 crore towards the dues, which Ericsson refused.

Ericsson had sought Mr. Ambani and others to be "detained in civil prison" unless they repaid the dues. It sought directions to the Ministry of Home Affairs to prevent Mr. Ambani, Reliance Telecom Ltd. chairman Satish Seth and chairperson of Reliance Infratel Ltd. Chhaya Virani from leaving the country. This is the second round of contempt proceedings in this case. Earlier hearings in the court last year were

based on a contempt petition filed by Ericsson against Mr. Ambani and the top two executives for failure to pay ₹550 crore in dues as ordered by the apex court on August 3.

NCLAT order

On August 3 last year, the Supreme Court, referring to a May 30 order of the National Company Law Appellate Tribunal, observed that Ericsson India, who is an operational creditor, is willing to settle its debt of over ₹1,500 crore for ₹550 crore available with the company.

is to be paid within 120 days from the date of that order, ie, by September 20, 2018."

Ericsson, in its petition, said the order had not been complied with.

IN BRIEF



Lupin gets USFDA nod for schizophrenia drug

NEW DELHI Drug maker Lupin said it had received approval from the U.S. health regulator to market Lurasidone Hydrochloride tablets in the U.S. The firm can sell its product, which is a generic version of Sunovion Pharmaceuticals Inc.'s Latuda tablets, in strengths of 20 mg, 40 mg, 60 mg, 80 mg and 120 mg. The drug is indicated for conditions such as schizophrenia and bipolar depression. PTI

HDFC moves NCLAT to recover dues from RHC

NEW DELHI HDFC has challenged an NCLT ruling that dismissed the mortgage lender's insolvency plea against RHC Holding, an entity promoted by Malvinder Mohan Singh and Shivinder Mohan Singh. Following the plea, the NCLAT on Monday issued notices to RHC Holding and other parties and directed them to file their replies. RHC Holding had taken a loan of ₹200 crore from HDFC in 2016. PTI

IL&FS arm defaults on dividend payment

NEW DELHI IL&FS Transportation Networks, a group company of the troubled IL&FS group, on Monday said it has defaulted on dividend payment of ₹7.12 crore due on redemption of cumulative non convertible redeemable preference shares. The dividend was due for the period between April 1, 2017 to December 23, 2018 and was not paid due to insufficient funds, the company said in a filing with the exchanges. PTI

Essar Global repays ₹12,000 cr. loans

At the group level, the Ruias have executed sale of several assets and repaid over ₹1,37,000 cr. of debt

PIYUSH PANDEY

MUMBAI

Essar Global Fund Ltd., the holding company for the Essar group of companies, on Monday repaid a debt of ₹12,000 crore to its various Indian and foreign lenders.

This is in addition to the ₹30,000 crore that it had repaid in August 2017 to various lenders.

Essar Global has now repaid approximately ₹6,300 crore to ICICI Bank, Axis Bank and Standard Chartered Bank. With this, these banks have been repaid their entire facility of ₹31,500 crore. The loans had been provided to Essar Global to fund its capital expenditure programme between 2008 and 2014.

The only continuing lender to Essar Global now is

Getting into shape

Aug. 2017: ₹72,600 cr. paid to lenders after sale of Essar Oil

Nov. 2017: ₹6,000 cr. debt paid from sale of Aegis

April 2018: ₹2,400 cr. paid off from sale of Equinox business park

Oct. 2018: ₹44,000 cr. (Offered to Essar Steel lenders under IBC)

Jan. 2019: ₹12,000 cr. paid to lenders of Essar Global



Outstanding debt:
₹32,000 cr., of which
₹20,000 cr. is
in the books of
Essar Power alone

**Total:
1,37,000
crore
(Paid+offered to
pay so far)**

VTB. In addition to repaying all of its existing secured debt, Essar Global has also simultaneously concluded a settlement with lenders who had provided debt facilities to erstwhile Essar Steel Minnesota Ltd. and were beneficiaries of unsecured guarantees from Essar Global.

Lenders with whom settlements have been concluded include ICICI Bank and State Bank of India. It also includes a consortium of international funds led by Davidson Kempner. As part of this, Essar Global has purchased

\$260 million face value notes issued by Mesabi Metallics Inc. These notes substantially constitute all of the debt of Mesabi, and paves the way for Essar Global to once again participate in the low-cost iron ore mining and pellet manufacturing project in the U.S. At the group level, the Ruias have undertaken a deleveraging programme, and repaid over ₹1,37,000 crore of debt.

Sale of Essar Oil

In 2017, through the sale of Essar Oil to a consortium led by Rosneft and Trafigura, Essar Global had repaid approximately ₹86,000 crore of group liabilities.

Additional asset sales that have been concluded in the past two years include the sale of Aegis to Teleperfor-

mance and CSP for approximately ₹6,000 crore, and the sale of Equinox Business Parks to Brookfield Asset Management for ₹2,400 crore.

A further debt of ₹44,000 crore of group debt relating to Essar Steel India is being addressed through the ongoing IBC process. The lenders have already received an offer from ArcelorMittal for a cash repayment of ₹42,000 crore. A subsidiary of Essar Global has separately offered ₹54,389 crore, for full repayment to secured lenders and operational creditors.

"Over the past two years, we committed ourselves to a massive deleveraging programme and have repaid more than ₹1,37,000 crore to our lenders," said Prashant Ruia, director, Essar Capital.



Going places: The cruise would be calling in multiple ports in Mumbai. ■ BY SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

First India-flagged cruise from April

To set sail from Mumbai to Goa

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

MUMBAI

Aimed at contributing to India's cruise tourism, Zen Cruises, a company promoted by Essel Group chairman Subhash Chandra's family office, has announced plans to start cruise services on India's coastline starting April's.

Karnika, the first ship under the Jalesh brand, with a capacity to take 1,900-2,000 people on board, will sail from Mumbai to Goa, to begin with.

Mumbai home port

The company, which will operate its services under the Jalesh Cruises brand, has decided to make Mumbai its home port and the ships will be registered in India, thus making it the first India flagged cruise line.

"Jalesh Cruises - meaning 'Lord of Water' - is designed to offer a rich experience of Indian culture, hospitality and food to domestic and international travelers," the company said. In the first year, the cruise line will offer 137 cruises and cater to about 2,50,000 guests and add another vessel by next year. Since Mumbai will be the home port, the Mumbai Port will benefit the most.

"Mumbai Port is converting into a water transport and sea tourism hub. With Zen Cruises making Mumbai its home port, it will contribute a lot to our overall plans. We provided all support. What we had planned to achieve in three to four years, we will achieve it in less than two years," said Sanjay Bhatia, chairman, Mumbai Port Trust. The state government has assured all support to the new cruise line as it would be calling in multiple ports in the State.

"I am confident that Jalesh will be a gamechanger and beneficial for Maharashtra. We will provide all necessary infrastructure at all the ports they will be calling in the State," said Ashish Kumar Singh, principal secretary, Maharashtra.

With a multitude of onboard offerings, Jalesh Cruises will be targeting vacationers, corporates, wedding planners and event organisers. Jurgen Bailom, president and CEO, Zen Cruises Pvt. Ltd., said, "Zen Cruises is pioneering cruise holidays for Indian passengers in both domestic and international waters. It is an Indian company and will offer all Indian."

₹40,000 cr. expected from OALP-II auctions

14 oil and gas blocks are up for bids

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

NEW DELHI



Dharmendra Pradhan

The government is expecting about ₹40,000 crore of investment in the 14 blocks it put up on auction for prospecting of oil and gas in the second round of open acreage licensing policy (OALP), Oil Minister Dharmendra Pradhan said Monday.

In the first round of OALP last year, as much as ₹60,000 crore was committed in the exploration of oil and gas in 55 blocks or areas, he said adding a third round of OALP with 12 oil and gas blocks and five coalbed methane (CBM) blocks would be launched in this month. The 14 blocks offered in OALP-II bid rounds

cover an area of 29,333 square kilometre and bids close on March 12, he said at the launch event. Since 2014, the Centre has held two auctions of discovered small fields and two auctions under OALP. Cumulative investment committed is ₹12,000 crore, he said.

T&D losses

Its revenue was ₹322 crore in 2017-18 with transmission and distribution losses of about 45%, said Mr. Goenka.

Mr. Goenka told the media that the 25 square km circle, with one lakh customers (86% industrial and the balance domestic), is a challenging franchise.

Operations would be conducted through a subsidiary of the group's flagship company CESC Ltd., which is engaged in power generation and distribution. The franchise period is 20 years, a CESC official said.

RP-SG Group to invest ₹150 cr. in Malegaon power circle

Group may turn around loss-making operations by 2021-22

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

KOLKATA



Sanjiv Goenka

The RP-SG Group, which has won the power distribution franchise for Malegaon from Maharashtra State Electricity Distribution Company Ltd., expects to turn around the loss-making operations by 2021-22, said Sanjiv Goenka, group chairman.

Mr. Goenka told the media that the 25 square km circle, with one lakh customers (86% industrial and the balance domestic), is a challenging franchise.

T&D losses

Its revenue was ₹322 crore in 2017-18 with transmission and distribution losses of about 45%, said Mr. Goenka.

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"We plan to invest around ₹150 crore in phases," Mr. Goenka added. With the franchise, CESC's power distribution operations are now spread across West Bengal, Greater Noida (U.P.) and Rajasthan.

Of this, while Kolkata and Noida are licences, Rajasthan and Maharashtra are franchises.

To a question on whether the group's independent power plant at Chandrapur in Maharashtra will be benefited, Mr. Goenka said "if at all it helps, that would be only incidental."

Out of its generation of about 540 MW, Chandrapur has a power purchase agreement for about 440 MW.

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SUNIL GAVASKAR, ON TV
It is not India's fault that this Australian team was without David Warner and Steve Smith. Australia could have handed them shorter bans but obviously it was thought that one-year bans would be good for Australian cricket, that they needed to be made an example for anyone who brings the game into disrepute.



BISHAN SINGH BEDI
Kudos to Team Ind fr recovering lot of (sic) lost ground in (sic) St Af/Eng truly remarkable feat-beating Aust fr 1st time in (sic) their own backyard-2 guys @chetswarl & @Jaspritumrah93 personified consistency-all playing XI's gr8 resolve/determination helped cross the Rubicon.Congrats All!



SACHIN TENDULKAR
An amazing day for Indian cricket! The resilience and determination of #TeamIndia has made this a series to be cherished. Proud of the boys. Has been a wonderful series where the younger and senior players shared responsibilities to achieve something special. @Rishabpant777, who has gone from strength to strength and @imkuldeep18 are definitely ones to watch out for



VVS LAXMAN
Many congratulations #TeamIndia on this historic series win in Australia. It took a complete Team effort from every member of the side and it gives such an immense sense of satisfaction and joy to see what the boys have done on the field. Let's cherish this special series win



VIRENDER SEHWAG
Congratulations #TeamIndia for this memorable win. Every cricket lover in India will be very proud of this one and a special effort by every member in the Team to ensure this result



MITCHELL JOHNSON
Congratulations to the Indian cricket team for making history, winning in Australia for the 1st time is a proud achievement for all of India. @chetswarl & the whole Indian bowling attack was just unstoppable this series. Was thrilling to watch @Jaspritumrah93 bowling

On top down under – after seven decades of agony

Having already retained the Border-Gavaskar Trophy, India claims its first series in Australia after the final day of the fourth Test is washed out

OZ CHALLENGE

S. DINAKAR
SYDNEY

Their spirit shone bright on a murky day; much like headlights on an unlit highway.

This Indian team had been tactically slick, fought with commitment and passion, and accomplished what no Indian team had managed to achieve in 71 years.

India had finally, after all these years of wait, agony and near misses, triumphed in a Test series in Australia. Indian cricket had broken through a monumental barrier.

A persistent drizzle and bad light meant the fifth day's play was called off at 2.30 p.m. local time at the SCG on Monday; Australia, following on 322 behind and six without loss in its second innings, was not forced to save the fourth Test.

India had retained the Border-Gavaskar Trophy with a 2-1 verdict in the four-Test series. Down under, the Indians had kept their date with history.

Aggression pays off

In its relentlessly aggressive skipper Virat Kohli, obsessed with away Test victories, and coach Ravi Shastri, the side had two men who had instilled belief in the team to play winning cricket on pitches with more pace and bounce.

Kohli and his men were itching to go for a victory on Monday. But when a draw loomed and the play, rather inevitably, was abandoned in the afternoon, the Indians, putting aside the disappoint-



Hail the champions! Virat Kohli leads his team on a victory parade around the SCG after India's historic 2-1 series win. • AFP

How the Border-Gavaskar Trophy has travelled

Season	1996/97	1998	1999/00	2001	2003/04	2004	2007/08	2008	2010	2011/12	2013	2014/15	2017	2018/19
Venue	India	India	Australia	India	Australia	India	Australia	India	India	Australia	India	Australia	India	Australia
Winner	India	India	Australia	India	drawn	Australia	Australia	India	India	Australia	India	Australia	India	India
Margin	1-0	2-1	3-0	2-1	1-1	2-1	2-1	2-0	2-0	4-0	4-0	2-0	2-1	2-1
Tests	1	3	3	3	4	4	4	4	2	4	4	4	4	4

ment of the moment, entered the ground to celebrate a larger feat.

This was an iconic mo-

ment for Indian cricket and the cricketers ran towards a band of supporters in the stands who had braved incle-

ment weather.

The cricketers led by Kohli and the pocket powerhouse Rishabh Pant, mimicked

Cheteshwar Pujara's style of running where he moves his arms only minimally, with a dance. Kohli said later, "Only

Pujara did not dance!"

Yet, Pujara, adjudged man-of-the-match and player-of-the-series for his

Disappointments to delight — a chequered journey

S. DINAKAR
SYDNEY

Australia had always been one of the toughest teams to conquer for the Indian team.

Forgettable start

India's maiden campaign in Australia, in 1947-48, ended in a 4-0 defeat. India was up against a legendary Australian team with giants such as Don Bradman, Arthur Morris and Ray Lindwall.

Despite individual brilliance from Vijay Hazare, Vinoo Mankad and Dattu Phadkar, India could not challenge Australia.

In 1967-68, India was led by the attack-minded Tiger Pataudi. India pressed hard but Australia took the series 4-0. With his deception and turn, Erapalli Prasanna scalped 25 in the series, was involved in stirring duels with the fleet-footed Ian Chappell.

In 1999-2000 Australia's strong batting and the combination of Glenn McGrath, Brett Lee and Shane Warne saw India being blown away 3-0.

Then, India missed a gilt-edged opportunity to floor a rebuilding Australian team in 1985-86. All the three Tests were drawn although Australia barely escaped in Sydney.

India was brushed aside 4-0 in 1991-92 despite Kapil's brilliance and Sachin Tendulkar's spirit-lifting hundred at Perth.

In 1999-2000 Australia's strong batting and the combination of Glenn McGrath, Brett Lee and Shane Warne saw India being blown away 3-0.

In the subsequent series in 2003-04, the Sourav Gan-

guly-led Indians forced a sensational four-wicket win in Adelaide with Ajit Agarkar's six for 41 derailing the Aussies in a match Rahul Dravid dominated with innings of 233 and 72 not out.

That was a series in which Laxman batted brilliantly and Anil Kumble was outstanding with the ball.

India was poised to win the decider at Sydney when Steve Waugh, in his final Test appearance, and Simon Katich, saved the day for the host.

Debacles continue

In the infamous, ill-tempered, Monkeygate series of 2007-08, India roared back from 2-0 for an outstanding win at Perth made possible by pacemen. Australia held on to win the series.

In 2011-12, India was blanked 4-0 in the four-Test series; Michael Clarke and Ben Hilfenhaus excelled. Then, in 2014-15, despite Virat Kohli's brilliance, India went down 2-0.

Now, Kohli, learning from the past, has enabled India take the final step.

Can bat, can't dance



Fancy footwork: Cheteshwar Pujara has done everything right in the Test series against Australia but dance. Virat Kohli said the unassuming batsman's failure in shaking a leg reflected his simplicity. The India skipper, who was part of the impromptu jig in which the run-machine struggled, dubbed it the 'Pujara Dance'. • AP

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
SYDNEY

These are not easy times for Tim Paine. His team has been beaten by India. And Australia's highest individual score in the four-Test has been, shockingly, just 79. Asked about the turning point of the series, Paine said, "I think the obvious one was the Adelaide Test. We honestly feel that we let that Test slip. We thought we had a number of opportunities during that Test to go well ahead of the game and when those key moments

came up, India outplayed us to be honest."

He added, "Looking back now, if we had won that Test, then won Perth, we got out played in Melbourne, and here there has been rain, it could have been 2-1 the other way. It's funny, in a big series of four Tests you go back to a couple of key moments in the very first Test where we let ourselves down.

The Australian captain said, "We are really disappointed. We know we had some guys missing but we honestly felt we could beat

More emotional than WC win'

So happy as a team, we cannot express it in words: Kohli

S. DINAKAR
SYDNEY

Skipper Virat Kohli termed India's historic Test series triumph in Australia a "team effort."

He said on Monday, "We strive to play well as a team. Single spells and single innings don't win games of cricket, especially Test matches. We are so happy as a team, we cannot express it in words. This is my proudest moment."

India coach Ravi Shastri said, "This tour didn't start in Australia. This tour started 12 months ago in South Africa, where we said there's a certain brand of cricket that we are going to play, we will experiment with combinations, find out what suits the team the best and take it forward from there. We lost in South Africa and England but learnt from those mistakes to fire home here."

Shastri said, "I will tell you how satisfying this win is for me. World Cup '83, World Championship '85. This is as big, or even bigger

RAVI SHASTRI
India coach

I will tell you how satisfying this win is for me. World Cup '83, World Championship '85. This is as big, or even bigger

because it is in the truest format of the game. It's Test cricket, which is meant to be the toughest."

Kohli said, "I was part of 2011 World Cup team, but I didn't have the emotion of not having been able to win a World Cup before, playing at home and winning it eventually. A lot of the senior players had that emotion. Yes, it was a great moment for me to be part of but if you ask me which moment is more emotional, I would say this one because this is my third tour here and I have learnt from those mistakes to fire home here."

Shastri said, "Today I can say I am proud of my boys and I can also tell them one thing which Virat touched in

the presentation that this team now has an identity to look at any other Indian team from the past in the eye and say 'We play proper Test match cricket. You did, we did too but without being intimidated.'

Virat saw the triumph as a stepping stone for the next generation of Indian cricketers to be drawn to Test cricket and be passionate about it.

Praise for Pujara
Shastri appreciated Cheteshwar Pujara's heroic performance in the series and said on a lighter note, "He should have collected the awards with his pads on."

The Indian coach said, given his potential, Kuldeep Yadav could become a permanent fixture in the Indian team, both home and abroad. India was now winning the big moments, Shastri said. "Taking wickets in Melbourne with Bumrah going through that spell when he was hot... these are the moments."

Breaking new ground

A look at how many tours it took India to win its first Test series in each Test-playing nation

Host	First season	Season won	No. of tours taken	Margin	Captain
New Zealand	1967/68	1967/68	1	3-1	MAK Pataudi
West Indies	1952/53	1970/71	3	1-0	Ajit Wadekar
England	1932	1971	7	1-0	Ajit Wadekar
Sri Lanka	1985	1993	2	1-0	M Azharuddin
Bangladesh	2000/01	2000/01	1	1-0	Sourav Ganguly
Pakistan	1954/55	2003/04	6	2-1	Ganguly / Rahul Dravid
Zimbabwe	1992/93	2005	4	2-0	Ganguly
Australia	1947/48	2018/19	12	2-1	Virat Kohli

India is yet to win a Test series in South Africa, which it has toured seven times since 1992-93

India outplayed us, says Paine

came up, India outplayed us to be honest."

He added, "Looking back now, if we had won that Test, then won Perth, we got out played in Melbourne, and here there has been rain, it could have been 2-1 the other way. It's funny, in a big series of four Tests you go back to a couple of key moments in the very first Test where we let ourselves down.

The Australian captain said, "We are really disappointed. We know we had some guys missing but we honestly felt we could beat

India in Australia.

"But throughout the series when those big moments came up, Virat scored runs, Pujara scored runs, Bumrah bowled a great spell and we couldn't quite get through those moments."

Paine elaborated. "That's why India won this series, their best players stood up in the big moments or when they were falling behind, one of their good players dragged them back into the contest or when they were in front of the game, they put their foot on us."

By the numbers

BEST BATSMEN

Player	Runs	HS	Ave	100	50

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Abhinav slams unbeaten century

A day after his 29th birthday, notches up his 29th First Class ton

S. DIPAK RAGAV
CHENNAI

A day after his 29th birthday, Abhinav Mukund slammed an unbeaten hundred (104 batting, 244b, 11x4), his second consecutive, and third of the season, to help Tamil Nadu end day one at 215 for three against Delhi on the opening day of the final Group B Ranji Trophy game at the M.A. Chidambaram Stadium here on Monday.

Abhinav, along with skipper B. Indrajith, added 155 runs for the third wicket partnership as the duo helped the home team steady the ship after losing two early wickets in the opening session.

Vikas strikes

TN opted to bat and Abhinav and N. Jagadeesan began cautiously, before left-arm spinner Vikas Mishra struck. Jagadeesan tried to go for a big hit but only managed to edge it to backward point.

Soon, Aparajith too fell, as he stepped out to off-spinner Shivam Sharma to a delivery that held its line and was



Purple patch: Tamil Nadu opener Abhinav Mukund came up with his second consecutive and third hundred of the season. ■ K. PICHUMANI

stumped as TN was reduced to 42 for two.

Meanwhile, Abhinav, who became TN's highest run-getter in Ranji Trophy in the last match against Himachal Pradesh en route to his ton in the second innings, looked in control playing some delectable drives and cuts.

The left-hander began

with a streaky boundary through the slips, but after that rarely gave a chance to the Delhi bowlers, it is pacers or spinners.

He struck two boundaries off Navdeep Saini, one through the covers and another straight down the ground to get his innings going.

At the other end, Indrajith continued his rich vein of form this season with another purposeful half-century (86, 199b, 11x4) with delicate late cuts and used his wrists well to drive the spinners through the leg-side.

The duo ensured no wicket fell in the second session as they milked the bowlers.

Later in the day, with the first delivery of the second new ball (86th over), pacer Saini found Abhinav's edge only for Lalit Yadav to drop it at gully, with the batsman on 97, allowing him to complete his 29th First Class century.

The scores:

Tamil Nadu - 1st innings: Abhinav Mukund (batting) 104, N. Jagadeesan c Lalit b Vikas, 8, B. Aparajith st Anubhav Shivam 6, B. Indrajith c Shreyas b Vikas 86, Vijay Shankar (batting) 8; Extras (lb-2, nb-1); Total (for three wkt. in 90 overs): 215.

Fall of wickets: 1-25, 2-42, 3-197.

Delhi bowling: Saini 17-3-53-0,

Bhati 13-7-16-0, Vikas 22-3-

71-2, Shivam 25-4-45-1, Lalit 7-

0-14-0, Rana 6-1-14-0.

RANJI TROPHY SCORES, DAY ONE

Elite

Group A: At Vadodara:

Karnataka 112 in 31.2 overs (Manish Pandey 43) & 13 for two in four overs vs Baroda 223 in 51 overs (Vishnu Solanki 69, Deepak Hooda 51, Shubhang Hegde four for 74, Shreyas Gopal four for 47); **Toss:** Karnataka.

At Mumbai: Chhattisgarh 129 in 42.1 overs (Amandeep Khare 48, Shardul Thakur four for 32, Tushar Deshpande five for 46) vs Mumbai 118 for three in 36 overs (Vikrant Auti 43); **Toss:** Mumbai.

At Delhi: Maharashtra 70 in 23.2 overs (Avinash Yadav four for 38) vs Railways 184 for nine in 60 overs (Mahesh Rawat 52 batting, Satyajeet Bachhav seven for 73); **Toss:** Maharashtra.

At Rajkot: Saurashtra 218 for five in 86 overs (Harvik Desai 74, Sheldon Jackson 65) vs Vidarbha; **Toss:** Saurashtra.

Group B: At Rohtak: Services 170 in 59.3 overs (Vikas Hothwala 54, Tinu Kundu six for 60, Amit Rana four for 55) vs Haryana; **Toss:** Haryana.

At Jammu: Jammu & Kashmir vs Jharkhand. First day's play washed out.

At Cuttack: Odisha 229 for seven in 90 overs (Sandip Pattanayak 100, Shantanu Mishra 59) vs Goa; **Toss:** Goa.

24 for three in 13 overs; **Toss:** MP.

At Chennai: Tamil Nadu 215 for three in 90 overs (Abhinav Mukund 104 batting, B. Indrajith 86) vs Delhi; **Toss:** TN.

At Nadaun: Himachal Pradesh 257 for seven in 87 overs (Ankit Kalsi 89 batting, Rishi Dhawan 58, M.D. Nidheesh four for 81) vs Kerala; **Toss:** Kerala.

At Kolkata: Bengal 187 in 69.1 overs (Sudip Chatterjee 52, Shreevats Goswami 57, Vinay Choudhary six for 62) vs Punjab 47 for two in 20 overs; **Toss:** Bengal.

Group C: At Rohtak: Services 170 in 59.3 overs (Vikas Hothwala 54, Tinu Kundu six for 60, Amit Rana four for 55) vs Haryana; **Toss:** Haryana.

At Dimapur: Nagaland 387 for five in 87.5 overs (Nitesh 100, Zimomi 177, Rongsen Jonathan 72 batting) vs Puducherry; **Toss:** Nagaland.

At Dehradun: Uttarakhand 377 in 83.5 overs (Saurabh Rawat 102, Rajat Bhatia 84, Malolan Rangarajan 58) vs Mizoram eight for no loss in four overs; **Toss:** Mizoram.

At Agartala: Tripura 35 for nine in 18.4 overs (Aniket Choudhury five for 11) & four for no loss in one over vs Rajasthan 218 in 51.3 overs (Manisankar Murasingh four for 75); **Toss:** Tripura.

At Kanpur: Assam 175 in 53.4 overs (Pallav Kumar Das 75) vs Uttar Pradesh 64 for one in 26 overs; **Toss:** UP.

At Goalpara: Arunachal Pradesh 169 in 49.1 overs (Kshitz Sharma 59, Milind five for 42) vs Sikkim 132 for three in 42 overs (Milind 50 batting); **Toss:** Sikkim.

At Patna: Manipur 156 in 32 overs (Mayank Raghu 79, Ashutosh Aman four for 39, Samar Quadri five for 49) vs Bihar 107 for five in 32 overs; **Toss:** Bihar.

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Delhi selectors in trouble

VIJAY LOKAPALLY
NEW DELHI

The Managing Committee (MC) of the Delhi and District Cricket Association (DDCA) had a marathon meeting on Monday to deliberate the sacking of the state selectors.

The top brass of the DDCA is reportedly unhappy with the performance of the teams in Ranji Trophy and squarely blames the selectors – Amit Bhandari (chairman), Sukhvinder Singh and Mohan Chaturvedi – for the situation. The junior selectors, Siddharth Singh, Mayank Tehan and Chetan Sharma, too have invited the wrath of the DDCA for poor selection for the Cooch Behar Trophy (under-19).

Reliable sources told *The Hindu* that the MC has informed of its decision to replace the current selection committee. The meeting on Monday ended on an inclusive note with the majority of members giving a 48-hour ultimatum to the dissenting section.

"It involves the prestige of the team which was runner-up last season. The selectors have not been consistent in their approach. We know the season is not over yet but a message has to be given strongly. In any case, it is not an unprecedented decision we will be taking," the member added.

In 2006, the then DDCA president Arun Jaitley had sacked the three-member senior selection committee comprising Vivek Razdan, Bantu Singh and Sunil

Khanna and replaced it with Chetan Chauhan, Vinay Lamba and Surender Khanna. The selectors were punished for picking a player who was not part of the panel's woes.

The lack of quality bowlers has made our task difficult. The supply line has been poor," was how Bhandari had described his panel's woes.

It is learnt the DDCA president Rajat Sharma has been apprised of the situation to pick a new selection committee. "The choice will be made from those who had been interviewed at the start of the season," the MC member informed.

Son guides Warriors home

Holds his nerve after teams were tied going into the decider

PBL

ASHWIN ACHAL
BENGALURU

Wan Son held his nerve in the deciding rubber to guide Awadhe Warriors to a close 4-3 win over Chennai Smashers, on the opening day of the Bengaluru leg of the Premier Badminton League (PBL) here on Monday.

With the teams tied at 3-3, Son outplayed Rajiv Ouseph 15-6, 15-6 to take his team past the finish line. The victory helped Awadhe take a big step towards qualifying for the semifinal round.

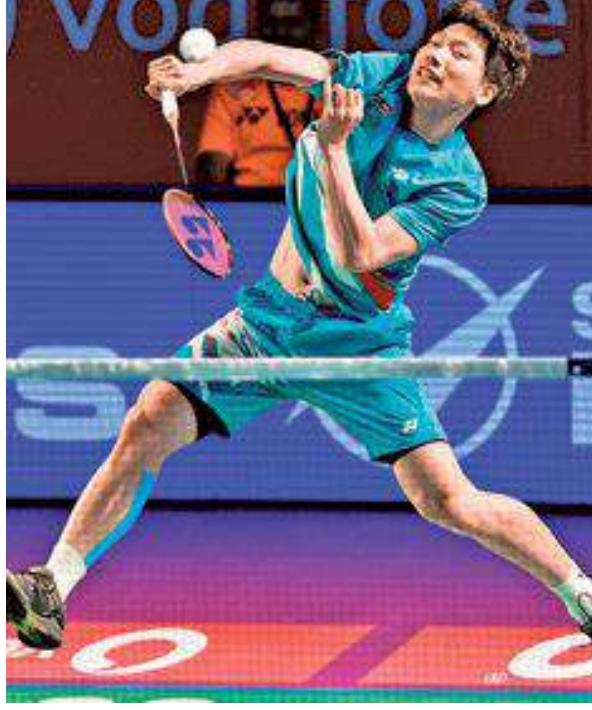
Awadhe began well, recording a crucial victory in the men's doubles. Yang Lee and Mathias Christiansen brought home two points in Awadhe's trump match, coasting past Chris Adcock and Sumeeth Reddy 15-8, 15-5.

Christiansen and Lee toyed with their opponents, finishing the rubber in just 20 minutes.

The first men's singles match was similarly one-sided, with Awadhe's Lee Keun (World No. 29) taking out Feng Chong (World No. 60) in straight games.

After losing the first game, Chong put up a fight by saving two match points in the second. Keun, however, possessed too much firepower and closed it out 15-7, 15-3.

Christiansen and local favourite Ashwini Ponnapa faced a stiff challenge against Chennai's accomplished husband-wife pair of Chris and Gabrielle Adcock. In the deciding game, Christiansen-Ashwini were sitting pretty with a big 14-10 advan-



One-sided contest: Awadhe Warriors' Lee Keun took out Chennai Smashers' Feng Chong in straight games in the first men's singles. ■ K. MURALI KUMAR

ce. The Adcocks, however, pulled a rabbit out of their hat, saved four match points, and sneaked through 15-13, 9-15, 15-14.

Son, the World No. 5, then ensured that Awadhe had no further slip ups.

The results:

Awadhe Warriors 4 bt Chennai Smashers 3 (Yang Lee & Mathias Christiansen (T) bt Chris Adcock & Sumeeth Reddy 15-8, 15-5; Lee Keun bt Feng Chong 15-7, 15-3; B. Zhang lost to Huyn Sung (T) 13-15, 8-15; Christiansen & Ashwini Ponnapa lost to Chris Adcock & Gabrielle Adcock 13-15, 15-9, 14-15; Wan Son bt Rajiv Ouseph 15-6, 15-6).

Son's win in the trump match helped Chennai reduce Awadhe's lead to 3-2, setting the stage for an exciting mixed doubles contest.

Christiansen and local favourite Ashwini Ponnapa faced a stiff challenge against Chennai's accomplished husband-wife pair of Chris and Gabrielle Adcock. In the deciding game, Christiansen-Ashwini were sitting pretty with a big 14-10 advan-

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TV PICKS

NBA: Sony ESPN (SD & HD), 7 a.m.
Ranji Trophy: Star Sports 1 (SD & HD), 9 a.m.
I-League: Star Sports 3, 5 p.m.
PBL: Star Sports 1 (SD & HD), 7 p.m.
AFC Asian Cup: Star Sports 3, 7 p.m.

IN BRIEF



All 10 for Pushpakumara

COLOMBO
Sri Lanka left-arm spinner Malinda Pushpakumara has achieved the rare feat of claiming all ten wickets in a First Class match. Playing for Colombo Cricket Club, the 31-year-old took 10 for 37 to bowl Saracens Sports Club out for 113 in the fourth-innings chase of 349 on Sunday. He also picked up a six-for in Saracens' first innings and finished with match figures of 16 for 110.

Ferrari to replace Arrivabene with Binotto

MILAN
Ferrari is set for a management reshuffle with team principal Maurizio Arrivabene to be replaced by technical director Mattia Binotto, according to reports on Monday. Gazzetta Dello Sport said Arrivabene's contract will not be renewed following another disappointing season. Ferrari president John Elkann has decided that Binotto, 49, is the right man to lead the Italian stable in 2019. AFP



Thailand axe coach Rajevac

ABU DHABI
Thailand has fired coach Milovan Rajevac following a humiliating 4-1 thrashing by India in its opening Asian Cup game at the weekend. The 65-year-old Serb, who took charge of Thailand in 2017, paid the price after the War Elephants conceded three second-half goals to slump to a shock defeat in Abu Dhabi on Sunday. "The result is not what is expected of the Thai national team and that our supporters deserve," Thailand's FA president Somyot Poompanmoung said.



Rooney arrested for being drunk, swearing

WASHINGTON
Former England and Manchester United star Wayne Rooney was arrested last month for being drunk and swearing in public and paid a \$25 fine Friday, according to multiple reports. Court records obtained by Washington ABC 7 News and The Athletic showed that Rooney was arrested in Loudon County, Virginia, on December 16 for cursing and intoxication, a misdemeanour for which he was released from custody on his own recognisance before paying the fine and court costs on Friday.

Win against Thailand best match of my career: Chhetri

I am very happy with the performance and it has been a great start for us'

ASIAN CUP

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NEW DELHI

The Indian football team captain Sunil Chhetri said on Monday that his team's first win in the Asian Cup after more than five decades was the best match of his illustrious international career in which he has out-scored superstar Lionel Messi.

India thrashed Thailand 4-1 in its group opener on Sunday. The 34-year-old goal machine struck on either side of the break in the country's stunning win, the first in Asian Cup since 1964.

"It (Thailand match) stays right there on top. I'm fortunate to play a lot of good games for my country but this game is right top there. It's one of those games where the team did really well," Chhetri said from Abu Dhabi.

He also became the second highest international goal-scorer among active players with 67 strikes from 105 matches. He went past Argentine superstar Messi, who has scored 65 from 128 matches. Portugal's Cristiano Ronaldo has 85 from 154 matches.

Chhetri, who made his India debut in 2005, said his side did not expect to win against Thailand by such a big margin.

"We were confident of a good show but honestly speaking, we did not think it could have been 4-1. They (Thailand) are a very good side, technically very good. I'm sure none of us could



Goal machine: Sunil Chhetri says the team unity, understanding and spirit played a big role in the victory against Thailand. ■ AFP

think of a 4-1 win but we were confident of a good outing," he said.

"I am very happy with the performance and it has been a great start for us. I think the team unity, understand-

ing and spirit played a big role."

Thailand, with three J-League players in its ranks, dictated the pace of the match in the first half with smooth passing but India

Railways and Kerala women in last four

Manoj masterminds TN men's progress

K. KEERTHIVASAN
CHENNAI

To say that the Indian Railways women's team is superior to others would be an understatement.

Comprising nine internationals, the 10-time [defending] champion thrashed Delhi 25-13, 25-15, 25-11 to reach the semifinals of the senior National volleyball championship on Monday.

Kerala women, too, reached the last four in style with a 25-12, 25-16, 25-12 victory over Haryana. This contest was better, with the latter providing a semblance of a fight in the second set.

Delhi appeared to be a novice unit in front of the behemoth.

The results (quarterfinals):

Men: TN bt Services 25-20, 23-25, 25-20, 25-20; Kerala bt AP 25-14, 25-17, 25-12.

Women: Railways bt Delhi 25-13, 25-15, 25-11; Kerala bt Haryana 25-12, 25-16, 25-12.



Superb effort: Kerala's Aswathi Raveendran comes up with a great retrieve against Haryana. ■ R. RAGU

NATL. VOLLEYBALL

None of its players looked like taking on the champion team – player for player.

Fine display

In the men's category, L.M. Manoj, who was brilliant throughout, fittingly did the finishing touches with a calculated spike as Tamil Nadu produced a fine performance to defeat Services 25-20, 23-25, 25-20, 25-20 in the quarterfinals.

The results (quarterfinals):

Men: TN bt Services 25-20, 23-25, 25-20, 25-20; Kerala bt AP 25-14, 25-17, 25-12.

Women: Railways bt Delhi 25-13, 25-15, 25-11; Kerala bt Haryana 25-12, 25-16, 25-12.

Karnataka men stun TN

Change in defence pattern befuddles the champion

NATL. BASKETBALL

RAYAN ROZARIO
BHAVNAGAR

Anil Kumar (25 points) did the star turn as Karnataka rallied from a 14-point deficit to stun defending champion Tamil Nadu 84-80 in a Group 'A' clash of the 69th senior National basketball championship at the Sidsar Sports Complex courts here on Monday.

It was a slightly shoddy first half display by Tamil Nadu that enabled Karnataka gain the early advantage. The Karnataka men were so quick on their feet that the former struggled to cut down on their speed.

Karnataka also made some smart moves that came in handy. For every two-ball possession, its coach kept changing the defence pattern. And that confused the Tamil Nadu men while marching forward. The team also terribly missed the services of Rikin Pethani, who is expected to join the team midway through. It relied on P. Jeevanantham to do the job and he failed a bit.

After being blown away in the first two quarters, Tamil Nadu shot back through Harirama (22 pts) and Sivabalavan (14 pts) in the third session. Jeevanantham chipped in as well and the team climbed rather quickly to be back on track. It even managed to take the lead at 51-45 and one could see the smiles



Guarding the citadel: The Karnataka defence kept the Tamil Nadu players in check. ■ SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

back on the Tamil Nadu camp.

Full court press

But it was only for a short while as Karnataka came up with some clever changes yet again. It went full court press coupled with zone defence and that worked wonders. The team inched its way up slowly and steadily and was only two points away from pulling off a stunner.

The pressure was beginning to show on the Tamil Nadu players and the Karnataka men cashed in on the situation, shot two crucial baskets to complete a fine win.

Earlier, the Tamil Nadu women went down to holders Indian Railway 67-91. Kerala was also hot on Railway's heels scoring their second straight win. It hammered a hapless Telangana 79-27.

Nehra and Harbhajan hail India's triumph

Both players don't want comparisons with previous eras

OZ CHALLENGE

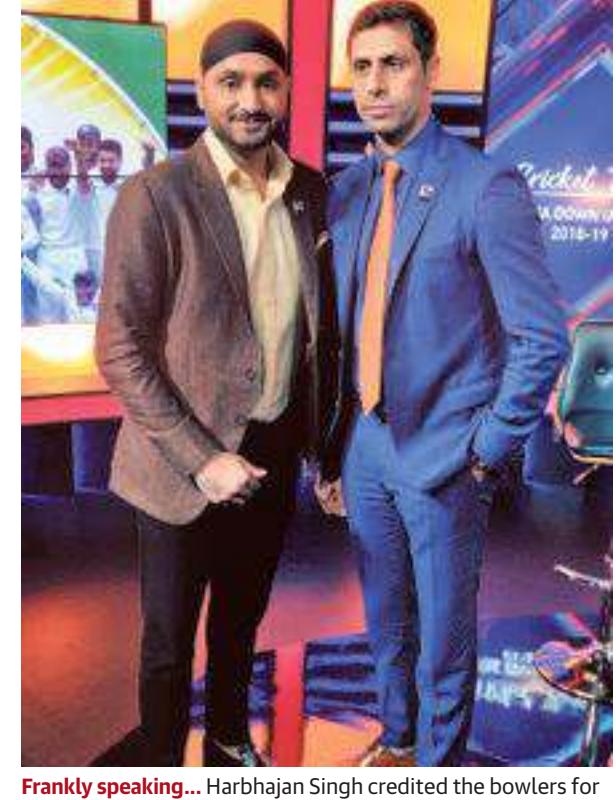
VIJAY LOKAPALLY
NEW DELHI

Ashish Nehra and Harbhajan Singh, while hailing India's performance in Australia, called for restraint following notes of comparisons with the teams which could not accomplish a Test series triumph down under.

"India played outstanding cricket, set new benchmarks and clearly was the better team. It should have been a 3-1 verdict. It is time to celebrate the progress, but I don't like comparisons. We must not compare the different eras.

"Playing on uncovered pitches against different bowlers had their own challenges. Who was better? Viv Richards, Sunil Gavaskar, Sachin Tendulkar, Rahul Dravid or Virat Kohli? I can't answer that. Let us look things in the right perspective," said Nehra, who played three Tests in Australia in 2003-04.

Chhetri said he wanted to celebrate more when his colleagues got the goals. "Udanta's cross, man, was something outstanding," he said about his second goal in the 46th minute from the Manipur winger's assist. "I love to play for my country and whenever I have been given an opportunity, I try my best to score for my country. As far as comparisons are concerned, I don't take them seriously. There's no comparison, whatsoever, between me and Lionel Messi. I'm just happy and honoured to play and score for my country."



Frankly speaking... Harbhajan Singh credited the bowlers for the win against Australia while Ashish Nehra wants Kohli's team to cherish the victory. ■ SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

on Sony as expert with Nehra, said.

Jasprit Bumrah's success impressed Nehra the most.

"Bumrah exploited the conditions and showed he has the ability to excel even on flat pitches. He bowls quick and has a superb slower one and the yorker. He can bowl long spells. He is a complete package."

In Harbhajan's opinion, the bowling attack was superb. "India's main spinner doesn't perform overseas and it is good that Kuldeep (Yadav) has emerged as the main spinner now with Ravindra Jadeja. The key was

Cheteshwar Pujara. He showed how Test cricket is to be played. Mayank (Agarwal) was a big plus too."

Nehra observed, "Don't judge teams by stats alone. Not that India did not play well in South Africa and England. Not that teams in the past were not good enough to win in South Africa and Australia. In today's international cricket, only South Africa and England are at par with India. Had I bowled better we would have won the 2003-04 series. All teams have their moments. This is the moment for Virat Kohli's team to cherish."

No time to recover for paddlers at Nationals

Exhausting schedule robs the charm

NATIONAL TT

AMOL KARHADKAR
CUTTACK

The gruelling schedule at the II Sports 80th inter-State and senior National championship has left the paddlers breathless.

On the first four days, including Monday, the players were competing till almost midnight.

"It is just not fair to treat players this way, especially when Indian table tennis is on the rise. We have two top-30 men and a woman who is on the verge of breaking into the top-50 in the World participating in the premier tournament. If the top players of the country have to be at their best, the scheduling has to support them," S. Raman, multiple National champion, told

The results Men: Group A: Karnataka 84 (Anil Kumar 25, A. Aravind 17, Abhishek Gowda 10, Rahul Sharath 10) bt Tamil Nadu 80 (R. Hariram 22, G. Siva Balan 14, Jeevanantham 14, Prasanna Venkatesh 11).

Group B: Indian Railway 76 (Rajan Sharma 24, Himanshu Sharma 21, Gagandeep Singh 12) bt Kerala 56 (Akhil 14, Jishnu G. Nair 14, Sejin Mathew 10).

Group C: Mizoram 58 bt Goa 53. **Group D:** Chhattisgarh 69 bt AP 54. **Group E:** Haryana 67 bt Puducherry 54. **Group F:** MP 66 bt Tripura 49, UP bt Assam 25. Odisha 75 bt Jharkhand 54.

Women: Group A: Indian Railway 91 (Sruthi Menon 22, Sita Mani Tudu 16, Raja Priyadarshini 15) bt Tamil Nadu 67 (S Pushpa 22, Dharshini 13, V. Srividya 10).

Group B: Kerala 79 (P.S. Jeena 14, Kavitha Jose 12, Aswathy Jayasankar 11, Stephy Nixon 10) bt Telangana 27; Chhattisgarh 84 bt Maharashtra 60.

Group C: Punjab 73 bt Puducherry 26. **Group D:** Odisha 42 bt AP 28.



Smooth sailing: Archana Kamath and Manav Thakkar stormed into the final. ■ AMOL KARHADKAR

Consulting players, a good move by FIDE: Anand

NANDAKUMAR MARAR
MUMBAI

Viswanathan Anand, named as one of the four Continental Assistants to the world chess body by newly-elected FIDE president Arkady Dvorkovich, is positive about players' voice being heard. He referred to the appointment of players and administrators as a healthy trend.

Anand, speaking on the sidelines of EKA-IIFL Mumbai International chess championships at the World Trade

Centre, said: "After the FIDE elections, I met Mr. (Arkady) Dvorkovich. He said he wanted me as advisor, wanted my input on various matters. I don't know what this will lead to, but hope he not only consults about rules, regulations, but also the game."

According to the chess governing body, the four get designated as Planning and Development body councillors, an initiative of the new FIDE head to use their expertise and experience in national federations development. Anand presented D Gu-

kesh with his live rating certificate for accomplishing 2500 points after the second round of the Mumbai International Chess event.

The chess icon referred to the depth in Indian chess. "Indian chess players have amazing depth, especially in the 8-23 age group. I don't know what the lower number is, but in the age group we have an amazing bunch of talent. Our youth chess team is one of the most competitive in the world."



Anand. ■ EMMANUEL YOGINI

Real Madrid stumbles again

Slips 10 points behind Barcelona after defeat to Sociedad

LA LIGA

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
MADRID

Real Madrid may not even challenge for the title let alone win it as a shock 2-0 defeat at home to Real Sociedad left it 10 points behind Barcelona in La Liga.

Barca took its advantage over its fiercest rivals into double figures by beating Getafe 2-1 while Atletico Madrid

and Sevilla also gained on the European champion, despite earlier sharing a 1-1 draw.

Lionel Messi and Luis Suárez's goals were enough for Barca, for whom the weekend could hardly have

IN BRIEF



Our body may cure itself of diabetes in future

LONDON Researchers have identified glucagon producing cells in the pancreas that can mimic functions of damaged or missing insulin-producing cells, an advance that may lead to cures for diabetes. PTI



Japan introduces \$9 departure tax

TOKYO Japan on Monday started levying a 1,000 yen (\$9.22) departure tax on each person leaving the country, a measure aimed at raising funds to further boost tourism. AFP



Want to lose weight?

PICK diet over exercise NEW YORK For those planning to hit the gym to lose weight, take note. A study suggests that diet is more important than physical activity, including walking and exercise. IANS

Gas hydrates produced under 'space' conditions

IIT-Madras team achieves a rare feat

R. PRASAD
CHENNAI

Researchers at Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Madras have experimentally shown that methane and carbon dioxide (CO_2) can exist as gas hydrates at temperatures and pressures seen in interstellar atmosphere. Gas hydrates are formed when a gas such as methane gets trapped in well-defined cages of water molecules forming crystalline solids. In terrestrial conditions, gas hydrates are formed naturally under the sea bed and glaciers under high pressure, low temperature conditions. Methane hydrate is a potential source of natural gas.

The methane and CO_2 hydrates were produced in the lab at very low pressures (ten thousand billionth of atmospheric pressure) and temperature (as low as -263 degree C) to simulate the conditions of deep space.

Applications The carbon dioxide hydrate produced in the lab raises the possibility of sequestering or storing carbon dioxide as hydrates by taking advantage of ice existing in environmental conditions favourable for hydrate formation. In these environments, the carbon dioxide will have enough energy to interact with ice. So both molecules will have enough mobility to allow interaction to form carbon dioxide hydrate.

" CO_2 hydrate is thermodynamically more stable than methane hydrate. So if methane hydrate has remained stable for millions of

years under the sea bed, it would be possible to sequester gaseous CO_2 as solid hydrate under the sea bed," said Prof. Rajnish Kumar, Department of Chemical Engineering, IIT Madras and a co-corresponding author of a paper published in the *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*.

IIT Madras, in collaboration with GAIL, is working to recover methane from methane hydrate from the Krishna-Godavari Basin and sequester CO_2 simultaneously, said Prof. Kumar.

"We have been conducting such experiments for the last five years but have never seen gas hydrates forming," says Prof. T. Pradeep from the Department of Chemistry at IIT Madras who led the team. That was because the researchers conducted the experiments only for a few hours.

Water and methane were originally deposited at -263 degree C (10 K). When the temperature was increased to -243 degree C (30 K), the researchers could observe methane hydrate forming after 25 hours. About 10% of methane present was found in the hydrate form at the end of 25 hours. "By the end of 75 hours, most methane got converted into hydrate," says Jyotirmoy Ghosh from IIT Madras and the first author of the paper.

Though both ice and methane are in a frozen state, prolonging the experiment at a very low temperature enhanced the mobility of methane molecules and led to their insertion into the cage of water molecules to form methane hydrate.

" CO_2 hydrate is thermodynamically more stable than methane hydrate. So if methane hydrate has remained stable for millions of

Watch iTunes movies on Samsung smart TVs

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE
LAS VEGAS



A new iTunes Movies and TV Shows app will debut on Samsung smart TVs.

If you've bought movies or TV shows from Apple's iTunes store, you will be able to watch those on Samsung TVs without con-

nnecting an Apple TV box. An iTunes Movies and TV Shows app will debut only on Samsung smart TVs.

Lit For Life to offer an eclectic, inclusive feast

Debates on contemporary themes, sessions on writing and tributes to cultural icons on the agenda

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
CHENNAI

"We live in a world where people keep saying 'people aren't interested in books any more'. I think you only need to come to a festival like this to see people love books," writer Markus Zuzak commented on a previous edition of *The Hindu* Lit for Life.

But there's more to the festival than just books. *The Hindu* Lit for Life has constantly engaged with ideas – whether in the sphere of literature, politics, environment, war, film, theatre, music, dance, health and well-being, food, travel, or sports.

The ninth edition of the festival will be inaugurated by veteran journalist and political commentator Arun Shourie on January 12. From discussions on the forthcoming elections, the rise of fake news, curbs on artistic expression, the rewriting of history, and religious and caste assertions to the fight to claim one's sexual identity, the 'othering' of those who don't fall in line with majoritarian views, Lit for Life has something for everyone. There are sessions on writing and illustrating for children, on managing waste, the art of crafting fiction and on the state of Indian science.

Tamil and Tamil Nadu will



Big draw: An interactive session at The Hindu Lit for Life last year. ■ R. RAGU

also be in the spotlight. A session on governance and responsibility has a panel of politicians C. Mahendran, Kanimozhhi Karunanidhi, S. Peter Alphonse, Thol Thirumavalavan and journalist S. Karthigaichelvan weighing in while Tamil authors Nanjil Nadan and Perumal Murugan will discuss the cuisines from the southern and western parts of the State with TV show host Harikrishnan Sankaran.

Celebrating Tamil

A.R. Venkatachalapathy and Gopalkrishna Gandhi will talk about Bharati and other Tamil personalities.

Lit for Life also pays tribute to two stalwarts of Tamil culture: Kalaignar Karunanidhi and veteran

theatreperson N. Muthuswamy. In the session 'Dravidian Ideology in Praxis', Kanimozhi Karunanidhi anchors a discussion on the legendary leader's legacy with N. Ram and N. Ezhilan. In 'Homage to N. Muthuswamy', journalist Dhalavai Sundaram, filmmaker and bureaucrat Gnana Rajasekaran and theatreperson Vinodhini share their memories of the Koothuppattarai founder. 2019 is the centenary year of Carnatic vocalist D.K. Pattammal and this is acknowledged through 'Her Music, Her Life'.

Among the 167 speakers this year are stellar names such as Daniel Handler aka Lemony Snicket, John Keay, Suki Kim, Audrey Truschke, Rajmohan Gandhi, Rama-

chandra Guha, Venki Ramakrishnan, K. VijayRaghavan, Joshua Pollack, Nilima Sheikh, Pratik Sinha, V.V.S. Laxman, Manisha Koirala, Meghna Gulzar, Aruna Sairam, T.M. Krishna, and Shekhar Sen.

Writing prizes

On January 13, the highlight is the announcement of *The Hindu* Prize that recognises the best of Indian writing in English. So far the prize has been awarded only for fiction but this a year a new category, non-fiction, has been introduced. The prize bears a cash component of ₹5 lakh each, a trophy and a citation.

That evening, Swarathma, the Bengaluru-based folk-fusion band, will offer a special performance.

The sharpest literature festival in India
LIT FOR LIFE
12 - 14 JANUARY, 2019

Venue: Lady Andal School grounds, Harrington Road. Visit www.thehindulf.com to register

Associate Sponsors: VR Mall, Chennai

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Brought to you by THEME

Bohemian Rhapsody rules Golden Globes

Roma bags best director and foreign film



Top winners: Rami Malek with Queen band members Roger Taylor, right, and Brian May, left, in California. ■ AFP

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
LOS ANGELES

Bohemian Rhapsody pulled a major upset at the close of Sunday, taking home the final two top prizes to put itself into the Oscars conversation along with *Green Book* and *Roma*.

Lit for Life has also taken the first steps toward being a zero-waste festival in collaboration with Chennai Kalai Theru Vizha. Apart from trying to reduce the use of plastic at the venue, the festival is undertaking an audit to map steps for a greener Lit for Life in the future.

On the morning of January 12, historian V. Sriram will host a walk curated specially for Lit for Life on the literary side of Triplicane.

For more details on this, go to <https://bit.ly/2RploPE>

It also bagged the biggest movie award of the night – best drama.

A Star is Born had to content itself with a statuette for best song, which went to *Gaga* and writing partner Mark Ronson, while Christian Bale – who played Dick Cheney in *Vice* – won a Golden Globe for best actor under the musical/comedy category.

Civil rights dramedy *Green Book* was the numerical winner – if not the prestige player – picking up awards for best comedy movie, best supporting actor Mahershala Ali and best screenplay.

The boozy gala at the Beverly Hilton also recognised Alfonso Cuaron's *Roma*, a cinematic ode to his childhood in 1970s Mexico City, with best director and foreign film honours.

Japan tycoon's tweet most shared of all time

Promised about \$10,000 to 100 followers

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
TOKYO

Billionaire Japanese tycoon and future space tourist Yusaku Maezawa said on Monday his tweet promising a cash giveaway of nearly \$10,000 was the most retweeted ever.

The 43-year-old Mr. Maezawa posted a tweet on Saturday promising one million yen (\$9,250) in cash each to 100 randomly selected followers who had retweeted it by Monday.

The tweet – now retweeted more than 4.3 million times – is the most shared in history, according to the entrepreneur.

"Hit the new world record. Surpassed Twitter's world record number of retweets (it was 3.55 million RTs before) and more people are still retweeting," wrote the high-profile Mr. Maezawa.

The previous record-holder was an American teenager in 2017 trying to win a year's supply of chicken nuggets from fast food chain Wendy's, according to media.

In October, Mr. Maezawa said he paid an undisclosed sum for a ticket on fellow tycoon Elon Musk's SpaceX rocket around the moon as early as 2023.

Mr. Maezawa will hitch a ride aboard Musk's Big Falcon Rocket, which SpaceX has acknowledged it may not be ready for human flight for at least five years.

He also plans to take around half a dozen artists with him on the trip.

Yusaku Maezawa

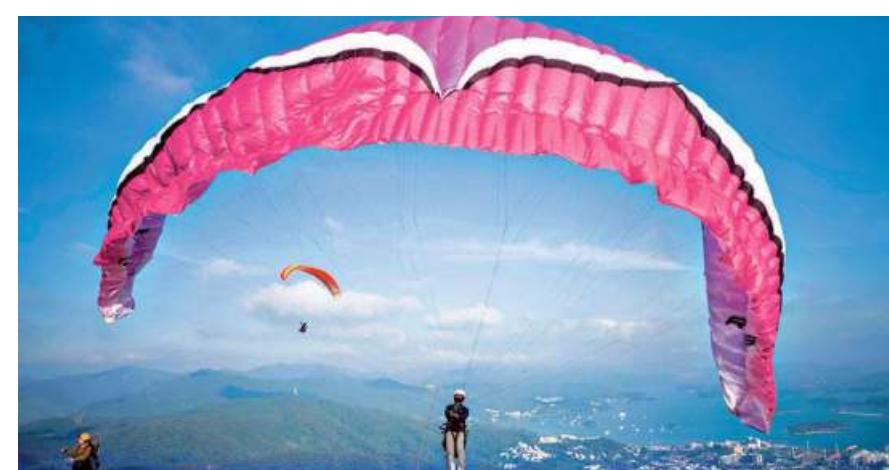
Freeze the miracle



Holy dance: Bulgarian men performing the traditional "Horo" dance in the icy waters of Tundza river in Kalofer, as part of Epiphany Day celebrations. As a tradition, an Eastern Orthodox priest throws a cross in the river and it is believed that the one who retrieves it will be healthy throughout the year as well as those dancing in the chilling waters. ■ AFP

Paragliding a hit as Hong Kongers seek escapade

With the city turning into a concrete jungle, young people say the sport offers them a brief respite



Brave jump: A paraglider preparing to take off from Ma On Shan peak in Hong Kong. ■ AFP

tropical weather and small landing zones, making it both a challenging and unfor-giving place.

The sport is not without its dangers. In July, experienced Hong Kong paraglider Patrick Chung Yuk-Wa – a friend of Mr. Lam's – failed to come back from a flight during squally conditions as a typhoon neared the region.

Safety risks

With grim weather conditions setting in after he was reported missing, it took rescuers five days to locate and retrieve Mr. Chung's body.

The sport debuted the following month at the Asian Games where an Afghan athlete suffered a spinal injury and a Chinese competitor broke a leg in separate crash landings.

Hong Kong has eight approved flying areas for paragliding. But pilots fear the sport's growth might be limited by pressure to build on parkland in a city. "We can't fly without landing. It's a pity that Hong Kong attaches a lot of weight to development, especially property development," Mr. Lam said.

Air pollution hampers work productivity'

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE
SINGAPORE

Besides affecting health, prolonged exposure to air pollution can also reduce employee's productivity, finds a study.

The study showed that daily fluctuations in pollution did not immediately affect the productivity of workers.

However, a definite drop in output was witnessed when measured for more prolonged exposures of up to 30 days, the researchers said. In addition, working in a highly polluted setting for long periods could affect mood.

For the study, the team gathered information from textile factories in China.

They compared how many pieces of fabric each worker produced each day.

"An increase in PM2.5, by 10 micrograms per cubic metre sustained over 25 days, reduces daily output by 1%, harming firms and workers," said Haoming Liu, Associate Professor of the varsity.

Watch iTunes movies on Samsung smart TVs

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE
LAS VEGAS



A new iTunes Movies and TV Shows app will debut on Samsung smart TVs.

If you've bought movies or TV shows from Apple's iTunes store, you will be able to watch those on Samsung TVs without con-

nnecting an Apple TV box. An iTunes Movies and TV Shows app will debut only on Samsung smart TVs.

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CM YK

**JNU online exams**

A few departments to have an option of taking a written exam during the viva voce stage **Page 2**

**High security number plates**

Gurugram Deputy Commissioner seeks action against agency for overcharging **Page 3**

**On the dotted line**

Here is an exhaustive book exploring the artistic expression of artist Janghar Singh Shyam **Page 5**

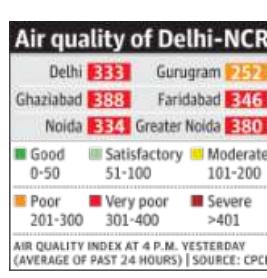
**Indie watch**

Making this the perfect time to pick up your favourite console and spend time in an indie game **Page 6**

IN BRIEF**'Utilise Ganga task force for waste management'**

NEW DELHI
The National Green Tribunal has asked the National Mission for Clean Ganga to consider utilising the Ganga task force for the upcoming Kumbh Mela for solid waste management and maintenance of water quality.

CITY ► PAGE 2

**Vadra's aide seeks anticipatory bail****SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT**

NEW DELHI
Two days after the Enforcement Directorate moved a Delhi court seeking issuance of an open-ended non-bailable warrant against Robert Vadra's alleged personal assistant Manoj Arora in a money laundering case, Mr. Arora on Monday sought anticipatory bail in the case.

The application is scheduled to be heard by Special Judge Sunil Rana on Tuesday. The ED's NBW application is also posted for hearing by a different court on the same day.

The ED has alleged that Mr. Arora was aware of overseas undeclared assets of Mr. Vadra and was instrumental in arranging funds for such properties.

The ED started a probe on the basis of digital evidence recovered by the Income Tax Department during raids on the premises of Sanjay Bhandari, a fugitive arms dealer.

Mr. Arora was absconding following a raid at his premises and had evaded summons issued to him on three dates.

Change in the air for Cong, BJP units ahead of Lok Sabha poll

Dikshit tops list of candidates for DPCC president; BJP waiting for certainty on alliance

JATIN ANAND
DAMINI NATH
NEW DELHI

In the run-up to the Lok Sabha elections, changes are in store for the Delhi units of both the Congress and the Bharatiya Janata Party this month, said multiple sources from both parties.

While the Congress is expected to decide on a new Delhi Pradesh Congress Committee (DPCC) president as well as two working presidents this week, the BJP is gearing up for a reorganisation of its State leadership later this month.

The sources said BJP is also awaiting a decision on a



Former Chief Minister Sheila Dikshit and former DPCC president Ajay Maken. ■ FILE PHOTO: SHANKER CHAKRAVARTY

potential Congress-Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) alliance, for which talks have been on between the two parties for months.

When DPCC president Ajay Maken's resignation was accepted at a meeting with Congress president Rahul Gandhi on January 3, the two leaders had discussed several names for his successor, said a senior Congress leader. Among the names on the top of the list was former three-time Chief Minister Sheila Dikshit.

The leader added that the party was considering having one state unit president and "two or three" working

presidents to share the workload.

Working presidents

For working president, the leaders being considered included former Delhi Assembly Speaker Yoganand Shastri and former MLA Devinder Yadav.

Another Delhi Congress source stated that apart from Mr. Shastri and Mr. Yadav, the other names for working president being considered included former Delhi Minister and ex-DPCC president Arvinder Singh Lovely, and former MLA Rajesh Lilotia.

Speaking at an event here

on Monday, All India Congress Committee (AICC) general secretary in-charge for Delhi P.C. Chacko said the party would decide on the new DPCC president by Thursday.

Mr. Gandhi is scheduled to go out of town from Thursday. Mr. Chacko added that Ms. Dikshit was being considered among others.

The Congress source said Ms. Dikshit's appointment was most likely for several reasons, including her potential to bring on board former MLAs, many of whom have threatened to resign in case of a possible alliance with the AAP, in case it goes through. While Ms. Dikshit is a Brahmin, the candidates for working president would represent other communities.

Meanwhile, the BJP is in hopes of a three-way electoral contest in which case it would have a better edge than in a two-way contest, said a party source.

The source added that the possible alliance, if it materialises, would not only have a bearing on its choice of candidates but also have a bearing on the reorganisation of its state leadership.

Tailor shot dead for throwing stone at dog; accused owner on the run

No injuries on the canine; victim is survived by three kids, wife

STAFF REPORTER

NEW DELHI

A 30-year-old tailor was shot dead after he allegedly threw a stone at a pet dog in north-east Delhi's Welcome, the police said Monday.

Mehtab who shot Aafaq Ali is absconding, they said.

The incident took place on Sunday at 7 p.m. after a quarrel broke out between Ali and the 28-year-old accused over throwing a stone at the latter's dog, said Deputy Commissioner of Police (North-East) Atul Kumar Thakur.

The officer said the victim's father-in-law Mohammad Shaukat, informed the police about the incident.

On reaching the spot, the police learnt that Ali was taken to Guru Teg Bahadur Hospital where he was declared brought dead.

Investigations revealed that Ali was walking past Mehtab's house when the dog started barking at him.

Following this, Ali allegedly threw a stone at the dog, the officer said.

Mehtab then got his gun and after a brief argument shot Ali dead, he added.

Criminal history

A case has been registered against Mehtab, they said, adding that he has a previous criminal history and dealt in the business of illicit liquor and marijuana.

A manhunt has been launched and further investigation underway, the police said.

Shaukat said Ali who worked as a tailor at a garments factory in Ghonda is survived by three children and wife. The victim was the sole breadwinner of the family, he said.

"This was not the first time that Mehtab got into an argument with someone over his dog. The animal had a tendency to snap at passers-by. If anyone protested against this, Mehtab would confront them," said Shaukat.

Police said they did not find any injuries on the canine during the inquiry.

Nude KMSS protesters detained

Raised slogans against move to amend Citizenship Amendment Bill

STAFF REPORTER

NEW DELHI

A group of youth from Assam on Monday staged protests, with some of the demonstrators stripping naked, outside Parliament against the Central government's move to amend the Citizenship Amendment Bill.

Carrying placards and raising slogans, about 10 protesters belonging to the Krishak Mukti Sangram Samiti from Assam, stripped to protest the controversial Bill.

The police quickly swung into action and removed them from Vijay Chowk.

"The policemen present

at Vijay Chowk nabbed the protesters. They were brought to the Parliament Street police station. After a few hours, they were told to leave," said a senior officer.

Another group of people protested outside the Assam Bhawan in Chanakyapuri, with black flags.

Kejriwal backs Akhilesh, attacks Modi-led govt

Centre has shamelessly unleashed CBI

STAFF REPORTER

NEW DELHI

Reacting to the development, Mr. Kejriwal tweeted: "In its last weeks in office, Modi govt shamelessly unleashing CBI on @yadvakhilesh is a reminder to all that we must not forget what Modi's political opponents have faced during last five years. Time to throw out this dictatorial & undemocratic regime [sic]."

Having faced CBI raids at his office and at those of his Cabinet colleagues in the past, Mr. Kejriwal and the AAP have accused the BJP government of using the investigating agency against them.

The CBI had announced last week that it was looking into the role of the former mining Ministers, including Mr. Yadav, who held the portfolio from 2012 to 2013, in a case of alleged illegal mining.

The leader added that the party was considering having one state unit president and "two or three" working

Conference of the birds



Stepping stone: Seagulls seen along the Yamuna in New Delhi on Monday. ■ PRADEEP KUMAR

'Sans revision, quota for EWS a stunt'

STAFF REPORTER

NEW DELHI

If the BJP-ruled government does not bring a Constitutional amendment to enable a 10% reservation for the economically weaker section (EWS) of the general category, which it approved

on Monday, then the decision would prove to be an "election stunt", said Aam Aadmi Party chief Arvind Kejriwal.

Reacting to the news that the Cabinet had approved the reservation, Mr. Kejriwal tweeted: "...The govt

should extend Parl session and bring constitutional amendment immediately. Else it is merely an election stunt. [sic]"

In another tweet, he said the AAP would support the government if it brings an amendment in Parliament.

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IN BRIEF



Seven-day book fair for Delhi govt schools

NEW DELHI

A seven-day book fair for Delhi government schools was inaugurated at one of the government schools in Mukherjee Nagar by Deputy Chief Minister and Education Minister Manish Sisodia on Monday. The heads of 1,024 Delhi government schools will be able to procure books for their school libraries at the fair, which will go on till January 14, the government said in a statement.

STAFF REPORTER

General strike: CITU slams L-G over ESMA

NEW DELHI

The Centre of Indian Trade Unions (CITU) slammed L-G Anil Baijal for invoking the Essential Services Maintenance Act (ESMA) and preventing electricity employees and engineers in the Capital from joining the nationwide workers' general strike on January 8 and 9. Mr. Baijal issued the notification utilising the Haryana Essential Services Maintenance Act (ESMA), 1974, which was established to ensure the delivery of certain services, which if obstructed, would affect normal life of the people. STAFF REPORTER

Shut down unauthorised Daryaganj units: NGT

NEW DELHI

The National Green Tribunal has directed the Delhi government and the North Delhi Municipal Corporation to shut down unauthorised industrial units that are running in residential areas of Daryaganj. Noting that operation of such units contributes to air pollution and is a threat to residents of the area, a Bench headed by NGT judicial member Raghuvendra S. Rathore said, "In case units have applied for clearance from the Delhi Pollution Control Committee [DPCC], the same may be reopened, as and when the requisite clearances are given." STAFF REPORTER

Deploy task force for waste management during Kumbh'

NGT tells National Mission for Clean Ganga ahead of the fair in Prayagraj

STAFF REPORTER
NEW DELHI

The National Green Tribunal (NGT) has asked the National Mission for Clean Ganga (NMCG) to consider utilising the Ganga task force for the upcoming Kumbh Mela pertaining to the management of solid waste management and maintenance of water quality.

A Bench headed by NGT Chairperson Justice Adarsh Kumar Goel further directed authorities to scientifically



Devotees cross a pontoon bridge across the Ganga during a procession ahead of the Kumbh Mela in Prayagraj. ■ FILE PHOTO

The Kumbh Sanitation Plan provides for three coloured bins for storage of bio-degradable waste, recyclable waste and other wastes. The Ministry of Urban Development and Housing and other authorities should display posters and banners to educate the people with regard to waste management

NGT BENCH

dispose thermocol cups and other such items instead of burning them.

Water quality

Reiterating previous orders passed by it, the green panel said, "We direct that earlier direction of digitally displaying water quality at permanent places may be fully complied with during the Kumbh Mela."

The directions came while the NGT took note of a re-

port submitted by a committee constituted by it earlier, which highlighted measures for waste management to be undertaken during the event.

The NGT noted the Kumbh Sanitation Plan provided by the Health Department and Mela Authority to the committee.

"The Kumbh Sanitation Plan provides for three coloured bins for storage of bio-degradable waste, recyclable waste and other wastes. It was noted that there is a requirement of centres for collection and segregation of waste and also for public association and awareness and community mobilisation...the Ministry of Urban Development and Housing and other authorities should display posters and banners to educate the people with regard to waste management," the Bench observed.

Fog delays trains, disrupts flights

A runway had to be shut down from 9 a.m. to 10 a.m.

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NEW DELHI

66%. The weatherman has forecast dense fog for Tuesday morning.

According to the Railways, 13 trains were running late due to fog, including the Puri-New Delhi Purushottam Express (late by four hours) and the Garib Rath Express which was scheduled to arrive in Delhi three hours late.

Fog disrupted the flight operations at the Indira Gandhi International Airport as one of the runways had to be shut down from 9 a.m. to 10 a.m. due to low visibility.

The runway number 29 started operating normally post 10 a.m.

The minimum runway visibility required for take-off is 125 metres, an airport official said.

On Sunday, the minimum temperature in the city had settled at 8.6 degrees Celsius, while the maximum temperature recorded was 19.6 degrees Celsius.

Boosting bilateral ties



Norway Prime Minister Erna Solberg with Union Minister of State for External Affairs General V.K. Singh and others at the inauguration of a new green compound at Royal Norwegian Embassy in the Capital on Monday. ■ SHIV KUMAR PUSHPAKAR

Real-time air pollution study to be ready in 18 months

Joint project to be conducted by the University of Washington and Delhi government

STAFF REPORTER
NEW DELHI

A real-time study of the sources of pollution in the Capital would be conducted by the University of Washington and the Delhi government over the next 18 months, a government statement said on Monday.

MoU signed

The government signed a memorandum of understanding with Washington University, St. Louis for the joint project that will collect real-time air pollution data, particularly particulate matter.

The Delhi Pollution Control Committee (DPC) and

the University of Washington will carry out real-time sampling of PM 1, PM 2.5 and PM 10, the statement said, in addition to suggesting ways to minimise pollution.

Wireless sensors

For the study, wireless sensors would be deployed along with a specially developed algorithm.

The real-time data will help policy development to regulate and improve the air quality, whereas the state of the art instrument demonstration will lead a path of capacity building development," the government said.

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NEW DELHI

Delhi's air quality was recorded in the "very poor" category on Monday as the impact of rain began to subside and the pollution level started rising, authorities said.

'Very poor' category

According to the Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB) data, the overall Air Quality Index (AQI) in the city reached 337, which is in the "very poor" category for the past two weeks.

Thirty areas in Delhi recorded "very poor" air quality, while two areas wit-

nessed "poor" quality air, it said.

In the NCR, Ghaziabad, Faridabad, Gurugram and Noida recorded "very poor" air quality, the CPCB said.

Delhi's pollution level went down on Sunday after rainfall washed away pollutants and cleansed the air on Saturday, authorities said. The air quality in the Capital has been oscillating between the upper range of the "very poor" and the "severe" category for the past two weeks.

On Monday, the overall PM2.5 level (fine particulate matter in the air with a diam-

eter of less than 2.5 micrometers) was recorded at 177 while the PM10 level (fine particulate matter in the air with a diameter of less than 10 micrometers) was at 266, the CPCB said.

An AQI between 100 and 200 comes under the "moderate" category, 201 and 300 is considered "poor", 301 and 400 "very poor", while an AQI between 401 and 500 is "severe".

The Centre-run System Air Quality and Weather Forecasting said the overall air quality over Delhi was very poor.

Pollution rises as rain impact weakens

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NEW DELHI

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JNU online exams: written test to be held at interview stage

To conduct mock tests to make aspirants familiar with process

SHINJINI GHOSH
NEW DELHI

With entrance examinations for the various programmes at Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU) set to go online for the 2019-20 academic session, the administration on Monday said that certain departments will have the option of taking a written examination to assess the "qualitative acumen" of MPhil and PhD aspirants, at the viva voce stage.

"While the multiple choice questions will test the range of knowledge, acumen to analyse and reason will be tested in the written examination, which is optional for the various centres to conduct. Out of the 30 marks assigned to viva voce, 15 marks will be allotted to the written examination," said JNU Rector-I Chintamani Mahapatra.



Out of the 30 marks assigned to viva voce, 15 marks will be allotted to the written examination, says JNU Rector-I Chintamani Mahapatra. ■ FILE PHOTO: SHIV KUMAR PUSHPAKAR

Possibility of satellite campus still open: JNU

STAFF REPORTER
NEW DELHI

ty somehow thinks about the possibility or the need for a satellite campus, we can do it on our own by raising funds and we will not need money from the government."

Not applied for funds
"The reason why the Ministry said it was because we had not applied for the funds," he added.

JNU Vice-Chancellor Jagadesh Kumar had last year announced that, in a bid to make the university accessible to more students, it was planning to open a satellite campus outside the National Capital Region.

process. Additionally, an hour before the exam, training sessions will be carried out for the aspirants."

"It is not the first time that some university is adopting the online mode of entrance examination. The guidelines provided by the University Grants Commission (UGC) mention 70% weightage for online examination and 30% weightage to the interview/viva voce. With the option of conducting written examinations,

Do not join strike, JNU admin appeals to faculty, students

JNUSU hits out at it for non-recognition of students' body

STAFF REPORTER
NEW DELHI

We appeal to the JNU faculty members and students to continue with your regular academic and research activities and not participate in such protests

JNU ADMINISTRATION

show one notification issued before the election process asking for 'only' GST bills."

Library fund cut
Further, the JNU administration refuted JNUSU allegations of a library fund cut.

"Earlier the money used to come for five years but now they come annually. We have received ₹2 crore from the UGC for the library fund," said Mr. Mahapatra. The students' body on Saturday called for a two-day strike on January 8 and 9 against various issues including alleged "financial corruption of the V-C".

Responding to allegations of an expenditure of ₹13 lakh by the varsity while hosting spiritual leader Sri Sri Ravi Shankar, he said, "The numbers are a statistical jugglery.

There was funding from outside as well for the said event and adding up all numbers and blaming the university is wrong."

Over 2,000 pollution violations

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NEW DELHI

A total of 2,092 violations of pollution norms in Delhi-NCR were recorded in the month of December by pollution watchdog Central Pollution Control Board in 300 inspections.

The highest number of violations were that of construction and demolition activity at 593 followed by open burning of garbage at 471. Out of the 2,092 violations in NCR, the highest number was found in Delhi at 1,731 where maximum number of inspections were conducted, the data showed.

Water supply in south Delhi to be affected

Due to ongoing repair works

STAFF REPORTER
NEW DELHI

Greater Kailash, Vasant Kunj, Deoli, Ambedkar Nagar, Panchsheel Park, Shahpur Jat, Kotla Mubarakpur, Defence Colony, Siddhartha Enclave, Sarita Vihar, Okhla, Dakshinpuri, Malviya Nagar, Deer Park, Geetanjali, Shri Niwaspuri, Chattarpur and Lutyens' Delhi.

Damaged main line
The Delhi Jal Board added that repair of a damaged main line at Jal Vihar would lead to no water supply from Tuesday till Wednesday morning in Bhogal, Nehru Nagar, Lajpat Nagar, Moolchand, and Nizamuddin.

IN BRIEF



Wheelchair user held at IGI for smuggling gold

NEW DELHI
A wheelchair user was arrested by Customs officials at the IGI airport in Delhi on Monday for allegedly trying to smuggle into the country gold valuing about ₹35 lakh, an official statement said. The 50-year-old man was intercepted after his arrival from Dubai. Three gold bars weighing a total of 1.2 kg having the market value of ₹35.22 lakh were seized from his possession. PTI

Foundation stone laid for police building

NEW DELHI
Minister of State for Home Affairs, Kiren Rijiju, on Monday laid the foundation stone for a new building for Special Police Unit for Women and Children (SPUWAC) and Special Police Unit for North Eastern Region (SPUNER) of the Delhi Police. L-G Anil Baijal and Delhi Police Commissioner Amulya Pathak were also present at the event organised by the Delhi Police at Nanakpura. PTI

Wife accuses man of assault, forcing her into unnatural sex

Says she was harassed over dowry demands; accused at large

STAFF REPORTER

GREATER NOIDA
A 24-year-old woman has accused her absconding husband for allegedly disrobing her in public, forcing into unnatural sex, assault, harassment over dowry and converting her religion, the police said on Monday.

The Bareilly-based woman said she had been subjected to cruelty for the past three years. On November 20, the man allegedly left her and their 9-month-old daughter alone in a rented flat in Bisrakh. Later, when he did not return and stopped taking her calls, the woman complained to the police.

A manhunt for the accused husband is on.

The police said the accused hails from Bareilly's Jadonpur village in Uttar Pradesh. He had currently been living at the rented flat in Bisrakh with his wife and their daughter. He worked as a carpenter.

The first information report filed by the wife on December 28 states that she had been in a relationship with the accused since 2015, and they got married only on September 12, 2018 as per Islamic rituals.

She has alleged that the accused had forced her to convert into Islam. "We met in Bareilly in 2015. He had

Cop accuses another of sexual assault

PCR call made from Tilak Bridge; complaint withdrawn later

SAURABH TRIVEDI

NEW DELHI

A Delhi police constable has accused another policeman of sexual assault at Barakhamba police station on Monday.

'Assaulted for 10 years'
The police said that around 7.05 a.m. on Monday, the police control room received a call from Tilak Bridge and that the caller was accusing his friend of sexually assaulting him for the past 10 years.

The victim and the accused are posted in separate units of the Delhi Police.

"After receiving the call, the police rushed to the bus stop from where the call was made and brought both the men to Barakhamba police station for further inquiry. The caller and the other person were found to be Delhi Police personnel," said a police officer.

The officer also said that the two had been subjected to assault for the past 10 years, the police said.

We are writing to the respective units of the Delhi Police for departmental action against both the policemen... One of them called the police alleging sexual assault and later withdrew the complaint. Their conduct will be reported to their respective units where they are currently posted

MADHUR VERMA
Deputy Commissioner of Police (New Delhi)

two de-boarded a local train at Tilak Bridge, after which a quarrel broke out between them over some issue. One of them then informed the police regarding the alleged sexual assault.

The caller claimed that he had been subjected to assault for the past 10 years, the police said.

"After the matter was brought to the notice of senior police officers, further investigation was ordered into the matter. The victim and the accused have given their statements in written. They said they do not want any action to be taken in the case and left the police station," the police officer also said.

Madhur Verma, Deputy Commissioner of Police (New Delhi) said that the police are investigating the matter. If the call received by the police control room on Monday was fake, then appropriate action will be taken against the caller, he said.

"We are writing to the respective units of the Delhi Police for departmental action against both the policemen who were involved in a quarrel on road. One of them called the police alleging sexual assault and later withdrew the complaint. Their conduct will be reported to their respective units where they are currently posted," said Mr. Verma.

2 bullet-riddled bodies found

They were spotted on Nangloi-Najafgarh Road on Sunday

STAFF REPORTER

NEW DELHI

Two men have been found murdered on Nangloi-Najafgarh Road in outer Delhi's Ranholi on Sunday night, the police said on Monday.

They said that the men were shot dead and the bodies were found near the divider, adding that they were shot multiple times.

The deceased have been identified as Deepak Singhal (21) and his friend Neeraj (22).

"The bodies were spotted by a passer-by around 9 p.m. on Sunday. The police control room was then informed after which the police reached the spot. It appears that a vehicle was also used in the murder as pieces of a broken windshield have been found at the site. The case is under investigation," said Seju P. Kuruvilla, Deputy Commissioner of Police (Outer).

Recent brawl'

They lived in Baprola village and Jai Vihar, both barely a kilometre away from the spot where their bodies were found. Deepak's family



The victims Deepak (left) and Neeraj. ■ SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

has alleged that the victims had had a fight with a neighbour over car parking recently.

A police officer said that they are trying to find out if the murders were the fallout of some personal enmity. The police are probing the role of the neighbour, whose house was however, found locked on Monday.

Mr. Kuruvilla said that they are probing the matter from various angles. Deepak had one bullet in his body while Neeraj was shot four times.

"Deepak worked with an app-based cab company, while Neeraj was unemployed after having worked at a food joint. On the day of

the incident, they left home around 7 p.m. They had said at home that they would have dinner outside and would come late," said Mr. Kuruvilla.

"It seems that the men were shot somewhere else and their bodies were brought to the spot in a car and dumped," said Mr. Kuruvilla.

The police are trying to identify the last person whom the deceased met on the day of the incident.

"An FIR under Section 302 (murder) of the Indian Penal Code has been registered at Ranholi police station. The case is under investigation," Mr. Kuruvilla further said.

Issuance of gun licence to be put on hold in Noida

STAFF REPORTER

NOIDA

With the general elections approaching, and 9,000 applications received for issuance of gun licence, the district administration here has put a stop citing "law and order situation". Officials said that the deluge of applications had led to a pile of work pending at the administration at the tehsil, city magistrate and the collectorate level.

As per the office order issued, documents of around 2,000 applications are complete and currently being processed at the city magistrate's office. Officials said that these too will now be put on hold till elections and it will be at the administration's discretion to issue licences.

The UP government had started granting licences for possessing arms, which had been on hold for around four years following a stay by the Allahabad High Court. The court lifted the stay in November 2017.

Flyover accident: retired IAF doc held

Accused arrested for rash driving

STAFF REPORTER

NEW DELHI

A retired Indian Air Force (IAF) doctor was arrested on Monday for rash driving a day after his car hit a motorcycle that led to the death of a 26-year-old woman. The victim, who was riding pillion on the two-wheeler, died after falling off Barapullah flyover in south Delhi on Sunday.

The police said that the accused, identified as Madhusudan Choudhary, owns a private hospital in Mayur Vihar Phase II. They said he was arrested from his house in Bhopal.

The retired IAF doctor

lost control of his car on Sunday at a turn on the Barapullah flyover and hit the motorcycle. He was heading towards his home from the hospital when the accident happened.

Flung off the bike
"Victim Nisha flung off the bike and fell 30 feet below when the motorcycle was hit from behind by the accused's car. Her husband Sunny is currently at the ICU in a critical condition," said a police officer.

Nisha and Sunny celebrated their first marriage anniversary on December 3 last.

Men in action



CRPF's quick action team participates in a drill on Parliament premises during the winter session in New Delhi on Monday. ■ SANDEEP SAXENA

Rohtak honour killing: arms supplier arrested

Accused carried ₹1 lakh bounty on his head; a minor, a cop were killed in the incident in August last

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

GURUGRAM

A man has been arrested for his alleged involvement in an honour killing case, in which a teenager and a policeman escorting her were shot dead by bike-borne youth five months ago in Rohtak, the police said on Monday.

While stating this in Chandigarh on Monday, a spokesman of the Haryana Police said that the accused

had been identified as Vikas, a resident of Bagpat's Barmoli in Uttar Pradesh.

Vikas was carrying a reward of ₹1 lakh on his head. Seven others involved in this case have already been arrested and put behind bars.

During preliminary interrogation, it was revealed that arrested accused is a member of Meerut's notorious Yogesh Bhadra gang.

Vikas was supposed to

commit the murder, but could not execute it due to some reasons.

The weapons used in the crime were delivered by Vikas, who is also arms supplier. The accused was arrested after the police received a tip-off.

Search on for cousin
The police are also conducting raids in search of the girl's cousin.

The police had already ar-

rested both the real and foster parents of the girl in connection with the case within 36 hours of the murder.

The three bike-borne assailants were also arrested along with weapons on August 14 last.

The 17-year-old girl had come along with a police team comprising Sub-Inspector Narendra Kumar at Rohtak's court on August 8 to depose in a case of forgery, when two unidentified

men riding a motorcycle opened indiscriminate fire on her around 3 p.m.

Kumar, who was escorting the minor, fired in retaliation, but sustained bullet injuries.

Both Kumar and the girl were declared dead at a hospital.

Girl eloped in 2017
The girl, who was a Jat, had eloped with one Sombir, a Dalit, on August 24, 2017.

DELHI TODAY

Talk: Lecture on "Chinese History and Nationalism: Contemporary Relevance" by Prof. Viren Murthy, University of Wisconsin-Madison, USA.

Chair: Cmde C. Uday Bhaskar, Director, Society for Policy Studies at Conference Room - I, India International Centre (IIC), 6 p.m.

Talk: Panel discussion on "Seventy years of India-US relations & Future prospects". Panelists: Amb. Shivshankar Menon, former National Security Adviser; Swapna Dasgupta, MP, Rajya Sabha; Amb. Meera Shankar, former Amb. to USA, MaryKay Carlson, DCIM, US Embassy; Dr. Arvind Virmani, former Chief Economic Adviser, Govt. of India; Lt Gen Satish Nambari (Retd), former UN Force Commander in Yugoslavia. Moderator: Amb. Surendra Kumar, Founding President, IAFU at Gilmore Hall, India Habitat Centre (IHC), 7 p.m.

Talk: Discussion on "Global and Asian trends in publishing". Rickard Henley, Ananth Padmanabhan, Helena Gustafsson and Rukun Kaul discuss new trends in print and audio publishing, followed by a discussion on Hindi translation of Namita Gokhale's novel "Things to Leave Behind" featuring the author with Pushpesh Pant, Vani Tripathi and S. Nirupam at Amritas Hall, India Habitat Centre (IHC), 7 p.m.

Exhibition: "Lehno" - a glimpse of life and culture of the Nomads of Jammu & Kashmir. An exhibition of paintings and photographs by Adnan Kohli and Sumair Mumtaz at Open Palm Court Gallery, India Habitat Centre (IHC), 11 a.m.- 7 p.m.

Exhibition: "Artfulness" - a group show of paintings, photographs and sculptures at Uchhan Art Gallery, Sector-43, Sushant Lok, Phase-I, 11:30 a.m.- 7:30 p.m.

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

Lineman electrocuted in Noida, another injured

A high-tension line broke and fell on them on Sunday

STAFF REPORTER

GREATER NOIDA

A 27-year-old man died after he was electrocuted on Sunday while another man sustained injuries after a high-tension line broke and fell on them at Uncha Amirpura village in Greater Noida's Jarcha, the police said on Monday.

The deceased has been identified as Yogesh Chauhan, who hailed from Johra village in Aligarh. He lived in a rented flat and worked as a lineman at the National Thermal Power Corporation Limited on a contract basis.

The incident happened around 6 p.m. on Sunday, when Yogesh was standing next to an electricity pole facing a playground.

The high-tension line, carrying 11,000 KV current broke and fell on the him and another man. The both were electrocuted and fell on the ground.

"We got a call from one of

the residents of the village who informed us about the incident. The police reached the spot. The two were taken to a hospital in Pilkhuwa where Yogesh was declared dead. The other victim was discharged after he was provided first aid," said Prabhakar Dixit, Station House Officer at Jarcha.

"We have obtained details of the deceased and have assured to start the process for the relief fund and compensation in the case. The electricity department has promised ₹5 lakh. We have also raised an application for the family in the Chief Minister's Relief Fund," said a senior administration official.

Yogesh is survived by his father, wife, a three-year-old daughter and a two-year-old son.

compensation for the deceased's family. The residents raised slogans against the electricity department and the administration.

₹5 lakh compensation

Soon after the protest started, senior officials from the electricity department reached the spot and assured the villagers of ₹5 lakh compensation from the department to the family of the deceased.

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Patriarchal beliefs strong in Haryana tier-II towns: survey

Over 58% of participants say men have complete right over their wives after marriage

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

Over 58% of the people living in tier-II towns in Haryana believe that men have complete right over their wives after marriage, and are rightful in dictating terms to them. A total of 88% also agree that a woman's greatest happiness lies in bringing up her family.

A total of 1,225 participants from 10 government schools and five Industrial Training Institutes (ITIs) in Haryana participated in the survey, which was conducted by the Martha Farrell Foundation. The participants were mainly from Sonipat and adjoining towns.

The survey revealed that 43% of the participants believe that women invite sexual harassment with their attire and behaviour, 21% believed that it is okay for the husband to hit his wife to discipline her and 34% believed that women should not take travelling jobs.

It's a man's world

A majority of people in tier-II cities believe:

Women should not take up jobs which involve travelling

Winking, whistling, passing comments at girls are harmless and a part of a teenage boy's growing-up process

A girl invites teasing by men and boys through her provocative dresses or behaviour



It is okay for the man's family to charge dowry from the girl

A man has the right to tell his wife what she can do and what she cannot

It is okay for the husband to hit his wife to discipline her if the dinner is served a little late or if the food doesn't have salt

A woman's greatest happiness lies in bringing up her family

SOURCE: MARTHA FARRELL FOUNDATION

adolescence can turn into lifelong commitment to make sustained contributions to community causes. As active citizens, studies such as this help to shape the work of youth champions from our programmes to nurture a gender-just society," said Nandita Bhatt, director at Martha Farrell Foundation.

The survey was not without some positive points with 85% of participants believing that every woman should report issues of assault and seek support, and 81% stating that they are against dowry.

"We are beginning to see some change in the attitudes of the youth. This is a positive trend that can be attributed to decades of work put in by civil society organisations such as ours," she said.

tire and behaviour, 21% believed that it is okay for the husband to hit his wife to discipline her and 34% believed that women should not take travelling jobs. "The youth are the foun-

dation of tomorrow's India. A large part of our work at Martha Farrell Foundation involves working with youth. We believe that a young person's personal interaction and positive experiences in

Petition to ban *The Accidental Prime Minister* trailer rejected

Impersonation of a living person not permissible in law: plea

STAFF REPORTER
NEW DELHI

The Delhi High Court on Monday refused to entertain a plea seeking a ban on the trailer of the upcoming movie, "The Accidental Prime Minister," based on a similarly titled book by Sanjaya Baru, former media adviser of former Prime Minister Manmohan Singh.

Justice Vibhu Bakshu said the petition by a Delhi-based fashion designer was more in the nature of a public interest litigation (PIL). The judge said petitioner Pooja Mahajan could move the court again by filing her petition as a PIL.

Ms. Mahajan, in her plea, said the trailer violated Section 416 of the In-

dian Penal Code as impersonation of a living character or living persons was not permissible in law.

Bollywood actors Anupam Kher and Akshay Khanna play Dr. Manmohan Singh and Mr. Baru in the film, slated to release on Friday.

No consent taken

The petition contended that the producers had not taken any consent from Dr. Singh, Congress president Rahul Gandhi and his mother Sonia Gandhi to perform their characters in the movie.

Central Board of Film Certification (CBFC) guidelines say that a 'no objection certificate' was re-

quired, but for the trailer, no such NOC was obtained, the petitioner said.

She alleged that a wrong image of the country's high office was being projected in the movie trailer. She said the makers of the trailer had added various inputs without the consent of the author.

She said voice, looks, dress of high-profile politicians were copied simply for upsetting the entire democratic set-up.

Her petition has requested the court to issue directions to the Centre, Google, YouTube and the Central Board of Film Certification to take steps to stop the exhibition and display of the trailer.

STAFF REPORTER
NEW DELHI

The Delhi BJP on Monday accused the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) of spreading rumours against it ahead of the Lok Sabha election by distributing pamphlets to mobilise voters on the basis of religion.

Senior AAP leader Atishi

dismissed the charge saying it was a general pamphlet that was being distributed to warn voters against a "conspiracy" by the BJP-RSS to wean away voters from the AAP and shift votes to the Congress.

'AAP nervous'
Activity of this nature establishes the nervousness of the AAP. Instead of going to the public with its works in

pamphlets distributed outside mosques last week accused the BJP and the RSS of conspiring to shift votes to the Congress from the AAP.

Delhi during four years in government, it is asking for votes in the name of religion," he alleged.

Ms. Atishi, AAP in-charge for the East Delhi parliamentary constituency, said the pamphlets were distributed everywhere to expose how the RSS and the BJP workers were informally encouraging

people to vote for the Congress, instead of the AAP.

The pamphlets, which were in Hindi and Urdu, sought to warn voters to be wary of the RSS-BJP "ploy" through which they wanted to shift votes from the AAP to the Congress so that BJP candidates win the upcoming Lok Sabha elections".

BJP accuses AAP of spreading rumours through pamphlets

AAP rubishes claim, says pamphlets warning voters to be aware of BJP-RSS conspiracy to wean votes

STAFF REPORTER
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Police apprehend juvenile for killing 55-year-old woman

STAFF REPORTER
NEW DELHI

The Crime Branch unit of the Delhi Police on Monday apprehended a juvenile for the alleged murder of 55-year-old woman on the intervening night of January 1 and 2. The incident took place in west Delhi's Uttam Nagar.

The juvenile belongs to

the notorious Saddam Gang, which indulges in various illegal activities across the city. During interrogation, the youth confessed to his involvement in the crime.

He has been handed over to the local police for further investigation.

The victim, Shama Devi, was shot dead outside her

house while she was having a bonfire. The incident was recorded on CCTV camera, which helped the police to identify the culprits.

The video footage captured two people. The police received a tip-off on January 5 that one of the accused would meet his aide near Nangloi-Najafgarh Road that

evening. Following the information, the police laid a trap and nabbed the accused.

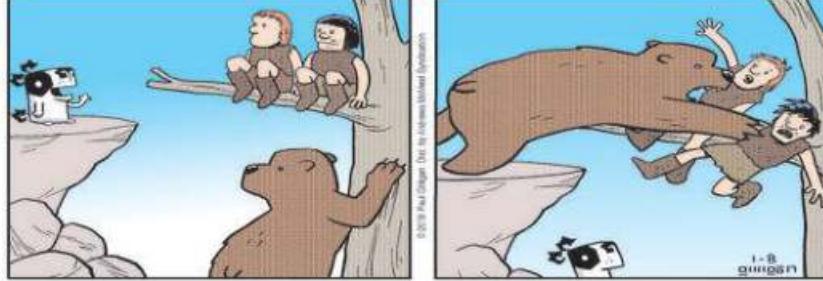
After the murder, the juvenile also made extortion calls and demanded ₹50,000 from the complainant. A case of extortion was lodged against him at Uttam Nagar police station on January 3.

The juvenile disclosed

that he had recently joined the notorious gang and was ordered by the gang leader to threaten people.

The woman was allegedly involved in several cases of excise Act and refused to pay money. Following this, the juvenile along with his associate shot her in order to terrorise others.

POOCH CAFE



PEANUTS



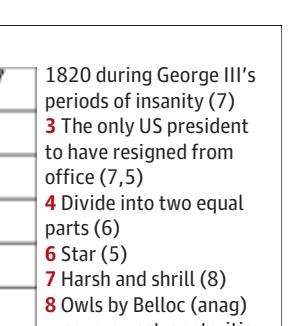
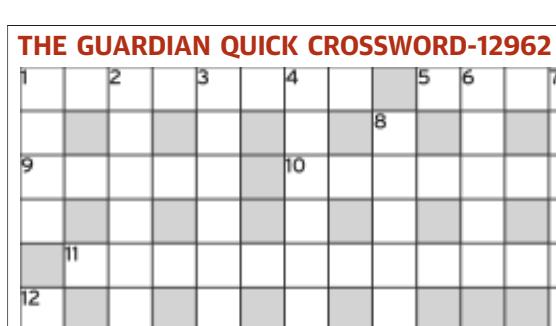
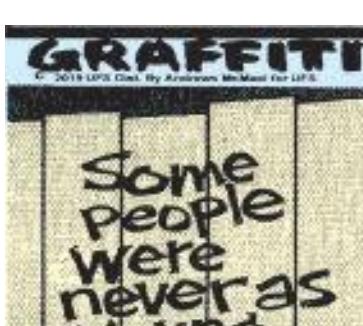
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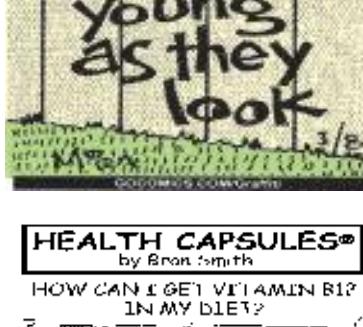
CALVIN AND HOBBES



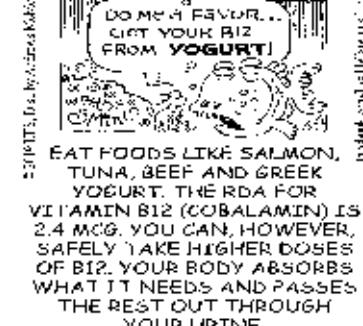
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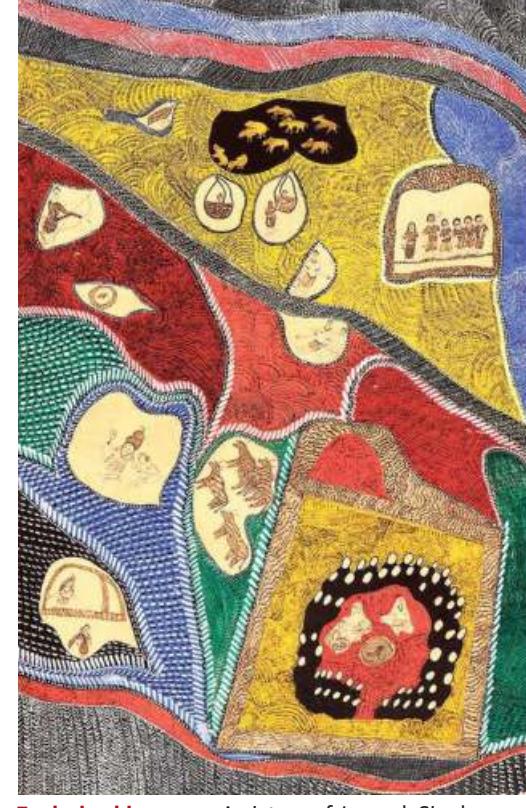
WUMO



PEARLS BEFORE SWINE



On the dotted line



Exploring his canvas: A picture of Jangarh Singh Shyam from the book, the book cover and some of his works ■ SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

A holistic approach to fashion

The synergy between designers and craftspersons was on display at a fashion event organised at the historic Red Fort

MADHUR TANKHA

Anonymous artisans have been doing a yeoman's service in reviving our country's rich textiles and traditional craft. To bring them into the national mainstream and boost their morale, the Ministry of Textiles organised an event, "Artisan Speak", showcasing India's glorious textiles and honouring the people behind them, at the Red Fort over the weekend.

The event manifested the synergy between artisans and designers and how the two are inter-dependent. While the two professionals come from contrasting backgrounds, they can be on the same page as they both share the passion for giving a push to textiles and traditional crafts. They exemplified their bond and craftsmanship at the fashion show.

Union Minister for Textiles Smriti Irani honoured 16 master artisans including Gajam Govardhana, Gajam Anjaiah, Devji Premji Vankar, Shribhas Supakar, Govardhan Panika and V. Sundarajan for their unparalleled contribution to the handloom industry.

Twist to Kanjeeveram

The man of the moment was Gajam Anjaiah, who worked on Kanjeevaram saris for designer Gaurang Shah that was showcased at the event. "I weaved traditional designs and temple art. One sari takes three months," he said modestly.



Collective consciousness: (From left) Anita Dongre, Rajesh Pratap Singh, Anju Modi, Gaurang Shah, Rohit Bal and Rahul Mishra; (below) master artisans ■ SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT



Standing next to him, Gaurang added: "I am fortunate to be working with him. Kanjeeveram is made in Kanchipuram in Tamil Nadu but he develops it in Telangana. Secondly, while most saris in the region are made with two-ply yarn, these Kanjeevaram saris have been made with three to four-ply yarns. This gives them a languorous fall and solidity that can bear the weight and scale of his intricate designs."

Speaking about his other achievement, Gajam said: "I revived Telia rumal. The double ikkat weave used for headgears was on the verge of extinction when I started using it for saris, dupattas and bedsheets."

Devji Premji Vankar, from Bhuj in Gujarat, who won the National Award in 1997 and Sant Kabir Award two years ago, said that designers, big and small, were in touch with him. On the kind of work he does, he said, Gujarat shawl was the best when compared to shawls made in other parts of the country. "In our shawl made in Kutch there is an extra dhaga (thread) in the warp and weft. And that gives it an edge." His major contribution was introduction of fine quality yarn to create soft fabrics in traditional Kutch weaving.

The evening saw a beautifully-choreographed show of gorgeous saris and outfits created by six of India's top designers who are known for their passion for traditional textiles and craft - Rahul Mishra, Rajesh Pratap Singh, Gaurang Shah, Rohit Bal, Anita Dongre and Anju Modi.

Inspired by Mughals

The show started off with Rahul Mishra's all-white Charbagh collection which had an imprint of Mughal architecture. There were outfits in

chikankari, metal mukesh work from Lucknow and zardozi.

Rahul said: "It was inspired not only by Mughal architecture but also shared the vision of Mughals who gave patronage to artisans. This setting is actually a Charbagh with all four sides having gardens and on the centre is the structure. It reflects the idea of India."

"Everything I make is hand-made. Our artisans work like entrepreneurs. We maintain utmost transparency and work with no exclusive contract. We allow them to prosper and work on their own. Hukum Kohli, an artisan from Chanderi, now drives a car, owns two-storey house," Rahul underlined.

From a distance, Rohit Bal's collection looked like white silhouette but as the models came closer the audience discovered its varied facets.

The designer greeted a couple of artisans with folded hands at the culmination of his show. Later, he posed for pictures with Shabani Kashyap, the compere of the evening, who was dressed in Guddu's outfit emblazoned with poppies, tunics, zardozi,

"The colourful outfit is almost like a garden of Kashmir. Wearing this outfit, I feel like a part of Mughal era," she gushed.

Anju Modi showcased her collection, Raas Leela, in which the garments were an amalgamation of rich handcrafted textiles and traditional hand embroidery. "Indian craft and textiles have always intrigued me and that's something I have always been passionate about. I used Indian heritage textiles like mashroo, Banarsi brocade and matka silk in this collection along with bandhani, Rajastrani gota patti work, and zardozi embroidery."

New avenues

Pointing out that she explored varied textile craft clusters of India during her Bharat darshan, Anju said this collection was a homage to those clusters and collectively to the Indian textiles and craft.

Interestingly, Madhu Jain was the only designer who was felicitated with Special Recognition Award in the Textile Sector for her work with natural fibres. "With India being the second largest producer of bamboo in the world, I recognised early that India is well positioned to grab ascendancy in bamboo-yarn production. My dream is to help India realise this," she said.

The Special Recognition Award was also conferred upon the FDCI president, Sunil Sethi, for his pursuit of the Made in India campaign and for working for the languishing handloom industry.

Summing up, designer Nitin Bal Chauhan, said the only way forward for Indian textiles to survive was a solid collaboration between designers and artisans.

"This is the best way to provide value addition to crafts that fall in the luxury category. Earlier craftspeople worked in isolation. It is a happy progression for them to work with designers who come with a lot of knowledge and understanding of what sells in the market."



SHORT TAKES

Bharat gears up for Eid

Filmmaker Ali Abbas Zafar has started shooting for the last schedule of the upcoming biggie *Bharat* starring Salman Khan in the lead. Taking to his Twitter page, he wrote, "Last shooting schedule of *Bharat* begins today... Ab Eid door Nahin (Eid is not far)."

The film marks Ali Abbas Zafar's third collaboration with Salman Khan after the blockbusters *Sultan* and *Tiger Zinda Hai*. *Bharat* is an official adaptation of the South Korean film *Ode To My Father*.

Produced by Atul Agnihotri's Reel Life

Emraan Hashmi is a responsible man

Rajesh Jais

Emraan Hashmi is a responsible man, says actor Rajesh Jais, who worked with him in the upcoming film "Cheat India".

"Be it work or family, Emraan knows how to maintain a fair balance between the two. He is a responsible person and a father."

"I love the way he cares for his son, he is also responsible citizen too. He is associated with several NGOs and supports social causes in personal life," he added.

Directed by Soumik Sen, "Cheat India" – based on India's education system is scheduled to release on January 18. It was earlier supposed to release on January 25.



courtroom. It is an important role for me as being an aware citizen, I wanted to do something for society for a long time and with "Cheat India", I hope I will be able to spread positive message in the society," he added.

"My character confronts Emraan in the

IANS

5 EVENTS WORTH-YOUR-WHILE



EXHIBITION

Prayag - The Inner Journey, an art show by Yoga Guru Bharat Thakur, features three major bodies of work; his self portraits, portraits of babas and sculptures. As a multidimensional artist, he works with sculpture, installations and a wide variety of painting mediums and has taken inspiration from his spiritual lineage.

VENUE: Visual Arts Gallery, India Habitat Centre

TIME: 11 a.m. - 7 p.m.



LITERATURE

Seminar

On the occasion of the centenary birth anniversary of renowned poet Kaifi Azmi, Urdu Academy, Delhi organises a seminar titled "Jashn-e-Kaifi". Renowned poet and writer Javed Akhtar, actress and social worker Shabana Azmi will narrate the immense contribution of Kaifi Azmi to theatre and Urdu literature.

VENUE: Triveni Kala Sangam, Mandi House

TIME: 9:45 a.m.



CUISINE

Avocado menu

Delhi Baking Company, a restaurant at JW Marriott New Delhi Aerocity has created a new item "Avocado Menu". On the menu will be Avocado and Quinoa salad, Avocado toast, prepared with truffle oil, sea salt and guacamole. The crisp toast with gooey avocado, dressed with sea salt and truffle oil is served with the chips.

VENUE: Delhi Baking Company, JW Marriott

TIME: 7 a.m. - 10 p.m.



THEATRE

Andha Yug

Shoonya Theatre Group presents its classical Hindi play, Dharmavir Bharati's "Andha Yug", directed by Rama Yadav. Based on the epic Mahabharat, it is a play that conveys the story of a blind kingdom which chose to be indifferent to its own subjects failed to follow its own principles of rule and affection in life.

VENUE: Shri Ram Centre , Mandi House

TIME: 7 p.m.



EXHIBITION

Endless Spaces

Nidhi Khurana and Hemavathy Guha's ongoing show "Endless Spaces" is an exhibition of art works inspired and influenced by textiles. The primary concept of the show is 'Space'. Nidhi collects and uses a variety of organic materials to produce works and Hemavathy's work consists of domestic elements and recycled materials.

VENUE: Apparao Gallery, The Lodhi

TIME: 11 a.m. - 7 p.m.

CMYK



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The next wave

JULIAN ALMEIDA

It's that time of the year again, when we are at the cusp of the biggest technological breakthroughs revealed at one of the biggest tech events in the world, the Consumer Electronics Expo 2019. Where every year all the latest gadgets are unveiled, where we get a taste of new technologies emerging as well as advancements in lifestyle tech, and if we're lucky, we get to see the next big thing. For years, it saw the debut of Curved Displays, VR, AR, Wearables, AI Assistants and more. So let's stare together into that CES-crystal ball and see what's on the horizon.

Smartphones

Several large companies like Samsung, LG, Sony and many more choose CES as the stage for unveiling their latest flagship devices. Most notably, Sam-

The Consumer Electronics Expo 2019 is almost upon us, and here are our predictions

Samsung's Galaxy S phones are launched here, and this year we will see the launch of the new S10. The Samsung Galaxy S10 will



With smartphone gaming becoming a big thing

sport a new Infinity O display, and as we've seen in many leaks, is a notch-less phone with a circular cutout in the display for the camera. The S10 will reportedly come in 5.8, 6.1, and 6.4-inch flavours. Along with the O display, there are phones that use a U and a V notch and we could be seeing those phones as well. In addition to that, we should see Sony's new Xperia XZ4 which features a triple camera set-up and the new Snapdragon 855.

With the 5G band being inevitable, we should see the emergence of 5G-compatible phones at CES 2019. Over the past few years, we've been seeing a steady stream of bendable displays, and we've been hearing whispers all over the place that this CES we may actually see the first slew of foldable phones and tablets from the likes of LG, Samsung, Xiaomi and Royole, a Chinese company whose claim to fame is a flexible screen and a working concept flexible smartphone.

With smartphone gaming becoming a big thing

post the launch of PlayerUnknown's Battlegrounds and Fortnite on smartphones and the popularity of League of Legends, Clash of Clans, Clash Royale and many more, we should see a lot more gaming peripherals for the hardcore smartphone gamer. Last year at E3, we saw ASUS and Razer launch a gaming phone with some serious hardware and software tech installed. Now, we could see a lot more manufacturers launch a gaming phone. We also secretly hope Sony finally launches a new PlayStation Phone.

Display

Did you finally jump on the 4K bandwagon, now that QHD has finally hit affordable price points? Well if you have, you'll be happy to know that 8K is right around the corner, and we should be expecting to see new 8K HDTVs hit the market soon from all the big manufacturers. Plus, OLED is going to be so yesteryear, as we are going to see the introduction of the first batch of home MicroLED TVs. Which is a less expensive technology to OLED with the same results. On the wild side, anything is possible, as we could see rollable and foldable displays. LG had already shown off a

rollable display earlier, and it is rumoured they will announce a living room-ready consumer version soon. Plus, there are strong chances we may get to see transpa-

rent displays too; wonder how that will work. Apart from those, we may get to see manufacturers unveil more affordable versions of 4K TVs in different shapes and sizes. You can also expect to see a slew of Dolby Atmos soundbars and other home theatre tech debut.

Digital Assistants

Already, there is a steady trickle of Alexa and Google Assistant-related news drip-feeding us in the days leading to CES 2019. With Klipsh and several other big brands in sound announcing Google Assistant and Alexa-powered speakers. In addition to that, we will also see digital assistant support baked into upcoming cars. Amazon and Google have been pushing into their Virtual Assistants and their AI technologies; we should expect a lot of announcements in the way of new behaviours and new ways in which we can interact with them, as well as new abilities and things they can control.

Smart Homes get smarter

With Google's Home Hub recently launched, we should be seeing a whole lot of new Smart Home tech launching to support it. Especially, smart connected appliances like fridges, ovens, and everything in between. We could also be seeing Google Assistant and Alexa-powered home security making its debut.

Take your pick From smart home solutions to foldable screens and a lot more ■SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

Let's hope the show does not go full Skynet on us.

New PC/Laptop tech

AMD is reportedly gearing up for the launch of their new Ryzen 3000; the next generation in their processors seem to push the envelope further, and there are rumours they may launch a new high-end affordable 16-core CPU. We could be seeing new GPUs from Nvidia, as well as RTX-powered laptops. As with every CES, we will see most definitely see new slimmer laptops with thinner bezels. If you are a PC user, you can expect the usual unveiling of new cabinets, displays and other peripherals from several large and small manufacturers. Guaranteed, there will be some ultra-cool, gaming PCs as well as laptops unveiled.

Virtual, Augmented and Mixed Reality

We saw VR and Oculus Rift as the next big thing several years ago at CES, and over the years, we've been seeing the comings and goings of VR, AR and MR devices, without actually getting anything concrete. Hopefully this year, we will see a consumer version of the large VR headsets, which are not like the stand-alone offerings Oculus Rift have right now, but something we can connect to our PCs and enjoy. There are rumblings of a new version of HTC Vive, as well as the impending launch of several Augmented and Mixed Reality headgear. So we can all look like idiots while playing our favourite games.

Health wear

The moment Apple an-



+ TECH-A-BYTE

**Group calling, low-light mode coming to Google Duo**

Google is working towards bringing a group calling feature as well as a new low-light mode on Duo. One of the most requested features for the app since its launch has been group calling, something Apple's FaceTime now supports for up to 32 users at once. A report in *Android Police* said that the new feature in Duo is likely to support seven users. Users will have to first create a group with people they want to video chat with, and can start a call with all at the same time. "Tapping on the group name in the bottom right corner of a call brings you a list of group members," the report said. The low-light mode tweaks the users' video so that others can see them better during night-time conversations.

**Facebook tracks Android users who don't have app: Study**

This could be bad news for people who are worried about online security. According to a UK-based charity Privacy International, Facebook tracks Android users even if they don't use the FB app. App developers share data with Facebook through the Facebook Software Development Kit, a set of software development tools that help developers build apps for a specific operating system, an IANS report quoted. For the study, Privacy International studied 34 apps on Android. The study showed that at least 61% of these apps automatically transfer data to Facebook the moment a user opens the app. "This happens whether people have a Facebook account or not, or whether they are logged into Facebook or not," the report said.

GAMESPOT

Indie watch

Let's kick-start this year with the spotlight on all the fantastic independent games out there

JULIAN ALMEIDA

January is always a quiet time between the end of the holiday season and just before the gaming season opens up again in February, where we see big games released right up to March. Making this the perfect time to pick up your favourite console or PC and spend some time in an indie game. Usually made by smaller studios or just a bunch of people, sometimes the work of just one person, independent, or indie games are not afraid to break new ground in gaming. In fact, large successes like PUBG stem from indie roots and there is where most of the innovation is happening. From telling deeply personal stories to tackling psychological issues to experimenting with new gameplay paradigms, indie games generally push the envelope in ways large AAA games from massive game studios can't. Here's a bunch of the latest and the best in indie games:

**Gris**

Every time someone utters the words 'games are not art', shove a copy of Gris in their smug faces. With a hand-drawn, inked aesthetic, Gris is one of the most beautiful games out there. Tackling themes of fear and how it paralyses you, Gris features a young girl who is unable to call out for help, stuck in a crumbling world. A side-scrolling adventure game, Gris grips you from the get-go, in the warmth of its visuals, the fluidity with which it moves, as well as the simplistic gameplay elements. The game will fascinate you at times and also scare you at some points, but its art style will take your breath away.

Celeste

Bagging Best Independent Game at The Game Awards 2018, Celeste at its core is a Mario-esque platformer, with a princess to be rescued. You play a girl, Madeline, who wrestles internally with her anxiety and depression. All she wants to do is scale this mountain called Celeste, and she's determined to achieve this despite her mental health issues. An important piece of storytelling shrouded in a simple game that's a lot of fun to play. All done in cute retro sprites with very 80s-era colours to bring it to life.

Dead Cells

Quite frankly, Dead Cells is a lot more fun to play than any of the games that came out the past year. Taking inspiration from Metroid and Castlevania as a side-scrolling action game, while taking the difficulty of a Dark Souls game and the procedurally generated mayhem of a Rogue-like game. With a satisfying fast-paced action system, a beautiful pixel-like realm and a never-ending dungeon. You unlock more and more powers and weapons, to try taking on the dungeon again, as it changes subtly with each play through.

**Donut County**

There is no game 'hole'ier than Donut County. Pun intended, as this zany game has you playing a raccoon that's playing a game which creates a moving hole, whose sole purpose is to drop things into it. The more you drop, the bigger the hole gets, until it's a Godzilla of a hole, sucking up entire buildings. A puzzle game that's simple to grasp, it's hilarious watching all sorts of cute creatures just looking surprised as they're falling. Plus, there's a 'hole' lot of jokes in there too, as Donut County will have you grinning throughout your play.

Into the Breach

A new game from another legend of the independent gaming circuit, Subset Games, the makers of FTL: Faster than Light, Into the Breach is deceptively simple, channelling X-Com on an 8x8 grid that lets you take part in giant robot battles against the Vek, a powerful alien threat. As you send mechs through time, while adapting continuously to counter each threat. So a loss just means a change in strategy.

Like FTL, Into the Breach will be the reason you will have many a sleepless night. Don't let the old-school graphics fool you, this game is incredible where it counts.

Kingdom Come: Deliverance

If you like Medieval shows like *Game of Thrones* or you fantasise on the prospect of being a knight in one of those Arthurian legends, then Kingdom Come: Deliverance is for you. An action role-playing game set in the medieval Kingdom of Bohemia, an Imperial State of the Holy Roman Empire, Deliverance promises to be historically accurate. If that doesn't impress, then the game's incredible physics-based fighting system gives you some incredibly realistic action with swords. Both in the way your enemies react to sword strikes and the way they take damage. Deliverance looks incredible too, with slick production values.

**Frostpunk**

This War of Mine was a grim game that showed us the horrors of war from the perspective of the civilians affected. Now, from the same studio comes an equally grim game called Frostpunk. Caused by a volcanic winter in the wake of dual eruptions that blotted out the sun, you play a group of survivors tasked with setting up a city, creating warmth, while the temperatures are constantly dropping. Where you have to make those terrible decisions in order to keep your little slice of life afloat, to scavenge and build against the elements as well as our human natures. A bleak game and an excellent city builder.

**Return of the Obra Dinn**

Papers, Please was one of the most unique indie games in recent history, that has you playing an immigration officer, and it was fun. Now, Lucas Pope has done it again with Return of the Obra Dinn, a game that has you solve a mystery aboard an East India Company ship, to piece together what happened to its sixty-member crew. It is a meticulously constructed puzzle that you need all your powers of deduction and logic to be able to solve.

Armed with a few mystical tricks up your sleeve, it's up to you to solve this mystery.

The writer is a tech and gaming enthusiast who hopes to one day finish his sci-fi novel